

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

Translations by His Divine Grace A.C.
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**Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare**

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Mangalacarana

**om ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmlitaṁ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ**

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

**śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ
sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ
dadāti sva-padāntikam**

When will Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Chaitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

**vande 'haṁ śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānvitaṁ taṁ sa-jīvam
sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitāṁś ca**

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master and unto the feet of all vaiṣṇavas, I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Srila Rupa Goswami along with his elder brother Sanatan Goswami, as well as Raghunath Das and Raghunath Bhatta, Gopal Bhatta, and Srila Jiva Goswami. I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Krishna Chaitanya and Lord Nityananda along with Adwaita Acharya, Gadadhar, Srivas, and other associates. I offer my respectful obeisances to Srimati Radharani and Sri Krishna along with Their associates Sri Lalita and Visakha.

**he kṛṣṇa karuṇā-sindho
dīna-bandho jagat-pate
gopeśa gopikā-kānta
rādhā-kānta namo'stu te**

O my dear Krishna, O ocean of mercy, You are the friend of the distressed and the source of creation. You are the master of the gopīs and the lover of Radharani. I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

**tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi
rādhe vṛndāvaneśvari
vṛṣabhānu-sute devi
praṇamāmi hari-priye**

I offer my respects to Radharani, whose bodily complexion is like molten gold and who is the Queen of Vrindavan. You are the daughter of King Vrishabhanu, and you are very dear to Lord Krishna.

**vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ**

I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord. They can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the fallen souls.

**namo mahā-vadānyāya
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ**

O most munificent incarnation! You are Krishna Himself appearing as Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Srimati Radharani, and You are widely distributing pure love of Krishna. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You. — Cc. madhya 19.53

**yad advaitam brahmopaniṣadi tad apy asya tanu-bhā
ya ātmāntaryāmī puruṣa iti so 'syāmśa-vibhavaḥ
ṣaḍ-aiśvaryaḥ pūrṇo ya iha bhagavān sa svayam ayaṁ
na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāj jagati para-tattvaṁ param iha**

What the Upaniṣads describe as the impersonal Brahman is but the effulgence of His body, and the Lord known as the Supersoul is but His localized plenary portion. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, full with six opulences. He is the absolute truth, and no other truth is greater than or equal to Him. — Cc. ādi 1.3

**rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinīśaktir asmād
ekātmānāv api bhuvi purā deha-bhedaṁ gatau tau
caitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dayam caikyam āptam
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam**

The loving affairs of Sri Radha and Krishna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure giving potency. Although Radha and Krishna are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united in the form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Srimati Radharani although He is Krishna Himself. — Cc. ādi 1.5

**cirād adattam nija-gupta-vittam
svaprema-nāmāmṛtam atyudāraḥ
āpāmaram yo vitatāra gaurah
kṛṣṇo janebhyas tam aham prapadye**

The most munificent Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Gaurakrishna, distributed to everyone—even the lowest of men—His own confidential treasury in the form of the nectar of love of Himself and the holy name. This was never given to the people at any time before. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto Him. — Cc. madhya 23.1

**gaurah sac-caritāmṛtāmṛta-nidhiḥ gauram sadaiva-stuve
gaureṇa prathitam rahasya-bhajanam gaurāya sarvam dade
gaurādsti kṛpālu-ratra na paro gaurasya bhṛityo bhavam
gaure gauravamācarāmi bhagavan gaura-prabho rakṣa mām**

I pray to Srīman Gaurāṅga Mahaprabhu whose ecstatic transcendental pastimes are like a river of nectar. Gaura has given the path of confidential devotional service. I will completely surrender to Gaura. Is there anyone more merciful than Gaura? I will become a servant of Gaura. I shall preach the glory of Gaura. May my Lord Gaura protect me. — Gaurāṅga-virudāvalī by Srīla Raghunandan Goswami

**mādhuryaiḥ-madhubhiḥ sugambhi-bhajana śvarṇambhujānām vanam
kāruṇyāmṛta nirjharai-rupacitah sat-prema hemacālah**

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**bhaktāmbodhara dharaṇī vijayanī niskampa sampāvalī
daivo na kula daivatām vijayatām caitanya-kṛṣṇa-hariḥ**

I worship the golden hued Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Who is absorbed in the enchanting mellows of madhurya rasa. May the transcendental love of Krishna that Mahaprabhu is distributing, pour down on this earth like a waterfall of nectar. All glories to that Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

**ājānu-lambita-bhujau kanakāva-dātau
saṅkīrtanaika-pitarau kamalāya-tāksau
visvambharau dvijavarau yuga-dharma-pālau
vande jagat priyakarau karuṇāvatārau**

I worship Their Lordships Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu whose long arms extend down to Their knees, whose beautiful complexions are radiant yellow like molten gold and whose elongated eyes are like red lotuses. They are the topmost brāhmaṇas, the guardians of religious principles for this age, the most munificent benefactors of all living entities, and the most compassionate incarnations of Godhead. They initiated the congregational chanting of the names of Lord Krishna. — Caitanya-bhāgavata ādi 1.1

**anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah**

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Srimati Sacidevi, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant spiritual knowledge of the mellow taste of His service. — Vidagdha-mādhava 1.2

The following three verses are from Prema-bhakti-chandrikā by Srila Narottama Das Thakur section 10, verses 12-14.

**śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanyadeva rati-mati bhava bhaja
prema-kalpa-taru-bara-dātā
śrī-vraja-rāja-nandana rādhikā-jīvana-dhana
aparūpa ei saba kathā**

O brother, always worship Sri Krishna Caitanyadeva who is the great philanthropist giving away the treasure of the desire tree of pure love for Krishna. This Lord Chaitanya is actually Lord Krishna, the prince of Vraja and the life of Srimati Radharani. Descriptions of Him are spiritual sounds. They are not at all material. — verse 12

**navadvīpe avatari´ rādhā-bhāva aṅgīkari´
tānra kānti aṅgera bhūṣaṇa
tina vāñchā abhilāṣi´ śacī-garbhe parakāṣi´
saṅge lañā pariṣada-gaṇa**

Lord Krishna desired to appear in Nabadwip to understand the intense love Srimati Radharani felt for Him, and accept Her golden complexion as His bodily ornament. In order to fulfill these three desires, the Lord appeared in Sacidevi's womb. When the Lord appeared like this in the material world, all His associates followed Him, and also appeared in the world. — verse 13

**gaura-hari avatari´ premera vādara kari´
sādhilā manera tina kāja**

**rādhikāra prāṇa-pati kivā bhāve kānde niti
ihā bujhe bhakata-samāja**

The Lord appeared in the golden form of Lord Chaitanya, and preached the message of pure love for Krishna. In this way He fulfilled the three desires in His mind. Only the devotees are able to understand in what a wonderful way Krishna, who is the Lord of Srimati Radharani's life, continually cried in ecstatic love of God. — verse 14

**uttama adhama kichu na bāchila yāciyā dilaka kola
kahe premānanda emana gaurāṅga hṛdaye dhariyā bola
bhaja gaurāṅga kaha gaurāṅga laha gaurāṅga nāma (re)
ye jana gaurāṅga bhaje sei haya āmāra prāṇa (re)**

Never discriminating who was a fit candidate, elevated or degraded, the son of mother Sachi magnanimously accepts one and all onto His lap in a loving embrace crying, "Come to My fold, come to My fold!" The poet Premananda Das begs you all to constantly chant the sweet name of Krishna while holding tightly to that son of mother Sachi in the innermost core of your heart. Worship Gauranga! Speak about Gauranga! Oh please take to gaura-nāma! Whoever worships Gauranga is my life and soul.

**yasyaiva pādāmbuja-bhakti-lābhyah
premābhidhānah paramah pum-arthah
tasmai jagan-maṅgala-maṅgalāya
caitanya-candrāya namo namas te**

O Lord Chaitanyachandra, by devotedly serving Your lotus feet one can attain the pure love for Lord Krishna that is the ultimate goal of all endeavors. O Lord Chaitanyachandra, O great auspiciousness of the world, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. — Srila Prabhodhananda Saraswati, Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 9

**ānanda-līlāmaya-vigrahāya
hemābha-divya-cchavi-sundarāya
tasmai mahā-prema-rasa-pradāya
caitanyacandrāya namo namas te**

O Lord Chaitanyachandra, O Lord whose form is full of blissful pastimes, O Lord whose complexion is as splendid as gold, O Lord who gives in charity the nectar of pure love for Lord Krishna. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. — Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 11

**yan nāptaṁ karma-niṣṭhair na ca samadhi-gataṁ yat tapo dhyāna-yogair
vairāgyais tyāga-tattva-stutibhir api na yat tarkitaṁ cāpi kaiścit
govinda-prema-bhājām api na ca kalitaṁ yad rahasyaṁ svayaṁ tan
nāmnaiva prādurāsīd avatarati pare yatra taṁ naumi gauram**

Not attainable by the faithful performers of pious deeds, not understood by those engaged in austerity, meditation, and yoga, not guessed by those absorbed in detachment, renunciation of the fruits of work, philosophical speculation or recitation of prayers, and unknown even to the devotees full of love for Lord Govinda, the secret of pure devotional service has been revealed by the holy name during Lord Gaura's advent. Let me glorify that Lord Gaura.

— Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 3

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Srimad Bhagavata Mahatmyam

The Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam

Translated by Sri Satyanarayan Dasa

Introduction

In the dark age of Kali, bhakti is the only process for getting free from material conditioning. Bhakti is achieved only by the holy association of a pure devotee of the Supreme Lord. Specifically, one must hear krsna-katha from such a devotee. Srimad Bhagavatam is the best source of krsna katha. It presents questions and answers related to Lord Krsna, His name, form, pastimes, energies, and various incarnations. It was compiled by Srila Vyasa, and is the essence of all Vedic Literature.

Srimad Bhagavatam is so potent that it captivated the heart of Sukadeva Gosvami, a self realised soul completely absorbed in Brahman. He ran away from home after his birth, but returned as soon as he heard a few verses of Srimad Bhagavatam. Although he renounced everything including even a kaupin, he could not give up Srimad-Bhagavatam. He was very fond of forest life (aranya-priya), but after hearing Srimad-Bhagavatam from his father, he became very dear to the devotees (visnujana-priya), by reciting the Srimad-Bhagavatam. He was so renounced that he did not distinguish between male and female, yet he relished narrating the most intimate pastimes of Lord Krsna with the cowherd damsels.

Srimad-Bhagavatam is the very life and soul of the Vaisnavas, especially the Gaudiya Vaisnavas. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu called it spotless (amala Purana). He would hear it from His dear associate, Sri Gadadhara Pandita at Narendra Sarovara in Jagannatha Puri. In Bhakti-rasamrta sindhu, Srila Rupa Gosvami lists hearing Srimad Bhagavatam as one of the five essential processes of devotional service. Indeed, it is so wonderful that even impersonalists, who do not consider the Lord's form or abode transcendental, cannot resist studying and commenting upon it.

Srila Prabhupada carried Srimad Bhagavatam aboard the Jaladuta to the United States and with this weapon he conquered the world. He blessed many thousands with the wealth of Srimad Bhagavatam. He referred to his Bhaktivedanta purports on Srimad Bhagavatam as his "emotional ecstasies". He made it mandatory for his followers to hear Srimad Bhagavatam daily. Wherever he went he spoke on Srimad Bhagavatam, he sometimes relished hearing it from his disciples as well.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati said that if all the books in the world were destroyed, and only Srimad Bhagavatam remained, there would be no loss. It will be clear from this booklet that this is no over statement.

This translation of six chapters of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, entitled Srimad-bhagavat-mahatmya, the glory of Srimad Bhagavatam. Srimad Bhagavatam is the mature fruit of the Vedic tree and therefore, can grant all desires. The process of hearing Srimad Bhagavatam is seven days (Saptaha-Yajna) is the means for attaining all desires. Generally pure devotees of the Lord, being free from all material desires, do not engage in such recitation

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or rituals, but they use the Saptaha process for preaching to the masses. Therefore, they are not concerned with all the details of the rituals, as the real purpose is to convey the importance of hearing the Srimad Bhagavatam

The Puranas sometimes instruct through the indirect method of story telling (paroksavada). As Sri Narada Muni informed King Pracinbarhi (S.B. 4.28.65), "My dear King, in this way I have indirectly instructed you in the science of self-realisation. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator and controller of the universe, is very much pleased with indirect explanations, paroksavada." This does not mean, however, that this narration is a fable. It is factual, but there is a moral to the story. To give some insight, brief comments are given at the end of each chapter.

Within these chapters there is a lucid description and incidental predictions for the modern age. Unscrupulous scholars should not consider them interpolations because even according to modern historians the Puranas existed prior to the activities narrated herein. This is a confirmed historical fact. For example, the first chapter states that Yavanas will take control of holy places and demolish temples. This is a reference to Muslim rulers like Aurangazeb, who destroyed the major temples in Vrndavana, Mathura, and other holy places. There is also an implicit prediction that Srila Prabhupada would preach in the west. This should make atheists, agnostics, and sceptics reconsider their convictions.

I hope this booklet will create interest in studying Srimad Bhagavatam and bolster the faith of those who already study it.

Chapter One

The Meeting of Narada Muni and Bhakti Devi

Invocation

We offer our humble obeisances unto Lord Sri Krsna, whose transcendental form is bliss personified. He is the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe and the destroyer of the three types of miseries.

We pay our humble obeisances to Sri Sukadeva Gosvami who is like the Supersoul. He left home immediately after taking birth, though he had not undergone any samskaras, or purificatory ceremonies. Upon his departure,, his father out of separation followed him calling, "O my son! O my son," but only the trees responded.

Once in the forest of Naimisaranya, Sri Saunaka Rsi, the best of sages who are expert in tasting krsna-katha, put some questions to Suta Gosvami after paying obeisances. Sri Saunaka said, "O Suta Gosvami, your knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance like millions of suns. Please recite the nectarean pastimes of Lord Krsna, which are like tonic for the ears. How can one increase the discrimination that results from knowledge of devotion and renunciation of the material world?1 How do Vaisnavas get relief from the illusion created by Maya? In Kali-yuga the general populace is demonic, please explain, therefore, the best means to purify those who are troubled by various types of tribulations. O Suta Gosvami, please describe that sadhana, or most auspicious purifying process that will take one to Krsna. A touch-stone can give only

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material happiness and the kalpa-vrksa tree can at most grant heavenly opulence, however, when the spiritual master is pleased he can give the eternal abode of the Lord - the Vaikuntha planet -- which is not achieved even by the yogis."

Sri Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, your heart is full of love for the Personality of Godhead. After proper deliberation, therefore I will give you the essence of all conclusions, which will destroy the fear of birth and death and increase the flow of devotion which is the chief cause of Lord Sri Krsna's happiness. Please hear it attentively. Sri Sukadeva Gosvami recited Srimad Bhagavatam in Kali yuga to absolutely destroy fear of the snake of death. There is no superior means than this for the purification of the mind. One attains the Srimad Bhagavatam, however, only after accumulating pious activities for many life times.

"When Sukadeva Gosvami sat among the sages and prepared to recite Srimad Bhagavatam to Parikṣita Maharaja,² the demigods, who are expert in accomplishing their work, approached him with a pot of nectar. They offered humble obeisances and said, 'Please accept this pot of nectar and in exchange give us the nectar of hari-katha. Let King Parikṣita drink this, and let us drink the nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam.'

"At that time Sri Sukadeva Gosvami thought, 'Where is a piece of glass and where is a transcendental gem? How can one compare these two? What is the question of comparing this material nectar, though celestial, with the transcendental nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam?'³ In this way Sukadeva Gosvami made fun of the demigods. He did not consider them proper recipients of hari-katha, because they are devoid of pure devotional service. Hence, hearing the Srimad Bhagavatam is rare even among the demigods.

"Lord Brahma was astonished to learn that Parikṣita Maharaja became liberated just by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam. In Satyaloka, he put the Srimad Bhagavatam on one end of a scale and all other processes for obtaining liberation on the other. Upon seeing the Srimad Bhagavatam tilt the scale, all the sages present were struck with wonder. They asserted that in Kali-yuga only hearing and reciting Srimad Bhagavatam, which is non different from the Personality of Godhead, can immediately relieve one from material distress. If one hears it according to the proper process (as described in chapter six), it will certainly grant bhakti. Previously the most merciful Kumara brothers recited Srimad Bhagavatam to the sage Narada. Although Sri Narada had heard it from lord Brahma, the Kumaras gave him the opportunity to hear it according to the recommended process."⁴

Sri Saunaka asked, "Where did the learned Narada, who is free from material bondage and constantly travels all over the universe, meet those great sages? How did his interest in hearing hari-katha and in knowing the specific rules and regulations for hearing it develop?"

Suta Gosvami replied, "Now I will narrate an episode that is full of devotion. Sri Sukadeva, who considers me his surrendered disciple, told it to me in confidence. Once, the Kumaras went to Visala (Badrinatha) to get the holy association of saintly people.⁵ There they met Narada Muni.

"The Kumaras said, 'O brahmana, why do you appear so dejected and full of anxiety? Where have you come from, and where are you going so quickly? You appear like a person in

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complete anxiety owing to loss of wealth.⁶ This is not befitting a person like you, who is completely free from material attachment. Please explain the reason for this.'

"Sri Narada replied, 'I came here considering the earth to be the best of planets. Although I travelled to Puskara, Prayaga, Kasi, Godavari, Haridvara, Kuruksetra, Sriranga and Setubandha, I could not find peace in any of those holy places. At present, Kali yuga the friend of irreligion, has completely afflicted the whole earth. Now truthfulness, austerity, cleanliness, mercy and charity are nowhere to be seen. The fallen living entities take pleasure in telling lies and are simply engaged in filling their bellies.⁷ They are lazy, less intelligent, unfortunate, and always disturbed. Those who are called saintly are actually pretenders. Though they appear renounced, they accumulate wealth, women, and paraphernalia for sense pleasure. Women rule the family and the brother-in-law is the consultant. People sell their daughters out of greed, and husbands and wives always quarrel. The holy places, asramas of saintly people, and rivers are under the control of the yavanas, who are against Vedic religion.⁸ They have destroyed many temples and therefore yogis, siddhas, jnanis and religious people are not to be seen. The processes of liberation are completely burnt to ashes in the fire of Kali-yuga. In this age people sell grains in the market, the brahmanas charge fees to teach,⁹ and women thrive by prostitution.¹⁰

"Thus witnessing the defects of Kali-yuga and wandering over the face of the earth, I reached the bank of the Yamuna where Lord Krsna had performed various pastimes. O best of sages, please hear about the wonder I saw there. A beautiful woman was sitting in a dejected mood while two old men lay unconscious in front of her breathing very quickly. While trying to bring them to consciousness, the young women would sometimes cry. At times she would look around as if searching for her protector, the Supersoul. She was served by hundreds of women who were fanning and trying to console her. I saw this whole scene from afar and out of curiosity went near them. Upon seeing me, the young lady stood up and spoke very piteously. She said: "O saintly person, please stay here for a moment¹¹ and dispel my distress. Your auspicious vision destroys the sins of materialistic people. By your words I will get relief from misery and become peaceful. Only by great fortune can one get darsana of a person like you."

I inquired, "O virtuous lady, who are you and who are these two men lying here? Who are these ladies serving you? Please explain the cause of your distress in detail."

The lady said, "My name is Bhakti, and these two are my sons Jnana and Vairagya.¹² By the influence of time they have become old and decrepit.¹³ These women are the holy rivers, such as the Ganges. They have come here to serve me.¹⁴ Although I am directly being served by these ladies, still I am not peaceful.¹⁵ O sage, whose only wealth is austerity, though it is well known, please hear my story carefully and grant me solace. I was born in the land of Dravida, in South India, and I grew up in Karnataka. I was respected in the state of Maharastra, but when I came to Gujarata, I lost my youth.¹⁶ Rogues influenced by Kali-yuga broke my limbs and for a long time I remained in that condition and thus, along with my sons, I have become very weak and impotent. Upon coming to Vrndavana, I regained my youth and beauty, but my two sons, who are lying here, are still old and tired.¹⁷ I will leave this place and travel to foreign lands,¹⁸ but I feel sad owing to the plight of my sons. We always remain together, so why is it that I am young and they are old? It should be that the sons are young

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while the mother is old. I am astonished by this and so I lament. You have mystic power and are most intelligent, therefore, please explain this to me."

Narada said, "O chaste lady, from within my heart I see the cause of your misery, therefore I advise you not to lament. Lord Hari will shower all auspiciousness upon you."

Suta Gosvami said, "The best of sages, Sri Narada, understood the reason in a moment and said, 'O beautiful lady, hear attentively from me. Because of this ruthless age (Kali-yuga), good behaviour, yoga, and austerities have all become lost. People are addicted to cheating, irreligious behaviour, and are like the demon Agha, sin personified.¹⁹ At present, saintly people are unhappy and demonic people are enjoying sense gratification. Under these circumstances, if an intelligent man maintains his fortitude, then he is considered a scholar. By and by the earth is becoming a burden for Lord Sesha. At present it is not even worth seeing, what to speak of touching, and I see no auspiciousness anywhere. Everyone neglects you and your two sons. Because of worldly attachment to sense gratification, people are blind. Owing to their negligence,, you have become decrepit. It is only due to the glory of Vrndavana that you have become young again. This land is very auspicious because devotion always dances here. However, your two sons are being neglected and thus their health is failing,²⁰ but by the touch of Vrndavana they remain asleep and breathing."

Bhakti said, "Why is it that King Parikṣita did not kill this sinful Kali-yuga? Because of Kali-yuga all objects have lost their essence. Why does the most merciful Lord Hari tolerate irreligion? O sage, please remove this doubt. I feel pacified by hearing your sweet words."

Narada said, "O auspicious young lady, now that you have asked, please hear me with attention as I explain everything and thus relieve your misery. Kali-yuga took control and started obstructing auspiciousness the day Lord Kṛṣṇa left this planet for His abode. When King Parikṣita travelled on earth, conquering all the kings, he met Kali, who fell at his feet and took shelter of him. The king, who understood the essence of things just like the bumble bee, decided not to kill him because that goal which is not attainable by penance, yoga meditation, or samadhi, is easily attained in Kali-yuga simply by performing hari-kirtana.²¹ Although the king knew that Kali-yuga was useless, he spotted this one essential good quality, and understanding that this would make the living beings happy, he spared him. Because humanity is engaged in irreligious and immoral acts, everything has lost its essence. All objects, including the seeds of the earth, are ineffective.²² The brahmanas, being greedy for wealth, are performing Bhagavata-katha in peoples houses and therefore the essence of katha is lost.²³ Immoral, atheistic, and sinful people have begun to reside in the holy places, causing the influence of those places to be lost. Those people whose hearts are always filled with lust, greed and anger make a show of performing austerities, thereby causing the essence of penance to be lost. Because people are unable to control their mind, they have taken shelter of greed, pretence, and immorality, and have given up the study of scriptures, causing the influence of jnana-yoga to be lost. Moreover, the pandits, or scholars, are only expert in producing children and enjoying sex like buffaloes. They are no longer expert in the process of liberation.²⁴ Furthermore, there are hardly any Vaisnavas coming in bonafide sampradayas and there, everywhere all objects have become ineffective. This indeed, is due to the influence of Kali and is not the defect of anyone else. Therefore, although the lotus-eyed Lord resides near by, He tolerates this."

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Suta Gosvami said, " O Saunaka, hearing these revealing words of Sri Narada Muni, Bhakti was very surprised. She replied, 'O saintly person, you are very glorious and it is my good fortune to have met you. Within this material world, association with a saintly person is indeed the cause of all perfection. Just by once meeting you, Sri Prahlada, the son of Kayadhu, conquered Maya, and by your mercy Dhruva Maharaja gained the Dhruva planet. You are the personification of all auspiciousness. I offer my obeisances unto you, the direct son of Lord Brahma.'"

Comments on Chapter One

1 That discrimination which is not related to Bhakti is useless. It can only make a person materially wise, because it has no superior purpose. Similarly, knowledge and renunciation are useful only when they arise from devotion, otherwise they make the heart dry and hard.

2 Parikṣita Maharaja was cursed by the son of Samika Rsi to be bitten by a snake called Taksaka and die after seven days. When the king heard this, he renounced his kingdom and sat on the bank of Ganges intending to fast until death. Upon Sukadeva Gosvami's arrival, Parikṣita Maharaja asked him to recite Srimad Bhagavatam. Actually every living entity is cursed to die within seven days (from Sunday to Saturday). Death is compared to a snake that will pay everyone a visit. While everyone fears death, they do not use this fear to cultivate detachment. Rather, owing to ignorance, they become more attached. This is the difference between Parikṣita Maharaja and the common man. Hearing Srimad Bhagavatam makes a person free from the fear of death. That Parikṣita Maharaja heard Srimad Bhagavatam for seven days signifies that we should hear it everyday until our death.

3 Srimad Bhagavatam is the property of the devotees of the Supreme Lord. Although demigods are also devotees, they are selfish and attached to enjoyment. This disqualifies them from drinking the nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam. When one drinks heavenly nectar he loses his piety, but when one hears kṛṣṇa-katha, he is freed from sin and his heart becomes purified, punya sravana kirtana (S.B. 1.2.17). This is the difference between heavenly nectar and the nectar of kṛṣṇa-katha.

4 According to the Second Canto, Lord Brahma spoke the original four verses of the Srimad Bhagavatam to Narada, who in turn instructed them to Sri Vyasa. The "proper process" refers to hearing the complete Srimad Bhagavatam in seven days according to the guidelines given in chapter six.

5 Visala is another name for Badrinatha. Lord Nara-Narayana, the presiding deity of Bharata-varṣa resides there and this it is visited by many saintly people.

6 Generally a saintly person has no reason to feel either dejected or elated but when he sees the living entities suffering, he feels unhappy for them.

7 This is the prediction for the present age.

8 Yavanas refers to the Muslim rulers who invaded India at various times, beginning from the 11th century. They were inimical to Vedic religion and culture. Some were tolerant, some

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were atrocious. Some Muslim destroyed temples and even forcibly converted Hindus to Islam. They even imposed taxes on visitors to the holy places.

9 According to Vedic custom a brahmana should not charge for giving knowledge. He is allowed to accept donations for his maintenance or send his students to householders for begging food. This custom insured that only those who had interest in teaching would perform this service and unqualified people would not be interest. Because students did not pay fees, they remained indebted and obedient to their teachers. This system continued in India up until about 150 years ago when British rulers introduced change. Under the present system, good relations between student and teachers are non-existent and thus the whole educational process is degraded.

10 The exact Sanskrit is kaminyah kesasulinyah, which can also mean that women will cut their hair.

11 A saintly person does not speak with women unnecessarily.

12 Jnana and Vairagya are the natural offspring of devotion to the Lord (S.B. 1.2.7.).

13 "By the influence of time" indicates the age of Kali, in which people lose interest in transcendental knowledge and renunciation.

14 All the holy places are subservient to devotional service. They follow Bhakti. Therefore wherever a devotee goes, that places becomes holy.

15 Transcendental knowledge and detachment from sense gratification naturally follow Bhakti. (S.B. 11.2.43). And discrepancy in this principle implies disturbance in devotional service.

16 This briefly describes the history of the Bhakti movement in the age of Kali. There were many great Vaisnavas who appeared in the land of Dravida. Later on Ramanujacarya organised and propagated Vaisnavism under the banner of the Sri Sampradaya (S.B. 11.5.38-40). Madhvacharya appeared in the state of Karnataka and preached very vigorously, nurturing bhakti. In Maharastra there were some saints such as Tukarma in Pandarpura who propagated bhakti. But in Gujarata the people were more interested in accumulating wealth and thus bhakti was neglected. When one worships the deha (the body), the worship of Deva (the Lord), is neglected. When bhakti is weak then jnana and vairagya are automatically emaciated.

17 Vrndavana is the eternal abode of Lord Krsna and thus Bhakti naturally flourishes there. But, if one neglects hearing krsna-katha, then Jnana and Vairagya remain in a fainted state. They get covered by Maya. As Lord Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita (5.15) ajnanenavrtam jnanam tena muhynati jantavah.

18 Idam sthanam parityajya videsam gamyate maya. This statement hints at Srila Prabhupada's travel to the western world from Vrndavana. It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit proverb used in this sentence is in the passive voice (gamyate). This signifies that she (Bhakti) will be carried by someone. Because the Puranas are compiled by Srila Vyasa, who is an incarnation of the Lord, it is not impossible for him to make such predictive statements.

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19 Aghasura was a demon with the body of a python. He swallowed the innocent cowherd friends of Krsna, who later on killed him. Demonic persons, who trouble innocent people and seize their wealth, are like Aghasura.

20 At present in Vrndavana the study of devotional literature such as Srimad Bhagavatam is being neglected and Vairagya is being replaced with cosy life. Yet the land has not lost its power.

21 Sage Karbhajana confirms this (S.B. 11.5.36).

22 The new varieties of grains, fruits and vegetables are hybrids. They yield more produce but are not as nutritious and delicious as the original varieties, which existed since time immemorial. We have experienced this ourselves because the hybrid seeds were introduced very late in India. For example chapatis made from contemporary wheat flour have less flavour, and the texture is not as pleasing as those of bygone years. They become dry and hard very quickly and are not as conducive to health as those made of the desi grain which is now extinct.

23 The purpose of Hari-katha is not to solve economic problems. Its real purpose is to nourish Bhakti along with Jnana and Vairagya.

24 All the above predictions can be confirmed by paying a visit to holy places like Vrndavana. That the "essence is lost" means one no longer sees their influence. If, however, one performs these activities as prescribed in the scriptures, he will feel the positive influence.

Chapter Two

Narada Endeavours to Remove Bhakti's Distress

Sri Narada said, "O young lady, why are you in so much anxiety? Don't be melancholy unnecessary. Just meditate on the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krsna and by His mercy you will be free from all misery.¹ Lord Krsna, who protected Draupadi from the atrocities of the Kauravas and who is the lover of the damsels of Vraja, has not gone far away. Besides, you are Bhakti and more dear to Him than His very life. On your request He even goes to the house of low born people.² In Satya, Treta and Dvapara-yugas, jnana and vairagya were the means of liberation, but in Kali-yuga only bhakti can grant liberation. Thinking in this way, Lord Hari, the transcendental personification of knowledge, manifested you. You are the very dear beloved of Lord Krsna.

"Once you approached the Lord with folded hands and asked Him what you should do. He said, "Go and nourish My devotees". You accepted this order which pleased Him very much. To assist you, the Lord sent Mukti as your maidservant and Jnana and Vairagya as your sons.³ You directly reside in Vaikuntha dhama where you nourish the devotees and you expand yourself on this earthly planet for their nourishment as well.⁴ You came and happily resided on this earth along with Mukti, Jnana and Vairagya from Satya-yuga to Dvapara-yuga. But in Kali-yuga, Mukti contracted the disease of irreligious pretence and languished, and with your permission, went back to Vaikuntha. Now whenever you remember her, she comes to this planet briefly and returns to Vaikuntha, but Jnana and Vairagya remain with you always

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because they are like your sons. Being neglected by the people of Kali-yuga, they have become old and weak, but will soon recuperate, so you need not worry. I will find a solution to rejuvenate their bodies.

O beautiful faced one, there is no other age like Kali-yuga⁵ because you will be established in every house as well as in the heart of every person.⁶ Hear my vow. If I do not preach your message, subdue all other religions and make devotional festivals predominant then I shall not be considered the servant of Lord Hari. In Kali-yuga those people who follow you, even if they are sinful, will attain the abode of Lord Krsna without fear.⁷ The people in whose heart you reside become purified and they will not see Yamaraja, the Lord of Death, even in their dreams. Even ghostly beings like pretas, pisacas, raksasas and daityas are not able to trouble those whose hearts are imbued with devotion. The Lord cannot be controlled by austerities, study of the Vedas, by culture of knowledge, or by the fruitive activities described in the Vedas. He is controlled only by bhakti and the gopis are the evidence (pramana) of this.⁸ On the strength of pious activities performed for hundreds of lives one becomes attracted to bhakti, which is the only essence in Kali-yuga. On the strength of bhakti, Lord Krsna Himself appears to the devotee. Those people who are envious of devotion are always miserable no matter where they go within the three planetary systems. In the past, the great sage Durvasa suffered immense misery for offending a devotee.⁹ What more can I say? All vratas, tirthas, yogas, sacrifices and talks of knowledge are not needed. Bhakti alone can grant liberation."

Suta Gosvami continued, "Narada's conclusion glorified Bhakti and nurtured her. Then Bhakti spoke as follows. 'O Narada, you are very glorious and have unflinching faith in me. Thus I will always reside in your heart and never leave. O saintly person, you are most merciful. Just in a matter of moments you have removed my misery. But my sons have not yet regained their consciousness. Please quickly bring them back to normal.'"

Suta Gosvami said, "Upon hearing these words of Bhakti, Narada felt very compassionate and attempted to wake them up by shaking them with his hands.¹⁰ He put his mouth to their ears and said, 'O Jnana wake up, O Vairagya please arise.'¹¹ Then he chanted Vedic Mantras, the Vedanta Sutras, and the Upanisads. He recited Bhagavad-gita again and again. With great difficulty, they were revived, but overcome by lethargy, they yawned and were unable to even open their eyes.¹² Their hair was as white as the feathers of ducks and their bodily limbs were emaciated and powerless. Owing to hunger and thirst they were weak and sleepy. Seeing this, Narada fell into anxiety and contemplated further ways to revive them from old age and sleep. O Saunaka, as the sage Narada, deliberated, meditating on the Supreme Lord, he heard a voice emanating from the sky.¹³ 'O Devarsi, do not worry, your endeavour will be successful. O sage you must perform one specific noble act that will be revealed to you by some great saintly person.¹⁴ As soon as you complete that activity, Jnana and Vairagya will be released from the clutches of sleep and old age, and bhakti will reign everywhere.'¹⁵ These words were heard by everyone."

"In astonishment Narada said, 'I cannot understand the meaning of this indirect statement.¹⁶ The voice did not clearly explain the path one must follow in order to achieve perfection. Nor do I know where to find those saintly persons who will explain the process to me. What must I do to implement this order?'"

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Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, bidding farewell to Jnana and Vairagya, Narada Muni travelled to various holy places and met with the saintly people residing there. He asked them to suggest a process by which Jnana and Vairagya could be revived. Some listened carefully but could not give a definite answer.¹⁷ Others stated that it could not be accomplished, while still others remarked that it was not possible to determine a correct answer. Upon being asked the question, several simply kept quiet while others wriggled away to avoid embarrassment. They were all surprised to hear this question and none could offer a satisfactory reply. They began discussing among themselves as follows, 'My dear friends, if Jnana and Vairagya could not be revived after the chanting of the Vedas, Vedanta Sutra and recitation of the Bhagavad-gita, then what can be the solution? And if Narada Muni, who is the chief yogi and saint, does not know, then who can answer?'"¹⁸

"In this way, wherever Sri Narada inquired, he got the same answer—that it is very difficult to accomplish. He thus became very worried and decided to go to Badari where he performed penance with the intent to find the solution to revive Jnana and Vairagya. Shortly thereafter the Kumaras, headed by Sanaka, appeared there.¹⁹ They were effulgent like a million suns. Seeing them Sri Narada again enquired, "O saintly people, it is by great fortune that I have attained your association. Please be merciful to me and explain that noble process. You are the best of yogis, most knowledgeable and scholarly. Although you appear like five year old boys, you are the senior-most saintly persons. You always reside in Vaikuntha and engage in chanting the holy names. You are always intoxicated with the nectar of Lord Hari's pastimes, which are your only sustenance.²⁰ You are always chanting the mantra harih saranam and therefore old age, which is caused by the influence of time, does not approach you. Previously, just by the flick of your eyebrows, you whirled Lord Visnu's gatekeepers, Jaya and Vijaya down to this earth.²¹ Later they were reinstated by your mercy. I am most lowly and I feel most fortunate to have your darsana. You are very merciful so kindly bestow your mercy on me. Please reveal that process which the voice in the sky directed me to learn from saintly people. Please explain in detail how to follow that path. How can Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya become happy? How can they be established in all classes of men?"

The Kumaras replied, "O sage, Narada Muni, abandon your anxiety and be happy for the solution is simple. O Narada, glorious crest-jewel among the renunciates, you are the guide of those who walk the path of devotion, indeed you are the sun of bhakti-yoga. It is not very surprising that you have undergone this great endeavour for the sake of Bhakti. It is certainly appropriate for a devotee of the Lord to properly establish Bhakti.²² Various sages have propagated many paths, but they are all troublesome and generally can only elevate one to the heavenly planets. Until now, the process by which one can attain the original Personality of Godhead has remained concealed, and it is rare to find one who knows this practice. We know the procedure the voice in the sky referred to and we will explain it to you.²³ Please hear with an attentive mind. O Narada, sacrifice of material objects, penance, yoga, meditation, study of the Vedas and the path of knowledge, generally only lead toward fruitive activities and grant residence in the heavenly planets. Scholars have said that only jnana-yajna, or the sacrifice of knowledge, is the path of liberation.²⁴ This constitutes the study of the Srimad Bhagavatam which has been sung by great personalities like Sukadeva Gosvami. Just by hearing the words of Srimad Bhagavatam, Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya will be nourished. This will relieve the misery of Jnana and Vairagya and will make Bhakti blissful. As

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when a lion roars, wolves flee in fear, so merely by the sound of Srimad Bhagavatam, all the vicious qualities of Kali-yuga are destroyed. Bhakti is the flow of love of God and along with Jnana and Vairagya will enter every house and dance in the heart of every living being."

Sri Narada said. "I have tried to awaken Jnana and Vairagya by chanting the Vedas, Upanisads and Bhagavad-gita with no success. How is it possible that they will re revived by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam?²⁵ After all Srimad Bhagavatam is nothing more than the essence of the Vedas. Your darsana never goes in vain and you always protect those who surrender to you, please, therefore, remove my doubt with delay."

The Kumaras said: "It is a fact that Srimad Bhagavatam is the essence of the Vedas and Upanisads,²⁶ but it is the fruit of the tree of Vedic literature, it is superior. The vital fluid of the tree is spread from the root to the tip though it cannot be tasted. When that same fluid accumulates in the fruit however, it tastes very delicious. Similarly, ghee, which is relishable even to the demigods, is spread throughout cow's milk, but it cannot be savoured until it is extracted. Sugar also exists throughout the cane, yet when extracted, it becomes more succulent. The same applies to the pastimes depicted in Srimad Bhagavatam, which is equal to the Vedas. Srila Vyasadeva has propagated it to establish bhakti, jnana and vairagya. Once Srila Vyasadeva, who knows the essence of all the Vedas and Upanisads, and is the compiler of the Bhagavad-gita felt dejected and was drowning in an ocean of confusion. At that time you spoke the message of the Bhagavatam in just four verses. Upon hearing these verses Vyasa was freed from his lamentation. So why are you doubtful and astonished by this? Recite Srimad Bhagavatam to Jnana and Vairagya and their lamentation and misery will be destroyed."

Narada said, "O saintly people, your darsana immediately shatters all the sins of the living entities and brings solace to those being scorched by the fire of material misery. You are always drinking the nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam, which you heard from Lord Sesa. I have taken shelter of you for the purpose of preaching the message of bhakti, which is characterised by love of God. Only one who has performed greatly pious acts²⁷ for many millions of lifetimes may achieve the association of saintly persons like yourselves and thus get completely free from ignorance caused by material delusion and pride. He then becomes established in proper discrimination."

Comments on Chapter Two

1. This is the only panacea for anxiety. When the mind is fixed on Krsna, it cannot experience agitation. That's why devotees are always free from anxiety.
2. Lord Krsna is called patita-pavana, the purifier of the fallen, and Dina-bandhu, the friend of the distressed. He does not care for haughty people; He is pleased by humility.
3. The Lord is pleased with His obedient servants. He grants liberation, knowledge and detachment to the surrendered souls even without their asking.
4. Devotional service is the internal potency of the Lord and descends from Him into the material world through disciplic succession.

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5. Kali means the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, but it also indicates the age in which the Lord is readily available--*kam krsnam lati dadati iti kalih*. In other yugas people were healthy, intelligent, alert, and long lived. They had a natural inclination for yoga, penance, study of the Vedas, yajnas and so on. They did not pay heed to devotion, considering it too simplistic. Without bhakti, however, liberation cannot be attained. In previous ages people had to undergo the rigours of the respective processes for many lifetimes in order to realise this fact. But in Kali-yuga there is natural propensity towards bhakti because people in general are not qualified to participate in jnana, yoga, and karma. Therefore this age is glorious. Moreover, Lord Caitanya appeared in Kali-yuga to directly preach the message of bhakti and set the proper example.
6. This statement predicts the appearance of Lord Caitanya who predicted *prthivite ache yat nagaradi grama / sarvatra pracara hoibe mora nama*. When Narada Muni says that he will establish bhakti, he means it will be done through a devotee. Therefore this verse also hints at the preaching activities of Srila Prabhupada who fulfilled the prophecies of Lord Caitanya and Sri Narada Muni. In fact in America Srila Prabhupada once held a program which very few people attended. When one disciple remarked that not many people had come, Srila Prabhupada said, "That's not true. The great sage Narada Muni was present."
7. Everyone is qualified to take to the process of bhakti, regardless of birth or caste.
8. In Vedic culture, the Vedas are considered to be the supreme pramana, though here Sri Narada asserts that the gopis are. This is because the gopis are the topmost knowers and lovers of Krsna. Besides, among the gopis some are known to be the Vedas personified, hence they are also called pramana.
9. This refers to the story of Ambarisa Maharaja from the Ninth Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam.
10. Narada's attempt to wake Jnana and Vairagya by shaking them with his hands indicates that knowledge cannot be revived by the process of karma.
11. Narada's placing his mouth next to their ear presents the initiation ceremony in which the guru utters mantras into the right ear of the disciple. Mere initiation, however, cannot make one learned or renounced.
12. The lethargy and yawning of Jnana and Vairagya indicate that one can get only a meagre amount of knowledge by recitation of the scriptures mentioned. They do not make one's consciousness crystal clear.
13. The Supersoul guides the sincerely inquisitive person from within.
14. A sincere, inquisitive person should accept the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. In this way the Lord helps from within and without.
15. This statement predicts the appearance of ISKCON.
16. Personal realisations which lack the guidance of a bona fide teacher and the scriptures are unclear and insufficient.

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17. Most people in the garb of saints do not clearly understand the Absolute Reality. They follow hodge-podge philosophy and lacking realisation cannot give satisfactory guidance to their disciples.
18. Here the word "Narada" means the giver of knowledge--naram jnanam dadati iti naradah.
19. The Lord appears in the form of the spiritual master to the sincere seeker.
20. These are the characteristics of a bona fide spiritual master.
21. This story is in the Third Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam.
22. This is the duty of every devotee of the Lord.
23. A guru is able to dispel all the doubts of his disciple.
24. Here the term 'knowledge' is non different from devotion. Knowledge related to the Personality of Godhead is one aspect of bhakti.
25. A disciple should present his doubts to his guru submissively. If he is arrogant a saintly person is not obliged to give the treasure of his knowledge to such an unqualified disciple.
26. The Vedas and Itihasas mainly deal in dharma, artha, kama and moksa, but the Srimad Bhagavatam speaks only of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Krsna.
27. The pious acts mentioned here are those related to devotion such as offering charity to a devotee.

Chapter Three

Bhakti's Distress is Dispelled

Sri Narada said, "To establish bhakti, jnana and vairagya, I will perform a jnana-yajna by reciting the Srimad Bhagavatam as was spoken by Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Please explain where this yajna should be performed. You are the knower of the Vedas, therefore please explain the glories of the Srimad Bhagavatam as spoken by Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Also please explain the proper procedure and duration for the recitation."

The Kumaras replied, "O Narada, you are very humble and discriminate.¹ We will explain everything to you, so kindly hear from us. Near Haridvara there is a bathing place or ghata on the bank of Ganges called Ananda.² Many saintly persons reside there and demigods and perfected beings visit frequently. The place abounds with various types of trees and creepers and the sand is soft and appealing. The beautiful ghata decorates a solitary point on the river.³ The fragrance of lotus flowers fills the air and lions and tigers dwell with no animosity toward other animals.⁴ Go there and effortlessly start this jnana-yajna, for by the medium of this katha, a novel rasa will become manifest. You will see Bhakti appear along with Jnana and Vairagya, who have become decrepit. Wherever there is recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam, bhakti, jnana and vairagya automatically become manifest. By the sound of Bhagavatam they will become young and energetic."⁵

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Sri Suta Gosvami said, "After saying this, the Kumaras desiring to drink the nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam, arrived at the bank of the Ganges, along with Narada. The news spread all over the earth and throughout the three planetary systems. Those devotees who harboured any taste for hearing the Lord's pastimes, came in haste to drink the nectar. Sage like Bhrgu, Vasistha, Cyavana, Gautama, Medhatithi, Devala, Devarata, Parasurama, Visvamisra, Sakala, Markandeya, Dattatreya, Pippalada, Vyasa, Parasara, Chayasuka, Jajali, Jahnu, and all such great saintly persons arrived there along with their family members and disciples. Besides them, the Vedas, the Upanisads, Mantra, Tantra, the seventeen Puranas and the six philosophical systems came in their personified forms. Sacred rivers like the Ganges, sacred ponds like Puskara, holy ksetras like Kuruksetra, sanctified forests like Dandaka, all the directions, majestic mountains like the Himalayas, the demigods, Gandharvas, and even Danavas came there to hear hari-katha. Those who were not inclined to come out of excessive pride, were brought by the great sage Bhrgu who had expertly convinced them. The Kumaras then sat on a beautiful seat offered by Sri Narada and resolved themselves to recite Srimad Bhagavatam. In the front of the audience sat Vaisnavas, renunciants, brahmacaris, and Sri Narada Muni sat in front of them. On the one side sat the sages and on the other the demigods. One place hosted the Vedas and Upanisads, and another the holy places. In yet another place sat the women, while all around could be heard, "All glories! All glories!" as conches resounded and people decorated each other with coloured powder and flowers. Some demigods alighted from their airplanes and from the sky others showered flowers on the audience."

Suta Gosvami said, "In this way the worship was performed and then everyone sat with an attentive mind. The Kumaras began reciting the glories of Srimad Bhagavatam before the sage Narada. "Now we will describe the glories of Bhagavatam, which by hearing, one attains liberation. One should always hear Srimad Bhagavatam, for just by doing so, the Lord sits in one's heart. Bhagavatam has 18 000 verses in twelve cantos and is a dialogue between Sri Sukadeva and King Parikṣita.⁶ The living entity wanders in this world owing to ignorance, until he hears the Bhagavatam Sri Sukadeva Gosvami recited. Indeed there is no need to hear many scriptures and Puranas as this simply causes confusion. Srimad Bhagavatam alone is sufficient to grant liberation. That house where Bhagavatam is recited daily becomes a holy place and those who reside there become free from all sins. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds Vajapeya sacrifices cannot compare to one sixteenth of the benefit of hearing Srimad Bhagavatam. O sages, sins reside in a person's body only until he properly hears Srimad Bhagavatam. The benefits offered by the Ganges, Gaya, Kasi, Puskara, or Prayaga cannot compare to those derived from hearing the Bhagavatam. If you at all desire the supreme destination, then you should daily recite at least one half, or even on fourth of a Srimad Bhagavatam sloka. There is no difference between Omkara, Gayatri Mantra, Purusa-sukta, the three Vedas, Srimad Bhagavatam, the twelve syllable mantra, the twelve features of the sun god, Prayaga, Kala which manifests as a year, brahmana, agnihotra sacrifice, a cow, fasting on ekadasi, Tulasi, spring season and the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. A person who hears Srimad Bhagavatam day and night and understands its meaning, becomes free from the sins committed in millions of lives. There is no doubt about it. The person who daily recites even one half or one fourth of a verse of Srimad Bhagavatam gets the benefit of performing the Rajasuya sacrifice (horse sacrifice). Daily recitation of the Bhagavatam, meditation on the Personality of Godhead, the watering of Tulasi, and rendering service to the cow, are all

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considered equal. If a person hears a verse from the Srimad Bhagavatam at the time of death, the Lord becomes pleased and grants him residence in Vaikuntha.

Whoever places the Bhagavatam on a golden throne and donates it to a devotee certainly attains the association of the Personality of Godhead. A person who does not hear even a part of Srimad Bhagavatam during the whole of his life, lives just like a candala or an ass. The purpose of his birth is only to give delivery pains to his mother. A person who has not even heard one verse of the Bhagavatam is very sinful and although living, is actually dead. His life is an utter waste and simply a burden for the earth. This is the statement of Lord Indra, the chief among the demigods. Indeed it is not very easy to get an opportunity to hear Srimad Bhagavatam. Only a very pious person gets such an opportunity. O Narada, you are very intelligent and the abode of mysticism. Hear this katha with attention. There are no rules restricting the time or date for hearing Bhagavatam.⁷ Considered best is that one should hear Bhagavatam while keeping a vow of celibacy and truthfulness.⁸ But for the people in Kali-yuga this is very difficult. Therefore, Sukadeva Gosvami explained a special process for hearing that should be known. In Kali-yuga the minds of people are always disturbed and thus it is very difficult for them to perform pious activity and follow rules and regulations for a long period. He has recommended, therefore, a process of hearing the Bhagavatam in seven days, which is called saptaha sravana, or saptaha yajna.

Whatever benefit one derives from hearing Bhagavatam during the month of Magha or anytime, Sukadeva says, that one gets the same benefit by the process of Saptaha. Because people in general are short-lived, always sick, and unable to control their minds, the process of hearing Srimad Bhagavatam in seven days is offered in Kali-yuga.⁹ That benefit which is unattainable through penance, yoga and mystic trance, can be readily attained by properly hearing the Bhagavatam through the process of Saptaha. There is no greater vrata, penance, sacrifice, service to a holy place, meditation, or knowledge than hearing Bhagavatam through the Saptaha Yajna."

Saunaka said, "O Suta Gosvami, you have made very wonderful statements! Certainly Bhagavatam must describe about Lord Krsna, who is the source of Brahma, but how is it possible that this is a better process of liberation than even the path of knowledge?"

Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, when Lord Krsna was about to leave this earthly planet to go to His own abode, He spoke the eleventh canto to Uddhava. Upon hearing it, Uddhava asked, "O Govinda You have fulfilled Your purpose with respect to Your devotees and as You prepare to return to Your abode, there is one doubt in my mind. Please hear it and grant me solace. kali-yuga will begin immediately, and various types of vicious qualities will become manifest. Sainly people will become demonic and the earth will become over burdened. Then who will give her shelter? O lotus-eyed Lord, but for You, I do not see anyone who can protect the earth. O Lord, You are very dear to Your devotees and merciful to the saintly persons, therefore, please do not leave. O Lord, You appeared here only for the benefit of Your devotees, so how will Your devotees maintain their lives in your separation? To meditated on Your impersonal feature is very miserable, therefore please do something.¹⁰

"Hearing these words of Uddhava at Prabhasa, the Lord devised a solution to give shelter to His devotees. O Saunaka, He invested all His power in the Srimad Bhagavatam along

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with Himself in His unmanifest form. We should know, there, that Srimad Bhagavatam is the personification of the Lord in the form of sound. One who serves, hears, or even sees the Srimad Bhagavatam becomes free from all sin. In Kali-yuga, therefore, hearing Bhagavata Saptaha is the chief religion and superior to all other means. In Kali-yuga this is the only principle which removes sin and relieves the misery of unfortunate people. It gives them the power to conquer lust, anger, and greed. It is very difficult for the demigods to get relief from Maya, so then, how can mortal beings be expected to become free from her? Hearing Saptaha, therefore, is the correct means to be freed from the clutches of Maya."¹¹

Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, while the Kumaras were explaining the glory of Saptaha to Narada Muni, a very wonderful thing happened in that assembly. Bhakti appeared along with her two sons, who had now regained their youth. She was loudly and repeatedly chanting "Sri Krsna! Govinda! Hare! Murare! O Lord Narayana! Vasudeva! All the assembled people saw that Bhakti had become beautiful by wearing the imports of the Srimad Bhagavatam as ornaments.¹² The sages then began discussing how it was that Bhakti had manifested herself in the assembly, from where had she come, and so on."

The Kumaras then said, "Bhakti has now appeared from the import of the Bhagavata-katha. Hearing this, Bhakti and her two sons humbly submitted. 'In Kali-yuga we were almost lost but now you have rejuvenated us. Please explain where we can reside.'

The Kumaras responded, "You award the Personality of Godhead to your devotees, and you sever the bonds of this material world, therefore with great patience and fortitude you should reside in the hearts of the devotees of Lord Krsna. The defects of Kali-yuga may overpower the whole universe but they will not be able to so much as glance at you."

Upon hearing the words of the Kumaras, Bhakti entered the hearts of the Lord's devotees. The devotees in whose heart Bhakti resides many appear impoverished, but they are most glorious and opulent, because abandoning His own abode, the Lord Himself comes to reside in their heart, being tied by the rope of devotion. The Bhagavatam is the personification of the Lord on earth and its glory cannot be described in words. Anyone who hears or recites Bhagavatam becomes an associate of the Lord, so what is the purpose of religious principles without it?"

Comments on Chapter Three

1. Knowledge comes to a humble and discriminate person.
2. Haridvara means the gateway to Lord Hari, and Ananda means bliss. Bliss is in the vicinity of the Lord. Going to Haridvara means becoming favourable to the Lord and giving up the atheistic mentality. In this mood the Bhagavatam reciter will taste bliss.
3. One should bath one's mind with beautiful thoughts of Lord Hari. The Ganges represents the flow of transcendental knowledge. "Solitary place" means the absence of improper association.
4. When one is in transcendental knowledge he gets free from envy and material attachment.

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5. Sound, or sabda pramana, is the only means to acquire transcendental knowledge.
6. Some scholars propose that Bhagavatam refers to the Devi-bhagavatam, which also has 18 000 verses and twelve cantos, but this statement soundly defeats their claim because the Devi-bhagavatam was not spoke by Sri Sukadeva Gosvami.
7. Bhagavatam is transcendental and should be heard whenever one has the opportunity, for a moment passed, never returns.
8. If one neglects these rules he will not understand the actual message of Srimad Bhagavatam.
9. Something is better than nothing, therefore, at least for seven days one should follow the rules and regulations for hearing Srimad Bhagavatam. As far as the devotees are concerned however, 'seven days' means everyday just as when people say "I do this seven days a week", and what they mean is I do this every day of the year.
10. Worship of impersonal Brahman is very difficult, and more so for the people of Kali-yuga. Therefore, no one should waste valuable and limited life in such a fruitless pursuit.
11. This statement is directed to the common man, for if he is instructed to hear Srimad Bhagavatam daily, he will immediately reject the proposal. But after deliberation he may conclude, "If hearing it for only one week has so many wonderful benefits, then why not hear it everyday?" Therefore, Saptaha is a preaching technique for dull people. Moreover, if one submissively hears Srimad Bhagavatam from a pure devotee, he will surely get free from the clutches of Maya. There is no exaggeration in this statement.
12. Just hearing Srimad Bhagavatam is devotional service, but understanding it and meditating on its meaning is like decorating Bhakti.

nimna-ganam yatha ganga

devanam acyuto yatha

vaisnavanam yatha sambhuh

purananam idam tatha

Just as the Ganga is the greatest of all rivers, Lord Acyuta the supreme among deities and Lord Sambhu (Siva) the greatest of Vaishnavas, so Srimad Bhagavatam is the greatest of all Puranas.

(Srimad Bhagavatam 12.13.16)

Chapter Four

The Story of Gokarna

Suta Gosvami continued, "O Saunaka, when the Supreme Lord, who is very dear to His devotees, saw transcendental bhakti manifest within their hearts, He left His abode and appeared in the assembly at Ananda. He wore a garland made of forest flowers, and His bodily hue was just like that of a monsoon cloud. He was dressed in dazzling yellow garments

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and wore a belt studded with gems. A crown decorated His head and His earrings moved to and fro. He stood in a beautiful threefold bending form that stole the hearts of everyone. The Kaustubha gem glittered on His chest and His bodily limbs were anointed with sandalwood pulp. His exquisite beauty defeated millions of Cupids. The transcendental Personality of Godhead, who held a flute, then entered the hearts of His devotees. His intimate associates, such as Uddhava, had come there incognito to hear the bhagavata-katha. As the Lord appeared, in all directions could be heard "All glories! All glories!" There was a wonderful flow of bhakti rasa, the sound of conches, and showers of flowers and coloured water. The entire assembly completely forgot themselves and their possessions and were fully absorbed in hearing the Srimad Bhagavatam."

Seeing their deep absorption, Sri Narada said, "O sages, today I have seen the wonderful glory of Saptaha. Even foolish rogues and animals become purified by hearing it. I have no doubt, therefore, that in Kali-yuga, bhagavata-katha is the most powerful process for purifying the heart. O most merciful saintly persons, only to show kindness upon the suffering living entities in the material world have you revealed this wonderful process. Now please narrate histories regarding those who have become purified by performing Saptaha Yajna."¹

The Kumaras said, "Those crooked people who always transgress the rules of the scriptures and engage in various types of sinful acts, burning in the fire of anger, and are always given to lust, will be purified by the Saptaha Yajna.

Those who are outside the varnasrama system, devoid of truth, and troubled by material desires, who always criticise their parents, who are envious, hypocritical and bent on giving misery to others, will be purified by the Saptaha Yajna.

Those who steal gold, drink liquor, kill brahmanas, and who have sex with the wife of their spiritual master, who are very cruel, merciless, treacherous, immoral, demonic, always prone to cheating and live off the wealth of brahmanas, will be purified by the Saptaha Yajna.

Those who are very obstinate and thus always engage in sinful activities with their body, mind and speech, who always live on the wealth of others, and whose hearts are very impure will get purified by the Saptaha Yajna.

O Narada, in this context, I will recite a history which simply by hearing one will become free from sin.

Once there was a beautiful settlement on the bank of the Tungabhadra. The people of that city were truthful, religious and dedicated to executing their prescribed duties. In that city lived a brahmana named Atma Deva, who was expert in studying the Vedas and performing karma-kanda activities. He was brilliant like the sun and although rich, he lived by begging. He had a beautiful wife named Dhundhuli, who came from a good family, but was very obstinate. By nature she was very cruel, talkative and took great pleasure in gossiping with others. although expert in household duties, she was miserly and quarrelsome.² This brahmana and his wife lived together lovingly, owning ample wealth and objects for sense enjoyment. Though their house was very beautiful, they were not happy because they had no son.³ As old age crept up on Atma Deva, he engaged in various pious activities for getting a son. He distributed charity to the poor and donated cows, land, gold, cloth and so on. In this

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way he spent half of his wealth on religious activities. Still he could not get a child and thus he was filled with anxiety.

"One day, feeling very disheartened, he left home and went to the forest. As the sun reached its zenith he was thirsty and approached a pond. Owing to lack of progeny he was depressed, weak and tired,⁴ and after drinking he sat down to rest.⁵ By and by a sannyasi came there to drink. The brahmana approached him and fell at his feet breathing heavily. The sannyasi asked, "O brahmana, why are you crying so anxiously? Tell me what is your problem?"

The brahmana said, "O Maharaja, I am suffering from sins committed in my past life. Even my forefathers are in such anxiety that when I offer oblations of water, they accept, but remain full of worry. The demigods and brahmanas do not happily accept my offerings of food. I am so miserable for want of children that my life appears wasted. I have come here to give up my useless life, as I have no son. A house without children is like a forest, and wealth loses all value. Indeed a family without children is very inauspicious. O Maharaja, even the cows I acquire become barren! When I plant a tree, it yields no fruits or flowers. And when I bring fruit to my home, it spoils very quickly. I am most unfortunate because I have no son, therefore my life has no purpose."

Saying this, the brahmana began crying piteously and the saint's heart became filled with compassion.⁶ He was a perfected yogi and by seeing the lines on the brahmana's forehead, he could understand everything about his life.

The sannyasi said, "O brahmana, give up your attachment and desire for children, for Fate is very powerful. Take shelter of discrimination and give up attachment to this world. O brahmana, I can understand your fate and am certain that you will have no son for the next seven lives. Previously, King Sagara and King Anga had to suffer repeated miseries because of not having a son. Therefore, brahmana, give up all hope for success in family life. Happiness is only in the life of renunciation."

The brahmana said, "O Swamiji, what is the value of such discrimination? There is simply no spice in sannyasa life. Somehow or another give me a son, otherwise, I will plunge into lamentation and give up my life. One who does not experience the happiness of wife and children lives in a desert. Happiness exists only when the house is filled with wife, sons, and grandsons.⁷

Seeing Atma Deva's great attachment, the saint said, "O brahmana, King Citraketu had to suffer excessively because he wanted to undo his fate.⁸ Providence is very powerful, hence none of your endeavours will be successful. For this reason you will not get the happiness of a son, but I see that you are very obstinate, and since you have approached me desiring a son, what can I say in these circumstances?"

Understanding the brahmana's determination the saint offered him a fruit and said, "Your wife will surely get pregnant and bear you a son upon her eating this fruit. She should follow a vow of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, and charity and eat only one meal a day for one year. By doing so, she will have a son who will be pious and righteous."

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After saying this the sannyasi disappeared and the brahmana joyfully returned to his house. He gave the fruit to his wife and left for another place. His wife, whose nature was crooked, began crying and spoke to her associate: "My dear friend, I am in great anxiety! My husband has brought a fruit which has the potency to give me a son. If I eat it, I will become pregnant,, my womb will grow, and not being able to eat properly I will become weak and unable to perform my household duties. If by ill fortune dacoits attack, I will not be able to run in my pregnant condition. And if during the time of delivery, the child gets stuck in the birth canal, I will lose my life. Or if he remains in my womb for an extended period, like Sukadeva how much will I have to suffer. I am very tender by nature, how will I be able to tolerate all this? During the pregnancy I will be weak, then my sister-in-law is sure to come and pilfer all my wealth. Moreover, I will have to follow so many rules and regulations which will create difficulty. Child-bearing is very painful, and upbringing more painful still.⁹ I think only barren women and widows live happily."

Thinking in this way she did not eat the fruit. Yet when her husband asked her, she deceitfully said, "Yes, I have eaten it."¹⁰

One day her sister visited and Dhundhuli confided the whole story to her, revealing her distress. Dhundhuli said, "O dead sister, owing to anxiety, day by day I am becoming weaker. Please tell me what I should do?"

Her sister replied: "I am now pregnant so when I deliver this child, I will secretly give him to you. Meanwhile you pose yourself as pregnant and offer some wealth to my husband, thus he will not mind giving his child to you. Somehow or another we will arrange for everyone to think that I suffered a miscarriage after six months. Later I will arrange to nourish the baby at your house.¹¹ Now, to test this fruit, let us give it to this cow."

Dhundhuli fed the fruit to a cow and in due course her sister gave birth to a son. The child's father quietly delivered it to Dhundhuli who informed Atma Deva that she had delivered a son. hearing this Atma Deva became very jubilant. he performed the birth ceremony along with various other auspicious activities, gave charity to the brahmanas, and arranged musicians to celebrate the birth of his son.

Dhundhuli said to her husband, "There is no milk in my breast and I think it is not possible to feed cow's milk to the child yet. What shall I do? My sister's child was still-born so if you call her, she can breast-feed my son."

Atma Deva took her suggestion, and Dhundhuli named the boy Dhundhukari. After three more months the cow that ate the fruit also delivered a beautiful human child. He was peaceful and divine looking and his face was very brilliant. Seeing this, the brahmana became very ecstatic.¹² He performed all the appropriate ceremonies for this new baby. Hearing this, all the people were astonished and all came to see the baby born of the cow. They started talking among themselves, "Just see how fortunate Atma Deva has become. Even his cow has borne him a son!"

By the will of the Divine no one could understand the secret behind the intrigue. Atma Deva named the cow's son Gokarna because his ears resembled those of a cow. In time both boys grew up. Gokarna was intelligent and scholarly, while Dhundhukari was a rogue. He

would not perform any brahmanical duties or follow the rules of cleanliness. he used no discrimination when eating and was irate. He would accumulate useless articles and would even eat food touched by a dead body. He was expert in stealing and envious of others. Sometimes he would quietly go and set fire to another's house, or he would abduct a baby and throw it in a well. He took pleasure in violent activities and always carried weapons. He happily troubled blind and handicapped people and kept special friendships with candalas. He also kept a pack of dogs and would often go hunting. He was attached to prostitutes and thus he wasted all his father's wealth. One day he severely beat his parents, took all the pots and utensils in the house and sold them. In this way, all of Atma Deva's property was lost. he began lamenting, "Alas! alas! I was better off when my wife was barren! Oh! to have a rascal son is worse than having no son at all. Where shall I go? What shall I do? Who will help me in this unfavourable situation? O misery! I am being tormented by my own son and I'm prepared to give up my life!¹³

While he lamented in this way, Gokarna arrived and began instructing him:¹⁴ "O father, this world is full of delusion and misery, and is useless. You should deliberate upon who is the real owner of sons and wealth. Those who are attached to material things burn day and night like a ghee lamp. Neither Lord Indra nor the emperor of the whole universe can find happiness. Only those who are renounced and live in a solitary place have peace. Therefore give up this ignorance, thinking that this is your wife, this is your son, and so on. Owing to such delusion one goes to hell. This body will one day be lost, therefore, go and live in the forest."

Hearing the words of Gokarna, Atma Deva decided to go to the forest. He asked, "My dear son, please explain what I should do in the forest. I am very foolish and very much attached to karma-kanda activities. Now I have lost everything and am bound in this well of household life. You are very merciful - please deliver me."

Gokarna said, "O father, this body is nothing but a combination of bones, fat, blood, and flesh. Therefore, do not consider that you are this body and that this wife and children are yours. Day and night meditate on the ephemeral nature of this material world and thus do not become attached to anything. Become renounced and perform devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. Devotion is the greatest religion, therefore take shelter of it, and give up all other material religious principles. Render service to saintly people and give up all thoughts of sense gratification and greed for wealth. Do not meditate on the defects of others, fully engage in the service of the Lord, and always drink the nectar of His holy pastimes."

Influenced by the preaching of his son, Atma Deva left home and though he was sixty years old went to the forest with great determination. Day and night he remained engaged in the service of the Lord.¹⁵ He regularly recited the tenth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam until finally he attained the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krsna.

Comments on Chapter Four

1. After explaining a particular philosophical conclusion, (siddhanta), it is customary to corroborate it with an example. This strengthens the faith of the audience.

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2. While this is a true story, it has a philosophical interpretation. Atma Deva (lit. divine soul) is the living entity. Tungabhadra (very auspicious) signifies the material body. In Bhagavad-gita (5.13) the material body is compared to a city of nine gates which hosts the living entity. This city is very auspicious, because it gives facility to understand the scriptures and thus attain the lotus feet of the Lord. Although it is temporary, it can award permanent benefits, adhruva-marthadam (S.B. 7.6.1).

Karma-kanda activities signify all endeavours for sense gratification. Some people work hard to enjoy in this life, and others to enjoy in the next. A person is rich because he can elevate himself to spiritual life. but one is called krpana or miserly, if he uses his intelligence and energy for sense pleasure, which is available even to dogs and hogs.

Dhundhuli (lit. unclear) represents the intelligence which should work under the guidance of the soul. However, if she henpecks her husband, the living entity, he becomes like her slave. Contaminated intelligence takes pleasure in material thoughts which are compared to gossiping. Hatred and envy are compared to cruelty and quarrelling. Material intelligence is expertly used in material affairs (household duties).

3. Happiness does not depend on wealth. Everyone remains dissatisfied despite his high or low material standards.

4. A materialistic person is always full of stress and anxiety running after sense pleasure, like a deer running after the water in a mirage.

5. Drinking water and relaxing represents temporarily stopping material pursuits. This is compared to shifting a heavy load from one shoulder to the other, it gives only a momentary feeling of relief.

6. The sannyasi signifies the spiritual master.

7. Generally a materialistic person approaches a guru to satisfy his own material desires. The intelligence develops discrimination only through holy association, but when the intelligence is overly attached to sense pleasure, one cannot understand the value of detachment or transcendental knowledge. Such people consider devotional life extremely miserable.

8. Unless one takes to spiritual life he must suffer or enjoy the fruits of his past karma.

9. The general tendency of the human being is to enjoy the fruits of labour without undergoing any endeavour. This is compared to a woman desiring to bear a son without labour pains.

10. Material intelligence always cheats the living entity.

11. The sister signifies the mind. The mind and intelligence conspire against the conditioned soul.

12. A materialistic person feels elated with material success, but it does not last very long.

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13. In the Bhagavad-gita Lord Krsna explains that happiness in the mode of passion is like a nectar in the beginning and poison at the end; it always ends in misery.
14. Gokarna was born from the fruit given by the sannyasi, thus the association of a saint never goes in vain. Even if one approaches a devotee or Krsna with vested interest, he will benefit spiritually in due course of time.
15. Practice with determination and enthusiasm is the key to success.

yasyam vai srutyamanayam

krsne parama-puruse

bhaktir utpadyate pumsah

soka-moha-bhayapaha

Simply by giving aural reception to this Vedic literature, the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, sprouts up at once to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness.

Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.7

Chapter Five

Dhundhukari gets a ghostly body and is delivered by Gokarna

Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, one day, after Atma Deva went to the forest, Dhundhukari beat his mother severely, demanded her wealth and threatened to burn her. Being overly troubled and afraid of her son, one night Dhundhuli stole out of the house, threw herself into a well and drowned. The saintly Gokarna, who was not troubled by happiness or distress and did not consider anyone his friend or enemy, left to go on pilgrimage.

Dhundhukari remained living in their house with five prostitutes and constantly worried how to accumulate wealth for sense gratification.¹ Owing to this he lost all his intelligence and thus engaged in cruel and heinous activities.²

One day the prostitutes requested that he give them various ornaments. Dhundhukari completely blinded by lust and forgetful of death, left to fulfil their desire by hook or crook. In his attempt to please them, he stole some wealth and used it to buy beautiful clothes and ornaments. After receiving the stolen goods, one night the prostitutes began to consider, "Dhundhukari is always plundering others and in time will surely get caught by the king, who will confiscate his wealth and hang him. We might as well kill him ourselves, take his wealth and move to a distant place." Thinking in this way, one night while Dhundhukari was sleeping, they tied him with ropes, put a noose around his neck and tried to strangle him. He would not die easily and this worried the prostitutes.³ They then brought burning wood, shoved it into his mouth. The wood burned him to death and they buried his dead body. Indeed women are very courageous and it is difficult to understand their mind. No one could understand what happened to Dhundhukari. When asked, the prostitutes said he had gone far away to collect some wealth and would return after a year.

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An intelligent person should never believe an unchaste woman. Any foolish man who puts his faith in such women will suffer like Dhundhukari. The voice of an unchaste woman appears as sweet as nectar to a lusty man. Actually her heart is as sharp as a razor. Unchaste women have no love for anyone - they only value wealth. The prostitutes, who had experienced many lovers, thus took all Dhundhukari's wealth and disappeared.

Owing to his misdeeds Dhundhukari attained a ghost body,⁴ and remaining within a whirlwind wandered here and there suffering from hunger and thirst, and lamenting his misfortune. He could find no shelter anywhere. After some time the news of Dhundhukari's death reached Gokarna, so he went to Gaya to perform sraddha, considering his brother destitute. Later, while travelling to the holy places, Gokarna reached his home town and hiding from everyone, went to his former house to pass the night. Dhundhukari's ghost observed Gokarna return so he assumed very fierce forms and appeared before him. sometimes he took the form of a dreadful sheep, then an elephant, or a buffalo, or like Indra sometimes like fire.⁵ Finally he appeared as a human being. Seeing this, Gokarna realised that a ghost must be making this display. With courage and patience he spoke, "Who are you? Why are you exhibiting all these fearsome forms? How did you fall into this condition? Tell me clearly are you a ghost, goblin, or a demon?"

Suta Gosvami said, "When Gokarna questioned him, the ghost started crying loudly. He did not have the power to speak, so he gestured with his hands. Gokarna sprinkled some water on the ghost. This relieved him of enough sinful reactions that he was able to speak. "I am your brother Dhundhukari," the ghost said. "Because of my misdeeds I have fallen from my respectable birth as a brahmana. Owing to complete ignorance I killed many people. It is not possible to count my sins. I was addicted to five prostitutes who finally killed me, and as a result I am suffering the reactions for my ill activities and have thus gotten this ghost body. Somehow, by the will of the Lord, I am now surviving only on air. My dear brother, you are an ocean of mercy. Please somehow deliver me from this ghostly form."

Gokarna replied, "Dear brother, I am very surprised. I duly performed oblations for you in Gaya and it is a wonder that you still have not been relieved from this ghostly form. If you cannot be delivered by performing sacrifice in Gaya, then I do not know what to do. Tell me what is the solution?"

The ghost said, "I cannot be relieved of this condition even by the performance of hundreds of sraddhas at Gaya. You must think of some more powerful practice."

Gokarna, astonished to hear this, said, "If you cannot be delivered by hundreds of sraddhas in Gaya, then your liberation is practically impossible. anyway, do not fear. Stay here and I will think of some procedure to deliver you."

The ghost left and Gokarna passed the night in deep thought but did not discover a solution. The next morning many people including scholars, savants, knowers of the Vedas, and yogis came to see him and he explained the incident which had occurred the previous night. They all consulted their particular scriptures but could not suggest a suitable means to deliver Dhundhukari. They finally decided to follow whatever Surya-narayana, the sun-god would order. By the power of his accumulated penance, Gokarna checked the movements of

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the sun-god and prayed, "O Lord, you are the witness of the whole universe, I offer my obeisances unto you. Please be merciful and tell me the process to deliver Dhundhukari."

The sun-god replied, "Only one thing can be done to deliver him - recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam for one week."

The assembly heard this statement of the sun-god and agreed that this simple process should be executed. Thus the news spread that Gokarna would perform the Saptaha Yajna. From the nearby villages many people came who were lame, blind, aged and less intelligent, all had the desire to become free from their sins. Such a crowd assembled that even the demigods were surprised.⁶ Gokarna took his seat on the vyasasana and began reciting the pastimes of Lord Krsna as described in the Bhagavatam. At that time the ghost also came and searched for a place to sit. Because he had an airy body he could not sit outside, so he entered a bamboo rod which had seven knots and thus began hearing Srimad Bhagavatam.

After Gokarna appointed one Vaisnava brahmana as the chief of the assembly, in a clear sweet voice he started reciting Srimad Bhagavatam from the first canto. That evening during a pause in the katha, a wonderful incident occurred. The people in the assemble noticed that one of the knots in the bamboo cracked and burst. In this way, at the end of each day, a knot would burst and on the seventh day, when the recitation was complete, all the knots were cracked. Dhundhukari was delivered from his ghostly form.⁷ He attained a divine body, which was blackish like rain clouds. He was clad in yellow garments, a Tulasi garland around his neck, a crown adorning his head and beautiful earrings dangling from his ears.

He immediately offered obeisances to Gokarna and said, "My dear brother, by your mercy I have been released from the ghostly body. This ceremony of Saptaha is so glorious that it can destroy ghostly forms and elevate one to the abode of Lord Krsna. When a person starts hearing the Saptaha, sins tremble in fear anticipating that the bhagavatam-katha will burn them to ashes. In the same way that fire burns a twig or a tree so, this Saptaha burns all big or small sins, performed with the body, mind and speech. Scholars in the assembly of demigods have said that the lives of those Indians who do not hear Srimad Bhagavatam are an utter waste. What is the value of making this temporary body stout and strong? If one does not hear Srimad Bhagavatam, then there is no gain from this so-called beautiful body? This body is supported by bones, which are like pillars and tied together with the ropes of nerves and veins. It is covered with skin and is filled with flesh and every part reeks being nothing more than a pot of stool and urine. In old age it is the cause of lamentation and misery. Indeed it is a residence of ailments and to maintain it is a great burden. It is continuously troubled by desires that can never be satisfied. Every pore is full of defects and it can be destroyed within a moment. When buried, it is eaten by worms; if thrown out, it is eaten by vultures and transformed into stool; and if burned, it turns to ashes. Indeed these are the only destinations of this body. who is that sane person who will not utilise this temporary body to gain permanent benefit? Food which is cooked in the morning is putrid by evening, so how can this body be considered eternal, since it is nourished by elements that decompose?

In this material world people can very quickly attain the lotus feet of the Lord by hearing Bhagavata Saptaha. This is the only means to get rid of the defects of human birth. Those people who do not hear bhagavata-katha are just like bubbles in water, or like

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mosquitoes, who take birth only to die uselessly. If this bhagavata-katha can burst the knots of bamboo, then why can it not burst those in the heart? By hearing Srimad Bhagavatam, one's doubts are removed, the karma is slackened and one becomes relieved of the knots in the heart. Bhagavata-katha is like a tirtha that cleanses one from all impurities. Scholars say that when the Bhagavatam becomes fixed in the heart, one's liberation is definite."

When Dhundhukari was speaking in this way, the sky became effulgent and a Vaikuntha airplane appeared carrying associates of the Lord.⁸ In front of the whole assembly, Dhundhukari boarded the airplane.

Gokarna posed a question, "O dear associates of the Lord, in this assembly there are many pure heart people and all of them heard the Bhagavata Saptaha. Why is it that this airplane has come exclusively for Dhundhukari? Why are the others not getting the same result?"

The servants of the Lord spoke, "O Gokarna, the difference lies in the quality of their hearing. Although it is true that everyone heard the katha, everyone did not meditate on it equally. For this reason the results of performing bhajana or devotional service are different.⁹ The ghost fasted for seven days and heard Bhagavatam with a completely fixed and attentive mind. That knowledge which is not stable is useless. In the same way, if one does not hear attentively or if one harbours doubts or lets his mind wander here and there, then he will not get the benefit of chanting his mantra. Land devoid of Vaisnavas, Sraddha offered to unqualified persons, charity given to ill behaved brahmanas who do not know the Vedas, are all useless. Faith in the words of the spiritual master, humility, control of the mind's defects and attentive hearing of bhagavata-katha all grant the full result. If one hears the Bhagavatam attentively he certainly attains Vaikuntha. O Gokarna, as far as you are concerned, the Lord Himself will come to take you to Goloka." Thereafter the associates of the Lord, performing hari-kirtana ascended to the Vaikuntha.

In the month of Sravana Gokarna again performed the Saptaha Yajna of Srimad Bhagavatam and those people listened to it.

O Narada, please listen what happened at the end of that Saptaha. The Lord appeared in a plane filled with devotees. From all quarters could be heard, "All glories! All glories!" and people were paying obeisances. The Lord blew His conch shell named Pancajanya and embraced Gokarna. In a moment He granted everyone who listened to the Srimad Bhagavatam a body just like His own. They all acquired a blackish body and wore yellow garments, helmets and earrings. By the mercy of Gokarna all the living entities in that village, including dogs and even the dog-eaters, ascended in that airship. They were carried to the place where only devotees go--the abode of the Lord.

In this way, Lord Krsna being very pleased by His katha took Gokarna with Him to Goloka Dhama, which is most dear to the cowherd people. In the past Lord Ramacandra took all the residents of Ayodhya to His abode, Saketa.¹⁰ In the same way, Lord Krsna took everyone to Goloka Dhama, which is not attained even by great yogis,, the Sun God, Moon God, or even perfected beings, but is attained only by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam. O Narada, what can we say about the wonderful result which one attains by hearing Bhagavata-Saptaha?

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Even those who have heard a fraction of the history of Gokarna do not take birth again. That destination which can not be attained by those who live on air, water or dry leaves, executing extended penance or the practice of yoga, is easily attained simply by hearing Bhagavata-Saptaha. The great sage Sandilya, who is always absorbed in transcendental bliss, engages in reciting this pious history at Citrakuta.¹¹ This story is so purifying that anyone who hears it even once becomes free from all sin. If it is recited during the Sraddha ceremony, the forefathers are very pleased. Anyone who recites Srimad Bhagavatam daily attains liberation.

Comments on Chapter Five:

1. Dhundhukari represents the materialistic man. The five prostitutes indicate the five senses which always demand their respective objects and cause the living entity to work hard for their satisfaction.
2. When a person is attached to sense gratification he is almost crazy and loses all sense of morality.
3. Demoniak people do not die easily. They suffer immense pain even in their sojourn to Yamaloka.
4. A sinful person is like a ghost while living and becomes a ghost after death.
5. Human beings have an unstable mind in a stable body, but ghosts have an unstable mind in an unstable body.
6. The demigods were surprised, because they had not seen such gatherings even in big sacrifices that were considered highly religious.
7. The bamboo with seven knots represents the material body comprised of five gross material elements and the mind and false ego, all of which cover and bind the living entity. It can also represent the material body which is seven vitasti in height. A vitasti is the distance between tip of the little finger and the tip of the thumb on an outstretched hand. Every normal person's body is the length of seven vitasti of his own hand. The even knots can also refer to ignorance, lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy.
8. This narration should not be considered as a fable or exaggerated. Even in modern times such effects of hearing Srimad Bhagavatam have been witnessed.
9. Consciousness is the most important factor in devotional service.
10. This story is narrated in the Valmiki Ramayana.
11. This is sadhu pramana.

Chapter Six

The Process of Saptaha Yajna

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The Kumaras said, "O Narada, now we will explain the process of performing Saptaha. Generally this process requires wealth and the assistance of others.¹ First one should determine an auspicious times with the help of a good astrologer. If the Saptaha begins in the months of Bhadra, Asvina, Kartika, Margasirsa, Asadha or Sravana, the audience will get liberation.² Even during these months, however, inauspicious periods such as Bhadra vyatipata should be avoided.

With the help of enthusiastic people, one should acquire as much wealth as needed to perform a marriage ceremony. he should then graciously invite various families, including women and sudras, to hear Hari-katha.³ One should publicly announce the event and send written invitations to Vaisnavas and other lovers of Hari-kirtana.

One should announce in writing that for seven day the rare opportunity to hear the transcendental message of Srimad Bhagavatam and to associate with saintly persons is being made available. it should be explained that if one is unable to attend for the entire period, he should come for at least one day to give blessings. In this way one should humbly send invitations to Vaisnavas and make proper arrangements for their board and lodging.

The recitation of Bhagavatam should be done either in a holy place, a forest, or in one's house. It should be performed on an open ground that is properly cleaned and decorated. if performed in one's house, all household articles should be removed from the room used for the recitation.

One should start making arrangements five days in advance. A nice podium should be arranged and decorated with fruits, leaves, flowers, banana trees, and so forth. On the stage one should imagine the seven planetary systems. Proper seats should be offered to saintly persons and there should be a nice vyasasana for the speaker.

It is the opinion of scholars that if the speaker faces north, the audience should face eastwards; if the speaker faces east, the audience should face north; or both can face the east.

The speaker should be learned, expert, and able to explain the essence of Vedic literature and give proper examples. He should be a renounced brahmana, a devotee of the Lord and free from material desires. Those who are cheaters, attached to women, and who do not know the essence of religion, should not be invited to speak on Srimad Bhagavatam. The speaker may have a learned assistant to remove doubts whenever necessary.

One day before the recitation the speaker should shave his head. He should take morning bath, chant Gayatri, perform other morning duties and then worship Ganesa for removing any obstacles in the Saptaha Yajna. He should offer oblations to the forefathers, perform prayascitta, and establish Lord Hari on the Mandala. Thereafter, he should worship Lord Krsna by chanting proper mantras and offer sixteen articles of worship. He should circumambulate the Lord and beseech Him in the following way, "O most merciful Lord, I am drowning in the ocean of this material world. I am very fallen and caught in the network of karma, which is like a crocodile. Please deliver me from this world."

Following the procedure, he should then worship Srimad Bhagavatam with incense, ghee lamp, and so on. He should place one coconut in front of the book, pay obeisances, and

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offer the following prayer: "O Lord Krsna, You are directly the Srimad Bhagavatam. I take shelter of You so I can free myself from this world. Please remove all obstacles so this ceremony may be successfully completed. O Lord Kesava, I am your servant."

Thereafter, the host should worship the speaker, give him nice cloth, and offer the following prayer, "You are the personification of Sukadeva and are expert in explaining the meaning of Srimad Bhagavatam. Please reveal this knowledge to us and dispel our ignorance."

Then in a blissful mood, one should take a vow for his own good and maintain it for seven days without fail.⁴ To dispel all obstacles in the katha, five brahmanas should be selected to daily chant the twelve syllable mantra composed of names of Lord Hari. After this, the host should worship the brahmanas, the devotees, and give charity to the kirtana performers. He should offer them obeisances and with their permission, be seated.

Those who hear the katha attentively, with great faith and a pure mind, who have give up attachment to home, wealth, family, and so on, will receive the highest benefit.

The intelligent speaker will start the katha at sunrise and continue for nine hours. He should recite in a sweet medium tone and observe a one hour lapse at noon. During this interim the Vaisnavas should glorify the various names of Lord Hari associated with the particular history being narrated and there should be no idle talk. To avoid passing stool and urine during the time of katha, one should consume only light food. If possible, one should fast for seven days, or subsist only on ghee, or milk and happily listen to the Bhagavatam. Alternatively one can eat once a day or subsist only on fruit. One should observe a procedure that can be followed without much difficulty. I consider eating better than fasting if it helps one concentrate and hear properly. If fasting disturbs one's hearing, then he should avoid it.

O Narada, now listen to the principles to be observed while hearing Saptaha. A person who is not initiated into Vaisnava mantra is not qualified to hear it. A person who wants to properly hear the Saptaha should observe celibacy and sleep on the floor. After the recitation he should eat food served on leaves. He should not eat dhal, honey, oil, heavy, stale, or contaminated food.

He should completely avoid lust, pride, greed, envy, anger, illusion, hypocrisy and so on. He should also avoid criticising or hearing criticism of the Vedas, Vaisnavas, brahmanas, the guru, women, the king, great personalities, or those who render service to the cow.

He should also avoid contacting women during menstruation, a mleccha, a fallen person, a brahmana who is not initiated into Gayatri mantra, those who are antagonistic toward brahmanas, and those who do not accept the Vedas. He should always be clean, truthful, silent, simple, humble, merciful and generous.

Even those who are poor, sick, unfortunate, childless, and desirous of liberation, are qualified to hear this katha. Women who are barren, who have only one child, whose child had died, who have reached menopause, or who always suffer miscarriages, should also hear this katha. If they hear attentively, they will attain imperishable benefit. The recitation of Bhagavatam gives the highest benefit to the human being.

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After observing these rules, one should perform the concluding ceremony of the Saptaha. Those who desire special benefit should observe this just like the Janmastami celebration. However, it is not necessary for renunciates to observe it.⁵ They are purified just by hearing the Saptaha.

When the Saptaha Yajna is over, the audience should worship the book and the speaker with great devotion. The speaker should distribute prasada, Tulasi leaves, and the offered garlands to the audience. Everyone should perform kirtana with mrdanga and karatalas and sing with beautiful voices. The Jaya Dhvani should be chanted, obeisances should be offered, conches should be blown, and food and charity should be distributed to the brahmanas and beggars.

On the following day a renounced person from the audience should recite Bhagavad-gita to create peace and remove all improprieties. If one is a householder, he should perform a sacrifice, recite slokas from the tenth canto, and offer oblations to the fire. Or he should chant Gayatri mantra with a concentrated mind and perform sacrifice. In reality, Srimad Bhagavatam is the personification of the Gayatri mantra.

A person who does not have the means to perform sacrifice, should give charity to the brahmanas and recite Visnu sahasranama, to remove all deficiencies. This will bring him all success. Thereafter he should fee twelve brahmanas with sweet rice, honey, and delicious foodstuffs. He should give cows and gold in charity. If he has the means, he should place the Srimad Bhagavatam on a throne made of thirty-six grams of gold and donate it to the spiritual master. By this he will become free from the cycle of birth and death.

This process of performing Saptaha removes all sins. If performed properly, the most auspicious Bhagavatam will bestow whatever one desires, be it dharma, artha, kama or moksa.⁶ There is no doubt about it."

The Kumaras continued, "O Narada, in this way I have explained hearing Bhagavatam-Saptaha. The Srimad Bhagavatam can deliver both bhoga and moksa. What more do you want to know?"

Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, after saying this, the Kumaras recited Srimad Bhagavatam for one week. This is most pure, dispels all sins, and is capable of granting sense enjoyment as well as liberation. While they observed all the rules and regulations, the assembly listened attentively. After this, they worshipped the Personality of Godhead according to the scriptural injunctions. After recitation, Jnana, Vairagya, and Bhakti were rejuvenated. Being young and enthusiastic, they attracted the hearts of all living entities.⁷ Seeing his desire fulfilled, Narada Muni was completely absorbed in bliss and his hairs stood up in ecstasy.

Narada, who is very dear to the Lord, spoke to the Kumaras in a sweet loving voice with folded hands, "Indeed I am very fortunate to get your mercy. Today I have attained Lord Hari who is the dispeller of sins. O austere sages, hearing this Bhagavatam is the best religious act, as by doing so, one attains Lord Krsna, who always resides in Goloka."

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Suta Gosvami said, "O Saunaka, while the topmost Vaisnava, Narada, was speaking in this way, Sukadeva Gosvami, the best of the yogis appeared there. He was completely satisfied within himself and looked just like a sixteen year old youth. He appeared like a full moon to bring tide in the ocean of knowledge. He was blissfully reciting Bhagavatam in a very low voice. Upon seeing Sukadeva Gosvami, the entire assembly stood up and offered him an elevated seat. Then Sri Narada Muni worshipped him with love and affection."

When Sukadeva Gosvami was comfortably seated, he said, "Dear ones, please hear my words. O devotees who taste devotional mellows, Srimad Bhagavatam is the mature fruit of the wish fulfilling tree of the Vedas. It has come from my mouth and is full of nectar. This fruit has no skin or stone -- it is pure nectar and is easily available only on earth.⁸ Therefore, as long as you are conscious, please drink it again and again.

"The great sage Vyasa compiled this Maha Purana which describes the highest religious process, and is free from all cheating propensities. It explains the absolute reality and is meant for those whose hearts are pure. It relieves one of the three miseries. If one takes shelter of the Srimad Bhagavatam, there is no need for any other scripture or process. Whenever a pious soul desires to hear it, the Personality of Godhead immediately appears within his heart.

Srimad Bhagavatam is the crest-jewel among the Puranas and the wealth of the Vaisnavas. It describes that pure knowledge is dear to the paramahansas and illuminates the path of detachment along with Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya.⁹ Those who hear, read, or meditate on its meaning, are liberated. This nectar is not available in heaven, Satya-loka, Kailasa, or Vaikuntha. Therefore, O fortunate listeners, please drink it again and again and never leave it."

Suta Gosvami said, "While Sri Sukadeva spoke in the midst of that assembly, Lord Hari appeared along with Prahlada, Bali, Uddhava, Arjuna and other associates.¹⁰ Sri Narada then worshipped the Lord along with His devotees. Seeing the Lord in a blissful mood, Narada Muni gave Him a nice seat and then everyone performed kirtana. Lord Siva, Parvati, and Lord Brahma came there to listen. Prahlada, who is very swift, played the karatalas and Uddhava played big cymbals. Narada Muni played his vina and Arjuna, who is adept in ragas, sang melodiously. Indra played the mrdanga, and the Kumaras shouted Jaya! Jaya! Sri Sukadeva Gosvami moved his limbs in an ecstatic trance. In the midst of everyone, Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya danced like expert actors."

Observing this, the Lord said, "I am very pleased with this recitation and kirtana. all of you have controlled Me by your love and affection therefore you may ask some boon from Me."

Everyone was pleased to hear this and with love-laden hearts they requested, "O Lord, we desire that whenever and wherever there is recitation of the Saptaha, You kindly appear along with your associates."

The Lord said, "Let it be so", and then disappeared. After that Narada Muni paid obeisances in the direction which the Lord and His devotees departed. He offered obeisances to Sukadeva Gosvami and the assembled saints. Everyone was in ecstasy after drinking the

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nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam and were free from delusion. Thereafter, everyone returned to their respective places.

At that time Sri Sukadeva Gosvami established Bhakti and her two sons in the Srimad Bhagavatam. By rendering service to the Bhagavatam Lord Hari becomes fixed in the heart of the Vaisnavas. The Srimad Bhagavatam bestows auspiciousness to those burning in misery, troubled by Maya, or drowning in an ocean of nescience.

Saunaka asked, "O Suta Gosvami, when did Sukadeva recite the Bhagavatam to Parikṣita, Gokarna to Dhundhukari, and the Kumaras to Narada Muni?"

Suta Gosvami replied, "About thirty years after Lord Kṛṣṇa's departure to His abode, on the ninth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Bhādra, Sukadeva recited Bhagavatam to Parikṣita. Two hundred years later in the month of Āśāḍha, on the ninth day of the bright fortnight Gokarna recited Bhagavatam to Dhundhukari. Thirty years later, in the month of Kārtika on the ninth day of the bright fortnight, the Kumaras recited it to Narada Muni.

"O sinless Saunaka, I have replied to everything you have asked. Bhagavata-katha is the panacea for all problems in Kali-yuga. All of you are saintly, therefore, please drink it. Bhagavatam destroys all sins and is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa. It increases one's devotion and is the only means to attain liberation. What is the value of serving the holy places or engaging in other processes of liberation?"

When the Yamadutas are sent to arrest someone with ropes Yamaraja instructs them, 'Don't approach those who are maddened by hearing the pastimes of Lord Hari. I do not have the power to chastise them, for Vaisnavas are beyond my jurisdiction.'

"The nectar which came from the mouth of Sukadeva Gosvami brings all auspiciousness to those who are attached to the poison of sense gratification. My dear friends, why wander in the forest of sense enjoyment and hear useless talks? As soon as this katha enters the ears, one is liberated. The proof is Parikṣita Maharaja.

Sri Sukadeva Gosvami spoke the Bhagavatam while in ecstasy. anyone who recites the Bhagavatam is qualified to go to Vaikuntha. O Saunaka, after studying the various scriptures, I have revealed this secret to you. This is the essence of all scriptures. There is nothing superior to this Bhagavatam which was spoken by Sukadeva Gosvami.

For the attainment of transcendental bliss, you should always drink the Bhagavatam which is composed of twelve cantos. anyone who hears the Bhagavatam from the lips of a devotee, with faith, and a pure heart, or recites it to the devotees, will attain the supreme goal. In the three worlds there is nothing unattainable for them.

Comments on Chapter Six

1. Generally karma-kanda activities and spiritual festivals require the assistance and co-operation of other people.
2. An auspicious time is not required for performing pure devotional service, but sometimes devotees follow such rules to set a good example.

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3. Women and sudras are not allowed to hear the Vedas, but there is no such restriction for Srimad Bhagavatam, although it is considered the mature fruit of the Vedas. In the same way there are restrictions for chanting Vedic mantras, but none for chanting the holy name of the Lord, which is the essence of Vedic mantras.
4. Vows help one to control the flickering mind.
5. The concluding ceremony requires great wealth, which renunciates cannot afford, therefore, it is not compulsory for him."
6. Because Srimad Bhagavatam is the personification of Lord Krsna, it can fulfil ones material as well as spiritual desires.
7. It means that after hearing Srimad Bhagavatam, one develops a taste for Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya.
8. Srimad Bhagavatam is like a very juicy fruit. Though it is a fruit, it has no skin or stone. And though it is only juice, it is a fruit.
9. Detachment without bhakti is worthless.
10. The Lord is omnipresent and manifests Himself wherever His devotees sing His glories.
11. Lord Sri Krsna left the earth 5 091 years ago.

Canto 1: Creation

SB 1.1: Questions by the Sages

1 O my Lord, ŚrīKṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, O allpervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I meditate upon Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa because He is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the manifested universes. He is directly and indirectly conscious of all manifestations, and He is independent because there is no other cause beyond Him. It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual, although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa, who is eternally existent in the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth.

2: Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this BhāgavataPurāṇa propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhāgavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyāsadeva [in his maturity], is sufficient in itself for God realization. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhāgavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.

3: O expert and thoughtful men, relish ŚrīmadBhāgavatam, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.

4: Once, in a holy place in the forest of Naimiṣāranya, great sages headed by the sage Śaunaka assembled to perform a great thousandyear sacrifice for the satisfaction of the Lord and His devotees.

5: One day, after finishing their morning duties by burning a sacrificial fire and offering a seat of esteem to ŚrīlaSūta Gosvāmī, the great sages made inquiries, with great respect, about the following matters.

6: The sages said: Respected Sūta Gosvāmī, you are completely free from all vice. You are well versed in all the scriptures famous for religious life, and in the Purāṇas and the histories as well, for you have gone through them under proper guidance and have also explained them.

7: Being the eldest learned Vedāntist, O Sūta Gosvāmī, you are acquainted with the knowledge of Vyāsadeva, who is the incarnation of Godhead, and you also know other sages who are fully versed in all kinds of physical and metaphysical knowledge.

8: And because you are submissive, your spiritual masters have endowed you with all the favors bestowed upon a gentle disciple. Therefore you can tell us all that you have scientifically learned from them.

9: Please, therefore, being blessed with many years, explain to us, in an easily understandable way, what you have ascertained to be the absolute and ultimate good for the people in general.

10: O learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy,

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misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed.11: There are many varieties of scriptures, and in all of them there are many prescribed duties, which can be learned only after many years of study in their various divisions. Therefore, O sage, please select the essence of all these scriptures and explain it for the good of all living beings, that by such instruction their hearts may be fully satisfied.

12: All blessings upon you, O Sūta Gosvāmī. You know for what purpose the Personality of Godhead appeared in the womb of Devakī as the son of Vasudeva.

13: O Sūta Gosvāmī, we are eager to learn about the Personality of Godhead and His incarnations. Please explain to us those teachings imparted by previous masters [ācāryas], for one is uplifted both by speaking them and by hearing them.

14: Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, which is feared by fear personified.

15: O Sūta, those great sages who have completely taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord can at once sanctify those who come in touch with them, whereas the waters of the Ganges can sanctify only after prolonged use.

16: Who is there, desiring deliverance from the vices of the age of quarrel, who is not willing to hear the virtuous glories of the Lord?

17: His transcendental acts are magnificent and gracious, and great learned sages like Nārada sing of them. Please, therefore, speak to us, who are eager to hear about the adventures He performs in His various incarnations.

18: O wise Sūta, please narrate to us the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Godhead's multiincarnations. Such auspicious adventures and pastimes of the Lord, the supreme controller, are performed by His internal powers.

19: We never tire of hearing the transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by hymns and prayers. Those who have developed a taste for transcendental relationships with Him relish hearing of His pastimes at every moment.

20: Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, along with Balarāma, played like a human being, and so masked He performed many superhuman acts.

21: Knowing well that the age of Kali has already begun, we are assembled here in this holy place to hear at great length the transcendental message of Godhead and in this way perform sacrifice.

22: We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.

23: Since ŚrīKṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, the master of all mystic powers, has departed for His own abode, please tell us to whom the religious principles have now gone for shelter

SB 1.2: Divinity and Divine Service

1 Ugraśravā [Sūta Gosvāmī], the son of Romaharṣaṇa, being fully satisfied by the perfect questions of the brāhmaṇas, thanked them and thus attempted to reply.

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2 Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto that great sage [Śukadeva Gosvāmī] who can enter the hearts of all. When he went away to take up the renounced order of life [sannyāsa], leaving home without undergoing reformation by the sacred thread or the ceremonies observed by the higher castes, his father, Vyāsadeva, fearing separation from him, cried out, “O my son!” Indeed, only the trees, which were absorbed in the same feelings of separation, echoed in response to the begrieved father.

3 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto him [Śuka], the spiritual master of all sages, the son of Vyāsadeva, who, out of his great compassion for those gross materialists who struggle to cross over the darkest regions of material existence, spoke this most confidential supplement to the cream of Vedic knowledge, after having personally assimilated it by experience.

4 Before reciting this ŚrīmadBhāgavatam, which is the very means of conquest, one should offer respectful obeisances unto the Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, unto Naranārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, the supermost human being, unto mother Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, and unto Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the author.

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

6 The supreme occupation [dharma] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self.

7 By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world.

8 The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.

9 All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification.

10 Life’s desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or selfpreservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one’s works.

11 Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā or Bhagavān.

12 The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes that Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedāntaśruti.

13 O best among the twiceborn, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one’s own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.

14 Therefore, with onepointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees.

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15 With sword in hand, intelligent men cut through the binding knots of reactionary work [karma] by remembering the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, who will not pay attention to His message?

16 O twiceborn sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vāsudeva.

17 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.

18 By regular attendance in classes on the Bhāgavatam and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

19 As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy.

20 Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association.

21 Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the self as master.

22 Certainly, therefore, since time immemorial, all transcendentalists have been rendering devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, with great delight, because such devotional service is enlivening to the self.

23 The transcendental Personality of Godhead is indirectly associated with the three modes of material nature, namely passion, goodness and ignorance, and just for the material world's creation, maintenance and destruction He accepts the three qualitative forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Of these three, all human beings can derive ultimate benefit from Viṣṇu, the form of the quality of goodness.

24 Firewood is a transformation of earth, but smoke is better than the raw wood. And fire is still better, for by fire we can derive the benefits of superior knowledge [through Vedic sacrifices]. Similarly, passion [rajas] is better than ignorance [tamas], but goodness [sattva] is best because by goodness one can come to realize the Absolute Truth.

25 Previously all the great sages rendered service unto the Personality of Godhead due to His existence above the three modes of material nature. They worshiped Him to become free from material conditions and thus derive the ultimate benefit. Whoever follows such great authorities is also eligible for liberation from the material world.

26 Those who are serious about liberation are certainly nonenvious, and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the allblissful forms of Lord Viṣṇu and His plenary portions.

27 Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance worship those in the same category namely the forefathers, other living beings and the demigods who are in charge of cosmic activities for they are urged by a desire to be materially benefited with women, wealth, power and progeny.

28-29 In the revealed scriptures, the ultimate object of knowledge is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. The purpose of performing sacrifice is to please Him. Yoga is for realizing Him. All fruitive activities are ultimately rewarded by Him only. He is supreme knowledge, and all severe austerities are performed to know Him. Religion [dharma] is rendering loving service unto Him. He is the supreme goal of life.

30 In the beginning of the material creation, that Absolute Personality of Godhead [Vāsudeva], in His transcendental position, created the energies of cause and effect by His own internal energy.

31 After creating the material substance, the Lord [Vāsudeva] expands Himself and enters into it. And although He is within the material modes of nature and appears to be one of the created beings, He is always fully enlightened in His transcendental position.

32 The Lord, as Supersoul, pervades all things, just as fire permeates wood, and so He appears to be of many varieties, though He is the absolute one without a second.

33 The Supersoul enters into the bodies of the created beings who are influenced by the modes of material nature and causes them to enjoy the effects of these modes by the subtle mind.

34 Thus the Lord of the universes maintains all planets inhabited by demigods, men and lower animals. Assuming the roles of incarnations, He performs pastimes to reclaim those in the mode of pure goodness.

SB 1.3: Kṛṣṇa Is the Source of All Incarnations

1 Sūta said: In the beginning of the creation, the Lord first expanded Himself in the universal form of the puruṣa incarnation and manifested all the ingredients for the material creation. And thus at first there was the creation of the sixteen principles of material action. This was for the purpose of creating the material universes.

2 A part of the puruṣa lies down within the water of the universe, from the navel lake of His body sprouts a lotus stem, and from the lotus flower atop this stem, Brahmā, the master of all engineers in the universe, becomes manifest.

3 It is believed that all the universal planetary systems are situated on the extensive body of the puruṣa, but He has nothing to do with the created material ingredients. His body is eternally in spiritual existence par excellence.

4 The devotees, with their perfect eyes, see the transcendental form of the puruṣa who has thousands of legs, thighs, arms and faces all extraordinary. In that body there are thousands of heads, ears, eyes and noses. They are decorated with thousands of helmets and glowing earrings and are adorned with garlands.

5 This form [the second manifestation of the puruṣa] is the source and indestructible seed of multifarious incarnations within the universe. From the particles and portions of this form,

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different living entities, like demigods, men and others, are created.

6 First of all, in the beginning of creation, there were the four unmarried sons of Brahmā [the Kumāras], who, being situated in a vow of celibacy, underwent severe austerities for realization of the Absolute Truth.

7 The supreme enjoyer of all sacrifices accepted the incarnation of a boar [the second incarnation], and for the welfare of the earth He lifted the earth from the nether regions of the universe.

8 In the millennium of the ṛṣis, the Personality of Godhead accepted the third empowered incarnation in the form of Devarṣi Nārada, who is a great sage among the demigods. He collected expositions of the Vedas which deal with devotional service and which inspire nonfruitive action.

9 In the fourth incarnation, the Lord became Nara and Nārāyaṇa, the twin sons of the wife of King Dharma. Thus He undertook severe and exemplary penances to control the senses.

10 The fifth incarnation, named Lord Kapila, is foremost among perfected beings. He gave an exposition of the creative elements and metaphysics to Āsuri Brāhmaṇa, for in course of time this knowledge had been lost.

11 The sixth incarnation of the puruṣa was the son of the sage Atri. He was born from the womb of Anasūyā, who prayed for an incarnation. He spoke on the subject of transcendence to Alarka, Prahlāda and others [Yadu, Haihaya, etc.].

12 The seventh incarnation was Yajña, the son of Prajāpati Ruci and his wife Ākūti. He controlled the period during the change of the Svāyambhuva Manu and was assisted by demigods such as His son Yāma.

13 The eighth incarnation was King Ṛṣabha, son of King Nābhi and his wife Merudevī. In this incarnation the Lord showed the path of perfection, which is followed by those who have fully controlled their senses and who are honored by all orders of life.

14 O brāhmaṇas, in the ninth incarnation, the Lord, prayed for by sages, accepted the body of a king [Pṛthu] who cultivated the land to yield various produce, and for that reason the earth was beautiful and attractive.

15 When there was a complete inundation after the period of the Cākṣuṣa Manu and the whole world was deep within water, the Lord accepted the form of a fish and protected Vaivasvata Manu, keeping him up on a boat.

16 The eleventh incarnation of the Lord took the form of a tortoise whose shell served as a pivot for the Mandarācala Hill, which was being used as a churning rod by the theists and atheists of the universe.

17 In the twelfth incarnation, the Lord appeared as Dhanvantari, and in the thirteenth He allured the atheists by the charming beauty of a woman and gave nectar to the demigods to drink.

18 In the fourteenth incarnation, the Lord appeared as Nṛsimha and bifurcated the strong body of the atheist Hiraṇyakaśipu with His nails, just as a carpenter pierces cane.

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19 In the fifteenth incarnation, the Lord assumed the form of a dwarf brāhmaṇa [Vāmana] and visited the arena of sacrifice arranged by Mahārāja Bali. Although at heart He was willing to regain the kingdom of the three planetary systems, He simply asked for a donation of three steps of land.

20 In the sixteenth incarnation of the Godhead, the Lord [as Bhṛgupati] annihilated the administrative class [kṣatriyas] twentyone times, being angry with them because of their rebellion against the brāhmaṇas [the intelligent class].

21 Thereafter, in the seventeenth incarnation of Godhead, Śrī Vyāsadeva appeared in the womb of Satyavatī through Parāśara Muni, and he divided the one Veda into several branches and subbranches, seeing that the people in general were less intelligent.

22 In the eighteenth incarnation, the Lord appeared as King Rāma. In order to perform some pleasing work for the demigods, He exhibited superhuman powers by controlling the Indian Ocean and then killing the atheist King Rāvaṇa, who was on the other side of the sea.

23 In the nineteenth and twentieth incarnations, the Lord advented Himself as Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa in the family of Vṛṣṇi [the Yadu dynasty], and by so doing He removed the burden of the world.

24 Then, in the beginning of Kaliyuga, the Lord will appear as Lord Buddha, the son of Aśjanā, in the province of Gayā, just for the purpose of deluding those who are envious of the faithful theist.

25 Thereafter, at the conjunction of two yugas, the Lord of the creation will take His birth as the Kalki incarnation and become the son of Viṣṇu Yaśā. At this time almost all the rulers of the earth will have degenerated into plunderers.

26 O brāhmaṇas, the incarnations of the Lord are innumerable, like rivulets flowing from inexhaustible sources of water.

27 All the ṛṣis, Manus, demigods and descendants of Manu, who are especially powerful, are plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord. This also includes the Prajāpatis.

28 All of the abovementioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead. All of them appear on planets whenever there is a disturbance created by the atheists. The Lord incarnates to protect the theists.

29 Whoever carefully recites the mysterious appearances of the Lord, with devotion in the morning and in the evening, gets relief from all miseries of life.

30 The conception of the virāṭ universal form of the Lord, as appearing in the material world, is imaginary. It is to enable the less intelligent [and neophytes] to adjust to the idea of the Lord's having form. But factually the Lord has no material form.

31 Clouds and dust are carried by the air, but less intelligent persons say that the sky is cloudy and the air is dirty. Similarly, they also implant material bodily conceptions on the spirit self.

32 Beyond this gross conception of form is another, subtle conception of form which is

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without formal shape and is unseen, unheard and unmanifest. The living being has his form beyond this subtlety, otherwise he could not have repeated births.

33 Whenever a person experiences, by selfrealization, that both the gross and subtle bodies have nothing to do with the pure self, at that time he sees himself as well as the Lord.

34 If the illusory energy subsides and the living entity becomes fully enriched with knowledge by the grace of the Lord, then he becomes at once enlightened with selfrealization and thus becomes situated in his own glory.

35 Thus learned men describe the births and activities of the unborn and inactive, which is undiscoverable even in the Vedic literatures. He is the Lord of the heart.

36 The Lord, whose activities are always spotless, is the master of the six senses and is fully omnipotent with six opulences. He creates the manifested universes, maintains them and annihilates them without being in the least affected. He is within every living being and is always independent.

37 The foolish with a poor fund of knowledge cannot know the transcendental nature of the forms, names and activities of the Lord, who is playing like an actor in a drama. Nor can they express such things, neither in their speculations nor in their words.

38 Only those who render unreserved, uninterrupted, favorable service unto the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who carries the wheel of the chariot in His hand, can know the creator of the universe in His full glory, power and transcendence.

39 Only by making such inquiries in this world can one be successful and perfectly cognizant, for such inquiries invoke transcendental ecstatic love unto the Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of all the universes, and guarantee centpercent immunity from the dreadful repetition of birth and death.

40 This ŚrīmadBhāgavatam is the literary incarnation of God, and it is compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of God. It is meant for the ultimate good of all people, and it is allsuccessful, allblissful and allperfect.

41 Śrī Vyāsadeva delivered it to his son, who is the most respected among the selfrealized, after extracting the cream of all Vedic literatures and histories of the universe.

42 Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva, in his turn delivered the Bhāgavatam to the great Emperor Parīkṣit, who sat surrounded by sages on the bank of the Ganges, awaiting death without taking food or drink.

43 This Bhāgavata Purāṇa is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the Age of Kali shall get light from this Purāṇa.

44 O learned brāhmaṇas, when Śukadeva Gosvāmī recited Bhāgavatam there [in the presence of Emperor Parīkṣit], I heard him with rapt attention, and thus, by his mercy, I learned the Bhāgavatam from that great and powerful sage. Now I shall try to make you hear the very same thing as I learned it from him and as I have realized it.

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SB 1.4: The Appearance of Śrī Nārada

1 Vyāsadeva said: On hearing Sūta Gosvāmī speak thus, Śaunaka Muni, who was the elderly, learned leader of all the ṛṣis engaged in that prolonged sacrificial ceremony, congratulated Sūta Gosvāmī by addressing him as follows.

2 Śaunaka said: O Sūta Gosvāmī, you are the most fortunate and respected of all those who can speak and recite. Please relate the pious message of ŚrīmadBhāgavatam, which was spoken by the great and powerful sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

3 In what period and at what place was this first begun, and why was this taken up? From where did Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana Vyāsa, the great sage, get the inspiration to compile this literature?

4 His [Vyāsadeva's] son was a great devotee, an equibalanced monist, whose mind was always concentrated in monism. He was transcendental to mundane activities, but being unexposed, he appeared like an ignorant person.

5 While Śrī Vyāsadeva was following his son, beautiful young damsels who were bathing naked covered their bodies with cloth, although Śrī Vyāsadeva himself was not naked. But they had not done so when his son had passed. The sage inquired about this, and the young ladies replied that his son was purified and when looking at them made no distinction between male and female. But the sage made such distinctions.

6 How was he [Śrīla Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsa] recognized by the citizens when he entered the city of Hastināpura [now Delhi], after wandering in the provinces of Kuru and Jāṅgala, appearing like a madman, dumb and retarded?

7 How did it so happen that King Parīkṣit met this great sage, making it possible for this great transcendental essence of the Vedas [Bhāgavatam] to be sung to him?

8 He [Śukadeva Gosvāmī] was accustomed to stay at the door of a householder only long enough for a cow to be milked. And he did this just to sanctify the residence.

9 It is said that Mahārāja Parīkṣit is a great firstclass devotee of the Lord and that his birth and activities are all wonderful. Please tell us about him.

10 He was a great emperor and possessed all the opulences of his acquired kingdom. He was so exalted that he was increasing the prestige of the Pāṇḍu dynasty. Why did he give up everything to sit down on the bank of the Ganges and fast until death?

11 He was such a great emperor that all his enemies would come and bow down at his feet and surrender all their wealth for their own benefit. He was full of youth and strength, and he possessed kingly opulences that were difficult to give up. Why did he want to give up everything, including his life?

12 Those who are devoted to the cause of the Personality of Godhead live only for the welfare, development and happiness of others. They do not live for any selfish interest. So even though the Emperor [Parīkṣit] was free from all attachment to worldly possessions, how could he give up his mortal body, which was the shelter for others?

13 We know that you are expert in the meaning of all subjects, except some portions of the Vedas, and thus you can clearly explain the answers to all the questions we have just put to

you.

14 Sūta Gosvāmī said: When the second millennium overlapped the third, the great sage [Vyāsadeva] was born to Parāśara in the womb of Satyavatī, the daughter of Vasu.

15 Once upon a time he [Vyāsadeva], as the sun rose, took his morning ablution in the waters of the Sarasvatī and sat alone to concentrate.

16 The great sage Vyāsadeva saw anomalies in the duties of the millennium. This happens on the earth in different ages, due to the unseen force of time.

17-18 The great sage, who was fully equipped in knowledge, could see through his transcendental vision the deterioration of everything material due to the influence of the age. He could also see that the faithless people in general would be reduced in duration of life and would be impatient due to lack of goodness. Thus he contemplated for the welfare of men in all statuses and orders of life.

19 He saw that the sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas were means by which the people's occupations could be purified. And to simplify the process he divided the one Veda into four, in order to expand them among men.

20 The four divisions of the original sources of knowledge [the Vedas] were made separately. But the historical facts and authentic stories mentioned in the Purāṇas are called the fifth Veda.

21 After the Vedas were divided into four divisions, Paila Ṛṣi became the professor of the Ṛg Veda, Jaimini the professor of the Sāma Veda, and Vaiśampāyana alone became glorified by the Yajur Veda.

22 The Sumantu Muni Aṅgirā, who was very devotedly engaged, was entrusted with the Atharva Veda. And my father, Romahaṛṣaṇa, was entrusted with the Purāṇas and historical records.

23 All these learned scholars, in their turn, rendered their entrusted Vedas unto their many disciples, granddisciples and greatgranddisciples, and thus the respective branches of the followers of the Vedas came into being.

24 Thus the great sage Vyāsadeva, who is very kind to the ignorant masses, edited the Vedas so they might be assimilated by less intellectual men.

25 Out of compassion, the great sage thought it wise that this would enable men to achieve the ultimate goal of life. Thus he compiled the great historical narration called the Mahābhārata for women, laborers and friends of the twiceborn.

26 O twiceborn brāhmaṇas, still his mind was not satisfied, although he engaged himself in working for the total welfare of all people.

27 Thus the sage, being dissatisfied at heart, at once began to reflect, because he knew the essence of religion, and he said within himself:

28-29 I have, under strict disciplinary vows, unpretentiously worshiped the Vedas, the spiritual masters and the altar of sacrifice. I have also abided by the rulings and have shown the import

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of disciplic succession through the explanation of the Mahābhārata, by which even women, śūdras and others [friends of the twiceborn] can see the path of religion.

30 I am feeling incomplete, though I myself am fully equipped with everything required by the Vedas.

31 This may be because I did not specifically point out the devotional service of the Lord, which is dear both to perfect beings and to the infallible Lord.

32 As mentioned before, Nārada reached the cottage of Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana Vyāsa on the banks of the Sarasvatī just as Vyāsadeva was regretting his defects.

33 At the auspicious arrival of Śrī Nārada, Śrī Vyāsadeva got up respectfully and worshiped him, giving him veneration equal to that given to Brahmājī, the creator.

SB 1.5: Nārada's Instructions on ŚrīmadBhāgavatam for Vyāsadeva

1 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus the sage amongst the gods [Nārada], comfortably seated and apparently smiling, addressed the ṛṣi amongst the brāhmaṇas [Vedavyāsa].

2 Addressing Vyāsadeva, the son of Parāśara, Nārada inquired: Are you satisfied by identifying with the body or the mind as objects of selfrealization?

3 Your inquiries were full and your studies were also well fulfilled, and there is no doubt that you have prepared a great and wonderful work, the Mahābhārata, which is full of all kinds of Vedic sequences elaborately explained.

4 You have fully delineated the subject of impersonal Brahman as well as the knowledge derived therefrom. Why should you be despondent in spite of all this, thinking that you are undone, my dear prabhu?

5 Śrī Vyāsadeva said: All you have said about me is perfectly correct. Despite all this, I am not pacified. I therefore question you about the root cause of my dissatisfaction, for you are a man of unlimited knowledge due to your being the offspring of one [Brahmā] who is selfborn [without mundane father and mother].

6 My lord! Everything that is mysterious is known to you because you worship the creator and destroyer of the material world and the maintainer of the spiritual world, the original Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to the three modes of material nature.

7 Like the sun, Your Goodness can travel everywhere in the three worlds, and like the air you can penetrate the internal region of everyone. As such, you are as good as the allpervasive Supersoul. Please, therefore, find out the deficiency in me, despite my being absorbed in transcendence under disciplinary regulations and vows.

8 Śrī Nārada said: You have not actually broadcast the sublime and spotless glories of the Personality of Godhead. That philosophy which does not satisfy the transcendental senses of the Lord is considered worthless.

9 Although, great sage, you have very broadly described the four principles beginning with religious performances, you have not described the glories of the Supreme Personality, Vāsudeva.

10 Those words which do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the allperfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there.

11 On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.

12 Knowledge of selfrealization, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible [God]. What, then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilized for the devotional service of the Lord?

13 O Vyāsadeva, your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and situated in truthfulness. And thus you can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage.

14 Whatever you desire to describe that is separate in vision from the Lord simply reacts, with different forms, names and results, to agitate the mind, as the wind agitates a boat which has no resting place.

15 The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and is quite unreasonable. Because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion and will hardly care for prohibitions.

16 The Supreme Lord is unlimited. Only a very expert personality, retired from the activities of material happiness, deserves to understand this knowledge of spiritual values. Therefore those who are not so well situated, due to material attachment, should be shown the ways of transcendental realization, by Your Goodness, through descriptions of the transcendental activities of the Supreme Lord.

17 One who has forsaken his material occupations to engage in the devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a nondevotee, though fully engaged in occupational duties, does not gain anything.

18 Persons who are actually intelligent and philosophically inclined should endeavor only for that purposeful end which is not obtainable even by wandering from the topmost planet [Brahmaloka] down to the lowest planet [Pātāla]. As far as happiness derived from sense enjoyment is concerned, it can be obtained automatically in course of time, just as in course of time we obtain miseries even though we do not desire them.

19 My dear Vyāsa, even though a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa sometimes falls down somehow or other, he certainly does not undergo material existence like others [fruitive workers, etc.] because a person who has once relished the taste of the lotus feet of the Lord can do nothing but remember that ecstasy again and again.

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20 The Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is Himself this cosmos, and still He is aloof from it. From Him only has this cosmic manifestation emanated, in Him it rests, and unto Him it enters after annihilation. Your good self knows all about this. I have given only a synopsis.

21 Your Goodness has perfect vision. You yourself can know the Supersoul Personality of Godhead because you are present as the plenary portion of the Lord. Although you are birthless, you have appeared on this earth for the wellbeing of all people. Please, therefore, describe the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa more vividly.

22 Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, namely austerities, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry.

23 O Muni, in the last millennium I was born as the son of a certain maidservant engaged in the service of brāhmaṇas who were following the principles of Vedānta. When they were living together during the four months of the rainy season, I was engaged in their personal service.

24 Although they were impartial by nature, those followers of the Vedānta blessed me with their causeless mercy. As far as I was concerned, I was selfcontrolled and had no attachment for sports, even though I was a boy. In addition, I was not naughty, and I did not speak more than required.

25 Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me.

26 O Vyāsadeva, in that association and by the mercy of those great Vedāntists, I could hear them describe the attractive activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And thus listening attentively, my taste for hearing of the Personality of Godhead increased at every step.

27 O great sage, as soon as I got a taste of the Personality of Godhead, my attention to hear of the Lord was unflinching. And as my taste developed, I could realize that it was only in my ignorance that I had accepted gross and subtle coverings, for both the Lord and I are transcendental.

28 Thus during two seasons the rainy season and autumn I had the opportunity to hear these greatsouled sages constantly chant the unadulterated glories of the Lord Hari. As the flow of my devotional service began, the coverings of the modes of passion and ignorance vanished.

29 I was very much attached to those sages. I was gentle in behavior, and all my sins were eradicated in their service. In my heart I had strong faith in them. I had subjugated the senses, and I was strictly following them with body and mind.

30 As they were leaving, those bhaktivedāntas, who are very kind to poorhearted souls, instructed me in that most confidential subject which is instructed by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

31 By that confidential knowledge, I could understand clearly the influence of the energy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the creator, maintainer and annihilator of everything. By knowing that, one can return to Him and personally meet Him.

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32 O Brāhmaṇa Vyāsadeva, it is decided by the learned that the best remedial measure for removing all troubles and miseries is to dedicate one's activities to the service of the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead [Śrī Kṛṣṇa].

33 O good soul, does not a thing, applied therapeutically, cure a disease which was caused by that very same thing?

34 Thus when all a man's activities are dedicated to the service of the Lord, those very activities which caused his perpetual bondage become the destroyer of the tree of work.

35 Whatever work is done here in this life for the satisfaction of the mission of the Lord is called bhaktiyoga, or transcendental loving service to the Lord, and what is called knowledge becomes a concomitant factor.

36 While performing duties according to the order of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one constantly remembers Him, His names and His qualities.

37 Let us all chant the glories of Vāsudeva along with His plenary expansions Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa.

38 Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who has no material form.

39 O brāhmaṇa, thus by the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa I was endowed first with the transcendental knowledge of the Lord as inculcated in the confidential parts of the Vedas, then with the spiritual opulences, and then with His intimate loving service.

40 Please, therefore, describe the almighty Lord's activities which you have learned by your vast knowledge of the Vedas, for that will satisfy the hankerings of great learned men and at the same time mitigate the miseries of the masses of common people who are always suffering from material pang. Indeed, there is no other way to get out of such miseries.

SB 1.6: Conversation Between Nārada and Vyāsadeva

1 Sūta said: O brāhmaṇas, thus hearing all about Śrī Nārada's birth and activities, Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of God and son of Satyavatī, inquired as follows.

2 Śrī Vyāsadeva said: What did you [Nārada] do after the departure of the great sages who had instructed you in scientific transcendental knowledge before the beginning of your present birth?

3 O son of Brahmā, how did you pass your life after initiation, and how did you attain this body, having quit your old one in due course?

4 O great sage, time annihilates everything in due course, so how is it that this subject matter, which happened prior to this day of Brahmā, is still fresh in your memory, undisturbed by time?

5 Śrī Nārada said: The great sages, who had imparted scientific knowledge of transcendence to me, departed for other places, and I had to pass my life in this way.

6 I was the only son of my mother, who was not only a simple woman but a maidservant as well. Since I was her only offspring, she had no other alternative for protection: she bound me with the tie of affection.

7 She wanted to look after my maintenance properly, but because she was not independent, she was not able to do anything for me. The world is under the full control of the Supreme Lord; therefore everyone is like a wooden doll in the hands of a puppet master.

8 When I was a mere child of five years, I lived in a brāhmaṇa school. I was dependent on my mother's affection and had no experience of different lands.

9 Once upon a time, my poor mother, when going out one night to milk a cow, was bitten on the leg by a serpent, influenced by supreme time.

10 I took this as the special mercy of the Lord, who always desires benediction for His devotees, and so thinking, I started for the north.

11 After my departure, I passed through many flourishing metropolises, towns, villages, animal farms, mines, agricultural lands, valleys, flower gardens, nursery gardens and natural forests.

12 I passed through hills and mountains full of reservoirs of various minerals like gold, silver and copper, and through tracts of land with reservoirs of water filled with beautiful lotus flowers, fit for the denizens of heaven, decorated with bewildered bees and singing birds.

13 I then passed alone through many forests of rushes, bamboo, reeds, sharp grass, weeds and caves, which were very difficult to go through alone. I visited deep, dark and dangerously fearful forests, which were the play yards of snakes, owls and jackals.

14 Thus traveling, I felt tired, both bodily and mentally, and I was both thirsty and hungry. So I took a bath in a river lake and also drank water. By contacting water, I got relief from my exhaustion.

15 After that, under the shadow of a banyan tree in an uninhabited forest I began to meditate upon the Supersoul situated within, using my intelligence, as I had learned from liberated souls.

16 As soon as I began to meditate upon the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead with my mind transformed in transcendental love, tears rolled down my eyes, and without delay the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, appeared on the lotus of my heart.

17 O Vyāsadeva, at that time, being exceedingly overpowered by feelings of happiness, every part of my body became separately enlivened. Being absorbed in an ocean of ecstasy, I could not see both myself and the Lord.

18 The transcendental form of the Lord, as it is, satisfies the mind's desire and at once erases all mental incongruities. Upon losing that form, I suddenly got up, being perturbed, as is usual when one loses that which is desirable.

19 I desired to see again that transcendental form of the Lord, but despite my attempts to concentrate upon the heart with eagerness to view the form again, I could not see Him any more, and thus dissatisfied, I was very much aggrieved.

20 Seeing my attempts in that lonely place, the Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to all mundane description, spoke to me with gravity and pleasing words, just to mitigate my grief.

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21 O Nārada [the Lord spoke], I regret that during this lifetime you will not be able to see Me anymore. Those who are incomplete in service and who are not completely free from all material taints can hardly see Me.

22 O virtuous one, you have only once seen My person, and this is just to increase your desire for Me, because the more you hanker for Me, the more you will be freed from all material desires.

23 By service of the Absolute Truth, even for a few days, a devotee attains firm and fixed intelligence in Me. Consequently he goes on to become My associate in the transcendental world after giving up the present deplorable material worlds.

24 Intelligence engaged in My devotion cannot be thwarted at any time. Even at the time of creation, as well as at the time of annihilation, your remembrance will continue by My mercy.

25 Then that supreme authority, personified by sound and unseen by eyes, but most wonderful, stopped speaking. Feeling a sense of gratitude, I offered my obeisances unto Him, bowing my head.

26 Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble and unenvious.

27 And so, O Brāhmaṇa Vyāsadeva, in due course of time I, who was fully absorbed in thinking of Kṛṣṇa and who therefore had no attachments, being completely freed from all material taints, met with death, as lightning and illumination occur simultaneously.

28 Having been awarded a transcendental body befitting an associate of the Personality of Godhead, I quit the body made of five material elements, and thus all acquired fruitive results of work [karma] stopped.

29 At the end of the millennium, when the Personality of Godhead, Lord Nārāyaṇa, lay down within the water of devastation, Brahmā began to enter into Him along with all creative elements, and I also entered through His breathing.

30 After 4,300,000,000 solar years, when Brahmā awoke to create again by the will of the Lord, all the ṛṣis like Marīci, Aṅgirā, Atri and so on were created from the transcendental body of the Lord, and I also appeared along with them.

31 Since then, by the grace of the almighty Viṣṇu, I travel everywhere without restriction both in the transcendental world and in the three divisions of the material world. This is because I am fixed in unbroken devotional service of the Lord.

32 And thus I travel, constantly singing the transcendental message of the glories of the Lord, vibrating this instrument called a vīṇā, which is charged with transcendental sound and which was given to me by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

33 The Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose glories and activities are pleasing to hear, at once appears on the seat of my heart, as if called for, as soon as I begin to chant His holy activities.

34 It is personally experienced by me that those who are always full of cares and anxieties due

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to desiring contact of the senses with their objects can cross the ocean of nescience on a most suitable boat the constant chanting of the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead.

35 It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get relief from the disturbances of desire and lust, but this is not sufficient to give satisfaction to the soul, for this [satisfaction] is derived from devotional service to the Personality of Godhead.

36 O Vyāsadeva, you are freed from all sins. Thus I have explained my birth and activities for selfrealization, as you asked. All this will be conducive for your personal satisfaction also.

37 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus addressing Vyāsadeva, Śrīla Nārada Muni took leave of him, and vibrating on his vīṇā instrument, he left to wander at his free will.

38 All glory and success to Śrīla Nārada Muni because he glorifies the activities of the Personality of Godhead, and so doing he himself takes pleasure and also enlivens all the distressed souls of the universe.

SB 1.7: The Son of Droṇa Punished

1Rṣi Śaunaka asked: O Sūta, the great and transcendently powerful Vyāsadeva heard everything from Śrī Nārada Muni. So after Nārada's departure, what did Vyāsadeva do?

2Śrī Sūta said: On the western bank of the river Sarasvatī, which is intimately related with the Vedas, there is a cottage for meditation at Śamyāprāsa which enlivens the transcendental activities of the sages.

3 In that place, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, in his own āśrama, which was surrounded by berry trees, sat down to meditate after touching water for purification.

4 Thus he fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service [bhaktiyoga] without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control.

5 Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.

6 The material miseries of the living entity, which are superfluous to him, can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyāsadeva compiled this Vedic literature, which is in relation to the Supreme Truth.

7 Simply by giving aural reception to this Vedic literature, the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, sprouts up at once to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness.

8 The great sage Vyāsadeva, after compiling the ŚrīmadBhāgavatam and revising it, taught it to his own son, ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī, who was already engaged in selfrealization.

9ŚrīŚaunaka asked Sūta Gosvāmī: ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī was already on the path of

selfrealization, and thus he was pleased with his own self. So why did he take the trouble to undergo the study of such a vast literature?

10 Sūta Gosvāmī said: All different varieties of ātmārāmas [those who take pleasure in the ātmā, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of selfrealization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.

11 Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, was not only transcendently powerful. He was also very dear to the devotees of the Lord. Thus he underwent the study of this great narration [ŚrīmadBhāgavatam].

12 Sūta Gosvāmī thus addressed the ṛṣis headed by Śaunaka: Now I shall begin the transcendental narration of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and topics of the birth, activities and deliverance of King Parīkṣit, the sage amongst kings, as well as topics of the renunciation of the worldly order by the sons of Pāṇḍu.

13-14 When the respective warriors of both camps, namely the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, were killed on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra and the dead warriors obtained their deserved destinations, and when the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra fell down lamenting, his spine broken, being beaten by the club of Bhīmasena, the son of Droṇācārya [Aśvatthāmā] beheaded the five sleeping sons of Draupadī and delivered the heads as a prize to his master, foolishly thinking that he would be pleased. Duryodhana, however, disapproved of the heinous act, and he was not pleased in the least.

15 Draupadī, the mother of the five children of the Pāṇḍavas, after hearing of the massacre of her sons, began to cry in distress with eyes full of tears. Trying to pacify her in her great loss, Arjuna spoke to her thus:

16 O gentle lady, when I present you with the head of that brāhmaṇa, after beheading him with arrows from my Gāṇḍīva bow, I shall then wipe the tears from your eyes and pacify you. Then, after burning your sons' bodies, you can take your bath standing on his head.

17 Arjuna, who is guided by the infallible Lord as friend and driver, thus satisfied the dear lady by such statements. Then he dressed in armor and armed himself with furious weapons, and getting into his chariot, he set out to follow Aśvatthāmā, the son of his martial teacher.

18 Aśvatthāmā, the murderer of the princes, seeing from a great distance Arjuna coming at him with great speed, fled in his chariot, panic stricken, just to save his life, as Brahmā fled in fear from Śiva.

19 When the son of the brāhmaṇa [Aśvatthāmā] saw that his horses were tired, he considered that there was no alternative for protection outside of his using the ultimate weapon, the brahmāstra [nuclear weapon].

20 Since his life was in danger, he touched water in sanctity and concentrated upon the chanting of the hymns for throwing nuclear weapons, although he did not know how to withdraw such weapons.

21 Thereupon a glaring light spread in all directions. It was so fierce that Arjuna thought his

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own life in danger, and so he began to address Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

22 Arjuna said: O my Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You are the almighty Personality of Godhead. There is no limit to Your different energies. Therefore only You are competent to instill fearlessness in the hearts of Your devotees. Everyone in the flames of material miseries can find the path of liberation in You only.

23 You are the original Personality of Godhead who expands Himself all over the creations and is transcendental to material energy. You have cast away the effects of the material energy by dint of Your spiritual potency. You are always situated in eternal bliss and transcendental knowledge.

24 And yet, though You are beyond the purview of the material energy, You execute the four principles of liberation characterized by religion and so on for the ultimate good of the conditioned souls.

25 Thus You descend as an incarnation to remove the burden of the world and to benefit Your friends, especially those who are Your exclusive devotees and are constantly rapt in meditation upon You.

26 O Lord of lords, how is it that this dangerous effulgence is spreading all around? Where does it come from? I do not understand it.

27 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Know from Me that this is the act of the son of Droṇa. He has thrown the hymns of nuclear energy [brahmāstra], and he does not know how to retract the glare. He has helplessly done this, being afraid of imminent death.

28 O Arjuna, only another brahmāstra can counteract this weapon. Since you are expert in the military science, subdue this weapon's glare with the power of your own weapon.

29 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Hearing this from the Personality of Godhead, Arjuna touched water for purification, and after circumambulating Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he cast his brahmāstra weapon to counteract the other one.

30 When the rays of the two brahmāstras combined, a great circle of fire, like the disc of the sun, covered all outer space and the whole firmament of planets.

31 All the population of the three worlds was scorched by the combined heat of the weapons. Everyone was reminded of the sāmivartaka fire which takes place at the time of annihilation.

32 Thus seeing the disturbance of the general populace and the imminent destruction of the planets, Arjuna at once retracted both brahmāstra weapons, as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa desired.

33 Arjuna, his eyes blazing in anger like two red balls of copper, dexterously arrested the son of Gautamī and bound him with ropes like an animal.

34 After binding Aśvatthāmā, Arjuna wanted to take him to the military camp. The Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, looking on with His lotus eyes, spoke to Arjuna in an angry mood.

35 Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O Arjuna, you should not show mercy by releasing this relative of a brāhmaṇa [brahmabandhu], for he has killed innocent boys in their sleep.

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36 A person who knows the principles of religion does not kill an enemy who is careless, intoxicated, insane, asleep, afraid or devoid of his chariot. Nor does he kill a boy, a woman, a foolish creature or a surrendered soul.

37 A cruel and wretched person who maintains his existence at the cost of others' lives deserves to be killed for his own wellbeing, otherwise he will go down by his own actions.

38 Furthermore, I have personally heard you promise Draupadī that you would bring forth the head of the killer of her sons.

39 This man is an assassin and murderer of your own family members. Not only that, but he has also dissatisfied his master. He is but the burnt remnants of his family. Kill him immediately.

40 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Although Kṛṣṇa, who was examining Arjuna in religion, encouraged Arjuna to kill the son of Droṇācārya, Arjuna, a great soul, did not like the idea of killing him, although Aśvatthāmā was a heinous murderer of Arjuna's family members.

41 After reaching his own camp, Arjuna, along with his dear friend and charioteer [Śrī Kṛṣṇa], entrusted the murderer unto his dear wife, who was lamenting for her murdered sons.

42 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Draupadī then saw Aśvatthāmā, who was bound with ropes like an animal and silent for having enacted the most inglorious murder. Due to her female nature, and due to her being naturally good and wellbehaved, she showed him due respects as a brāhmaṇa.

43 She could not tolerate Aśvatthāmā's being bound by ropes, and being a devoted lady, she said: Release him, release him, for he is a brāhmaṇa, our spiritual master.

44 It was by Droṇācārya's mercy that you learned the military art of throwing arrows and the confidential art of controlling weapons.

45 He [Droṇācārya] is certainly still existing, being represented by his son. His wife Kṛpī did not undergo a satī with him because she had a son.

46 O most fortunate one who know the principles of religion, it is not good for you to cause grief to glorious family members who are always respectable and worshipful.

47 My lord, do not make the wife of Droṇācārya cry like me. I am aggrieved for the death of my sons. She need not cry constantly like me.

48 If the kingly administrative order, being unrestricted in sense control, offends the brāhmaṇa order and enrages them, then the fire of that rage burns up the whole body of the royal family and brings grief upon them all.

49 Sūta Gosvāmī said: O brāhmaṇas, King Yudhiṣṭhira fully supported the statements of the Queen, which were in accordance with the principles of religion and were justified, glorious, full of mercy and equity, and without duplicity.

50 Nakula and Sahadeva [the younger brothers of the King] and also Sātyaki, Arjuna, the Personality of Godhead Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, and the ladies and others all unanimously agreed with the King.

51 Bhīma, however, angrily disagreed with them and recommended killing this culprit, who had murdered sleeping children for no purpose and for neither his nor his master's interest.

52 Caturbhuja [the fourarmed one], or the Personality of Godhead, after hearing the words of Bhīma, Draupadī and others, saw the face of His dear friend Arjuna, and He began to speak as if smiling.

53-54 The Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: A friend of a brāhmaṇa is not to be killed, but if he is an aggressor he must be killed. All these rulings are in the scriptures, and you should act accordingly. You have to fulfill your promise to your wife, and you must also act to the satisfaction of Bhīmasena and Me.

55 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Just then Arjuna could understand the motive of the Lord by His equivocal orders, and thus with his sword he severed both hair and jewel from the head of Aśvatthāmā.

56 He [Aśvatthāmā] had already lost his bodily luster due to infanticide, and now, moreover, having lost the jewel from his head, he lost even more strength. Thus he was unbound and driven out of the camp.

57 Cutting the hair from his head, depriving him of his wealth and driving him from his residence are the prescribed punishments for the relative of a brāhmaṇa. There is no injunction for killing the body.

58 Thereafter, the sons of Pāṇḍu, and Draupadī, overwhelmed with grief, performed the proper rituals for the dead bodies of their relatives.

SB 1.8: Prayers by Queen Kuntī and Parīkṣit Saved

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thereafter the Pāṇḍavas, desiring to deliver water to the dead relatives who had desired it, went to the Ganges with Draupadī. The ladies walked in front.

2Having lamented over them and sufficiently offered Ganges water, they bathed in the Ganges, whose water is sanctified due to being mixed with the dust of the lotus feet of the Lord.

3There sat the King of the Kurus, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, along with his younger brothers and Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, Kuntī and Draupadī, all overwhelmed with grief. Lord Kṛṣṇa was also there.

4Citing the stringent laws of the Almighty and their reactions upon living beings, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the munis began to pacify those who were shocked and affected.

5The clever Duryodhana and his party cunningly usurped the kingdom of Yudhiṣṭhira, who had no enemy. By the grace of the Lord, the recovery was executed, and the unscrupulous kings who joined with Duryodhana were killed by Him. Others also died, their duration of life having decreased for their rough handling of the hair of Queen Draupadī.

6Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa caused three wellperformed aśvamedhayajṣas [horse sacrifices] to be conducted by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and thus caused his virtuous fame to be glorified in all directions, like that of Indra, who had performed one hundred such sacrifices.

7Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa then prepared for His departure. He invited the sons of Pāṇḍu, after having

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been worshiped by the brāhmaṇas, headed by Śrīla Vyāsadeva. The Lord also reciprocated greetings.

8As soon as He seated Himself on the chariot to start for Dvārakā, He saw Uttarā hurrying toward Him in fear.

9Uttarā said: O Lord of lords, Lord of the universe! You are the greatest of mystics. Please protect me, protect me, for there is no one else who can save me from the clutches of death in this world of duality.

10O my Lord, You are allpowerful. A fiery iron arrow is coming towards me fast. My Lord, let it burn me personally, if You so desire, but please do not let it burn and abort my embryo. Please do me this favor, my Lord.

11Sūta Gosvāmī said: Having patiently heard her words, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is always very affectionate to His devotees, could at once understand that Aśvatthāmā, the son of Droṇācārya, had thrown the brahmāstra to finish the last life in the Pāṇḍava family.

12O foremost among the great thinkers [munis] [Śaunaka], seeing the glaring brahmāstra proceeding towards them, the Pāṇḍavas took up their five respective weapons.

13The almighty Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having observed that a great danger was befalling His unalloyed devotees, who were fully surrendered souls, at once took up His Sudarśana disc to protect them.

14The Lord of supreme mysticism, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, resides within everyone's heart as the Paramātmā. As such, just to protect the progeny of the Kuru dynasty, He covered the embryo of Uttarā by His personal energy.

15O Śaunaka, glory of Bhṛgu's family, although the supreme brahmāstra weapon released by Aśvatthāmā was irresistible and without check or counteraction, it was neutralized and foiled when confronted by the strength of Viṣṇu [Lord Kṛṣṇa].

16O brāhmaṇas, do not think this to be especially wonderful in the activities of the mysterious and infallible Personality of Godhead. By His own transcendental energy He creates, maintains and annihilates all material things, although He Himself is unborn.

17Thus saved from the radiation of the brahmāstra, Kuntī, the chaste devotee of the Lord, and her five sons and Draupadī addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa as He started for home.

18Śrīmatī Kuntī said: O Kṛṣṇa, I offer my obeisances unto You because You are the original personality and are unaffected by the qualities of the material world. You are existing both within and without everything, yet You are invisible to all.

19Being beyond the range of limited sense perception, You are the eternally irreproachable factor covered by the curtain of deluding energy. You are invisible to the foolish observer, exactly as an actor dressed as a player is not recognized.

20You Yourself descend to propagate the transcendental science of devotional service unto the hearts of the advanced transcendentalists and mental speculators, who are purified by being able to discriminate between matter and spirit. How then can we women know You perfectly?

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21 Let me therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who has become the son of Vasudeva, the pleasure of Devakī, the boy of Nanda and the other cowherd men of Vṛndāvana, and the enlivener of the cows and the senses.

22 My respectful obeisances are unto You, O Lord, whose abdomen is marked with a depression like a lotus flower, who are always decorated with garlands of lotus flowers, whose glance is as cool as the lotus and whose feet are engraved with lotuses.

23 O Hṛṣīkeśa, master of the senses and Lord of lords, You have released Your mother, Devakī, who was long imprisoned and distressed by the envious King Kamsa, and me and my children from a series of constant dangers.

24 My dear Kṛṣṇa, Your Lordship has protected us from a poisoned cake, from a great fire, from cannibals, from the vicious assembly, from sufferings during our exile in the forest and from the battle where great generals fought. And now You have saved us from the weapon of Aśvatthāmā.

25 I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths.

26 My Lord, Your Lordship can easily be approached, but only by those who are materially exhausted. One who is on the path of [material] progress, trying to improve himself with respectable parentage, great opulence, high education and bodily beauty, cannot approach You with sincere feeling.

27 My obeisances are unto You, who are the property of the materially impoverished. You have nothing to do with the actions and reactions of the material modes of nature. You are self-satisfied, and therefore You are the most gentle and are master of the monists.

28 My Lord, I consider Your Lordship to be eternal time, the supreme controller, without beginning and end, the allpervasive one. In distributing Your mercy, You are equal to everyone. The dissensions between living beings are due to social intercourse.

29 O Lord, no one can understand Your transcendental pastimes, which appear to be human and so are misleading. You have no specific object of favor, nor do You have any object of envy. People only imagine that You are partial.

30 Of course it is bewildering, O soul of the universe, that You work, though You are inactive, and that You take birth, though You are the vital force and the unborn. You Yourself descend amongst animals, men, sages and aquatics. Verily, this is bewildering.

31 My dear Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodā took up a rope to bind You when You committed an offense, and Your perturbed eyes overflowed with tears, which washed the mascara from Your eyes. And You were afraid, though fear personified is afraid of You. This sight is bewildering to me.

32 Some say that the Unborn is born for the glorification of pious kings, and others say that He is born to please King Yadu, one of Your dearest devotees. You appear in his family as sandalwood appears in the Malaya hills.

33 Others say that since both Vasudeva and Devakī prayed for You, You have taken Your birth as their son. Undoubtedly You are unborn, yet You take Your birth for their welfare and to kill those who are envious of the demigods.

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34Others say that the world, being overburdened like a boat at sea, is much aggrieved, and that Brahmā, who is Your son, prayed for You, and so You have appeared to diminish the trouble.

35And yet others say that You appeared for the sake of rejuvenating the devotional service of hearing, remembering, worshiping and so on in order that the conditioned souls suffering from material pangs might take advantage and gain liberation.

36O Kṛṣṇa, those who continuously hear, chant and repeat Your transcendental activities, or take pleasure in others' doing so, certainly see Your lotus feet, which alone can stop the repetition of birth and death.

37O my Lord, You have executed all duties Yourself. Are you leaving us today, though we are completely dependent on Your mercy and have no one else to protect us, now when all kings are at enmity with us?

38As the name and fame of a particular body is finished with the disappearance of the living spirit, similarly if You do not look upon us, all our fame and activities, along with the Pāṇḍavas and Yadus, will end at once.

39O Gadādhara [Kṛṣṇa], our kingdom is now being marked by the impressions of Your feet, and therefore it appears beautiful. But when You leave, it will no longer be so.

40All these cities and villages are flourishing in all respects because the herbs and grains are in abundance, the trees are full of fruits, the rivers are flowing, the hills are full of minerals and the oceans full of wealth. And this is all due to Your glancing over them.

41O Lord of the universe, soul of the universe, O personality of the form of the universe, please, therefore, sever my tie of affection for my kinsmen, the Pāṇḍavas and the Vṛṣṇis.

42O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.

43O Kṛṣṇa, O friend of Arjuna, O chief amongst the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, You are the destroyer of those political parties which are disturbing elements on this earth. Your prowess never deteriorates. You are the proprietor of the transcendental abode, and You descend to relieve the distresses of the cows, the brāhmaṇas and the devotees. You possess all mystic powers, and You are the preceptor of the entire universe. You are the almighty God, and I offer You my respectful obeisances.

44Sūta Gosvāmī said: The Lord, thus hearing the prayers of Kuntīdevī, composed in choice words for His glorification, mildly smiled. That smile was as enchanting as His mystic power.

45Thus accepting the prayers of Śrīmatī Kuntīdevī, the Lord subsequently informed other ladies of His departure by entering the palace of Hastināpura. But upon preparing to leave, He was stopped by King Yudhiṣṭhira, who implored Him lovingly.

46King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was much aggrieved, could not be convinced, despite instructions by great sages headed by Vyāsa and the Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, the performer of superhuman feats, and despite all historical evidence.

47King Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Dharma, overwhelmed by the death of his friends, was aggrieved just like a common, materialistic man. O sages, thus deluded by affection, he began to speak.

48King Yudhiṣṭhira said: O my lot! I am the most sinful man! Just see my heart, which is full of ignorance! This body, which is ultimately meant for others, has killed many, many phalanxes of men.

49I have killed many boys, brāhmaṇas, wellwishers, friends, parents, preceptors and brothers. Though I live millions of years, I will not be relieved from the hell that awaits me for all these sins.

50There is no sin for a king who kills for the right cause, who is engaged in maintaining his citizens. But this injunction is not applicable to me.

51I have killed many friends of women, and I have thus caused enmity to such an extent that it is not possible to undo it by material welfare work.

52As it is not possible to filter muddy water through mud, or purify a winestained pot with wine, it is not possible to counteract the killing of men by sacrificing animals.

SB 1.9: The Passing Away of Bhīṣmadeva in the Presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Being afraid for having killed so many subjects on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira went to the scene of the massacre. There, Bhīṣmadeva was lying on a bed of arrows, about to pass away.

2At that time all his brothers followed him on beautiful chariots drawn by firstclass horses decorated with gold ornaments. With them were Vyāsa and ṛṣis like Dhaumya [the learned priest of the Pāṇḍavas] and others.

3O sage amongst the brāhmaṇas, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, also followed, seated on a chariot with Arjuna. Thus King Yudhiṣṭhira appeared very aristocratic, like Kuvera surrounded by his companions [the Guhyakas].

4Seeing him [Bhīṣma] lying on the ground, like a demigod fallen from the sky, the Pāṇḍava King Yudhiṣṭhira, along with his younger brothers and Lord Kṛṣṇa, bowed down before him.

5Just to see the chief of the descendants of King Bharata [Bhīṣma], all the great souls in the universe, namely the ṛṣis amongst the demigods, brāhmaṇas and kings, all situated in the quality of goodness, were assembled there.

6-7All the sages like Parvata Muni, Nārada, Dhaumya, Vyāsa the incarnation of God, Bṛhadaśva, Bharadvāja and Paraśurāma and disciples, Vasiṣṭha, Indrapramada, Trita, Gṛtsamada, Asita, Kakṣīvān, Gautama, Atri, Kauśika and Sudarśana were present.

8And many others like Śukadeva Gosvāmīand other purified souls, Kaśyapa and Āṅgīrasa and others, all accompanied by their respective disciples, arrived there.

9Bhīṣmadeva, who was the best amongst the eight Vasus, received and welcomed all the great and powerful ṛṣis who were assembled there, for he knew perfectly all the religious principles according to time and place.

10Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is situated in everyone's heart, yet He manifests His transcendental form by His internal potency. This very Lord was sitting before Bhīṣmadeva, and since Bhīṣmadeva knew of His glories, he worshiped Him duly.

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11The sons of Mahārāja Pāṇḍu were sitting silently nearby, overtaken with affection for their dying grandfather. Seeing this, Bhīṣmadeva congratulated them with feeling. There were tears of ecstasy in his eyes, for he was overwhelmed by love and affection.

12Bhīṣmadeva said: Oh, what terrible sufferings and what terrible injustices you good souls suffer for being the sons of religion personified. You did not deserve to remain alive under those tribulations, yet you were protected by the brāhmaṇas, God and religion.

13As far as my daughter-in-law Kuntī is concerned, upon the great General Pāṇḍu's death, she became a widow with many children, and therefore she suffered greatly. And when you were grown up she suffered a great deal also because of your actions.

14In my opinion, this is all due to inevitable time, under whose control everyone in every planet is carried, just as the clouds are carried by the wind.

15Oh, how wonderful is the influence of inevitable time! It is irreversible otherwise, how can there be reverses in the presence of King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of the demigod controlling religion; Bhīma, the great fighter with a club; the great bowman Arjuna with his mighty weapon Gāṇḍīva; and above all, the Lord, the direct wellwisher of the Pāṇḍavas?

16O King, no one can know the plan of the Lord [Śrī Kṛṣṇa]. Even though great philosophers inquire exhaustively, they are bewildered.

17O best among the descendants of Bharata [Yudhiṣṭhira], I maintain, therefore, that all this is within the plan of the Lord. Accepting the inconceivable plan of the Lord, you must follow it. You are now the appointed administrative head, and, my lord, you should now take care of those subjects who are now rendered helpless.

18This Śrī Kṛṣṇa is no other than the inconceivable, original Personality of Godhead. He is the first Nārāyaṇa, the supreme enjoyer. But He is moving amongst the descendants of King Vṛṣṇi just like one of us, and He is bewildering us with His self-created energy.

19O King, Lord Śiva, Nārada the sage amongst the demigods, and Kapila, the incarnation of Godhead, all know very confidentially about His glories through direct contact.

20O King, that personality whom, out of ignorance only, you thought to be your maternal cousin, your very dear friend, wellwisher, counselor, messenger, benefactor, etc., is that very Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

21Being the Absolute Personality of Godhead, He is present in everyone's heart. He is equally kind to everyone, and He is free from the false ego of differentiation. Therefore whatever He does is free from material inebriety. He is equibalanced.

22Yet, despite His being equally kind to everyone, He has graciously come before me while I am ending my life, for I am His unflinching servitor.

23The Personality of Godhead, who appears in the mind of the devotee by attentive devotion and meditation and by chanting of the holy name, releases the devotee from the bondage of fruitive activities at the time of his quitting the material body.

24May my Lord, who is fourhanded and whose beautifully decorated lotus face, with eyes as red as the rising sun, is smiling, kindly await me at that moment when I quit this material body.

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25Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, after hearing Bhīṣmadeva speak in that appealing tone, asked him, in the presence of all the great ṛṣis, about the essential principles of various religious duties.

26At Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's inquiry, Bhīṣmadeva first defined all the classifications of castes and orders of life in terms of the individual's qualifications. Then he systematically, in twofold divisions, described counteraction by detachment and interaction by attachment.

27He then explained, by divisions, acts of charity, the pragmatic activities of a king and activities for salvation. Then he described the duties of women and devotees, both briefly and extensively.

28Then he described the occupational duties of different orders and statuses of life, citing instances from history, for he was himself well acquainted with the truth.

29While Bhīṣmadeva was describing occupational duties, the sun's course ran into the northern hemisphere. This period is desired by mystics who die at their will.

30Thereupon that man who spoke on different subjects with thousands of meanings, and who fought on thousands of battlefields and protected thousands of men, stopped speaking and, being completely freed from all bondage, withdrew his mind from everything else and fixed his wideopen eyes upon the original Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who stood before him, fourhanded, dressed in yellow garments that glittered and shined.

31By pure meditation, looking at Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he at once was freed from all material inauspiciousness and was relieved of all bodily pains caused by the arrow wounds. Thus all the external activities of his senses at once stopped, and he prayed transcendently to the controller of all living beings while quitting his material body.

32Bhīṣmadeva said: Let me now invest my thinking, feeling and willing, which were so long engaged in different subjects and occupational duties, in the allpowerful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is always selfsatisfied, but sometimes, being the leader of the devotees, He enjoys transcendental pleasure by descending to the material world, although from Him only the material world is created.

33Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the intimate friend of Arjuna. He has appeared on this earth in His transcendental body, which resembles the bluish color of the tamāla tree. His body attracts everyone in the three planetary systems [upper, middle and lower]. May His glittering yellow dress and His lotus face, covered with paintings of sandalwood pulp, be the object of my attraction, and may I not desire fruitive results.

34On the battlefield [where Śrī Kṛṣṇa attended Arjuna out of friendship], the flowing hair of Lord Kṛṣṇa turned ashen due to the dust raised by the hoofs of the horses. And because of His labor, beads of sweat wetted His face. All these decorations, intensified by the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows, were enjoyed by Him. Let my mind thus go unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

35In obedience to the command of His friend, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the arena of the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra between the soldiers of Arjuna and Duryodhana, and while there He shortened the life spans of the opposite party by His merciful glance. This was done simply by His looking at the enemy. Let my mind be fixed upon that Kṛṣṇa.

36When Arjuna was seemingly polluted by ignorance upon observing the soldiers and

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commanders before him on the battlefield, the Lord eradicated his ignorance by delivering transcendental knowledge. May His lotus feet always remain the object of my attraction.

37Fulfilling my vow and sacrificing His own promise, He got down from the chariot, took up its wheel, and ran towards me hurriedly, just as a lion goes to kill an elephant. He even dropped His outer garment on the way.

38May He, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who awards salvation, be my ultimate destination. On the battlefield He charged me, as if angry because of the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows. His shield was scattered, and His body was smeared with blood due to the wounds.

39At the moment of death, let my ultimate attraction be to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. I concentrate my mind upon the chariot driver of Arjuna who stood with a whip in His right hand and a bridle rope in His left, who was very careful to give protection to Arjuna's chariot by all means. Those who saw Him on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original forms after death.

40Let my mind be fixed upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose motions and smiles of love attracted the damsels of Vrajadhāma [the gopīs]. The damsels imitated the characteristic movements of the Lord [after His disappearance from the rāsa dance].

41At the Rājasūyayajña [sacrifice] performed by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, there was the greatest assembly of all the elite men of the world, the royal and learned orders, and in that great assembly Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was worshiped by one and all as the most exalted Personality of Godhead. This happened during my presence, and I remembered the incident in order to keep my mind upon the Lord.

42Now I can meditate with full concentration upon that one Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, now present before me because now I have transcended the misconceptions of duality in regard to His presence in everyone's heart, even in the hearts of the mental speculators. He is in everyone's heart. The sun may be perceived differently, but the sun is one.

43Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus Bhīṣmadeva merged himself in the Supersoul, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, with his mind, speech, sight and actions, and thus he became silent, and his breathing stopped.

44Knowing that Bhīṣmadeva had merged into the unlimited eternity of the Supreme Absolute, all present there became silent like birds at the end of the day.

45Thereafter, both men and demigods sounded drums in honor, and the honest royal order commenced demonstrations of honor and respect. And from the sky fell showers of flowers.

46O descendant of Bhṛgu [Śaunaka], after performing funeral rituals for the dead body of Bhīṣmadeva, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was momentarily overtaken with grief.

47All the great sages then glorified Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was present there, by confidential Vedic hymns. Then all of them returned to their respective hermitages, bearing always Lord Kṛṣṇa within their hearts.

48Thereafter, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira at once went to his capital, Hastināpura, accompanied by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and there he consoled his uncle and aunt Gāndhārī, who was an ascetic.

49After this, the great religious King, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, executed the royal power in the kingdom strictly according to the codes of royal principles approved by his uncle and confirmed by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

SB 1.10: Departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa for Dvārakā

1Śaunaka Muni asked: After killing his enemies who desired to usurp his rightful inheritance, how did the greatest of all religious men, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, assisted by his brothers, rule his subjects? Surely he could not freely enjoy his kingdom with unrestricted consciousness.

2Sūta Gosvāmī said: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the maintainer of the world, became pleased after reestablishing Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira in his own kingdom and after restoring the Kuru dynasty, which had been exhausted by the bamboo fire of anger.

3Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, after being enlightened by what was spoken by Bhīṣmadeva and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the infallible, engaged himself in matters of perfect knowledge because all his misgivings were eradicated. Thus he ruled over the earth and seas and was followed by his younger brothers.

4During the reign of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the clouds showered all the water that people needed, and the earth produced all the necessities of man in profusion. Due to its fatty milk bag and cheerful attitude, the cow used to moisten the grazing ground with milk.

5The rivers, oceans, hills, mountains, forests, creepers and active drugs, in every season, paid their tax quota to the King in profusion.

6Because of the King's having no enemy, the living beings were not at any time disturbed by mental agonies, diseases, or excessive heat or cold.

7Śrī Hari, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, resided at Hastināpura for a few months to pacify His relatives and please His own sister [Subhadrā].

8Afterwards, when the Lord asked permission to depart and the King gave it, the Lord offered His respects to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira by bowing down at his feet, and the King embraced Him. After this the Lord, being embraced by others and receiving their obeisances, got into His chariot.

9-10At that time Subhadrā, Draupadī, Kuntī, Uttarā, Gāndhārī, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Yuyutsu, Kṛpācārya, Nakula, Sahadeva, Bhīmasena, Dhaumya and Satyavatī all nearly fainted because it was impossible for them to bear separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa.

11-12The intelligent, who have understood the Supreme Lord in association with pure devotees and have become freed from bad materialistic association, can never avoid hearing the glories of the Lord, even though they have heard them only once. How then could the Pāṇḍavas tolerate His separation, for they had been intimately associated with His person, seeing Him face to face, touching Him, conversing with Him, and sleeping, sitting and dining with Him?

13All their hearts were melting for Him on the pot of attraction. They looked at Him without blinking their eyes, and they moved hither and thither in perplexity.

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14The female relatives, whose eyes were flooded with tears out of anxiety for Kṛṣṇa, came out of the palace. They could stop their tears only with great difficulty. They feared that tears would cause misfortune at the time of departure.

15While the Lord was departing from the palace of Hastināpura, different types of drums like the mṛdaṅga, dhola, nagra, dhundhurī and dundubhi and flutes of different types, the vīṇā, gomukha and bherī, all sounded together to show Him honor.

16Out of a loving desire to see the Lord, the royal ladies of the Kurus got up on top of the palace, and smiling with affection and shyness, they showered flowers upon the Lord.

17At that time Arjuna, the great warrior and conqueror of sleep, who is the intimate friend of the most beloved Supreme Lord, took up an umbrella which had a handle of jewels and was embroidered with lace and pearls.

18Uddhava and Sātyaki began to fan the Lord with decorated fans, and the Lord, as the master of Madhu, seated on scattered flowers, commanded them along the road.

19It was being heard here and there that the benedictions being paid to Kṛṣṇa were neither befitting nor unbecoming because they were all for the Absolute, who was now playing the part of a human being.

20Absorbed in the thought of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, who is sung in select poetry, the ladies on the roofs of all the houses of Hastināpura began to talk of Him. This talk was more attractive than the hymns of the Vedas.

21They said: Here He is, the original Personality of Godhead as we definitely remember Him. He alone existed before the manifested creation of the modes of nature, and in Him only, because He is the Supreme Lord, all living beings merge, as if sleeping at night, their energy suspended.

22The Personality of Godhead, again desiring to give names and forms to His parts and parcels, the living entities, placed them under the guidance of material nature. By His own potency, material nature is empowered to recreate.

23Here is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead whose transcendental form is experienced by the great devotees who are completely cleansed of material consciousness by dint of rigid devotional service and full control of life and the senses. And that is the only way to purify existence.

24O dear friends, here is that very Personality of Godhead whose attractive and confidential pastimes are described in the confidential parts of Vedic literature by His great devotees. It is He only who creates, maintains and annihilates the material world and yet remains unaffected.

25Whenever there are kings and administrators living like animals in the lowest modes of existence, the Lord in His transcendental form manifests His supreme power, the Truth Positive, shows special mercy to the faithful, performs wonderful activities and manifests various transcendental forms as is necessary in different periods and ages.

26Oh, how supremely glorified is the dynasty of King Yadu, and how virtuous is the land of Mathurā, where the supreme leader of all living beings, the husband of the goddess of fortune, has taken His birth and wandered in His childhood.

27Undoubtedly it is wonderful that Dvārakā has defeated the glories of the heavenly planets and has enhanced the celebrity of the earth. The inhabitants of Dvārakā are always seeing the soul of all living beings [Kṛṣṇa] in His loving feature. He glances at them and favors them with sweet smiles.

28O friends, just think of His wives, whose hands He has accepted. How they must have undergone vows, baths, fire sacrifices and perfect worship of the Lord of the universe to constantly relish now the nectar from His lips [by kissing]. The damsels of Vrajabhūmi would often faint just by expecting such favors.

29The children of these ladies are Pradyumna, Sāmba, Amba, etc. Ladies like Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā and Jāmbavatī were forcibly taken away by Him from their svayaṁvara ceremonies after He defeated many powerful kings, headed by Śīsupāla. And other ladies were also forcibly taken away by Him after He killed Bhaumāsura and thousands of his assistants. All of these ladies are glorious.

30All these women auspiciously glorified their lives despite their being without individuality and without purity. Their husband, the lotuseyed Personality of Godhead, never left them alone at home. He always pleased their hearts by making valuable presentations.

31While the ladies of the capital [Hastināpura] were greeting Him and talking in this way, the Lord, smiling, accepted their good greetings, and casting the grace of His glance over them, He departed from the city.

32Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, although no one's enemy, engaged four divisions of defense [horse, elephant, chariot and army] to accompany Lord Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the asuras [demons]. The Mahārāja did this because of the enemy, and also out of affection for the Lord.

33Out of profound affection for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas, who were of the Kuru dynasty, accompanied Him a considerable distance to see Him off. They were overwhelmed with the thought of future separation. The Lord, however, persuaded them to return home, and He proceeded towards Dvārakā with His dear companions.

34-35O Śaunaka, the Lord then proceeded towards Kurujāṅgala, Pāścālā, Śūrasenā, the land on the bank of the river Yamunā, Brahmāvarta, Kurukṣetra, Matsya, Sārasvata, the province of the desert and the land of scanty water. After crossing these provinces He gradually reached the Sauvīra and Ābhīra provinces, then, west of these, reached Dvārakā at last.

36On His journey through these provinces He was welcomed, worshiped and given various presentations. In the evening, in all places, the Lord suspended His journey to perform evening rites. This was regularly observed after sunset.

SB 1.11: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Entrance into Dvārakā

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Upon reaching the border of His most prosperous metropolis, known as the country of the Ānartas [Dvārakā], the Lord sounded His auspicious conchshell, heralding His arrival and apparently pacifying the dejection of the inhabitants.

2The white and fatbowed conchshell, being gripped by the hand of Lord Kṛṣṇa and sounded by Him, appeared to be reddened by the touch of His transcendental lips. It seemed that a white swan was playing in the stems of red lotus flowers.

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3The citizens of Dvārakā, having heard that sound which threatens fear personified in the material world, began to run towards Him fast, just to have a long desired audience with the Lord, who is the protector of all devotees.

4The citizens arrived before the Lord with their respective presentations, offering them to the fully satisfied and selfsufficient one, who, by His own potency, incessantly supplies others. These presentations were like the offering of a lamp to the sun. Yet the citizens began to speak in ecstatic language to receive the Lord, just as wards welcome their guardian and father.

6The citizens said: O Lord, You are worshiped by all demigods like Brahmā, the four Sanas and even the King of heaven. You are the ultimate rest for those who are really aspiring to achieve the highest benefit of life. You are the supreme transcendental Lord, and inevitable time cannot exert its influence upon You.

7O creator of the universe, You are our mother, wellwisher, Lord, father, spiritual master and worshipable Deity. By following in Your footsteps we have become successful in every respect. We pray, therefore, that You continue to bless us with Your mercy.

8Oh, it is our good luck that we have come again today under Your protection by Your presence, for Your Lordship rarely visits even the denizens of heaven. Now it is possible for us to look into Your smiling face, which is full of affectionate glances. We can now see Your transcendental form, full of all auspiciousness.

9O lotuseyed Lord, whenever You go away to MathurāVṛndāvana or Hastināpura to meet Your friends and relatives, every moment of Your absence seems like millions of years. O infallible one, at that time our eyes become useless, as if bereft of sun.

10O master, if You live abroad all the time, then we cannot look at Your attractive face, whose smiles vanquish all our sufferings. How can we exist without Your presence?

11As Bhogavatī, the capital of Nāgaloka, is protected by the Nāgas, so was Dvārakā protected by the descendants of Vṛṣṇi Bhoja, Madhu, Daśārha, Arha, Kukura, Andhaka, etc. who were as strong as Lord Kṛṣṇa.

12The city of Dvārakāpurī was filled with the opulences of all seasons. There were hermitages, orchards, flower gardens, parks and reservoirs of water breeding lotus flowers all over.

13The city gateway, the household doors and festooned arches along the roads were all nicely decorated with festive signs like plantain trees and mango leaves, all to welcome the Lord. Flags, garlands and painted signs and slogans all combined to shade the sunshine.

14The highways, subways, lanes, markets and public meeting places were all thoroughly cleansed and then moistened with scented water. And to welcome the Lord, fruits, flowers and unbroken seeds were strewn everywhere.

15In each and every door of the residential houses, auspicious things like curd, unbroken fruits, sugarcane and full waterpots with articles for worship, incense and candles were all displayed.

16-17On hearing that the most dear Kṛṣṇa was approaching Dvārakādhāma, magnanimous Vasudeva, Akrūra, Ugrasena, Balarāma (the superhumanly powerful), Pradyumna, Cārudeṣṇa and Sāmba the son of Jāmbavatī, all extremely happy, abandoned resting, sitting and dining.

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18They hastened toward the Lord on chariots with brāhmaṇas bearing flowers. Before them were elephants, emblems of good fortune. Conchshells and bugles were sounded, and Vedic hymns were chanted. Thus they offered their respects, which were saturated with affection.

19At the same time, many hundreds of wellknown prostitutes began to proceed on various vehicles. They were all very eager to meet the Lord, and their beautiful faces were decorated with dazzling earrings, which enhanced the beauty of their foreheads.

20Expert dramatists, artists, dancers, singers, historians, genealogists and learned speakers all gave their respective contributions, being inspired by the superhuman pastimes of the Lord. Thus they proceeded on and on.

21Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, approached them and offered due honor and respect to each and every one of the friends, relatives, citizens and all others who came to receive and welcome Him.

22The almighty Lord greeted everyone present by bowing His head, exchanging greetings, embracing, shaking hands, looking and smiling, giving assurances and awarding benedictions, even to the lowest in rank.

23Then the Lord personally entered the city accompanied by elderly relatives and invalid brāhmaṇas with their wives, all offering benedictions and singing the glories of the Lord. Others also praised the glories of the Lord.

24When Lord Kṛṣṇa passed over the public roads, all the ladies from the respectable families of Dvārakā went up to the roofs of their palaces just to have a look at the Lord. They considered this to be the greatest festival.

25The inhabitants of Dvārakā were regularly accustomed to look upon the reservoir of all beauty, the infallible Lord, yet they were never satiated.

26The Lord's chest is the abode of the goddess of fortune. His moonlike face is the drinking vessel for eyes which hanker after all that is beautiful. His arms are the resting places for the administrative demigods. And His lotus feet are the refuge of pure devotees who never talk or sing of any subject except His Lordship.

27As the Lord passed along the public road of Dvārakā, His head was protected from the sunshine by a white umbrella. White feathered fans moved in semicircles, and showers of flowers fell upon the road. His yellow garments and garlands of flowers made it appear as if a dark cloud were surrounded simultaneously by sun, moon, lightning and rainbows.

28After entering the house of His father, He was embraced by the mothers present, and the Lord offered His obeisances unto them by placing His head at their feet. The mothers were headed by Devakī [His real mother].

29The mothers, after embracing their son, sat Him on their laps. Due to pure affection, milk sprang from their breasts. They were overwhelmed with delight, and the tears from their eyes wetted the Lord.

30Thereafter, the Lord entered His palaces, which were perfect to the fullest extent. His wives lived in them, and they numbered over sixteen thousand.

31The queens of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa rejoiced within their minds to see their husband home after a

long period abroad. The queens got up at once from their seats and meditations. As was socially customary, they covered their faces shyly and looked about coyly.

32The insuperable ecstasy was so strong that the queens, who were shy, first embraced the Lord in the innermost recesses of their hearts. Then they embraced Him visually, and then they sent their sons to embrace Him [which is equal to personal embracing]. But, O chief amongst the Bhṛḡus, though they tried to restrain their feelings, they inadvertently shed tears.

33Although Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was constantly by their sides, as well as exclusively alone, His feet appeared to them to be newer and newer. The goddess of fortune, although by nature always restless and moving, could not quit the Lord's feet. So what woman can be detached from those feet, having once taken shelter of them?

34The Lord was pacified after killing those kings who were burdensome to the earth. They were puffed up with their military strength, their horses, elephants, chariots, infantry, etc. He Himself was not a party in the fight. He simply created hostility between the powerful administrators, and they fought amongst themselves. He was like the wind which causes friction between bamboos and so sparks a fire.

35That Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy, appeared on this planet by His internal potency and enjoyed Himself amongst competent women as if He were engaging in mundane affairs.

36Although the queens' beautiful smiles and furtive glances were all spotless and exciting, and although they could conquer Cupid himself by making him give up his bow in frustration, and although even the tolerant Śiva could fall victim to them, still, despite all their magical feats and attractions, they could not agitate the senses of the Lord.

37The common materialistic conditioned souls speculate that the Lord is one of them. Out of their ignorance they think that the Lord is affected by matter, although He is unattached.

38This is the divinity of the Personality of Godhead: He is not affected by the qualities of material nature, even though He is in contact with them. Similarly, the devotees who have taken shelter of the Lord do not become influenced by the material qualities.

39The simple and delicate women truly thought that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, their beloved husband, followed them and was dominated by them. They were unaware of the extent of the glories of their husband, as the atheists are unaware of Him as the supreme controller.

SB 1.12: Birth of Emperor Parīkṣit

1The sage Śaunaka said: The womb of Uttarā, mother of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, was spoiled by the dreadful and invincible brahmāstra weapon released by Aśvatthāmā. But Mahārāja Parīkṣit was saved by the Supreme Lord.

2How was the great emperor Parīkṣit, who was a highly intelligent and great devotee, born in that womb? How did his death take place, and what did he achieve after his death?

3We all respectfully want to hear about him [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] to whom Śukadeva Gosvāmī imparted transcendental knowledge. Please speak on this matter.

4Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira administered generously to everyone during his reign. He was exactly like his father. He had no personal ambition and was freed from all sorts

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of sense gratification because of his continuous service unto the lotus feet of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

5News even reached the celestial planets about Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's worldly possessions, the sacrifices by which he would attain a better destination, his queen, his stalwart brothers, his extensive land, his sovereignty over the planet earth, his fame, etc.

6O brāhmaṇas, the opulence of the King was so enchanting that the denizens of heaven aspired for it. But because he was absorbed in the service of the Lord, nothing could satisfy him except the Lord's service.

7O son of Bhṛgu [Śaunaka], when the child Parīkṣit, the great fighter, was in the womb of his mother, Uttarā, and was suffering from the burning heat of the brahmāstra [thrown by Aśvatthāmā], he could observe the Supreme Lord coming to him.

8He [the Lord] was only thumb high, but He was all transcendental. He had a very beautiful, blackish, infallible body, and He wore a dress of lightning yellow and a helmet of blazing gold. Thus He was seen by the child.

9The Lord was enriched with four hands, earrings of molten gold and eyes blood red with fury. As He loitered about, His club constantly encircled Him like a shooting star.

10The Lord was thus engaged in vanquishing the radiation of the brahmāstra, just as the sun evaporates a drop of dew. He was observed by the child, who thought about who He was.

11While thus being observed by the child, the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul of everyone and the protector of the righteous, who stretches in all directions and who is unlimited by time and space, disappeared at once.

12Thereupon, when all the good signs of the zodiac gradually evolved, the heir apparent of Pāṇḍu, who would be exactly like him in prowess, took birth.

13King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was very satisfied with the birth of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, had the purificatory process of birth performed. Learned brāhmaṇas, headed by Dhaumya and Kṛpa, recited auspicious hymns.

14Upon the birth of a son, the King, who knew how, where and when charity should be given, gave gold, land, villages, elephants, horses and good food grains to the brāhmaṇas.

15The learned brāhmaṇas, who were very satisfied with the charities of the King, addressed him as the chief amongst the Pūrus and informed him that his son was certainly in the line of descent from the Pūrus.

16The brāhmaṇas said: This spotless son has been restored by the allpowerful and allpervasive Lord Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead, in order to oblige you. He was saved when he was doomed to be destroyed by an irresistible supernatural weapon.

17For this reason this child will be well known in the world as one who is protected by the Personality of Godhead. O most fortunate one, there is no doubt that this child will become a firstclass devotee and will be qualified with all good qualities.

18The good King [Yudhiṣṭhira] inquired: O great souls, will he become as saintly a king, as pious in his very name and as famous and glorified in his achievements, as others who appeared in this great royal family?

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19The learned brāhmaṇas said: O son of Pṛthā, this child shall be exactly like King Ikṣvāku, son of Manu, in maintaining all those who are born. And as for following the brahminical principles, especially in being true to his promise, he shall be exactly like Rāma, the Personality of Godhead, the son of Mahārāja Daśaratha.

20This child will be a munificent donor of charity and protector of the surrendered, like the famous King Śibi of the Uśīnara country. And he will expand the name and fame of his family like Bharata, the son of Mahārāja Duṣyanta.

21Amongst great bowmen, this child will be as good as Arjuna. He will be as irresistible as fire and as unsurpassable as the ocean.

22This child will be as strong as a lion, and as worthy a shelter as the Himālaya Mountains. He will be forbearing like the earth, and as tolerant as his parents.

23This child will be like his grandfather Yudhiṣṭhira or Brahmā in equanimity of mind. He will be munificent like the lord of the Kailāsa Hill, Śiva. And he will be the resort of everyone, like the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, who is even the shelter of the goddess of fortune.

24This child will be almost as good as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa by following in His footsteps. In magnanimity he will become as great as King Rantideva. And in religion he will be like Mahārāja Yayāti.

25This child will be like Bali Mahārāja in patience, a staunch devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa like Pahlāda Mahārāja, a performer of many aśvamedha [horse] sacrifices and a follower of the old and experienced men.

26This child will be the father of kings who will be like sages. For world peace and for the sake of religion, he will be the chastiser of the upstarts and the quarrelsome.

27After hearing about his death, which will be caused by the bite of a snakebird sent by a son of a brāhmaṇa, he will get himself freed from all material attachment and surrender unto the Personality of Godhead, taking shelter of Him.

28After inquiring about proper selfknowledge from the son of Vyāsadeva, who will be a great philosopher, he will renounce all material attachment and achieve a life of fearlessness.

29Thus those who were expert in astrological knowledge and in performance of the birth ceremony instructed King Yudhiṣṭhira about the future history of his child. Then, being sumptuously remunerated, they all returned to their respective homes.

30So his son would become famous in the world as Parīkṣit [examiner] because he would come to examine all human beings in his search after that personality whom he saw before his birth. Thus he would come to constantly contemplate Him.

31As the moon, in its waxing fortnight, develops day after day, so the royal prince [Parīkṣit] very soon developed luxuriantly under the care and full facilities of his guardian grandfathers.

32Just at this time, King Yudhiṣṭhira was considering performing a horse sacrifice to get freed from sins incurred from fighting with kinsmen. But he became anxious to get some wealth, for there were no surplus funds outside of fines and tax collection.

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33Understanding the hearty wishes of the King, his brothers, as advised by the infallible Lord Kṛṣṇa, collected sufficient riches from the north [left by King Marutta].

34By those riches, the King could procure the ingredients for three horse sacrifices. Thus the pious King Yudhiṣṭhira, who was very fearful after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, pleased Lord Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

35Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, being invited to the sacrifices by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, saw to it that they were performed by qualified [twiceborn] brāhmaṇas. After that, for the pleasure of the relatives, the Lord remained a few months.

36O Śaunaka, thereafter the Lord, having bade farewell to King Yudhiṣṭhira, Draupadī and other relatives, started for the city of Dvārakā, accompanied by Arjuna and other members of the Yadu dynasty.

SB 1.13: Dhṛtarāṣṭra Quits Home

1Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: While traveling on a pilgrimage, Vidura received knowledge of the destination of the self from the great sage Maitreya and then returned to Hastināpura. He became as well versed in the subject as he desired.

2After asking various questions and becoming established in the transcendental loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Vidura retired from putting questions to Maitreya Muni.

34When they saw Vidura return to the palace, all the inhabitants Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, his younger brothers, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sātyaki, Saṣjaya, Kṛpācārya, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadrā, Uttarā, Kṛpī, many other wives of the Kauravas, and other ladies with children all hurried to him in great delight. It so appeared that they had regained their consciousness after a long period.

5With great delight they all approached him, as if life had returned to their bodies. They exchanged obeisances and welcomed each other with embraces.

6Due to anxieties and long separation, they all cried out of affection. King Yudhiṣṭhira then arranged to offer sitting accommodations and a reception.

7After Vidura ate sumptuously and took sufficient rest, he was comfortably seated. Then the King began to speak to him, and all who were present there listened.

8Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: My uncle, do you remember how you always protected us, along with our mother, from all sorts of calamities? Your partiality, like the wings of a bird, saved us from poisoning and arson.

9While traveling on the surface of the earth, how did you maintain your livelihood? At which holy places and pilgrimage sites did you render service?

10My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.

11My uncle, you must have visited Dvārakā. In that holy place are our friends and wellwishers, the descendants of Yadu, who are always rapt in the service of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You might have seen them or heard about them. Are they all living happily in their abodes?

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12Thus being questioned by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, Mahātmā Vidura gradually described everything he had personally experienced, except news of the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty.

13Compassionate Mahātmā Vidura could not stand to see the Pāṇḍavas distressed at any time. Therefore he did not disclose this unpalatable and unbearable incident because calamities come of their own accord.

14Thus Mahātmā Vidura, being treated just like a godly person by his kinsmen, remained there for a certain period just to rectify the mentality of his eldest brother and in this way bring happiness to all the others.

15As long as Vidura played the part of a śūdra, being cursed by Maṇḍūka Muni, Aryamā officiated at the post of Yamarāja to punish those who committed sinful acts.

16Having won his kingdom and observed the birth of one grandson competent to continue the noble tradition of his family, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira reigned peacefully and enjoyed uncommon opulence in cooperation with his younger brothers, who were all expert administrators to the common people.

17Insurmountable eternal time imperceptibly overcomes those who are too much attached to family affairs and are always engrossed in their thought.

18Mahātmā Vidura knew all this, and therefore he addressed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, saying: My dear King, please get out of here immediately. Do not delay. Just see how fear has overtaken you.

19This frightful situation cannot be remedied by any person in this material world. My lord, it is the Supreme Personality of Godhead as eternal time [kāla] that has approached us all.

20Whoever is under the influence of supreme kāla [eternal time] must surrender his most dear life, and what to speak of other things, such as wealth, honor, children, land and home.

21Your father, brother, wellwishers and sons are all dead and passed away. You yourself have expended the major portion of your life, your body is now overtaken by invalidity, and you are living in the home of another.

22You have been blind from your very birth, and recently you have become hard of hearing. Your memory is shortened, and your intelligence is disturbed. Your teeth are loose, your liver is defective, and you are coughing up mucus.

23Alas, how powerful are the hopes of a living being to continue his life. Verily, you are living just like a household dog and are eating remnants of food given by Bhīma.

24There is no need to live a degraded life and subsist on the charity of those whom you tried to kill by arson and poisoning. You also insulted their married wife and usurped their kingdom and wealth.

25Despite your unwillingness to die and your desire to live even at the cost of honor and prestige, your miserly body will certainly dwindle and deteriorate like an old garment.

26He is called undisturbed who goes to an unknown, remote place and, freed from all obligations, quits his material body when it has become useless.

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27He is certainly a firstclass man who awakens and understands, either by himself or from others, the falsity and misery of this material world and thus leaves home and depends fully on the Personality of Godhead residing within his heart.

28Please, therefore, leave for the North immediately, without letting your relatives know, for soon that time will approach which will diminish the good qualities of men.

29Thus Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the scion of the family of Ajamīdha, firmly convinced by introspective knowledge [prajñā], broke at once the strong network of familial affection by his resolute determination. Thus he immediately left home to set out on the path of liberation, as directed by his younger brother Vidura.

30The gentle and chaste Gāndhārī, who was the daughter of King Subala of Kandahar [or Gāndhāra], followed her husband, seeing that he was going to the Himālaya Mountains, which are the delight of those who have accepted the staff of the renounced order like fighters who have accepted a good lashing from the enemy.

31Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, whose enemy was never born, performed his daily morning duties by praying, offering fire sacrifice to the sun-god, and offering obeisances, grains, cows, land and gold to the brāhmaṇas. He then entered the palace to pay respects to the elderly. However, he could not find his uncles or aunt, the daughter of King Subala.

32Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, full of anxiety, turned to Saṣjaya, who was sitting there, and said: O Saṣjaya, where is our uncle, who is old and blind?

33Where is my wellwisher, uncle Vidura, and mother Gāndhārī, who is very afflicted due to all her sons' demise? My uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra was also very mortified due to the death of all his sons and grandsons. Undoubtedly I am very ungrateful. Did he, therefore, take my offenses very seriously and, along with his wife, drown himself in the Ganges?

34When my father, Pāṇḍu, fell down and we were all small children, these two uncles gave us protection from all kinds of calamities. They were always our good wellwishers. Alas, where have they gone from here?

35Sūta Gosvāmī said: Because of compassion and mental agitation, Saṣjaya, not having seen his own master, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, was aggrieved and could not properly reply to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

36First he slowly pacified his mind by intelligence, and wiping away his tears and thinking of the feet of his master, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he began to reply to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

37Saṣjaya said: My dear descendant of the Kuru dynasty, I have no information of the determination of your two uncles and Gāndhārī. O King, I have been cheated by those great souls.

38While Saṣjaya was thus speaking, Śrī Nārada, the powerful devotee of the Lord, appeared on the scene carrying his tumburu. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers received him properly by getting up from their seats and offering obeisances.

39Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: O godly personality, I do not know where my two uncles have gone. Nor can I find my ascetic aunt who is griefstricken by the loss of all her sons.

40You are like a captain of a ship in a great ocean and you can direct us to our destination.

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Thus addressed, the godly personality, Devarṣi Nārada, greatest of the philosopher devotees, began to speak.

41Śrī Nārada said: O pious King, do not lament for anyone, for everyone is under the control of the Supreme Lord. Therefore all living beings and their leaders carry on worship to be well protected. It is He only who brings them together and disperses them.

42As a cow, bound through the nose by a long rope, is conditioned, so also human beings are bound by different Vedic injunctions and are conditioned to obey the orders of the Supreme.

43As a player sets up and disperses his playthings according to his own sweet will, so the supreme will of the Lord brings men together and separates them.

44O King, in all circumstances, whether you consider the soul to be an eternal principle, or the material body to be perishable, or everything to exist in the impersonal Absolute Truth, or everything to be an inexplicable combination of matter and spirit, feelings of separation are due only to illusory affection and nothing more.

45Therefore give up your anxiety due to ignorance of the self. You are now thinking of how they, who are helpless poor creatures, will exist without you.

46This gross material body made of five elements is already under the control of eternal time [kāla], action [karma] and the modes of material nature [guṇa]. How then can it, being already in the jaws of the serpent, protect others?

47Those who are devoid of hands are prey for those who have hands; those devoid of legs are prey for the fourlegged. The weak are the subsistence of the strong, and the general rule holds that one living being is food for another.

48Therefore, O King, you should look to the Supreme Lord only, who is one without a second and who manifests Himself by different energies and is both within and without.

49That Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of alldevouring time [kālarūpa] has now descended to the earth to eliminate the envious from the world.

50The Lord has already performed His duties to help the demigods, and He is awaiting the rest. You Pāṇḍavas may wait as long as the Lord is here on earth.

51O King, your uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra, his brother Vidura and his wife Gāndhārī have gone to the southern side of the Himālaya Mountains, where there are shelters of the great sages.

52The place is called Saptasrota [“divided by seven”] because there the waters of the sacred Ganges were divided into seven branches. This was done for the satisfaction of the seven great ṛṣis.

53On the banks at Saptasrota, Dhṛtarāṣṭra is now engaged in beginning aṣṭāṅgayoga by bathing three times daily, in the morning, noon and evening, by performing the Agnihotra sacrifice with fire and by drinking only water. This helps one control the mind and the senses and frees one completely from thoughts of familial affection.

54One who has controlled the sitting postures [the yogic āsanas] and the breathing process can turn the senses toward the Absolute Personality of Godhead and thus become immune to the contaminations of the modes of material nature, namely mundane goodness, passion and

ignorance.

55Dhṛtarāṣṭra will have to amalgamate his pure identity with intelligence and then merge into the Supreme Being with knowledge of his qualitative oneness, as a living entity, with the Supreme Brahman. Being freed from the blocked sky, he will have to rise to the spiritual sky.

56He will have to suspend all the actions of the senses, even from the outside, and will have to be impervious to interactions of the senses, which are influenced by the modes of material nature. After renouncing all material duties, he must become immovably established, beyond all sources of hindrances on the path.

57O King, he will quit his body, most probably on the fifth day from today. And his body will turn to ashes.

58While outside observing her husband, who will burn in the fire of mystic power along with his thatched cottage, his chaste wife will enter the fire with rapt attention.

59Vidura, being affected with delight and grief, will then leave that place of sacred pilgrimage.

60Having spoken thus, the great sage Nārada, along with his vīṇā, ascended into outer space. Yudhiṣṭhira kept his instruction in his heart and so was able to get rid of all lamentations.

SB 1.14: The Disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa

1Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Arjuna went to Dvārakā to see Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other friends and also to learn from the Lord of His next activities.

2A few months passed, and Arjuna did not return. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira then began to observe some inauspicious omens, which were fearful in themselves.

3He saw that the direction of eternal time had changed, and this was very fearful. There were disruptions in the seasonal regularities. The people in general had become very greedy, angry and deceitful. And he saw that they were adopting foul means of livelihood.

4All ordinary transactions and dealings became polluted with cheating, even between friends. And in familial affairs, there was always misunderstanding between fathers, mothers and sons, between wellwishers, and between brothers. Even between husband and wife there was always strain and quarrel.

5In course of time it came to pass that people in general became accustomed to greed, anger, pride, etc. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, observing all these omens, spoke to his younger brother.

6Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said to his younger brother Bhīmasena: I sent Arjuna to Dvārakā to meet his friends and to learn from the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, of His program of work.

7Since he departed, seven months have passed, yet he has not returned. I do not know factually how things are going there.

8Is He going to quit His earthly pastimes, as Devarṣi Nārada indicated? Has that time already arrived?

9From Him only, all our kingly opulence, good wives, lives, progeny, control over our subjects, victory over our enemies, and future accommodations in higher planets have become possible.

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All this is due to His causeless mercy upon us.

10Just see, O man with a tiger's strength, how many miseries due to celestial influences, earthly reactions and bodily pains all very dangerous in themselves are foreboding danger in the near future by deluding our intelligence.

11The left side of my body my thighs, arms and eyes are all quivering again and again. I am having heart palpitations due to fear. All this indicates undesirable happenings.

12Just see, O Bhīma, how the shejackal cries at the rising sun and vomits fire, and how the dog barks at me fearlessly.

13O Bhīmasena, tiger amongst men, now useful animals like cows are passing me on my left side, and lower animals like the asses are circumambulating me. My horses appear to weep upon seeing me.

14Just see! This pigeon is like a messenger of death. The shrieks of the owls and their rival crows make my heart tremble. It appears that they want to make a void of the whole universe.

15Just see how the smoke encircles the sky. It appears that the earth and mountains are throbbing. Just hear the cloudless thunder and see the bolts from the blue.

16The wind blows violently, blasting dust everywhere and creating darkness. Clouds are raining everywhere with bloody disasters.

17The rays of the sun are declining, and the stars appear to be fighting amongst themselves. Confused living entities appear to be ablaze and weeping.

18Rivers, tributaries, ponds, reservoirs and the mind are all perturbed. Butter no longer ignites fire. What is this extraordinary time? What is going to happen?

19The calves do not suck the teats of the cows, nor do the cows give milk. They are standing, crying, tears in their eyes, and the bulls take no pleasure in the pasturing grounds.

20The Deities seem to be crying in the temple, lamenting and perspiring. They seem about to leave. All the cities, villages, towns, gardens, mines and hermitages are now devoid of beauty and bereft of all happiness. I do not know what sort of calamities are now awaiting us.

21I think that all these earthly disturbances indicate some greater loss to the good fortune of the world. The world was fortunate to have been marked with the footprints of the lotus feet of the Lord. These signs indicate that this will no longer be.

22O Brāhmaṇa Śaunaka, while Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, observing the inauspicious signs on the earth at that time, was thus thinking to himself, Arjuna came back from the city of the Yadus [Dvārakā].

23When he bowed at his feet, the King saw that his dejection was unprecedented. His head was down, and tears glided from his lotus eyes.

24Seeing Arjuna pale due to heartfelt anxieties, the King, remembering the indications of the sage Nārada, questioned him in the midst of friends.

25Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: My dear brother, please tell me whether our friends and relatives,

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such as Madhu, Bhoja, Daśārha, Ārha, Sātvata, Andhaka and the members of the Yadu family are all passing their days in happiness.

26Is my respectable grandfather Śūrasena in a happy mood? And are my maternal uncle Vasudeva and his younger brothers all doing well?

27His seven wives, headed by Devakī, are all sisters. Are they and their sons and daughters-in-law all happy?

28-29Are Ugrasena, whose son was the mischievous Kaṁsa, and his younger brother still living? Are Hṛdīka and his son Kṛtavarmā happy? Are Akṛūra, Jayanta, Gada, Sāraṇa and Śatrujit all happy? How is Balarāma, the Personality of Godhead and the protector of devotees?

30How is Pradyumna, the great general of the Vṛṣṇi family? Is He happy? And is Aniruddha, the plenary expansion of the Personality of Godhead, faring well?

31Are all the chieftain sons of Lord Kṛṣṇa, such as Suśeṇa, Cārudeṣṇa, Sāmba the son of Jāmbavatī, and Ṛṣabha, along with their sons, all doing well?

32-33Also, Śrutadeva, Uddhava and others, Nanda, Sunanda and other leaders of liberated souls who are constant companions of the Lord are protected by Lord Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Are they all doing well in their respective functions? Do they, who are all eternally bound in friendship with us, remember our welfare?

34Is Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gives pleasure to the cows, the senses and the brāhmaṇas, who is very affectionate towards His devotees, enjoying the pious assembly at Dvārakā Purī surrounded by friends?

3536The original Personality of Godhead, the enjoyer, and Balarāma, the primeval Lord Ananta, are staying in the ocean of the Yadu dynasty for the welfare, protection and general progress of the entire universe. And the members of the Yadu dynasty, being protected by the arms of the Lord, are enjoying life like the residents of the spiritual sky.

37Simply by administering comforts at the lotus feet of the Lord, which is the most important of all services, the queens at Dvārakā, headed by Satyabhāmā, induced the Lord to conquer the demigods. Thus the queens enjoy things which are prerogatives of the wives of the controller of thunderbolts.

38The great heroes of the Yadu dynasty, being protected by the arms of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, always remain fearless in every respect. And therefore their feet trample over the Sudharmā assembly house, which the best demigods deserved but which was taken away from them.

39My brother Arjuna, please tell me whether your health is all right. You appear to have lost your bodily luster. Is this due to others disrespecting and neglecting you because of your long stay at Dvārakā?

40Has someone addressed you with unfriendly words or threatened you? Could you not give charity to one who asked, or could you not keep your promise to someone?

41You are always the protector of the deserving living beings, such as brāhmaṇas, children, cows, women and the diseased. Could you not give them protection when they approached you for shelter?

42Have you contacted a woman of impeccable character, or have you not properly treated a deserving woman? Or have you been defeated on the way by someone who is inferior or equal to you?

43Have you not taken care of old men and boys who deserve to dine with you? Have you left them and taken your meals alone? Have you committed some unpardonable mistake which is considered to be abominable?

44Or is it that you are feeling empty for all time because you might have lost your most intimate friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa? O my brother Arjuna, I can think of no other reason for your becoming so dejected.

SB 1.15: The Pāṇḍavas Retire Timely

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Arjuna, the celebrated friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, was griefstricken because of his strong feeling of separation from Kṛṣṇa, over and above all Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's speculative inquiries.

2Due to grief, Arjuna's mouth and lotuslike heart had dried up. Therefore his body lost all luster. Now, remembering the Supreme Lord, he could hardly utter a word in reply.

3With great difficulty he checked the tears of grief that smeared his eyes. He was very distressed because Lord Kṛṣṇa was out of his sight, and he increasingly felt affection for Him.

4Remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa and His well wishes, benefactions, intimate familial relations and His chariot driving, Arjuna, overwhelmed and breathing very heavily, began to speak.

5Arjuna said: O King! The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who treated me exactly like an intimate friend, has left me alone. Thus my astounding power, which astonished even the demigods, is no longer with me.

6I have just lost Him whose separation for a moment would render all the universes unfavorable and void, like bodies without life.

7Only by His merciful strength was I able to vanquish all the lusty princes assembled at the palace of King Drupada for the selection of the bridegroom. With my bow and arrow I could pierce the fish target and thereby gain the hand of Draupadī.

8Because He was near me, it was possible for me to conquer with great dexterity the powerful King of heaven, Indradeva, along with his demigod associates and thus enable the firegod to devastate the Khāṇḍava Forest. And only by His grace was the demon named Maya saved from the blazing Khāṇḍava Forest, and thus we could build our assembly house of wonderful architectural workmanship, where all the princes assembled during the performance of Rājasūyayajña and paid you tributes.

9Your respectable younger brother, who possesses the strength of ten thousand elephants, killed, by His grace, Jarāsandha, whose feet were worshiped by many kings. These kings had been brought for sacrifice in Jarāsandha's Mahābhairavayajña, but they were thus released. Later they paid tribute to Your Majesty.

10It was He only who loosened the hair of all the wives of the miscreants who dared open the cluster of your Queen's hair, which had been nicely dressed and sanctified for the great Rājasūya sacrificial ceremony. At that time she fell down at the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa with tears in

her eyes.

11 During our exile, Durvāsā Muni, who eats with his ten thousand disciples, intrigued with our enemies to put us in dangerous trouble. At that time He [Lord Kṛṣṇa], simply by accepting the remnants of food, saved us. By His accepting food thus, the assembly of munis, while bathing in the river, felt sumptuously fed. And all the three worlds were also satisfied.

12 It was by His influence only that in a fight I was able to astonish the personality of god Lord Śiva and his wife, the daughter of Mount Himālaya. Thus he [Lord Śiva] became pleased with me and awarded me his own weapon. Other demigods also delivered their respective weapons to me, and in addition I was able to reach the heavenly planets in this present body and was allowed a halfelevated seat.

13 When I stayed for some days as a guest in the heavenly planets, all the heavenly demigods, including King Indradeva, took shelter of my arms, which were marked with the Gāṇḍīva bow, to kill the demon named Nivātakavaca. O King, descendant of Ajamīdha, at the present moment I am bereft of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose influence I was so powerful.

14 The military strength of the Kauravas was like an ocean in which there dwelled many invincible existences, and thus it was insurmountable. But because of His friendship, I, seated on the chariot, was able to cross over it. And only by His grace was I able to regain the cows and also collect by force many helmets of the kings, which were bedecked with jewels that were sources of all brilliance.

15 It was He only who withdrew the duration of life from everyone and who, in the battlefield, withdrew the speculative power and strength of enthusiasm from the great military phalanx made by the Kauravas, headed by Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Droṇa, Śalya, etc. Their arrangement was expert and more than adequate, but He [Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa], while going forward, did all this.

16 Great generals like Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa, Bhūriśravā, Suśarmā, Śalya, Jayadratha and Bāhlika all directed their invincible weapons against me. But by His [Lord Kṛṣṇa's] grace they could not even touch a hair on my head. Similarly, Prahlāda Mahārāja, the supreme devotee of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, was unaffected by the weapons the demons used against him.

17 It was by His mercy only that my enemies neglected to kill me when I descended from my chariot to get water for my thirsty horses. And it was due to my lack of esteem for my Lord that I dared engage Him as my chariot driver, for He is worshiped and offered services by the best men to attain salvation.

18 O King! His jokings and frank talks were pleasing and beautifully decorated with smiles. His addresses unto me as “O son of Pṛthā, O friend, O son of the Kuru dynasty,” and all such heartiness are now remembered by me, and thus I am overwhelmed.

19 Generally both of us used to live together and sleep, sit and loiter together. And at the time of advertising oneself for acts of chivalry, sometimes, if there were any irregularity, I used to reproach Him by saying, “My friend, You are very truthful.” Even in those hours when His value was minimized, He, being the Supreme Soul, used to tolerate all those utterings of mine, excusing me exactly as a true friend excuses his true friend, or a father excuses his son.

20 O Emperor, now I am separated from my friend and dearest wellwisher, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore my heart appears to be void of everything. In His

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absence I have been defeated by a number of infidel cowherd men while I was guarding the bodies of all the wives of Kṛṣṇa.

21I have the very same Gāṇḍīva bow, the same arrows, the same chariot drawn by the same horses, and I use them as the same Arjuna to whom all the kings offered their due respects. But in the absence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, all of them, at a moment's notice, have become null and void. It is exactly like offering clarified butter on ashes, accumulating money with a magic wand or sowing seeds on barren land.

22-23O King, since you have asked me about our friends and relatives in the city of Dvārakā, I will inform you that all of them were cursed by the brāhmaṇas, and as a result they all became intoxicated with wine made of putrefied rice and fought among themselves with sticks, not even recognizing one another. Now all but four or five of them are dead and gone.

24Actually this is all due to the supreme will of the Lord, the Personality of Godhead. Sometimes people kill one another, and at other times they protect one another.

25-26O King, as in the ocean the bigger and stronger aquatics swallow up the smaller and weaker ones, so also the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to lighten the burden of the earth, has engaged the stronger Yadu to kill the weaker, and the bigger Yadu to kill the smaller.

27Now I am attracted to those instructions imparted to me by the Personality of Godhead [Govinda] because they are impregnated with instructions for relieving the burning heart in all circumstances of time and space.

28Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus being deeply absorbed in thinking of the instructions of the Lord, which were imparted in the great intimacy of friendship, and in thinking of His lotus feet, Arjuna's mind became pacified and free from all material contamination.

29Arjuna's constant remembrance of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa rapidly increased his devotion, and as a result all the trash in his thoughts subsided.

30Because of the Lord's pastimes and activities and because of His absence, it appeared that Arjuna forgot the instructions left by the Personality of Godhead. But factually this was not the case, and again he became lord of his senses.

31Because of his possessing spiritual assets, the doubts of duality were completely cut off. Thus he was freed from the three modes of material nature and placed in transcendence. There was no longer any chance of his becoming entangled in birth and death, for he was freed from material form.

32Upon hearing of Lord Kṛṣṇa's returning to His abode, and upon understanding the end of the Yadu dynasty's earthly manifestation, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira decided to go back home, back to Godhead.

33Kuntī, after overhearing Arjuna's telling of the end of the Yadu dynasty and disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, engaged in the devotional service of the transcendental Personality of Godhead with full attention and thus gained release from the course of material existence.

34The supreme unborn, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, caused the members of the Yadu dynasty to relinquish their bodies, and thus He relieved the burden of the world. This action was like picking out a thorn with a thorn, though both are the same to the controller.

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35The Supreme Lord relinquished the body which He manifested to diminish the burden of the earth. Just like a magician, He relinquishes one body to accept different ones, like the fish incarnation and others.

36When the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, left this earthly planet in His selfsame form, from that very day Kali, who had already partially appeared, became fully manifest to create inauspicious conditions for those who are endowed with a poor fund of knowledge.

37Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was intelligent enough to understand the influence of the Age of Kali, characterized by increasing avarice, falsehood, cheating and violence throughout the capital, state, home and among individuals. So he wisely prepared himself to leave home, and he dressed accordingly.

38Thereafter, in the capital of Hastināpura, he enthroned his grandson, who was trained and equally qualified, as the emperor and master of all land bordered by the seas.

39Then he posted Vajra, the son of Aniruddha [grandson of Lord Kṛṣṇa], at Mathurā as the King of Śūrasena. Afterwards Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira performed a Prājāpatya sacrifice and placed in himself the fire for quitting household life.

40Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira at once relinquished all his garments, belt and ornaments of the royal order and became completely disinterested and unattached to everything.

41Then he amalgamated all the sense organs into the mind, then the mind into life, life into breathing, his total existence into the embodiment of the five elements, and his body into death. Then, as pure self, he became free from the material conception of life.

42Thus annihilating the gross body of five elements into the three qualitative modes of material nature, he merged them in one nescience and then absorbed that nescience in the self, Brahman, which is inexhaustible in all circumstances.

43After that, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira dressed himself in torn clothing, gave up eating all solid foods, voluntarily became dumb and let his hair hang loose. All this combined to make him look like an urchin or madman with no occupation. He did not depend on his brothers for anything. And, just like a deaf man, he heard nothing.

44He then started towards the north, treading the path accepted by his forefathers and great men, to devote himself completely to the thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And he lived in that way wherever he went.

45The younger brothers of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira observed that the Age of Kali had already arrived throughout the world and that the citizens of the kingdom were already affected by irreligious practice. Therefore they decided to follow in the footsteps of their elder brother.

46They all had performed all the principles of religion and as a result rightly decided that the lotus feet of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the supreme goal of all. Therefore they meditated upon His feet without interruption.

47-48Thus by pure consciousness due to constant devotional remembrance, they attained the spiritual sky, which is ruled over by the Supreme Nārāyaṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is attained only by those who meditate upon the one Supreme Lord without deviation. This abode of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, cannot be attained by persons who are absorbed in the material conception of life. But the Pāṇḍavas, being completely washed of all material

contamination, attained that abode in their very same bodies.

49Vidura, while on pilgrimage, left his body at Prabhāsa. Because he was absorbed in thought of Kṛṣṇa, he was received by the denizens of the Pitṛloka planet, where he returned to his original post.

50Draupadī also saw that her husbands, without caring for her, were leaving home. She knew well about Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. Both she and Subhadrā became absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa and attained the same results as their husbands.

51The subject of the departure of the sons of Pāṇḍu for the ultimate goal of life, back to Godhead, is fully auspicious and is perfectly pure. Therefore anyone who hears this narration with devotional faith certainly gains the devotional service of the Lord, the highest perfection of life.

SB 1.16: How Parīkṣit Received the Age of Kali

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: O learned brāhmaṇas, Mahārāja Parīkṣit then began to rule over the world as a great devotee of the Lord under the instructions of the best of the twiceborn brāhmaṇas. He ruled by those great qualities which were foretold by expert astrologers at the time of his birth.

2King Parīkṣit married the daughter of King Uttara and begot four sons, headed by Mahārāja Janamejaya.

3Mahārāja Parīkṣit, after having selected Kṛpācārya for guidance as his spiritual master, performed three horse sacrifices on the banks of the Ganges. These were executed with sufficient rewards for the attendants. And at these sacrifices, even the common man could see demigods.

4Once, when Mahārāja Parīkṣit was on his way to conquer the world, he saw the master of Kaliyuga, who was lower than a śūdra, disguised as a king and hurting the legs of a cow and bull. The King at once caught hold of him to deal sufficient punishment.

5Śaunaka Ṛṣi inquired: Why did Mahārāja Parīkṣit simply punish him, since he was the lowest of the śūdras, having dressed as a king and having struck a cow on the leg? Please describe all these incidents if they relate to the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

6The devotees of the Lord are accustomed to licking up the honey available from the lotus feet of the Lord. What is the use of topics which simply waste one's valuable life?

7O Sūta Gosvāmī, there are those amongst men who desire freedom from death and get eternal life. They escape the slaughtering process by calling the controller of death, Yamarāja.

8As long as Yamarāja, who causes everyone's death, is present here, no one shall meet with death. The great sages have invited the controller of death, Yamarāja, who is the representative of the Lord. Living beings who are under his grip should take advantage by hearing the deathless nectar in the form of this narration of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord.

9Lazy human beings with paltry intelligence and a short duration of life pass the night sleeping and the day performing activities that are for naught.

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10Sūta Gosvāmī said: While Mahārāja Parīkṣit was residing in the capital of the Kuru empire, the symptoms of the Age of Kali began to infiltrate within the jurisdiction of his state. When he learned about this, he did not think the matter very palatable. This did, however, give him a chance to fight. He took up his bow and arrows and prepared himself for military activities.

11Mahārāja Parīkṣit sat on a chariot drawn by black horses. His flag was marked with the sign of a lion. Being so decorated and surrounded by charioteers, cavalry, elephants and infantry soldiers, he left the capital to conquer in all directions.

12Mahārāja Parīkṣit then conquered all parts of the earthly planet Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Bhārata, the northern Kuru, Kimpuruṣa, etc. and exacted tributes from their respective rulers.

1315Wherever the King visited, he continuously heard the glories of his great forefathers, who were all devotees of the Lord, and also of the glorious acts of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He also heard how he himself had been protected by the Lord from the powerful heat of the weapon of Aśvatthāmā. People also mentioned the great affection between the descendants of Viṣṇu and Pṛthā due to the latter's great devotion to Lord Keśava. The King, being very pleased with the singers of such glories, opened his eyes in great satisfaction. Out of magnanimity he was pleased to award them very valuable necklaces and clothing.

16Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard that out of His causeless mercy Lord Kṛṣṇa [Viṣṇu], who is universally obeyed, rendered all kinds of service to the malleable sons of Pāṇḍu by accepting posts ranging from chariot driver to president to messenger, friend, night watchman, etc., according to the will of the Pāṇḍavas, obeying them like a servant and offering obeisances like one younger in years. When he heard this, Mahārāja Parīkṣit became overwhelmed with devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord.

17Now you may hear from me of what happened while Mahārāja Parīkṣit was passing his days hearing of the good occupations of his forefathers and being absorbed in thought of them.

18The personality of religious principles, Dharma, was wandering about in the form of a bull. And he met the personality of earth in the form of a cow who appeared to grieve like a mother who had lost her child. She had tears in her eyes, and the beauty of her body was lost. Thus Dharma questioned the earth as follows.

19Dharma [in the form of a bull] asked: Madam, are you not hale and hearty? Why are you covered with the shadow of grief? It appears by your face that you have become black. Are you suffering from some internal disease, or are you thinking of some relative who is away in a distant place?

20I have lost my three legs and am now standing on one only. Are you lamenting for my state of existence? Or are you in great anxiety because henceforward the unlawful meateaters will exploit you? Or are you in a sorry plight because the demigods are now bereft of their share of sacrificial offerings because no sacrifices are being performed at present? Or are you grieving for living beings because of their sufferings due to famine and drought?

21Are you feeling compunction for the unhappy women and children who are left forlorn by unscrupulous persons? Or are you unhappy because the goddess of learning is being handled by brāhmaṇas addicted to acts against the principles of religion? Or are you sorry to see that the brāhmaṇas have taken shelter of administrative families that do not respect brahminical culture?

22The so-called administrators are now bewildered by the influence of this Age of Kali, and

thus they have put all state affairs into disorder. Are you now lamenting this disorder? Now the general populace does not follow the rules and regulations for eating, sleeping, drinking, mating, etc., and they are inclined to perform such anywhere and everywhere. Are you unhappy because of this?

23O mother earth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, incarnated Himself as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa just to unload your heavy burden. All His activities here are transcendental, and they cement the path of liberation. You are now bereft of His presence. You are probably now thinking of those activities and feeling sorry in their absence.

24Mother, you are the reservoir of all riches. Please inform me of the root cause of your tribulations by which you have been reduced to such a weak state. I think that the powerful influence of time, which conquers the most powerful, might have forcibly taken away all your fortune, which was adored even by the demigods.

25The earthly deity [in the form of a cow] thus replied to the personality of religious principles [in the form of a bull]: O Dharma, whatever you have inquired from me shall be known to you. I shall try to reply to all those questions. Once you too were maintained by your four legs, and you increased happiness all over the universe by the mercy of the Lord.

26-30In Him reside (1) truthfulness, (2) cleanliness, (3) intolerance of another's unhappiness, (4) the power to control anger, (5) selfsatisfaction, (6) straightforwardness, (7) steadiness of mind, (8) control of the sense organs, (9) responsibility, (10) equality, (11) tolerance, (12) equanimity, (13) faithfulness, (14) knowledge, (15) absence of sense enjoyment, (16) leadership, (17) chivalry, (18) influence, (19) the power to make everything possible, (20) the discharge of proper duty, (21) complete independence, (22) dexterity, (23) fullness of all beauty, (24) serenity, (25) kindheartedness, (26) ingenuity, (27) gentility, (28) magnanimity, (29) determination, (30) perfection in all knowledge, (31) proper execution, (32) possession of all objects of enjoyment, (33) joyfulness, (34) immovability, (35) fidelity, (36) fame, (37) worship, (38) pridelessness, (39) being (as the Personality of Godhead), (40) eternity, and many other transcendental qualities which are eternally present and never to be separated from Him. That Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of all goodness and beauty, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has now closed His transcendental pastimes on the face of the earth. In His absence the Age of Kali has spread its influence everywhere, so I am sorry to see this condition of existence.

31I am thinking about myself and also, O best amongst the demigods, about you, as well as about all the demigods, sages, denizens of Pitṛloka, devotees of the Lord and all men obedient to the system of varṇa and āśrama in human society.

32-33Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, whose glance of grace was sought by demigods like Brahmā and for whom they surrendered many a day unto the Personality of Godhead, gave up her own abode in the forest of lotus flowers and engaged herself in the service of the lotus feet of the Lord. I was endowed with specific powers to supersede the fortune of all the three planetary systems by being decorated with the impressions of the flag, thunderbolt, elephantdriving rod and lotus flower, which are signs of the lotus feet of the Lord. But at the end, when I felt I was so fortunate, the Lord left me.

34O personality of religion, I was greatly overburdened by the undue military phalanxes arranged by atheistic kings, and I was relieved by the grace of the Personality of Godhead. Similarly you were also in a distressed condition, weakened in your standing strength, and thus He also incarnated by His internal energy in the family of the Yadus to relieve you.

35Who, therefore, can tolerate the pangs of separation from that Supreme Personality of Godhead? He could conquer the gravity and passionate wrath of His sweethearts like Satyabhāmā by His sweet smile of love, pleasing glance and hearty appeals. When He traversed my [earth's] surface, I would be immersed in the dust of His lotus feet and thus would be sumptuously covered with grass which appeared like hairs standing on me out of pleasure.

36While the earth and the personality of religion were thus engaged in conversation, the saintly King Parīkṣit reached the shore of the Sarasvatī River, which flowed towards the east.

SB 1.17: Punishment and Reward of Kali

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: After reaching that place, Mahārāja Parīkṣit observed that a lowercaste śūdra, dressed like a king, was beating a cow and a bull with a club, as if they had no owner.

2The bull was as white as a white lotus flower. He was terrified of the śūdra who was beating him, and he was so afraid that he was standing on one leg, trembling and urinating.

3Although the cow is beneficial because one can draw religious principles from her, she was now rendered poor and calfless. Her legs were being beaten by a śūdra. There were tears in her eyes, and she was distressed and weak. She was hankering after some grass in the field.

4Mahārāja Parīkṣit, well equipped with arrows and bow and seated on a goldembossed chariot, spoke to him [the śūdra] with a deep voice sounding like thunder.

5Oh, who are you? You appear to be strong and yet you dare kill, within my protection, those who are helpless! By your dress you pose yourself to be a godly man [king], but by your deeds you are opposing the principles of the twiceborn kṣatriyas.

6You rogue, do you dare beat an innocent cow because Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the carrier of the Gāṇḍīva bow, are out of sight? Since you are beating the innocent in a secluded place, you are considered a culprit and therefore deserve to be killed.

7Then he [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] asked the bull: Oh, who are you? Are you a bull as white as a white lotus, or are you a demigod? You have lost three of your legs and are moving on only one. Are you some demigod causing us grief in the form of a bull?

8Now for the first time in a kingdom well protected by the arms of the kings of the Kuru dynasty, I see you grieving with tears in your eyes. Up till now no one on earth has ever shed tears because of royal negligence.

9O son of Surabhi, you need lament no longer now. There is no need to fear this lowclass śūdra. And, O mother cow, as long as I am living as the ruler and subduer of all envious men, there is no cause for you to cry. Everything will be good for you.

10-11O chaste one, the king's good name, duration of life and good rebirth vanish when all kinds of living beings are terrified by miscreants in his kingdom. It is certainly the prime duty of the king to subdue first the sufferings of those who suffer. Therefore I must kill this most wretched man because he is violent against other living beings.

12He [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] repeatedly addressed and questioned the bull thus: O son of Surabhi, who has cut off your three legs? In the state of the kings who are obedient to the laws of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, there is no one as unhappy as you.

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13O bull, you are offenseless and thoroughly honest; therefore I wish all good to you. Please tell me of the perpetrator of these mutilations, which blacken the reputation of the sons of Pṛthā.

14Whoever causes offenseless living beings to suffer must fear me anywhere and everywhere in the world. By curbing dishonest miscreants, one automatically benefits the offenseless.

15An upstart living being who commits offenses by torturing those who are offenseless shall be directly uprooted by me, even though he be a denizen of heaven with armor and decorations.

16The supreme duty of the ruling king is to give all protection to lawabiding persons and to chastise those who stray from the ordinances of the scriptures in ordinary times, when there is no emergency.

17The personality of religion said: These words just spoken by you befit a person of the Pāṇḍava dynasty. Captivated by the devotional qualities of the Pāṇḍavas, even Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, performed duties as a messenger.

18O greatest among human beings, it is very difficult to ascertain the particular miscreant who has caused our sufferings, because we are bewildered by all the different opinions of theoretical philosophers.

19Some of the philosophers, who deny all sorts of duality, declare that one's own self is responsible for his personal happiness and distress. Others say that superhuman powers are responsible, while yet others say that activity is responsible, and the gross materialists maintain that nature is the ultimate cause.

20There are also some thinkers who believe that no one can ascertain the cause of distress by argumentation, nor know it by imagination, nor express it by words. O sage amongst kings, judge for yourself by thinking over all this with your own intelligence.

21Sūta Gosvāmī said: O best among the brāhmaṇas, the Emperor Parīkṣit, thus hearing the personality of religion speak, was fully satisfied, and without mistake or regret he gave his reply.

22The King said: O you, who are in the form of a bull! You know the truth of religion, and you are speaking according to the principle that the destination intended for the perpetrator of irreligious acts is also intended for one who identifies the perpetrator. You are no other than the personality of religion.

23Thus it is concluded that the Lord's energies are inconceivable. No one can estimate them by mental speculation or by word jugglery.

24In the age of Satya [truthfulness] your four legs were established by the four principles of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. But it appears that three of your legs are broken due to rampant irreligion in the form of pride, lust for women, and intoxication.

25You are now standing on one leg only, which is your truthfulness, and you are somehow or other hobbling along. But quarrel personified [Kali], flourishing by deceit, is also trying to destroy that leg.

26The burden of the earth was certainly diminished by the Personality of Godhead and by others as well. When He was present as an incarnation, all good was performed because of His

auspicious footprints.

27Now she, the chaste one, being unfortunately forsaken by the Personality of Godhead, laments her future with tears in her eyes, for now she is being ruled and enjoyed by lowerclass men who pose as rulers.

28Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who could fight one thousand enemies singlehandedly, thus pacified the personality of religion and the earth. Then he took up his sharp sword to kill the personality of Kali, who is the cause of all irreligion.

29When the personality of Kali understood that the King was willing to kill him, he at once abandoned the dress of a king and, under pressure of fear, completely surrendered to him, bowing his head.

30Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was qualified to accept surrender and worthy of being sung in history, did not kill the poor surrendered and fallen Kali, but smiled compassionately, for he was kind to the poor.

31The King thus said: We have inherited the fame of Arjuna; therefore since you have surrendered yourself with folded hands you need not fear for your life. But you cannot remain in my kingdom, for you are the friend of irreligion.

32If the personality of Kali, irreligion, is allowed to act as a mangod or an executive head, certainly irreligious principles like greed, falsehood, robbery, incivility, treachery, misfortune, cheating, quarrel and vanity will abound.

33Therefore, O friend of irreligion, you do not deserve to remain in a place where experts perform sacrifices according to truth and religious principles for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

34In all sacrificial ceremonies, although sometimes a demigod is worshiped, the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is worshiped because He is the Supersoul of everyone, and exists both inside and outside like the air. Thus it is He only who awards all welfare to the worshiper.

35Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: The personality of Kali, thus being ordered by Mahārāja Parīkṣit, began to tremble in fear. Seeing the King before him like Yamarāja, ready to kill him, Kali spoke to the King as follows.

36O Your Majesty, though I may live anywhere and everywhere under your order, I shall but see you with bow and arrows wherever I look.

37Therefore, O chief amongst the protectors of religion, please fix some place for me where I can live permanently under the protection of your government.

38Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parīkṣit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed.

39The personality of Kali asked for something more, and because of his begging, the King gave him permission to live where there is gold because wherever there is gold there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity.

40Thus the personality of Kali, by the directions of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the son of Uttarā, was

allowed to live in those five places.

41Therefore, whoever desires progressive wellbeing, especially kings, religionists, public leaders, brāhmaṇas and sannyāsīs, should never come in contact with the four abovementioned irreligious principles.

42Thereafter the King reestablished the lost legs of the personality of religion [the bull], and by encouraging activities he sufficiently improved the condition of the earth.

43-44The most fortunate emperor Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was entrusted with the kingdom of Hastināpura by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira when he desired to retire to the forest, is now ruling the world with great success due to his being glorified by the deeds of the kings of the Kuru dynasty.

45Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the son of Abhimanyu, is so experienced that by dint of his expert administration and patronage, it has been possible for you to perform a sacrifice such as this.

SB 1.18: Mahārāja Parīkṣit Cursed by a Brāhmaṇa Boy

1Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Due to the mercy of the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who acts wonderfully, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, though struck by the weapon of the son of Droṇa in his mother's womb, could not be burned.

2Furthermore, Mahārāja Parīkṣit was always consciously surrendered to the Personality of Godhead, and therefore he was neither afraid nor overwhelmed by fear due to a snakebird which was to bite him because of the fury of a brāhmaṇa boy.

3Furthermore, after leaving all his associates, the King surrendered himself as a disciple to the son of Vyāsa [Śukadeva Gosvāmī], and thus he was able to understand the actual position of the Personality of Godhead, and at last gave up his material body on the bank of the Ganges.

4This was so because those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead, of whom the Vedic hymns sing, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives.

5As long as the great, powerful son of Abhimanyu remains the Emperor of the world, there is no chance that the personality of Kali will flourish.

6The very day and moment the Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, left this earth, the personality of Kali, who promotes all kinds of irreligious activities, came into this world.

7Mahārāja Parīkṣit was a realist, like the bees who only accept the essence [of a flower]. He knew perfectly well that in this Age of Kali, auspicious things produce good effects immediately, whereas inauspicious acts must be actually performed [to render effects]. So he was never envious of the personality of Kali.

8Mahārāja Parīkṣit considered that less intelligent men might find the personality of Kali to be very powerful, but that those who are selfcontrolled would have nothing to fear. The King was powerful like a tiger and took care for the foolish, careless persons.

9O sages, as you did ask me, now I have described almost everything regarding the narrations about Lord Kṛṣṇa in connection with the history of the pious Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

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10Those who are desirous of achieving complete perfection in life must submissively hear all topics that are connected with the transcendental activities and qualities of the Personality of Godhead, who acts wonderfully.

11The good sages said: O grave Sūta Gosvāmī! May you live many years and have eternal fame, for you are speaking very nicely about the activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. This is just like nectar for mortal beings like us.

12We have just begun the performance of this fruitive activity, a sacrificial fire, without certainty of its result due to the many imperfections in our action. Our bodies have become black from the smoke, but we are factually pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Govinda, which you are distributing.

13The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death.

14The Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa [Govinda], is the exclusive shelter for all great living beings, and His transcendental attributes cannot even be measured by such masters of mystic powers as Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. Can anyone who is expert in relishing nectar [rasa] ever be fully satiated by hearing topics about Him?

15O Sūta Gosvāmī, you are a learned and pure devotee of the Lord because the Personality of Godhead is your chief object of service. Therefore please describe to us the pastimes of the Lord, which are above all material conception, for we are anxious to receive such messages.

16O Sūta Gosvāmī, please describe those topics of the Lord by which Mahārāja Parīkṣit, whose intelligence was fixed on liberation, attained the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of Garuḍa, the king of birds. Those topics were vibrated by the son of Vyāsa [Śrīla Śukadeva].

17Thus please narrate to us the narrations of the Unlimited, for they are purifying and supreme. They were spoken to Mahārāja Parīkṣit, and they are very dear to the pure devotees, being full of bhaktiyoga.

18Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: O God, although we are born in a mixed caste, we are still promoted in birthright simply by serving and following the great who are advanced in knowledge. Even by conversing with such great souls, one can without delay cleanse oneself of all disqualifications resulting from lower births.

19And what to speak of those who are under the direction of the great devotees, chanting the holy name of the Unlimited, who has unlimited potency? The Personality of Godhead, unlimited in potency and transcendental by attributes, is called Ananta [Unlimited].

20It is now ascertained that He [the Personality of Godhead] is unlimited and there is none equal to Him. Consequently no one can speak of Him adequately. Great demigods cannot obtain the favor of the goddess of fortune even by prayers, but this very goddess renders service unto the Lord, although He is unwilling to have such service.

21Who can be worthy of the name of the Supreme Lord but the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Brahmājī collected the water emanating from the nails of His feet in order to award it to Lord Śiva as a worshipful welcome. This very water [the Ganges] is purifying the whole universe, including Lord Śiva.

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22 Self-controlled persons who are attached to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa can all of a sudden give up the world of material attachment, including the gross body and subtle mind, and go away to attain the highest perfection of the renounced order of life, by which nonviolence and renunciation are consequential.

23 O ṛṣis, who are as powerfully pure as the sun, I shall try to describe to you the transcendental pastimes of Viṣṇu as far as my knowledge is concerned. As the birds fly in the sky as far as their capacity allows, so do the learned devotees describe the Lord as far as their realization allows.

24-25 Once upon a time Mahārāja Parīkṣit, while engaged in hunting in the forest with bow and arrows, became extremely fatigued, hungry and thirsty while following the stags. While searching for a reservoir of water, he entered the hermitage of the wellknown Śamīka Ṛṣi and saw the sage sitting silently with closed eyes.

26 The muni's sense organs, breath, mind and intelligence were all restrained from material activities, and he was situated in a trance apart from the three [wakefulness, dream and unconsciousness], having achieved a transcendental position qualitatively equal with the Supreme Absolute.

27 The sage, in meditation, was covered by the skin of a stag, and long, compressed hair was scattered all over him. The King, whose palate was dry from thirst, asked him for water.

28 The King, not received by any formal welcome by means of being offered a seat, place, water and sweet addresses, considered himself neglected, and so thinking he became angry.

29 O brāhmaṇas, the circumstances having distressed him with extreme hunger and thirst, the King directed toward the sage his anger and envy, which he had never before directed toward a brāhmaṇa.

30 While leaving, the King, being so insulted, picked up a lifeless snake with his bow and angrily placed it on the shoulder of the sage. Then he returned to his palace.

31 Upon returning, he began to contemplate and argue within himself whether the sage had actually been in meditation, with senses concentrated and eyes closed, or whether he had just been feigning trance just to avoid receiving a lower kṣatriya.

32 The sage had a son who was very powerful, being a brāhmaṇa's son. While he was playing with inexperienced boys, he heard of his father's distress, which was occasioned by the King. Then and there the boy spoke as follows.

33 [The brāhmaṇa's son, Śṛṅgi, said:] O just look at the sins of the rulers who, like crows and watchdogs at the door, perpetrate sins against their masters, contrary to the principles governing servants.

34 The descendants of the kingly orders are definitely designated as watchdogs, and they must keep themselves at the door. On what grounds can dogs enter the house and claim to dine with the master on the same plate?

35 After the departure of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead and supreme ruler of everyone, these upstarts have flourished, our protector being gone. Therefore I myself shall take up this matter and punish them. Just witness my power.

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36The son of the ṛṣi, his eyes redhot with anger, touched the water of the River Kauśika while speaking to his playmates and discharged the following thunderbolt of words.

37The brāhmaṇa's son cursed the King thus: On the seventh day from today a snakebird will bite the most wretched one of that dynasty [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] because of his having broken the laws of etiquette by insulting my father.

38Thereafter, when the boy returned to the hermitage, he saw a snake on his father's shoulder, and out of his grief he cried very loudly.

39O brāhmaṇas, the ṛṣi, who was born in the family of Aṅgirā Muni, hearing his son crying, gradually opened his eyes and saw the dead snake around his neck.

40He threw the dead snake aside and asked his son why he was crying, whether anyone had done him harm. On hearing this, the son explained to him what had happened.

41The father heard from his son that the King had been cursed, although he should never have been condemned, for he was the best amongst all human beings. The ṛṣi did not congratulate his son, but, on the contrary, began to repent, saying: Alas! What a great sinful act was performed by my son. He has awarded heavy punishment for an insignificant offense.

42O my boy, your intelligence is immature, and therefore you have no knowledge that the king, who is the best amongst human beings, is as good as the Personality of Godhead. He is never to be placed on an equal footing with common men. The citizens of the state live in prosperity, being protected by his unsurpassable prowess.

43My dear boy, the Lord, who carries the wheel of a chariot, is represented by the monarchical regime, and when this regime is abolished the whole world becomes filled with thieves, who then at once vanquish the unprotected subjects like scattered lambs.

44Due to the termination of the monarchical regimes and the plundering of the people's wealth by rogues and thieves, there will be great social disruptions. People will be killed and injured, and animals and women will be stolen. And for all these sins we shall be responsible.

45At that time the people in general will fall systematically from the path of a progressive civilization in respect to the qualitative engagements of the castes and the orders of society and the Vedic injunctions. Thus they will be more attracted to economic development for sense gratification, and as a result there will be an unwanted population on the level of dogs and monkeys.

46The Emperor Parīkṣit is a pious king. He is highly celebrated and is a firstclass devotee of the Personality of Godhead. He is a saint amongst royalty, and he has performed many horse sacrifices. When such a king is tired and fatigued, being stricken with hunger and thirst, he does not at all deserve to be cursed.

47Then the ṛṣi prayed to the allpervading Personality of Godhead to pardon his immature boy, who had no intelligence and who committed the great sin of cursing a person who was completely free from all sins, who was subordinate and who deserved to be protected.

48The devotees of the Lord are so forbearing that even though they are defamed, cheated, cursed, disturbed, neglected or even killed, they are never inclined to avenge themselves.

49The sage thus regretted the sin committed by his own son. He did not take the insult paid by

the King very seriously.

50 Generally the transcendentalists, even though engaged by others in the dualities of the material world, are not distressed. Nor do they take pleasure [in worldly things], for they are transcendently engaged.

SB 1.19: The Appearance of Śukadeva Gosvāmī

1 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: While returning home, the King [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] felt that the act he had committed against the faultless and powerful brāhmaṇa was heinous and uncivilized. Consequently he was distressed.

2 [King Parīkṣit thought:] Due to my neglecting the injunctions of the Supreme Lord I must certainly expect some difficulty to overcome me in the near future. I now desire without reservation that the calamity come now, for in this way I may be freed of the sinful action and not commit such an offense again.

3 I am uncivilized and sinful due to my neglect of brahminical culture, God consciousness and cow protection. Therefore I wish that my kingdom, strength and riches burn up immediately by the fire of the brāhmaṇa's wrath so that in the future I may not be guided by such inauspicious attitudes.

4 While the King was thus repenting, he received news of his imminent death, which would be due to the bite of a snakebird, occasioned by the curse spoken by the sage's son. The King accepted this as good news, for it would be the cause of his indifference toward worldly things.

5 Mahārāja Parīkṣit sat down firmly on the banks of the Ganges to concentrate his mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, rejecting all other practices of selfrealization, because transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa is the greatest achievement, superseding all other methods.

6 The river [by which the King sat to fast] carries the most auspicious water, which is mixed with the dust of the lotus feet of the Lord and tulasī leaves. Therefore that water sanctifies the three worlds inside and outside and even sanctifies Lord Śiva and other demigods. Consequently everyone who is destined to die must take shelter of this river.

7 Thus the King, the worthy descendant of the Pāṇḍavas, decided once and for all and sat on the Ganges' bank to fast until death and give himself up to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who alone is able to award liberation. So, freeing himself from all kinds of associations and attachments, he accepted the vows of a sage.

8 At that time all the great minds and thinkers, accompanied by their disciples, and sages who could verily sanctify a place of pilgrimage just by their presence, arrived there on the plea of making a pilgrim's journey.

9-10 From different parts of the universe there arrived great sages like Atri, Cyavana, Śaradvān, Ariṣṭanemi, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Parāśara, Viśvāmitra, Aṅgirā, Paraśurāma, Utathya, Indrapramada, Idhmavāhu, Medhātithi, Devala, Ārṣiṣeṇa, Bhāradvāja, Gautama, Pippalāda, Maitreya, Aurva, Kavaṣa, Kumbhayoni, Dvaipāyana and the great personality Nārada.

11 There were also many other saintly demigods, kings and special royal orders called aruṇādayas [a special rank of rājarṣis] from different dynasties of sages. When they all assembled together to meet the Emperor [Parīkṣit], he received them properly and bowed his

head to the ground.

12After all the ṛṣis and others had seated themselves comfortably, the King, humbly standing before them with folded hands, told them of his decision to fast until death.

13The fortunate King said: Indeed, we are the most grateful of all the kings who are trained to get favors from the great souls. Generally you [sages] consider royalty as refuse to be rejected and left in a distant place.

14The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of both the transcendental and mundane worlds, has graciously overtaken me in the form of a brāhmaṇa's curse. Due to my being too much attached to family life, the Lord, in order to save me, has appeared before me in such a way that only out of fear I will detach myself from the world.

15O brāhmaṇas, just accept me as a completely surrendered soul, and let mother Ganges, the representative of the Lord, also accept me in that way, for I have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. Let the snakebird or whatever magical thing the brāhmaṇa created bite me at once. I only desire that you all continue singing the deeds of Lord Viṣṇu.

16Again, offering obeisances unto all you brāhmaṇas, I pray that if I should again take my birth in the material world I will have complete attachment to the unlimited Lord Kṛṣṇa, association with His devotees and friendly relations with all living beings.

17In perfect selfcontrol, Mahārāja Parīkṣit sat down on a seat of straw, with strawroots facing the east, placed on the southern bank of the Ganges, and he himself faced the north. Just previously he had given charge of his kingdom over to his son.

18Thus the King, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, sat to fast until death. All the demigods of the higher planets praised the King's actions and in pleasure continually scattered flowers over the earth and beat celestial drums.

19All the great sages who were assembled there also praised the decision of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, and they expressed their approval by saying "Very good." Naturally the sages are inclined to do good to common men, for they have all the qualitative powers of the Supreme Lord. Therefore they were very much pleased to see Mahārāja Parīkṣit, a devotee of the Lord, and they spoke as follows.

20[The sages said:] O chief of all the saintly kings of the Pāṇḍu dynasty who are strictly in the line of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa! It is not at all astonishing that you give up your throne, which is decorated with the helmets of many kings, to achieve eternal association with the Personality of Godhead.

21We shall all wait here until the foremost devotee of the Lord, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, returns to the supreme planet, which is completely free from all mundane contamination and all kinds of lamentation.

22All that was spoken by the great sages was very sweet to hear, full of meaning and appropriately presented as perfectly true. So after hearing them, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, desiring to hear of the activities of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, congratulated the great sages.

23The King said: O great sages, you have all very kindly assembled here, having come from all

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parts of the universe. You are all as good as supreme knowledge personified, who resides in the planet above the three worlds [Satyaloka]. Consequently you are naturally inclined to do good to others, and but for this you have no interest, either in this life or in the next.

24O trustworthy brāhmaṇas, I now ask you about my immediate duty. Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and specifically of those who are just about to die.

25At that moment there appeared the powerful son of Vyāsadeva, who traveled over the earth disinterested and satisfied with himself. He did not manifest any symptoms of belonging to any social order or status of life. He was surrounded with women and children, and he dressed as if others had neglected him.

26This son of Vyāsadeva was only sixteen years old. His legs, hands, thighs, arms, shoulders, forehead and the other parts of his body were all delicately formed. His eyes were beautifully wide, and his nose and ears were highly raised. He had a very attractive face, and his neck was well formed and beautiful like a conchshell.

27His collarbone was fleshy, his chest broad and thick, his navel deep and his abdomen beautifully striped. His arms were long, and curly hair was strewn over his beautiful face. He was naked, and the hue of his body reflected that of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

28He was blackish and very beautiful due to his youth. Because of the glamor of his body and his attractive smiles, he was pleasing to women. Though he tried to cover his natural glories, the great sages present there were all expert in the art of physiognomy, and so they honored him by rising from their seats.

29Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who is also known as Viṣṇurāta [one who is always protected by Viṣṇu], bowed his head to receive the chief guest, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. At that time all the ignorant women and boys ceased following Śrīla Śukadeva. Receiving respect from all, Śukadeva Gosvāmī took his exalted seat.

30Śukadeva Gosvāmī was then surrounded by saintly sages and demigods just as the moon is surrounded by stars, planets and other heavenly bodies. His presence was gorgeous, and he was respected by all.

31The sage ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī sat perfectly pacified, intelligent and ready to answer any question without hesitation. The great devotee, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, approached him, offered his respects by bowing before him, and politely inquired with sweet words and folded hands.

32The fortunate King Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, by your mercy only, you have sanctified us, making us like unto places of pilgrimage, all by your presence here as my guest. By your mercy, we, who are but unworthy royalty, become eligible to serve the devotee.

33Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified. And what to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your holy feet and offering you a seat in our home?

34Just as the atheist cannot remain in the presence of the Personality of Godhead, so also the invulnerable sins of a man are immediately vanquished in your presence, O saint! O great mystic!

35Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is very dear to the sons of King Pāṇḍu, has accepted me as one of those relatives just to please His great cousins and brothers.

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36 Otherwise [without being inspired by Lord Kṛṣṇa] how is it that you have voluntarily appeared here, though you are moving incognito to the common man and are not visible to us who are on the verge of death?

37 You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die.

38 Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.

39 O powerful brāhmaṇa, it is said that you hardly stay in the houses of men long enough to milk a cow.

40 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: The King thus spoke and questioned the sage, using sweet language. Then the great and powerful personality, the son of Vyāsadeva, who knew the principles of religion, began his reply.

Canto 2: The Cosmic Manifestation

SB 2.1: The First Step in God Realization

Invocation O my Lord, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial to all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter for hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists.

2 Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor.

3 The lifetime of such an envious householder is passed at night either in sleeping or in sex indulgence, and in the daytime either in making money or maintaining family members.

4 Persons devoid of ātma-tattva do not inquire into the problems of life, being too attached to the fallible soldiers like the body, children and wife. Although sufficiently experienced, they still do not see their inevitable destruction.

5 O descendant of King Bharata, one who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller and the savior from all miseries.

6 The highest perfection of human life, achieved either by complete knowledge of matter and spirit, by practice of mystic powers, or by perfect discharge of occupational duty, is to remember the Personality of Godhead at the end of life.

7 O King Parīkṣit, mainly the topmost transcendentalists, who are above the regulative principles and restrictions, take pleasure in describing the glories of the Lord.

8 At the end of the Dvāpara-yuga, I studied this great supplement of Vedic literature named Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is equal to all the Vedas, from my father, Śrīla Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva.

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9 O saintly King, I was certainly situated perfectly in transcendence, yet I was still attracted by the delineation of the pastimes of the Lord, who is described by enlightened verses.

10 That very Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam I shall recite before you because you are the most sincere devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who gives full attention and respect to hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam achieves unflinching faith in the Supreme Lord, the giver of salvation.

11 O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.

12 What is the value of a prolonged life which is wasted, inexperienced by years in this world? Better a moment of full consciousness, because that gives one a start in searching after his supreme interest.

13 The saintly King Khaṭvāṅga, after being informed that the duration of his life would be only a moment more, at once freed himself from all material activities and took shelter of the supreme safety, the Personality of Godhead.

14 Mahārāja Parīkṣit, now your duration of life is limited to seven more days, so during this time you can perform all those rituals which are needed for the best purpose of your next life.

15 At the last stage of one's life, one should be bold enough not to be afraid of death. But one must cut off all attachment to the material body and everything pertaining to it and all desires thereof.

16 One should leave home and practice self-control. In a sacred place he should bathe regularly and sit down in a lonely place duly sanctified.

17 After sitting in the above manner, make the mind remember the three transcendental letters [a-u-m], and by regulating the breathing process, control the mind so as not to forget the transcendental seed.

18 Gradually, as the mind becomes progressively spiritualized, withdraw it from sense activities, and by intelligence the senses will be controlled. The mind too absorbed in material activities can be engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead and become fixed in full transcendental consciousness.

19 Thereafter, you should meditate upon the limbs of Viṣṇu, one after another, without being deviated from the conception of the complete body. Thus the mind becomes free from all sense objects. There should be no other thing to be thought upon. Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is the Ultimate Truth, the mind becomes completely reconciled in Him only.

20 One's mind is always agitated by the passionate mode of material nature and bewildered by the ignorant mode of nature. But one can rectify such conceptions by the relation of Viṣṇu and thus become pacified by cleansing the dirty things created by them.

21 O King, by this system of remembrance and by being fixed in the habit of seeing the all-good personal conception of the Lord, one can very soon attain devotional service to the Lord, under His direct shelter.

22 The fortunate King Parīkṣit, inquiring further, said: O brāhmaṇa, please describe in full detail how and where the mind has to be applied and how the conception can be fixed so that the dirty things in a person's mind can be removed.

23 Śukadeva Gosvāmī answered: One should control the sitting posture, regulate the breathing process by the yogic prāṇāyāma and thus control the mind and senses and with intelligence apply the mind to the gross potencies of the Lord [called the virāṭ-rūpa].

24 This gigantic manifestation of the phenomenal material world as a whole is the personal body of the Absolute Truth, wherein the universal resultant past, present and future of material time is experienced.

25 The gigantic universal form of the Personality of Godhead, within the body of the universal shell, which is covered by sevenfold material elements, is the subject for the virāṭ conception.

26 Persons who have realized it have studied that the planets known as Pātāla constitute the bottoms of the feet of the universal Lord, and the heels and the toes are the Rasātala planets. The ankles are the Mahātala planets, and His shanks constitute the Talātala planets.

27 The knees of the universal form are the planetary system of the name Sutala, and the two thighs are the Vitala and Atala planetary systems. The hips are Mahātala, and outer space is the depression of His navel.

28 The chest of the Original Personality of the gigantic form is the luminary planetary system, His neck is the Mahar planets, His mouth is the Janas planets, and His forehead is the Tapas planetary system. The topmost planetary system, known as Satyaloka, is the head of He who has one thousand heads.

29 His arms are the demigods headed by Indra, the ten directional sides are His ears, and physical sound is His sense of hearing. His nostrils are the two Aśvinī-kumāras, and material fragrance is His sense of smell. His mouth is the blazing fire.

30 The sphere of outer space constitutes His eyepits, and the eyeball is the sun as the power of seeing. His eyelids are both the day and night, and in the movements of His eyebrows, Brahmā and similar supreme personalities reside. His palate is the director of water, Varuṇa, and the juice or essence of everything is His tongue.

31 They say that the Vedic hymns are the cerebral passage of the Lord, and His jaws of teeth are Yama, god of death, who punishes the sinners. The art of affection is His set of teeth, and the most alluring illusory material energy is His smile. This great ocean of material creation is but the casting of His glance over us.

32 Modesty is the upper portion of His lips, hankering is His chin, religion is the breast of the Lord, and irreligion is His back. Brahmājī, who generates all living beings in the material world, is His genitals, and the Mitrā-varuṇas are His two testicles. The ocean is His waist, and the hills and mountains are the stacks of His bones.

33 O King, the rivers are the veins of the gigantic body, the trees are the hairs of His body, and the omnipotent air is His breath. The passing ages are His movements, and His activities are the reactions of the three modes of material nature.

34 O best amongst the Kurus, the clouds which carry water are the hairs on His head, the terminations of days or nights are His dress, and the supreme cause of material creation is His intelligence. His mind is the moon, the reservoir of all changes.

35 The principle of matter [mahat-tattva] is the consciousness of the omnipresent Lord, as asserted by the experts, and Rudradeva is His ego. The horse, mule, camel and elephant are His nails, and wild animals and all quadrupeds are situated in the belt zone of the Lord.

36 Varieties of birds are indications of His masterful artistic sense. Manu, the father of mankind, is the emblem of His standard intelligence, and humanity is His residence. The celestial species of human beings, like the Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas and angels, all represent His musical rhythm, and the demoniac soldiers are representations of His wonderful prowess.

37 The virāṭ-puruṣa's face is the brāhmaṇas, His arms are the kṣatriyas, His thighs are the vaiśyas, and the śūdras are under the protection of His feet. All the worshipable demigods are also overtaken by Him, and it is the duty of everyone to perform sacrifices with feasible goods to appease the Lord.

38 I have thus explained to you the gross material gigantic conception of the Personality of Godhead. One who seriously desires liberation concentrates his mind on this form of the Lord, because there is nothing more than this in the material world.

39 One should concentrate his mind upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who alone distributes Himself in so many manifestations just as ordinary persons create thousands of manifestations in dreams. One must concentrate the mind on Him, the only all-blissful Absolute Truth. Otherwise one will be misled and will cause his own degradation.

SB 2.2: The Lord in the Heart

1 ŚrīSukadeva Gosvāmī said: Formerly, prior to the manifestation of the cosmos, Lord Brahmā, by meditating on the virāṭ-rūpa, regained his lost consciousness by appeasing the Lord. Thus he was able to rebuild the creation as it was before.

2 The way of presentation of the Vedic sounds is so bewildering that it directs the intelligence of the people to meaningless things like the heavenly kingdoms. The conditioned souls hover in dreams of such heavenly illusory pleasures, but actually they do not relish any tangible happiness in such places.

3 For this reason the enlightened person should endeavor only for the minimum necessities of life while in the world of names. He should be intelligently fixed and never endeavor for unwanted things, being competent to perceive practically that all such endeavors are merely hard labor for nothing.

4 When there are ample earthly flats to lie on, what is the necessity of cots and beds? When one can use his own arms, what is the necessity of a pillow? When one can use the palms of his hands, what is the necessity of varieties of utensils? When there is ample covering, or the skins of trees, what is the necessity of clothing?

5 Are there no torn clothes lying on the common road? Do the trees, which exist for maintaining others, no longer give alms in charity? Do the rivers, being dried up, no longer supply water to the thirsty? Are the caves of the mountains now closed? Or above all, does the Almighty Lord not protect the fully surrendered souls? Why then do the learned sages go to

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flatter those who are intoxicated by hard-earned wealth?

6 Thus being fixed, one must render service unto the Supersoul situated in one's own heart by His omnipotency. Because He is the Almighty Personality of Godhead, eternal and unlimited, He is the ultimate goal of life, and by worshipping Him one can end the cause of the conditioned state of existence.

7 Who else but the gross materialists will neglect such transcendental thought and take to the nonpermanent names only, seeing the mass of people fallen in the river of suffering as the consequence of accruing the result of their own work?

8 Others conceive of the Personality of Godhead residing within the body in the region of the heart and measuring only eight inches, with four hands carrying a lotus, a wheel of a chariot, a conchshell and a club respectively.

9 His mouth expresses His happiness. His eyes spread like the petals of a lotus, and His garments, yellowish like the saffron of a kadamba flower, are bedecked with valuable jewels. His ornaments are all made of gold, set with jewels, and He wears a glowing headdress and earrings.

10 His lotus feet are placed over the whorls of the lotuslike hearts of great mystics. On His chest is the Kaustubha jewel, engraved with a beautiful calf, and there are other jewels on His shoulders. His complete torso is garlanded with fresh flowers.

11 He is well decorated with an ornamental wreath about His waist and rings studded with valuable jewels on His fingers. His leglets, His bangles, His oiled hair, curling with a bluish tint, and His beautiful smiling face are all very pleasing.

12 The Lord's magnanimous pastimes and the glowing glancing of His smiling face are all indications of His extensive benedictions. One must therefore concentrate on this transcendental form of the Lord, as long as the mind can be fixed on Him by meditation.

13 The process of meditation should begin from the lotus feet of the Lord and progress to His smiling face. The meditation should be concentrated upon the lotus feet, then the calves, then the thighs, and in this way higher and higher. The more the mind becomes fixed upon the different parts of the limbs, one after another, the more the intelligence becomes purified.

14 Unless the gross materialist develops a sense of loving service unto the Supreme Lord, the seer of both the transcendental and material worlds, he should remember or meditate upon the universal form of the Lord at the end of his prescribed duties.

15 O King, whenever the yogī desires to leave this planet of human beings, he should not be perplexed about the proper time or place, but should comfortably sit without being disturbed and, regulating the life air, should control the senses by the mind.

16 Thereafter, the yogī should merge his mind, by his unalloyed intelligence, into the living entity, and then merge the living entity into the Superself. And by doing this, the fully satisfied living entity becomes situated in the supreme stage of satisfaction, so that he ceases from all other activities.

17 In that transcendental state of labdhopasānti, there is no supremacy of devastating time, which controls even the celestial demigods who are empowered to rule over mundane

creatures. (And what to speak of the demigods themselves?) Nor is there the mode of material goodness, nor passion, nor ignorance, nor even the false ego, nor the material Causal Ocean, nor the material nature.

18 The transcendentalists desire to avoid everything godless, for they know that supreme situation in which everything is related with the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore a pure devotee who is in absolute harmony with the Lord does not create perplexities, but worships the lotus feet of the Lord at every moment, taking them into his heart.

19 By the strength of scientific knowledge, one should be well situated in absolute realization and thus be able to extinguish all material desires. One should then give up the material body by blocking the air hole [through which stool is evacuated] with the heel of one's foot and by lifting the life air from one place to another in the six primary places.

20 The meditative devotee should slowly push up the life air from the navel to the heart, from there to the chest, and from there to the root of the palate. He should search out the proper places with intelligence.

21 Thereafter the bhakti-yogī should push the life air up between the eyebrows, and then, blocking the seven outlets of the life air, he should maintain his aim for going back home, back to Godhead. If he is completely free from all desires for material enjoyment, he should then reach the cerebral hole and give up his material connections, having gone to the Supreme.

22 However, O King, if a yogī maintains a desire for improved material enjoyments, like transference to the topmost planet, Brahmaloḳa, or the achievement of the eightfold perfections, travel in outer space with the Vaihāyāsa, or a situation in one of the millions of planets, then he has to take away with him the materially molded mind and senses.

23 The transcendentalists are concerned with the spiritual body. As such, by the strength of their devotional service, austerities, mystic power and transcendental knowledge, their movements are unrestricted, within and beyond the material worlds. The fruitive workers, or the gross materialists, can never move in such an unrestricted manner.

24 O King, when such a mystic passes over the Milky Way by the illuminating Suṣuṃṇā to reach the highest planet, Brahmaloḳa, he goes first to Vaiśvānara, the planet of the deity of fire, wherein he becomes completely cleansed of all contaminations, and thereafter he still goes higher, to the circle of Śiśuṃāra, to relate with Lord Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

25 This Śiśuṃāra is the pivot for the turning of the complete universe, and it is called the navel of Viṣṇu [Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu]. The yogī alone goes beyond this circle of Śiśuṃāra and attains the planet [Maharloḳa] where purified saints like Bhṛḡu enjoy a duration of life of 4,300,000,000 solar years. This planet is worshipable even for saints who are transcendently situated.

26 At the time of the final devastation of the complete universe [the end of the duration of Brahmā's life], a flame of fire emanates from the mouth of Ananta [from the bottom of the universe]. The yogī sees all the planets of the universe burning to ashes, and thus he leaves for Satyaloḳa by airplanes used by the great purified souls. The duration of life in Satyaloḳa is calculated to be 15,480,000,000,000 years.

27 In that planet of Satyaloḳa, there is neither bereavement, nor old age nor death. There is no

pain of any kind, and therefore there are no anxieties, save that sometimes, due to consciousness, there is a feeling of compassion for those unaware of the process of devotional service, who are subjected to unsurpassable miseries in the material world.

28 After reaching Satyaloka, the devotee is specifically able to be incorporated fearlessly by the subtle body in an identity similar to that of the gross body, and one after another he gradually attains stages of existence from earthly to watery, fiery, glowing and airy, until he reaches the ethereal stage.

29 The devotee thus surpasses the subtle objects of different senses like aroma by smelling, the palate by tasting, vision by seeing forms, touch by contacting, the vibrations of the ear by ethereal identification, and the sense organs by material activities.

30 The devotee, thus surpassing the gross and the subtle forms of coverings, enters the plane of egoism. And in that status he merges the material modes of nature [ignorance and passion] in this point of neutralization and thus reaches egoism in goodness. After this, all egoism is merged in the mahat-tattva, and he comes to the point of pure self-realization.

31 Only the purified soul can attain the perfection of associating with the Personality of Godhead in complete bliss and satisfaction in his constitutional state. Whoever is able to renovate such devotional perfection is never again attracted by this material world, and he never returns.

32 Your Majesty Mahārāja Parīkṣit, know that all that I have described in reply to your proper inquiry is just according to the version of the Vedas, and it is eternal truth. This was described personally by Lord Kṛṣṇa unto Brahmā, with whom the Lord was satisfied upon being properly worshiped.

33 For those who are wandering in the material universe, there is no more auspicious means of deliverance than what is aimed at in the direct devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

34 The great personality Brahmā, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest perfection of religion.

35 The Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in every living being along with the individual soul. And this fact is perceived and hypothesized in our acts of seeing and taking help from the intelligence.

36 O King, it is therefore essential that every human being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere.

37 Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him [the Personality of Godhead].

SB 2.3: Pure Devotional Service: The Change in Heart

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parīkṣit, as you have inquired from me as to the duty of the intelligent man who is on the threshold of death, so I have answered you.

2-7 One who desires to be absorbed in the impersonal brahmajyoti effulgence should worship

the master of the Vedas [Lord Brahmā or Bṛhaspati, the learned priest], one who desires powerful sex should worship the heavenly King, Indra, and one who desires good progeny should worship the great progenitors called the Prajāpatis. One who desires good fortune should worship Durgādevī, the superintendent of the material world. One desiring to be very powerful should worship fire, and one who aspires only after money should worship the Vasus. One should worship the Rudra incarnations of Lord Śiva if he wants to be a great hero. One who wants a large stock of grains should worship Aditi. One who desires to attain the heavenly planets should worship the sons of Aditi. One who desires a worldly kingdom should worship Viśvadeva, and one who wants to be popular with the general mass of population should worship the Sādhya demigod. One who desires a long span of life should worship the demigods known as the Aśvinī-kumāras, and a person desiring a strongly built body should worship the earth. One who desires stability in his post should worship the horizon and the earth combined. One who desires to be beautiful should worship the beautiful residents of the Gandharva planet, and one who desires a good wife should worship the Apsarās and the Urvaśī society girls of the heavenly kingdom. One who desires domination over others should worship Lord Brahmā, the head of the universe. One who desires tangible fame should worship the Personality of Godhead, and one who desires a good bank balance should worship the demigod Varuṇa. If one desires to be a greatly learned man he should worship Lord Śiva, and if one desires a good marital relation he should worship the chaste goddess Umā, the wife of Lord Śiva.

8 One should worship Lord Viṣṇu or His devotee for spiritual advancement in knowledge, and for protection of heredity and advancement of a dynasty one should worship the various demigods.

9 One who desires domination over a kingdom or an empire should worship the Manus. One who desires victory over an enemy should worship the demons, and one who desires sense gratification should worship the moon. But one who desires nothing of material enjoyment should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

10 A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.

11 All the different kinds of worshipers of multidemigods can attain the highest perfectional benediction, which is spontaneous attraction unflinchingly fixed upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only by the association of the pure devotee of the Lord.

12 Transcendental knowledge in relation with the Supreme Lord Hari is knowledge resulting in the complete suspension of the waves and whirlpools of the material modes. Such knowledge is self-satisfying due to its being free from material attachment, and being transcendental it is approved by authorities. Who could fail to be attracted?

13 Śaunaka said: The son of Vyāsadeva, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, was a highly learned sage and was able to describe things in a poetic manner. What did Mahārāja Parīkṣit again inquire from him after hearing all that he had said?

14 O learned Sūta Gosvāmī! Please continue to explain such topics to us because we are all eager to hear. Besides that, topics which result in the discussion of the Lord Hari should certainly be discussed in the assembly of devotees.

15 Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the grandson of the Pāṇḍavas, was from his very childhood a great devotee of the Lord. Even while playing with dolls, he used to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa by imitating

the worship of the family Deity.

16 Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva, was also full in transcendental knowledge and was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva. So there must have been discussion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is glorified by great philosophers and in the company of great devotees.

17 Both by rising and by setting, the sun decreases the duration of life of everyone, except one who utilizes the time by discussing topics of the all-good Personality of Godhead.

18 Do the trees not live? Do the bellows of the blacksmith not breathe? All around us, do the beasts not eat and discharge semen?

19 Men who are like dogs, hogs, camels and asses praise those men who never listen to the transcendental pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the deliverer from evils.

20 One who has not listened to the messages about the prowess and marvelous acts of the Personality of Godhead and has not sung or chanted loudly the worthy songs about the Lord is to be considered to possess earholes like the holes of snakes and a tongue like the tongue of a frog.

21 The upper portion of the body, though crowned with a silk turban, is only a heavy burden if not bowed down before the Personality of Godhead who can award mukti [freedom]. And the hands, though decorated with glittering bangles, are like those of a dead man if not engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead Hari.

22 The eyes which do not look at the symbolic representations of the Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu [His forms, name, quality, etc.] are like those printed on the plumes of the peacock, and the legs which do not move to the holy places [where the Lord is remembered] are considered to be like tree trunks.

23 The person who has not at any time received the dust of the feet of the Lord's pure devotee upon his head is certainly a dead body. And the person who has never experienced the aroma of the tulasī leaves from the lotus feet of the Lord is also a dead body, although breathing.

24 Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end.

25 O Sūta Gosvāmī, your words are pleasing to our minds. Please therefore explain this to us as it was spoken by the great devotee Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is very expert in transcendental knowledge, and who spoke to Mahārāja Parīkṣit upon being asked.

SB 2.4: The Process of Creation

1 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the son of Uttarā, after hearing the speeches of Śukadeva Gosvāmī, which were all about the truth of the self, applied his concentration faithfully upon Lord Kṛṣṇa.

2 Mahārāja Parīkṣit, as a result of his wholehearted attraction for Lord Kṛṣṇa, was able to give up all deep-rooted affection for his personal body, his wife, his children, his palace, his animals like horses and elephants, his treasury house, his friends and relatives, and his undisputed kingdom.

3-4 O great sages, the great soul Mahārāja Parīkṣit, constantly rapt in thought of Lord Kṛṣṇa, knowing well of his imminent death, renounced all sorts of fruitive activities, namely acts of

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religion, economic development and sense gratification, and thus fixed himself firmly in his natural love for Kṛṣṇa and asked all these questions, exactly as you are asking me.

5 Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O learned brāhmaṇa, you know everything because you are without material contamination. Therefore whatever you have spoken to me appears perfectly right. Your speeches are gradually destroying the darkness of my ignorance, for you are narrating the topics of the Lord.

6 I beg to know from you how the Personality of Godhead, by His personal energies, creates these phenomenal universes as they are, which are inconceivable even to the great demigods.

7 Kindly describe how the Supreme Lord, who is all-powerful, engages His different energies and different expansions in maintaining and again winding up the phenomenal world in the sporting spirit of a player.

8 O learned brāhmaṇa, the transcendental activities of the Lord are all wonderful, and they appear inconceivable because even great endeavors by many learned scholars have still proved insufficient for understanding them.

9 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, whether He alone acts with the modes of material nature, or simultaneously expands in many forms, or expands consecutively to direct the modes of nature.

10 Kindly clear up all these doubtful inquiries, because you are not only vastly learned in the Vedic literatures and self-realized in transcendence, but are also a great devotee of the Lord and are therefore as good as the Personality of Godhead.

11 Sūta Gosvāmī said: When Śukadeva Gosvāmī was thus requested by the King to describe the creative energy of the Personality of Godhead, he then systematically remembered the master of the senses [Śrī Kṛṣṇa], and to reply properly he spoke thus.

12 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who, for the creation of the material world, accepts the three modes of nature. He is the complete whole residing within the body of everyone, and His ways are inconceivable.

13 I again offer my respectful obeisances unto the form of complete existence and transcendence, who is the liberator of the pious devotees from all distresses and the destroyer of the further advances in atheistic temperament of the nondevotee-demons. For the transcendentalists who are situated in the topmost spiritual perfection, He grants their specific destinations.

14 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Him who is the associate of the members of the Yadu dynasty and who is always a problem for the nondevotees. He is the supreme enjoyer of both the material and spiritual worlds, yet He enjoys His own abode in the spiritual sky. There is no one equal to Him because His transcendental opulence is immeasurable.

15 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-auspicious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, about whom glorification, remembrances, audience, prayers, hearing and worship can at once cleanse the effects of all sins of the performer.

16 Let me offer my respectful obeisances again and again unto the all-auspicious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The highly intellectual, simply by surrendering unto His lotus feet, are relieved of all attachments to present and future existences and without difficulty progress toward spiritual existence.

17 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-auspicious Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa again and again because the great learned sages, the great performers of charity, the great workers of distinction, the great philosophers and mystics, the great chanters of the Vedic hymns and the great followers of Vedic principles cannot achieve any fruitful result without dedication of such great qualities to the service of the Lord.

18 Kirāta, Hūṇa, Āndhra, Pulinda, Pulkaśa, Ābhīra, Śumbha, Yavana, members of the Khasa races and even others addicted to sinful acts can be purified by taking shelter of the devotees of the Lord, due to His being the supreme power. I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

19 He is the Supersoul and the Supreme Lord of all self-realized souls. He is the personification of the Vedas, religious scriptures and austerities. He is worshiped by Lord Brahmā and Śiva and all those who are transcendental to all pretensions. Being so revered with awe and veneration, may that Supreme Absolute be pleased with me.

20 May Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the worshipable Lord of all devotees, the protector and glory of all the kings like Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi of the Yadu dynasty, the husband of all goddesses of fortune, the director of all sacrifices and therefore the leader of all living entities, the controller of all intelligence, the proprietor of all planets, spiritual and material, and the supreme incarnation on the earth (the supreme all in all), be merciful upon me.

21 It is the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa who gives liberation. By thinking of His lotus feet at every second, following in the footsteps of authorities, the devotee in trance can see the Absolute Truth. The learned mental speculators, however, think of Him according to their whims. May the Lord be pleased with me.

22 May the Lord, who in the beginning of the creation amplified the potent knowledge of Brahmā from within his heart and inspired him with full knowledge of creation and of His own Self, and who appeared to be generated from the mouth of Brahmā, be pleased with me.

23 May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who enlivens the materially created bodies of the elements by lying down within the universe, and who in His puruṣa incarnation causes the living being to be subjected to the sixteen divisions of material modes which are his generator, be pleased to decorate my statements.

24 I offer my respectful obeisances unto Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Vāsudeva who compiled the Vedic scriptures. The pure devotees drink up the nectarean transcendental knowledge dropping from the lotuslike mouth of the Lord.

25 My dear King, Brahmā, the firstborn, on being questioned by Nārada, exactly apprised him on this subject as it had been directly spoken by the Lord to His own son, who was impregnated with Vedic knowledge from his very birth.

SB 2.5: The Cause of All Causes

1 Śrī Nārada Muni asked Brahmājī: O chief amongst the demigods, O firstborn living entity, I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto you. Please tell me that transcendental knowledge which specifically directs one to the truth of the individual soul and the Supersoul.

2 My dear father, please describe factually the symptoms of this manifest world. What is its background? How is it created? How is it conserved? And under whose control is all this being done?

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3 My dear father, all this is known to you scientifically because whatever was created in the past, whatever will be created in the future, or whatever is being created at present, as well as everything within the universe, is within your grip, just like a walnut.

4 My dear father, what is the source of your knowledge? Under whose protection are you standing? And under whom are you working? What is your real position? Do you alone create all entities with material elements by your personal energy?

5 As the spider very easily creates the network of its cobweb and manifests its power of creation without being defeated by others, so also you yourself, by employment of your self-sufficient energy, create without any other's help.

6 Whatever we can understand by the nomenclature, characteristics and features of a particular thing superior, inferior or equal, eternal or temporary is not created from any source other than that of Your Lordship, thou so great.

7 Yet we are moved to wonder about the existence of someone more powerful than you when we think of your great austerities in perfect discipline, although your good self is so powerful in the matter of creation.

8 My dear father, you know everything, and you are the controller of all. Therefore, may all that I have inquired from you be kindly instructed to me so that I may be able to understand it as your student.

9 Lord Brahmā said: My dear boy Nārada, being merciful to all (including me) you have asked all these questions because I have been inspired to see into the prowess of the Almighty Personality of Godhead.

10 Whatever you have spoken about me is not false because unless and until one is aware of the Personality of Godhead, who is the ultimate truth beyond me, one is sure to be illusioned by observing my powerful activities.

11 I create after the Lord's creation by His personal effulgence [known as the brahmajyoti], just as when the sun manifests its fire, the moon, the firmament, the influential planets and the twinkling stars also manifest their brightness.

12 I offer my obeisances and meditate upon Lord Kṛṣṇa [Vāsudeva], the Personality of Godhead, whose invincible potency influences them [the less intelligent class of men] to call me the supreme controller.

13 The illusory energy of the Lord cannot take precedence, being ashamed of her position, but those who are bewildered by her always talk nonsense, being absorbed in thoughts of "It is I" and "It is mine."

14 The five elementary ingredients of creation, the interaction thereof set up by eternal time, and the intuition or nature of the individual living beings are all differentiated parts and parcels of the Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, and in truth there is no other value in them.

15 The Vedic literatures are made by and are meant for the Supreme Lord, the demigods are also meant for serving the Lord as parts of His body, the different planets are also meant for the sake of the Lord, and different sacrifices are performed just to please Him.

16 All different types of meditation or mysticism are means for realizing Nārāyaṇa. All austerities are aimed at achieving Nārāyaṇa. Culture of transcendental knowledge is for getting a glimpse of Nārāyaṇa, and ultimately salvation is entering the kingdom of Nārāyaṇa.

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17 Inspired by Him only, I discover what is already created by Him [Nārāyaṇa] under His vision as the all-pervading Supersoul, and I also am created by Him only.

18 The Supreme Lord is pure, spiritual form, transcendental to all material qualities, yet for the sake of the creation of the material world and its maintenance and annihilation, He accepts through His external energy the material modes of nature called goodness, passion and ignorance.

19 These three modes of material nature, being further manifested as matter, knowledge and activities, put the eternally transcendental living entity under conditions of cause and effect and make him responsible for such activities.

20 O Brāhmaṇa Nārada, the Superseer, the transcendent Lord, is beyond the perception of the material senses of the living entities because of the above-mentioned three modes of nature. But He is the controller of everyone, including me.

21 The Lord, who is the controller of all energies, thus creates, by His own potency, eternal time, the fate of all living entities, and their particular nature, for which they were created, and He again merges them independently.

22 After the incarnation of the first puruṣa [Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu], the mahat-tattva, or the principles of material creation, take place, and then time is manifested, and in course of time the three qualities appear. Nature means the three qualitative appearances. They transform into activities.

23 Material activities are caused by the mahat-tattva's being agitated. At first there is transformation of the modes of goodness and passion, and later due to the mode of ignorance matter, its knowledge, and different activities of material knowledge come into play.

24 The self-centered materialistic ego, thus being transformed into three features, becomes known as the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance in three divisions, namely the powers that evolve matter, knowledge of material creations, and the intelligence that guides such materialistic activities. Nārada, you are quite competent to understand this.

25 From the darkness of false ego, the first of the five elements, namely the sky, is generated. Its subtle form is the quality of sound, exactly as the seer is in relationship with the seen.

26-29 Because the sky is transformed, the air is generated with the quality of touch, and by previous succession the air is also full of sound and the basic principles of duration of life: sense perception, mental power and bodily strength. When the air is transformed in course of time and nature's course, fire is generated, taking shape with the sense of touch and sound. Since fire is also transformed, there is a manifestation of water, full of juice and taste. As previously, it also has form and touch and is also full of sound. And water, being transformed from all variegatedness on earth, appears odorous and, as previously, becomes qualitatively full of juice, touch, sound and form respectively.

30 From the mode of goodness the mind is generated and becomes manifest, as also the ten demigods controlling the bodily movements. Such demigods are known as the controller of directions, the controller of air, the sun-god, the father of Dakṣa Prajāpati, the Aśvinī-kumāras, the fire-god, the King of heaven, the worshipable deity in heaven, the chief of the Ādityas, and Brahmājī, the Prajāpati. All come into existence.

31 By further transformation of the mode of passion, the sense organs like the ear, skin, nose, eyes, tongue, mouth, hands, genitals, legs, and the outlet for evacuating, together with

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intelligence and living energy, are all generated.

32 O Nārada, best of the transcendentalists, the forms of the body cannot take place as long as these created parts, namely the elements, senses, mind and modes of nature, are not assembled.

33 Thus when all these became assembled by force of the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this universe certainly came into being by accepting both the primary and secondary causes of creation.

34 Thus all the universes remained thousands of aeons within the water [the Causal Ocean], and the Lord of living beings, entering in each of them, caused them to be fully animated.

35 The Lord [Mahā-Viṣṇu], although lying in the Causal Ocean, came out of it, and dividing Himself as Hiraṇyagarbha, He entered into each universe and assumed the virāṭ-rūpa, with thousands of legs, arms, mouths, heads, etc.

36 Great philosophers imagine that the complete planetary systems in the universe are displays of the different upper and lower limbs of the universal body of the Lord.

37 The brāhmaṇas represent His mouth, the kṣatriyas His arms, the vaiśyas His thighs, and the śūdras are born of His legs.

38 The lower planetary systems, up to the limit of the earthly stratum, are said to be situated in His legs. The middle planetary systems, beginning from Bhūvarloka, are situated in His navel. And the still higher planetary systems, occupied by the demigods and highly cultured sages and saints, are situated in the chest of the Supreme Lord.

39 From the forefront of the chest up to the neck of the universal form of the Lord are situated the planetary systems named Janaloka and Tapaloka, whereas Satyaloka, the topmost planetary system, is situated on the head of the form. The spiritual planets, however, are eternal.

40-41 My dear son Nārada, know from me that there are seven lower planetary systems out of the total fourteen. The first planetary system, known as Atala, is situated on the waist; the second, Vitala, is situated on the thighs; the third, Sutala, on the knees; the fourth, Talātala, on the shanks; the fifth, Mahātala, on the ankles; the sixth, Rasātala, on the upper portion of the feet; and the seventh, Pātāla, on the soles of the feet. Thus the virāṭ form of the Lord is full of all planetary systems.

42 Others may divide the whole planetary system into three divisions, namely the lower planetary systems on the legs [up to the earth], the middle planetary systems on the navel, and the upper planetary systems [Svarloka] from the chest to the head of the Supreme Personality.

SB 2.6: Puruṣa-sūkta Confirmed

1 Lord Brahmā said: The mouth of the virāṭ-puruṣa [the universal form of the Lord] is the generating center of the voice, and the controlling deity is Fire. His skin and six other layers are the generating centers of the Vedic hymns, and His tongue is the productive center of different foodstuffs and delicacies for offering to the demigods, the forefathers and the general mass of people.

2 His two nostrils are the generating centers of our breathing and of all other airs, His smelling powers generate the Aśvinī-kumāra demigods and all kinds of medicinal herbs, and His breathing energies produce different kinds of fragrance.

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3 His eyes are the generating centers of all kinds of forms, and they glitter and illuminate. His eyeballs are like the sun and the heavenly planets. His ears hear from all sides and are receptacles for all the Vedas, and His sense of hearing is the generating center of the sky and of all kinds of sound.

4 His bodily surface is the breeding ground for the active principles of everything and for all kinds of auspicious opportunities. His skin, like the moving air, is the generating center for all kinds of sense of touch and is the place for performing all kinds of sacrifice.

5 The hairs on His body are the cause of all vegetation, particularly of those trees which are required as ingredients for sacrifice. The hairs on His head and face are reservoirs for the clouds, and His nails are the breeding ground of electricity, stones and iron ores.

6 The Lord's arms are the productive fields for the great demigods and other leaders of the living entities who protect the general mass.

7 Thus the forward steps of the Lord are the shelter for the upper, lower and heavenly planets, as well as for all that we need. His lotus feet serve as protection from all kinds of fear.

8 From the Lord's genitals originate water, semen, generatives, rains and the procreators. His genitals are the cause of a pleasure that counteracts the distress of begetting.

9 O Nārada, the evacuating outlet of the universal form of the Lord is the abode of the controlling deity of death, Mitra, and the evacuating hole and the rectum of the Lord is the place of envy, misfortune, death, hell, etc.

10 The back of the Lord is the place for all kinds of frustration and ignorance, as well as for immorality. From His veins flow the great rivers and rivulets, and on His bones are stacked the great mountains.

11 The impersonal feature of the Lord is the abode of great oceans, and His belly is the resting place for the materially annihilated living entities. His heart is the abode of the subtle material bodies of living beings. Thus it is known by the intelligent class of men.

12 Also, the consciousness of that great personality is the abode of religious principles mine, yours, and those of the four bachelors Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanat-kumāra and Sanandana. That consciousness is also the abode of truth and transcendental knowledge.

13-16 Beginning from me [Brahmā] down to you and Bhava [Śiva], all the great sages who were born before you, the demigods, the demons, the Nāgas, the human beings, the birds, the beasts, as well as the reptiles, etc., and all phenomenal manifestations of the universes, namely the planets, stars, asteroids, luminaries, lightning, thunder, and the inhabitants of the different planetary systems, namely the Gandharvas, Apsarās, Yakṣas, Rakṣas, Bhūtagaṇas, Uragas, Paśus, Pitās, Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas, and all other different varieties of living entities, including the birds, beasts, trees and everything that be, are all covered by the universal form of the Lord at all times, namely past, present and future, although He is transcendental to all of them, eternally existing in a form not exceeding nine inches.

17 The sun illuminates both internally and externally by expanding its radiation; similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by expanding His universal form, maintains everything in the creation both internally and externally.

18 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the controller of immortality and fearlessness, and He is transcendental to death and the fruitive actions of the material world. O Nārada, O brāhmaṇa, it is therefore difficult to measure the glories of the Supreme Person.

19 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is to be known as the supreme reservoir of all material opulences by the one fourth of His energy in which all the living entities exist. Deathlessness, fearlessness and freedom from the anxieties of old age and disease exist in the kingdom of God, which is beyond the three higher planetary systems and beyond the material coverings.

20 The spiritual world, which consists of three fourths of the Lord's energy, is situated beyond this material world, and it is especially meant for those who will never be reborn. Others, who are attached to family life and who do not strictly follow celibacy vows, must live within the three material worlds.

21 By His energies, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead is thus comprehensively the master in the activities of controlling and in devotional service. He is the ultimate master of both nescience and factual knowledge of all situations.

22 From that Personality of Godhead, all the universal globes and the universal form with all material elements, qualities and senses are generated. Yet He is aloof from such material manifestations, like the sun, which is separate from its rays and heat.

23 When I was born from the abdominal lotus flower of the Lord [Mahā-Viṣṇu], the great person, I had no ingredients for sacrificial performances except the bodily limbs of the great Personality of Godhead.

24 For performing sacrificial ceremonies, one requires sacrificial ingredients, such as flowers, leaves and straw, along with the sacrificial altar and a suitable time [spring].

25 Other requirements are utensils, grains, clarified butter, honey, gold, earth, water, the Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda and Sāma Veda and four priests to perform the sacrifice.

26 Other necessities include invoking the different names of the demigods by specific hymns and vows of recompense, in accordance with the particular scripture, for specific purposes and by specific processes.

27 Thus I had to arrange all these necessary ingredients and paraphernalia of sacrifice from the personal bodily parts of the Personality of Godhead. By invocation of the demigods' names, the ultimate goal, Viṣṇu, was gradually attained, and thus compensation and ultimate offering were complete.

28 Thus I created the ingredients and paraphernalia for offering sacrifice out of the parts of the body of the Supreme Lord, the enjoyer of the sacrifice, and I performed the sacrifice to satisfy the Lord.

29 My dear son, thereafter your nine brothers, who are the masters of living creatures, performed the sacrifice with proper rituals to satisfy both the manifested and nonmanifested personalities.

30 Thereafter, the Manus, the fathers of mankind, the great sages, the forefathers, the learned scholars, the Daityas and mankind performed sacrifices meant to please the Supreme Lord.

31 All the material manifestations of the universes are therefore situated in His powerful material energies, which He accepts self-sufficiently, although He is eternally without affinity for the material modes.

32 By His will, I create, Lord Śiva destroys, and He Himself, in His eternal form as the Personality of Godhead, maintains everything. He is the powerful controller of these three

energies.

33 My dear son, whatever you inquired from me I have thus explained unto you, and you must know for certain that whatever there is (either as cause or as effect, both in the material and spiritual worlds) is dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

34 O Nārada, because I have caught hold of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, with great zeal, whatever I say has never proved to have been false. Nor is the progress of my mind ever deterred. Nor are my senses ever degraded by temporary attachment to matter.

35 Although I am known as the great Brahmā, perfect in the disciplic succession of Vedic wisdom, and although I have undergone all austerities and am an expert in mystic powers and self-realization, and although I am recognized as such by the great forefathers of the living entities, who offer me respectful obeisances, still I cannot understand Him, the Lord, the very source of my birth.

36 Therefore it is best for me to surrender unto His feet, which alone can deliver one from the miseries of repeated birth and death. Such surrender is all-auspicious and allows one to perceive all happiness. Even the sky cannot estimate the limits of its own expansion. So what can others do when the Lord Himself is unable to estimate His own limits?

37 Since neither Lord Śiva nor you nor I could ascertain the limits of spiritual happiness, how can other demigods know it? And because all of us are bewildered by the illusory, external energy of the Supreme Lord, we can see only this manifested cosmos according to our individual ability.

38 Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto that Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose incarnations and activities are chanted by us for glorification, though He can hardly be fully known as He is.

39 That supreme original Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, expanding His plenary portion as Mahā-Viṣṇu, the first incarnation, creates this manifested cosmos, but He is unborn. The creation, however, takes place in Him, and the material substance and manifestations are all Himself. He maintains them for some time and absorbs them into Himself again.

40-41 The Personality of Godhead is pure, being free from all contaminations of material tinges. He is the Absolute Truth and the embodiment of full and perfect knowledge. He is all-pervading, without beginning or end, and without rival. O Nārada, O great sage, the great thinkers can know Him when completely freed from all material hankerings and when sheltered under undisturbed conditions of the senses. Otherwise, by untenable arguments, all is distorted, and the Lord disappears from our sight.

42 Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu is the first incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and He is the master of eternal time, space, cause and effects, mind, the elements, the material ego, the modes of nature, the senses, the universal form of the Lord, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the sum total of all living beings, both moving and nonmoving.

43-45 I myself [Brahmā], Lord Śiva, Lord Viṣṇu, great generators of living beings like Dakṣa and Prajāpati, yourselves [Nārada and the Kumāras], heavenly demigods like Indra and Candra, the leaders of the Bhūrloka planets, the leaders of the earthly planets, the leaders of the lower planets, the leaders of the Gandharva planets, the leaders of the Vidyādhara planets, the leaders of the Cāraṇaloka planets, the leaders of the Yakṣas, Rakṣas and Uragas, the great sages, the great demons, the great atheists and the great spacemen, as well as the dead bodies,

evil spirits, satans, jinn, kūṣmāṇḍas, great aquatics, great beasts and great birds, etc. in other words, anything and everything which is exceptionally possessed of power, opulence, mental and perceptual dexterity, strength, forgiveness, beauty, modesty, opulence, and breeding, whether in form or formless may appear to be the specific truth and the form of the Lord, but actually they are not so. They are only a fragment of the transcendental potency of the Lord.

46 O Nārada, now I shall state, one after another, the transcendental incarnations of the Lord known as līlā-avatāras. Hearing of their activities counteracts all foul matters accumulated in the ear. These pastimes are pleasing to hear and are to be relished. Therefore they are in my heart.

SB 2.7: Scheduled Incarnations with Specific Functions

1 Lord Brahmā said: When the unlimitedly powerful Lord assumed the form of a boar as a pastime, just to lift the planet earth, which was drowned in the great ocean of the universe called the Garbhodaka, the first demon [Hiraṇyākṣa] appeared, and the Lord pierced him with His tusk.

2 The Prajāpati first begot Suyajsa in the womb of his wife Ākūti, and then Suyajsa begot demigods, headed by Suyama, in the womb of his wife Dakṣiṇā. Suyajsa, as the Indradeva, diminished very great miseries in the three planetary systems [upper, lower and intermediate], and because he so diminished the miseries of the universe, he was later called Hari by the great father of mankind, namely Svāyambhuva Manu.

3 The Lord then appeared as the Kapila incarnation, being the son of the prajāpati brāhmaṇa Kardama and his wife, Devahūti, along with nine other women [sisters]. He spoke to His mother about self-realization, by which, in that very lifetime, she became fully cleansed of the mud of the material modes and thereby achieved liberation, the path of Kapila.

4 The great sage Atri prayed for offspring, and the Lord, being satisfied with him, promised to incarnate as Atri's son, Dattātreya [Datta, the son of Atri]. And by the grace of the lotus feet of the Lord, many Yadus, Haihayas, etc., became so purified that they obtained both material and spiritual blessings.

5 To create different planetary systems I had to undergo austerities and penance, and the Lord, thus being pleased with me, incarnated in four sanas [Sanaka, Sanatkumāra, Sanandana and Sanātana]. In the previous creation the spiritual truth was devastated, but the four sanas explained it so nicely that the truth at once became clearly perceived by the sages.

6 To exhibit His personal way of austerity and penance, He appeared in twin forms as Nārāyaṇa and Nara in the womb of Mūrti, the wife of Dharma and the daughter of Dakṣa. Celestial beauties, the companions of Cupid, went to try to break His vows, but they were unsuccessful, for they saw that many beauties like them were emanating from Him, the Personality of Godhead.

7 Great stalwarts like Lord Śiva can, by their wrathful glances, overcome lust and vanquish him, yet they cannot be free from the overwhelming effects of their own wrath. Such wrath can never enter into the heart of Him [the Lord], who is above all this. So how can lust take shelter in His mind?

8 Being insulted by sharp words spoken by the co-wife of the king, even in his presence, Prince Dhruva, though only a boy, took to severe penances in the forest. And the Lord, being satisfied by his prayer, awarded him the Dhruva planet, which is worshiped by great sages, both upward and downward.

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9 Mahārāja Vena went astray from the path of righteousness, and the brāhmaṇas chastised him by the thunderbolt curse. By this King Vena was burnt with his good deeds and opulence and was en route to hell. The Lord, by His causeless mercy, descended as his son, by the name of Pṛthu, delivered the condemned King Vena from hell, and exploited the earth by drawing all kinds of crops as produce.

10 The Lord appeared as the son of Sudevī, the wife of King Nābhi, and was known as Ṛṣabhadeva. He performed materialistic yoga to equilibrate the mind. This stage is also accepted as the highest perfectional situation of liberation, wherein one is situated in one's self and is completely satisfied.

11 The Lord appeared as the Hayagrīva incarnation in a sacrifice performed by me [Brahmā]. He is the personified sacrifices, and the hue of His body is golden. He is the personified Vedas as well, and the Supersoul of all demigods. When He breathed, all the sweet sounds of the Vedic hymns came out of His nostrils.

12 At the end of the millennium, the would-be Vaivasvata Manu, of the name Satyavrata, would see that the Lord in the fish incarnation is the shelter of all kinds of living entities, up to those in the earthly planets. Because of my fear of the vast water at the end of the millennium, the Vedas come out of my [Brahmā's] mouth, and the Lord enjoys those vast waters and protects the Vedas.

13 The primeval Lord then assumed the tortoise incarnation in order to serve as a resting place [pivot] for the Mandara Mountain, which was acting as a churning rod. The demigods and demons were churning the Ocean of Milk with the Mandara Mountain in order to extract nectar. The mountain moved back and forth, scratching the back of Lord Tortoise, who, while partially sleeping, was experiencing an itching sensation.

14 The Personality of Godhead assumed the incarnation of Nṛsimhadeva in order to vanquish the great fears of the demigods. He killed the king of the demons [Hiraṇyakaśipu], who challenged the Lord with a club in his hand, by placing the demon on His thighs and piercing him with His nails, rolling His eyebrows in anger and showing His fearful teeth and mouth.

15 The leader of the elephants, whose leg was attacked in a river by a crocodile of superior strength, was much aggrieved. Taking a lotus flower in his trunk, he addressed the Lord, saying, "O original enjoyer, Lord of the universe! O deliverer, as famous as a place of pilgrimage! All are purified simply by hearing Your holy name, which is worthy to be chanted."

16 The Personality of Godhead, after hearing the elephant's plea, felt that the elephant needed His immediate help, for he was in great distress. Thus at once the Lord appeared there on the wings of the king of birds, Garuḍa, fully equipped with His weapon, the wheel [cakra]. With the wheel He cut to pieces the mouth of the crocodile to save the elephant, and He delivered the elephant by lifting him by his trunk.

17 The Lord, although transcendental to all material modes, still surpassed all the qualities of the sons of Aditi, known as the Ādityas. The Lord appeared as the youngest son of Aditi. And because He surpassed all the planets of the universe, He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. On the pretense of asking for a measurement of three footsteps of land, He took away all the lands of Bali Mahārāja. He asked simply because without begging, no authority can take one's rightful possession.

18 Bali Mahārāja, who put on his head the water washed from the lotus feet of the Lord, did not think of anything besides his promise, in spite of being forbidden by his spiritual master. The king dedicated his own personal body to fulfill the measurement of the Lord's third step.

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For such a personality, even the kingdom of heaven, which he conquered by his strength, was of no value.

19 O Nārada, you were taught about the science of God and His transcendental loving service by the Personality of Godhead in His incarnation of Haṁsāvatāra. He was very much pleased with you, due to your intense proportion of devotional service. He also explained unto you, lucidly, the full science of devotional service, which is especially understandable by persons who are souls surrendered unto Lord Vāsudeva, the Personality of Godhead.

20 As the incarnation of Manu, the Lord became the descendant of the Manu dynasty and ruled over the miscreant kingly order, subduing them by His powerful wheel weapon. Undeterred in all circumstances, His rule was characterized by His glorious fame, which spread over the three lokas, and above them to the planetary system of Satyaloka, the topmost in the universe.

21 The Lord in His incarnation of Dhanvantari very quickly cures the diseases of the ever-diseased living entities simply by His fame personified, and only because of Him do the demigods achieve long lives. Thus the Personality of Godhead becomes ever glorified. He also exacted a share from the sacrifices, and it is he only who inaugurated the medical science or the knowledge of medicine in the universe.

22 When the ruling administrators, who are known as the kṣatriyas, turned astray from the path of the Absolute Truth, being desirous to suffer in hell, the Lord, in His incarnation as the sage Paraśurāma, uprooted those unwanted kings, who appeared as the thorns of the earth. Thus He thrice seven times uprooted the kṣatriyas with His keenly sharpened chopper.

23 Due to His causeless mercy upon all living entities within the universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, along with His plenary extensions, appeared in the family of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku as the Lord of His internal potency, Sītā. Under the order of His father, Mahārāja Daśaratha, He entered the forest and lived there for considerable years with His wife and younger brother. Rāvaṇa, who was very materially powerful, with ten heads on his shoulders, committed a great offense against Him and was thus ultimately vanquished.

24 The Personality of Godhead Rāmacandra, being aggrieved for His distant intimate friend [Sītā], glanced over the city of the enemy Rāvaṇa with red-hot eyes like those of Hara [who wanted to burn the kingdom of heaven]. The great ocean, trembling in fear, gave Him His way because its family members, the aquatics like the sharks, snakes and crocodiles, were being burnt by the heat of the angry red-hot eyes of the Lord.

25 When Rāvaṇa was engaged in the battle, the trunk of the elephant which carried the King of heaven, Indra, broke in pieces, having collided with the chest of Rāvaṇa, and the scattered broken parts illuminated all directions. Rāvaṇa therefore felt proud of his prowess and began to loiter in the midst of the fighting soldiers, thinking himself the conqueror of all directions. But his laughter, overtaken by joy, along with his very air of life, suddenly ceased with the tingling sound of the bow of Rāmacandra, the Personality of Godhead.

26 When the world is overburdened by the fighting strength of kings who have no faith in God, the Lord, just to diminish the distress of the world, descends with His plenary portion. The Lord comes in His original form, with beautiful black hair. And just to expand His transcendental glories, He acts extraordinarily. No one can properly estimate how great He is.

27 There is no doubt about Lord Kṛṣṇa's being the Supreme Lord. Otherwise, how was it possible for Him to kill a giant demon like Pūtanā when He was just on the lap of His mother,

to overturn a cart with His leg when He was only three months old, or to uproot a pair of arjuna trees so high that they touched the sky, when He was only crawling? All these activities are impossible for anyone other than the Lord Himself.

28 Then also when the cowherd boys and their animals drank the poisoned water of the river Yamunā, and after the Lord [in His childhood] revived them by His merciful glance, just to purify the water of the river Yamunā He jumped into it as if playing and chastised the venomous Kāliya snake, which was lurking there, its tongue emitting waves of poison. Who can perform such herculean tasks but the Supreme Lord?

29 On the very night of the day of the chastisement of the Kāliya snake, when the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi were sleeping carefreely, there was a forest fire ablaze due to dry leaves, and it appeared that all the inhabitants were sure to meet their death. But the Lord, along with Balarāma, saved them simply by closing His eyes. Such are the superhuman activities of the Lord.

30 When the cowherd woman [Kṛṣṇa's foster mother, Yaśodā] was trying to tie the hands of her son with ropes, she found the rope to be always insufficient in length, and when she finally gave up, Lord Kṛṣṇa, by and by, opened His mouth, wherein the mother found all the universes situated. Seeing this, she was doubtful in her mind, but she was convinced in a different manner of the mystic nature of her son.

31 Lord Kṛṣṇa saved His foster father, Nanda Mahārāja, from the fear of the demigod Varuṇa and released the cowherd boys from the caves of the mountain, for they were placed there by the son of Maya. Also, to the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, who were busy working during daytime and sleeping soundly at night because of their hard labor in the day, Lord Kṛṣṇa awarded promotion to the highest planet in the spiritual sky. All these acts are transcendental and certainly prove without any doubt His Godhood.

32 When the cowherd men of Vṛndāvana, under instruction of Kṛṣṇa, stopped offering sacrifice to the heavenly King, Indra, the whole tract of land known as Vraja was threatened with being washed away by constant heavy rains for seven days. Lord Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy upon the inhabitants of Vraja, held up the hill known as Govardhana with one hand only, although He was only seven years old. He did this to protect the animals from the onslaught of water.

33 When the Lord was engaged in His pastimes of the rāsa dance in the forest of Vṛndāvana, enlivening the sexual desires of the wives of the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana by sweet and melodious songs, a demon of the name Śaṅkhacūḍa, a rich follower of the treasurer of heaven [Kuvera], kidnapped the damsels, and the Lord severed his head from his trunk.

34-35 All demonic personalities like Pralamba, Dhenuka, Baka, Keśī, Ariṣṭa, Cāṅūra, Muṣṭika, Kuvalayāpīḍa elephant, Kāmsa, Yavana, Narakāsura and Pauṇḍraka, great marshals like Śālva, Dvidida monkey and Balvala, Dantavakra, the seven bulls, Śambara, Vidūratha and Rukmī, as also great warriors like Kāmboja, Matsya, Kuru, Sṛṣṭjaya and Kekaya, would all fight vigorously, either with the Lord Hari directly or with Him under His names of Baladeva, Arjuna, Bhīma, etc. And the demons, thus being killed, would attain either the impersonal brahmajyoti or His personal abode in the Vaikuṅṭha planets.

36 The Lord Himself in His incarnation as the son of Satyavatī [Vyāsadeva] will consider his compilation of the Vedic literature to be very difficult for the less intelligent persons with short life, and thus He will divide the tree of Vedic knowledge into different branches, according to the circumstances of the particular age.

37 When the atheists, after being well versed in the Vedic scientific knowledge, annihilate inhabitants of different planets, flying unseen in the sky on well-built rockets prepared by the great scientist Maya, the Lord will bewilder their minds by dressing Himself attractively as Buddha and will preach on subreligious principles.

38 Thereafter, at the end of Kali-yuga, when there exist no topics on the subject of God, even at the residences of so-called saints and respectable gentlemen of the three higher castes, and when the power of government is transferred to the hands of ministers elected from the lowborn śūdra class or those less than them, and when nothing is known of the techniques of sacrifice, even by word, at that time the Lord will appear as the supreme chastiser.

39 At the beginning of creation there are penance, myself [Brahmā] and the Prajāpatis, the great sages who generate; then, during the maintenance of the creation, there are Lord Viṣṇu, the demigods with controlling powers, and the kings of different planets. But at the end there is irreligion, and then Lord Śiva and the atheists full of anger, etc. All of them are different representative manifestations of the energy of the supreme power, the Lord.

40 Who can describe completely the prowess of Viṣṇu? Even the scientist, who might have counted the particles of the atoms of the universe, cannot do so. Because it is He only who in His form of Trivikrama moved His leg effortlessly beyond the topmost planet, Satyaloka, up to the neutral state of the three modes of material nature. And all were moved.

41 Neither I nor all the sages born before you know fully the omnipotent Personality of Godhead. So what can others, who are born after us, know about Him? Even the first incarnation of the Lord, namely Śeṣa, has not been able to reach the limit of such knowledge, although He is describing the qualities of the Lord with ten hundred faces.

42 But anyone who is specifically favored by the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, due to unalloyed surrender unto the service of the Lord, can overcome the insurmountable ocean of illusion and can understand the Lord. But those who are attached to this body, which is meant to be eaten at the end by dogs and jackals, cannot do so.

43-45 O Nārada, although the potencies of the Lord are unknowable and immeasurable, still, because we are all surrendered souls, we know how He acts through yoga-māyā potencies. And, similarly, the potencies of the Lord are also known to the all-powerful Śiva, the great king of the atheist family, namely Prahlāda Mahārāja, Svāyambhuva Manu, his wife Śatarūpā, his sons and daughters like Priyavrata, Uttānapāda, Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti, Prācīnabarhi, Ṛbhu, Aṅga the father of Vena, Mahārāja Dhruva, Ikṣvāku, Aila, Mucukunda, Mahārāja Janaka, Gādhī, Raghu, Ambarīṣa, Sagara, Gaya, Nāhuṣa, Māndhātā, Alarka, Śatadhanve, Anu, Rantideva, Bhīṣma, Bali, Amūrttaraya, Dilīpa, Saubhari, Utaṅka, Śibi, Devala, Pippalāda, Sārasvata, Uddhava, Parāśara, Bhūriṣeṇa, Vibhīṣaṇa, Hanumān, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Arjuna, Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, Vidura, Śrutadeva, etc.

46 Surrendered souls, even from groups leading sinful lives, such as women, the laborer class, the mountaineers and the Siberians, or even the birds and beasts, can also know about the science of Godhead and become liberated from the clutches of the illusory energy by surrendering unto the pure devotees of the Lord and by following in their footsteps in devotional service.

47 What is realized as the Absolute Brahman is full of unlimited bliss without grief. That is certainly the ultimate phase of the supreme enjoyer, the Personality of Godhead. He is eternally void of all disturbances and is fearless. He is complete consciousness as opposed to matter. Uncontaminated and without distinctions, He is the principle primeval cause of all

causes and effects, in whom there is no sacrifice for fruitive activities and in whom the illusory energy does not stand.

48 In such a transcendental state there is no need of artificial control of the mind, mental speculation or meditation, as performed by the jñānīs and yogīs. One gives up such processes, as the heavenly King, Indra, forgoes the trouble to dig a well.

49 The Personality of Godhead is the supreme master of everything auspicious because the results of whatever actions are performed by the living being, in either the material or spiritual existence, are awarded by the Lord. As such, He is the ultimate benefactor. Every individual living entity is unborn, and therefore even after the annihilation of the material elementary body, the living entity exists, exactly like the air within the body.

50 My dear son, I have now explained in brief the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is creator of the manifested worlds. Without Him (Hari, the Lord), there are no other causes of the phenomenal and noumenal existences.

51 O Nārada, this science of God, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, was spoken to me in summary by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it was spoken as the accumulation of His diverse potencies. Please expand this science yourself.

52 Please describe the science of Godhead with determination and in a manner by which it will be quite possible for the human being to develop transcendental devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead Hari, the Supersoul of every living being and the summum bonum source of all energies.

53 The Lord's activities in association with His different energies should be described, appreciated and heard in accordance with the teachings of the Supreme Lord. If this is done regularly with devotion and respect, one is sure to get out of the illusory energy of the Lord.

SB 2.8: Questions by King Parīkṣit

1 King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: How did Nārada Muni, whose hearers are as fortunate as those instructed by Lord Brahmā, explain the transcendental qualities of the Lord, who is without material qualities, and before whom did he speak?

2 The King said: I wish to know. Narrations concerning the Lord, who possesses wonderful potencies, are certainly auspicious for living beings in all planets.

3 O greatly fortunate Śukadeva Gosvāmī, please continue narrating Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam so that I can place my mind upon the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and, being completely freed from material qualities, thus relinquish this body.

4 Persons who hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously will have the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested in their hearts within a short time.

5 The sound incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul [i.e., Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam], enters into the heart of a self-realized devotee, sits on the lotus flower of his loving relationship, and thus cleanses the dust of material association, such as lust, anger and hankering. Thus it acts like autumnal rains upon pools of muddy water.

6 A pure devotee of the Lord whose heart has once been cleansed by the process of devotional service never relinquishes the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, for they fully satisfy him, as a traveler is satisfied at home after a troubled journey.

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- 7 O learned brāhmaṇa, the transcendental spirit soul is different from the material body. Does he acquire the body accidentally or by some cause? Will you kindly explain this, for it is known to you.
- 8 If the Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whose abdomen the lotus stem sprouted, is possessed of a gigantic body according to His own caliber and measurement, then what is the specific difference between the body of the Lord and those of common living entities?
- 9 Brahmā, who was not born of a material source but of the lotus flower coming out of the navel abdomen of the Lord, is the creator of all those who are materially born. Of course, by the grace of the Lord, Brahmā was able to see the form of the Lord.
- 10 Please also explain the Personality of Godhead, who lies in every heart as the Supersoul, and as the Lord of all energies, but is untouched by His external energy.
- 11 O learned brāhmaṇa, it was formerly explained that all the planets of the universe with their respective governors are situated in the different parts of the gigantic body of the virāṭ-puruṣa. I have also heard that the different planetary systems are supposed to be in the gigantic body of the virāṭ-puruṣa. But what is their actual position? Will you please explain that?
- 12 Also please explain the duration of time between creation and annihilation, and that of other subsidiary creations, as well as the nature of time, indicated by the sound of past, present and future. Also, please explain the duration and measurement of life of the different living beings known as the demigods, the human beings, etc., in different planets of the universe.
- 13 O purest of the brāhmaṇas, please also explain the cause of the different durations of time, both short and long, as well as the beginning of time, following the course of action.
- 14 Then again, kindly describe how the proportionate accumulation of the reactions resulting from the different modes of material nature act upon the desiring living being, promoting or degrading him among the different species of life, beginning from the demigods down to the most insignificant creatures.
- 15 O best of the brāhmaṇas, please also describe how the creation of the globes throughout the universe, the four directions of the heavens, the sky, the planets, the stars, the mountains, the rivers, the seas and the islands, as well as their different kinds of inhabitants, takes place.
- 16 Also, please describe the inner and outer space of the universe by specific divisions, as well as the character and activities of the great souls, and also the characteristics of the different classifications of the castes and orders of social life.
- 17 Please explain all the different ages in the duration of the creation, and also the duration of such ages. Also tell me about the different activities of the different incarnations of the Lord in different ages.
- 18 Please also explain what may generally be the common religious affiliations of human society, as well as their specific occupational duties in religion, the classification of the social orders as well as the administrative royal orders, and the religious principles for one who may be in distress.
- 19 Kindly explain all about the elementary principles of creation, the number of such elementary principles, their causes, and their development, and also the process of devotional service and the method of mystic powers.
- 20 What are the opulences of the great mystics, and what is their ultimate realization? How

does the perfect mystic become detached from the subtle astral body? What is the basic knowledge of the Vedic literatures, including the branches of history and the supplementary Purāṇas?

21 Please explain unto me how the living beings are generated, how they are maintained, and how they are annihilated. Tell me also of the advantages and disadvantages of discharging devotional service unto the Lord. What are the Vedic rituals and injunctions of the supplementary Vedic rites, and what are the procedures of religion, economic development and sense satisfaction?

22 Please also explain how, merged in the body of the Lord, living beings are created, and how the infidels appear in the world. Also please explain how the unconditioned living entities exist.

23 The independent Personality of Godhead enjoys His pastimes by His internal potency and at the time of annihilation gives them up to the external potency, and He remains a witness to it all.

24 O great sage, representative of the Lord, kindly satisfy my inquisitiveness in all that I have inquired from you and all that I may not have inquired from you from the very beginning of my questionings. Since I am a soul surrendered unto you, please impart full knowledge in this connection.

25 O great sage, you are as good as Brahmā, the original living being. Others follow custom only, as followed by the previous philosophical speculators.

26 O learned brāhmaṇa, because of my drinking the nectar of the message of the infallible Personality of Godhead, which is flowing down from the ocean of your speeches, I do not feel any sort of exhaustion due to my fasting.

27 Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus Śukadeva Gosvāmī, being invited by Mahārāja Parīkṣit to speak on topics of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the devotees, was very much pleased.

28 He began to reply to the inquiries of Mahārāja Parīkṣit by saying that the science of the Personality of Godhead was spoken first by the Lord Himself to Brahmā when he was first born. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the supplementary Vedic literature, and it is just in pursuance of the Vedas.

29 He also prepared himself to reply to all that King Parīkṣit had inquired from him. Mahārāja Parīkṣit was the best in the dynasty of the Pāṇḍus, and thus he was able to ask the right questions from the right person.

SB 2.9: Answers by Citing the Lord's Version

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, unless one is influenced by the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no meaning to the relationship of the pure soul in pure consciousness with the material body. That relationship is just like a dreamer's seeing his own body working.

2 The illusioned living entity appears in so many forms offered by the external energy of the Lord. While enjoying in the modes of material nature, the encaged living entity misconceives, thinking in terms of "I" and "mine."

3 As soon as the living entity becomes situated in his constitutional glory and begins to enjoy the transcendence beyond time and material energy, he at once gives up the two

misconceptions of life [I and mine] and thus becomes fully manifested as the pure self.

4 O King, the Personality of Godhead, being very much pleased with Lord Brahmā because of his nondeceptive penance in bhakti-yoga, presented His eternal and transcendental form before Brahmā. And that is the objective goal for purifying the conditioned soul.

5 Lord Brahmā, the first spiritual master, supreme in the universe, could not trace out the source of his lotus seat, and while thinking of creating the material world, he could not understand the proper direction for such creative work, nor could he find out the process for such creation.

6 While thus engaged in thinking, in the water, Brahmājī heard twice from nearby two syllables joined together. One of the syllables was taken from the sixteenth and the other from the twenty-first of the sparśa alphabets, and both joined to become the wealth of the renounced order of life.

7 When he heard the sound, he tried to find the speaker, searching on all sides. But when he was unable to find anyone besides himself, he thought it wise to sit down on his lotus seat firmly and give his attention to the execution of penance, as he was instructed.

8 Lord Brahmā underwent penances for one thousand years by the calculations of the demigods. He heard this transcendental vibration from the sky, and he accepted it as divine. Thus he controlled his mind and senses, and the penances he executed were a great lesson for the living entities. Thus he is known as the greatest of all ascetics.

9 The Personality of Godhead, being thus very much satisfied with the penance of Lord Brahmā, was pleased to manifest His personal abode, Vaikuṅṭha, the supreme planet above all others. This transcendental abode of the Lord is adored by all self-realized persons freed from all kinds of miseries and fear of illusory existence.

10 In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy; it cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, both the demigods and the demons worship the Lord as devotees.

11 The inhabitants of the Vaikuṅṭha planets are described as having a glowing sky-bluish complexion. Their eyes resemble lotus flowers, their dress is of yellowish color, and their bodily features very attractive. They are just the age of growing youths, they all have four hands, they are all nicely decorated with pearl necklaces with ornamental medallions, and they all appear to be effulgent.

12 Some of them are effulgent like coral and diamonds in complexion and have garlands on their heads, blooming like lotus flowers, and some wear earrings.

13 The Vaikuṅṭha planets are also surrounded by various airplanes, all glowing and brilliantly situated. These airplanes belong to the great mahātmās or devotees of the Lord. The ladies are as beautiful as lightning because of their celestial complexions, and all these combined together appear just like the sky decorated with both clouds and lightning.

14 The goddess of fortune in her transcendental form is engaged in the loving service of the Lord's lotus feet, and being moved by the black bees, followers of spring, she is not only engaged in variegated pleasure service to the Lord, along with her constant companions but is also engaged in singing the glories of the Lord's activities.

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15 Lord Brahmā saw in the Vaikuṅṭha planets the Personality of Godhead, who is the Lord of the entire devotee community, the Lord of the goddess of fortune, the Lord of all sacrifices, and the Lord of the universe, and who is served by the foremost servitors like Nanda, Sunanda, Prabala and Arhaṇa, His immediate associates.

16 The Personality of Godhead, seen leaning favorably towards His loving servitors, His very sight intoxicating and attractive, appeared to be very much satisfied. He had a smiling face decorated with an enchanting reddish hue. He was dressed in yellow robes and wore earrings and a helmet on his head. He had four hands, and His chest was marked with the lines of the goddess of fortune.

17 The Lord was seated on His throne and was surrounded by different energies like the four, the sixteen, the five, and the six natural opulences, along with other insignificant energies of the temporary character. But He was the factual Supreme Lord, enjoying His own abode.

18 Lord Brahmā, thus seeing the Personality of Godhead in His fullness, was overwhelmed with joy within his heart, and thus in full transcendental love and ecstasy, his eyes filled with tears of love. He thus bowed down before the Lord. That is the way of the highest perfection for the living being [paramahansa].

19 And seeing Brahmā present before Him, the Lord accepted him as worthy to create living beings, to be controlled as He desired, and thus being much satisfied with him, the Lord shook hands with Brahmā and, slightly smiling, addressed him thus.

20 The beautiful Personality of Godhead addressed Lord Brahmā: O Brahmā, impregnated with the Vedas, I am very much pleased with your long-accumulated penance with the desire for creation. Hardly am I pleased with the pseudo mystics.

21 I wish you good luck. O Brahmā, you may ask from Me, the giver of all benediction, all that you may desire. You may know that the ultimate benediction, as the result of all penances, is to see Me by realization.

22 The highest perfectional ingenuity is the personal perception of My abodes, and this has been possible because of your submissive attitude in the performance of severe penance according to My order.

23 O sinless Brahmā, you may know from Me that it was I who first ordered you to undergo penance when you were perplexed in your duty. Such penance is My heart and soul, and therefore penance and I are nondifferent.

24 I create this cosmos by such penance, I maintain it by the same energy, and I withdraw it all by the same energy. Therefore the potency is penance only.

25 Lord Brahmā said: O Personality of Godhead, You are situated in every living entity's heart as the supreme director, and therefore You are aware of all endeavors by Your superior intelligence, without any hindrance whatsoever.

26 In spite of that, my Lord, I am praying to You to kindly fulfill my desire. May I please be informed how, in spite of Your transcendental form, You assume the mundane form, although You have no such form at all.

27 And [please inform me] how You, by Your own Self, manifest different energies for annihilation, generation, acceptance and maintenance by combination and permutation.

28 O master of all energies, please tell me philosophically all about them. You play like a

spider that covers itself by its own energy, and Your determination is infallible.

29 Please tell me so that I may be taught in the matter by the instruction of the Personality of Godhead and may thus act instrumentally to generate living entities, without being conditioned by such activities.

30 O my Lord, the unborn, You have shaken hands with me just as a friend does with a friend [as if equal in position]. I shall be engaged in the creation of different types of living entities, and I shall be occupied in Your service. I shall have no perturbation, but I pray that all this may not give rise to pride, as if I were the Supreme.

31 The Personality of Godhead said: Knowledge about Me as described in the scriptures is very confidential, and it has to be realized in conjunction with devotional service. The necessary paraphernalia for that process is being explained by Me. You may take it up carefully.

32 All of Me, namely My actual eternal form and My transcendental existence, color, qualities and activities let all be awakened within you by factual realization, out of My causeless mercy.

33 Brahmā, it is I, the Personality of Godhead, who was existing before the creation, when there was nothing but Myself. Nor was there the material nature, the cause of this creation. That which you see now is also I, the Personality of Godhead, and after annihilation what remains will also be I, the Personality of Godhead.

34 O Brahmā, whatever appears to be of any value, if it is without relation to Me, has no reality. Know it as My illusory energy, that reflection which appears to be in darkness.

35 O Brahmā, please know that the universal elements enter into the cosmos and at the same time do not enter into the cosmos; similarly, I Myself also exist within everything created, and at the same time I am outside of everything.

36 A person who is searching after the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, must certainly search for it up to this, in all circumstances, in all space and time, and both directly and indirectly.

37 O Brahmā, just follow this conclusion by fixed concentration of mind, and no pride will disturb you, neither in the partial nor in the final devastation.

38 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, after being seen in His transcendental form, instructing Brahmājī, the leader of the living entities, disappeared.

39 On the disappearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is the object of transcendental enjoyment for the senses of devotees, Brahmā, with folded hands, began to re-create the universe, full with living entities, as it was previously.

40 Thus once upon a time the forefather of living entities and the father of religiousness, Lord Brahmā, situated himself in acts of regulative principles, desiring self-interest for the welfare of all living entities.

41 Nārada, the most dear of the inheritor sons of Brahmā, always ready to serve his father, strictly follows the instructions of his father by his mannerly behavior, meekness and sense control.

42 Nārada very much pleased his father and desired to know all about the energies of Viṣṇu,

the master of all energies, for Nārada was the greatest of all sages and greatest of all devotees, O King.

43 The great sage Nārada also inquired in detail from his father, Brahmā, the great-grandfather of all the universe, after seeing him well satisfied.

44 Thereupon the supplementary Vedic literature, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which was described by the Personality of Godhead and which contains ten characteristics, was told with satisfaction by the father [Brahmā] to his son Nārada.

45 In succession, O King, the great sage Nārada instructed Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam unto the unlimitedly powerful Vyāsadeva, who meditated in devotional service upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, on the bank of the river Sarasvatī.

46 O King, your questions as to how the universe became manifested from the gigantic form of the Personality of Godhead, as well as other questions, I shall answer in detail by explanation of the four verses already mentioned.

SB 2.10: Bhāgavatam Is the Answer to All Questions

1 ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam there are ten divisions of statements regarding the following: the creation of the universe, subcreation, planetary systems, protection by the Lord, the creative impetus, the change of Manus, the science of God, returning home, back to Godhead, liberation, and the summum bonum.

2 To isolate the transcendence of the summum bonum, the symptoms of the rest are described sometimes by Vedic inference, sometimes by direct explanation, and sometimes by summary explanations given by the great sages.

3 The elementary creation of sixteen items of matter—namely the five elements [fire, water, land, air and sky], sound, form, taste, smell, touch, and the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind—is known as sarga, whereas subsequent resultant interaction of the modes of material nature is called visarga.

4 The right situation for the living entities is to obey the laws of the Lord and thus be in perfect peace of mind under the protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Manus and their laws are meant to give right direction in life. The impetus for activity is the desire for fruitive work.

5 The science of God describes the incarnations of the Personality of Godhead and His different activities together with the activities of His great devotees.

6 The merging of the living entity, along with his conditional living tendency, with the mystic lying down of the Mahā-Viṣṇu is called the winding up of the cosmic manifestation. Liberation is the permanent situation of the form of the living entity after he gives up the changeable gross and subtle material bodies.

7 The supreme one who is celebrated as the Supreme Being or the Supreme Soul is the supreme source of the cosmic manifestation as well as its reservoir and winding up. Thus He is the Supreme Fountainhead, the Absolute Truth.

8 The individual person possessing different instruments of senses is called the adhyātmic person, and the individual controlling deity of the senses is called adhidaivic. The embodiment seen on the eyeballs is called the adhibhautic person.

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9 All three of the above-mentioned stages of different living entities are interdependent. In the absence of one, another is not understood. But the Supreme Being who sees every one of them as the shelter of the shelter is independent of all, and therefore He is the supreme shelter.

10 After separating the different universes, the gigantic universal form of the Lord [Mahā-Viṣṇu], which came out of the Causal Ocean, the place of appearance for the first puruṣa-avatāra, entered into each of the separate universes, desiring to lie on the created transcendental water [Garbhodaka].

11 That Supreme Person is not impersonal and therefore is distinctively a nara, or person. Therefore the transcendental water created from the Supreme Nara is known as nāra. And because He lies down on that water, He is known as Nārāyaṇa.

12 One should definitely know that all material ingredients, activities, time and modes, and the living entities who are meant to enjoy them all, exist by His mercy only, and as soon as He does not care for them, everything becomes nonexistent.

13 The Lord, while lying on His bed of mystic slumber, generated the seminal symbol, golden in hue, through external energy out of His desire to manifest varieties of living entities from Himself alone.

14 Just hear from me how the potency of His Lordship divides one into three, called the controlling entities, the controlled entities and the material bodies, in the manner mentioned above.

15 From the sky situated within the transcendental body of the manifesting Mahā-Viṣṇu, sense energy, mental force and bodily strength are all generated, as well as the sum total of the fountainhead of the total living force.

16 As the followers of a king follow their lord, similarly when the total energy is in motion, all other living entities move, and when the total energy stops endeavoring, all other living entities stop sensual activities.

17 The living force, being agitated by the virāṭ-puruṣa, generated hunger and thirst, and when He desired to drink and eat, the mouth opened.

18 From the mouth the palate became manifested, and thereupon the tongue was also generated. After this all the different tastes came into existence so that the tongue can relish them.

19 When the Supreme desired to speak, speeches were vibrated from the mouth. Then the controlling deity Fire was generated from the mouth. But when He was lying in the water, all these functions remained suspended.

20 Thereafter, when the supreme puruṣa desired to smell odors, the nostrils and respiration were generated, the nasal instrument and odors came into existence, and the controlling deity of air, carrying smell, also became manifested.

21 Thus when everything existed in darkness, the Lord desired to see Himself and all that was created. Then the eyes, the illuminating god Sun, the power of vision and the object of sight all became manifested.

22 By development of the desire of the great sages to know, the ears, the power of hearing, the controlling deity of hearing, and the objects of hearing became manifested. The great sages desired to hear about the Self.

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23 When there was a desire to perceive the physical characteristics of matter, such as softness, hardness, warmth, cold, lightness and heaviness, the background of sensation, the skin, the skin pores, the hairs on the body and their controlling deities (the trees) were generated. Within and outside the skin is a covering of air through which sense perception became prominent.

24 Thereafter when the Supreme Person desired to perform varieties of work, the two hands and their controlling strength, and Indra, the demigod in heaven, became manifested, as also the acts dependent on both the hands and the demigod.

25 Thereupon, because of His desiring to control movement, His legs became manifested, and from the legs the controlling deity named Viṣṇu was generated. By His personal supervision of this act, all varieties of human being are busily engaged in dutiful occupational sacrifice.

26 Thereupon, for sexual pleasure, begetting offspring and tasting heavenly nectar, the Lord developed the genitals, and thus there is the genital organ and its controlling deity, the Prajāpati. The object of sexual pleasure and the controlling deity are under the control of the genitals of the Lord.

27 Thereafter, when He desired to evacuate the refuse of eatables, the evacuating hole, anus, and the sensory organ thereof developed along with the controlling deity Mitra. The sensory organ and the evacuating substance are both under the shelter of the controlling deity.

28 Thereafter, when He desired to move from one body to another, the navel and the air of departure and death were combinedly created. The navel is the shelter for both, namely death and the separating force.

29 When there was a desire to have food and drink, the abdomen and the intestines and also the arteries became manifested. The rivers and seas are the source of their sustenance and metabolism.

30 When there was a desire to think about the activities of His own energy, then the heart (the seat of the mind), the mind, the moon, determination and all desire became manifested.

31 The seven elements of the body, namely the thin layer on the skin, the skin itself, the flesh, blood, fat, marrow and bone, are all made of earth, water and fire, whereas the life breath is produced by the sky, water and air.

32 The sense organs are attached to the modes of material nature, and the modes of material nature are products of the false ego. The mind is subjected to all kinds of material experiences (happiness and distress), and the intelligence is the feature of the mind's deliberation.

33 Thus by all this, the external feature of the Personality of Godhead is covered by gross forms such as those of planets, which were explained to you by me.

34 Therefore beyond this [gross manifestation] is a transcendental manifestation finer than the finest form. It has no beginning, no intermediate stage and no end; therefore it is beyond the limits of expression or mental speculation and is distinct from the material conception.

35 Neither of the above forms of the Lord, as just described unto you from the material angle of vision, is accepted by the pure devotees of the Lord who know Him well.

36 He, the Personality of Godhead, manifests Himself in a transcendental form, being the subject of His transcendental name, quality, pastimes, entourage and transcendental variegatedness. Although He is unaffected by all such activities, He appears to be so engaged.

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37-40 O King, know from me that all living entities are created by the Supreme Lord according to their past deeds. This includes Brahmā and his sons like Dakṣa, the periodical heads like Vaivasvata Manu, the demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa, the great sages like Bhṛgu, Vyāsa and Vasiṣṭha, the inhabitants of Pitṛloka and Siddhaloka, the Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Asuras, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and angels, the serpentines, the monkey-shaped Kimpuruṣas, the human beings, the inhabitants of Mātṛloka, the demons, Piśācas, ghosts, spirits, lunatics and evil spirits, the good and evil stars, the goblins, the animals in the forest, the birds, the household animals, the reptiles, the mountains, the moving and standing living entities, the living entities born from embryos, from eggs, from perspiration and from seeds, and all others, whether they be in the water, land or sky, in happiness, in distress or in mixed happiness and distress. All of them, according to their past deeds, are created by the Supreme Lord.

41 According to the different modes of material nature the mode of goodness, the mode of passion and the mode of darkness there are different living creatures, who are known as demigods, human beings and hellish living entities. O King, even a particular mode of nature, being mixed with the other two, is divided into three, and thus each kind of living creature is influenced by the other modes and acquires its habits also.

42 He, the Personality of Godhead, as the maintainer of all in the universe, appears in different incarnations after establishing the creation, and thus He reclaims all kinds of conditioned souls amongst the humans, the nonhumans and the demigods.

43 Thereafter, at the end of the millennium, the Lord Himself in the form of Rudra, the destroyer, will annihilate the complete creation as the wind displaces the clouds.

44 The great transcendentalists thus describe the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the pure devotees deserve to see more glorious things in transcendence, beyond these features.

45 There is no direct engineering by the Lord for the creation and destruction of the material world. What is described in the Vedas about His direct interference is simply to counteract the idea that material nature is the creator.

46 This process of creation and annihilation described in summary herein is the regulative principle during the duration of Brahmā's one day. It is also the regulative principle in the creation of mahat, in which the material nature is dispersed.

47 O King, I shall in due course explain the measurement of time in its gross and subtle features with the specific symptoms of each, but for the present let me explain unto you the Pādma-kalpa.

48 Śaunaka Ṛṣi, after hearing all about the creation, inquired from Sūta Gosvāmī about Vidura, for Sūta Gosvāmī had previously informed him how Vidura left home, leaving aside all his relatives, who were very difficult to leave.

49-50 Śaunaka Ṛṣi said: Let us know, please, what topics were discussed between Vidura and Maitreya, who talked on transcendental subjects, and what was inquired by Vidura and replied by Maitreya. Also please let us know the reason for Vidura's giving up the connection of his family members, and why he again came home. Please also let us know the activities of Vidura while he was in the places of pilgrimage.

51 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī explained: I shall now explain to you the very subjects explained by the great sage in answer to King Parīkṣit's inquiries. Please hear them attentively.

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Canto 3: The Status Quo

SB 3.1: Questions by Vidura

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After renouncing his prosperous home and entering the forest, King Vidura, the great devotee, asked this question of His Grace Maitreya Ṛṣi.

2 What else is there to say about the residential house of the Pāṇḍavas? Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of everything, acted as your minister. He used to enter that house as if it were His own, and He did not take any care of Duryodhana's house.

3 The King asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī: Where and when did the meeting and discussion take place between Saint Vidura and His Grace Maitreya Muni? Kindly oblige, my lord, and describe this to us.

4 Saint Vidura was a great and pure devotee of the Lord, and therefore his questions to His Grace Ṛṣi Maitreya must have been very purposeful, on the highest level, and approved by learned circles.

5 Śrī Suta Gosvāmī said: The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī was highly experienced and was pleased with the King. Thus being questioned by the King, he said to him, "Please hear the topics attentively."

6 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: King Dhṛtarāṣṭra became blind under the influence of impious desires to nourish his dishonest sons, and thus he set fire to the lacquer house to burn his fatherless nephews, the Pāṇḍavas.

7 The King did not forbid his son Duḥśāsana's abominable action of grabbing the hair of Draupadī, the wife of the godly King Yudhiṣṭhira, even though her tears washed the red dust on her breast.

8 Yudhiṣṭhira, who was born without any enemy, was unfairly defeated in gambling. But because he had taken the vow of truthfulness, he went off to the forest. When he came back in due course and begged the return of his rightful share of the kingdom, he was refused by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was overwhelmed by illusion.

9 Lord Kṛṣṇa was sent by Arjuna into the assembly as the spiritual master of the whole world, and although His words were heard by some [like Bhīṣma] as pure nectar, it was not so for the others, who were completely bereft of the last farthing of past pious works. The King [Dhṛtarāṣṭra or Duryodhana] did not take the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa very seriously.

10 When Vidura was invited by his elder brother [Dhṛtarāṣṭra] for consultation, he entered the house and gave instructions which were exactly to the point. His advice is well known, and instructions by Vidura are approved by expert ministers of state.

11 [Vidura said:] You must now return the legitimate share to Yudhiṣṭhira, who has no enemies and who has been forbearing through untold sufferings due to your offenses. He is waiting with his younger brothers, among whom is the revengeful Bhīma, breathing heavily like a snake. Surely you are afraid of him.

12 Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, has accepted the sons of Prthā as His kinsmen, and all the kings of the world are with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is present in His home with all His family members, the kings and princes of the Yadu dynasty, who have conquered an unlimited number of rulers, and He is their Lord.

13 You are maintaining offense personified, Duryodhana, as your infallible son, but he is envious of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And because you are thus maintaining a nondevotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are devoid of all auspicious qualities. Relieve yourself of this ill fortune as soon as possible and do good to the whole family!

14 While speaking thus, Vidura, whose personal character was esteemed by respectable persons, was insulted by Duryodhana, who was swollen with anger and whose lips were trembling. Duryodhana was in company with Karṇa, his younger brothers and his maternal uncle Śakuni.

15 Who asked him to come here, this son of a kept mistress? He is so crooked that he spies in the interest of the enemy against those on whose support he has grown up. Toss him out of the palace immediately and leave him with only his breath.

16 Thus being pierced by arrows through his ears and afflicted to the core of his heart, Vidura placed his bow on the door and quit his brother's palace. He was not sorry, for he considered the acts of the external energy to be supreme.

17 By his piety, Vidura achieved the advantages of the pious Kauravas. After leaving Hastināpura, he took shelter of many places of pilgrimages, which are the Lord's lotus feet. With a desire to gain a high order of pious life, he traveled to holy places where thousands of transcendental forms of the Lord are situated.

18 He began to travel alone, thinking only of Kṛṣṇa, through various holy places like Ayodhyā, Dvārakā and Mathurā. He traveled where the grove, hill, orchard, river and lake are all pure and sinless and where the forms of the Unlimited decorate the temples. Thus he performed the pilgrim's progress.

19 While so traversing the earth, he simply performed duties to please the Supreme Lord Hari. His occupation was pure and independent. He was constantly sanctified by taking his bath in holy places, although he was in the dress of a mendicant and had no hair dressing nor a bed on which to lie. Thus he was always unseen by his various relatives.

20 Thus, when he was in the land of Bhāratavarṣa traveling to all the places of pilgrimage, he visited Prabhāsakṣetra. At that time Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was the emperor and held the world under one military strength and one flag.

21 At the place of pilgrimage at Prabhāsa, it came to his knowledge that all his relatives had died due to violent passion, just as an entire forest burns due to fire produced by the friction of bamboos. After this he proceeded west, where the river Sarasvatī flows.

22 On the bank of the river Sarasvatī there were eleven places of pilgrimage, namely (1) Trita, (2) Uśanā, (3) Manu, (4) Pṛthu, (5) Agni, (6) Asita, (7) Vāyu, (8) Sudāsa, (9) Go, (10) Guha and (11) Śrāddhadeva. Vidura visited all of them and duly performed rituals.

23 There were also many other temples of various forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu, established by great sages and demigods. These temples were marked with the chief emblems of the Lord, and they reminded one always of the original Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

24 Thereafter he passed through very wealthy provinces like Surat, Sauvīra and Matsya and through western India, known as Kurujāṅgala. At last he reached the bank of the Yamunā, where he happened to meet Uddhava, the great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

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25 Then, due to his great love and feeling, Vidura embraced him [Uddhava], who was a constant companion of Lord Kṛṣṇa and formerly a great student of Bṛhaspati's. Vidura then asked him for news of the family of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

26 [Please tell me] whether the original Personalities of Godhead, who incarnated Themselves at the request of Brahmā [who is born out of the lotus flower from the Lord] and who have increased the prosperity of the world by elevating everyone, are doing well in the house of Śūrasena.

27 [Please tell me] whether the best friend of the Kurus, our brother-in-law Vasudeva, is doing well. He is very munificent. He is like a father to his sisters, and he is always pleasing to his wives.

28 O Uddhava, please tell me, How is Pradyumna, the commander in chief of the Yadus, who was Cupid in a former life? Rukmiṇī bore him as her son from Lord Kṛṣṇa, by the grace of brāhmaṇas whom she pleased.

29 O my friend, [tell me] whether Ugrasena, the King of the Sātvatas, Vṛṣṇis, Bhojas and Dāśārhas, is now doing well. He went far away from his kingdom, leaving aside all hopes of his royal throne, but Lord Kṛṣṇa again installed him.

30 O gentle one, does Sāmba fare well? He exactly resembles the son of the Personality of Godhead. In a previous birth he was born as Kārttikeya in the womb of the wife of Lord Śiva, and now he has been born in the womb of Jāmbavatī, the most enriched wife of Kṛṣṇa.

31 O Uddhava, does Yuyudhāna fare well? He learned the intricacies of the military art from Arjuna and attained the transcendental destination which is very difficult to reach even for great renunciators.

32 Please tell me whether Akrūra, the son of Śvaphalka, is doing well. He is a faultless soul surrendered unto the Personality of Godhead. He once lost his mental equilibrium due to his ecstasy of transcendental love and fell down on the dust of a road which was marked with the footprints of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

33 As the Vedas are the reservoir of sacrificial purposes, so the daughter of King Devaka-bhoja conceived the Supreme Personality of Godhead in her womb, as did the mother of the demigods. Is she [Devakī] doing well?

34 May I inquire whether Aniruddha is doing well? He is the fulfiller of all the desires of the pure devotees and has been considered from yore to be the cause of the Ṛg Veda, the creator of the mind and the fourth plenary expansion of Viṣṇu.

35 O sober one, others, such as Hṛdīka, Cārudeṣṇa, Gada and the son of Satyabhāmā, who accept Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the soul of the self and thus follow His path without deviation are they well?

36 Also let me inquire whether Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira is now maintaining the kingdom according to religious principles and with respect for the path of religion. Formerly Duryodhana was burning with envy because Yudhiṣṭhira was being protected by the arms of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna as if they were his own arms.

37 [Please tell me] whether the unconquerable Bhīma, who is like a cobra, has released his long-cherished anger upon the sinners? The field of battle could not tolerate even the wonderful playing of his club when he stepped on the path.

38 [Please tell me] whether Arjuna, whose bow bears the name Gāṇḍīva and who is always famous amongst the chariot warriors for vanquishing his enemies, is doing well. He once satisfied Lord Śiva by covering him with arrows when Śiva came as an unidentified false hunter.

39 Are the twin brothers who are protected by their brothers doing well? Just as the eye is always protected by the eyelid, they are protected by the sons of Pṛthā, who snatched back their rightful kingdom from the hands of their enemy Duryodhana, just as Garuḍa snatched nectar from the mouth of Indra, the thunderbolt carrier.

40 O my lord, is Pṛthā still living? She lived only for the sake of her fatherless children; otherwise it was impossible for her to live without King Pāṇḍu, who was the greatest commander and who alone conquered the four directions simply with the help of a second bow.

41 O gentle one, I simply lament for him [Dhṛtarāṣṭra] who rebelled against his brother after death. By him I was driven out of my own house, although I am his sincere well-wisher, because he accepted the line of action adopted by his own sons.

42 I am not astonished at this, having traveled over the world without being seen by others. The activities of the Personality of Godhead, which are like those of a man in this mortal world, are bewildering to others, but I know of His greatness by His grace, and thus I am happy in all respects.

43 Despite His being the Lord and being always willing to relieve the distress of sufferers, He [Kṛṣṇa] refrained from killing the Kurus, although they committed all sorts of sins and although He saw other kings constantly agitating the earth by their strong military movements carried out under the dictation of three kinds of false pride.

44 The appearance of the Lord is manifested for the annihilation of the upstarts. His activities are transcendental and are enacted for the understanding of all persons. Otherwise, since the Lord is transcendental to all material modes, what purpose could He serve by coming to earth?

45 O my friend, please, therefore, chant the glories of the Lord, who is meant to be glorified in the places of pilgrimage. He is unborn, and yet He appears by His causeless mercy upon the surrendered rulers of all parts of the universe. Only for their interest did He appear in the family of His unalloyed devotees the Yadus.

SB 3.2: Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa

1 ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the great devotee Uddhava was asked by Vidura to speak on the messages of the dearest [Lord Kṛṣṇa], Uddhava was unable to answer immediately due to excessive anxiety at the remembrance of the Lord.

2 He was one who even in his childhood, at the age of five years, was so absorbed in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa that when he was called by his mother for morning breakfast, he did not wish to have it.

3 Uddhava thus served the Lord continually from childhood, and in his old age that attitude of service never slackened. As soon as he was asked about the message of the Lord, he at once remembered all about Him.

4 For a moment he remained dead silent, and his body did not move. He became absorbed in the nectar of remembering the Lord's lotus feet in devotional ecstasy, and he appeared to be

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going increasingly deeper into that ecstasy.

5 It was so observed by Vidura that Uddhava had all the transcendental bodily changes due to total ecstasy, and he was trying to wipe away tears of separation from his eyes. Thus Vidura could understand that Uddhava had completely assimilated extensive love for the Lord.

6 The great devotee Uddhava soon came back from the abode of the Lord to the human plane, and wiping his eyes, he awakened his reminiscence of the past and spoke to Vidura in a pleasing mood.

7 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Vidura, the sun of the world, Lord Kṛṣṇa, has set, and our house has now been swallowed by the great snake of time. What can I say to you about our welfare?

8 This universe with all its planets is most unfortunate. And even more unfortunate are the members of the Yadu dynasty because they could not identify Lord Hari as the Personality of Godhead, any more than the fish could identify the moon.

9 The Yadus were all experienced devotees, learned and expert in psychic study. Over and above this, they were always with the Lord in all kinds of relaxations, and still they were only able to know Him as the one Supreme who dwells everywhere.

10 Under no circumstances can the words of persons bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord deviate the intelligence of those who are completely surrendered souls.

11 Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who manifested His eternal form before the vision of all on the earth, performed His disappearance by removing His form from the sight of those who were unable to see Him [as He is] due to not executing required penance.

12 The Lord appeared in the mortal world by His internal potency, yoga-māyā. He came in His eternal form, which is just suitable for His pastimes. These pastimes were wonderful for everyone, even for those proud of their own opulence, including the Lord Himself in His form as the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha. Thus His [Śrī Kṛṣṇa's] transcendental body is the ornament of all ornaments.

13 All the demigods from the upper, lower and middle universal planetary systems assembled at the altar of the rājasūya sacrifice performed by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. After seeing the beautiful bodily features of Lord Kṛṣṇa, they all contemplated that He was the ultimate dexterous creation of Brahmā, the creator of human beings.

14 The damsels of Vraja, after pastimes of laughter, humor and exchanges of glances, were anguished when Kṛṣṇa left them. They used to follow Him with their eyes, and thus they sat down with stunned intelligence and could not finish their household duties.

15 The Personality of Godhead, the all-compassionate controller of both the spiritual and material creations, is unborn, but when there is friction between His peaceful devotees and persons who are in the material modes of nature, He takes birth just like fire, accompanied by the mahat-tattva.

16 When I think of Lord Kṛṣṇa how He was born in the prison house of Vasudeva although He is unborn, how He went away from His father's protection to Vraja and lived there incognito out of fear of the enemy, and how, although unlimitedly powerful, He fled from Mathurā in fear all these bewildering incidents give me distress.

17 Lord Kṛṣṇa begged pardon from His parents for Their [Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's] inability to serve their feet, due to being away from home because of great fear of Kāṁsa. He said, "O

mother, O father, please excuse Us for this inability.” All this behavior of the Lord gives me pain at heart.

18 Who, after smelling the dust of His lotus feet even once, could ever forget it? Simply by expanding the leaves of His eyebrows, Kṛṣṇa has given the deathblow to those who were burdening the earth.

19 You have personally seen how the King of Cedi [Śiśupāla] achieved success in yoga practice, although he hated Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even the actual yogīs aspire after such success with great interest by performance of their various practices. Who can tolerate separation from Him?

20 Certainly others who were fighters on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra were purified by the onslaught of Arjuna’s arrows, and while seeing the lotuslike face of Kṛṣṇa, so pleasing to the eyes, they achieved the abode of the Lord.

21 Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all kinds of threes and is independently supreme by achievement of all kinds of fortune. He is worshiped by the eternal maintainers of the creation, who offer Him the paraphernalia of worship by touching their millions of helmets to His feet.

22 Therefore, O Vidura, does it not pain us, His servitors, when we remember that He [Lord Kṛṣṇa] used to stand before King Ugrasena, who was sitting on the royal throne, and used to submit explanations before him, saying, “O My lord, please let it be known to you”?

23 Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Pūtanā] although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?

24 I consider the demons, who are inimical toward the Lord, to be more than the devotees because while fighting with the Lord, absorbed in thoughts of enmity, they are able to see the Lord carried on the shoulder of Garuḍa, the son of Tārṁśya [Kāśyapa], and carrying the wheel weapon in His hand.

25 The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being prayed to by Brahmā to bring welfare to the earth, was begotten by Vasudeva in the womb of his wife Devakī in the prison of the King of Bhoja.

26 Thereafter, His father, being afraid of Kāmsa, brought Him to the cow pastures of Mahārāja Nanda, and there He lived for eleven years like a covered flame with His elder brother, Baladeva.

27 In His childhood, the Almighty Lord was surrounded by cowherd boys and calves, and thus He traveled on the shore of the Yamunā river, through gardens densely covered with trees and filled with vibrations of chirping birds.

28 When the Lord displayed His activities just suitable for childhood, He was visible only to the residents of Vṛndāvana. Sometimes He would cry and sometimes laugh, just like a child, and while so doing He would appear like a lion cub.

29 While herding the very beautiful bulls, the Lord, who was the reservoir of all opulence and fortune, used to blow His flute, and thus He enlivened His faithful followers, the cowherd boys.

30 The great wizards who were able to assume any form were engaged by the King of Bhoja, Kāmsa, to kill Kṛṣṇa, but in the course of His pastimes the Lord killed them as easily as a child

breaks dolls.

31 The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were perplexed by great difficulties because a certain portion of the Yamunā was poisoned by the chief of the reptiles [Kāliya]. The Lord chastised the snake-king within the water and drove him away, and after coming out of the river, He caused the cows to drink the water and proved that the water was again in its natural state.

32 The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, desired to utilize the opulent financial strength of Mahārāja Nanda for worship of the cows, and also He wanted to give a lesson to Indra, the King of heaven. Thus He advised His father to perform worship of go, or the pasturing land and the cows, with the help of learned brāhmaṇas.

33 O sober Vidura, King Indra, his honor having been insulted, poured water incessantly on Vṛndāvana, and thus the inhabitants of Vraja, the land of cows, were greatly distressed. But the compassionate Lord Kṛṣṇa saved them from danger with His pastime umbrella, the Govardhana Hill.

34 In the third season of the year, the Lord enjoyed as the central beauty of the assembly of women by attracting them with His pleasing songs in an autumn night brightened by moonshine.

SB 3.3: The Lord's Pastimes Out of Vṛndāvana

1 Śrī Uddhava said: Thereafter Lord Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā City with Śrī Baladeva, and to please Their parents They dragged Kaṁsa, the leader of public enemies, down from his throne and killed him, pulling him along the ground with great strength.

2 The Lord learned all the Vedas with their different branches simply by hearing them once from His teacher, Sāṅdīpani Muni, whom He rewarded by bringing back his dead son from the region of Yamaloka.

3 Attracted by the beauty and fortune of Rukmiṇī, the daughter of King Bhīṣmaka, many great princes and kings assembled to marry her. But Lord Kṛṣṇa, stepping over the other hopeful candidates, carried her away as His own share, as Garuḍa carried away nectar.

4 By subduing seven bulls whose noses were not pierced, the Lord achieved the hand of Princess Nāgnijitī in the open competition to select her bridegroom. Although the Lord was victorious, His competitors asked the hand of the princess, and thus there was a fight. Well equipped with weapons, the Lord killed or wounded all of them, but He Himself was not hurt.

5 Just to please His dear wife, the Lord brought back the pārijāta tree from heaven, just as an ordinary husband would do. But Indra, the King of heaven, induced by his wives (henpecked as he was), ran after the Lord with full force to fight Him.

6 Narakāśura, the son of Dharitṛī, the earth, tried to grasp the whole sky, and for this he was killed by the Lord in a fight. His mother then prayed to the Lord. This led to the return of the kingdom to the son of Narakāśura, and thus the Lord entered the house of the demon.

7 There in the house of the demon, all the princesses kidnapped by Narakāśura at once became alert upon seeing the Lord, the friend of the distressed. They looked upon Him with eagerness, joy and shyness and offered to be His wives.

8 All those princesses were lodged in different apartments, and the Lord simultaneously assumed different bodily expansions exactly matching each and every princess. He accepted

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their hands in perfect rituals by His internal potency.

9 Just to expand Himself according to His transcendental features, the Lord begot in each and every one of them ten offspring with exactly His own qualities.

10 Kālayavana, the King of Magadha and Sālva attacked the city of Mathurā, but when the city was encircled by their soldiers, the Lord refrained from killing them personally, just to show the power of His own men.

11 Of kings like Śambara, Dvividā, Bāṇa, Mura, Balvala and many other demons, such as Dantavakra, some He killed Himself, and some He caused to be killed by others [Śrī Baladeva, etc.].

12 Then, O Vidura, the Lord caused all the kings, both the enemies and those on the side of your fighting nephews, to be killed in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. All those kings were so great and strong that the earth seemed to shake as they traversed the warfield.

13 Duryodhana was bereft of his fortune and duration of life because of the intricacy of ill advice given by Karṇa, Duṣṣāsana and Saubala. When he lay on the ground with his followers, his thighs broken although he was powerful, the Lord was not happy to see the scene.

14 [After the end of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, the Lord said:] The abatement of the earth's great burden, eighteen akṣauhiṇīs, has now been effected with the help of Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Arjuna and Bhīma. But what is this? There is still the great strength of the Yadu dynasty, born of Myself, which may be a more unbearable burden.

15 When they quarrel among themselves, influenced by intoxication, with their eyes red like copper because of drinking [madhu], then only will they disappear; otherwise, it will not be possible. On My disappearance, this incident will take place.

16 Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus thinking to Himself, established Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira in the position of supreme control of the world in order to show the ideal of administration on the path of piety.

17 The embryo of Pūru's descendant begotten by the great hero Abhimanyu in the womb of Uttarā, his wife, was burnt by the weapon of the son of Droṇa, but later he was again protected by the Lord.

18 The Supreme Lord induced the son of Dharma to perform three horse sacrifices, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, constantly following Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, protected and enjoyed the earth, assisted by his younger brothers.

19 Simultaneously, the Personality of Godhead enjoyed life in the city of Dvārakā, strictly in conformity with the Vedic customs of society. He was situated in detachment and knowledge, as enunciated by the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy.

20 He was there in His transcendental body, the residence of the goddess of fortune, with His usual gentle and sweetly smiling face, His nectarean words and His flawless character.

21 The Lord enjoyed His pastimes, both in this world and in other worlds [higher planets], specifically in the association of the Yadu dynasty. At leisure hours offered by night, He enjoyed the friendship of conjugal love with women.

22 The Lord was thus engaged in household life for many, many years, but at last His detachment from ephemeral sex life was fully manifested.

23 Every living entity is controlled by a supernatural force, and thus his sense enjoyment is also under the control of that supernatural force. No one, therefore, can put his faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental sense activities but one who has become a devotee of the Lord by rendering devotional service.

24 Once upon a time, great sages were made angry by the sporting activities of the princely descendants of the Yadu and Bhoja dynasties, and thus, as desired by the Lord, the sages cursed them.

25 A few months passed, and then, bewildered by Kṛṣṇa, all the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, Bhoja and Andhaka who were incarnations of demigods went to Prabhāsa, while those who were eternal devotees of the Lord did not leave but remained in Dvārakā.

26 After arriving there, all of them took bath, and with the water of this place of pilgrimage they offered their respects to the forefathers, demigods and great sages and thus satisfied them. They gave cows to the brāhmaṇas in royal charity.

27 The brāhmaṇas were not only given well-fed cows in charity, but also gold, gold coins, bedding, clothing, animal-skin seats, blankets, horses, elephants, girls and sufficient land for maintenance.

28 Thereafter they offered the brāhmaṇas highly delicious foodstuffs first offered to the Personality of Godhead and offered their respectful obeisances by touching their heads to the ground. They lived perfectly by protecting the cows and the brāhmaṇas.

SB 3.4: Vidura Approaches Maitreya

1 Thereafter, all of them [the descendants of Vṛṣṇi and Bhoja], being permitted by the brāhmaṇas, partook of the remnants of prasāda and also drank liquor made of rice. By drinking they all became delirious, and, bereft of knowledge, they touched the cores of each other's hearts with harsh words.

2 As by the friction of bamboos destruction takes place, so also, at sunset, by the interaction of the faults of intoxication, all their minds became unbalanced, and destruction took place.

3 The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after foreseeing the end [of His family] by His internal potency, went to the bank of the river Sarasvatī, sipped water, and sat down underneath a tree.

4 The Lord is the vanquisher of the distresses of one who is surrendered unto Him. Thus He who desired to destroy His family told me previously to go to Badarikāśrama.

5 Yet in spite of my knowing His desire [to destroy the dynasty], O Arindama [Vidura], I followed Him because it was impossible for me to bear separation from the lotus feet of the master.

6 Thus following, I saw my patron and master [Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa] sitting alone and deeply thinking, taking shelter on the bank of the river Sarasvatī although He is the shelter of the goddess of fortune.

7 The Lord's body is blackish, but is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge, and very, very beautiful. His eyes are always peaceful, and they are reddish like the rising morning sun. I could immediately recognize Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His four hands, different symbolic representations, and yellow silk garments.

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8 The Lord was sitting, taking rest against a young banyan tree, with His right lotus foot on His left thigh, and although He had left all household comforts, He looked quite cheerful in that posture.

9 At that time, after traveling in many parts of the world, Maitreya, a great devotee of the Lord and a friend and well-wisher of the great sage Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa, reached that spot out of his own perfect accord.

10 Maitreya Muni was greatly attached to Him [the Lord], and he was listening in a pleasing attitude, with his shoulder lowered. With a smile and a particular glance upon me, having allowed me to rest, the Lord spoke as follows.

11 O Vasu, I know from within your mind what you desired in the days of yore when the Vasus and other demigods responsible for expanding the universal affairs performed sacrifices. You particularly desired to achieve My association. This is very difficult for others to obtain, but I award it unto you.

12 O honest one, your present life is the last and the supermost because in this term of life you have been awarded My ultimate favor. Now you can go to My transcendental abode, Vaikuṅṭha, by leaving this universe of conditioned living entities. Your visit to Me in this lonely place because of your pure and unflinching devotional service is a great boon for you.

13 O Uddhava, in the lotus millennium in the days of yore, at the beginning of the creation, I spoke unto Brahmā, who is situated on the lotus that grows out of My navel, about My transcendental glories, which the great sages describe as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

14 Uddhava said: O Vidura, when I was thus favored at every moment by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and addressed by Him with great affection, my words failed in tears, and the hairs on my body erupted. After smearing my tears, I, with folded hands, spoke like this.

15 O my Lord, devotees who engage in the transcendental loving service of Your lotus feet have no difficulty in achieving anything within the realm of the four principles of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But, O great one, as far as I am concerned, I have preferred only to engage in the loving service of Your lotus feet.

16 My Lord, even the learned sages become disturbed in their intelligence when they see that Your Greatness engages in fruitive work although You are free from all desires, that You take birth although You are unborn, that You flee out of fear of the enemy and take shelter in a fort although You are the controller of invincible time, and that You enjoy householder life surrounded by many women although You enjoy in Your Self.

17 O my Lord, Your eternal Self is never divided by the influence of time, and there is no limitation to Your perfect knowledge. Thus You were sufficiently able to consult with Yourself, yet You called upon me for consultation, as if bewildered, although You are never bewildered. And this act of Yours bewilders me.

18 My Lord, kindly explain to us, if You think us competent to receive it, that transcendental knowledge which gives enlightenment about Yourself and which You explained before to Brahmājī.

19 When I thus expressed my heartfelt desires unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the lotus-eyed Lord instructed me about His transcendental situation.

20 I have studied the path of understanding self-knowledge from my spiritual master, the

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Personality of Godhead, and thus after circumambulating Him I have come to this place, very much aggrieved due to separation.

21 My dear Vidura, now I am mad for want of the pleasure of seeing Him, and just to mitigate this I am now proceeding to Badarikāśrama in the Himālayas for association, as I have been instructed by Him.

22 There in Badarikāśrama the Personality of Godhead, in His incarnation as the sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa, has been undergoing great penance since time immemorial for the welfare of all amiable living entities.

23 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing from Uddhava all about the annihilation of his friends and relatives, the learned Vidura pacified his overwhelming bereavement by dint of his transcendental knowledge.

24 While Uddhava, the chief and most confidential amongst the devotees of the Lord, was going away, Vidura, in affection and confidence, questioned him.

25 Vidura said: O Uddhava, because the servants of Viṣṇu, the Lord, wander in the interest of serving others, it is quite fit that you kindly describe the self-knowledge with which you have been enlightened by the Lord Himself.

26 Śrī Uddhava said: You may take lessons from the great learned sage Maitreya, who is nearby and who is worshipable for reception of transcendental knowledge. He was directly instructed by the Personality of Godhead while He was about to quit this mortal world.

27 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, after thus discussing with Vidura the transcendental name, fame, qualities, etc., on the bank of the Yamunā, Uddhava was overwhelmed with great affliction. He passed the night as if it were a moment, and thereafter he went away.

28 The King inquired: At the end of the pastimes of the Lord of the three worlds, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and after the disappearance of the members of the Vṛṣṇi and Bhoja dynasties, who were the best of the great commanders, why did Uddhava alone remain?

29 Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied: My dear King, the cursing of the brāhmaṇas was only a plea, but the actual fact was the supreme desire of the Lord. He wanted to disappear from the face of the earth after dispatching His excessively numerous family members. He thought to Himself as follows.

30 Now I shall leave the vision of this mundane world, and I see that Uddhava, the foremost of My devotees, is the only one who can be directly entrusted with knowledge about Me.

31 Uddhava is not inferior to Me in any way because he is never affected by the modes of material nature. Therefore he may remain in this world in order to disseminate specific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead.

32 Śukadeva Gosvāmī informed the King that Uddhava, being thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the source of all Vedic knowledge and the spiritual master of the three worlds, reached the pilgrimage site of Badarikāśrama and engaged himself there in trance to satisfy the Lord.

33 Vidura also heard from Uddhava about the appearance and disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul, in the mortal world, which is a subject matter sought after with great perseverance by the great sages.

34 The Lord's glorious acts and His acceptance of various transcendental forms for the performance of extraordinary pastimes in the mortal world are very difficult for anyone other than His devotees to understand, and for the beasts they are simply a mental disturbance.

35 Understanding that he was remembered by Lord Kṛṣṇa [while quitting this world], Vidura began to cry loudly, overwhelmed by the ecstasy of love.

36 After passing a few days on the bank of the river Yamunā, Vidura, the self-realized soul, reached the bank of the Ganges, where the great sage Maitreya was situated.

SB 3.5: Vidura's Talks with Maitreya

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Vidura, the best amongst the Kuru dynasty, who was perfect in devotional service to the Lord, thus reached the source of the celestial Ganges river [Hardwar], where Maitreya, the great, fathomless learned sage of the world, was seated. Vidura, who was perfect in gentleness and satisfied in transcendence, inquired from him.

2 Vidura said: O great sage, everyone in this world engages in fruitive activities to attain happiness, but one finds neither satiation nor the mitigation of distress. On the contrary, one is only aggravated by such activities. Please, therefore, give us directions on how one should live for real happiness.

3 O my lord, great philanthropic souls travel on the earth on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to show compassion to the fallen souls who are averse to the sense of subordination to the Lord.

4 Therefore, O great sage, please give me instruction on the transcendental devotional service of the Lord, so that He who is situated in the heart of everyone can be pleased to impart, from within, knowledge of the Absolute Truth in terms of the ancient Vedic principles delivered only to those who are purified by the process of devotional service.

5 O great sage, kindly narrate how the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the independent, desireless Lord of the three worlds and the controller of all energies, accepts incarnations and creates the cosmic manifestation with perfectly arranged regulative principles for its maintenance.

6 He lies down on His own heart spread in the form of the sky, and thus placing the whole creation in that space, He expands Himself into many living entities, which are manifested as different species of life. He does not have to endeavor for His maintenance, because He is the master of all mystic powers and the proprietor of everything. Thus He is distinct from the living entities.

7 You may narrate also about the auspicious characteristics of the Lord in His different incarnations for the welfare of the twice-born, the cows and the demigods. Our minds are never satisfied completely, although we continuously hear of His transcendental activities.

8 The Supreme King of all kings has created different planets and places of habitation where living entities are situated in terms of the modes of nature and work, and He has created their different kings and rulers.

9 O chief amongst the brāhmaṇas, please also describe how Nārāyaṇa, the creator of the universe and the self-sufficient Lord, has differently created the natures, activities, forms, features and names of the different living creatures.

10 O my lord, I have repeatedly heard about these higher and lower statuses of human society

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from the mouth of Vyāsadeva, and I am quite satiated with all these lesser subject matters and their happiness. They have not satisfied me with the nectar of topics about Kṛṣṇa.

11 Who in human society can be satisfied without hearing sufficient talk of the Lord, whose lotus feet are the sum total of all places of pilgrimage and who is worshiped by great sages and devotees? Such topics can cut off one's bondage to family affection simply by entering the holes of one's ears.

12 Your friend the great sage Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa has already described the transcendental qualities of the Lord in his great work the Mahābhārata. But the whole idea is to draw the attention of the mass of people to kṛṣṇa-kathā [Bhagavad-gītā] through their strong affinity for hearing mundane topics.

13 For one who is anxious to engage constantly in hearing such topics, kṛṣṇa-kathā gradually increases his indifference towards all other things. Such constant remembrance of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa by the devotee who has achieved transcendental bliss vanquishes all his miseries without delay.

14 O sage, persons who because of their sinful activities are averse to the topics of Transcendence and thus ignorant of the purpose of the Mahābhārata [Bhagavad-gītā] are pitied by the pitiable. I also pity them because I see how their duration of life is spoiled by eternal time while they involve themselves in presentations of philosophical speculation, theoretical ultimate goals of life, and different modes of ritual.

15 O Maitreya, O friend of the distressed, the glories of the Supreme Lord can alone do good for people all over the world. Therefore, just as bees collect honey from flowers, kindly describe the essence of all topics the topics of the Lord.

16 Kindly chant all those superhuman transcendental activities of the supreme controller, the Personality of Godhead, who accepted incarnations fully equipped with all potency for the full manifestation and maintenance of the cosmic creation.

17 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The great sage Maitreya Muni, after honoring Vidura very greatly, began to speak, at Vidura's request, for the greatest welfare of all people.

18 Śrī Maitreya said: O Vidura, all glory unto you. You have inquired from me of the greatest of all goodness, and thus you have shown your mercy both to the world and to me because your mind is always absorbed in thoughts of the Transcendence.

19 O Vidura, it is not at all wonderful that you have so accepted the Lord without deviation of thought, for you were born from the semen of Vyāsadeva.

20 I know that you are now Vidura due to the cursing of Māṇḍavya Muni and that formerly you were King Yamarāja, the great controller of living entities after their death. You were begotten by the son of Satyavatī, Vyāsadeva, in the kept wife of his brother.

21 Your good self is one of the eternal associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead for whose sake the Lord, while going back to His abode, left instructions with me.

22 I shall therefore describe to you the pastimes by which the Personality of Godhead extends His transcendental potency for the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic world as they occur one after another.

23 The Personality of Godhead, the master of all living entities, existed prior to the creation as one without a second. It is by His will only that creation is made possible and again everything

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merges in Him. This Supreme Self is symptomized by different names.

24 The Lord, the undisputed proprietor of everything, was the only seer. The cosmic manifestation was not present at that time, and thus He felt imperfect without His plenary and separated parts and parcels. The material energy was dormant, whereas the internal potency was manifested.

25 The Lord is the seer, and the external energy, which is seen, works as both cause and effect in the cosmic manifestation. O greatly fortunate Vidura, this external energy is known as *māyā* or illusion, and through her agency only is the entire material manifestation made possible.

26 The Supreme Living Being in His feature as the transcendental puruṣa incarnation, who is the Lord's plenary expansion, impregnates the material nature of three modes, and thus by the influence of eternal time the living entities appear.

27 Thereafter, influenced by the interactions of eternal time, the supreme sum total of matter, called the mahat-tattva, became manifested, and in this mahat-tattva the unalloyed goodness, the Supreme Lord, sowed the seeds of universal manifestation out of His own body.

28 Thereafter the mahat-tattva differentiated itself into many different forms as the reservoir of the would-be entities. The mahat-tattva is chiefly in the mode of ignorance, and it generates the false ego. It is a plenary expansion of the Personality of Godhead, with full consciousness of creative principles and time for fructification.

29 Mahat-tattva, or the great causal truth, transforms into false ego, which is manifested in three phases—cause, effect and the doer. All such activities are on the mental plane and are based on the material elements, gross senses and mental speculation. The false ego is represented in three different modes—goodness, passion and ignorance.

30 The false ego is transformed into mind by interaction with the mode of goodness. All the demigods who control the phenomenal world are also products of the same principle, namely the interaction of false ego and the mode of goodness.

31 The senses are certainly products of the mode of passion in false ego, and therefore philosophical speculative knowledge and fruitive activities are predominantly products of the mode of passion.

32 The sky is a product of sound, and sound is the transformation of egoistic ignorance. In other words, the sky is the symbolic representation of the Supreme Soul.

33 Thereafter the Personality of Godhead glanced over the sky, partly mixed with eternal time and external energy, and thus developed the touch sensation, from which the air in the sky was produced.

34 Thereafter the extremely powerful air, interacting with the sky, generated the form of sense perception, and the perception of form transformed into electricity, the light to see the world.

35 When electricity was surcharged in the air and was glanced over by the Supreme, at that time, by a mixture of eternal time and external energy, there occurred the creation of water and taste.

36 Thereafter the water produced from electricity was glanced over by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and mixed with eternal time and external energy. Thus it was transformed into the earth, which is qualified primarily by smell.

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37 O gentle one, of all the physical elements, beginning from the sky down to the earth, all the inferior and superior qualities are due only to the final touch of the glance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

38 The controlling deities of all the above-mentioned physical elements are empowered expansions of Lord Viṣṇu. They are embodied by eternal time under the external energy, and they are His parts and parcels. Because they were entrusted with different functions of universal duties and were unable to perform them, they offered fascinating prayers to the Lord as follows.

39 The demigods said: O Lord, Your lotus feet are like an umbrella for the surrendered souls, protecting them from all the miseries of material existence. All the sages under that shelter throw off all material miseries. We therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto Your lotus feet.

40 O Father, O Lord, O Personality of Godhead, the living entities in the material world can never have any happiness because they are overwhelmed by the three kinds of miseries. Therefore they take shelter of the shade of Your lotus feet, which are full of knowledge, and we also thus take shelter of them.

41 The lotus feet of the Lord are by themselves the shelter of all places of pilgrimage. The great clear-minded sages, carried by the wings of the Vedas, always search after the nest of Your lotuslike face. Some of them surrender to Your lotus feet at every step by taking shelter of the best of rivers [the Ganges], which can deliver one from all sinful reactions.

42 Simply by hearing about Your lotus feet with eagerness and devotion and by meditating upon them within the heart, one at once becomes enlightened with knowledge, and on the strength of detachment one becomes pacified. We must therefore take shelter of the sanctuary of Your lotus feet.

43 O Lord, You assume incarnations for the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation, and therefore we all take shelter of Your lotus feet because they always award remembrance and courage to Your devotees.

44 O Lord, persons who are entangled by undesirable eagerness for the temporary body and kinsmen, and who are bound by thoughts of “mine” and “I,” are unable to see Your lotus feet, although Your lotus feet are situated within their own bodies. But let us take shelter of Your lotus feet.

45 O great Supreme Lord, offensive persons whose internal vision has been too affected by external materialistic activities cannot see Your lotus feet, but they are seen by Your pure devotees, whose one and only aim is to transcendently enjoy Your activities.

46 O Lord, persons who, because of their serious attitude, attain the stage of enlightened devotional service achieve the complete meaning of renunciation and knowledge and attain the Vaikuṅṭhaloka in the spiritual sky simply by drinking the nectar of Your topics.

47 Others, who are pacified by means of transcendental self-realization and have conquered over the modes of nature by dint of strong power and knowledge, also enter into You, but for them there is much pain, whereas the devotee simply discharges devotional service and thus feels no such pain.

48 O Original Person, we are therefore but Yours only. Although we are Your creatures, we are born one after another under the influence of the three modes of nature, and for this reason we are separated in action. Therefore, after the creation we could not act concertedly for Your

transcendental pleasure.

49 O unborn one, please enlighten us regarding the ways and means by which we can offer You all enjoyable grains and commodities so that both we and all other living entities in this world can maintain ourselves without disturbance and can easily accumulate the necessities of life both for You and for ourselves.

50 You are the original personal founder of all the demigods and the orders of different gradations, yet You are the oldest and are unchanged. O Lord, You have no source or superior. You have impregnated the external energy with the semen of the total living entities, yet You are unborn.

51 O Supreme Self, please give us, who are created in the beginning from the mahat-tattva, the total cosmic energy, Your kind directions on how we shall act. Kindly award us Your perfect knowledge and potency so that we can render You service in the different departments of subsequent creation.

SB 3.6: Creation of the Universal Form

1 The Ṛṣi Maitreya said: The Lord thus heard about the suspension of the progressive creative functions of the universe due to the noncombination of His potencies, such as the mahat-tattva.

2 The Supreme Powerful Lord then simultaneously entered into the twenty-three elements with the goddess Kālī, His external energy, who alone amalgamates all the different elements.

3 Thus when the Personality of Godhead entered into the elements by His energy, all the living entities were enlivened into different activities, just as one is engaged in his work after awakening from sleep.

4 When the twenty-three principal elements were set in action by the will of the Supreme, the gigantic universal form, or the viśvarūpa body of the Lord, came into existence.

5 As the Lord, in His plenary portion, entered into the elements of the universal creation, they transformed into the gigantic form in which all the planetary systems and all movable and immovable creations rest.

6 The gigantic virāṭ-puruṣa, known as Hiraṇmaya, lived for one thousand celestial years on the water of the universe, and all the living entities lay with Him.

7 The total energy of the mahat-tattva, in the form of the gigantic virāṭ-rūpa, divided Himself by Himself into the consciousness of the living entities, the life of activity, and self-identification, which are subdivided into one, ten and three respectively.

8 The gigantic universal form of the Supreme Lord is the first incarnation and plenary portion of the Supersoul. He is the Self of an unlimited number of living entities, and in Him rests the aggregate creation, which thus flourishes.

9 The gigantic universal form is represented by three, ten and one in the sense that He is the body and the mind and the senses, He is the dynamic force for all movements by ten kinds of life energy, and He is the one heart where life energy is generated.

10 The Supreme Lord is the Supersoul of all the demigods entrusted with the task of constructing the cosmic manifestation. Being thus prayed to [by the demigods], He thought to Himself and thus manifested the gigantic form for their understanding.

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11 Maitreya said: You may now hear from me how the Supreme Lord separated Himself into the diverse forms of the demigods after the manifestation of the gigantic universal form.

12 Agni, or heat, separated from His mouth, and all the directors of material affairs entered into it in their respective positions. By that energy the living entity expresses himself in words.

13 When the palate of the gigantic form was separately manifested, Varuṇa, the director of water in the planetary systems, entered therein, and thus the living entity has the facility to taste everything with his tongue.

14 When the Lord's two nostrils separately manifested themselves, the dual Aśvinī-kumāras entered them in their proper positions, and because of this the living entities can smell the aromas of everything.

15 Thereafter, the two eyes of the gigantic form of the Lord were separately manifested. The sun, the director of light, entered them with the partial representation of eyesight, and thus the living entities can have vision of forms.

16 When there was a manifestation of skin separated from the gigantic form, Anila, the deity directing the wind, entered with partial touch, and thus the living entities can realize tactile knowledge.

17 When the ears of the gigantic form became manifested, all the controlling deities of the directions entered into them with the hearing principles, by which all the living entities hear and take advantage of sound.

18 When there was a separate manifestation of skin, the controlling deities of sensations and their different parts entered into it, and thus the living entities feel itching and happiness due to touch.

19 When the genitals of the gigantic form separately became manifest, then Prajāpati, the original living creature, entered into them with his partial semen, and thus the living entities can enjoy sex pleasure.

20 The evacuating channel separately became manifest, and the director named Mitra entered into it with partial organs of evacuation. Thus the living entities are able to pass stool and urine.

21 Thereafter, when the hands of the gigantic form separately became manifested, Indra, the ruler of the heavenly planets, entered into them, and thus the living entity is able to transact business for his livelihood.

22 Thereafter the legs of the gigantic form separately became manifest, and the demigod named Viṣṇu [not the Personality of Godhead] entered with partial movement. This helps the living entity move to his destination.

23 When the intelligence of the gigantic form separately became manifest, Brahmā, the lord of the Vedas, entered into it with the partial power of understanding, and thus an object of understanding is experienced by the living entities.

24 After that, the heart of the gigantic form separately manifested itself, and into it entered the moon demigod with partial mental activity. Thus the living entity can conduct his mental speculations.

25 Thereafter the materialistic ego of the gigantic form separately manifested itself, and into it entered Rudra, the controller of false ego, with his own partial activities, by which the living

entity transacts his objective actions.

26 Thereafter, when His consciousness separately manifested itself, the total energy, mahat-tattva, entered with His conscious part. Thus the living entity is able to conceive specific knowledge.

27 Thereafter, from the head of the gigantic form, the heavenly planets were manifested, and from His legs the earthly planets and from His abdomen the sky separately manifested themselves. Within them the demigods and others also were manifested in terms of the modes of material nature.

28 The demigods, qualified by the superexcellent quality of the mode of goodness, are situated in the heavenly planets, whereas the human beings, because of their nature in the mode of passion, live on the earth in company with their subordinates.

29 Living entities who are associates of Rudra develop in the third mode of material nature, or ignorance. They are situated in the sky between the earthly planets and the heavenly planets.

30 O chief of the Kuru dynasty, the Vedic wisdom became manifested from the mouth of the virāt, the gigantic form. Those who are inclined to this Vedic knowledge are called brāhmaṇas, and they are the natural teachers and spiritual masters of all the orders of society.

31 Thereafter the power of protection was generated from the arms of the gigantic virāt form, and in relation to such power the kṣatriyas also came into existence by following the kṣatriya principle of protecting society from the disturbance of thieves and miscreants.

32 The means of livelihood of all persons, namely production of grains and their distribution to the prajāṣ, was generated from the thighs of the Lord's gigantic form. The mercantile men who take charge of such execution are called vaiśyas.

33 Thereafter, service was manifested from the legs of the Personality of Godhead for the sake of perfecting the religious function. Situated on the legs are the śūdras, who satisfy the Lord by service.

34 All these different social divisions are born, with their occupational duties and living conditions, from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus for unconditional life and self-realization one has to worship the Supreme Lord under the direction of the spiritual master.

35 O Vidura, who can estimate or measure the transcendental time, work and potency of the gigantic form manifested by the internal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

36 In spite of my inability, whatever I have been able to hear [from the spiritual master] and whatever I could assimilate I am now describing in glorification of the Lord by pure speech, for otherwise my power of speaking would remain unchaste.

37 The highest perfectional gain of humanity is to engage in discussions of the activities and glories of the Pious Actor. Such activities are so nicely arranged in writing by the greatly learned sages that the actual purpose of the ear is served just by being near them.

38 O my son, the original poet, Brahmā, after mature meditation for one thousand celestial years, could know only that the glories of the Supreme Soul are inconceivable.

39 The wonderful potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is bewildering even to the jugglers. That potency is unknown even to the self-sufficient Lord, so it is certainly unknown to others.

40 Words, mind and ego, with their respective controlling demigods, have failed to achieve success in knowing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, we simply have to offer our respectful obeisances unto Him as a matter of sanity.

SB 3.7: Further Inquires by Vidura

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, while Maitreya, the great sage, was thus speaking, Vidura, the learned son of Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, expressed a request in a pleasing manner by asking this question.

2 Śrī Vidura said: O great brāhmaṇa, since the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the complete spiritual whole and is unchangeable, how is He connected with the material modes of nature and their activities? If this is His pastime, how do the activities of the unchangeable take place and exhibit qualities without the modes of nature?

3 Boys are enthusiastic to play with other boys or with various diversions because they are encouraged by desire. But there is no possibility of such desire for the Lord because He is self-satisfied and detached from everything at all times.

4 By His self-sheltered potency of the three modes of material nature, the Lord has caused the creation of this universe. By her He maintains the creation and conversely dissolves it, again and again.

5 The pure soul is pure consciousness and is never out of consciousness, either due to circumstances, time, situations, dreams or other causes. How then does he become engaged in nescience?

6 The Lord, as the Supersoul, is situated in every living being's heart. Why then do the living entities' activities result in misfortune and misery?

7 O great and learned one, my mind is greatly illusioned by the distress of this nescience, and I therefore request you to clear it up.

8 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Maitreya, being thus agitated by the inquisitive Vidura, at first seemed astonished, but then he replied to him without hesitation, since he was fully God conscious.

9 Śrī Maitreya said: Certain conditioned souls put forward the theory that the Supreme Brahman, or the Personality of Godhead, is overcome by illusion, or māyā, and at the same time they maintain that He is unconditioned. This is against all logic.

10 The living entity is in distress regarding his self-identity. He has no factual background, like a man who dreams that he sees his head cut off.

11 As the moon reflected on water appears to the seer to tremble due to being associated with the quality of the water, so the self associated with matter appears to be qualified as matter.

12 But that misconception of self-identity can be diminished gradually by the mercy of the Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, through the process of devotional service to the Lord in the mode of detachment.

13 When the senses are satisfied in the seer-Supersoul, the Personality of Godhead, and merge in Him, all miseries are completely vanquished, as after a sound sleep.

14 Simply by chanting and hearing of the transcendental name, form, etc., of the Personality of

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Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one can achieve the cessation of unlimited miserable conditions. Therefore what to speak of those who have attained attraction for serving the flavor of the dust of the Lord's lotus feet?

15 Vidura said: O powerful sage, my lord, all my doubts about the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities have now been removed by your convincing words. My mind is now perfectly entering into them.

16 O learned sage, your explanations are very good, as they should be. Disturbances to the conditioned soul have no other basis than the movement of the external energy of the Lord.

17 Both the lowest of fools and he who is transcendental to all intelligence enjoy happiness, whereas persons between them suffer the material pangs.

18 But, my dear sir, I am obliged to you because now I can understand that this material manifestation is without substance, although it appears real. I am confident that by serving your feet it will be possible for me to give up the false idea.

19 By serving the feet of the spiritual master, one is enabled to develop transcendental ecstasy in the service of the Personality of Godhead, who is the unchangeable enemy of the Madhu demon and whose service vanquishes one's material distresses.

20 Persons whose austerity is meager can hardly obtain the service of the pure devotees who are progressing on the path back to the kingdom of Godhead, the Vaikuṅṭhas. Pure devotees engage one hundred percent in glorifying the Supreme Lord, who is the Lord of the demigods and the controller of all living entities.

21 After creating the total material energy, the mahat-tattva, and thereby manifesting the gigantic universal form with senses and sense organs, the Supreme Lord entered within it.

22 The puruṣa incarnation lying on the Causal Ocean is called the original puruṣa in the material creations, and in His virāṭ form, in whom all the planets and their inhabitants live, He has many thousands of legs and hands.

23 O great brāhmaṇa, you have told me that the gigantic virāṭ form and His senses, sense objects and ten kinds of life air exist with three kinds of life vigor. Now, if you will, kindly explain to me the different powers of the specific divisions.

24 O my lord, I think that the process manifest in the forms of sons, grandsons and family members has spread all over the universe in different varieties and species.

25 O learned brāhmaṇa, please describe how the leader of all the demigods, namely the Prajāpati, Brahmā, decided to establish the various Manus, the heads of the ages. Please describe the Manus also, and please describe the descendants of those Manus.

26 O son of Mitrā, kindly describe how the planets are situated above the earth as well as underneath it, and also please mention their measurement as well as that of the earthly planets.

27 Also please describe the living beings under different classifications: subhumans, humans, those born of the embryo, those born of perspiration, those who are twice-born [birds], and the plants and vegetables. Kindly describe their generations and subdivisions also.

28 Please also describe the incarnations of the material modes of nature Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara and please describe the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His magnanimous activities.

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29 O great sage, kindly describe the divisions and orders of human society in terms of symptoms, behavior and the characteristics of mental equilibrium and sense control. Also please describe the births of the great sages and the categorical divisions of the Vedas.

30 Please also describe the expansions of different sacrifices and the paths of mystic powers, analytical study of knowledge, and devotional service, all with their respective regulations.

31 Please also describe the imperfections and contradictions of the faithless atheists, the situation of crossbreeding, and the movements of the living entities in various species of life according to their particular modes of nature and work.

32 You may also describe the noncontradictory causes of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and salvation and also the different means of livelihood and different processes of law and order as mentioned in the revealed scriptures.

33 Please also explain the regulations for offering respects to the forefathers, the creation of the Pitṛloka, the time schedule in the planets, stars and luminaries, and their respective situations.

34 Please also describe the fruitive results of charity and penance and of digging reservoirs of water. Please describe the situation of persons who are away from home and also the duty of a man in an awkward position.

35 O sinless one, because the Personality of Godhead, the controller of all living entities, is the father of all religion and all those who are candidates for religious activities, kindly describe how He can be completely satisfied.

36 O best among the brāhmaṇas, those who are spiritual masters are very kind to the needy. They are always kind to their followers, disciples and sons, and without being asked by them, the spiritual master describes all that is knowledge.

37 Please describe how many dissolutions there are for the elements of material nature and who survives after the dissolutions to serve the Lord while He is asleep.

38 What are the truths regarding the living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead? What are their identities? What are the specific values in the knowledge in the Vedas, and what are the necessities for the spiritual master and his disciples?

39 Spotless devotees of the Lord have mentioned the source of such knowledge. How could one have knowledge of devotional service and detachment without the help of such devotees?

40 My dear sage, I have put all these questions before you with a view to knowing the pastimes of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are the friend of all, so kindly describe them for all those who have lost their vision.

41 O spotless one, your answers to all these questions will grant immunity from all material miseries. Such charity is greater than all Vedic charities, sacrifices, penances, etc.

42 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus the chief of the sages, who was always enthusiastic about describing topics regarding the Personality of Godhead, began to narrate the descriptive explanation of the Purāṇas, being so infused by Vidura. He was very much enlivened by speaking on the transcendental activities of the Lord.

SB 3.8: Manifestation of Brahmā from Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

1 The great sage Maitreya Muni said to Vidura: The royal dynasty of King Pūru is worthy to serve the pure devotees because all the descendants of that family are devoted to the Personality of Godhead. You are also born in that family, and it is wonderful that because of your attempt the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are becoming newer and newer at every moment.

2 Let me now begin speaking on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, which was directly spoken to the great sages by the Personality of Godhead for the benefit of those who are entangled in extreme miseries for the sake of very little pleasure.

3 Some time ago, being inquisitive to know, Sanat-kumāra, the chief of the boy-saints, accompanied by other great sages, inquired exactly like you about the truths regarding Vāsudeva, the Supreme, from Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is seated at the bottom of the universe.

4 At that time Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa was meditating upon His Supreme Lord, whom the learned esteem as Lord Vāsudeva, but for the sake of the advancement of the great learned sages He slightly opened His lotus like eyes and began to speak.

5 The sages came from the highest planets down to the lower region through the water of the Ganges, and therefore the hair on their heads was wet. They touched the lotus feet of the Lord, which are worshiped with various paraphernalia by the daughters of the serpent-king when they desire good husbands.

6 The four Kumāras, headed by Sanat-kumāra, who all knew the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, glorified the Lord in rhythmic accents with selected words full of affection and love. At that time Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, with His thousands of raised hoods, began to radiate an effulgence from the glowing stones on His head.

7 Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa thus spoke the purport of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to the great sage Sanat-kumāra, who had already taken the vow of renunciation. Sanat-kumāra also, in his turn, when inquired of by Sāṅkhyāyana Muni, explained Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as he had heard it from Saṅkarṣaṇa.

8 The great sage Sāṅkhyāyana was the chief amongst the transcendentalists, and when he was describing the glories of the Lord in terms of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, it so happened that my spiritual master, Parāśara, and Bṛhaspati both heard him.

9 The great sage Parāśara, as aforementioned, being so advised by the great sage Pulastya, spoke unto me the foremost of the Purāṇas [Bhāgavatam]. I shall also describe this before you, my dear son, in terms of my hearing, because you are always my faithful follower.

10 At that time when the three worlds were submerged in water, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu was alone, lying on His bedstead, the great snake Ananta, and although He appeared to be in slumber in His own internal potency, free from the action of the external energy, His eyes were not completely closed.

11 Just like the strength of fire within fuel wood, the Lord remained within the water of dissolution, submerging all the living entities in their subtle bodies. He lay in the self-invigorated energy called kāla.

12 The Lord lay down for a thousand cycles of four yugas in His internal potency, and by His external energy He appeared to be sleeping within the water. When the living entities were coming out for further development of their fruitive activities, actuated by the energy called kāla-śakti, He saw His transcendental body as bluish.

13 The subtle subject matter of creation, on which the Lord's attention was fixed, was agitated by the material mode of passion, and thus the subtle form of creation pierced through His abdomen.

14 Piercing through, this sum total form of the fruitive activity of the living entities took the shape of the bud of a lotus flower generated from the Personality of Viṣṇu, and by His supreme will it illuminated everything, like the sun, and dried up the vast waters of devastation.

15 Into that universal lotus flower Lord Viṣṇu personally entered as the Supersoul, and when it was thus impregnated with all the modes of material nature, the personality of Vedic wisdom, whom we call the self-born, was generated.

16 Brahmā, born out of the lotus flower, could not see the world, although he was situated in the whorl. He therefore circumambulated all of space, and while moving his eyes in all directions he achieved four heads in terms of the four directions.

17 Lord Brahmā, situated in that lotus, could not perfectly understand the creation, the lotus or himself. At the end of the millennium the air of devastation began to move the water and the lotus in great circular waves.

18 Lord Brahmā, in his ignorance, contemplated: Who am I that am situated on the top of this lotus? Wherefrom has it sprouted? There must be something downwards, and that from which this lotus has grown must be within the water.

19 Lord Brahmā, thus contemplating, entered the water through the channel of the stem of the lotus. But in spite of entering the stem and going nearer to the navel of Viṣṇu, he could not trace out the root.

20 O Vidura, while searching in that way about his existence, Brahmā reached his ultimate time, which is the eternal wheel in the hand of Viṣṇu and which generates fear in the mind of the living entity like the fear of death.

21 Thereafter, being unable to achieve the desired destination, he retired from such searching and came back again to the top of the lotus. Thus, controlling all objectives, he concentrated his mind on the Supreme Lord.

22 At the end of Brahmā's one hundred years, when his meditation was complete, he developed the required knowledge, and as a result he could see in his heart the Supreme within himself, whom he could not see before with the greatest endeavor.

23 Brahmā could see that on the water there was a gigantic lotuslike white bedstead, the body of Śeṣa-nāga, on which the Personality of Godhead was lying alone. The whole atmosphere was illuminated by the rays of the jewels bedecking the hood of Śeṣa-nāga, and that illumination dissipated all the darkness of those regions.

24 The luster of the transcendental body of the Lord mocked the beauty of the coral mountain. The coral mountain is very beautifully dressed by the evening sky, but the yellow dress of the Lord mocked its beauty. There is gold on the summit of the mountain, but the Lord's helmet, bedecked with jewels, mocked it. The mountain's waterfalls, herbs, etc., with a panorama of flowers, seem like garlands, but the Lord's gigantic body, and His hands and legs, decorated with jewels, pearls, tulasī leaves and flower garlands, mocked the scene on the mountain.

25 His transcendental body, unlimited in length and breadth, occupied the three planetary systems, upper, middle and lower. His body was self-illuminated by unparalleled dress and

variegatedness and was properly ornamented.

26 The Lord showed His lotus feet by raising them. His lotus feet are the source of all awards achieved by devotional service free from material contamination. Such awards are for those who worship Him in pure devotion. The splendor of the transcendental rays from His moonlike toenails and fingernails appeared like the petals of a flower.

27 He also acknowledged the service of the devotees and vanquished their distress by His beautiful smile. The reflection of His face, decorated with earrings, was so pleasing because it dazzled with the rays from His lips and the beauty of His nose and eyebrows.

28 O my dear Vidura, the Lord's waist was covered with yellow cloth resembling the saffron dust of the kadamba flower, and it was encircled by a well-decorated belt. His chest was decorated with the śrīvatsa marking and a necklace of unlimited value.

29 As a sandalwood tree is decorated with fragrant flowers and branches, the Lord's body was decorated with valuable jewels and pearls. He was the self-situated tree, the Lord of all others in the universe. And as a sandalwood tree is covered with many snakes, so the Lord's body was also covered by the hoods of Ananta.

30 Like a great mountain, the Lord stands as the abode for all moving and nonmoving living entities. He is the friend of the snakes because Lord Ananta is His friend. As a mountain has thousands of golden peaks, so the Lord was seen with the thousands of golden-helmeted hoods of Ananta-nāga; and as a mountain is sometimes filled with jewels, so also His transcendental body was fully decorated with valuable jewels. As a mountain is sometimes submerged in the ocean water, so the Lord is sometimes submerged in the water of devastation.

31 Lord Brahmā, thus looking upon the Lord in the shape of a mountain, concluded that He was Hari, the Personality of Godhead. He saw that the garland of flowers on His chest glorified Him with Vedic wisdom in sweet songs and looked very beautiful. He was protected by the Sudarśana wheel for fighting, and even the sun, moon, air, fire, etc., could not have access to Him.

32 When Lord Brahmā, the maker of the universal destination, thus saw the Lord, he simultaneously glanced over creation. Lord Brahmā saw the lake in Lord Viṣṇu's navel, and the lotus flower, as well as the devastating water, the drying air and the sky. All became visible to him.

33 Lord Brahmā, thus being surcharged with the mode of passion, became inclined to create, and after seeing the five causes of creation indicated by the Personality of Godhead, he began to offer his respectful prayers on the path of the creative mentality.

SB 3.9: Brahmā's Prayers for Creative Energy

1 Lord Brahmā said: O my Lord, today, after many, many years of penance, I have come to know about You. Oh, how unfortunate the embodied living entities are that they are unable to know Your personality! My Lord, You are the only knowable object because there is nothing supreme beyond You. If there is anything supposedly superior to You, it is not the Absolute. You exist as the Supreme by exhibiting the creative energy of matter.

2 The form which I see is eternally freed from material contamination and has advented to show mercy to the devotees as a manifestation of internal potency. This incarnation is the origin of many other incarnations, and I am born from the lotus flower grown from Your navel

home.

3 O my Lord, I do not see a form superior to Your present form of eternal bliss and knowledge. In Your impersonal Brahman effulgence in the spiritual sky, there is no occasional change and no deterioration of internal potency. I surrender unto You because whereas I am proud of my material body and senses, Your Lordship is the cause of the cosmic manifestation and yet You are untouched by matter.

4 This present form, or any transcendental form expanded by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is equally auspicious for all the universes. Since You have manifested this eternal personal form upon whom Your devotees meditate, I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You. Those who are destined to be dispatched to the path of hell neglect Your personal form because of speculating on material topics.

5 O my Lord, persons who smell the aroma of Your lotus feet, carried by the air of Vedic sound through the holes of the ears, accept Your devotional service. For them You are never separated from the lotus of their hearts.

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

7 O my Lord, persons who are bereft of the all-auspicious performance of chanting and hearing about Your transcendental activities are certainly unfortunate and are also bereft of good sense. They engage in inauspicious activities, enjoying sense gratification for a very little while.

8 O great actor, my Lord, all these poor creatures are constantly perplexed by hunger, thirst, severe cold, secretion and bile, attacked by coughing winter, blasting summer, rains and many other disturbing elements, and overwhelmed by strong sex urges and indefatigable anger. I take pity on them, and I am very much aggrieved for them.

9 O my Lord, the material miseries are without factual existence for the soul. Yet as long as the conditioned soul sees the body as meant for sense enjoyment, he cannot get out of the entanglement of material miseries, being influenced by Your external energy.

10 Such nondevotees engage their senses in very troublesome and extensive work, and they suffer insomnia at night because their intelligence constantly breaks their sleep with various mental speculations. They are frustrated in all their various plans by supernatural power. Even great sages, if they are against Your transcendental topics, must rotate in this material world.

11 O my Lord, Your devotees can see You through the ears by the process of bona fide hearing, and thus their hearts become cleansed, and You take Your seat there. You are so merciful to Your devotees that You manifest Yourself in the particular eternal form of transcendence in which they always think of You.

12 My Lord, You are not very much satisfied by the worship of the demigods, who arrange for Your worship very pompously, with various paraphernalia, but who are full of material hankering. You are situated in everyone’s heart as the Supersoul just to show Your causeless mercy, and You are the eternal well-wisher, but You are unavailable for the nondevotee.

13 But the pious activities of the people, such as performance of Vedic rituals, charity, austere penances and transcendental service, performed with a view to worship You and satisfy You

by offering You the fruitive results, are also beneficial. Such acts of religion never go in vain.

14 Let me offer my obeisances unto the Supreme Transcendence, who is eternally distinguished by His internal potency. His indistinguishable impersonal feature is realized by intelligence for self-realization. I offer my obeisances unto Him who by His pastimes enjoys the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation.

15 Let me take shelter of the lotus feet of Him whose incarnations, qualities and activities are mysterious imitations of worldly affairs. One who invokes His transcendental names, even unconsciously, at the time he quits this life, is certainly washed immediately of the sins of many, many births and attains Him without fail.

16 Your Lordship is the prime root of the tree of the planetary systems. This tree has grown by first penetrating the material nature in three trunks as me, Śiva and You, the Almighty for creation, maintenance and dissolution, and we three have grown with many branches. Therefore I offer my obeisances unto You, the tree of the cosmic manifestation.

17 People in general all engage in foolish acts, not in the really beneficial activities enunciated directly by You for their guidance. As long as their tendency for foolish work remains powerful, all their plans in the struggle for existence will be cut to pieces. I therefore offer my obeisances unto Him who acts as eternal time.

18 Your Lordship, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You who are indefatigable time and the enjoyer of all sacrifices. Although I am situated in an abode which will continue to exist for a time duration of two parārdhas, although I am the leader of all other planets in the universe, and although I have undergone many, many years of penance for self-realization, still I offer my respects unto You.

19 O my Lord, by Your own will You appear in the various species of living entities, among animals lower than human beings as well as among the demigods, to perform Your transcendental pastimes. You are not affected by material contamination. You come just to fulfill the obligations of Your own principles of religion, and therefore, O Supreme Personality, I offer my obeisances unto You for manifesting such different forms.

20 My Lord, You accept the pleasure of sleeping in the water of devastation, where there are violent waves, and You enjoy pleasure on the bed of snakes, showing the happiness of Your sleep to intelligent persons. At that time, all the universal planets are stationed within Your abdomen.

21 O object of my worship, I am born from the house of Your lotus navel for the purpose of creating the universe by Your mercy. All these planets of the universe were stationed within Your transcendental abdomen while You were enjoying sleep. Now, Your sleep having ended, Your eyes are open like blossoming lotuses in the morning.

22 Let the Supreme Lord be merciful towards me. He is the one friend and soul of all living entities in the world, and He maintains all, for their ultimate happiness, by His six transcendental opulences. May He be merciful towards me so that I, as before, may be empowered with the introspection to create, for I am also one of the surrendered souls who are dear to the Lord.

23 The Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, is always the benefactor of the surrendered souls. His activities are always enacted through His internal potency, Ramā, or the goddess of fortune. I pray only to engage in His service in the creation of the material world, and I pray that I not be materially affected by my works, for thus I may be able to give up the false

prestige of being the creator.

24 The Lord's potencies are innumerable. As He lies down in the water of devastation, I am born as the total universal energy from the navel lake in which the lotus sprouts. I am now engaged in manifesting His diverse energies in the form of the cosmic manifestation. I therefore pray that in the course of my material activities I may not be deviated from the vibration of the Vedic hymns.

25 The Lord, who is supreme and is the oldest of all, is unlimitedly merciful. I wish that He may smilingly bestow His benediction upon me by opening His lotus eyes. He can uplift the entire cosmic creation and remove our dejection by kindly speaking His directions.

26 The sage Maitreya said: O Vidura, after observing the source of his appearance, namely the Personality of Godhead, Brahmā prayed for His mercy as far as his mind and words would permit him. Thus having prayed, he became silent, as if tired from his activities of penance, knowledge and mental concentration.

27-28 The Lord saw that Brahmā was very anxious about the planning and construction of the different planetary systems and was depressed upon seeing the devastating water. He could understand the intention of Brahmā, and thus He spoke in deep, thoughtful words, removing all the illusion that had arisen.

29 The Supreme Personality of Godhead then said: O Brahmā, O depth of Vedic wisdom, be neither depressed nor anxious about the execution of creation. What you are begging from Me has already been granted before.

30 O Brahmā, situate yourself in penance and meditation and follow the principles of knowledge to receive My favor. By these actions you will be able to understand everything from within your heart.

31 O Brahmā, when you are absorbed in devotional service, in the course of your creative activities, you will see Me in you and throughout the universe, and you will see that you yourself, the universe and the living entities are all in Me.

32 You will see Me in all living entities as well as all over the universe, just as fire is situated in wood. Only in that state of transcendental vision will you be able to be free from all kinds of illusion.

33 When you are free from the conception of gross and subtle bodies and when your senses are free from all influences of the modes of material nature, you will realize your pure form in My association. At that time you will be situated in pure consciousness.

34 Since you have desired to increase the population innumerable and expand your varieties of service, you shall never be deprived in this matter because My causeless mercy upon you will always increase for all time.

35 You are the original ṛṣi, and because your mind is always fixed on Me, even though you will be engaged in generating various progeny the vicious mode of passion will never encroach upon you.

36 Although I am not easily knowable by the conditioned soul, you have known Me today because you know that My personality is not constituted of anything material, and specifically not of the five gross and three subtle elements.

37 When you were contemplating whether there was a source to the stem of the lotus of your

birth and you even entered into that stem, you could not trace out anything. But at that time I manifested My form from within.

38 O Brahmā, the prayers that you have chanted praising the glories of My transcendental activities, the penances you have undertaken to understand Me, and your firm faith in Me all these are to be considered My causeless mercy.

39 I am very much pleased by your description of Me in terms of My transcendental qualities, which appear mundane to the mundaners. I grant you all benedictions in your desire to glorify all the planets by your activities.

40 Any human being who prays like Brahmā, and who thus worships Me, shall very soon be blessed with the fulfillment of all his desires, for I am the Lord of all benediction.

41 It is the opinion of expert transcendentalists that the ultimate goal of performing all traditional good works, penances, sacrifices, charities, mystic activities, trances, etc., is to invoke My satisfaction.

42 I am the Supersoul of every individual. I am the supreme director and the dearest. People are wrongly attached to the gross and subtle bodies, but they should be attached to Me only.

43 By following My instructions you can now generate the living entities as before, by dint of your complete Vedic wisdom and the body you have directly received from Me, the supreme cause of everything.

44 The sage Maitreya said: After instructing Brahmā, the creator of the universe, to expand, the primeval Lord, the Personality of Godhead in His personal form as Nārāyaṇa, disappeared.

SB 3.10: Divisions of the Creation

1 Śrī Vidura said: O great sage, please let me know how Brahmā, the grandfather of the planetary inhabitants, created the bodies of the living entities from his own body and mind after the disappearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

2 O greatly learned one, kindly eradicate all my doubts, and let me know of all that I have inquired from you from the beginning to the end.

3 Sūta Gosvāmī said: O son of Bhṛgu, the great sage Maitreya Muni, thus hearing from Vidura, felt very much enlivened. Everything was in his heart, and thus he began to reply to the questions one after another.

4 The greatly learned sage Maitreya said: O Vidura, Brahmā thus engaged himself in penances for one hundred celestial years, as advised by the Personality of Godhead, and applied himself in devotional service to the Lord.

5 Thereafter Brahmā saw that both the lotus on which he was situated and the water on which the lotus was growing were trembling due to a strong, violent wind.

6 Long penance and transcendental knowledge of self-realization had matured Brahmā in practical knowledge, and thus he drank the wind completely, along with the water.

7 Thereafter he saw that the lotus on which he was situated was spread throughout the universe, and he contemplated how to create all the planets, which were previously merged in that very same lotus.

8 Thus engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Brahmā entered into the whorl of the lotus, and as it spread all over the universe he divided it into three divisions of worlds and later into fourteen divisions.

9 Lord Brahmā is the most exalted personality in the universe because of his causeless devotional service unto the Lord in mature transcendental knowledge. He therefore created all the fourteen planetary divisions for inhabitation by the different types of living entities.

10 Vidura inquired from Maitreya: O my lord, O greatly learned sage, kindly describe eternal time, which is another form of the Supreme Lord, the wonderful actor. What are the symptoms of that eternal time? Please describe them to us in detail.

11 Maitreya said: Eternal time is the primeval source of the interactions of the three modes of material nature. It is unchangeable and limitless, and it works as the instrument of the Supreme Personality of Godhead for His pastimes in the material creation.

12 This cosmic manifestation is separated from the Supreme Lord as material energy by means of kāla, which is the unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Lord. It is situated as the objective manifestation of the Lord under the influence of the same material energy of Viṣṇu.

13 This cosmic manifestation is as it is now, it was the same in the past, and it will continue in the same way in the future.

14 There are nine different kinds of creations besides the one which naturally occurs due to the interactions of the modes. There are three kinds of annihilations due to eternal time, the material elements and the quality of one's work.

15 Of the nine creations, the first one is the creation of the mahat-tattva, or the sum total of the material ingredients, wherein the modes interact due to the presence of the Supreme Lord. In the second, the false ego is generated, in which the material ingredients, material knowledge and material activities arise.

16 The sense perceptions are created in the third creation, and from these the elements are generated. The fourth creation is the creation of knowledge and of working capacity.

17 The fifth creation is that of the controlling deities by the interaction of the mode of goodness, of which the mind is the sum total. The sixth creation is the ignorant darkness of the living entity, by which the master acts as a fool.

18 All the above are natural creations by the external energy of the Lord. Now hear from me about the creations by Brahmā, who is an incarnation of the mode of passion and who, in the matter of creation, has a brain like that of the Personality of Godhead.

19 The seventh creation is that of the immovable entities, which are of six kinds: the fruit trees without flowers, trees and plants which exist until the fruit is ripe, creepers, pipe plants, creepers which have no support, and trees with flowers and fruits.

20 All the immovable trees and plants seek their subsistence upwards. They are almost unconscious but have feelings of pain within. They are manifested in variegatedness.

21 The eighth creation is that of the lower species of life, and they are of different varieties, numbering twenty-eight. They are all extensively foolish and ignorant. They know their desirables by smell, but are unable to remember anything within the heart.

22 O purest Vidura, of the lower animals the cow, goat, buffalo, kṛṣṇa stag, hog, gavaya

animal, deer, lamb and camel all have cloven hooves.

23 The horse, mule, ass, gaura, śarabha bison and wild cow all have only one hoof. Now you may hear from me about the animals who have five nails.

24 The dog, jackal, tiger, fox, cat, rabbit, sajāru, lion, monkey, elephant, tortoise, alligator, gosāpa, etc., all have five nails in their claws. They are known as paṣca-nakhas, or animals having five nails.

25 The heron, vulture, crane, hawk, bhāsa, bhallūka, peacock, swan, sārasa, cakravāka, crow, owl and others are the birds.

26 The creation of the human beings, who are of one species only and who stock their eatables in the belly, is the ninth in the rotation. In the human race, the mode of passion is very prominent. Humans are always busy in the midst of miserable life, but they think themselves happy in all respects.

27 O good Vidura, these last three creations and the creation of demigods (the tenth creation) are vaikṛta creations, which are different from the previously described prākṛta (natural) creations. The appearance of the Kumāras is both.

28-29 The creation of the demigods is of eight varieties: (1) the demigods, (2) the forefathers, (3) the asuras, or demons, (4) the Gandharvas and Apsarās, or angels, (5) the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, (6) the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Vidyādharas, (7) the Bhūtas, Pretas and Piśācas, and (8) the superhuman beings, celestial singers, etc. All are created by Brahmā, the creator of the universe.

30 Now I shall describe the descendants of the Manus. The creator, Brahmā, as the incarnation of the passion mode of the Personality of Godhead, creates the universal affairs with unfailing desires in every millennium by the force of the Lord's energy.

SB 3.11: Calculation of Time, from the Atom

1 The material manifestation's ultimate particle, which is indivisible and not formed into a body, is called the atom. It exists always as an invisible identity, even after the dissolution of all forms. The material body is but a combination of such atoms, but it is misunderstood by the common man.

2 Atoms are the ultimate state of the manifest universe. When they stay in their own forms without forming different bodies, they are called the unlimited oneness. There are certainly different bodies in physical forms, but the atoms themselves form the complete manifestation.

3 One can estimate time by measuring the movement of the atomic combination of bodies. Time is the potency of the almighty Personality of Godhead, Hari, who controls all physical movement although He is not visible in the physical world.

4 Atomic time is measured according to its covering a particular atomic space. That time which covers the unmanifest aggregate of atoms is called the great time.

5 The division of gross time is calculated as follows: two atoms make one double atom, and three double atoms make one hexatom. This hexatom is visible in the sunshine which enters through the holes of a window screen. One can clearly see that the hexatom goes up towards the sky.

6 The time duration needed for the integration of three trasareṇus is called a truṭi, and one

hundred truṭis make one vedha. Three vedhas make one lava.

7 The duration of time of three lavas is equal to one nimeṣa, the combination of three nimeṣas makes one kṣaṇa, five kṣaṇas combined together make one kāṣṭhā, and fifteen kāṣṭhās make one laghu.

8 Fifteen laghus make one nāḍikā, which is also called a daṇḍa. Two daṇḍas make one muhūrta, and six or seven daṇḍas make one fourth of a day or night, according to human calculation.

9 The measuring pot for one nāḍikā, or daṇḍa, can be prepared with a six-pala-weight [fourteen ounce] pot of copper, in which a hole is bored with a gold probe weighing four māṣa and measuring four fingers long. When the pot is placed on water, the time before the water overflows in the pot is called one daṇḍa.

10 It is calculated that there are four praharas, which are also called yāmas, in the day and four in the night of the human being. Similarly, fifteen days and nights are a fortnight, and there are two fortnights, white and black, in a month.

11 The aggregate of two fortnights is one month, and that period is one complete day and night for the Pitā planets. Two of such months comprise one season, and six months comprise one complete movement of the sun from south to north.

12 Two solar movements make one day and night of the demigods, and that combination of day and night is one complete calendar year for the human being. The human being has a duration of life of one hundred years.

13 Influential stars, planets, luminaries and atoms all over the universe are rotating in their respective orbits under the direction of the Supreme, represented by eternal kāla.

14 There are five different names for the orbits of the sun, moon, stars and luminaries in the firmament, and they each have their own saṁvatsara.

15 O Vidura, the sun enlivens all living entities with his unlimited heat and light. He diminishes the duration of life of all living entities in order to release them from their illusion of material attachment, and he enlarges the path of elevation to the heavenly kingdom. He thus moves in the firmament with great velocity, and therefore everyone should offer him respects once every five years with all ingredients of worship.

16 Vidura said: I now understand the life durations of the residents of the Pitā planets and heavenly planets as well as that of the human beings. Now kindly inform me of the durations of life of those greatly learned living entities who are beyond the range of a kalpa.

17 O spiritually powerful one, you can understand the movements of eternal time, which is the controlling form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because you are a self-realized person, you can see everything by the power of mystic vision.

18 Maitreya said: O Vidura, the four millenniums are called the Satya-, Tretā-, Dvāpara- and Kali-yuga. The aggregate number of years of all of these combined is equal to twelve thousand years of the demigods.

19 The duration of the Satya millennium equals 4,800 years of the years of the demigods; the duration of the Tretā millennium equals 3,600 years of the demigods; the duration of the Dvāpara millennium equals 2,400 years; and that of the Kali millennium is 1,200 years of the

demigods.

20 The transitional periods before and after every millennium, which are a few hundred years as aforementioned, are known as yuga-sandhyās, or the conjunctions of two millenniums, according to the expert astronomers. In those periods all kinds of religious activities are performed.

21 O Vidura, in the Satya millennium mankind properly and completely maintained the principles of religion, but in other millenniums religion gradually decreased by one part as irreligion was proportionately admitted.

22 Outside of the three planetary systems [Svarga, Martya and Pātāla], the four yugas multiplied by one thousand comprise one day on the planet of Brahmā. A similar period comprises a night of Brahmā, in which the creator of the universe goes to sleep.

23 After the end of Brahmā's night, the creation of the three worlds begins again in the daytime of Brahmā, and they continue to exist through the life durations of fourteen consecutive Manus, or fathers of mankind.

24 Each and every Manu enjoys a life of a little more than seventy-one sets of four millenniums.

25 After the dissolution of each and every Manu, the next Manu comes in order, along with his descendants, who rule over the different planets; but the seven famous sages, and demigods like Indra and their followers, such as the Gandharvas, all appear simultaneously with Manu.

26 In the creation, during Brahmā's day, the three planetary systems Svarga, Martya and Pātāla revolve, and the inhabitants, including the lower animals, human beings, demigods and Pitās, appear and disappear in terms of their fruitive activities.

27 In each and every change of Manu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears by manifesting His internal potency in different incarnations, as Manu and others. Thus He maintains the universe by discovered power.

28 At the end of the day, under the insignificant portion of the mode of darkness, the powerful manifestation of the universe merges in the darkness of night. By the influence of eternal time, the innumerable living entities remain merged in that dissolution, and everything is silent.

29 When the night of Brahmā ensues, all the three worlds are out of sight, and the sun and the moon are without glare, just as in the due course of an ordinary night.

30 The devastation takes place due to the fire emanating from the mouth of Saṅkarṣaṇa, and thus great sages like Bhṛgu and other inhabitants of Maharloka transport themselves to Janaloka, being distressed by the warmth of the blazing fire which rages through the three worlds below.

31 At the beginning of the devastation all the seas overflow, and hurricane winds blow very violently. Thus the waves of the seas become ferocious, and in no time at all the three worlds are full of water.

32 The Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, lies down in the water on the seat of Ananta, with His eyes closed, and the inhabitants of the Janaloka planets offer unto the Lord their glorious prayers with folded hands.

33 Thus the process of the exhaustion of the duration of life exists for every one of the living

beings, including Lord Brahmā. One's life endures for only one hundred years, in terms of the times in the different planets.

34 The one hundred years of Brahmā's life are divided into two parts, the first half and the second half. The first half of the duration of Brahmā's life is already over, and the second half is now current.

35 In the beginning of the first half of Brahmā's life, there was a millennium called Brāhma-kalpa, wherein Lord Brahmā appeared. The birth of the Vedas was simultaneous with Brahmā's birth.

36 The millennium which followed the first Brāhma millennium is known as the Pādma-kalpa because in that millennium the universal lotus flower grew out of the navel reservoir of water of the Personality of Godhead, Hari.

37 O descendant of Bharata, the first millennium in the second half of the life of Brahmā is also known as the Vārāha millennium because the Personality of Godhead appeared in that millennium as the hog incarnation.

38 The duration of the two parts of Brahmā's life, as above mentioned, is calculated to be equal to one nimeṣa [less than a second] for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unchanging and unlimited and is the cause of all causes of the universe.

39 Eternal time is certainly the controller of different dimensions, from that of the atom up to the superdivisions of the duration of Brahmā's life; but, nevertheless, it is controlled by the Supreme. Time can control only those who are body conscious, even up to the Satyaloka or the other higher planets of the universe.

40 This phenomenal material world is expanded to a diameter of four billion miles, as a combination of eight material elements transformed into sixteen further categories, within and without, as follows.

41 The layers or elements covering the universes are each ten times thicker than the one before, and all the universes clustered together appear like atoms in a huge combination.

42 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is therefore said to be the original cause of all causes. Thus the spiritual abode of Viṣṇu is eternal without a doubt, and it is also the abode of Mahā-Viṣṇu, the origin of all manifestations.

SB 3.12: Creation of the Kumāras and Others

1 Śrī Maitreya said: O learned Vidura, so far I have explained to you the glories of the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His feature of kāla. Now you can hear from me about the creation of Brahmā, the reservoir of all Vedic knowledge.

2 Brahmā first created the nescient engagements like self-deception, the sense of death, anger after frustration, the sense of false ownership, and the illusory bodily conception, or forgetfulness of one's real identity.

3 Seeing such a misleading creation as a sinful task, Brahmā did not feel much pleasure in his activity, and therefore he purified himself by meditation on the Personality of Godhead. Then he began another term of creation.

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4 In the beginning, Brahmā created four great sages named Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra. All of them were unwilling to adopt materialistic activities because they were highly elevated due to their semen's flowing upwards.

5 Brahmā spoke to his sons after generating them. "My dear sons," he said, "now generate progeny." But due to their being attached to Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they aimed at liberation, and therefore they expressed their unwillingness.

6 On the refusal of the sons to obey the order of their father, there was much anger generated in the mind of Brahmā, which he tried to control and not express.

7 Although he tried to curb his anger, it came out from between his eyebrows, and a child mixed blue and red was immediately generated.

8 After his birth he began to cry: O destiny maker, teacher of the universe, kindly designate my name and place.

9 The all-powerful Brahmā, who was born from the lotus flower, pacified the boy with gentle words, accepting his request, and said: Do not cry. I shall certainly do as you desire.

10 Thereafter Brahmā said: O chief of the demigods, you shall be called by the name Rudra by all people because you have so anxiously cried.

11 My dear boy, I have already selected the following places for your residence: the heart, the senses, the air of life, the sky, the air, the fire, the water, the earth, the sun, the moon and austerity.

12 Lord Brahmā said: My dear boy Rudra, you have eleven other names: Manyu, Manu, Mahinasa, Mahān, Śiva, Ṛtadhvaja, Ugraretā, Bhava, Kāla, Vāmadeva and Dhṛtavrata.

13 O Rudra, you also have eleven wives, called the Rudrāṅīs, and they are as follows: Dhī, Dhṛti, Rasalā, Umā, Niyut, Sarpi, Ilā, Ambikā, Irāvātī, Svadhā and Dīkṣā.

14 My dear boy, you may now accept all the names and places designated for you and your different wives, and since you are now one of the masters of the living entities, you may increase the population on a large scale.

15 The most powerful Rudra, whose bodily color was blue mixed with red, created many offspring exactly resembling him in features, strength and furious nature.

16 The sons and grandsons generated by Rudra were unlimited in number, and when they assembled together they attempted to devour the entire universe. When Brahmā, the father of the living entities, saw this, he became afraid of the situation.

17 Brahmā told Rudra: O best among the demigods, there is no need for you to generate living entities of this nature. They have begun to devastate everything on all sides with the fiery flames from their eyes, and they have even attacked me.

18 My dear son, you had better situate yourself in penance, which is auspicious for all living entities and which will bring all benediction upon you. By penance only shall you be able to create the universe as it was before.

19 By penance only can one even approach the Personality of Godhead, who is within the heart of every living entity and at the same time beyond the reach of all senses.

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20 Śrī Maitreya said: Thus Rudra, having been ordered by Brahmā, circumambulated his father, the master of the Vedas. Addressing him with words of assent, he entered the forest to perform austere penances.

21 Brahmā, who was empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thought of generating living entities and begot ten sons for the extension of the generations.

22 Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Dakṣa, and the tenth son, Nārada, were thus born.

23 Nārada was born from the deliberation of Brahmā, which is the best part of the body. Vasiṣṭha was born from his breathing, Dakṣa from a thumb, Bhṛgu from his touch, and Kratu from his hand.

24 Pulastya was generated from the ears, Aṅgirā from the mouth, Atri from the eyes, Marīci from the mind and Pulaha from the navel of Brahmā.

25 Religion was manifested from the breast of Brahmā, wherein is seated the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa, and irreligion appeared from his back, where horrible death takes place for the living entity.

26 Lust and desire became manifested from the heart of Brahmā, anger from between his eyebrows, greed from between his lips, the power of speaking from his mouth, the ocean from his penis, and low and abominable activities from his anus, the source of all sins.

27 Sage Kardama, husband of the great Devahūti, was manifested from the shadow of Brahmā. Thus all became manifested from either the body or the mind of Brahmā.

28 O Vidura, we have heard that Brahmā had a daughter named Vāk who was born from his body and who attracted his mind toward sex, although she was not sexually inclined towards him.

29 Thus, finding their father so deluded in an act of immorality, the sages headed by Marīci, all sons of Brahmā, spoke as follows with great respect.

30 O father, this performance in which you are endeavoring to complicate yourself was never attempted by any other Brahmā, nor by anyone else, nor by you in previous kalpas, nor will anyone dare to attempt it in the future. You are the supreme being in the universe, so how is it that you want to have sex with your daughter and cannot control your desire?

31 Even though you are the most powerful being, this act does not suit you because your character is followed for spiritual improvement by people in general.

32 Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the Personality of Godhead, who, by His own effulgence, while situated in Himself, has manifested this cosmos. May He also protect religion for all goodness.

33 The father of all Prajāpatis, Brahmā, thus seeing all his Prajāpati sons speaking in that way, became very much ashamed and at once gave up the body he had accepted. Later that body appeared in all directions as the dangerous fog in darkness.

34 Once upon a time, when Brahmā was thinking of how to create the worlds as in the past millennium, the four Vedas, which contain all varieties of knowledge, became manifested from his four mouths.

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35 The four kinds of paraphernalia for conducting the fire sacrifice became manifest: the performer [the chanter], the offerer, the fire, and the action performed in terms of the supplementary Vedas. Also the four principles of religiosity [truth, austerity, mercy and cleanliness] and the duties in the four social orders all became manifest.

36 Vidura said: O great sage whose only wealth is penance, kindly explain to me how and with whose help Brahmā established the Vedic knowledge which emanated from his mouth.

37 Maitreya said: Beginning from the front face of Brahmā, gradually the four Vedas Ṛk, Yajur, Sāma and Atharva became manifest. Thereafter, Vedic hymns which had not been pronounced before, priestly rituals, the subject matters of the recitation, and transcendental activities were all established, one after another.

38 He also created the medical science, military art, musical art and architectural science, all from the Vedas. They all emanated one after another, beginning from the front face.

39 Then he created the fifth Veda the Purāṇas and the histories from all his mouths, since he could see all the past, present and future.

40 All the different varieties of fire sacrifices [ṣoḍaśī, uktha, purīṣi, agniṣṭoma, āptoryāma, atirātra, vājapeya and gosava] became manifested from the eastern mouth of Brahmā.

41 Education, charity, penance and truth are said to be the four legs of religion, and to learn this there are four orders of life with different classifications of castes according to vocation. Brahmā created all these in systematic order.

42 Then the thread ceremony for the twice-born was inaugurated, as were the rules to be followed for at least one year after acceptance of the Vedas, rules for observing complete abstinence from sex life, vocations in terms of Vedic injunctions, various professional duties in household life, and the method of maintaining a livelihood without anyone's cooperation by picking up rejected grains.

43 The four divisions of retired life are the vaikhānasas, vālakhilyas, audumbaras and phenapas. The four divisions of the renounced order of life are the kuṭīcakas, bahvodas, haṁsas and niṣkriyas. All these were manifested from Brahmā.

44 The science of logical argument, the Vedic goals of life, and also law and order, moral codes and the celebrated hymns bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ and svaḥ all became manifested from the mouths of Brahmā, and the praṇava omkāra was manifested from his heart.

45 Thereafter the art of literary expression, uṣṇik, was generated from the hairs on the body of the almighty Prajāpati. The principal Vedic hymn, gāyatrī, was generated from the skin, triṣṭup from the flesh, anuṣṭup from the veins, and jagatī from the bones of the lord of the living entities.

46 The art of writing verse, paṅkti, became manifested from the bone marrow, and that of bṛhatī, another type of verse, was generated from the life-breath of the lord of the living entities.

47 Brahmā's soul was manifested as the touch alphabets, his body as the vowels, his senses as the sibilant alphabets, his strength as the intermediate alphabets and his sensual activities as the seven notes of music.

48 Brahmā is the personal representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the source

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of transcendental sound and is therefore above the conception of manifested and unmanifested. Brahmā is the complete form of the Absolute Truth and is invested with multifarious energies.

49 Thereafter Brahmā accepted another body, in which sex life was not forbidden, and thus he engaged himself in the matter of further creation.

50 O son of the Kurus, when Brahmā saw that in spite of the presence of sages of great potency there was no sufficient increase in population, he seriously began to consider how the population could be increased.

51 Brahmā thought to himself: Alas, it is wonderful that in spite of my being scattered all over, there is still insufficient population throughout the universe. There is no other cause for this misfortune but destiny.

52 While he was thus absorbed in contemplation and was observing the supernatural power, two other forms were generated from his body. They are still celebrated as the body of Brahmā.

53 The two newly separated bodies united together in a sexual relationship.

54 Out of them, the one who had the male form became known as the Manu named Svāyambhuva, and the woman became known as Śatarūpā, the queen of the great soul Manu.

55 Thereafter, by sex indulgence, they gradually increased generations of population one after another.

56 O son of Bharata, in due course of time he [Manu] begot in Śatarūpā five children two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, and three daughters, Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti.

57 The father, Manu, handed over his first daughter, Ākūti, to the sage Ruci, the middle daughter, Devahūti, to the sage Kardama, and the youngest, Prasūti, to Dakṣa. From them, all the world filled with population.

SB 3.13: The Appearance of Lord Varāha

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, after hearing all these most virtuous topics from the sage Maitreya, Vidura inquired further on the topics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which he adored to hear.

2 Vidura said: O great sage, what did Svāyambhuva, the dear son of Brahmā, do after obtaining his very loving wife?

3 O best of the virtuous, the original king of kings [Manu] was a great devotee of the Personality of Godhead Hari, and thus it is worth hearing of his sublime character and activities. Please describe them. I am very eager to hear.

4 Persons who hear from a spiritual master with great labor and for a long time must hear from the mouths of pure devotees about the character and activities of pure devotees. Pure devotees always think within their hearts of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, who awards His devotees liberation.

5 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was pleased to place His lotus feet on the lap of Vidura because Vidura was very meek and gentle. The sage Maitreya was very pleased with Vidura's words, and, being influenced by his spirit, he attempted to

speak.

6 The sage Maitreya said to Vidura: After his appearance, Manu, the father of mankind, along with his wife, thus addressed the reservoir of Vedic wisdom, Brahmā, with obeisances and folded hands.

7 You are the father of all living entities and the source of their subsistence because they are all born of you. Please order us how we may be able to render service unto you.

8 O worshipful one, please give us your direction for the execution of duty within our working capacity so that we can follow it for fame in this life and progress in the next.

9 Lord Brahmā said: My dear son, O lord of the world, I am very pleased with you, and I desire all blessings for both you and your wife. You have without reservation surrendered yourself unto me with your heart for my instructions.

10 O hero, your example is quite befitting a son in relationship with his father. This sort of adoration for the superior is required. One who is beyond the limit of envy and who is sane accepts the order of his father with great delight and executes it to his full capacity.

11 Since you are my very obedient son, I ask you to beget children qualified like yourself in the womb of your wife. Rule the world in pursuance of the principles of devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus worship the Lord by performances of yajña.

12 O King, if you can give proper protection to the living beings in the material world, that will be the best service for me. When the Supreme Lord sees you to be a good protector of the conditioned souls, certainly the master of the senses will be very pleased with you.

13 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Janārdana [Lord Kṛṣṇa], is the form to accept all the results of sacrifice. If He is not satisfied, then one's labor for advancement is futile. He is the ultimate Self, and therefore one who does not satisfy Him certainly neglects his own interests.

14 Śrī Manu said: O all-powerful lord, O killer of all sins, I shall abide by your order. Now please let me know my place and that of the living entities born of me.

15 O master of the demigods, please attempt to lift the earth, which is merged in the great water, because it is the dwelling place for all the living entities. It can be done by your endeavor and by the mercy of the Lord.

16 Śrī Maitreya said: Thus, seeing the earth merged in the water, Brahmā gave his attention for a long time to how it could be lifted.

17 Brahmā thought: While I have been engaged in the process of creation, the earth has been inundated by a deluge and has gone down into the depths of the ocean. What can we do who are engaged in this matter of creation? It is best to let the Almighty Lord direct us.

18 O sinless Vidura, all of a sudden, while Brahmā was engaged in thinking, a small form of a boar came out of his nostril. The measurement of the creature was not more than the upper portion of a thumb.

19 O descendant of Bharata, while Brahmā was observing Him, that boar became situated in the sky in a wonderful manifestation as gigantic as a great elephant.

20 Struck with wonder at observing the wonderful boarlike form in the sky, Brahmā, with

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great brāhmaṇas like Marīci, as well as the Kumāras and Manu, began to argue in various ways.

21 Is this some extraordinary entity come in the pretense of a boar? It is very wonderful that He has come from my nose.

22 First of all this boar was seen no bigger than the tip of a thumb, and within a moment He was as large as a stone. My mind is perturbed. Is He the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu?

23 While Brahmā was deliberating with his sons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, roared tumultuously like a great mountain.

24 The omnipotent Supreme Personality of Godhead enlivened Brahmā and the other highly elevated brāhmaṇas by again roaring with His uncommon voice, which echoed in all directions.

25 When the great sages and thinkers who are residents of Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka heard the tumultuous voice of Lord Boar, which was the all-auspicious sound of the all-merciful Lord, they chanted auspicious chants from the three Vedas.

26 Playing like an elephant, He entered into the water after roaring again in reply to the Vedic prayers by the great devotees. The Lord is the object of the Vedic prayers, and thus He understood that the devotees' prayers were meant for Him.

27 Before entering the water to rescue the earth, Lord Boar flew in the sky, slashing His tail, His hard hairs quivering. His very glance was luminous, and He scattered the clouds in the sky with His hooves and His glittering white tusks.

28 He was personally the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu and was therefore transcendental, yet because He had the body of a hog, He searched after the earth by smell. His tusks were fearful, and He glanced over the devotee-brāhmaṇas engaged in offering prayers. Thus He entered the water.

29 Diving into the water like a giant mountain, Lord Boar divided the middle of the ocean, and two high waves appeared as the arms of the ocean, which cried loudly as if praying to the Lord, "O Lord of all sacrifices, please do not cut me in two! Kindly give me protection!"

30 Lord Boar penetrated the water with His hooves, which were like sharp arrows, and found the limits of the ocean, although it was unlimited. He saw the earth, the resting place for all living beings, lying as it was in the beginning of creation, and He personally lifted it.

31 Lord Boar very easily took the earth on His tusks and got it out of the water. Thus He appeared very splendid. Then, His anger glowing like the Sudarśana wheel, He immediately killed the demon [Hiraṇyākṣa], although he tried to fight with the Lord.

32 Thereupon Lord Boar killed the demon within the water, just as a lion kills an elephant. The cheeks and tongue of the Lord became smeared with the blood of the demon, just as an elephant becomes reddish from digging in the purple earth.

33 Then the Lord, playing like an elephant, suspended the earth on the edge of His curved white tusks. He assumed a bluish complexion like that of a tamāla tree, and thus the sages, headed by Brahmā, could understand Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offered respectful obeisances unto the Lord.

34 All the sages uttered with great respect: O unconquerable enjoyer of all sacrifices, all glories and all victories unto You! You are moving in Your form of the personified Vedas, and in the

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hair holes of Your body the oceans are submerged. For certain reasons [to uplift the earth] You have now assumed the form of a boar.

35 O Lord, Your form is worshipable by performances of sacrifice, but souls who are simply miscreants are unable to see it. All the Vedic hymns, Gāyatrī and others, are in the touch of Your skin. In Your bodily hairs is the kuśa grass, in Your eyes is the clarified butter, and in Your four legs are the four kinds of fruitive activities.

36 O Lord, Your tongue is a plate of sacrifice, Your nostril is another plate of sacrifice, in Your belly is the eating plate of sacrifice, and another plate of sacrifice is the holes of Your ears. In Your mouth is the Brahmā plate of sacrifice, Your throat is the plate of sacrifice known as soma, and whatever You chew is known as agni-hotra.

37 Moreover, O Lord, the repetition of Your appearance is the desire for all kinds of initiation. Your neck is the place for three desires, and Your tusks are the result of initiation and the end of all desires. Your tongue is the prior activities of initiation, Your head is the fire without sacrifice as well as the fire of worship, and Your living forces are the aggregate of all desires.

38 O Lord, Your semen is the sacrifice called soma-yajña. Your growth is the ritualistic performances of the morning. Your skin and touch sensations are the seven elements of the agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Your bodily joints are symbols of various other sacrifices performed in twelve days. Therefore You are the object of all sacrifices called soma and asoma, and You are bound by yajñas only.

39 O Lord, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and are worshipable by universal prayers, Vedic hymns and sacrificial ingredients. We offer our obeisances unto You. You can be realized by the pure mind freed from all visible and invisible material contamination. We offer our respectful obeisances to You as the supreme spiritual master of knowledge in devotional service.

40 O lifter of the earth, the earth with its mountains, which You have lifted with Your tusks, is situated as beautifully as a lotus flower with leaves sustained by an infuriated elephant just coming out of the water.

41 O Lord, as the peaks of great mountains become beautiful when decorated with clouds, Your transcendental body has become beautiful because of Your lifting the earth on the edge of Your tusks.

42 O Lord, for the residential purposes of all inhabitants, both moving and nonmoving, this earth is Your wife, and You are the supreme father. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You, along with mother earth, in whom You have invested Your own potency, just as an expert sacrificer puts fire in the araṇi wood.

43 Who else but You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, could deliver the earth from within the water? It is not very wonderful for You, however, because You acted most wonderfully in the creation of the universe. By Your energy You have created this wonderful cosmic manifestation.

44 O Supreme Lord, undoubtedly we are inhabitants of the most pious planets the Jana, Tapas and Satya lokas but still we have been purified by the drops of water sprinkled from Your shoulder hairs by the shaking of Your body.

45 O Lord, there is no limit to Your wonderful activities. Anyone who desires to know the limit of Your activities is certainly nonsensical. Everyone in this world is conditioned by the

powerful mystic potencies. Please bestow Your causeless mercy upon these conditioned souls.

46 The sage Maitreya said: The Lord, being thus worshiped by all the great sages and transcendentalists, touched the earth with His hooves and placed it on the water.

47 In this manner the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the maintainer of all living entities, raised the earth from within the water, and having placed it afloat on the water, He returned to His own abode.

48 If one hears and describes in a devotional service attitude this auspicious narration of Lord Boar, which is worthy of description, the Lord, who is within the heart of everyone, is very pleased.

49 Nothing remains unachieved when the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased with someone. By transcendental achievement one understands everything else to be insignificant. One who engages in transcendental loving service is elevated to the highest perfectional stage by the Lord Himself, who is seated in everyone's heart.

50 Who, other than one who is not a human being, can exist in this world and not be interested in the ultimate goal of life? Who can refuse the nectar of narrations about the Personality of Godhead's activities, which by itself can deliver one from all material pangs?

SB 3.14: Pregnancy of Diti in the Evening

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing from the great sage Maitreya about the Lord's incarnation as Varāha, Vidura, who had taken a vow, begged him with folded hands to please narrate further transcendental activities of the Lord, since he [Vidura] did not yet feel satisfied.

2 Śrī Vidura said: O chief amongst the great sages, I have heard by disciplic succession that Hiraṇyākṣa, the original demon, was slain by the same form of sacrifices, the Personality of Godhead [Lord Boar].

3 What was the reason, O brāhmaṇa, for the fight between the demon king and Lord Boar while the Lord was lifting the earth as His pastime?

4 My mind has become very inquisitive, and therefore I am not satisfied with hearing the narration of the Lord's appearance. Please, therefore, speak more and more to a devotee who is faithful.

5 The great sage Maitreya said: O warrior, the inquiry made by you is just befitting a devotee because it concerns the incarnation of the Personality of Godhead. He is the source of liberation from the chain of birth and death for all those who are otherwise destined to die.

6 By hearing these topics from the sage [Nārada], the son of King Uttānapāda [Dhruva] was enlightened regarding the Personality of Godhead, and he ascended to the abode of the Lord, placing his feet over the head of death.

7 This history of the fight between the Lord as a boar and the demon Hiraṇyākṣa was heard by me in a year long ago as it was described by the foremost of the demigods, Brahmā, when he was questioned by the other demigods.

8 Diti, daughter of Dakṣa, being afflicted with sex desire, begged her husband, Kaśyapa, the son of Marīci, to have intercourse with her in the evening in order to beget a child.

9 The sun was setting, and the sage was sitting in trance after offering oblations to the

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Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, whose tongue is the sacrificial fire.

10 In that place the beautiful Diti expressed her desire: O learned one, Cupid is taking his arrows and distressing me forcibly, as a mad elephant troubles a banana tree.

11 Therefore you should be kind towards me by showing me complete mercy. I desire to have sons, and I am much distressed by seeing the opulence of my co-wives. By performing this act, you will become happy.

12 A woman is honored in the world by the benediction of her husband, and a husband like you will become famous by having children because you are meant for the expansion of living entities.

13 In days long ago, our father, the most opulent Dakṣa, who was affectionate to his daughters, asked each of us separately whom we would prefer to select as our husband.

14 Our well-wishing father, Dakṣa, after knowing our intentions, handed over thirteen of his daughters unto you, and since then we have all been faithful.

15 O lotus-eyed one, kindly bless me by fulfilling my desire. When someone in distress approaches a great person, his pleas should never go in vain.

16 O hero [Vidura], Diti, being thus afflicted by the contamination of lust, and therefore poor and talkative, was pacified by the son of Marīci in suitable words.

17 O afflicted one, I shall forthwith gratify whatever desire is dear to you, for who else but you is the source of the three perfections of liberation?

18 As one can cross over the ocean with seagoing vessels, one can cross the dangerous situation of the material ocean by living with a wife.

19 O respectful one, a wife is so helpful that she is called the better half of a man's body because of her sharing in all auspicious activities. A man can move without anxiety entrusting all responsibilities to his wife.

20 As a fort commander very easily conquers invading plunderers, by taking shelter of a wife one can conquer the senses, which are unconquerable in the other social orders.

21 O queen of the home, we are not able to act like you, nor could we repay you for what you have done, even if we worked for our entire life or even after death. To repay you is not possible, even for those who are admirers of personal qualities.

22 Even though it is not possible to repay you, I shall satisfy your sex desire immediately for the sake of begetting children. But you must wait for only a few seconds so that others may not reproach me.

23 This particular time is most inauspicious because at this time the horrible-looking ghosts and constant companions of the lord of the ghosts are visible.

24 Lord Śiva, the king of the ghosts, sitting on the back of his bull carrier, travels at this time, accompanied by ghosts who follow him for their welfare.

25 Lord Śiva's body is reddish, and he is unstained, but he is covered with ashes. His hair is dusty from the whirlwind dust of the burning crematorium. He is the younger brother of your husband, and he sees with his three eyes.

26 Lord Śiva regards no one as his relative, yet there is no one who is not connected with him. He does not regard anyone as very favorable or abominable. We respectfully worship the remnants of his foodstuff, and we vow to accept what is rejected by him.

27 Although no one in the material world is equal to or greater than Lord Śiva, and although his unimpeachable character is followed by great souls to dismantle the mass of nescience, he nevertheless remains as if a devil to give salvation to all devotees of the Lord.

28 Unfortunate, foolish persons, not knowing that he is engaged in his own self, laugh at him. Such foolish persons engage in maintaining the body which is eatable by dogs with dresses, ornaments, garlands and ointments.

29 Demigods like Brahmā also follow the religious rites observed by him. He is the controller of the material energy, which causes the creation of the material world. He is great, and therefore his devilish characteristics are simply imitation.

30 Maitreya said: Diti was thus informed by her husband, but she was pressed by Cupid for sexual satisfaction. She caught hold of the clothing of the great brāhmaṇa sage, just like a shameless public prostitute.

31 Understanding his wife's purpose, he was obliged to perform the forbidden act, and thus after offering his obeisances unto worshipable fate, he lay with her in a secluded place.

32 Thereafter the brāhmaṇa took his bath in the water and controlled his speech by practicing trance, meditating on the eternal effulgence and chanting the holy Gāyatrī hymns within his mouth.

33 O son of the Bharata family, Diti, after this, went nearer to her husband, her face lowered because of her faulty action. She spoke as follows.

34 The beautiful Diti said: My dear brāhmaṇa, kindly see that my embryo is not killed by Lord Śiva, the lord of all living entities, because of the great offense I have committed against him.

35 Let me offer my obeisances unto the angry Lord Śiva, who is simultaneously the very ferocious great demigod and the fulfiller of all material desires. He is all-auspicious and forgiving, but his anger can immediately move him to chastise.

36 Let him be pleased with us, since he is my brother-in-law, the husband of my sister Satī. He is also the worshipable lord of all women. He is the personality of all opulences and can show mercy towards women, who are excused even by the uncivilized hunters.

37 Maitreya said: The great sage Kaśyapa thus addressed his wife, who was trembling because of fear that her husband was offended. She understood that he had been dissuaded from his daily duties of offering evening prayers, yet she desired the welfare of her children in the world.

38 The learned Kaśyapa said: Because of your mind's being polluted, because of defilement of the particular time, because of your negligence of my directions, and because of your being apathetic to the demigods, everything was inauspicious.

39 O haughty one, you will have two contemptuous sons born of your condemned womb. Unlucky woman, they will cause constant lamentation to all the three worlds!

40 They will kill poor, faultless living entities, torture women and enrage the great souls.

41 At that time the Lord of the universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the well-wisher of all living entities, will descend and kill them, just as Indra smashes the mountains with his thunderbolts.

42 Diti said: It is very good that my sons will be magnanimously killed by the arms of the Personality of Godhead with His Sudarśana weapon. O my husband, may they never be killed by the wrath of the brāhmaṇa devotees.

43 A person who is condemned by a brāhmaṇa or is always fearful to other living entities is not favored either by those who are already in hell or by those in the species in which he is born.

44-45 The learned Kaśyapa said: Because of your lamentation, penitence and proper deliberation, and also because of your unflinching faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and your adoration for Lord Śiva and me, one of the sons [Prahāda] of your son [Hiraṇyakaśipu] will be an approved devotee of the Lord, and his fame will be broadcast equally with that of the Personality of Godhead.

46 In order to follow in his footsteps, saintly persons will try to emulate his character by practicing freedom from animosity, just as the purifying processes rectify gold of inferior quality.

47 Everyone will be pleased with him because the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller of the universe, is always satisfied with a devotee who does not wish for anything beyond Him.

48 That topmost devotee of the Lord will have expanded intelligence and expanded influence and will be the greatest of the great souls. Due to matured devotional service, he will certainly be situated in transcendental ecstasy and will enter the spiritual sky after quitting this material world.

49 He will be a virtuously qualified reservoir of all good qualities; he will be jolly and happy in others' happiness, distressed in others' distress, and will have no enemies. He will be a destroyer of the lamentation of all the universes, like the pleasant moon after the summer sun.

50 Your grandson will be able to see, inside and outside, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose wife is the beautiful goddess of fortune. The Lord can assume the form desired by the devotee, and His face is always beautifully decorated with earrings.

51 The sage Maitreya said: Hearing that her grandson would be a great devotee and that her sons would be killed by Kṛṣṇa, Diti was highly pleased in mind.

SB 3.15: Description of the Kingdom of God

1 Śrī Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, Diti, the wife of the sage Kaśyapa, could understand that the sons within her womb would be a cause of disturbance to the demigods. As such, she continuously bore the powerful semen of Kaśyapa Muni, which was meant to give trouble to others, for one hundred years.

2 By the force of the pregnancy of Diti, the light of the sun and moon was impaired in all the planets, and the demigods of various planets, being disturbed by that force, asked the creator of the universe, Brahmā, "What is this expansion of darkness in all directions?"

3 The fortunate demigods said: O great one, just see this darkness, which you know very well and which is causing us anxieties. Because the influence of time cannot touch you, there is

nothing unmanifest before you.

4 O god of the demigods, sustainer of the universe, head jewel of all the demigods in other planets, you know the intentions of all living entities, in both the spiritual and material worlds.

5 O original source of strength and scientific knowledge, all obeisances unto you! You have accepted the differentiated mode of passion from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. With the help of external energy you are born of the unmanifested source. All obeisances unto you!

6 O lord, all these planets exist within your self, and all the living entities are generated from you. Therefore you are the cause of this universe, and anyone who meditates upon you without deviation attains devotional service.

7 There is no defeat in this material world for persons who control the mind and senses by controlling the breathing process and who are therefore experienced, mature mystics. This is because by such perfection in yoga they have attained your mercy.

8 All the living entities within the universe are conducted by the Vedic directions, as a bull is directed by the rope attached to its nose. No one can violate the rules laid down in the Vedic literatures. To the chief person, who has contributed the Vedas, we offer our respect!

9 The demigods prayed to Brahmā: Please look upon us mercifully, for we have fallen into a miserable condition; because of the darkness, all our work has been suspended.

10 As fuel overloads a fire, so the embryo created by the semen of Kaśyapa in the womb of Diti has caused complete darkness throughout the universe.

11 Śrī Maitreya said: Thus Lord Brahmā, who is understood by transcendental vibration, tried to satisfy the demigods, being pleased with their words of prayer.

12 Lord Brahmā said: My four sons Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra, who were born from my mind, are your predecessors. Sometimes they travel throughout the material and spiritual skies without any definite desire.

13 After thus traveling all over the universes, they also entered into the spiritual sky, for they were freed from all material contamination. In the spiritual sky there are spiritual planets known as Vaikuṅṭhas, which are the residence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees and are worshiped by the residents of all the material planets.

14 In the Vaikuṅṭha planets all the residents are similar in form to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They all engage in devotional service to the Lord without desires for sense gratification.

15 In the Vaikuṅṭha planets is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the original person and who can be understood through the Vedic literature. He is full of the uncontaminated mode of goodness, with no place for passion or ignorance. He contributes religious progress for the devotees.

16 In those Vaikuṅṭha planets there are many forests which are very auspicious. In those forests the trees are desire trees, and in all seasons they are filled with flowers and fruits because everything in the Vaikuṅṭha planets is spiritual and personal.

17 In the Vaikuṅṭha planets the inhabitants fly in their airplanes, accompanied by their wives and consorts, and eternally sing of the character and activities of the Lord, which are always devoid of all inauspicious qualities. While singing the glories of the Lord, they deride even the

presence of the blossoming mādhavī flowers, which are fragrant and laden with honey.

18 When the king of bees hums in a high pitch, singing the glories of the Lord, there is a temporary lull in the noise of the pigeon, the cuckoo, the crane, the cakravāka, the swan, the parrot, the partridge and the peacock. Such transcendental birds stop their own singing simply to hear the glories of the Lord.

19 Although flowering plants like the mandāra, kunda, kurabaka, utpala, campaka, arṇa, punnāga, nāgakeśara, bakula, lily and pārijāta are full of transcendental fragrance, they are still conscious of the austerities performed by tulasī, for tulasī is given special preference by the Lord, who garlands Himself with tulasī leaves.

20 The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha travel in their airplanes made of lapis lazuli, emerald and gold. Although crowded by their consorts, who have large hips and beautiful smiling faces, they cannot be stimulated to passion by their mirth and beautiful charms.

21 The ladies in the Vaikuṅṭha planets are as beautiful as the goddess of fortune herself. Such transcendently beautiful ladies, their hands playing with lotuses and their leg bangles tinkling, are sometimes seen sweeping the marble walls, which are bedecked at intervals with golden borders, in order to receive the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 The goddesses of fortune worship the Lord in their own gardens by offering tulasī leaves on the coral-paved banks of transcendental reservoirs of water. While offering worship to the Lord, they can see on the water the reflection of their beautiful faces with raised noses, and it appears that they have become more beautiful because of the Lord's kissing their faces.

23 It is very much regrettable that unfortunate people do not discuss the description of the Vaikuṅṭha planets but engage in topics which are unworthy to hear and which bewilder one's intelligence. Those who give up the topics of Vaikuṅṭha and take to talk of the material world are thrown into the darkest region of ignorance.

24 Lord Brahmā said: My dear demigods, the human form of life is of such importance that we also desire to have such life, for in the human form one can attain perfect religious truth and knowledge. If one in this human form of life does not understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His abode, it is to be understood that he is very much affected by the influence of external nature.

25 Persons whose bodily features change in ecstasy and who breathe heavily and perspire due to hearing the glories of the Lord are promoted to the kingdom of God, even though they do not care for meditation and other austerities. The kingdom of God is above the material universes, and it is desired by Brahmā and other demigods.

26 Thus the great sages Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra, upon reaching the above-mentioned Vaikuṅṭha in the spiritual world by dint of their mystic yoga performance, perceived unprecedented happiness. They found that the spiritual sky was illuminated by highly decorated airplanes piloted by the best devotees of Vaikuṅṭha and was predominated by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

27 After passing through the six entrances of Vaikuṅṭha-purī, the Lord's residence, without feeling astonishment at all the decorations, they saw at the seventh gate two shining beings of the same age, armed with maces and adorned with most valuable jewelry, earrings, diamonds, helmets, garments, etc.

28 The two doormen were garlanded with fresh flowers which attracted intoxicated bees and

which were placed around their necks and between their four blue arms. From their arched eyebrows, discontented nostrils and reddish eyes, they appeared somewhat agitated.

29 The great sages, headed by Sanaka, had opened doors everywhere. They had no idea of “ours” and “theirs.” With open minds, they entered the seventh door out of their own will, just as they had passed through the six other doors, which were made of gold and diamonds.

30 The four boy-sages, who had nothing to cover their bodies but the atmosphere, looked only five years old, even though they were the oldest of all living creatures and had realized the truth of the self. But when the porters, who happened to possess a disposition quite unpalatable to the Lord, saw the sages, they blocked their way with their staffs, despising their glories, although the sages did not deserve such treatment at their hands.

31 When the Kumāras, although by far the fittest persons, were thus forbidden entrance by the two chief doorkeepers of Śrī Hari while other divinities looked on, their eyes suddenly turned red because of anger due to their great eagerness to see their most beloved master, Śrī Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

32 The sages said: Who are these two persons who have developed such a discordant mentality even though they are posted in the service of the Lord in the highest position and are expected to have developed the same qualities as the Lord? How are these two persons living in Vaikuṅṭha? Where is the possibility of an enemy’s coming into this kingdom of God? The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no enemy. Who could be envious of Him? Probably these two persons are imposters; therefore they suspect others to be like themselves.

33 In the Vaikuṅṭha world there is complete harmony between the residents and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, just as there is complete harmony within space between the big and the small skies. Why then is there a seed of fear in this field of harmony? These two persons are dressed like inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha, but wherefrom can their disharmony come into existence?

34 Therefore let us consider how these two contaminated persons should be punished. The punishment should be apt, for thus benefit can eventually be bestowed upon them. Since they find duality in the existence of Vaikuṅṭha life, they are contaminated and should be removed from this place to the material world, where the living entities have three kinds of enemies.

35 When the doormen of Vaikuṅṭhaloka, who were certainly devotees of the Lord, found that they were going to be cursed by the brāhmaṇas, they at once became very much afraid and fell down at the feet of the brāhmaṇas in great anxiety, for a brāhmaṇa’s curse cannot be counteracted by any kind of weapon.

36 After being cursed by the sages, the doormen said: It is quite apt that you have punished us for neglecting to respect sages like you. But we pray that due to your compassion at our repentance, the illusion of forgetting the Supreme Personality of Godhead will not come upon us as we go progressively downward.

37 At that very moment, the Lord, who is called Padmanābha because of the lotus grown from His navel and who is the delight of the righteous, learned about the insult offered by His own servants to the saints. Accompanied by His spouse, the goddess of fortune, He went to the spot on those very feet sought for by recluses and great sages.

38 The sages, headed by Sanaka Ṛṣi, saw that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who was formerly visible only within their hearts in ecstatic trance, had now actually become visible to their eyes. As He came forward, accompanied by His own associates bearing all

paraphernalia, such as an umbrella and a cāmara fan, the white bunches of hair moved very gently, like two swans, and due to their favorable breeze the pearls garlanding the umbrella also moved, like drops of nectar falling from the white full moon or ice melting due to a gust of wind.

39 The Lord is the reservoir of all pleasure. His auspicious presence is meant for everyone's benediction, and His affectionate smiling and glancing touch the core of the heart. The Lord's beautiful bodily color is blackish, and His broad chest is the resting place of the goddess of fortune, who glorifies the entire spiritual world, the summit of all heavenly planets. Thus it appeared that the Lord was personally spreading the beauty and good fortune of the spiritual world.

40 He was adorned with a girdle that shone brightly on the yellow cloth covering His large hips, and He wore a garland of fresh flowers which was distinguished by humming bees. His lovely wrists were graced with bracelets, and He rested one of His hands on the shoulder of Garuḍa, His carrier, and twirled a lotus with another hand.

41 His countenance was distinguished by cheeks that enhanced the beauty of His alligator-shaped pendants, which outshone lightning. His nose was prominent, and His head was covered with a gem-studded crown. A charming necklace hung between His stout arms, and His neck was adorned with the gem known by the name Kaustubha.

42 The exquisite beauty of Nārāyaṇa, being many times magnified by the intelligence of His devotees, was so attractive that it defeated the pride of the goddess of fortune in being the most beautiful. My dear demigods, the Lord who thus manifested Himself is worshipable by me, by Lord Śiva and by all of you. The sages regarded Him with unsated eyes and joyously bowed their heads at His lotus feet.

43 When the breeze carrying the aroma of tulasī leaves from the toes of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead entered the nostrils of those sages, they experienced a change both in body and in mind, even though they were attached to the impersonal Brahman understanding.

44 The Lord's beautiful face appeared to them like the inside of a blue lotus, and the Lord's smile appeared to be a blossoming jasmine flower. After seeing the face of the Lord, the sages were fully satisfied, and when they wanted to see Him further, they looked upon the nails of His lotus feet, which resembled rubies. Thus they viewed the Lord's transcendental body again and again, and so they finally achieved meditation on the Lord's personal feature.

45 This is the form of the Lord which is meditated upon by the followers of the yoga process, and it is pleasing to the yogīs in meditation. It is not imaginary but factual, as proved by great yogīs. The Lord is full in eight kinds of achievement, but for others these achievements are not possible in full perfection.

46 The Kumāras said: Our dear Lord, You are not manifested to rascals, even though You are seated within the heart of everyone. But as far as we are concerned, we see You face to face, although You are unlimited. The statements we have heard about You from our father, Brahmā, through the ears have now been actually realized by Your kind appearance.

47 We know that You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, who manifests His transcendental form in the uncontaminated mode of pure goodness. This transcendental, eternal form of Your personality can be understood only by Your mercy, through unflinching devotional service, by great sages whose hearts have been purified in the devotional way.

48 Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom.

49 O Lord, we pray that You let us be born in any hellish condition of life, just as long as our hearts and minds are always engaged in the service of Your lotus feet, our words are made beautiful [by speaking of Your activities] just as tulasī leaves are beautified when offered unto Your lotus feet, and as long as our ears are always filled with the chanting of Your transcendental qualities.

50 O Lord, we therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto Your eternal form as the Personality of Godhead, which You have so kindly manifested before us. Your supreme, eternal form cannot be seen by unfortunate, less intelligent persons, but we are so much satisfied in our mind and vision to see it.

SB 3.16:

The Two Doorkeepers of Vaikuṅṭha, Jaya and Vijaya, Cursed by the Sages

1 Lord Brahmā said: After thus congratulating the sages for their nice words, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose abode is in the kingdom of God, spoke as follows.

2 The Personality of Godhead said: These attendants of Mine, Jaya and Vijaya by name, have committed a great offense against you because of ignoring Me.

3 O great sages, I approve of the punishment that you who are devoted to Me have meted out to them.

4 To Me, the brāhmaṇa is the highest and most beloved personality. The disrespect shown by My attendants has actually been displayed by Me because the doormen are My servitors. I take this to be an offense by Myself; therefore I seek your forgiveness for the incident that has arisen.

5 A wrong act committed by a servant leads people in general to blame his master, just as a spot of white leprosy on any part of the body pollutes all of the skin.

6 Anyone in the entire world, even down to the caṇḍāla, who lives by cooking and eating the flesh of the dog, is immediately purified if he takes bath in hearing through the ear the glorification of My name, fame, etc. Now you have realized Me without doubt; therefore I will not hesitate to lop off My own arm if its conduct is found hostile to you.

7 The Lord continued: Because I am the servitor of My devotees, My lotus feet have become so sacred that they immediately wipe out all sin and I have acquired such a disposition that the goddess of fortune does not leave Me, even though I have no attachment for her, while others praise her beauty and observe sacred vows to secure from her even a slight favor.

8 I do not enjoy the oblations offered by the sacrificers in the sacrificial fire, which is one of My own mouths, with the same relish as I do the delicacies overflowing with ghee which are offered to the mouths of the brāhmaṇas who have dedicated to Me the results of their activities and who are ever satisfied with My prasāda.

9 I am the master of My unobstructed internal energy, and the water of the Ganges is the remnant left after My feet are washed. That water sanctifies the three worlds, along with Lord

Śiva, who bears it on his head. If I can take the dust of the feet of the Vaiṣṇava on My head, who will refuse to do the same?

10 The brāhmaṇas, the cows and the defenseless creatures are My own body. Those whose faculty of judgment has been impaired by their own sin look upon these as distinct from Me. They are just like furious serpents, and they are angrily torn apart by the bills of the vulturelike messengers of Yamarāja, the superintendent of sinful persons.

11 On the other hand, they captivate My heart who are gladdened in heart and who, their lotus faces enlightened by nectarean smiles, respect the brāhmaṇas, even though the brāhmaṇas utter harsh words. They look upon the brāhmaṇas as My own Self and pacify them by praising them in loving words, even as a son would appease an angry father or as I am pacifying you.

12 These servants of Mine have transgressed against you, not knowing the mind of their master. I shall therefore deem it a favor done to Me if you order that, although reaping the fruit of their transgression, they may return to My presence soon and the time of their exile from My abode may expire before long.

13 Brahmā continued: Even though the sages had been bitten by the serpent of anger, their souls were not satiated with hearing the Lord's lovely and illuminating speech, which was like a series of Vedic hymns.

14 The Lord's excellent speech was difficult to comprehend because of its momentous import and its most profound significance. The sages heard it with wide-open ears and pondered it as well. But although hearing, they could not understand what He intended to do.

15 The four brāhmaṇa sages were nevertheless extremely delighted to behold Him, and they experienced a thrill throughout their bodies. They then spoke as follows to the Lord, who had revealed the multiglories of the Supreme Personality through His internal potency, yoga-māyā.

16 The sages said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, we are unable to know what You intend for us to do, for even though You are the supreme ruler of all, You speak in our favor as if we had done something good for You.

17 O Lord, You are the supreme director of the brahminical culture. Your considering the brāhmaṇas to be in the highest position is Your example for teaching others. Actually You are the supreme worshipable Deity, not only for the gods but for the brāhmaṇas also.

18 You are the source of the eternal occupation of all living entities, and by Your multimanifestations of Personalities of Godhead, You have always protected religion. You are the supreme objective of religious principles, and in our opinion You are inexhaustible and unchangeable eternally.

19 Mystics and transcendentalists, by the mercy of the Lord, cross beyond nescience by ceasing all material desires. It is not possible, therefore, that the Supreme Lord can be favored by others.

20 The goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, the dust of whose feet is worn on the head by others, waits upon You, as appointed, for she is anxious to secure a place in the abode of the king of bees, who hovers on the fresh wreath of tulasī leaves offered at Your feet by some blessed devotee.

21 O Lord, You are exceedingly attached to the activities of Your pure devotees, yet You are never attached to the goddesses of fortune who constantly engage in Your transcendental loving service. How can You be purified, therefore, by the dust of the path traversed by the

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brāhmaṇas, and how can You be glorified or made fortunate by the marks of Śrīvatsa on Your chest?

22 O Lord, You are the personification of all religion. Therefore You manifest Yourself in three millenniums, and thus You protect this universe, which consists of animate and inanimate beings. By Your grace, which is of pure goodness and is the bestower of all blessings, kindly drive away the elements of rajas and tamas for the sake of the demigods and twice-born.

23 O Lord, You are the protector of the highest of the twice-born. If You do not protect them by offering worship and mild words, then certainly the auspicious path of worship will be rejected by people in general, who act on the strength and authority of Your Lordship.

24 Dear Lord, You never want the auspicious path to be destroyed, for You are the reservoir of all goodness. Just to benefit people in general, You destroy the evil element by Your mighty potency. You are the proprietor of the three creations and the maintainer of the entire universe. Therefore Your potency is not reduced by Your submissive behavior. Rather, by submission You exhibit Your transcendental pastimes.

25 O Lord, whatever punishment You wish to award to these two innocent persons, or also to us, we shall accept without duplicity. We understand that we have cursed two faultless persons.

26 The Lord replied: O brāhmaṇas, know that the punishment you inflicted on them was originally ordained by Me, and therefore they will fall to a birth in a demoniac family. But they will be firmly united with Me in thought through mental concentration intensified by anger, and they will return to My presence shortly.

27 Lord Brahmā said: After seeing the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the self-illuminated Vaikuṅṭha planet, the sages left that transcendental abode.

28 The sages circumambulated the Supreme Lord, offered their obeisances and returned, extremely delighted at learning of the divine opulences of the Vaiṣṇava.

29 The Lord then said to His attendants, Jaya and Vijaya: Depart this place, but fear not. All glories unto you. Though I am capable of nullifying the brāhmaṇas' curse, I would not do so. On the contrary, it has My approval.

30 This departure from Vaikuṅṭha was foretold by Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune. She was very angry because when she left My abode and then returned, you stopped her at the gate while I was sleeping.

31 The Lord assured the two Vaikuṅṭha inhabitants, Jaya and Vijaya: By practicing the mystic yoga system in anger, you will be cleansed of the sin of disobeying the brāhmaṇas and within a very short time return to Me.

32 After thus speaking at the door of Vaikuṅṭha, the Lord returned to His abode, where there are many celestial airplanes and all-surpassing wealth and splendor.

33 But those two gatekeepers, the best of the demigods, their beauty and luster diminished by the curse of the brāhmaṇas, became morose and fell from Vaikuṅṭha, the abode of the Supreme Lord.

34 Then, as Jaya and Vijaya fell from the Lord's abode, a great roar of disappointment arose from all the demigods, who were sitting in their splendid airplanes.

35 Lord Brahmā continued: Those two principal doorkeepers of the Personality of Godhead have now entered the womb of Diti, the powerful semen of Kaśyapa Muni having covered them.

36 It is the prowess of these twin asuras [demons] that has disturbed you, for it has minimized your power. There is no remedy within my power, however, for it is the Lord Himself who desires to do all this.

37 My dear sons, the Lord is the controller of the three modes of nature and is responsible for the creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. His wonderful creative power, yoga-māyā, cannot be easily understood even by the masters of yoga. That most ancient person, the Personality of Godhead, will alone come to our rescue. What purpose can we serve on His behalf by deliberating on the subject?

SB 3.17: Victory of Hiraṇyākṣa Over All the Directions of the Universe

1 Śrī Maitreya said: The demigods, the inhabitants of the higher planets, were freed from all fear upon hearing the cause of the darkness explained by Brahmā, who was born from Viṣṇu. Thus they all returned to their respective planets.

2 The virtuous lady Diti had been very apprehensive of trouble to the gods from the children in her womb, and her husband predicted the same. She brought forth twin sons after a full one hundred years of pregnancy.

3 On the birth of the two demons there were many natural disturbances, all very fearful and wonderful, in the heavenly planets, the earthly planets and in between them.

4 There were earthquakes along the mountains on the earth, and it appeared that there was fire everywhere. Many inauspicious planets like Saturn appeared, along with comets, meteors and thunderbolts.

5 There blew winds which were most uninviting to the touch, hissing again and again and uprooting gigantic trees. They had storms for their armies and clouds of dust for their ensigns.

6 The luminaries in the heavens were screened by masses of clouds, in which lightning sometimes flashed as though laughing. Darkness reigned everywhere, and nothing could be seen.

7 The ocean with its high waves wailed aloud as if stricken with sorrow, and there was a commotion among the creatures inhabiting the ocean. The rivers and lakes were also agitated, and lotuses withered.

8 Misty halos appeared around the sun and the moon during solar and lunar eclipses again and again. Claps of thunder were heard even without clouds, and sounds like those of rattling chariots emerged from the mountain caves.

9 In the interior of the villages she-jackals yelled portentously, vomiting strong fire from their mouths, and jackals and owls also joined them with their cries.

10 Raising their necks, dogs cried here and there, now in the manner of singing and now of wailing.

11 O Vidura, the asses ran hither and thither in herds, striking the earth with their hard hooves and wildly braying.

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12 Frightened by the braying of the asses, birds flew shrieking from their nests, while cattle in the cowsheds as well as in the woods passed dung and urine.

13 Cows, terrified, yielded blood in place of milk, clouds rained pus, the images of the gods in the temples shed tears, and trees fell down without a blast of wind.

14 Ominous planets such as Mars and Saturn shone brighter and surpassed the auspicious ones such as Mercury, Jupiter and Venus as well as a number of lunar mansions. Taking seemingly retrograde courses, the planets came in conflict with one another.

15 Marking these and many other omens of evil times, everyone but the four sage sons of Brahmā, who were aware of the fall of Jaya and Vijaya and of their birth as Diti's sons, was seized with fear. They did not know the secrets of these portents and thought that the dissolution of the universe was at hand.

16 These two demons who appeared in ancient times soon began to exhibit uncommon bodily features; they had steel-like frames which began to grow just like two great mountains.

17 Their bodies became so tall that they seemed to kiss the sky with the crests of their gold crowns. They blocked the view of all directions and while walking shook the earth at every step. Their arms were adorned with brilliant bracelets, and they stood as if covering the sun with their waists, which were bound with excellent and beautiful girdles.

18 Prajāpati Kaśyapa, the creator of the living entities, gave his twin sons their names; the one who was born first he named Hiranyākṣa, and the one who was first conceived by Diti he named Hiranyakaśipu.

19 The elder child, Hiranyakaśipu, was unafraid of death from anyone within the three worlds because he received a benediction from Lord Brahmā. He was proud and puffed up due to this benediction and was able to bring all three planetary systems under his control.

20 His younger brother, Hiranyākṣa, was always ready to satisfy his elder brother by his activities. Hiranyākṣa took a club on his shoulder and traveled all over the universe with a fighting spirit just to satisfy Hiranyakaśipu.

21 Hiranyākṣa's temper was difficult to control. He had anklets of gold tinkling about his feet, he was adorned with a gigantic garland, and he rested his huge mace on one of his shoulders.

22 His mental and bodily strength as well as the boon conferred upon him had made him proud. He feared death at the hands of no one, and there was no checking him. The gods, therefore, were seized with fear at his very sight, and they hid themselves even as snakes hide themselves for fear of Garuḍa.

23 On not finding Indra and the other demigods, who had previously been intoxicated with power, the chief of the Daityas, seeing that they had all vanished before his might, roared loudly.

24 After returning from the heavenly kingdom, the mighty demon, who was like an elephant in wrath, for the sake of sport dived into the deep ocean, which was roaring terribly.

25 On his entering the ocean, the aquatic animals who formed the host of Varuṇa were stricken with fear and ran far away. Thus Hiranyākṣa showed his splendor without dealing a blow.

26 Moving about in the ocean for many, many years, the mighty Hiranyākṣa smote the gigantic

wind-tossed waves again and again with his iron mace and reached Vibhāvārī, the capital of Varuṇa.

27 Vibhāvārī is the home of Varuṇa, lord of the aquatic creatures and guardian of the lower regions of the universe, where the demons generally reside. There Hiranyākṣa fell at Varuṇa's feet like a lowborn man, and to make fun of him he said with a smile, "Give me battle, O Supreme Lord!"

28 You are the guardian of an entire sphere and a ruler of wide fame. Having crushed the might of arrogant and conceited warriors and having conquered all the Daityas and Dānavas in the world, you once performed a Rājasūya sacrifice to the Lord.

29 Thus mocked by an enemy whose vanity knew no bounds, the worshipful lord of the waters waxed angry, but by dint of his reason he managed to curb the anger that had sprung up in him, and he replied: O dear one, we have now desisted from warfare, having grown too old for combat.

30 You are so skilled in war that I do not see anyone else but the most ancient person, Lord Viṣṇu, who can give satisfaction in battle to you. Therefore, O chief of the asuras, approach Him, whom even heroes like you mention with praise.

31 Varuṇa continued: On reaching Him you will be rid of your pride at once and will lie down on the field of battle, surrounded by dogs, for eternal sleep. It is in order to exterminate wicked fellows like you and to show His grace to the virtuous that He assumes His various incarnations like Varāha.

SB 3.18: The Battle Between Lord Boar and the Demon Hiranyākṣa

1 Maitreya continued: The proud and falsely glorious Daitya paid little heed to the words of Varuṇa. O dear Vidura, he learned from Nārada the whereabouts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and hurriedly betook himself to the depths of the ocean.

2 He saw there the all-powerful Personality of Godhead in His boar incarnation, bearing the earth upward on the ends of His tusks and robbing him of his splendor with His reddish eyes. The demon laughed: Oh, an amphibious beast!

3 The demon addressed the Lord: O best of the demigods, dressed in the form of a boar, just hear me. This earth is entrusted to us, the inhabitants of the lower regions, and You cannot take it from my presence and not be hurt by me.

4 You rascal, You have been nourished by our enemies to kill us, and You have killed some demons by remaining invisible. O fool, Your power is only mystic, so today I shall enliven my kinsmen by killing You.

5 The demon continued: When You fall dead with Your skull smashed by the mace hurled by my arms, the demigods and sages who offer You oblations and sacrifice in devotional service will also automatically cease to exist, like trees without roots.

6 Although the Lord was pained by the shaftlike abusive words of the demon, He bore the pain. But seeing that the earth on the ends of His tusks was frightened, He rose out of the water just as an elephant emerges with its female companion when assailed by an alligator.

7 The demon, who had golden hair on his head and fearful tusks, gave chase to the Lord while He was rising from the water, even as an alligator would chase an elephant. Roaring like thunder, he said: Are You not ashamed of running away before a challenging adversary? There

is nothing reproachable for shameless creatures!

8 The Lord placed the earth within His sight on the surface of the water and transferred to her His own energy in the form of the ability to float on the water. While the enemy stood looking on, Brahmā, the creator of the universe, extolled the Lord, and the other demigods rained flowers on Him.

9 The demon, who had a wealth of ornaments, bangles and beautiful golden armor on his body, chased the Lord from behind with a great mace. The Lord tolerated his piercing ill words, but in order to reply to him, He expressed His terrible anger.

10 The Personality of Godhead said: Indeed, We are creatures of the jungle, and We are searching after hunting dogs like you. One who is freed from the entanglement of death has no fear from the loose talk in which you are indulging, for you are bound up by the laws of death.

11 Certainly We have stolen the charge of the inhabitants of Rasātala and have lost all shame. Although bitten by your powerful mace, I shall stay here in the water for some time because, having created enmity with a powerful enemy, I now have no place to go.

12 You are supposed to be the commander of many foot soldiers, and now you may take prompt steps to overthrow Us. Give up all your foolish talk and wipe out the cares of your kith and kin by slaying Us. One may be proud, yet he does not deserve a seat in an assembly if he fails to fulfill his promised word.

13 Śrī Maitreya said: The demon, being thus challenged by the Personality of Godhead, became angry and agitated, and he trembled in anger like a challenged cobra.

14 Hissing indignantly, all his senses shaken by wrath, the demon quickly sprang upon the Lord and dealt Him a blow with his powerful mace.

15 The Lord, however, by moving slightly aside, dodged the violent mace-blow aimed at His breast by the enemy, just as an accomplished yogī would elude death.

16 The Personality of Godhead now exhibited His anger and rushed to meet the demon, who bit his lip in rage, took up his mace again and began to repeatedly brandish it about.

17 Then with His mace the Lord struck the enemy on the right of his brow, but since the demon was expert in fighting, O gentle Vidura, he protected himself by a maneuver of his own mace.

18 In this way, the demon Haryakṣa and the Lord, the Personality of Godhead, struck each other with their huge maces, each enraged and seeking his own victory.

19 There was keen rivalry between the two combatants; both had sustained injuries on their bodies from the blows of each other's pointed maces, and each grew more and more enraged at the smell of blood on his person. In their eagerness to win, they performed maneuvers of various kinds, and their contest looked like an encounter between two forceful bulls for the sake of a cow.

20 O descendant of Kuru, Brahmā, the most independent demigod of the universe, accompanied by his followers, came to see the terrible fight for the sake of the world between the demon and the Personality of Godhead, who appeared in the form of a boar.

21 After arriving at the place of combat, Brahmā, the leader of thousands of sages and transcendentalists, saw the demon, who had attained such unprecedented power that no one

could fight with him. Brahmā then addressed Nārāyaṇa, who was assuming the form of a boar for the first time.

22-23 Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, this demon has proved to be a constant pinprick to the demigods, the brāhmaṇas, the cows and innocent persons who are spotless and always dependent upon worshipping Your lotus feet. He has become a source of fear by unnecessarily harassing them. Since he has attained a boon from me, he has become a demon, always searching for a proper combatant, wandering all over the universe for this infamous purpose.

24 Lord Brahmā continued: My dear Lord, there is no need to play with this serpentine demon, who is always very skilled in conjuring tricks and is arrogant, self-sufficient and most wicked.

25 Brahmā continued: My dear Lord, You are infallible. Please kill this sinful demon before the demoniac hour arrives and he presents another formidable approach favorable to him. You can kill him by Your internal potency without doubt.

26 My Lord, the darkest evening, which covers the world, is fast approaching. Since You are the Soul of all souls, kindly kill him and win victory for the demigods.

27 The auspicious period known as abhijit, which is most opportune for victory, commenced at midday and has all but passed; therefore, in the interest of Your friends, please dispose of this formidable foe quickly.

28 This demon, luckily for us, has come of his own accord to You, his death ordained by You; therefore, exhibiting Your ways, kill him in the duel and establish the worlds in peace.

SB 3.19: The Killing of the Demon Hiraṇyākṣa

1 Śrī Maitreya said: After hearing the words of Brahmā, the creator, which were free from all sinful purposes and as sweet as nectar, the Lord heartily laughed and accepted his prayer with a glance laden with love.

2 The Lord, who had appeared from the nostril of Brahmā, sprang and aimed His mace at the chin of His enemy, the Hiraṇyākṣa demon, who was stalking fearlessly before Him.

3 Struck by the demon's mace, however, the Lord's mace slipped from His hand and looked splendid as it fell down whirling. This was miraculous, for the mace was blazing wonderfully.

4 Even though the demon had an excellent opportunity to strike his unarmed foe without obstruction, he respected the law of single combat, thereby kindling the fury of the Supreme Lord.

5 As the Lord's mace fell to the ground and a cry of alarm arose from the witnessing crowd of gods and ṛṣis, the Personality of Godhead acknowledged the demon's love of righteousness and therefore invoked His Sudarśana discus.

6 As the discus began to revolve in the Lord's hands and the Lord contended at close quarters with the chief of His Vaikuṅṭha attendants, who had been born as Hiraṇyākṣa, a vile son of Diti, there issued from every direction strange expressions uttered by those who were witnessing from airplanes. They had no knowledge of the Lord's reality, and they cried, "May victory attend You! Pray dispatch him. Play no more with him."

7 When the demon saw the Personality of Godhead, who had eyes just like lotus petals, standing in position before him, armed with His Sudarśana discus, his senses were overpowered by indignation. He began to hiss like a serpent, and he bit his lip in great

resentment.

8 The demon, who had fearful tusks, stared at the Personality of Godhead as though to burn Him. Springing into the air, he aimed his mace at the Lord, exclaiming at the same time, "You are slain!"

9 O saintly Vidura, while His enemy looked on, the Lord in His boar form, the enjoyer of all sacrificial offerings, playfully knocked down the mace with His left foot, even as it came upon Him with the force of a tempest.

10 The Lord then said: "Take up your weapon and try again, eager as you are to conquer Me." Challenged in these words, the demon aimed his mace at the Lord and once more loudly roared.

11 When the Lord saw the mace flying toward Him, He stood firmly where He was and caught it with the same ease as Garuḍa, the king of birds, would seize a serpent.

12 His valor thus frustrated, the great demon felt humiliated and was put out of countenance. He was reluctant to take back the mace when it was offered by the Personality of Godhead.

13 He now took a trident which was as rapacious as a flaming fire and hurled it against the Lord, the enjoyer of all sacrifices, even as one would use penance for a malevolent purpose against a holy brāhmaṇa.

14 Hurling by the mighty demon with all his strength, the flying trident shone brightly in the sky. The Personality of Godhead, however, tore it to pieces with His discus Sudarśana, which had a sharp-edged rim, even as Indra cut off a wing of Garuḍa.

15 The demon was enraged when his trident was cut to pieces by the discus of the Personality of Godhead. He therefore advanced toward the Lord and, roaring aloud, struck his hard fist against the Lord's broad chest, which bore the mark of Śrīvatsa. Then he went out of sight.

16 Hit in this manner by the demon, O Vidura, the Lord, who had appeared as the first boar, did not feel the least quaking in any part of His body, any more than an elephant would when struck with a wreath of flowers.

17 The demon, however, employed many conjuring tricks against the Personality of Godhead, who is the Lord of yoga-māyā. At the sight of this the people were filled with alarm and thought that the dissolution of the universe was near.

18 Fierce winds began to blow from all directions, spreading darkness occasioned by dust and hail storms; stones came in volleys from every corner, as if thrown by machine guns.

19 The luminaries in outer space disappeared due to the sky's being overcast with masses of clouds, which were accompanied by lightning and thunder. The sky rained pus, hair, blood, stool, urine and bones.

20 O sinless Vidura, mountains discharged weapons of various kinds, and naked demonesses armed with tridents appeared with their hair hanging loose.

21 Cruel and savage slogans were uttered by hosts of ruffian Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, who all either marched on foot or rode on horses, elephants or chariots.

22 The Lord, the personal enjoyer of all sacrifices, now discharged His beloved Sudarśana, which was capable of dispersing the magical forces displayed by the demon.

23 At that very moment, a shudder suddenly ran through the heart of Diti, the mother of Hiraṇyākṣa. She recalled the words of her husband, Kaśyapa, and blood flowed from her breasts.

24 When the demon saw his magic forces dispelled, he once again came into the presence of the Personality of Godhead, Keśava, and, full of rage, tried to embrace Him within his arms to crush Him. But to his great amazement he found the Lord standing outside the circle of his arms.

25 The demon now began to strike the Lord with his hard fists, but Lord Adhokṣaja slapped him in the root of the ear, even as Indra, the lord of the Maruts, hit the demon Vṛtra.

26 Though struck indifferently by the Lord, the conqueror of all, the demon's body began to wheel. His eyeballs bulged out of their sockets. His arms and legs broken and the hair on his head scattered, he fell down dead, like a gigantic tree uprooted by the wind.

27 Aja [Brahmā] and others arrived on the spot to see the fearfully tusked demon lying on the ground, biting his lip. The glow of his face was yet unfaded, and Brahmā admiringly said: Oh, who could meet such blessed death?

28 Brahmā continued: He was struck by a forefoot of the Lord, whom yogīs, seeking freedom from their unreal material bodies, meditate upon in seclusion in mystic trance. While gazing on His countenance, this crest jewel of Diti's sons has cast off his mortal coil.

29 These two personal assistants of the Supreme Lord, having been cursed, have been destined to take birth in demoniac families. After a few such births, they will return to their own positions.

30 The demigods addressed the Lord: All obeisances unto You! You are the enjoyer of all sacrifices, and You have assumed the form of a boar, in pure goodness, for the purpose of maintaining the world. Fortunately for us, this demon, who was a torment to the worlds, has been slain by You, and we too, O Lord, are now at ease, in devotion to Your lotus feet.

31 Śrī Maitreya continued: After thus killing the most formidable demon Hiraṇyākṣa, the Supreme Lord Hari, the origin of the boar species, returned to His own abode, where there is always an uninterrupted festival. The Lord was praised by all the demigods, headed by Brahmā.

32 Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, I have explained to you the Personality of Godhead's coming down as the first boar incarnation and killing in a great fight a demon of unprecedented prowess as if he were just a plaything. This has been narrated by me as I heard it from my predecessor spiritual master.

33 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī continued: My dear brāhmaṇa, Kṣattā [Vidura] the great devotee of the Lord achieved transcendental bliss by hearing the narration of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead from the authoritative source of the sage Kauṣārava [Maitreya], and he was very pleased.

34 What to speak of hearing the pastimes of the Lord, whose chest is marked with Śrīvatsa, people may take transcendental pleasure even in hearing of the works and deeds of the devotees, whose fame is immortal.

35 The Personality of Godhead delivered the king of the elephants, who was attacked by an alligator and who meditated upon the lotus feet of the Lord. At that time the female elephants

who accompanied him were crying, and the Lord saved them from the impending danger.

36 What grateful soul is there who would not render his loving service to such a great master as the Personality of Godhead? The Lord can be easily pleased by spotless devotees who resort exclusively to Him for protection, though the unrighteous man finds it difficult to propitiate Him.

37 O brāhmaṇas, anyone who hears, chants, or takes pleasure in the wonderful narration of the killing of the Hiraṇyākṣa demon by the Lord, who appeared as the first boar in order to deliver the world, is at once relieved of the results of sinful activities, even the killing of a brāhmaṇa.

38 This most sacred narrative confers extraordinary merit, wealth, fame, longevity and all the objects of one's desire. On the field of battle it promotes the strength of one's vital organs and organs of action. One who listens to it at the last moment of his life is transferred to the supreme abode of the Lord, O dear Śaunaka.

SB 3.20: Conversation Between Maitreya and Vidura

1 Śrī Śaunaka inquired: O Sūta Gosvāmī, after the earth was again situated in its orbit, what did Svāyambhuva Manu do to show the path of liberation to persons who were to take birth later on?

2 Śaunaka Ṛṣi inquired about Vidura, who was a great devotee and friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa and who gave up the company of his elder brother because the latter, along with his sons, played tricks against the desires of the Lord.

3 Vidura was born from the body of Vedavyāsa and was not less than he. Thus he accepted the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa wholeheartedly and was attached to His devotees.

4 Vidura was purified of all passion by wandering in sacred places, and at last he reached Hardwar, where he met the great sage who knew the science of spiritual life, and he inquired from him. Śaunaka Ṛṣi therefore asked: What more did Vidura inquire from Maitreya?

5 Śaunaka inquired about the conversation between Vidura and Maitreya: There must have been many narrations of the spotless pastimes of the Lord. The hearing of such narrations is exactly like bathing in the water of the Ganges, for it can free one from all sinful reactions.

6 O Sūta Gosvāmī, all good fortune to you! Please narrate the activities of the Lord, which are all magnanimous and worth glorifying. What sort of devotee can be satiated by hearing the nectarean pastimes of the Lord?

7 On being asked to speak by the great sages of Naimiṣāraṇya, the son of Romaharṣaṇa, Sūta Gosvāmī, whose mind was absorbed in the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, said: Please hear what I shall now speak.

8 Sūta Gosvāmī continued: Vidura, the descendant of Bharata, was delighted to hear the story of the Lord, who, having assumed by His own divine potency the form of a boar, had enacted the sport of lifting the earth from the bottom of the ocean and indifferently killing the demon Hiraṇyākṣa. Vidura then spoke to the sage as follows.

9 Vidura said: Since you know of matters inconceivable to us, tell me, O holy sage, what did Brahmā do to create living beings after evolving the Prajāpatis, the progenitors of living beings?

10 Vidura inquired: How did the Prajāpatis [such progenitors of living entities as Marīci and

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Svāyambhuva Manu] create according to the instruction of Brahmā, and how did they evolve this manifested universe?

11 Did they evolve the creation in conjunction with their respective wives, did they remain independent in their action, or did they all jointly produce it?

12 Maitreya said: When the equilibrium of the combination of the three modes of nature was agitated by the unseen activity of the living entity, by Mahā-Viṣṇu and by the force of time, the total material elements were produced.

13 As impelled by the destiny of the jīva, the false ego, which is of three kinds, evolved from the mahat-tattva, in which the element of rajas predominates. From the ego, in turn, evolved many groups of five principles.

14 Separately unable to produce the material universe, they combined with the help of the energy of the Supreme Lord and were able to produce a shining egg.

15 For over one thousand years the shiny egg lay on the waters of the Causal Ocean in the lifeless state. Then the Lord entered it as Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.

16 From the navel of the Personality of Godhead Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu sprouted a lotus flower effulgent like a thousand blazing suns. This lotus flower is the reservoir of all conditioned souls, and the first living entity who came out of the lotus flower was the omnipotent Brahmā

17 When that Supreme Personality of Godhead who is lying on the Garbhodaka Ocean entered the heart of Brahmā, Brahmā brought his intelligence to bear, and with the intelligence invoked he began to create the universe as it was before.

18 First of all, Brahmā created from his shadow the coverings of ignorance of the conditioned souls. They are five in number and are called tāmisra, andha-tāmisra, tamas, moha and mahā-moha.

19 Out of disgust, Brahmā threw off the body of ignorance, and taking this opportunity, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas sprang for possession of the body, which continued to exist in the form of night. Night is the source of hunger and thirst.

20 Overpowered by hunger and thirst, they ran to devour Brahmā from all sides and cried, “Spare him not! Eat him up!”

21 Brahmā, the head of the demigods, full of anxiety, asked them, “Do not eat me, but protect me. You are born from me and have become my sons. Therefore you are Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.”

22 He then created the chief demigods, who were shining with the glory of goodness. He dropped before them the effulgent form of daytime, and the demigods sportingly took possession of it.

23 Lord Brahmā then gave birth to the demons from his buttocks, and they were very fond of sex. Because they were too lustful, they approached him for copulation.

24 The worshipful Brahmā first laughed at their stupidity, but finding the shameless asuras close upon him, he grew indignant and ran in great haste out of fear.

25 He approached the Personality of Godhead, who bestows all boons and who dispels the

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agony of His devotees and of those who take shelter of His lotus feet. He manifests His innumerable transcendental forms for the satisfaction of His devotees.

26 Lord Brahmā, approaching the Lord, addressed Him thus: My Lord, please protect me from these sinful demons, who were created by me under Your order. They are infuriated by an appetite for sex and have come to attack me.

27 My Lord, You are the only one capable of ending the affliction of the distressed and inflicting agony on those who never resort to Your feet.

28 The Lord, who can distinctly see the minds of others, perceived Brahmā's distress and said to him: "Cast off this impure body of yours." Thus commanded by the Lord, Brahmā cast off his body.

29 The body given up by Brahmā took the form of the evening twilight, when the day and night meet, a time which kindles passion. The asuras, who are passionate by nature, dominated as they are by the element of rajas, took it for a damsel, whose lotus feet resounded with the tinkling of anklets, whose eyes were wide with intoxication and whose hips were covered by fine cloth, over which shone a girdle.

30 Her breasts projected upward because of their clinging to each other, and they were too contiguous to admit any intervening space. She had a shapely nose and beautiful teeth, a lovely smile played on her lips, and she cast a sportful glance at the asuras.

31 Adorned with dark tresses, she hid herself, as it were, out of shyness. Upon seeing that girl, the asuras were all infatuated with an appetite for sex.

32 The demons praised her: Oh, what a beauty! What rare self-control! What a budding youth! In the midst of us all, who are passionately longing for her, she is moving about like one absolutely free from passion.

33 Indulging in various speculations about the evening twilight, which appeared to them endowed with the form of a young woman, the wicked-minded asuras treated her with respect and fondly spoke to her as follows.

34 Who are you, O pretty girl? Whose wife or daughter are you, and what can be the object of your appearing before us? Why do you tantalize us, unfortunate as we are, with the priceless commodity of your beauty?

35 Whosoever you may be, O beautiful girl, we are fortunate in being able to see you. While playing with a ball, you have agitated the minds of all onlookers.

36 O beautiful woman, when you strike the bouncing ball against the ground with your hand again and again, your lotus feet do not stay in one place. Oppressed by the weight of your full-grown breasts, your waist becomes fatigued, and your clear vision grows dull, as it were. Pray braid your comely hair.

37 The asuras, clouded in their understanding, took the evening twilight to be a beautiful woman showing herself in her alluring form, and they seized her.

38 With a laugh full of deep significance, the worshipful Brahmā then evolved by his own loveliness, which seemed to enjoy itself by itself, the hosts of Gandharvas and Apsarās.

39 After that, Brahmā gave up that shining and beloved form of moonlight. Viśvāvasu and other Gandharvas gladly took possession of it.

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40 The glorious Brahmā next evolved from his sloth the ghosts and fiends, but he closed his eyes when he saw them stand naked with their hair scattered.

41 The ghosts and hobgoblins took possession of the body thrown off in the form of yawning by Brahmā, the creator of the living entities. This is also known as the sleep which causes drooling. The hobgoblins and ghosts attack men who are impure, and their attack is spoken of as insanity.

42 Recognizing himself to be full of desire and energy, the worshipful Brahmā, the creator of the living entities, evolved from his own invisible form, from his navel, the hosts of Sādhyas and Pitās.

43 The Pitās themselves took possession of the invisible body, the source of their existence. It is through the medium of this invisible body that those well versed in the rituals offer oblations to the Sādhyas and Pitās [in the form of their departed ancestors] on the occasion of śrāddha.

44 Then Lord Brahmā, by his ability to be hidden from vision, created the Siddhas and Vidyādharas and gave them that wonderful form of his known as the Antardhāna.

45 One day, Brahmā, the creator of the living entities, beheld his own reflection in the water, and admiring himself, he evolved Kimpuruṣas as well as Kinnaras out of that reflection.

46 The Kimpuruṣas and Kinnaras took possession of that shadowy form left by Brahmā. That is why they and their spouses sing his praises by recounting his exploits at every daybreak.

47 Once Brahmā lay down with his body stretched at full length. He was very concerned that the work of creation had not proceeded apace, and in a sullen mood he gave up that body too.

48 O dear Vidura, the hair that dropped from that body transformed into snakes, and even while the body crawled along with its hands and feet contracted, there sprang from it ferocious serpents and Nāgas with their hoods expanded.

49 One day Brahmā, the self-born, the first living creature, felt as if the object of his life had been accomplished. At that time he evolved from his mind the Manus, who promote the welfare activities of the universe.

50 The self-possessed creator gave them his own human form. On seeing the Manus, those who had been created earlier the demigods, the Gandharvas and so on applauded Brahmā, the lord of the universe.

51 They prayed: O creator of the universe, we are glad; what you have produced is well done. Since ritualistic acts have now been established soundly in this human form, we shall all share the sacrificial oblations.

52 Having equipped himself with austere penance, adoration, mental concentration and absorption in devotion, accompanied by dispassion, and having controlled his senses, Brahmā, the self-born living creature, evolved great sages as his beloved sons.

53 To each one of these sons the unborn creator of the universe gave a part of his own body, which was characterized by deep meditation, mental concentration, supernatural power, austerity, adoration and renunciation.

SB 3.21: Conversation Between Manu and Kardama

1 Vidura said: The line of Svāyambhuva Manu was most esteemed. O worshipful sage, I beg

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- you: Give me an account of this race, whose progeny multiplied through sexual intercourse.
- 2 The two great sons of Svāyambhuva Manu Priyavrata and Uttānapāda ruled the world, consisting of seven islands, just according to religious principles.
- 3 O holy brāhmaṇa, O sinless one, you have spoken of his daughter, known by the name Devahūti, as the wife of the sage Kardama, the lord of created beings.
- 4 How many offspring did that great yogī beget through the princess, who was endowed with eightfold perfection in the yoga principles? Oh, pray tell me this, for I am eager to hear it.
- 5 O holy sage, tell me how the worshipful Ruci and Dakṣa, the son of Brahmā, generated children after securing as their wives the other two daughters of Svāyambhuva Manu.
- 6 The great sage Maitreya replied: Commanded by Lord Brahmā to beget children in the worlds, the worshipful Kardama Muni practiced penance on the bank of the river Sarasvatī for a period of ten thousand years.
- 7 During that period of penance, the sage Kardama, by worship through devotional service in trance, propitiated the Personality of Godhead, who is the quick bestower of all blessings upon those who flee to Him for protection.
- 8 Then, in the Satya-yuga, the lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead, being pleased, showed Himself to that Kardama Muni and displayed His transcendental form, which can be understood only through the Vedas.
- 9 Kardama Muni saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is free from material contamination, in His eternal form, effulgent like the sun, wearing a garland of white lotuses and water lilies. The Lord was clad in spotless yellow silk, and His lotus face was fringed with slick dark locks of curly hair.
- 10 Adorned with a crown and earrings, He held His characteristic conch, disc and mace in three of His hands and a white lily in the fourth. He glanced about in a happy, smiling mood whose sight captivates the hearts of all devotees.
- 11 A golden streak on His chest, the famous Kaustubha gem suspended from His neck, He stood in the air with His lotus feet placed on the shoulders of Garuḍa.
- 12 When Kardama Muni actually realized the Supreme Personality of Godhead in person, he was greatly satisfied because his transcendental desire was fulfilled. He fell on the ground with his head bowed to offer obeisances unto the lotus feet of the Lord. His heart naturally full of love of God, with folded hands he satisfied the Lord with prayers.
- 13 The great sage Kardama said: O supreme worshipful Lord, my power of sight is now fulfilled, having attained the greatest perfection of the sight of You, who are the reservoir of all existences. Through many successive births of deep meditation, advanced yogīs aspire to see Your transcendental form.
- 14 Your lotus feet are the true vessel to take one across the ocean of mundane nescience. Only persons deprived of their intelligence by the spell of the deluding energy will worship those feet with a view to attain the trivial and momentary pleasures of the senses, which even persons rotting in hell can attain. However, O my Lord, You are so kind that You bestow mercy even upon them.
- 15 Therefore, desiring to marry a girl of like disposition who may prove to be a veritable cow

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of plenty in my married life, to satisfy my lustful desire I too have sought the shelter of Your lotus feet, which are the source of everything, for You are like a desire tree.

16 O my Lord, You are the master and leader of all living entities. Under Your direction, all conditioned souls, as if bound by rope, are constantly engaged in satisfying their desires. Following them, O embodiment of religion, I also bear oblations for You, who are eternal time.

17 However, persons who have given up stereotyped worldly affairs and the beastly followers of these affairs, and who have taken shelter of the umbrella of Your lotus feet by drinking the intoxicating nectar of Your qualities and activities in discussions with one another, can be freed from the primary necessities of the material body.

18 Your wheel, which has three naves, rotates around the axis of the imperishable Brahman. It has thirteen spokes, 360 joints, six rims and numberless leaves carved upon it. Though its revolution cuts short the life span of the entire creation, this wheel of tremendous velocity cannot touch the life span of the devotees of the Lord.

19 My dear Lord, You alone create the universes. O Personality of Godhead, desiring to create these universes, You create them, maintain them and again wind them up by Your own energies, which are under the control of Your second energy, called *yoga-māyā*, just as a spider creates a cobweb by its own energy and again winds it up.

20 My dear Lord, although it is not Your desire, You manifest this creation of gross and subtle elements just for our sensual satisfaction. Let Your causeless mercy be upon us, for You have appeared before us in Your eternal form, adorned with a splendid wreath of *tulasī* leaves.

21 I continuously offer my respectful obeisances unto Your lotus feet, of which it is worthy to take shelter, because You shower all benedictions on the insignificant. To give all living entities detachment from fruitive activity by realizing You, You have expanded these material worlds by Your own energy.

22 Maitreya resumed: Sincerely extolled in these words, Lord Viṣṇu, shining very beautifully on the shoulders of Garuḍa, replied with words as sweet as nectar. His eyebrows moved gracefully as He looked at the sage with a smile full of affection.

23 The Supreme Lord said: Having come to know what was in your mind, I have already arranged for that for which you have worshiped Me well through your mental and sensory discipline.

24 The Lord continued: My dear ṛṣi, O leader of the living entities, for those who serve Me in devotion by worshiping Me, especially persons like you who have given up everything unto Me, there is never any question of frustration.

25 The Emperor Svāyambhuva Manu, the son of Lord Brahmā, who is well known for his righteous acts, has his seat in Brahmāvarta and rules over the earth with its seven oceans.

26 The day after tomorrow, O brāhmaṇa, that celebrated emperor, who is expert in religious activities, will come here with his queen, Śatarūpā, wishing to see you.

27 He has a grown-up daughter whose eyes are black. She is ready for marriage, and she has good character and all good qualities. She is also searching for a good husband. My dear sir, her parents will come to see you, who are exactly suitable for her, just to deliver their daughter as your wife.

28 That princess, O holy sage, will be just the type you have been thinking of in your heart for

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all these long years. She will soon be yours and will serve you to your heart's content.

29 She will bring forth nine daughters from the seed sown in her by you, and through the daughters you beget, the sages will duly beget children.

30 With your heart cleansed by properly carrying out My command, resigning to Me the fruits of all your acts, you will finally attain to Me.

31 Showing compassion to all living entities, you will attain self-realization. Giving assurance of safety to all, you will perceive your own self as well as all the universes in Me, and Myself in you.

32 O great sage, I shall manifest My own plenary portion through your wife, Devahūti, along with your nine daughters, and I shall instruct her in the system of philosophy that deals with the ultimate principles or categories.

33 Maitreya went on: Thus having spoken to Kardama Muni, the Lord, who reveals Himself only when the senses are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, departed from that lake called Bindu-sarovara, which was encircled by the river Sarasvatī.

34 While the sage stood looking on, the Lord left by the pathway leading to Vaikuṅṭha, a path extolled by all great liberated souls. The sage stood listening as the hymns forming the basis of the Sāma Veda were vibrated by the flapping wings of the Lord's carrier, Garuḍa.

35 Then, after the departure of the Lord, the worshipful sage Kardama stayed on the bank of Bindu-sarovara, awaiting the time of which the Lord had spoken.

36 Svāyambhuva Manu, with his wife, mounted his chariot, which was decorated with golden ornaments. Placing his daughter on it with them, he began traveling all over the earth.

37 O Vidura, they reached the hermitage of the sage, who had just completed his vows of austerity on the very day foretold by the Lord.

38-39 The holy Lake Bindu-sarovara, flooded by the waters of the river Sarasvatī, was resorted to by hosts of eminent sages. Its holy water was not only auspicious but as sweet as nectar. It was called Bindu-sarovara because drops of tears had fallen there from the eyes of the Lord, who was overwhelmed by extreme compassion for the sage who had sought His protection.

40 The shore of the lake was surrounded by clusters of pious trees and creepers, rich in fruits and flowers of all seasons, that afforded shelter to pious animals and birds, which uttered various cries. It was adorned by the beauty of groves of forest trees.

41 The area resounded with the notes of overjoyed birds. Intoxicated bees wandered there, intoxicated peacocks proudly danced, and merry cuckoos called one another.

42-43 Lake Bindu-sarovara was adorned by flowering trees such as kadamba, campaka, aśoka, karaṣa, bakula, āsana, kunda, mandāra, kuṭaja and young mango trees. The air was filled with the pleasing notes of kāraṇḍava ducks, plavas, swans, ospreys, waterfowl, cranes, cakravākas and cakoras.

44 Its shores abounded with deer, boars, porcupines, gavayas, elephants, baboons, lions, monkeys, mongooses and musk deer.

45-47 Entering that most sacred spot with his daughter and going near the sage, the first monarch, Svāyambhuva Manu, saw the sage sitting in his hermitage, having just propitiated the

sacred fire by pouring oblations into it. His body shone most brilliantly; though he had engaged in austere penance for a long time, he was not emaciated, for the Lord had cast His affectionate sidelong glance upon him and he had also heard the nectar flowing from the moonlike words of the Lord. The sage was tall, his eyes were large, like the petals of a lotus, and he had matted locks on his head. He was clad in rags. Svāyambhuva Manu approached and saw him to be somewhat soiled, like an unpolished gem.

48 Seeing that the monarch had come to his hermitage and was bowing before him, the sage greeted him with benediction and received him with due honor.

49 After receiving the sage's attention, the King sat down and was silent. Recalling the instructions of the Lord, Kardama then spoke to the King as follows, delighting him with his sweet accents.

50 The tour you have undertaken, O lord, is surely intended to protect the virtuous and kill the demons, since you embody the protecting energy of Śrī Hari.

51 When necessary, You assume the part of the sun-god; the moon-god; Agni, the god of fire; Indra, the lord of paradise; Vāyu, the wind-god; Yama, the god of punishment; Dharma, the god of piety; and Varuṇa, the god presiding over the waters. All obeisances to you, who are none other than Lord Viṣṇu!

52-54 If you did not mount your victorious jeweled chariot, whose mere presence threatens culprits, if you did not produce fierce sounds by the twanging of your bow, and if you did not roam about the world like the brilliant sun, leading a huge army whose trampling feet cause the globe of the earth to tremble, then all the moral laws governing the varṇas and āśramas created by the Lord Himself would be broken by the rogues and rascals.

55 If you gave up all thought of the world's situation, unrighteousness would flourish, for men who hanker only after money would be unopposed. Such miscreants would attack, and the world would perish.

56 In spite of all this, I ask you, O valiant King, the purpose for which you have come here. Whatever it may be, we shall carry it out without reservation.

SB 3.22: The Marriage of Kardama Muni and Devahūti

1 Śrī Maitreya said: After describing the greatness of the Emperor's manifold qualities and activities, the sage became silent, and the Emperor, feeling modesty, addressed him as follows.

2 Manu replied: To expand himself in Vedic knowledge, Lord Brahmā, the personified Veda, from his face created you, the brāhmaṇas, who are full of austerity, knowledge and mystic power and are averse to sense gratification.

3 For the protection of the brāhmaṇas, the thousand-legged Supreme Being created us, the kṣatriyas, from His thousand arms. Hence the brāhmaṇas are said to be His heart and the kṣatriyas His arms.

4 That is why the brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas protect each other, as well as themselves; and the Lord Himself, who is both the cause and effect and is yet immutable, protects them through each other.

5 Now I have resolved all my doubts simply by meeting you, for Your Lordship has very kindly and clearly explained the duty of a king who desires to protect his subjects.

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6 It is my good fortune that I have been able to see you, for you cannot easily be seen by persons who have not subdued the mind or controlled the senses. I am all the more fortunate to have touched with my head the blessed dust of your feet.

7 I have fortunately been instructed by you, and thus great favor has been bestowed upon me. I thank God that I have listened with open ears to your pure words.

8 O great sage, graciously be pleased to listen to the prayer of my humble self, for my mind is troubled by affection for my daughter.

9 My daughter is the sister of Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. She is seeking a suitable husband in terms of age, character and good qualities.

10 The moment she heard from the sage Nārada of your noble character, learning, beautiful appearance, youth and other virtues, she fixed her mind upon you.

11 Therefore please accept her, O chief of the brāhmaṇas, for I offer her with faith and she is in every respect fit to be your wife and take charge of your household duties.

12 To deny an offering that has come of itself is not commendable even for one absolutely free from all attachment, much less one addicted to sensual pleasure.

13 One who rejects an offering that comes of its own accord but later begs a boon from a miser thus loses his widespread reputation, and his pride is humbled by the neglectful behavior of others.

14 Svāyambhuva Manu continued: O wise man, I heard that you were prepared to marry. Please accept her hand, which is being offered to you by me, since you have not taken a vow of perpetual celibacy.

15 The great sage replied: Certainly I have a desire to marry, and your daughter has not yet married or given her word to anyone. Therefore our marriage according to the Vedic system can take place.

16 Let your daughter's desire for marriage, which is recognized in the Vedic scriptures, be fulfilled. Who would not accept her hand? She is so beautiful that by her bodily luster alone she excels the beauty of her ornaments.

17 I have heard that Viśvāvasu, the great Gandharva, his mind stupefied with infatuation, fell from his airplane after seeing your daughter playing with a ball on the roof of the palace, for she was indeed beautiful with her tinkling ankle bells and her eyes moving to and fro.

18 What wise man would not welcome her, the very ornament of womanhood, the beloved daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu and sister of Uttānapāda? Those who have not worshiped the gracious feet of the goddess of fortune cannot even perceive her, yet she has come of her own accord to seek my hand.

19 Therefore I shall accept this chaste girl as my wife, on the condition that after she bears semen from my body, I shall accept the life of devotional service accepted by the most perfect human beings. That process was described by Lord Viṣṇu. It is free from envy.

20 The highest authority for me is the unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whom this wonderful creation emanates and in whom its sustenance and dissolution rest. He is the origin of all Prajāpatis, the personalities meant to produce living entities in this world.

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21 Śrī Maitreya said: O great warrior Vidura, the sage Kardama said this much only and then became silent, thinking of his worshipable Lord Viṣṇu, who has a lotus on His navel. As he silently smiled, his face captured the mind of Devahūti, who began to meditate upon the great sage.

22 After having unmistakably known the decision of the Queen, as well as that of Devahūti, the Emperor most gladly gave his daughter to the sage, whose host of virtues was equaled by hers.

23 Empress Śatarūpā lovingly gave most valuable presents, suitable for the occasion, such as jewelry, clothes and household articles, in dowry to the bride and bridegroom.

24 Thus relieved of his responsibility by handing over his daughter to a suitable man, Svāyambhuva Manu, his mind agitated by feelings of separation, embraced his affectionate daughter with both his arms.

25 The Emperor was unable to bear the separation of his daughter. Therefore tears poured from his eyes again and again, drenching his daughter's head as he cried, "My dear mother! My dear daughter!"

26-27 After asking and obtaining the great sage's permission to leave, the monarch mounted his chariot with his wife and started for his capital, followed by his retinue. Along the way he saw the prosperity of the tranquil seers' beautiful hermitages on both the charming banks of the Sarasvatī, the river so agreeable to saintly persons.

28 Overjoyed to know of his arrival, his subjects came forth from Brahmāvarta to greet their returning lord with songs, prayers and musical instruments.

29-30 The city of Barhiṣmatī, rich in all kinds of wealth, was so called because Lord Viṣṇu's hair dropped there from His body when He manifested Himself as Lord Boar. As He shook His body, this very hair fell and turned into blades of evergreen kuśa grass and kāśa [another kind of grass used for mats], by means of which the sages worshiped Lord Viṣṇu after defeating the demons who had interfered with the performance of their sacrifices.

31 Manu spread a seat of kuśas and kāśas and worshiped the Lord, the Personality of Godhead, by whose grace he had obtained the rule of the terrestrial globe.

32 Having entered the city of Barhiṣmatī, in which he had previously lived, Manu entered his palace, which was filled with an atmosphere that eradicated the three miseries of material existence.

33 Emperor Svāyambhuva Manu enjoyed life with his wife and subjects and fulfilled his desires without being disturbed by unwanted principles contrary to the process of religion. Celestial musicians and their wives sang in chorus about the pure reputation of the Emperor, and early in the morning, every day, he used to listen to the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead with a loving heart.

34 Thus Svāyambhuva Manu was a saintly king. Although absorbed in material happiness, he was not dragged to the lowest grade of life, for he always enjoyed his material happiness in a Kṛṣṇa conscious atmosphere.

35 Consequently, although his duration of life gradually came to an end, his long life, consisting of a Manvantara era, was not spent in vain, since he ever engaged in hearing, contemplating, writing down and chanting the pastimes of the Lord.

36 He passed his time, which lasted seventy-one cycles of the four ages [71 × 4,320,000 years], always thinking of Vāsudeva and always engaged in matters regarding Vāsudeva. Thus he transcended the three destinations.

37 Therefore, O Vidura, how can persons completely under the shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa in devotional service be put into miseries pertaining to the body, the mind, nature, and other men and living creatures?

38 In reply to questions asked by certain sages, he [Svāyambhuva Manu], out of compassion for all living entities, taught the diverse sacred duties of men in general and the different varṇas and āśramas.

39 I have spoken to you of the wonderful character of Svāyambhuva Manu, the original king, whose reputation is worthy of description. Please hear as I speak of the flourishing of his daughter Devahūti.

SB 3.23: Devahūti's Lamentation

1 Maitreya continued: After the departure of her parents, the chaste woman Devahūti, who could understand the desires of her husband, served him constantly with great love, as Bhavānī, the wife of Lord Śiva, serves her husband.

2 O Vidura, Devahūti served her husband with intimacy and great respect, with control of the senses, with love and with sweet words.

3 Working sanely and diligently, she pleased her very powerful husband, giving up all lust, pride, envy, greed, sinful activities and vanity.

4-5 The daughter of Manu, who was fully devoted to her husband, looked upon him as greater even than providence. Thus she expected great blessings from him. Having served him for a long time, she grew weak and emaciated due to her religious observances. Seeing her condition, Kardama, the foremost of celestial sages, was overcome with compassion and spoke to her in a voice choked with great love.

6 Kardama Muni said: O respectful daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu, today I am very much pleased with you for your great devotion and most excellent loving service. Since the body is so dear to embodied beings, I am astonished that you have neglected your own body to use it on my behalf.

7 Kardama Muni continued: I have achieved the blessings of the Lord in discharging my own religious life of austerity, meditation and Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Although you have not yet experienced these achievements, which are free from fear and lamentation, I shall offer them all to you because you are engaged in my service. Now just look at them. I am giving you the transcendental vision to see how nice they are.

8 Kardama Muni continued: What is the use of enjoyments other than the Lord's grace? All material achievements are subject to be annihilated simply by a movement of the eyebrows of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By your principles of devotion to your husband, you have achieved and can enjoy transcendental gifts very rarely obtained by persons proud of aristocracy and material possessions.

9 Upon hearing the speaking of her husband, who excelled in knowledge of all kinds of transcendental science, innocent Devahūti was very satisfied. Her smiling face shining with a slightly bashful glance, she spoke in a choked voice because of great humility and love.

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10Śrī Devahūti said: My dear husband, O best of brāhmaṇas, I know that you have achieved perfection and are the master of all the infallible mystic powers because you are under the protection of yoga-māyā, the transcendental nature. But you once made a promise that our bodily union should now fulfill, since children are a great quality for a chaste woman who has a glorious husband.

11 Devahūti continued: My dear lord, I am struck by excited emotion for you. Therefore kindly make what arrangements must be made according to the scriptures so that my skinny body, emaciated through unsatisfied passion, may be rendered fit for you. Also, my lord, please think of a suitable house for this purpose.

12 Maitreya continued: O Vidura, seeking to please his beloved wife, the sage Kardama exercised his yogic power and instantly produced an aerial mansion that could travel at his will.

13 It was a wonderful structure, bedecked with all sorts of jewels, adorned with pillars of precious stones, and capable of yielding whatever one desired. It was equipped with every form of furniture and wealth, which tended to increase in the course of time.

14-15 The castle was fully equipped with all necessary paraphernalia, and it was pleasing in all seasons. It was decorated all around with flags, festoons and artistic work of variegated colors. It was further embellished with wreaths of charming flowers that attracted sweetly humming bees and with tapestries of linen, silk and various other fabrics.

16 The palace looked charming, with beds, couches, fans and seats, all separately arranged in seven stories.

17 Its beauty was enhanced by artistic engravings here and there on the walls. The floor was of emerald, with coral daises.

18 The palace was very beautiful, with its coral thresholds at the entrances and its doors bedecked with diamonds. Gold pinnacles crowned its domes of sapphire.

19 With the choicest rubies set in its diamond walls, it appeared as though possessed of eyes. It was furnished with wonderful canopies and greatly valuable gates of gold.

20 Here and there in that palace were multitudes of live swans and pigeons, as well as artificial swans and pigeons so lifelike that the real swans rose above them again and again, thinking them live birds like themselves. Thus the palace vibrated with the sounds of these birds.

21 The castle had pleasure grounds, resting chambers, bedrooms and inner and outer yards designed with an eye to comfort. All this caused astonishment to the sage himself.

22 When he saw Devahūti looking at the gigantic opulent palace with a displeased heart, Kardama Muni could understand her feelings because he could study the heart of anyone. Thus he personally addressed his wife as follows.

23 My dear Devahūti, you look very much afraid. First bathe in Lake Bindu-sarovara, created by Lord Viṣṇu Himself, which can grant all the desires of a human being, and then mount this airplane.

24 The lotus-eyed Devahūti accepted the order of her husband. Because of her dirty dress and the locks of matted hair on her head, she did not look very attractive.

25 Her body was coated with a thick layer of dirt, and her breasts were discolored. She dove,

however, into the lake, which contained the sacred waters of the Sarasvatī.

26 In a house inside the lake she saw one thousand girls, all in the prime of youth and fragrant like lotuses.

27 Seeing her, the damsels suddenly rose and said with folded hands, “We are your maidservants. Tell us what we can do for you.”

28 The girls, being very respectful to Devahūti, brought her forth, and after bathing her with valuable oils and ointments, they gave her fine, new, spotless cloth to cover her body.

29 They then decorated her with very excellent and valuable jewels, which shone brightly. Next they offered her food containing all good qualities, and a sweet inebriating drink called āsavam.

30 Then in a mirror she beheld her own reflection. Her body was completely freed from all dirt, and she was adorned with a garland. Dressed in unsullied robes and decorated with auspicious marks of tilaka, she was served very respectfully by the maids.

31 Her entire body, including her head, was completely bathed, and she was decorated all over with ornaments. She wore a special necklace with a locket. There were bangles on her wrists and tinkling anklets of gold about her ankles.

32 About her hips she wore a girdle of gold, set with numerous jewels, and she was further adorned with a precious pearl necklace and auspicious substances.

33 Her countenance shone, with beautiful teeth and charming eyebrows. Her eyes, distinguished by lovely moist corners, defeated the beauty of lotus buds. Her face was surrounded by dark curling tresses.

34 When she thought of her great husband, the best of the sages, Kardama Muni, who was very dear to her, she, along with all the maidservants, at once appeared where he was.

35 She was amazed to find herself surrounded by a thousand maids in the presence of her husband and to witness his yogic power.

36-37 The sage could see that Devahūti had washed herself clean and was shining forth as though no longer his former wife. She had regained her own original beauty as the daughter of a prince. Dressed in excellent robes, her charming breasts duly girded, she was waited upon by a thousand Gandharva girls. O destroyer of the enemy, his fondness for her grew, and he placed her on the aerial mansion.

38 Though seemingly attached to his beloved consort while served by the Gandharva girls, the sage did not lose his glory, which was mastery over his self. In the aerial mansion, Kardama Muni with his consort shone as charmingly as the moon in the midst of the stars in the sky, which causes rows of lilies to open in ponds at night.

39 In that aerial mansion he traveled to the pleasure valleys of Mount Meru, which were rendered all the more beautiful by cool, gentle, fragrant breezes that stimulated passion. In these valleys, the treasurer of the gods, Kuvera, surrounded by beautiful women and praised by the Siddhas, generally enjoys pleasure. Kardama Muni also, surrounded by the beautiful damsels and his wife, went there and enjoyed for many, many years.

40 Satisfied by his wife, he enjoyed in that aerial mansion not only on Mount Meru but in different gardens known as Vaiśrambhaka, Surasana, Nandana, Puṣpabhadra and

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Caitrarathya, and by the Mānasa-sarovara Lake.

41 He traveled in that way through the various planets, as the air passes uncontrolled in every direction. Coursing through the air in that great and splendid aerial mansion, which could fly at his will, he surpassed even the demigods.

42 What is difficult to achieve for determined men who have taken refuge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's lotus feet? His feet are the source of sacred rivers like the Ganges, which put an end to the dangers of mundane life.

43 After showing his wife the globe of the universe and its different arrangements, full of many wonders, the great yogī Kardama Muni returned to his own hermitage.

44 After coming back to his hermitage, he divided himself into nine personalities just to give pleasure to Devahūti, the daughter of Manu, who was eager for sex life. In that way he enjoyed with her for many, many years, which passed just like a moment.

45 In that aerial mansion, Devahūti, in the company of her handsome husband, situated on an excellent bed that increased sexual desires, could not realize how much time was passing.

46 While the couple, who eagerly longed for sexual pleasure, were thus enjoying themselves by virtue of mystic powers, a hundred autumns passed like a brief span of time.

47 The powerful Kardama Muni was the knower of everyone's heart, and he could grant whatever one desired. Knowing the spiritual soul, he regarded her as half of his body. Dividing himself into nine forms, he impregnated Devahūti with nine discharges of semen.

48 Immediately afterward, on the same day, Devahūti gave birth to nine female children, all charming in every limb and fragrant with the scent of the red lotus flower.

49 When she saw her husband about to leave home, she smiled externally, but at heart she was agitated and distressed.

50 She stood and scratched the ground with her foot, which was radiant with the luster of her gemlike nails. Her head bent down, she spoke in slow yet charming accents, suppressing her tears.

51 Śrī Devahūti said: My lord, you have fulfilled all the promises you gave me, yet because I am your surrendered soul, you should give me fearlessness too.

52 My dear brāhmaṇa, as far as your daughters are concerned, they will find their own suitable husbands and go away to their respective homes. But who will give me solace after your departure as a sannyāsī?

53 Until now we have simply wasted so much of our time in sense gratification, neglecting to cultivate knowledge of the Supreme Lord.

54 Not knowing your transcendental situation, I have loved you while remaining attached to the objects of the senses. Nonetheless, let the affinity I have developed for you rid me of all fear.

55 Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge.

56 Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious

ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

57 My lord, surely I have been solidly cheated by the insurmountable illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for in spite of having obtained your association, which gives liberation from material bondage, I did not seek such liberation.

SB 3.24: The Renunciation of Kardama Muni

1 Recalling the words of Lord Viṣṇu, the merciful sage Kardama replied as follows to Svāyambhuva Manu's praiseworthy daughter, Devahūti, who was speaking words full of renunciation.

2 The sage said: Do not be disappointed with yourself, O princess. You are actually praiseworthy. The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead will shortly enter your womb as your son.

3 You have undertaken sacred vows. God will bless you. Hence you should worship the Lord with great faith, through sensory control, religious observances, austerities and gifts of your money in charity.

4 The Personality of Godhead, being worshiped by you, will spread my name and fame. He will vanquish the knot of your heart by becoming your son and teaching knowledge of Brahman.

5 Śrī Maitreya said: Devahūti was fully faithful and respectful toward the direction of her husband, Kardama, who was one of the Prajāpatis, or generators of human beings in the universe. O great sage, she thus began to worship the master of the universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone's heart.

6 After many, many years, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Madhusūdana, the killer of the demon Madhu, having entered the semen of Kardama, appeared in Devahūti just as fire comes from wood in a sacrifice.

7 At the time of His descent on earth, demigods in the form of raining clouds sounded musical instruments in the sky. The celestial musicians, the Gandharvas, sang the glories of the Lord, while celestial dancing girls known as Apsarās danced in joyful ecstasy.

8 At the time of the Lord's appearance, the demigods flying freely in the sky showered flowers. All the directions, all the waters and everyone's mind became very satisfied.

9 Brahmā, the first-born living being, went along with Marīci and other sages to the place of Kardama's hermitage, which was surrounded by the river Sarasvatī.

10 Maitreya continued: O killer of the enemy, the unborn Lord Brahmā, who is almost independent in acquiring knowledge, could understand that a portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His quality of pure existence, had appeared in the womb of Devahūti just to explain the complete state of knowledge known as sāṅkhya-yoga.

11 After worshiping the Supreme Lord with gladdened senses and a pure heart for His intended activities as an incarnation, Brahmā spoke as follows to Kardama and Devahūti.

12 Lord Brahmā said: My dear son Kardama, since you have completely accepted my instructions without duplicity, showing them proper respect, you have worshiped me properly.

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Whatever instructions you took from me you have carried out, and thereby you have honored me.

13 Sons ought to render service to their father exactly to this extent. One should obey the command of his father or spiritual master with due deference, saying, “Yes, sir.”

14 Lord Brahmā then praised Kardama Muni’s nine daughters, saying: All your thin-waisted daughters are certainly very chaste. I am sure they will increase this creation by their own descendants in various ways.

15 Therefore, today please give away your daughters to the foremost of the sages, with due regard for the girls’ temperaments and likings, and thereby spread your fame all over the universe.

16 O Kardama, I know that the original Supreme Personality of Godhead has now appeared as an incarnation by His internal energy. He is the bestower of all that is desired by the living entities, and He has now assumed the body of Kapila Muni.

17 By mystic yoga and the practical application of knowledge from the scriptures, Kapila Muni, who is characterized by His golden hair, His eyes just like lotus petals and His lotus feet, which bear the marks of lotus flowers, will uproot the deep-rooted desire for work in this material world.

18 Lord Brahmā then told Devahūti: My dear daughter of Manu, the same Supreme Personality of Godhead who killed the demon Kaiṭabha is now within your womb. He will cut off all the knots of your ignorance and doubt. Then He will travel all over the world.

19 Your son will be the head of all the perfected souls. He will be approved by the ācāryas expert in disseminating real knowledge, and among the people He will be celebrated by the name Kapila. As the son of Devahūti, He will increase your fame.

20 Śrī Maitreya said: After thus speaking to Kardama Muni and his wife Devahūti, Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe, who is also known as Haṁsa, went back to the highest of the three planetary systems on his swan carrier with the four Kumāras and Nārada.

21 O Vidura, after the departure of Brahmā, Kardama Muni, having been ordered by Brahmā, handed over his nine daughters, as instructed, to the nine great sages who created the population of the world.

22-23 Kardama Muni handed over his daughter Kalā to Marīci, and another daughter, Anasūyā, to Atri. He delivered Śraddhā to Aṅgirā, and Havirbhū to Pulastya. He delivered Gati to Pulaha, the chaste Kriyā to Kratu, Khyāti to Bhṛgu, and Arundhatī to Vasiṣṭha.

24 He delivered Śānti to Atharvā. Because of Śānti, sacrificial ceremonies are well performed. Thus he got the foremost brāhmaṇas married, and he maintained them along with their wives.

25 Thus married, the sages took leave of Kardama and departed full of joy, each for his own hermitage, O Vidura.

26 When Kardama Muni understood that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the chief of all the demigods, Viṣṇu, had descended, Kardama approached Him in a secluded place, offered obeisances and spoke as follows.

27 Kardama Muni said: Oh, after a long time the demigods of this universe have become pleased with the suffering souls who are in material entanglement because of their own

misdeeds.

28 After many births, mature yogīs, by complete trance in yoga, endeavor in secluded places to see the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

29 Not considering the negligence of ordinary householders like us, that very same Supreme Personality of Godhead appears in our homes just to support His devotees.

30 Kardama Muni said: You, my dear Lord, who are always increasing the honor of Your devotees, have descended in my home just to fulfill Your word and disseminate the process of real knowledge.

31 My dear Lord, although You have no material form, You have Your own innumerable forms. They truly are Your transcendental forms, which are pleasing to Your devotees.

32 My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the reservoir that always deserves to receive worshipful homage from all great sages eager to understand the Absolute Truth. You are full in opulence, renunciation, transcendental fame, knowledge, strength and beauty, and therefore I surrender myself unto Your lotus feet.

33 I surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, descended in the form of Kapila, who is independently powerful and transcendental, who is the Supreme Person and the Lord of the sum total of matter and the element of time, who is the fully cognizant maintainer of all the universes under the three modes of material nature, and who absorbs the material manifestations after their dissolution.

34 Today I have something to ask from You, who are the Lord of all living entities. Since I have now been liberated by You from my debts to my father, and since all my desires are fulfilled, I wish to accept the order of an itinerant mendicant. Renouncing this family life, I wish to wander about, free from lamentation, thinking always of You in my heart.

35 The Personality of Godhead Kapila said: Whatever I speak, whether directly or in the scriptures, is authoritative in all respects for the people of the world. O Muni, because I told you before that I would become your son, I have descended to fulfill this truth.

36 My appearance in this world is especially to explain the philosophy of Sāṅkhya, which is highly esteemed for self-realization by those desiring freedom from the entanglement of unnecessary material desires.

37 This path of self-realization, which is difficult to understand, has now been lost in the course of time. Please know that I have assumed this body of Kapila to introduce and explain this philosophy to human society again.

38 Now, being sanctioned by Me, go as you desire, surrendering all your activities to Me. Conquering insurmountable death, worship Me for eternal life.

39 In your own heart, through your intellect, you will always see Me, the supreme self-effulgent soul dwelling within the hearts of all living entities. Thus you will achieve the state of eternal life, free from all lamentation and fear.

40 I shall also describe this sublime knowledge, which is the door to spiritual life, to My mother, so that she also can attain perfection and self-realization, ending all reactions to fruitive activities. Thus she also will be freed from all material fear.

41 Śrī Maitreya said: Thus when Kardama Muni, the progenitor of human society, was spoken

to in fullness by his son, Kapila, he circumambulated Him, and with a good, pacified mind he at once left for the forest.

42 The sage Kardama accepted silence as a vow in order to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and take shelter of Him exclusively. Without association, he traveled over the surface of the globe as a sannyāsī, devoid of any relationship with fire or shelter.

43 He fixed his mind upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Parabrahman, who is beyond cause and effect, who manifests the three modes of material nature, who is beyond those three modes, and who is perceived only through unflinching devotional service.

44 Thus he gradually became unaffected by the false ego of material identity and became free from material affection. Undisturbed, equal to everyone and without duality, he could indeed see himself also. His mind was turned inward and was perfectly calm, like an ocean unagitated by waves.

45 He thus became liberated from conditioned life and became self-situated in transcendental devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, the omniscient Supersoul within everyone.

46 He began to see that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is seated in everyone's heart, and that everyone is existing on Him, because He is the Supersoul of everyone.

47 Freed from all hatred and desire, Kardama Muni, being equal to everyone because of discharging uncontaminated devotional service, ultimately attained the path back to Godhead.

SB 3.25: The Glories of Devotional Service

1 Śrī Śaunaka said: Although He is unborn, the Supreme Personality of Godhead took birth as Kapila Muni by His internal potency. He descended to disseminate transcendental knowledge for the benefit of the whole human race.

2 Śaunaka continued: There is no one who knows more than the Lord Himself. No one is more worshipable or more mature a yogī than He. He is therefore the master of the Vedas, and to hear about Him always is the actual pleasure of the senses.

3 Therefore please precisely describe all the activities and pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, who is full of self-desire and who assumes all these activities by His internal potency.

4 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: The most powerful sage Maitreya was a friend of Vyāsadeva. Being encouraged and pleased by Vidura's inquiry about transcendental knowledge, Maitreya spoke as follows.

5 Maitreya said: When Kardama left for the forest, Lord Kapila stayed on the strand of the Bindu-sarovara to please His mother, Devahūti.

6 When Kapila, who could show her the ultimate goal of the Absolute Truth, was sitting leisurely before her, Devahūti remembered the words Brahmā had spoken to her, and she therefore began to question Kapila as follows.

7 Devahūti said: I am very sick of the disturbance caused by my material senses, for because of this sense disturbance, my Lord, I have fallen into the abyss of ignorance.

8 Your Lordship is my only means of getting out of this darkest region of ignorance because

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You are my transcendental eye, which, by Your mercy only, I have attained after many, many births.

9 You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the origin and Supreme Lord of all living entities. You have arisen to disseminate the rays of the sun in order to dissipate the darkness of the ignorance of the universe.

10 Now be pleased, my Lord, to dispel my great delusion. Due to my feeling of false ego, I have been engaged by Your *māyā* and have identified myself with the body and consequent bodily relations.

11 Devahūti continued: I have taken shelter of Your lotus feet because You are the only person of whom to take shelter. You are the ax which can cut the tree of material existence. I therefore offer my obeisances unto You, who are the greatest of all transcendentalists, and I inquire from You as to the relationship between man and woman and between spirit and matter.

12 Maitreya said: After hearing of His mother's uncontaminated desire for transcendental realization, the Lord thanked her within Himself for her questions, and thus, His face smiling, He explained the path of the transcendentalists, who are interested in self-realization.

13 The Personality of Godhead answered: The yoga system which relates to the Lord and the individual soul, which is meant for the ultimate benefit of the living entity, and which causes detachment from all happiness and distress in the material world, is the highest yoga system.

14 O most pious mother, I shall now explain unto you the ancient yoga system, which I explained formerly to the great sages. It is serviceable and practical in every way.

15 The stage in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted by the three modes of material nature is called conditional life. But when that same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.

16 When one is completely cleansed of the impurities of lust and greed produced from the false identification of the body as "I" and bodily possessions as "mine," one's mind becomes purified. In that pure state he transcends the stage of so-called material happiness and distress.

17 At that time the soul can see himself to be transcendental to material existence and always self-effulgent, never fragmented, although very minute in size.

18 In that position of self-realization, by practice of knowledge and renunciation in devotional service, one sees everything in the right perspective; he becomes indifferent to material existence, and the material influence acts less powerfully upon him.

19 Perfection in self-realization cannot be attained by any kind of *yogī* unless he engages in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that is the only auspicious path.

20 Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.

21 The symptoms of a *sādhū* are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.

22 Such a *sādhū* engages in staunch devotional service to the Lord without deviation. For the

sake of the Lord he renounces all other connections, such as family relationships and friendly acquaintances within the world.

23 Engaged constantly in chanting and hearing about Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the sādhus do not suffer from material miseries because they are always filled with thoughts of My pastimes and activities.

24 O My mother, O virtuous lady, these are the qualities of great devotees who are free from all attachment. You must seek attachment to such holy men, for this counteracts the pernicious effects of material attachment.

25 In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.

26 Thus consciously engaged in devotional service in the association of devotees, a person gains distaste for sense gratification, both in this world and in the next, by constantly thinking about the activities of the Lord. This process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the easiest process of mystic power; when one is actually situated on that path of devotional service, he is able to control the mind.

27 Thus by not engaging in the service of the modes of material nature but by developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, knowledge in renunciation, and by practicing yoga, in which the mind is always fixed in devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one achieves My association in this very life, for I am the Supreme Personality, the Absolute Truth.

28 On hearing this statement of the Lord, Devahūti inquired: What kind of devotional service is worth developing and practicing to help me easily and immediately attain the service of Your lotus feet?

29 The mystic yoga system, as You have explained, aims at the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is meant for completely ending material existence. Please let me know the nature of that yoga system. How many ways are there by which one can understand in truth that sublime yoga?

30 My dear son, Kapila, after all, I am a woman. It is very difficult for me to understand the Absolute Truth because my intelligence is not very great. But if You will kindly explain it to me, even though I am not very intelligent, I can understand it and thereby feel transcendental happiness.

31 Śrī Maitreya said: After hearing the statement of His mother, Kapila could understand her purpose, and He became compassionate towards her because of being born of her body. He described the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy, which is a combination of devotional service and mystic realization, as received by disciplic succession.

32 Lord Kapila said: The senses are symbolic representations of the demigods, and their natural inclination is to work under the direction of the Vedic injunctions. As the senses are representatives of the demigods, so the mind is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The mind's natural duty is to serve. When that service spirit is engaged in devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, without any motive, that is far better even than salvation.

33 Bhakti, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate

effort, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat.

34 A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities.

35 O My mother, My devotees always see the smiling face of My form, with eyes like the rising morning sun. They like to see My various transcendental forms, which are all benevolent, and they also talk favorably with Me.

36 Upon seeing the charming forms of the Lord, smiling and attractive, and hearing His very pleasing words, the pure devotee almost loses all other consciousness. His senses are freed from all other engagements, and he becomes absorbed in devotional service. Thus in spite of his unwillingness, he attains liberation without separate endeavor.

37 Thus because he is completely absorbed in thought of Me, the devotee does not desire even the highest benediction obtainable in the upper planetary systems, including Satyaloka. He does not desire the eight material perfections obtained from mystic yoga, nor does he desire to be elevated to the kingdom of God. Yet even without desiring them, the devotee enjoys, even in this life, all the offered benedictions.

38 The Lord continued: My dear mother, devotees who receive such transcendental opulences are never bereft of them; neither weapons nor the change of time can destroy such opulences. Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their relative, their son, preceptor, benefactor and Supreme Deity, they cannot be deprived of their possessions at any time.

39-40 Thus the devotee who worships Me, the all-pervading Lord of the universe, in unflinching devotional service, gives up all aspirations to be promoted to heavenly planets or to become happy in this world with wealth, children, cattle, home or anything in relationship with the body. I take him to the other side of birth and death.

41 The terrible fear of birth and death can never be forsaken by anyone who resorts to any shelter other than Myself, for I am the almighty Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original source of all creation, and also the Supreme Soul of all souls.

42 It is because of My supremacy that the wind blows, out of fear of Me; the sun shines out of fear of Me, and the lord of the clouds, Indra, sends forth showers out of fear of Me. Fire burns out of fear of Me, and death goes about taking its toll out of fear of Me.

43 The yogīs, equipped with transcendental knowledge and renunciation and engaged in devotional service for their eternal benefit, take shelter of My lotus feet, and since I am the Lord, they are thus eligible to enter into the kingdom of Godhead without fear.

44 Therefore persons whose minds are fixed on the Lord engage in the intensive practice of devotional service. That is the only means for attainment of the final perfection of life.

SB 3.26: Fundamental Principles of Material Nature

1 The Personality of Godhead, Kapila, continued: My dear mother, now I shall describe unto you the different categories of the Absolute Truth, knowing which any person can be released from the influence of the modes of material nature.

2 Knowledge is the ultimate perfection of self-realization. I shall explain that knowledge unto

you by which the knots of attachment to the material world are cut.

3 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supreme Soul, and He has no beginning. He is transcendental to the material modes of nature and beyond the existence of this material world. He is perceivable everywhere because He is self-effulgent, and by His self-effulgent luster the entire creation is maintained.

4 As His pastime, that Supreme Personality of Godhead, the greatest of the great, accepted the subtle material energy, which is invested with three material modes of nature and which is related with Viṣṇu.

5 Divided into varieties by her threefold modes, material nature creates the forms of the living entities, and the living entities, seeing this, are illusioned by the knowledge-covering feature of the illusory energy.

6 Because of his forgetfulness, the transcendental living entity accepts the influence of material energy as his field of activities, and thus actuated, he wrongly applies the activities to himself.

7 Material consciousness is the cause of one's conditional life, in which conditions are enforced upon the living entity by the material energy. Although the spirit soul does not do anything and is transcendental to such activities, he is thus affected by conditional life.

8 The cause of the conditioned soul's material body and senses, and the senses' presiding deities, the demigods, is the material nature. This is understood by learned men. The feelings of happiness and distress of the soul, who is transcendental by nature, are caused by the spirit soul himself.

9 Devahūti said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, kindly explain the characteristics of the Supreme Person and His energies, for both of these are the causes of this manifest and unmanifest creation.

10 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The unmanifested eternal combination of the three modes is the cause of the manifest state and is called pradhāna. It is called prakṛti when in the manifested stage of existence.

11 The aggregate elements, namely the five gross elements, the five subtle elements, the four internal senses, the five senses for gathering knowledge and the five outward organs of action, are known as the pradhāna.

12 There are five gross elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether. There are also five subtle elements: smell, taste, color, touch and sound.

13 The senses for acquiring knowledge and the organs for action number ten, namely the auditory sense, the sense of taste, the tactile sense, the sense of sight, the sense of smell, and the active organs for speaking, working, traveling, generating and evacuating.

14 The internal, subtle senses are experienced as having four aspects, in the shape of mind, intelligence, ego and contaminated consciousness. Distinctions between them can be made only by different functions, since they represent different characteristics.

15 All these are considered the qualified Brahman. The mixing element, which is known as time, is counted as the twenty-fifth element.

16 The influence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is felt in the time factor, which causes fear of death due to the false ego of the deluded soul who has contacted material

nature.

17 My dear mother, O daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu, the time factor, as I have explained, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whom the creation begins as a result of the agitation of the neutral, unmanifested nature.

18 By exhibiting His potencies, the Supreme Personality of Godhead adjusts all these different elements, keeping Himself within as the Supersoul and without as time.

19 After the Supreme Personality of Godhead impregnates material nature with His internal potency, material nature delivers the sum total of the cosmic intelligence, which is known as Hiraṇmaya. This takes place in material nature when she is agitated by the destinations of the conditioned souls.

20 Thus, after manifesting variegatedness, the effulgent mahat-tattva, which contains all the universes within itself, which is the root of all cosmic manifestations and which is not destroyed at the time of annihilation, swallows the darkness that covered the effulgence at the time of dissolution.

21 The mode of goodness, which is the clear, sober status of understanding the Personality of Godhead and which is generally called vāsudeva, or consciousness, becomes manifest in the mahat-tattva.

22 After the manifestation of the mahat-tattva, these features appear simultaneously. As water in its natural state, before coming in contact with earth, is clear, sweet and unruffled, so the characteristic traits of pure consciousness are complete serenity, clarity, and freedom from distraction.

23-24 The material ego springs up from the mahat-tattva, which evolved from the Lord's own energy. The material ego is endowed predominantly with active power of three kinds: good, passionate and ignorant. It is from these three types of material ego that the mind, the senses of perception, the organs of action, and the gross elements evolve.

25 The threefold ahaṅkāra, the source of the gross elements, the senses and the mind, is identical with them because it is their cause. It is known by the name of Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is directly Lord Ananta with a thousand heads.

26 This false ego is characterized as the doer, as an instrument and as an effect. It is further characterized as serene, active or dull according to how it is influenced by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance.

27 From the false ego of goodness, another transformation takes place. From this evolves the mind, whose thoughts and reflections give rise to desire.

28 The mind of the living entity is known by the name of Lord Aniruddha, the supreme ruler of the senses. He possesses a bluish-black form resembling a lotus flower growing in the autumn. He is found slowly by the yogīs.

29 By transformation of the false ego in passion, intelligence takes birth, O virtuous lady. The functions of intelligence are to help in ascertaining the nature of objects when they come into view, and to help the senses.

30 Doubt, misapprehension, correct apprehension, memory and sleep, as determined by their different functions, are said to be the distinct characteristics of intelligence.

31 Egoism in the mode of passion produces two kinds of senses: the senses for acquiring knowledge and the senses of action. The senses of action depend on the vital energy, and the senses for acquiring knowledge depend on intelligence.

32 When egoism in ignorance is agitated by the sex energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the subtle element sound is manifested, and from sound come the ethereal sky and the sense of hearing.

33 Persons who are learned and who have true knowledge define sound as that which conveys the idea of an object, indicates the presence of a speaker screened from our view and constitutes the subtle form of ether.

34 The activities and characteristics of the ethereal element can be observed as the accommodation of room for the external and internal existences of all living entities, namely the field of activities of the vital air, the senses and the mind.

35 From ethereal existence, which evolves from sound, the next transformation takes place under the impulse of time, and thus the subtle element touch and thence the air and sense of touch become prominent.

36 Softness and hardness and cold and heat are the distinguishing attributes of touch, which is characterized as the subtle form of air.

37 The action of the air is exhibited in movements, mixing, allowing approach to the objects of sound and other sense perceptions, and providing for the proper functioning of all other senses.

38 By interactions of the air and the sensations of touch, one receives different forms according to destiny. By evolution of such forms, there is fire, and the eye sees different forms in color.

39 My dear mother, the characteristics of form are understood by dimension, quality and individuality. The form of fire is appreciated by its effulgence.

40 Fire is appreciated by its light and by its ability to cook, to digest, to destroy cold, to evaporate, and to give rise to hunger, thirst, eating and drinking.

41 By the interaction of fire and the visual sensation, the subtle element taste evolves under a superior arrangement. From taste, water is produced, and the tongue, which perceives taste, is also manifested.

42 Although originally one, taste becomes manifold as astringent, sweet, bitter, pungent, sour and salty due to contact with other substances.

43 The characteristics of water are exhibited by its moistening other substances, coagulating various mixtures, causing satisfaction, maintaining life, softening things, driving away heat, incessantly supplying itself to reservoirs of water, and refreshing by slaking thirst.

44 Due to the interaction of water with the taste perception, the subtle element odor evolves under superior arrangement. Thence the earth and the olfactory sense, by which we can variously experience the aroma of the earth, become manifest.

45 Odor, although one, becomes many as mixed, offensive, fragrant, mild, strong, acidic and so on according to the proportions of associated substances.

46 The characteristics of the functions of earth can be perceived by modeling forms of the

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Supreme Brahman, by constructing places of residence, by preparing pots to contain water, etc. In other words, the earth is the place of sustenance for all elements.

47 The sense whose object of perception is sound is called the auditory sense, and that whose object of perception is touch is called the tactile sense.

48 The sense whose object of perception is form, the distinctive characteristic of fire, is the sense of sight. The sense whose object of perception is taste, the distinctive characteristic of water, is known as the sense of taste. Finally, the sense whose object of perception is odor, the distinctive characteristic of earth, is called the sense of smell.

49 Since the cause exists in its effect as well, the characteristics of the former are observed in the latter. That is why the peculiarities of all the elements exist in the earth alone.

50 When all these elements were unmixed, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the origin of creation, along with time, work, and the qualities of the modes of material nature, entered into the universe with the total material energy in seven divisions.

51 From these seven principles, roused into activity and united by the presence of the Lord, an unintelligent egg arose, from which appeared the celebrated Cosmic Being.

52 This universal egg, or the universe in the shape of an egg, is called the manifestation of material energy. Its layers of water, air, fire, sky, ego and mahat-tattva increase in thickness one after another. Each layer is ten times bigger than the previous one, and the final outside layer is covered by pradhāna. Within this egg is the universal form of Lord Hari, of whose body the fourteen planetary systems are parts.

53 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the virāṭ-puruṣa, situated Himself in that golden egg, which was lying on the water, and He divided it into many departments.

54 First of all a mouth appeared in Him, and then came forth the organ of speech, and with it the god of fire, the deity who presides over that organ. Then a pair of nostrils appeared, and in them appeared the olfactory sense, as well as prāṇa, the vital air.

55 In the wake of the olfactory sense came the wind-god, who presides over that sense. Thereafter a pair of eyes appeared in the universal form, and in them the sense of sight. In the wake of this sense came the sun-god, who presides over it. Next there appeared in Him a pair of ears, and in them the auditory sense and in its wake the Dig-devatās, or the deities who preside over the directions.

56 Then the universal form of the Lord, the virāṭ-puruṣa, manifested His skin, and thereupon the hair, mustache and beard appeared. After this all the herbs and drugs became manifested, and then His genitals also appeared.

57 After this, semen (the faculty of procreation) and the god who presides over the waters appeared. Next appeared an anus and then the organs of defecation and thereupon the god of death, who is feared throughout the universe.

58 Thereafter the two hands of the universal form of the Lord became manifested, and with them the power of grasping and dropping things, and after that Lord Indra appeared. Next the legs became manifested, and with them the process of movement, and after that Lord Viṣṇu appeared.

59 The veins of the universal body became manifested and thereafter the red corpuscles, or blood. In their wake came the rivers (the deities presiding over the veins), and then appeared

an abdomen.

60 Next grew feelings of hunger and thirst, and in their wake came the manifestation of the oceans. Then a heart became manifest, and in the wake of the heart the mind appeared.

61 After the mind, the moon appeared. Intelligence appeared next, and after intelligence, Lord Brahmā appeared. Then the false ego appeared and then Lord Śiva, and after the appearance of Lord Śiva came consciousness and the deity presiding over consciousness.

62 When the demigods and presiding deities of the various senses were thus manifested, they wanted to wake their origin of appearance. But upon failing to do so, they reentered the body of the virāṭ-puruṣa one after another in order to wake Him.

63 The god of fire entered His mouth with the organ of speech, but the virāṭ-puruṣa could not be aroused. Then the god of wind entered His nostrils with the sense of smell, but still the virāṭ-puruṣa refused to be awakened.

64 The sun-god entered the eyes of the virāṭ-puruṣa with the sense of sight, but still the virāṭ-puruṣa did not get up. Similarly, the predominating deities of the directions entered through His ears with the sense of hearing, but still He did not get up.

65 The predominating deities of the skin, herbs and seasoning plants entered the skin of the virāṭ-puruṣa with the hair of the body, but the Cosmic Being refused to get up even then. The god predominating over water entered His organ of generation with the faculty of procreation, but the virāṭ-puruṣa still would not rise.

66 The god of death entered His anus with the organ of defecation, but the virāṭ-puruṣa could not be spurred to activity. The god Indra entered the hands with their power of grasping and dropping things, but the virāṭ-puruṣa would not get up even then.

67 Lord Viṣṇu entered His feet with the faculty of locomotion, but the virāṭ-puruṣa refused to stand up even then. The rivers entered His blood vessels with the blood and the power of circulation, but still the Cosmic Being could not be made to stir.

68 The ocean entered His abdomen with hunger and thirst, but the Cosmic Being refused to rise even then. The moon-god entered His heart with the mind, but the Cosmic Being would not be roused.

69 Brahmā also entered His heart with intelligence, but even then the Cosmic Being could not be prevailed upon to get up. Lord Rudra also entered His heart with the ego, but even then the Cosmic Being did not stir.

70 However, when the inner controller, the deity presiding over consciousness, entered the heart with reason, at that very moment the Cosmic Being arose from the causal waters.

71 When a man is sleeping, all his material assets—namely the vital energy, the senses for recording knowledge, the senses for working, the mind and the intelligence—cannot arouse him. He can be aroused only when the Supersoul helps him.

72 Therefore, through devotion, detachment and advancement in spiritual knowledge acquired through concentrated devotional service, one should contemplate that Supersoul as present in this very body although simultaneously apart from it.

SB 3.27: Understanding Material Nature

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- 1 The Personality of Godhead Kapila continued: When the living entity is thus unaffected by the modes of material nature, because he is unchanging and does not claim proprietorship, he remains apart from the reactions of the modes, although abiding in a material body, just as the sun remains aloof from its reflection on water.
- 2 When the soul is under the spell of material nature and false ego, identifying his body as the self, he becomes absorbed in material activities, and by the influence of false ego he thinks that he is the proprietor of everything.
- 3 The conditioned soul therefore transmigrates into different species of life, higher and lower, because of his association with the modes of material nature. Unless he is relieved of material activities, he has to accept this position because of his faulty work.
- 4 Actually a living entity is transcendental to material existence, but because of his mentality of lording it over material nature, his material existential condition does not cease, and just as in a dream, he is affected by all sorts of disadvantages.
- 5 It is the duty of every conditioned soul to engage his polluted consciousness, which is now attached to material enjoyment, in very serious devotional service with detachment. Thus his mind and consciousness will be under full control.
- 6 One has to become faithful by practicing the controlling process of the yoga system and must elevate himself to the platform of unalloyed devotional service by chanting and hearing about Me.
- 7 In executing devotional service, one has to see every living entity equally, without enmity towards anyone yet without intimate connections with anyone. One has to observe celibacy, be grave and execute his eternal activities, offering the results to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- 8 For his income a devotee should be satisfied with what he earns without great difficulty. He should not eat more than what is necessary. He should live in a secluded place and always be thoughtful, peaceful, friendly, compassionate and self-realized.
- 9 One's seeing power should be increased through knowledge of spirit and matter, and one should not unnecessarily identify himself with the body and thus become attracted by bodily relationships.
- 10 One should be situated in the transcendental position, beyond the stages of material consciousness, and should be aloof from all other conceptions of life. Thus realizing freedom from false ego, one should see his own self just as he sees the sun in the sky.
- 11 A liberated soul realizes the Absolute Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental and who is manifest as a reflection even in the false ego. He is the support of the material cause and He enters into everything. He is absolute, one without a second, and He is the eyes of the illusory energy.
- 12 The presence of the Supreme Lord can be realized just as the sun is realized first as a reflection on water, and again as a second reflection on the wall of a room, although the sun itself is situated in the sky.
- 13 The self-realized soul is thus reflected first in the threefold ego and then in the body, senses and mind.
- 14 Although a devotee appears to be merged in the five material elements, the objects of

material enjoyment, the material senses and material mind and intelligence, he is understood to be awake and to be freed from the false ego.

15 The living entity can vividly feel his existence as the seer, but because of the disappearance of the ego during the state of deep sleep, he falsely takes himself to be lost, like a man who has lost his fortune and feels distressed, thinking himself to be lost.

16 When, by mature understanding, one can realize his individuality, then the situation he accepts under false ego becomes manifest to him.

17 Śrī Devahūti inquired: My dear brāhmaṇa, does material nature ever give release to the spirit soul? Since one is attracted to the other eternally, how is their separation possible?

18 As there is no separate existence of the earth and its aroma or of water and its taste, there cannot be any separate existence of intelligence and consciousness.

19 Hence even though he is the passive performer of all activities, how can there be freedom for the soul as long as material nature acts on him and binds him?

20 Even if the great fear of bondage is avoided by mental speculation and inquiry into the fundamental principles, it may still appear again, since its cause has not ceased.

21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One can get liberation by seriously discharging devotional service unto Me and thereby hearing for a long time about Me or from Me. By thus executing one's prescribed duties, there will be no reaction, and one will be freed from the contamination of matter.

22 This devotional service has to be performed strongly in perfect knowledge and with transcendental vision. One must be strongly renounced and must engage in austerity and perform mystic yoga in order to be firmly fixed in self-absorption.

23 The influence of material nature has covered the living entity, and thus it is as if the living entity were always in a blazing fire. But by the process of seriously discharging devotional service, this influence can be removed, just as wooden sticks which cause a fire are themselves consumed by it.

24 By discovering the faultiness of his desiring to lord it over material nature and by therefore giving it up, the living entity becomes independent and stands in his own glory.

25 In the dreaming state one's consciousness is almost covered, and one sees many inauspicious things, but when he is awakened and fully conscious, such inauspicious things cannot bewilder him.

26 The influence of material nature cannot harm an enlightened soul, even though he engages in material activities, because he knows the truth of the Absolute, and his mind is fixed on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

27 When a person thus engages in devotional service and self-realization for many, many years and births, he becomes completely reluctant to enjoy any one of the material planets, even up to the highest planet, which is known as Brahmaloḳa; he becomes fully developed in consciousness.

28-29 My devotee actually becomes self-realized by My unlimited causeless mercy, and thus, when freed from all doubts, he steadily progresses towards his destined abode, which is directly under the protection of My spiritual energy of unadulterated bliss. That is the ultimate

perfectional goal of the living entity. After giving up the present material body, the mystic devotee goes to that transcendental abode and never comes back.

30 When a perfect yogī's attention is no longer attracted to the by-products of mystic powers, which are manifestations of the external energy, his progress towards Me becomes unlimited, and thus the power of death cannot overcome him.

SB 3.28: Kapila's Instructions on the Execution of Devotional Service

1 The Personality of Godhead said: My dear mother, O daughter of the King, now I shall explain to you the system of yoga, the object of which is to concentrate the mind. By practicing this system one can become joyful and progressively advance towards the path of the Absolute Truth.

2 One should execute his prescribed duties to the best of his ability and avoid performing duties not allotted to him. One should be satisfied with as much gain as he achieves by the grace of the Lord, and one should worship the lotus feet of a spiritual master.

3 One should cease performing conventional religious practices and should be attracted to those which lead to salvation. One should eat very frugally and should always remain secluded so that he can achieve the highest perfection of life.

4 One should practice nonviolence and truthfulness, should avoid thieving and be satisfied with possessing as much as he needs for his maintenance. He should abstain from sex life, perform austerity, be clean, study the Vedas and worship the supreme form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

5 One must observe silence, acquire steadiness by practicing different yogic postures, control the breathing of the vital air, withdraw the senses from sense objects and thus concentrate the mind on the heart.

6 Fixing the vital air and the mind in one of the six circles of vital air circulation within the body, thus concentrating one's mind on the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is called samādhi, or samādhāna, of the mind.

7 By these processes, or any other true process, one must control the contaminated, unbridled mind, which is always attracted by material enjoyment, and thus fix himself in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

8 After controlling one's mind and sitting postures, one should spread a seat in a secluded and sanctified place, sit there in an easy posture, keeping the body erect, and practice breath control.

9 The yogī should clear the passage of vital air by breathing in the following manner: first he should inhale very deeply, then hold the breath in, and finally exhale. Or, reversing the process, the yogi can first exhale, then hold the breath outside, and finally inhale. This is done so that the mind may become steady and free from external disturbances.

10 The yogīs who practice such breathing exercises are very soon freed from all mental disturbances, just as gold, when put into fire and fanned with air, becomes free from all impurities.

11 By practicing the process of prāṇāyāma, one can eradicate the contamination of his physiological condition, and by concentrating the mind one can become free from all sinful activities. By restraining the senses one can free himself from material association, and by

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meditating on the Supreme Personality of Godhead one can become free from the three modes of material attachment.

12 When the mind is perfectly purified by this practice of yoga, one should concentrate on the tip of the nose with half-closed eyes and see the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

13 The Supreme Personality of Godhead has a cheerful, lotuslike countenance with ruddy eyes like the interior of a lotus, and a swarthy body like the petals of a blue lotus. He bears a conch, discus and mace in three of His hands.

14 His loins are covered by a shining cloth, yellowish like the filaments of a lotus. On His breast He bears the mark of Śrīvatsa, a curl of white hair. The brilliant Kaustubha gem is suspended from His neck.

15 He also wears around His neck a garland of attractive sylvan flowers, and a swarm of bees, intoxicated by its delicious fragrance, hums about the garland. He is further superbly adorned with a pearl necklace, a crown and pairs of armlets, bracelets and anklets.

16 His loins and hips encircled by a girdle, He stands on the lotus of His devotee's heart. He is most charming to look at, and His serene aspect gladdens the eyes and souls of the devotees who behold Him.

17 The Lord is eternally very beautiful, and He is worshipable by all the inhabitants of every planet. He is ever youthful and always eager to bestow His blessing upon His devotees.

18 The glory of the Lord is always worth singing, for His glories enhance the glories of His devotees. One should therefore meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead and upon His devotees. One should meditate on the eternal form of the Lord until the mind becomes fixed.

19 Thus always merged in devotional service, the yogī visualizes the Lord standing, moving, lying down or sitting within him, for the pastimes of the Supreme Lord are always beautiful and attractive.

20 In fixing his mind on the eternal form of the Lord, the yogī should not take a collective view of all His limbs, but should fix the mind on each individual limb of the Lord.

21 The devotee should first concentrate his mind on the Lord's lotus feet, which are adorned with the marks of a thunderbolt, a goad, a banner and a lotus. The splendor of their beautiful ruby nails resembles the orb of the moon and dispels the thick gloom of one's heart.

22 The blessed Lord Śiva becomes all the more blessed by bearing on his head the holy waters of the Ganges, which has its source in the water that washed the Lord's lotus feet. The Lord's feet act like thunderbolts hurled to shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. One should therefore meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord for a long time.

23 The yogī should fix in his heart the activities of Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, who is worshiped by all demigods and is the mother of the supreme person, Brahmā. She can always be found massaging the legs and thighs of the transcendental Lord, very carefully serving Him in this way.

24 Next, the yogi should fix his mind in meditation on the Personality of Godhead's thighs, the storehouse of all energy. The Lord's thighs are whitish blue, like the luster of the linseed flower, and appear most graceful when the Lord is carried on the shoulders of Garuḍa. Also the yogī should contemplate His rounded hips, which are encircled by a girdle that rests on the

exquisite yellow silk cloth that extends down to His ankles.

25 The yogī should then meditate on His moonlike navel in the center of His abdomen. From His navel, which is the foundation of the entire universe, sprang the lotus stem containing all the different planetary systems. The lotus is the residence of Brahmā, the first created being. In the same way, the yogī should concentrate his mind on the Lord's nipples, which resemble a pair of most exquisite emeralds and which appear whitish because of the rays of the milk-white pearl necklaces adorning His chest.

26 The yogī should then meditate on the chest of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the abode of goddess Mahā-Lakṣmī. The Lord's chest is the source of all transcendental pleasure for the mind and full satisfaction for the eyes. The yogī should then imprint on his mind the neck of the Personality of Godhead, who is adored by the entire universe. The neck of the Lord serves to enhance the beauty of the Kaustubha gem, which hangs on His chest.

27 The yogī should further meditate upon the Lord's four arms, which are the source of all the powers of the demigods who control the various functions of material nature. Then the yogi should concentrate on the polished ornaments, which were burnished by Mount Mandara as it revolved. He should also duly contemplate the Lord's discus, the Sudarśana cakra, which contains one thousand spokes and a dazzling luster, as well as the conch, which looks like a swan in His lotuslike palm.

28 The yogī should meditate upon His club, which is named Kaumodakī and is very dear to Him. This club smashes the demons, who are always inimical soldiers, and is smeared with their blood. One should also concentrate on the nice garland on the neck of the Lord, which is always surrounded by bumblebees, with their nice buzzing sound, and one should meditate upon the pearl necklace on the Lord's neck, which is considered to represent the pure living entities who are always engaged in His service.

29 The yogī should then meditate on the lotuslike countenance of the Lord, who presents His different forms in this world out of compassion for the anxious devotees. His nose is prominent, and His crystal-clear cheeks are illuminated by the oscillation of His glittering alligator-shaped earrings.

30 The yogi then meditates upon the beautiful face of the Lord, which is adorned with curly hair and decorated by lotuslike eyes and dancing eyebrows. A lotus surrounded by swarming bees and a pair of swimming fish would be put to shame by its elegance.

31 The yogīs should contemplate with full devotion the compassionate glances frequently cast by the Lord's eyes, for they soothe the most fearful threefold agonies of His devotees. His glances, accompanied by loving smiles, are full of abundant grace.

32 A yogī should similarly meditate on the most benevolent smile of Lord Śrī Hari, a smile which, for all those who bow to Him, dries away the ocean of tears caused by intense grief. The yogī should also meditate on the Lord's arched eyebrows, which are manifested by His internal potency in order to charm the sex-god for the good of the sages.

33 With devotion steeped in love and affection, the yogī should meditate within the core of his heart upon the laughter of Lord Viṣṇu. The laughter of Viṣṇu is so captivating that it can be easily meditated upon. When the Supreme Lord is laughing, one can see His small teeth, which resemble jasmine buds rendered rosy by the splendor of His lips. Once devoting his mind to this, the yogī should no longer desire to see anything else.

34 By following this course, the yogī gradually develops pure love for the Supreme Personality

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of Godhead, Hari. In the course of his progress in devotional service, the hairs on his body stand erect through excessive joy, and he is constantly bathed in a stream of tears occasioned by intense love. Gradually, even the mind, which he used as a means to attract the Lord, as one attracts a fish to a hook, withdraws from material activity.

35 When the mind is thus completely freed from all material contamination and detached from material objectives, it is just like the flame of a lamp. At that time the mind is actually dovetailed with that of the Supreme Lord and is experienced as one with Him because it is freed from the interactive flow of the material qualities.

36 Thus situated in the highest transcendental stage, the mind ceases from all material reaction and becomes situated in its own glory, transcendental to all material conceptions of happiness and distress. At that time the yogī realizes the truth of his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He discovers that pleasure and pain as well as their interactions, which he attributed to his own self, are actually due to the false ego, which is a product of ignorance.

37 Because he has achieved his real identity, the perfectly realized soul has no conception of how the material body is moving or acting, just as an intoxicated person cannot understand whether or not he has clothing on his body.

38 The body of such a liberated yogī, along with the senses, is taken charge of by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it functions until its destined activities are finished. The liberated devotee, being awake to his constitutional position and thus situated in samādhī, the highest perfectional stage of yoga, does not accept the by-products of the material body as his own. Thus he considers his bodily activities to be like the activities of a body in a dream.

39 Because of great affection for family and wealth, one accepts a son and some money as his own, and due to affection for the material body, one thinks that it is his. But actually, as one can understand that his family and wealth are different from him, the liberated soul can understand that he and his body are not the same.

40 The blazing fire is different from the flames, from the sparks and from the smoke, although all are intimately connected because they are born from the same blazing wood.

41 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Parambrahma, is the seer. He is different from the jīva soul, or individual living entity, who is combined with the senses, the five elements and consciousness.

42 A yogi should see the same soul in all manifestations, for all that exists is a manifestation of different energies of the Supreme. In this way the devotee should see all living entities without distinction. That is realization of the Supreme Soul.

43 As fire is exhibited in different forms of wood, so, under different conditions of the modes of material nature, the pure spirit soul manifests itself in different bodies.

44 Thus the yogī can be in the self-realized position after conquering the insurmountable spell of māyā, who presents herself as both the cause and effect of this material manifestation and is therefore very difficult to understand.

SB 3.29: Explanation of Devotional Service by Lord Kapila

1-2 Devahūti inquired: My dear Lord, You have already very scientifically described the symptoms of the total material nature and the characteristics of the spirit according to the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy. Now I shall request You to explain the path of devotional

service, which is the ultimate end of all philosophical systems.

3 Devahūti continued: My dear Lord, please also describe in detail, both for me and for people in general, the continual process of birth and death, for by hearing of such calamities we may become detached from the activities of this material world.

4 Please also describe eternal time, which is a representation of Your form and by whose influence people in general engage in the performance of pious activities.

5 My dear Lord, You are just like the sun, for You illuminate the darkness of the conditional life of the living entities. Because their eyes of knowledge are not open, they are sleeping eternally in that darkness without Your shelter, and therefore they are falsely engaged by the actions and reactions of their material activities, and they appear to be very fatigued.

6 Śrī Maitreya said: O best amongst the Kurus, the great sage Kapila, moved by great compassion and pleased by the words of His glorious mother, spoke as follows.

7 Lord Kapila, the Personality of Godhead, replied: O noble lady, there are multifarious paths of devotional service in terms of the different qualities of the executor.

8 Devotional service executed by a person who is envious, proud, violent and angry, and who is a separatist, is considered to be in the mode of darkness.

9 The worship of Deities in the temple by a separatist, with a motive for material enjoyment, fame and opulence, is devotion in the mode of passion.

10 When a devotee worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offers the results of his activities in order to free himself from the inebrieties of fruitive activities, his devotion is in the mode of goodness.

11-12 The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one's mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone's heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord.

13 A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* or *ekatva* even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

14 By attaining the highest platform of devotional service, as I have explained, one can overcome the influence of the three modes of material nature and be situated in the transcendental stage, as is the Lord.

15 A devotee must execute his prescribed duties, which are glorious, without material profit. Without excessive violence, one should regularly perform one's devotional activities.

16 The devotee should regularly see My statues in the temple, touch My lotus feet and offer worshipable paraphernalia and prayer. He should see in the spirit of renunciation, from the mode of goodness, and see every living entity as spiritual.

17 The pure devotee should execute devotional service by giving the greatest respect to the spiritual master and the *ācāryas*. He should be compassionate to the poor and make friendship with persons who are his equals, but all his activities should be executed under regulation and with control of the senses.

18 A devotee should always try to hear about spiritual matters and should always utilize his

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time in chanting the holy name of the Lord. His behavior should always be straightforward and simple, and although he is not envious but friendly to everyone, he should avoid the company of persons who are not spiritually advanced.

19 When one is fully qualified with all these transcendental attributes and his consciousness is thus completely purified, he is immediately attracted simply by hearing My name or hearing of My transcendental quality.

20 As the chariot of air carries an aroma from its source and immediately catches the sense of smell, similarly, one who constantly engages in devotional service, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, can catch the Supreme Soul, who is equally present everywhere.

21 I am present in every living entity as the Supersoul. If someone neglects or disregards that Supersoul everywhere and engages himself in the worship of the Deity in the temple, that is simply imitation.

22 One who worships the Deity of Godhead in the temples but does not know that the Supreme Lord, as Paramātmā, is situated in every living entity's heart, must be in ignorance and is compared to one who offers oblations into ashes.

23 One who offers Me respect but is envious of the bodies of others and is therefore a separatist never attains peace of mind, because of his inimical behavior towards other living entities.

24 My dear mother, even if he worships with proper rituals and paraphernalia, a person who is ignorant of My presence in all living entities never pleases Me by the worship of My Deities in the temple.

25 Performing his prescribed duties, one should worship the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead until one realizes My presence in his own heart and in the hearts of other living entities as well.

26 As the blazing fire of death, I cause great fear to whoever makes the least discrimination between himself and other living entities because of a differential outlook.

27 Therefore, through charitable gifts and attention, as well as through friendly behavior and by viewing all to be alike, one should propitiate Me, who abide in all creatures as their very Self.

28 Living entities are superior to inanimate objects, O blessed mother, and among them, living entities who display life symptoms are better. Animals with developed consciousness are better than them, and better still are those who have developed sense perception.

29 Among the living entities who have developed sense perception, those who have developed the sense of taste are better than those who have developed only the sense of touch. Better than them are those who have developed the sense of smell, and better still are those who have developed the sense of hearing.

30 Better than those living entities who can perceive sound are those who can distinguish between one form and another. Better than them are those who have developed upper and lower sets of teeth, and better still are those who have many legs. Better than them are the quadrupeds, and better still are the human beings.

31 Among human beings, the society which is divided according to quality and work is best, and in that society, the intelligent men, who are designated as brāhmaṇas, are best. Among the

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brāhmaṇas, one who has studied the Vedas is the best, and among the brāhmaṇas who have studied the Vedas, one who knows the actual purport of Veda is the best.

32 Better than the brāhmaṇa who knows the purpose of the Vedas is he who can dissipate all doubts, and better than him is one who strictly follows the brahminical principles. Better than him is one who is liberated from all material contamination, and better than him is a pure devotee, who executes devotional service without expectation of reward.

33 Therefore I do not find a greater person than he who has no interest outside of Mine and who therefore engages and dedicates all his activities and all his life everything unto Me without cessation.

34 Such a perfect devotee offers respects to every living entity because he is under the firm conviction that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has entered the body of every living entity as the Supersoul, or controller.

35 My dear mother, O daughter of Manu, a devotee who applies the science of devotional service and mystic yoga in this way can achieve the abode of the Supreme Person simply by that devotional service.

36 This puruṣa whom the individual soul must approach is the eternal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Brahman and Paramātmā. He is the transcendental chief personality, and His activities are all spiritual.

37 The time factor, who causes the transformation of the various material manifestations, is another feature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Anyone who does not know that time is the same Supreme Personality is afraid of the time factor.

38 Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the enjoyer of all sacrifices, is the time factor and the master of all masters. He enters everyone's heart, He is the support of everyone, and He causes every being to be annihilated by another.

39 No one is dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, nor is anyone His enemy or friend. But He gives inspiration to those who have not forgotten Him and destroys those who have.

40 Out of fear of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the wind blows, out of fear of Him the sun shines, out of fear of Him the rain pours forth showers, and out of fear of Him the host of heavenly bodies shed their luster.

41 Out of fear of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the trees, creepers, herbs and seasonal plants and flowers blossom and fructify, each in its own season.

42 Out of fear of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the rivers flow, and the ocean never overflows. Out of fear of Him only does fire burn and does the earth, with its mountains, not sink in the water of the universe.

43 Subject to the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the sky allows outer space to accommodate all the various planets, which hold innumerable living entities. The total universal body expands with its seven coverings under His supreme control.

44 Out of fear of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the directing demigods in charge of the modes of material nature carry out the functions of creation, maintenance and destruction; everything animate and inanimate within this material world is under their control.

45 The eternal time factor has no beginning and no end. It is the representative of the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, the maker of the criminal world. It brings about the end of the phenomenal world, it carries on the work of creation by bringing one individual into existence from another, and likewise it dissolves the universe by destroying even the lord of death, Yamarāja.

SB 3.30: Description by Lord Kapila of Adverse Fruitive Activities

- 1 The Personality of Godhead said: As a mass of clouds does not know the powerful influence of the wind, a person engaged in material consciousness does not know the powerful strength of the time factor, by which he is being carried.
- 2 Whatever is produced by the materialist with great pain and labor for so-called happiness, the Supreme Personality, as the time factor, destroys, and for this reason the conditioned soul laments.
- 3 The misguided materialist does not know that his very body is impermanent and that the attractions of home, land and wealth, which are in relationship to that body, are also temporary. Out of ignorance only, he thinks that everything is permanent.
- 4 The living entity, in whatever species of life he appears, finds a particular type of satisfaction in that species, and he is never averse to being situated in such a condition.
- 5 The conditioned living entity is satisfied in his own particular species of life; while deluded by the covering influence of the illusory energy, he feels little inclined to cast off his body, even when in hell, for he takes delight in hellish enjoyment.
- 6 Such satisfaction with one's standard of living is due to deep-rooted attraction for body, wife, home, children, animals, wealth and friends. In such association, the conditioned soul thinks himself quite perfect.
- 7 Although he is always burning with anxiety, such a fool always performs all kinds of mischievous activities, with a hope which is never to be fulfilled, in order to maintain his so-called family and society.
- 8 He gives heart and senses to a woman, who falsely charms him with māyā. He enjoys solitary embraces and talking with her, and he is enchanted by the sweet words of the small children.
- 9 The attached householder remains in his family life, which is full of diplomacy and politics. Always spreading miseries and controlled by acts of sense gratification, he acts just to counteract the reactions of all his miseries, and if he can successfully counteract such miseries, he thinks that he is happy.
- 10 He secures money by committing violence here and there, and although he employs it in the service of his family, he himself eats only a little portion of the food thus purchased, and he goes to hell for those for whom he earned the money in such an irregular way.
- 11 When he suffers reverses in his occupation, he tries again and again to improve himself, but when he is baffled in all attempts and is ruined, he accepts money from others because of excessive greed.
- 12 Thus the unfortunate man, unsuccessful in maintaining his family members, is bereft of all beauty. He always thinks of his failure, grieving very deeply.
- 13 Seeing him unable to support them, his wife and others do not treat him with the same respect as before, even as miserly farmers do not accord the same treatment to their old and

worn-out oxen.

14 The foolish family man does not become averse to family life although he is maintained by those whom he once maintained. Deformed by the influence of old age, he prepares himself to meet ultimate death.

15 Thus he remains at home just like a pet dog and eats whatever is so negligently given to him. Afflicted with many illnesses, such as dyspepsia and loss of appetite, he eats only very small morsels of food, and he becomes an invalid who cannot work any more.

16 In that diseased condition, one's eyes bulge due to the pressure of air from within, and his glands become congested with mucus. He has difficulty breathing, and upon exhaling and inhaling he produces a sound like ghura-ghura, a rattling within the throat.

17 In this way he comes under the clutches of death and lies down, surrounded by lamenting friends and relatives, and although he wants to speak with them, he no longer can because he is under the control of time.

18 Thus the man, who engaged with uncontrolled senses in maintaining a family, dies in great grief, seeing his relatives crying. He dies most pathetically, in great pain and without consciousness.

19 At death, he sees the messengers of the lord of death come before him, their eyes full of wrath, and in great fear he passes stool and urine.

20 As a criminal is arrested for punishment by the constables of the state, a person engaged in criminal sense gratification is similarly arrested by the Yamadūtas, who bind him by the neck with strong rope and cover his subtle body so that he may undergo severe punishment.

21 While carried by the constables of Yamarāja, he is overwhelmed and trembles in their hands. While passing on the road he is bitten by dogs, and he can remember the sinful activities of his life. He is thus terribly distressed.

22 Under the scorching sun, the criminal has to pass through roads of hot sand with forest fires on both sides. He is whipped on the back by the constables because of his inability to walk, and he is afflicted by hunger and thirst, but unfortunately there is no drinking water, no shelter and no place for rest on the road.

23 While passing on that road to the abode of Yamarāja, he falls down in fatigue, and sometimes he becomes unconscious, but he is forced to rise again. In this way he is very quickly brought to the presence of Yamarāja.

24 Thus he has to pass ninety-nine thousand yojanas within two or three moments, and then he is at once engaged in the torturous punishment which he is destined to suffer.

25 He is placed in the midst of burning pieces of wood, and his limbs are set on fire. In some cases he is made to eat his own flesh or have it eaten by others.

26 His entrails are pulled out by the hounds and vultures of hell, even though he is still alive to see it, and he is subjected to torment by serpents, scorpions, gnats and other creatures that bite him.

27 Next his limbs are lopped off and torn asunder by elephants. He is hurled down from hilltops, and he is also held captive either in water or in a cave.

28 Men and women whose lives were built upon indulgence in illicit sex life are put into many

kinds of miserable conditions in the hells known as Tāmisra, Andha-tāmisra and Raurava.

29 Lord Kapila continued: My dear mother, it is sometimes said that we experience hell or heaven on this planet, for hellish punishments are sometimes visible on this planet also.

30 After leaving this body, the man who maintained himself and his family members by sinful activities suffers a hellish life, and his relatives suffer also.

31 He goes alone to the darkest regions of hell after quitting the present body, and the money he acquired by envying other living entities is the passage money with which he leaves this world.

32 Thus, by the arrangement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the maintainer of kinsmen is put into a hellish condition to suffer for his sinful activities, like a man who has lost his wealth.

33 Therefore a person who is very eager to maintain his family and kinsmen simply by black methods certainly goes to the darkest region of hell, which is known as Andha-tāmisra.

34 Having gone through all the miserable, hellish conditions and having passed in a regular order through the lowest forms of animal life prior to human birth, and having thus been purged of his sins, one is reborn again as a human being on this earth.

SB 3.31: Lord Kapila's Instructions on the Movements of the Living Entities

1 The Personality of Godhead said: Under the supervision of the Supreme Lord and according to the result of his work, the living entity, the soul, is made to enter into the womb of a woman through the particle of male semen to assume a particular type of body.

2 On the first night, the sperm and ovum mix, and on the fifth night the mixture ferments into a bubble. On the tenth night it develops into a form like a plum, and after that, it gradually turns into a lump of flesh or an egg, as the case may be.

3 In the course of a month, a head is formed, and at the end of two months the hands, feet and other limbs take shape. By the end of three months, the nails, fingers, toes, body hair, bones and skin appear, as do the organ of generation and the other apertures in the body, namely the eyes, nostrils, ears, mouth and anus.

4 Within four months from the date of conception, the seven essential ingredients of the body, namely chyle, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen, come into existence. At the end of five months, hunger and thirst make themselves felt, and at the end of six months, the fetus, enclosed by the amnion, begins to move on the right side of the abdomen.

5 Deriving its nutrition from the food and drink taken by the mother, the fetus grows and remains in that abominable residence of stools and urine, which is the breeding place of all kinds of worms.

6 Bitten again and again all over the body by the hungry worms in the abdomen itself, the child suffers terrible agony because of his tenderness. He thus becomes unconscious moment after moment because of the terrible condition.

7 Owing to the mother's eating bitter, pungent foodstuffs, or food which is too salty or too sour, the body of the child incessantly suffers pains which are almost intolerable.

8 Placed within the amnion and covered outside by the intestines, the child remains lying on one side of the abdomen, his head turned towards his belly and his back and neck arched like

a bow.

9 The child thus remains just like a bird in a cage, without freedom of movement. At that time, if the child is fortunate, he can remember all the troubles of his past one hundred births, and he grieves wretchedly. What is the possibility of peace of mind in that condition?

10 Thus endowed with the development of consciousness from the seventh month after his conception, the child is tossed downward by the airs that press the embryo during the weeks preceding delivery. Like the worms born of the same filthy abdominal cavity, he cannot remain in one place.

11 The living entity in this frightful condition of life, bound by seven layers of material ingredients, prays with folded hands, appealing to the Lord, who has put him in that condition.

12 The human soul says: I take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appears in His various eternal forms and walks on the surface of the world. I take shelter of Him only, because He can give me relief from all fear and from Him I have received this condition of life, which is just befitting my impious activities.

13 I, the pure soul, appearing now bound by my activities, am lying in the womb of my mother by the arrangement of *māyā*. I offer my respectful obeisances unto Him who is also here with me but who is unaffected and changeless. He is unlimited, but He is perceived in the repentant heart. To Him I offer my respectful obeisances.

14 I am separated from the Supreme Lord because of my being in this material body, which is made of five elements, and therefore my qualities and senses are being misused, although I am essentially spiritual. Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental to material nature and the living entities, because He is devoid of such a material body, and because He is always glorious in His spiritual qualities, I offer my obeisances unto Him.

15 The human soul further prays: The living entity is put under the influence of material nature and continues a hard struggle for existence on the path of repeated birth and death. This conditional life is due to his forgetfulness of his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, without the Lord's mercy, how can he again engage in the transcendental loving service of the Lord?

16 No one other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as the localized *Paramātmā*, the partial representation of the Lord, is directing all inanimate and animate objects. He is present in the three phases of time—past, present and future. Therefore, the conditioned soul is engaged in different activities by His direction, and in order to get free from the threefold miseries of this conditional life, we have to surrender unto Him only.

17 Fallen into a pool of blood, stool and urine within the abdomen of his mother, his own body scorched by the mother's gastric fire, the embodied soul, anxious to get out, counts his months and prays, "O my Lord, when shall I, a wretched soul, be released from this confinement?"

18 My dear Lord, by Your causeless mercy I am awakened to consciousness, although I am only ten months old. For this causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the friend of all fallen souls, there is no way to express my gratitude but to pray with folded hands.

19 The living entity in another type of body sees only by instinct; he knows only the agreeable and disagreeable sense perceptions of that particular body. But I have a body in which I can control my senses and can understand my destination; therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whom I have been blessed with this

body and by whose grace I can see Him within and without.

20 Therefore, my Lord, although I am living in a terrible condition, I do not wish to depart from my mother's abdomen to fall again into the blind well of materialistic life. Your external energy, called deva-māyā, at once captures the newly born child, and immediately false identification, which is the beginning of the cycle of continual birth and death, begins.

21 Therefore, without being agitated any more, I shall deliver myself from the darkness of nescience with the help of my friend, clear consciousness. Simply by keeping the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu in my mind, I shall be saved from entering into the wombs of many mothers for repeated birth and death.

22 Lord Kapila continued: The ten-month-old living entity has these desires even while in the womb. But while he thus extols the Lord, the wind that helps parturition propels him forth with his face turned downward so that he may be born.

23 Pushed downward all of a sudden by the wind, the child comes out with great trouble, head downward, breathless and deprived of memory due to severe agony.

24 The child thus falls on the ground, smeared with stool and blood, and plays just like a worm germinated from the stool. He loses his superior knowledge and cries under the spell of māyā.

25 After coming out of the abdomen, the child is given to the care of persons who are unable to understand what he wants, and thus he is nursed by such persons. Unable to refuse whatever is given to him, he falls into undesirable circumstances.

26 Laid down on a foul bed infested with sweat and germs, the poor child is incapable of scratching his body to get relief from his itching sensation, to say nothing of sitting up, standing or even moving.

27 In his helpless condition, gnats, mosquitoes, bugs and other germs bite the baby, whose skin is tender, just as smaller worms bite a big worm. The child, deprived of his wisdom, cries bitterly.

28 In this way, the child passes through his childhood, suffering different kinds of distress, and attains boyhood. In boyhood also he suffers pain over desires to get things he can never achieve. And thus, due to ignorance, he becomes angry and sorry.

29 With the growth of the body, the living entity, in order to vanquish his soul, increases his false prestige and anger and thereby creates enmity towards similarly lusty people.

30 By such ignorance the living entity accepts the material body, which is made of five elements, as himself. With this misunderstanding, he accepts nonpermanent things as his own and increases his ignorance in the darkest region.

31 For the sake of the body, which is a source of constant trouble to him and which follows him because he is bound by ties of ignorance and fruitive activities, he performs various actions which cause him to be subjected to repeated birth and death.

32 If, therefore, the living entity again associates with the path of unrighteousness, influenced by sensually minded people engaged in the pursuit of sexual enjoyment and the gratification of the palate, he again goes to hell as before.

33 He becomes devoid of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, spiritual intelligence,

shyness, austerity, fame, forgiveness, control of the mind, control of the senses, fortune and all such opportunities.

34 One should not associate with a coarse fool who is bereft of the knowledge of self-realization and who is no more than a dancing dog in the hands of a woman.

35 The infatuation and bondage which accrue to a man from attachment to any other object is not as complete as that resulting from attachment to a woman or to the fellowship of men who are fond of women.

36 At the sight of his own daughter, Brahmā was bewildered by her charms and shamelessly ran up to her in the form of a stag when she took the form of a hind.

37 Amongst all kinds of living entities begotten by Brahmā, namely men, demigods and animals, none but the sage Nārāyaṇa is immune to the attraction of māyā in the form of woman.

38 Just try to understand the mighty strength of My māyā in the shape of woman, who by the mere movement of her eyebrows can keep even the greatest conquerors of the world under her grip.

39 One who aspires to reach the culmination of yoga and has realized his self by rendering service unto Me should never associate with an attractive woman, for such a woman is declared in the scripture to be the gateway to hell for the advancing devotee.

40 The woman, created by the Lord, is the representation of māyā, and one who associates with such māyā by accepting services must certainly know that this is the way of death, just like a blind well covered with grass.

41 A living entity who, as a result of attachment to a woman in his previous life, has been endowed with the form of a woman, foolishly looks upon māyā in the form of a man, her husband, as the bestower of wealth, progeny, house and other material assets.

42 A woman, therefore, should consider her husband, her house and her children to be the arrangement of the external energy of the Lord for her death, just as the sweet singing of the hunter is death for the deer.

43 Due to his particular type of body, the materialistic living entity wanders from one planet to another, following fruitive activities. In this way, he involves himself in fruitive activities and enjoys the result incessantly.

44 In this way the living entity gets a suitable body with a material mind and senses, according to his fruitive activities. When the reaction of his particular activity comes to an end, that end is called death, and when a particular type of reaction begins, that beginning is called birth.

45-46 When the eyes lose their power to see color or form due to morbid affliction of the optic nerve, the sense of sight becomes deadened. The living entity, who is the seer of both the eyes and the sight, loses his power of vision. In the same way, when the physical body, the place where perception of objects occurs, is rendered incapable of perceiving, that is known as death. When one begins to view the physical body as one's very self, that is called birth.

47 Therefore, one should not view death with horror, nor have recourse to defining the body as soul, nor give way to exaggeration in enjoying the bodily necessities of life. Realizing the true nature of the living entity, one should move about in the world free from attachment and steadfast in purpose.

48 Endowed with right vision and strengthened by devotional service and a pessimistic attitude towards material identity, one should relegate his body to this illusory world through his reason. Thus one can be unconcerned with this material world.

SB 3.32: Entanglement in Fruitive Activities

1 The Personality of Godhead said: The person who lives in the center of household life derives material benefits by performing religious rituals, and thereby he fulfills his desire for economic development and sense gratification. Again and again he acts the same way.

2 Such persons are ever bereft of devotional service due to being too attached to sense gratification, and therefore, although they perform various kinds of sacrifices and take great vows to satisfy the demigods and forefathers, they are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service.

3 Such materialistic persons, attracted by sense gratification and devoted to the forefathers and demigods, can be elevated to the moon, where they drink an extract of the soma plant. They again return to this planet.

4 All the planets of the materialistic persons, including all the heavenly planets, such as the moon, are vanquished when the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, goes to His bed of serpents, which is known as Ananta Śeṣa.

5 Those who are intelligent and are of purified consciousness are completely satisfied in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Freed from the modes of material nature, they do not act for sense gratification; rather, since they are situated in their own occupational duties, they act as one is expected to act.

6 By executing one's occupational duties, acting with detachment and without a sense of proprietorship or false egoism, one is posted in one's constitutional position by dint of complete purification of consciousness, and by thus executing so-called material duties he can easily enter into the kingdom of God.

7 Through the path of illumination, such liberated persons approach the complete Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of the material and spiritual worlds and is the supreme cause of their manifestation and dissolution.

8 Worshipers of the Hiraṇyagarbha expansion of the Personality of Godhead remain within this material world until the end of two parārdhas, when Lord Brahmā also dies.

9 After experiencing the inhabitable time of the three modes of material nature, known as two parārdhas, Lord Brahmā closes the material universe, which is covered by layers of earth, water, air, fire, ether, mind, ego, etc., and goes back to Godhead.

10 The yogīs who become detached from the material world by practice of breathing exercises and control of the mind reach the planet of Brahmā, which is far, far away. After giving up their bodies, they enter into the body of Lord Brahmā, and therefore when Brahmā is liberated and goes to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supreme Brahman, such yogīs can also enter into the kingdom of God.

11 Therefore, My dear mother, by devotional service take direct shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated in everyone's heart.

12-15 My dear mother, someone may worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead with a special self-interest, but even demigods such as Lord Brahmā, great sages such as Sanat-kumāra

and great munis such as Marīci have to come back to the material world again at the time of creation. When the interaction of the three modes of material nature begins, Brahmā, who is the creator of this cosmic manifestation and who is full of Vedic knowledge, and the great sages, who are the authors of the spiritual path and the yoga system, come back under the influence of the time factor. They are liberated by their nonfruitive activities and attain the first incarnation of the puruṣa, but at the time of creation they come back in exactly the same forms and positions they previously had.

16 Persons who are too addicted to this material world execute their prescribed duties very nicely and with great faith. They daily perform all such prescribed duties with attachment to the fruitive result.

17 Such persons, impelled by the mode of passion, are full of anxieties and always aspire for sense gratification due to uncontrolled senses. They worship the forefathers and are busy day and night improving the economic condition of their family, social or national life.

18 Such persons are called *traī-vargika* because they are interested in the three elevating processes. They are averse to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can give relief to the conditioned soul. They are not interested in the Supreme Personality's pastimes, which are worth hearing because of His transcendental prowess.

19 Such persons are condemned by the supreme order of the Lord. Because they are averse to the nectar of the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are compared to stool-eating hogs. They give up hearing the transcendental activities of the Lord and indulge in hearing of the abominable activities of materialistic persons.

20 Such materialistic persons are allowed to go to the planet called *Pitṛloka* by the southern course of the sun, but they again come back to this planet and take birth in their own families, beginning again the same fruitive activities from birth to the end of life.

21 When the results of their pious activities are exhausted, they fall down by higher arrangement and again come back to this planet, just as any person raised to a high position sometimes all of a sudden falls.

22 My dear mother, I therefore advise that you take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for His lotus feet are worth worshiping. Accept this with all devotion and love, for thus you can be situated in transcendental devotional service.

23 Engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and application of devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa make it possible to advance in knowledge and detachment, as well as in self-realization.

24 The exalted devotee's mind becomes equipoised in sensory activities, and he is transcendental to that which is agreeable and not agreeable.

25 Because of his transcendental intelligence, the pure devotee is equipoised in his vision and sees himself to be uncontaminated by matter. He does not see anything as superior or inferior, and he feels himself elevated to the transcendental platform of being equal in qualities with the Supreme Person.

26 The Supreme Personality of Godhead alone is complete transcendental knowledge, but according to the different processes of understanding He appears differently, either as impersonal Brahman, as *Paramātmā*, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead or as the *puruṣa-avatāra*.

27 The greatest common understanding for all yogīs is complete detachment from matter,

which can be achieved by different kinds of yoga.

28 Those who are averse to the Transcendence realize the Supreme Absolute Truth differently through speculative sense perception, and therefore, because of mistaken speculation, everything appears to them to be relative.

29 From the total energy, the mahat-tattva, I have manifested the false ego, the three modes of material nature, the five material elements, the individual consciousness, the eleven senses and the material body. Similarly, the entire universe has come from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

30 This perfect knowledge can be achieved by a person who is already engaged in devotional service with faith, steadiness and full detachment, and who is always absorbed in thought of the Supreme. He is aloof from material association.

31 My dear respectful mother, I have already described the path of understanding the Absolute Truth, by which one can come to understand the real truth of matter and spirit and their relationship.

32 Philosophical research culminates in understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After achieving this understanding, when one becomes free from the material modes of nature, he attains the stage of devotional service. Either by devotional service directly or by philosophical research, one has to find the same destination, which is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

33 A single object is appreciated differently by different senses due to its having different qualities. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, but according to different scriptural injunctions He appears to be different.

34-36 By performing fruitive activities and sacrifices, by distributing charity, by performing austerities, by studying various literatures, by conducting philosophical research, by controlling the mind, by subduing the senses, by accepting the renounced order of life, by performing the prescribed duties of one's social order, by performing the different divisions of yoga practice, by performing devotional service, by exhibiting the process of devotional service containing the symptoms of both attachment and detachment, by understanding the science of self-realization, and by developing a strong sense of detachment, one who is expert in understanding the different processes of self-realization realizes the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is represented in the material world as well as in transcendence.

37 My dear mother, I have explained to you the process of devotional service and its identity in four different social divisions. I have explained to you as well how eternal time is chasing the living entities, although it is imperceptible to them.

38 There are varieties of material existence for the living entity according to the work he performs in ignorance or forgetfulness of his real identity. My dear mother, if anyone enters into that forgetfulness, he is unable to understand where his movements will end.

39 Lord Kapila continued: This instruction is not meant for the envious, for the agnostics or for persons who are unclean in their behavior. Nor is it for hypocrites or for persons who are proud of material possessions.

40 It is not to be instructed to persons who are too greedy and too attached to family life, nor to persons who are nondevotees and who are envious of the devotees and of the Personality of Godhead.

41 Instruction should be given to the faithful devotee who is respectful to the spiritual master, nonenvious, friendly to all kinds of living entities and eager to render service with faith and sincerity.

42 This instruction should be imparted by the spiritual master to persons who have taken the Supreme Personality of Godhead to be more dear than anything, who are not envious of anyone, who are perfectly cleansed and who have developed detachment for that which is outside the purview of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

43 Anyone who once meditates upon Me with faith and affection, who hears and chants about Me, surely goes back home, back to Godhead.

SB 3.33: Activities of Kapila

1 Śrī Maitreya said: Thus Devahūti, the mother of Lord Kapila and wife of Kardama Muni, became freed from all ignorance concerning devotional service and transcendental knowledge. She offered her obeisances unto the Lord, the author of the basic principles of the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy, which is the background of liberation, and she satisfied Him with the following verses of prayer.

2 Devahūti said: Brahmā is said to be unborn because he takes birth from the lotus flower which grows from Your abdomen while You lie in the ocean at the bottom of the universe. But even Brahmā simply meditated upon You, whose body is the source of unlimited universes.

3 My dear Lord, although personally You have nothing to do, You have distributed Your energies in the interactions of the material modes of nature, and for that reason the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation take place. My dear Lord, You are self-determined and are the Supreme Personality of Godhead for all living entities. For them You created this material manifestation, and although You are one, Your diverse energies can act multifariously. This is inconceivable to us.

4 As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, You have taken birth from my abdomen. O my Lord, how is that possible for the supreme one, who has in His belly all the cosmic manifestation? The answer is that it is possible, for at the end of the millennium You lie down on a leaf of a banyan tree, and just like a small baby, You lick the toe of Your lotus foot.

5 My dear Lord, You have assumed this body in order to diminish the sinful activities of the fallen and to enrich their knowledge in devotion and liberation. Since these sinful people are dependent on Your direction, by Your own will You assume incarnations as a boar and as other forms. Similarly, You have appeared in order to distribute transcendental knowledge to Your dependents.

6 To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him.

7 Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Āryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required.

8 I believe, my Lord, that You are Lord Viṣṇu Himself under the name of Kapila, and You are

the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Brahman! The saints and sages, being freed from all the disturbances of the senses and mind, meditate upon You, for by Your mercy only can one become free from the clutches of the three modes of material nature. At the time of dissolution, all the Vedas are sustained in You only.

9 Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kapila, satisfied by the words of His mother, towards whom He was very affectionate, replied with gravity.

10 The Personality of Godhead said: My dear mother, the path of self-realization which I have already instructed to you is very easy. You can execute this system without difficulty, and by following it you shall very soon be liberated, even within your present body.

11 My dear mother, those who are actually transcendentalists certainly follow My instructions as I have given them to you. You may rest assured that if you traverse this path of self-realization perfectly, surely you shall be freed from fearful material contamination and shall ultimately reach Me. Mother, persons who are not conversant with this method of devotional service certainly cannot get out of the cycle of birth and death.

12 Śrī Maitreya said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Kapila, after instructing His beloved mother, took permission from her and left His home, His mission having been fulfilled.

13 As instructed by her son, Devahūti also began to practice bhakti-yoga in that very āśrama. She practiced samādhi in the house of Kardama Muni, which was so beautifully decorated with flowers that it was considered the flower crown of the river Sarasvatī.

14 She began to bathe three times daily, and thus her curling black hair gradually became gray. Due to austerity, her body gradually became thin, and she wore old garments.

15 The home and household paraphernalia of Kardama, who was one of the Prajāpatis, was developed in such a way, by dint of his mystic powers of austerity and yoga, that his opulence was sometimes envied by those who travel in outer space in airplanes.

16 The opulence of the household of Kardama Muni is described herein. The bedsheets and mattresses were all as white as the foam of milk, the chairs and benches were made of ivory and were covered by cloths of lace with golden filigree, and the couches were made of gold and had very soft pillows.

17 The walls of the house were made of first-class marble, decorated with valuable jewels. There was no need of light, for the household was illuminated by the rays of these jewels. The female members of the household were all amply decorated with jewelry.

18 The compound of the main household was surrounded by beautiful gardens with sweet, fragrant flowers and many trees which produced fresh fruit and were tall and beautiful. The attraction of such gardens was that singing birds would sit on the trees, and their chanting voices, as well as the humming sound of the bees, made the whole atmosphere as pleasing as possible.

19 When Devahūti would enter that lovely garden to take her bath in the pond filled with lotus flowers, the associates of the denizens of heaven, the Gandharvas, would sing about Kardama's glorious household life. Her great husband, Kardama, gave her all protection at all times.

20 Although her position was unique from all points of view, saintly Devahūti, in spite of all her possessions, which were envied even by the ladies of the heavenly planets, gave up all such comforts. She was only sorry that her great son was separated from her.

21 Devahūti's husband had already left home and accepted the renounced order of life, and then her only son, Kapila, left home. Although she knew all the truths of life and death, and although her heart was cleansed of all dirt, she was very aggrieved at the loss of her son, just as a cow is affected when her calf dies.

22 O Vidura, thus always meditating upon her son, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kapiladeva, she very soon became unattached to her nicely decorated home.

23 Thereafter, having heard with great eagerness and in all detail from her son, Kapiladeva, the eternally smiling Personality of Godhead, Devahūti began to meditate constantly upon the Viṣṇu form of the Supreme Lord.

24-25 She did so with serious engagement in devotional service. Because she was strong in renunciation, she accepted only the necessities of the body. She became situated in knowledge due to realization of the Absolute Truth, her heart became purified, she became fully absorbed in meditation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all misgivings due to the modes of material nature disappeared.

26 Her mind became completely engaged in the Supreme Lord, and she automatically realized the knowledge of the impersonal Brahman. As a Brahman-realized soul, she was freed from the designations of the materialistic concept of life. Thus all material pangs disappeared, and she attained transcendental bliss.

27 Situated in eternal trance and freed from illusion impelled by the modes of material nature, she forgot her material body, just as one forgets his different bodies in a dream.

28 Her body was being taken care of by the spiritual damsels created by her husband, Kardama, and since she had no mental anxiety at that time, her body did not become thin. She appeared just like a fire surrounded by smoke.

29 Because she was always absorbed in the thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she was not aware that sometimes her hair was loosened or her garments were disarranged.

30 My dear Vidura, by following the principles instructed by Kapila, Devahūti soon became liberated from material bondage and achieved the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as Supersoul, without difficulty.

31 The place where Devahūti achieved her perfection, my dear Vidura, is understood to be a most sacred spot. It is known all over the three worlds as Siddhapada.

32 Dear Vidura, the material elements of her body have melted into water and are now a flowing river, which is the most sacred of all rivers. Anyone who bathes in that river also attains perfection, and therefore all persons who desire perfection go bathe there.

33 My dear Vidura, the great sage Kapila, the Personality of Godhead, left His father's hermitage with the permission of His mother and went towards the northeast.

34 While He was passing in the northern direction, all the celestial denizens known as Cāraṇas and Gandharvas, as well as the munis and the damsels of the heavenly planets, prayed and offered Him all respects. The ocean offered Him oblations and a place of residence.

35 Even now Kapila Muni is staying there in trance for the deliverance of the conditioned souls in the three worlds, and all the ācāryas, or great teachers, of the system of Sāṅkhya philosophy are worshipping Him.

36 My dear son, since you have inquired from me, I have answered. O sinless one, the descriptions of Kapiladeva and His mother and their activities are the purest of all pure discourses.

37 The description of the dealings of Kapiladeva and His mother is very confidential, and anyone who hears or reads this narration becomes a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is carried by Garuḍa, and he thereafter enters into the abode of the Supreme Lord to engage in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order

SB 4.1: Genealogical Table of the Daughters of Manu

1 Śrī Maitreya said: Svāyambhuva Manu begot three daughters in his wife, Śatarūpā, and their names were Ākūti, Devahūti and Prasūti.

2 Ākūti had two brothers, but in spite of her brothers, King Svāyambhuva Manu handed her over to Prajāpati Ruci on the condition that the son born of her be returned to Manu as his son. This he did in consultation with his wife, Śatarūpā.

3 Ruci, who was very powerful in his brahminical qualifications and was appointed one of the progenitors of the living entities, begot one son and one daughter by his wife, Ākūti.

4 Of the two children born of Ākūti, the male child was directly an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His name was Yajsa, which is another name of Lord Viṣṇu. The female child was a partial incarnation of Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, the eternal consort of Lord Viṣṇu.

5 Svāyambhuva Manu very gladly brought home the beautiful boy named Yajsa, and Ruci, his son-in-law, kept with him the daughter, Dakṣiṇā.

6 The Lord of the ritualistic performance of yajsa later married Dakṣiṇā, who was anxious to have the Personality of Godhead as her husband, and in this wife the Lord was also very much pleased to beget twelve children.

7 The twelve boys born of Yajsa and Dakṣiṇā were named Toṣa, Pratoṣa, Santoṣa, Bhadra, Śānti, Iḍaspati, Idhma, Kavi, Vibhu, Svahna, Sudeva and Rocana.

8 During the time of Svāyambhuva Manu, these sons all became the demigods collectively named the Tuṣitas. Marīci became the head of the seven ṛṣis, and Yajsa became the king of the demigods, Indra.

9 Svāyambhuva Manu's two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, became very powerful kings, and their sons and grandsons spread all over the three worlds during that period.

10 My dear son, Svāyambhuva Manu handed over his very dear daughter Devahūti to Kardama Muni. I have already spoken to you about them, and you have heard about them almost in full.

11 Svāyambhuva Manu handed over his daughter Prasūti to the son of Brahmā named Dakṣa, who was also one of the progenitors of the living entities. The descendants of Dakṣa are spread throughout the three worlds.

12 You have already been informed about the nine daughters of Kardama Muni, who were handed over to nine different sages. I shall now describe the descendants of those nine daughters. Please hear from me.

13 Kardama Muni's daughter Kalā, who was married to Marīci, gave birth to two children, whose names were Kaśyapa and Pūrṇimā. Their descendants are spread all over the world.

14 My dear Vidura, of the two sons, Kaśyapa and Pūrṇimā, Pūrṇimā begot three children, namely Viraja, Viśvaga and Devakulyā. Of these three, Devakulyā was the water which washed the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead and which later on transformed into the Ganges of the heavenly planets.

15 Anasūyā, the wife of Atri Muni, gave birth to three very famous sons Soma, Dattātreya and Durvāsā who were partial representations of Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. Soma was a partial representation of Lord Brahmā, Dattātreya was a partial representation of Lord Viṣṇu, and Durvāsā was a partial representation of Lord Śiva.

16 After hearing this, Vidura inquired from Maitreya: My dear master, how is it that the three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, who are the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the whole creation, became the offspring of the wife of Atri Muni?

17 Maitreya said: When Lord Brahmā ordered Atri Muni to create generations after marrying Anasūyā, Atri Muni and his wife went to perform severe austerities in the valley of the mountain known as Ṛkṣa.

18 In that mountain valley flows a river named Nirvindhyā. On the bank of the river are many aśoka trees and other plants full of palāśa flowers, and there is always the sweet sound of water flowing from a waterfall. The husband and wife reached that beautiful place.

19 There the great sage concentrated his mind by the yogic breathing exercises, and thereby controlling all attachment, he remained standing on one leg only, eating nothing but air, and stood there on one leg for one hundred years.

20 He was thinking: May the Lord of the universe, of whom I have taken shelter, kindly be pleased to offer me a son exactly like Him.

21 While Atri Muni was engaged in these severe austerities, a blazing fire came out of his head by virtue of his breathing exercise, and that fire was seen by the three principal deities of the three worlds.

22 At that time, the three deities approached the hermitage of Atri Muni, accompanied by the denizens of the heavenly planets, such as the celestial beauties, the Gandharvas, the Siddhas, the Vidyādhara and the Nāgas. Thus they entered the āśrama of the great sage, who had become famous by his austerities.

23 The sage was standing on one leg, but as soon as he saw that the three deities had appeared before him, he was so pleased to see them all together that despite great difficulty he approached them on one leg.

24 Thereafter he began to offer prayers to the three deities, who were seated on different carriers a bull, a swan and Garuḍa and who held in their hands a drum, kuśa grass and a discus. The sage offered them his respects by falling down like a stick.

25 Atri Muni was greatly pleased to see that the three devas were gracious towards him. His eyes were dazzled by the effulgence of their bodies, and therefore he closed his eyes for the time being.

26-27 But since his heart was already attracted by the deities, somehow or other he gathered

his senses, and with folded hands and sweet words he began to offer prayers to the predominating deities of the universe. The great sage Atri said: O Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva, you have divided yourself into three bodies by accepting the three modes of material nature, as you do in every millennium for the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation. I offer my respectful obeisances unto all of you and beg to inquire whom of you three I have called by my prayer.

28 I called for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, desiring a son like Him, and I thought of Him only. But although He is far beyond the mental speculation of man, all three of you have come here. Kindly let me know how you have come, for I am greatly bewildered about this.

29 The great sage Maitreya continued: Upon hearing Atri Muni speak in that way, the three great deities smiled, and they replied in the following sweet words.

30 The three deities told Atri Muni: Dear brāhmaṇa, you are perfect in your determination, and therefore as you have decided, so it will happen; it will not happen otherwise. We are all the same person upon whom you were meditating, and therefore we have all come to you.

31 You will have sons who will represent a partial manifestation of our potency, and because we desire all good fortune for you, those sons will glorify your reputation throughout the world.

32 Thus, while the couple looked on, the three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara disappeared from that place after bestowing upon Atri Muni the benediction.

33 Thereafter, from the partial representation of Brahmā, the moon-god was born of them; from the partial representation of Viṣṇu, the great mystic Dattātreya was born; and from the partial representation of Śaṅkara [Lord Śiva], Durvāsā was born. Now you may hear from me of the many sons of Aṅgirā.

34 Aṅgirā's wife, Śraddhā, gave birth to four daughters, named Sinīvālī, Kuhū, Rākā and Anumati.

35 Besides these four daughters, she also had another two sons. One of them was known as Utathya, and the other was the learned scholar Bṛhaspati.

36 Pulastya begot in his wife, Havirbhū, one son of the name Agastya, who in his next birth became Dahrāgni. Besides him, Pulastya begot another very great and saintly son, whose name was Viśravā.

37 Viśravā had two wives. The first wife was Iḍavidā, from whom Kuvera, the master of all Yakṣas, was born, and the next wife was named Keśinī, from whom three sons were born Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarna and Vibhīṣaṇa.

38 Gati, the wife of the sage Pulaha, gave birth to three sons, named Karmaśreṣṭha, Varīyān and Sahiṣṇu, and all of them were great sages.

39 Kratu's wife, Kriyā, gave birth to sixty thousand great sages, named the Vālakhilyas. All these sages were greatly advanced in spiritual knowledge, and their bodies were illuminated by such knowledge.

40 The great sage Vasiṣṭha begot in his wife, Ūrjā [sometimes called Arundhatī], seven spotlessly great sages, headed by the sage named Citraketu.

41 The names of these seven sages are as follows: Citraketu, Suroci, Virajā, Mitra, Ulbaṇa, Vasubhṛdyāna and Dyumān. Some other very competent sons were born from Vasiṣṭha's other wife.

42 Citti, wife of the sage Atharvā, gave birth to a son named Aśvaśirā by accepting a great vow called Dadhyaṣca. Now you may hear from me about the descendants of the sage Bhṛgu.

43 The sage Bhṛgu was highly fortunate. In his wife, known as Khyāti, he begot two sons, named Dhātā and Vidhātā, and one daughter, named Śrī, who was very much devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44 The sage Meru had two daughters, named Āyati and Niyati, whom he gave in charity to Dhātā and Vidhātā. Āyati and Niyati gave birth to two sons, Mṛkaṇḍa and Prāṇa.

45 From Mṛkaṇḍa, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni was born, and from Prāṇa, the sage Vedaśirā, whose son was Uśanā [Śukrācārya], also known as Kavi. Thus Kavi also belonged to the descendants of the Bhṛgu dynasty.

46-47 My dear Vidura, the population of the universe was thus increased by the descendants of these sages and the daughters of Kardama. Anyone who hears the descriptions of this dynasty with faith will be relieved from all sinful reactions. Another of Manu's daughters, known as Prasūti, married the son of Brahmā named Dakṣa.

48 Dakṣa begot sixteen very beautiful daughters with lotuslike eyes in his wife Prasūti. Of these sixteen daughters, thirteen were given in marriage to Dharma, and one daughter was given to Agni.

49-52 One of the remaining two daughters was given in charity to the Pitṛloka, where she resides very amicably, and the other was given to Lord Śiva, who is the deliverer of sinful persons from material entanglement. The names of the thirteen daughters of Dakṣa who were given to Dharma are Śraddhā, Maitrī, Dayā, Śānti, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Kriyā, Unnati, Buddhi, Medhā, Titikṣā, Hrī and Mūrti. These thirteen daughters produced the following sons: Śraddhā gave birth to Śubha, Maitrī produced Prasāda, Dayā gave birth to Abhaya, Śānti gave birth to Sukha, Tuṣṭi gave birth to Muda, Puṣṭi gave birth to Smaya, Kriyā gave birth to Yoga, Unnati gave birth to Darpa, Buddhi gave birth to Artha, Medhā gave birth to Smṛti, Titikṣā gave birth to Kṣema, and Hrī gave birth to Praśraya. Mūrti, a reservoir of all respectable qualities, gave birth to Śrī Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

53 On the occasion of the appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the entire world was full of joy. Everyone's mind became tranquil, and thus in all directions the air, the rivers and the mountains became pleasant.

54-55 In the heavenly planets, bands began to play, and they showered flowers from the sky. The pacified sages chanted Vedic prayers, the denizens of heaven known as the Gandharvas and Kinnaras sang, the beautiful damsels of the heavenly planets danced, and in this way, at the time of the appearance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, all signs of good fortune were visible. Just at that time, great demigods like Brahmā also offered their respectful prayers.

56 The demigods said: Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the transcendental Personality of Godhead, who created as His external energy this cosmic manifestation, which is situated in Him as the air and clouds are situated in space, and who has now appeared in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi in the house of Dharma.

57 Let that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is understood by truly authorized Vedic literature and who has created peace and prosperity to destroy all calamities of the created world, be kind enough to bestow His glance upon the demigods. His merciful glance can supersede the beauty of the spotless lotus flower which is the home of the goddess of fortune.

58 [Maitreya said:] O Vidura, thus the demigods worshiped with prayers the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the sage Nara-Nārāyaṇa. The Lord glanced upon them with mercy and then departed for Gandhamādana Hill.

59 That Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who is a partial expansion of Kṛṣṇa, has now appeared in the dynasties of Yadu and Kuru, in the forms of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna respectively, to mitigate the burden of the world.

60 The predominating deity of fire begot in his wife, Svāhā, three children, named Pāvaka, Pavamāna and Śuci, who exist by eating the oblations offered to the fire of sacrifice.

61 From those three sons another forty-five descendants were generated, who are also fire-gods. The total number of fire-gods is therefore forty-nine, including the fathers and the grandfather.

62 These forty-nine fire-gods are the beneficiaries of the oblations offered in the Vedic sacrificial fire by impersonalist brāhmaṇas.

63 The Agniṣvāttas, the Barhiṣadas, the Saumyas and the Ājyapas are the Pitās. They are either sāgnika or niragnika. The wife of all these Pitās is Svadhā, who is the daughter of King Dakṣa.

64 Svadhā, who was offered to the Pitās, begot two daughters named Vayunā and Dhāriṇī, both of whom were impersonalists and were expert in transcendental and Vedic knowledge.

65 The sixteenth daughter, whose name was Satī, was the wife of Lord Śiva. She could not produce a child, although she always faithfully engaged in the service of her husband.

66 The reason is that Satī's father, Dakṣa, used to rebuke Lord Śiva in spite of Śiva's faultlessness. Consequently, before attaining a mature age, Satī gave up her body by dint of yogic mystic power.

SB 4.2: Dakṣa Curses Lord Śiva

1 Vidura inquired: Why was Dakṣa, who was so affectionate towards his daughter, envious of Lord Śiva, who is the best among the gentle? Why did he neglect his daughter Satī?

2 Lord Śiva, the spiritual master of the entire world, is free from enmity, is a peaceful personality, and is always satisfied in himself. He is the greatest among the demigods. How is it possible that Dakṣa could be inimical towards such an auspicious personality?

3 My dear Maitreya, to part with one's life is very difficult. Would you kindly explain to me how such a son-in-law and father-in-law could quarrel so bitterly that the great goddess Satī could give up her life?

4 The sage Maitreya said: In a former time, the leaders of the universal creation performed a great sacrifice in which all the great sages, philosophers, demigods and fire-gods assembled with their followers.

5 When Dakṣa, the leader of the Prajāpatis, entered that assembly, his personal bodily luster as bright as the effulgence of the sun, the entire assembly was illuminated, and all the assembled

personalities became insignificant in his presence.

6 Influenced by his personal bodily luster, all the fire-gods and other participants in that great assembly, with the exceptions of Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, gave up their own sitting places and stood in respect for Dakṣa.

7 Dakṣa was adequately welcomed by the president of the great assembly, Lord Brahmā. After offering Lord Brahmā respect, Dakṣa, by the order of Brahmā, properly took his seat.

8 Before taking his seat, however, Dakṣa was very much offended to see Lord Śiva sitting and not showing him any respect. At that time, Dakṣa became greatly angry, and, his eyes glowing, he began to speak very strongly against Lord Śiva.

9 All sages, brāhmaṇas and fire-gods present, please hear me with attention, for I speak about the manners of gentle persons. I do not speak out of ignorance or envy.

10 Śiva has spoiled the name and fame of the governors of the universe and has polluted the path of gentle manners. Because he is shameless, he does not know how to act.

11 He has already accepted himself as my subordinate by marrying my daughter in the presence of fire and brāhmaṇas. He has married my daughter, who is equal to Gāyatrī, and has pretended to be just like an honest person.

12 He has eyes like a monkey's, yet he has married my daughter, whose eyes are just like those of a deer cub. Nevertheless he did not stand up to receive me, nor did he think it fit to welcome me with sweet words.

13 I had no desire to give my daughter to this person, who has broken all rules of civility. Because of not observing the required rules and regulations, he is impure, but I was obliged to hand over my daughter to him just as one teaches the messages of the Vedas to a śūdra.

14-15 He lives in filthy places like crematoriums, and his companions are the ghosts and demons. Naked like a madman, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying, he smears crematorium ashes all over his body. He does not bathe regularly, and he ornaments his body with a garland of skulls and bones. Therefore only in name is he śiva, or auspicious; actually, he is the most mad and inauspicious creature. Thus he is very dear to crazy beings in the gross mode of ignorance, and he is their leader.

16 On the request of Lord Brahmā I handed over my chaste daughter to him, although he is devoid of all cleanliness and his heart is filled with nasty things.

17 The sage Maitreya continued: Thus Dakṣa, seeing Lord Śiva sitting as if against him, washed his hands and mouth and cursed him in the following words.

18 The demigods are eligible to share in the oblations of sacrifice, but Lord Śiva, who is the lowest of all the demigods, should not have a share.

19 Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, in spite of the requests of all the members of the sacrificial assembly, Dakṣa, in great anger, cursed Lord Śiva and then left the assembly and went back to his home.

20 Upon understanding that Lord Śiva had been cursed, Nandīśvara, one of Lord Śiva's principal associates, became greatly angry. His eyes became red, and he prepared to curse Dakṣa and all the brāhmaṇas present there who had tolerated Dakṣa's cursing Śiva in harsh words.

21 Anyone who has accepted Dakṣa as the most important personality and neglected Lord Śiva because of envy is less intelligent and, because of visualizing in duality, will be bereft of transcendental knowledge.

22 Pretentiously religious householder life, in which one is attracted to material happiness and thus also attracted to the superficial explanation of the Vedas, robs one of all intelligence and attaches one to fruitive activities as all in all.

23 Dakṣa has accepted the body as all in all. Therefore, since he has forgotten the viṣṇu-pāda, or viṣṇu-gati, and is attached to sex life only, within a short time he will have the face of a goat.

24 Those who have become as dull as matter by cultivating materialistic education and intelligence are nesciently involved in fruitive activities. Such men have purposely insulted Lord Śiva. May they continue in the cycle of repeated birth and death.

25 May those who are envious of Lord Śiva, being attracted by the flowery language of the enchanting Vedic promises, and who have thus become dull, always remain attached to fruitive activities.

26 These brāhmaṇas take to education, austerity and vows only for the purpose of maintaining the body. They shall be devoid of discrimination between what to eat and what not to eat. They will acquire money, begging from door to door, simply for the satisfaction of the body.

27 When all the hereditary brāhmaṇas were thus cursed by Nandīśvara, the sage Bhṛgu, as a reaction, condemned the followers of Lord Śiva with this very strong brahminical curse.

28 One who takes a vow to satisfy Lord Śiva or who follows such principles will certainly become an atheist and be diverted from transcendental scriptural injunctions.

29 Those who vow to worship Lord Śiva are so foolish that they imitate him by keeping long hair on their heads. When initiated into worship of Lord Śiva, they prefer to live on wine, flesh and other such things.

30 Bhṛgu Muni continued: Since you blaspheme the Vedas and the brāhmaṇas, who are followers of the Vedic principles, it is understood that you have already taken shelter of the doctrine of atheism.

31 The Vedas give the eternal regulative principles for auspicious advancement in human civilization which have been rigidly followed in the past. The strong evidence of this principle is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is called Janārdana, the well-wisher of all living entities.

32 By blaspheming the principles of the Vedas, which are the pure and supreme path of the saintly persons, certainly you followers of Bhūtapati, Lord Śiva, will descend to the standard of atheism without a doubt.

33 The sage Maitreya said: When such cursing and countercursing was going on between Lord Śiva's followers and the parties of Dakṣa and Bhṛgu, Lord Śiva became very morose. Not saying anything, he left the arena of the sacrifice, followed by his disciples.

34 The sage Maitreya continued: O Vidura, all the progenitors of the universal population thus executed a sacrifice for thousands of years, for sacrifice is the best way to worship the Supreme Lord, Hari, the Personality of Godhead.

35 My dear Vidura, carrier of bows and arrows, all the demigods who were performing the

sacrifice took their bath at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā after completing the yajña performance. Such a bath is called avabhṛtha-snāna. After thus becoming purified in heart, they departed for their respective abodes.

SB 4.3: Talks Between Lord Śiva and Satī

1 Maitreya continued: In this manner the tension between the father-in-law and son-in-law, Dakṣa and Lord Śiva, continued for a considerably long period.

2 When Lord Brahmā appointed Dakṣa the chief of all the Prajāpatis, the progenitors of population, Dakṣa became very much puffed up.

3 Dakṣa began a sacrifice named vājapeya, and he became excessively confident of his support by Lord Brahmā. He then performed another great sacrifice, named bṛhaspati-sava.

4 While the sacrifice was being performed, many brahmarṣis, great sages, ancestral demigods and other demigods, their wives all very nicely decorated with ornaments, attended from different parts of the universe.

5-7 The chaste lady Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa, heard the heavenly denizens flying in the sky conversing about the great sacrifice being performed by her father. When she saw that from all directions the beautiful wives of the heavenly denizens, their eyes very beautifully glittering, were near her residence and were going to the sacrifice dressed in fine clothing and ornamented with earrings and necklaces with lockets, she approached her husband, the master of the bhūtas, in great anxiety, and spoke as follows.

8 Satī said: My dear Lord Śiva, your father-in-law is now executing great sacrifices, and all the demigods, having been invited by him, are going there. If you desire, we may also go.

9 I think that all my sisters must have gone to this great sacrificial ceremony with their husbands just to see their relatives. I also desire to decorate myself with the ornaments given to me by my father and go there with you to participate in that assembly.

10 My sisters, my mother's sisters and their husbands, and other affectionate relatives must be assembled there, so if I go I shall be able to see them, and I shall be able to see the flapping flags and the performance of the sacrifice by the great sages. For these reasons, my dear husband, I am very much anxious to go.

11 This manifested cosmos is a wonderful creation of the interaction of the three material modes, or the external energy of the Supreme Lord. This truth is fully known to you. Yet I am but a poor woman, and, as you know, I am not conversant with the truth. Therefore I wish to see my birthplace once more.

12 O never-born, O blue-throated one, not only my relatives but also other women, dressed in nice clothes and decorated with ornaments, are going there with their husbands and friends. Just see how their flocks of white airplanes have made the entire sky very beautiful.

13 O best of the demigods, how can the body of a daughter remain undisturbed when she hears that some festive event is taking place in her father's house? Even though you may be considering that I have not been invited, there is no harm if one goes to the house of one's friend, husband, spiritual master or father without invitation.

14 O immortal Śiva, please be kind towards me and fulfill my desire. You have accepted me as half of your body; therefore please show kindness towards me and accept my request.

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15 The great sage Maitreya said: Lord Śiva, the deliverer of the hill Kailāsa, having thus been addressed by his dear wife, replied smilingly, although at the same time he remembered the malicious, heart-piercing speeches delivered by Dakṣa before the guardians of the universal affairs.

16 The great lord replied: My dear beautiful wife, you have said that one may go to a friend's house without being invited, and this is true, provided such a friend does not find fault with the guest because of bodily identification and thereby become angry towards him.

17 Although the six qualities education, austerity, wealth, beauty, youth and heritage are for the highly elevated, one who is proud of possessing them becomes blind, and thus he loses his good sense and cannot appreciate the glories of great personalities.

18 One should not go to anyone's house, even on the consideration of his being a relative or a friend, when the man is disturbed in his mind and looks upon the guest with raised eyebrows and angry eyes.

19 Lord Śiva continued: If one is hurt by the arrows of an enemy, one is not as aggrieved as when cut by the unkind words of a relative, for such grief continues to rend one's heart day and night.

20 My dear white-complexioned wife, it is clear that of the many daughters of Dakṣa you are the pet, yet you will not be honored at his house because of your being my wife. Rather, you will be sorry that you are connected with me.

21 One who is conducted by false ego and thus always distressed, both mentally and sensually, cannot tolerate the opulence of self-realized persons. Being unable to rise to the standard of self-realization, he envies such persons as much as demons envy the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 My dear young wife, certainly friends and relatives offer mutual greetings by standing up, welcoming one another and offering obeisances. But those who are elevated to the transcendental platform, being intelligent, offer such respects to the Supersoul, who is sitting within the body, not to the person who identifies with the body.

23 I am always engaged in offering obeisances to Lord Vāsudeva in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always pure consciousness, in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Vāsudeva, is revealed without any covering.

24 Therefore you should not see your father, although he is the giver of your body, because he and his followers are envious of me. Because of his envy, O most worshipful one, he has insulted me with cruel words although I am innocent.

25 If in spite of this instruction you decide to go, neglecting my words, the future will not be good for you. You are most respectable, and when you are insulted by your relative, this insult will immediately be equal to death.

SB 4.4: Satī Quits Her Body

1 The sage Maitreya said: Lord Śiva was silent after speaking to Satī, seeing her between decisions. Satī was very much anxious to see her relatives at her father's house, but at the same time she was afraid of Lord Śiva's warning. Her mind unsettled, she moved in and out of the room as a swing moves this way and that.

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2 Satī felt very sorry at being forbidden to go see her relatives at her father's house, and due to affection for them, tears fell from her eyes. Shaking and very much afflicted, she looked at her uncommon husband, Lord Śiva, as if she were going to blast him with her vision.

3 Thereafter Satī left her husband, Lord Śiva, who had given her half his body due to affection. Breathing very heavily because of anger and bereavement, she went to the house of her father. This less intelligent act was due to her being a weak woman.

4 When they saw Satī leaving alone very rapidly, thousands of Lord Śiva's disciples, headed by Maṇimān and Mada, quickly followed her with his bull Nandi in front and accompanied by the Yakṣas.

5 The disciples of Lord Śiva arranged for Satī to be seated on the back of a bull and gave her the bird which was her pet. They bore a lotus flower, a mirror and all such paraphernalia for her enjoyment and covered her with a great canopy. Followed by a singing party with drums, conchshells and bugles, the entire procession was as pompous as a royal parade.

6 She then reached her father's house, where the sacrifice was being performed, and entered the arena where everyone was chanting the Vedic hymns. The great sages, brāhmaṇas and demigods were all assembled there, and there were many sacrificial animals, as well as pots made of clay, stone, gold, grass and skin, which were all requisite for the sacrifice.

7 When Satī, with her followers, reached the arena, because all the people assembled were afraid of Dakṣa, none of them received her well. No one welcomed her but her mother and sisters, who, with tears in their eyes and with glad faces, welcomed her and talked with her very pleasingly.

8 Although she was received by her sisters and mother, she did not reply to their words of reception, and although she was offered a seat and presents, she did not accept anything, for her father neither talked with her nor welcomed her by asking about her welfare.

9 Present in the arena of sacrifice, Satī saw that there were no oblations for her husband, Lord Śiva. Next she realized that not only had her father failed to invite Lord Śiva, but when he saw Lord Śiva's exalted wife, Dakṣa did not receive her either. Thus she became greatly angry, so much so that she looked at her father as if she were going to burn him with her eyes.

10 The followers of Lord Śiva, the ghosts, were ready to injure or kill Dakṣa, but Satī stopped them by her order. She was very angry and sorrowful, and in that mood she began to condemn the process of sacrificial fruitive activities and persons who are very proud of such unnecessary and troublesome sacrifices. She especially condemned her father, speaking against him in the presence of all.

11 The blessed goddess said: Lord Śiva is the most beloved of all living entities. He has no rival. No one is very dear to him, and no one is his enemy. No one but you could be envious of such a universal being, who is free from all enmity.

12 Twice-born Dakṣa, a man like you can simply find fault in the qualities of others. Lord Śiva, however, not only finds no faults with others' qualities, but if someone has a little good quality, he magnifies it greatly. Unfortunately, you have found fault with such a great soul.

13 It is not wonderful for persons who have accepted the transient material body as the self to engage always in deriding great souls. Such envy on the part of materialistic persons is very good because that is the way they fall down. They are diminished by the dust of the feet of great personalities.

14 Satī continued: My dear father, you are committing the greatest offense by envying Lord Śiva, whose very name, consisting of two syllables, śi and va, purifies one of all sinful activities. His order is never neglected. Lord Śiva is always pure, and no one but you envies him.

15 You are envious of Lord Śiva, who is the friend of all living entities within the three worlds. For the common man he fulfills all desires, and because of their engagement in thinking of his lotus feet, he also blesses higher personalities who are seeking after brahmānanda [transcendental bliss].

16 Do you think that greater, more respectable personalities than you, such as Lord Brahmā, do not know this inauspicious person who goes under the name Lord Śiva? He associates with the demons in the crematorium, his locks of hair are scattered all over his body, and he is garlanded with human skulls and smeared with ashes from the crematorium, but in spite of all these inauspicious qualities, great personalities like Brahmā honor him by accepting the flowers offered to his lotus feet and placing them with great respect on their heads.

17 Satī continued: If one hears an irresponsible person blaspheme the master and controller of religion, one should block his ears and go away if unable to punish him. But if one is able to kill, then one should by force cut out the blasphemer's tongue and kill the offender, and after that one should give up his own life.

18 Therefore I shall no longer bear this unworthy body, which has been received from you, who have blasphemed Lord Śiva. If someone has taken food which is poisonous, the best treatment is to vomit.

19 It is better to execute one's own occupational duty than to criticize others'. Elevated transcendentalists may sometimes forgo the rules and regulations of the Vedas, since they do not need to follow them, just as the demigods travel in space whereas ordinary men travel on the surface of the earth.

20 In the Vedas there are directions for two kinds of activities activities for those who are attached to material enjoyment and activities for those who are materially detached. In consideration of these two kinds of activities, there are two kinds of people, who have different symptoms. If one wants to see two kinds of activities in one person, that is contradictory. But both kinds of activities may be neglected by a person who is transcendently situated.

21 My dear father, the opulence we possess is impossible for either you or your flatterers to imagine, for persons who engage in fruitive activities by performing great sacrifices are concerned with satisfying their bodily necessities by eating foodstuff offered as a sacrifice. We can exhibit our opulences simply by desiring to do so. This can be achieved only by great personalities who are renounced, self-realized souls.

22 You are an offender at the lotus feet of Lord Śiva, and unfortunately I have a body produced from yours. I am very much ashamed of our bodily relationship, and I condemn myself because my body is contaminated by a relationship with a person who is an offender at the lotus feet of the greatest personality.

23 Because of our family relationship, when Lord Śiva addresses me as Dākṣāyaṇī I at once become morose, and my jolliness and my smile at once disappear. I feel very much sorry that my body, which is just like a bag, has been produced by you. I shall therefore give it up.

24 Maitreya the sage told Vidura: O annihilator of enemies, while thus speaking to her father in the arena of sacrifice, Satī sat down on the ground and faced north. Dressed in saffron garments, she sanctified herself with water and closed her eyes to absorb herself in the process

of mystic yoga.

25 First of all she sat in the required sitting posture, and then she carried the life air upwards and placed it in the position of equilibrium near the navel. Then she raised her life air, mixed with intelligence, to the heart and then gradually towards the pulmonary passage, and from there to between her eyebrows.

26 Thus, in order to give up her body, which had been so respectfully and affectionately seated on the lap of Lord Śiva, who is worshiped by great sages and saints, Satī, due to anger towards her father, began to meditate on the fiery air within the body.

27 Satī concentrated all her meditation on the holy lotus feet of her husband, Lord Śiva, who is the supreme spiritual master of all the world. Thus she became completely cleansed of all taints of sin and quit her body in a blazing fire by meditation on the fiery elements.

28 When Satī annihilated her body in anger, there was a tumultuous roar all over the universe. Why had Satī, the wife of the most respectable demigod, Lord Śiva, quit her body in such a manner?

29 It was astonishing that Dakṣa, who was Prajāpati, the maintainer of all living entities, was so disrespectful to his own daughter Satī, who was not only chaste but was also a great soul, that she gave up her body because of his neglect.

30 Dakṣa, who is so hardhearted that he is unworthy to be a brāhmaṇa, will gain extensive ill fame because of his offenses to his daughter, because of not having prevented her death, and because of his great envy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31 While people were talking among themselves about the wonderful voluntary death of Satī, the attendants who had come with her readied themselves to kill Dakṣa with their weapons.

32 They came forward forcibly, but Bhṛgu Muni saw the danger and, offering oblations into the southern side of the sacrificial fire, immediately uttered mantric hymns from the Yajur Veda by which the destroyers of yajñic performances could be killed immediately.

33 When Bhṛgu Muni offered oblations in the fire, immediately many thousands of demigods named Ṛbhū became manifested. All of them were powerful, having achieved strength from Soma, the moon.

34 When the Ṛbhū demigods attacked the ghosts and Guhyakas with half-burned fuel from the yajña fire, all these attendants of Satī fled in different directions and disappeared. This was possible simply because of brahma-tejas, brahminical power.

SB 4.5: Frustration of the Sacrifice of Dakṣa

1 Maitreya said: When Lord Śiva heard from Nārada that Satī, his wife, was now dead because of Prajāpati Dakṣa's insult to her and that his soldiers had been driven away by the Ṛbhū demigods, he became greatly angry.

2 Thus Lord Śiva, being extremely angry, pressed his lips with his teeth and immediately snatched from his head a strand of hair which blazed like electricity or fire. He stood up at once, laughing like a madman, and dashed the hair to the ground.

3 A fearful black demon as high as the sky and as bright as three suns combined was thereby created, his teeth very fearful and the hairs on his head like burning fire. He had thousands of arms, equipped with various weapons, and he was garlanded with the heads of men.

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4 When that gigantic demon asked with folded hands, “What shall I do, my lord?” Lord Śiva, who is known as Bhūtanātha, directly ordered, “Because you are born from my body, you are the chief of all my associates. Therefore, kill Dakṣa and his soldiers at the sacrifice.”

5 Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, that black person was the personified anger of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he was prepared to execute the orders of Lord Śiva. Thus, considering himself capable of coping with any power offered against him, he circumambulated Lord Śiva.

6 Many other soldiers of Lord Śiva followed the fierce personality in a tumultuous uproar. He carried a great trident, fearful enough to kill even death, and on his legs he wore bangles which seemed to roar.

7 At that time, all the persons assembled in the sacrificial arena the priests, the chief of the sacrificial performance, and the brāhmaṇas and their wives wondered where the darkness was coming from. Later they could understand that it was a dust storm, and all of them were full of anxiety.

8 Conjecturing on the origin of the storm, they said: There is no wind blowing, and no cows are passing, nor is it possible that this dust storm could be raised by plunderers, for there is still the strong King Barhi, who would punish them. Where is this dust storm blowing from? Is the dissolution of the planet now to occur?

9 Prasūti, the wife of Dakṣa, along with the other women assembled, became very anxious and said: This danger has been created by Dakṣa because of the death of Satī, who, even though completely innocent, quit her body as her sisters looked on.

10 At the time of dissolution, Lord Śiva’s hair is scattered, and he pierces the rulers of the different directions with his trident. He laughs and dances proudly, scattering their hands like flags, as thunder scatters the clouds all over the world.

11 The gigantic black man bared his fearful teeth. By the movements of his brows he scattered the luminaries all over the sky, and he covered them with his strong, piercing effulgence. Because of the miSBehavior of Dakṣa, even Lord Brahmā, Dakṣa’s father, could not have been saved from the great exhibition of anger.

12 While all the people talked amongst themselves, Dakṣa saw dangerous omens from all sides, from the earth and from the sky.

13 My dear Vidura, all the followers of Lord Śiva surrounded the arena of sacrifice. They were of short stature and were equipped with various kinds of weapons; their bodies appeared to be like those of sharks, blackish and yellowish. They ran all around the sacrificial arena and thus began to create disturbances.

14 Some of the soldiers pulled down the pillars which were supporting the pandal of sacrifice, some of them entered the female quarters, some began destroying the sacrificial arena, and some entered the kitchen and the residential quarters.

15 They broke all the pots made for use in the sacrifice, and some of them began to extinguish the sacrificial fire. Some tore down the boundary line of the sacrificial arena, and some passed urine on the arena.

16 Some blocked the way of the fleeing sages, some threatened the women assembled there, and some arrested the demigods who were fleeing the pandal.

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17 Maṇimān, one of the followers of Lord Śiva, arrested Bṛgu Muni, and Vīrabhadra, the black demon, arrested Prajāpati Dakṣa. Another follower, who was named Caṇḍeśa, arrested Pūṣā. Nandīśvara arrested the demigod Bhaga.

18 There was a continuous shower of stones, and all the priests and other members assembled at the sacrifice were put into immense misery. For fear of their lives, they dispersed in different directions.

19 Vīrabhadra tore off the mustache of Bṛgu, who was offering the sacrificial oblations with his hands in the fire.

20 Vīrabhadra immediately caught Bhaga, who had been moving his eyebrows during Bṛgu's cursing of Lord Śiva, and out of great anger thrust him to the ground and forcibly put out his eyes.

21 Just as Baladeva knocked out the teeth of Dantavakra, the King of Kaliṅga, during the gambling match at the marriage ceremony of Aniruddha, Vīrabhadra knocked out the teeth of both Dakṣa, who had shown them while cursing Lord Śiva, and Pūṣā, who by smiling sympathetically had also shown his teeth.

22 Then Vīrabhadra, the giantlike personality, sat on the chest of Dakṣa and tried to separate his head from his body with sharp weapons, but was unsuccessful.

23 He tried to cut the head of Dakṣa with hymns as well as weapons, but still it was hard to cut even the surface of the skin of Dakṣa's head. Thus Vīrabhadra was exceedingly bewildered.

24 Then Vīrabhadra saw the wooden device in the sacrificial arena by which the animals were to have been killed. He took the opportunity of this facility to behead Dakṣa.

25 Upon seeing the action of Vīrabhadra, the party of Lord Śiva was pleased and cried out joyfully, and all the bhūtas, ghosts and demons that had come made a tumultuous sound. On the other hand, the brāhmaṇas in charge of the sacrifice cried out in grief at the death of Dakṣa.

26 Vīrabhadra then took the head and with great anger threw it into the southern side of the sacrificial fire, offering it as an oblation. In this way the followers of Lord Śiva devastated all the arrangements for sacrifice. After setting fire to the whole arena, they departed for their master's abode, Kailāsa.

SB 4.6: Brahmā Satisfies Lord Śiva

1-2 All the priests and other members of the sacrificial assembly and all the demigods, having been defeated by the soldiers of Lord Śiva and injured by weapons like tridents and swords, approached Lord Brahmā with great fear. After offering him obeisances, they began to speak in detail of all the events which had taken place.

3 Both Lord Brahmā and Viṣṇu had already known that such events would occur in the sacrificial arena of Dakṣa, and knowing beforehand, they did not go to the sacrifice.

4 When Lord Brahmā heard everything from the demigods and the members who had attended the sacrifice, he replied: You cannot be happy in executing a sacrifice if you blaspheme a great personality and thereby offend his lotus feet. You cannot have happiness in that way.

5 You have excluded Lord Śiva from taking part in the sacrificial results, and therefore you are

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all offenders at his lotus feet. Still, if you go without mental reservations and surrender unto him and fall down at his lotus feet, he will be very pleased.

6 Lord Brahmā also advised them that Lord Śiva is so powerful that by his anger all the planets and their chief controllers can be destroyed immediately. Also, he said that Lord Śiva was especially sorry because he had recently lost his dear wife and was also very much afflicted by the unkind words of Dakṣa. Under the circumstances, Lord Brahmā suggested, it would behoove them to go at once and beg his pardon.

7 Lord Brahmā said that no one – not even himself, Indra, all the members assembled in the sacrificial arena or all the sages – could know how powerful Lord Śiva is. Under the circumstances, who would dare to commit an offense at his lotus feet?

8 After thus instructing all the demigods, the Pitās and the lords of the living entities, Lord Brahmā took them with him and left for the abode of Lord Śiva, known as the Kailāsa Hill.

9 The abode known as Kailāsa is full of different herbs and vegetables, and it is sanctified by Vedic hymns and mystic yoga practice. Thus the residents of that abode are demigods by birth and have all mystic powers. Besides them there are other human beings, who are known as Kinnaras and Gandharvas and are accompanied by their beautiful wives, who are known as Apsarās, or angels.

10 Kailāsa is full of mountains filled with all kinds of valuable jewels and minerals and surrounded by all varieties of valuable trees and plants. The top of the hill is nicely decorated by various types of deer.

11 There are many waterfalls, and in the mountains there are many beautiful caves in which the very beautiful wives of the mystics are found.

12 On Kailāsa Hill there is always the rhythmical sound of the peacocks' sweet vibrations and the bees' humming. Cuckoos are always singing, and other birds whisper amongst themselves.

13 There are tall trees with straight branches that appear to call the sweet birds, and when herds of elephants pass through the hills, it appears that the Kailāsa Hill moves with them. When the waterfalls resound, it appears that Kailāsa Hill does also.

14-15 The whole of Kailāsa Hill is decorated with various kinds of trees, of which the following names may be mentioned: mandāra, pārijāta, sarala, tamāla, tāla, kovidāra, āsana, arjuna, āmra-jāti [mango], kadamba, dhūli-kadamba, nāga, punnāga, campaka, pāṭala, aśoka, bakula, kunda and kurabaka. The entire hill is decorated with such trees, which produce flowers with fragrant aromas.

16 There are other trees also which decorate the hill, such as the golden lotus flower, the cinnamon tree, mālatī, kubja, mallikā and mādhavī.

17 Kailāsa Hill is also decorated with such trees as kata, jackfruit, julara, banyan trees, plakṣas, nyagrodhas and trees producing asafetida. Also there are trees of betel nuts and bhūrja-patra, as well as rājapūga, blackberries and similar other trees.

18 There are mango trees, priyāla, madhuka and iṅguda. Besides these there are other trees, like thin bamboos, kīcaka and varieties of other bamboo trees, all decorating the tract of Kailāsa Hill.

19-20 There are different kinds of lotus flowers, such as kumuda, utpala and śatapatra. The

forest appears to be a decorated garden, and the small lakes are full of various kinds of birds who whisper very sweetly. There are many kinds of other animals also, like deer, monkeys, boars, lions, ṛkṣas, śalyakas, forest cows, forest asses, tigers, small deer, buffalo and many other animals, who are fully enjoying their lives.

21 There are varieties of deer, such as karṇāntra, ekapada, aśvāsya, vṛka and kastūrī, the deer which bears musk. Besides the deer there are many banana trees which decorate the small hillside lakes very nicely.

22 There is a small lake named Alakanandā in which Satī used to take her bath, and that lake is especially auspicious. All the demigods, after seeing the specific beauty of Kailāsa Hill, were struck with wonder at the great opulence to be found there.

23 Thus the demigods saw the wonderfully beautiful region known as Alakā in the forest known as Saugandhika, which means “full of fragrance.” The forest is known as Saugandhika because of its abundance of lotus flowers.

24 They also saw the two rivers named Nandā and Alakanandā. These two rivers are sanctified by the dust of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda.

25 My dear Kṣattā, Vidura, the celestial damsels come down to those rivers in their airplanes with their husbands, and after sexual enjoyment, they enter the water and enjoy sprinkling their husbands with water.

26 After the damsels of the heavenly planets bathe in the water, it becomes yellowish and fragrant due to the kuṅkuma from their bodies. Thus the elephants come to bathe there with their wives, the she-elephants, and they also drink the water, although they are not thirsty.

27 The airplanes of the heavenly denizens are bedecked with pearls, gold and many valuable jewels. The heavenly denizens are compared to clouds in the sky decorated with occasional flashes of electric lightning.

28 While traveling, the demigods passed over the forest known as Saugandhika, which is full of varieties of flowers, fruits and desire trees. While passing over the forest, they also saw the regions of Yakṣeśvara.

29 In that celestial forest there were many birds whose necks were colored reddish and whose sweet sounds mixed with the humming of the bees. The lakes were abundantly decorated with crying swans as well as strong-stemmed lotus flowers.

30 All these atmospheric influences unsettled the forest elephants who flocked together in the sandalwood forest, and the blowing wind agitated the minds of the damsels there for further sexual enjoyment.

31 They also saw that the bathing ghāṭas and their staircases were made of vaidūrya-maṇi. The water was full of lotus flowers. Passing by such lakes, the demigods reached a place where there was a great banyan tree.

32 That banyan tree was eight hundred miles high, and its branches spread over six hundred miles around. The tree cast a fine shade which permanently cooled the temperature, yet there was no noise of birds.

33 The demigods saw Lord Śiva sitting under that tree, which was competent to give perfection to mystic yogīs and deliver all people. As grave as time eternal, he appeared to have given up all anger.

34 Lord Śiva sat there, surrounded by saintly persons like Kuvera, the master of the Guhyakas, and the four Kumāras, who were already liberated souls. Lord Śiva was grave and saintly.

35 The demigods saw Lord Śiva situated in his perfection as the master of the senses, knowledge, fruitive activities and the path of achieving perfection. He was the friend of the entire world, and by virtue of his full affection for everyone, he was very auspicious.

36 He was seated on a deerskin and was practicing all forms of austerity. Because his body was smeared with ashes, he looked like an evening cloud. On his hair was the sign of a half-moon, a symbolic representation.

37 He was seated on a straw mattress and speaking to all present, including the great sage Nārada, to whom he specifically spoke about the Absolute Truth.

38 His left leg was placed on his right thigh, and his left hand was placed on his left thigh. [This sitting posture is called vīrāsana.] In his right hand he held rudrākṣa beads, and his finger was in the mode of argument.

39 All the sages and demigods, headed by Indra, offered their respectful obeisances unto Lord Śiva with folded hands. Lord Śiva was dressed in saffron garments and absorbed in trance, thus appearing to be the foremost of all sages.

40 Lord Śiva's lotus feet were worshiped by both the demigods and demons, but still, in spite of his exalted position, as soon as he saw that Lord Brahmā was there among all the other demigods, he immediately stood up and offered him respect by bowing down and touching his lotus feet, just as Vāmanadeva offered His respectful obeisances to Kaśyapa Muni.

41 All the sages who were sitting with Lord Śiva, such as Nārada and others, also offered their respectful obeisances to Lord Brahmā. After being so worshiped, Lord Brahmā, smiling, began to speak to Lord Śiva.

42 Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord Śiva, I know that you are the controller of the entire material manifestation, the combination father and mother of the cosmic manifestation, and the Supreme Brahman beyond the cosmic manifestation as well. I know you in that way.

43 My dear lord, you create this cosmic manifestation, maintain it, and annihilate it by expansion of your personality, exactly as a spider creates, maintains and winds up its web.

44 My dear lord, Your Lordship has introduced the system of sacrifices through the agency of Dakṣa, and thus one may derive the benefits of religious activities and economic development. Under your regulative principles, the institution of the four varṇās and āśramas is respected. The brāhmaṇas therefore vow to follow this system strictly.

45 O most auspicious lord, you have ordained the heavenly planets, the spiritual Vaikuṅṭha planets and the impersonal Brahman sphere as the respective destinations of the performers of auspicious activities. Similarly, for others, who are miscreants, you have destined different kinds of hells which are horrible and ghastly. Yet sometimes it is found that their destinations are just the opposite. It is very difficult to ascertain the cause of this.

46 My dear Lord, devotees who have fully dedicated their lives unto your lotus feet certainly observe your presence as Paramātmā in each and every being, and as such they do not differentiate between one living being and another. Such persons treat all living entities equally. They never become overwhelmed by anger like animals, who can see nothing without differentiation.

47 Persons who observe everything with differentiation, who are simply attached to fruitive activities, who are mean-minded, who are always pained to see the flourishing condition of others and who thus give distress to them by uttering harsh and piercing words have already been killed by providence. Thus there is no need for them to be killed again by an exalted personality like you.

48 My dear lord, if in some places materialists, who are already bewildered by the insurmountable illusory energy of the Supreme Godhead, sometimes commit offenses, a saintly person, with compassion, does not take this seriously. Knowing that they commit offenses because they are overpowered by the illusory energy, he does not show his prowess to counteract them.

49 My dear lord, you are never bewildered by the formidable influence of the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you are omniscient and should be merciful and compassionate toward those who are bewildered by the same illusory energy and are very much attached to fruitive activities.

50 My dear Lord Śiva, you are a shareholder of a portion of the sacrifice, and you are the giver of the result. The bad priests did not deliver your share, and therefore you destroyed everything, and the sacrifice remains unfinished. Now you can do the needful and take your rightful share.

51 My dear lord, by your mercy the performer of the sacrifice [King Dakṣa] may get back his life, Bhaga may get back his eyes, Bhṛgu his mustache, and Pūṣā his teeth.

52 O Lord Śiva, may the demigods and the priests whose limbs have been broken by your soldiers recover from the injuries by your grace.

53 O destroyer of the sacrifice, please take your portion of the sacrifice and let the sacrifice be completed by your grace.

SB 4.7: The Sacrifice Performed by Dakṣa

1 The sage Maitreya said: O mighty-armed Vidura, Lord Śiva, being thus pacified by the words of Lord Brahmā, spoke as follows in answer to Lord Brahmā's request.

2 Lord Śiva said: My dear father, Brahmā, I do not mind the offenses created by the demigods. Because these demigods are childish and less intelligent, I do not take a serious view of their offenses, and I have punished them only in order to right them.

3 Lord Śiva continued: Since the head of Dakṣa has already been burned to ashes, he will have the head of a goat. The demigod known as Bhaga will be able to see his share of sacrifice through the eyes of Mitra.

4 The demigod Pūṣā will be able to chew only through the teeth of his disciples, and if alone, he will have to satisfy himself by eating dough made from chickpea flour. But the demigods who have agreed to give me my share of the sacrifice will recover from all their injuries.

5 Those who have had their arms cut off will have to work with the arms of Aśvinī-kumāra, and those whose hands were cut off will have to do their work with the hands of Pūṣā. The priests will also have to act in that manner. As for Bhṛgu, he will have the beard from the goat's head.

6 The great sage Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, all the personalities present were very much satisfied in heart and soul upon hearing the words of Lord Śiva, who is the best among the

benedictors.

7 Thereafter, Bhr̥gu, the chief of the great sages, invited Lord Śiva to come to the sacrificial arena. Thus the demigods, accompanied by the sages, Lord Śiva, and Lord Brahmā, all went to the place where the great sacrifice was being performed.

8 After everything was executed exactly as directed by Lord Śiva, Dakṣa's body was joined to the head of the animal meant to be killed in the sacrifice.

9 When the animal's head was fixed on the body of King Dakṣa, Dakṣa was immediately brought to consciousness, and as he awakened from sleep, the King saw Lord Śiva standing before him.

10 At that time, when Dakṣa saw Lord Śiva, who rides upon a bull, his heart, which was polluted by envy of Lord Śiva, was immediately cleansed, just as the water in a lake is cleansed by autumn rains.

11 King Dakṣa wanted to offer prayers to Lord Śiva, but as he remembered the ill-fated death of his daughter Satī, his eyes filled with tears, and in bereavement his voice choked up and he could not say anything.

12 At this time, King Dakṣa, afflicted by love and affection, was very much awakened to his real senses. With great endeavor, he pacified his mind, checked his feelings, and with pure consciousness began to offer prayers to Lord Śiva.

13 King Dakṣa said: My dear Lord Śiva, I committed a great offense against you, but you are so kind that instead of withdrawing your mercy, you have done me a great favor by punishing me. You and Lord Viṣṇu never neglect even useless, unqualified brāhmaṇas. Why, then, should you neglect me, who am engaged in performing sacrifices?

14 My dear great and powerful Lord Śiva, you were created first from the mouth of Lord Brahmā in order to protect the brāhmaṇas in pursuing education, austerities, vows and self-realization. As protector of the brāhmaṇas, you always protect the regulative principles they follow, just as a cowherd boy keeps a stick in his hand to give protection to the cows.

15 I did not know your full glories. For this reason, I threw arrows of sharp words at you in the open assembly, although you did not take them into account. I was going down to hell because of my disobedience to you, who are the most respectable personality, but you took compassion upon me and saved me by awarding punishment. I request that you be pleased by your own mercy, since I cannot satisfy you by my words.

16 The great sage Maitreya said: Thus being pardoned by Lord Śiva, King Dakṣa, with the permission of Lord Brahmā, again began the performance of the yajña, along with the great learned sages, the priests and others.

17 Thereafter, in order to resume the activities of sacrifice, the brāhmaṇas first arranged to purify the sacrificial arena of the contamination caused by the touch of Vīrabhadra and the other ghostly followers of Lord Śiva. Then they arranged to offer into the fire the oblations known as puroḍāśa.

18 The great sage Maitreya said to Vidura: My dear Vidura, as soon as King Dakṣa offered the clarified butter with Yajur Veda mantras in sanctified meditation, Lord Viṣṇu appeared there in His original form as Nārāyaṇa.

19 Lord Nārāyaṇa was seated on the shoulder of Stotra, or Garuḍa, who had big wings. As soon as the Lord appeared, all directions were illuminated, diminishing the luster of Brahmā and the others present.

20 His complexion was blackish, His garment yellow like gold, and His helmet as dazzling as the sun. His hair was bluish, the color of black bees, and His face was decorated with earrings. His eight hands held a conchshell, wheel, club, lotus flower, arrow, bow, shield and sword, and they were decorated with golden ornaments such as bangles and bracelets. His whole body resembled a blossoming tree beautifully decorated with various kinds of flowers.

21 Lord Viṣṇu looked extraordinarily beautiful because the goddess of fortune and a garland were situated on His chest. His face was beautifully decorated with a smiling attitude which can captivate the entire world, especially the devotees. Fans of white hair appeared on both sides of the Lord like white swans, and the white canopy overhead looked like the moon.

22 As soon as Lord Viṣṇu was visible, all the demigods Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, the Gandharvas and all present there immediately offered their respectful obeisances by falling down straight before Him.

23 In the presence of the glaring effulgence of the bodily luster of Nārāyaṇa, everyone else's luster faded away, and everyone stopped speaking. Fearful with awe and veneration, all present touched their hands to their heads and prepared to offer their prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Adhokṣaja.

24 Although the mental scope of even demigods like Brahmā was unable to comprehend the unlimited glories of the Supreme Lord, they were all able to perceive the transcendental form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His grace. Only by such grace could they offer their respectful prayers according to their different capacities.

25 When Lord Viṣṇu accepted the oblations offered in the sacrifice, Dakṣa, the Prajāpati, began with great pleasure to offer respectful prayers unto Him. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually the master of all sacrifices and preceptor of all the Prajāpatis, and He is served even by such personalities as Nanda and Sunanda.

26 Dakṣa addressed the Supreme Personality of Godhead: My dear Lord, You are transcendental to all speculative positions. You are completely spiritual, devoid of all fear, and You are always in control of the material energy. Even though You appear in the material energy, You are situated transcendently. You are always free from material contamination because You are completely self-sufficient.

27 The priests addressed the Lord, saying: O Lord, transcendental to material contamination, by the curse offered by Lord Śiva's men we have become attached to fruitive activities, and thus we are now fallen and therefore do not know anything about You. On the contrary, we are now involved in the injunctions of the three departments of the Vedic knowledge under the plea of executing rituals in the name of yajña. We know that You have made arrangements for distributing the respective shares of the demigods.

28 The members of the assembly addressed the Lord: O exclusive shelter for all who are situated in troubled life, in this formidable fort of conditional existence the time element, like a snake, is always looking for an opportunity to strike. This world is full of ditches of so-called distress and happiness, and there are many ferocious animals always ready to attack. The fire of lamentation is always blazing, and the mirage of false happiness is always alluring, but one has no shelter from them. Thus foolish persons live in the cycle of birth and death, always overburdened in discharging their so-called duties, and we do not know when they will accept

the shelter of Your lotus feet.

29 Lord Śiva said: My dear Lord, my mind and consciousness are always fixed on Your lotus feet, which, as the source of all benediction and the fulfillment of all desires, are worshiped by all liberated great sages because Your lotus feet are worthy of worship. With my mind fixed on Your lotus feet, I am no longer disturbed by persons who blaspheme me, claiming that my activities are not purified. I do not mind their accusations, and I excuse them out of compassion, just as You exhibit compassion toward all living entities.

30 Śrī Bhṛgu said: My dear Lord, all living entities, beginning from the highest, namely Lord Brahmā, down to the ordinary ant, are under the influence of the insurmountable spell of illusory energy, and thus they are ignorant of their constitutional position. Everyone believes in the concept of the body, and all are thus submerged in the darkness of illusion. They are actually unable to understand how You live in every living entity as the Supersoul, nor can they understand Your absolute position. But You are the eternal friend and protector of all surrendered souls. Therefore, please be kind toward us and forgive all our offenses.

31 Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, Your personality and eternal form cannot be understood by any person who is trying to know You through the different processes of acquiring knowledge. Your position is always transcendental to the material creation, whereas the empiric attempt to understand You is material, as are its objectives and instruments.

32 King Indra said: My dear Lord, Your transcendental form with eight hands and weapons in each of them appears for the welfare of the entire universe, and it is very pleasing to the mind and eyes. In such a form, Your Lordship is always prepared to punish the demons, who are envious of Your devotees.

33 The wives of the performers of the sacrifice said: My dear Lord, this sacrifice was arranged under the instruction of Brahmā, but unfortunately Lord Śiva, being angry at Dakṣa, devastated the entire scene, and because of his anger the animals meant for sacrifice are lying dead. Therefore the preparations of the yajña have been lost. Now, by the glance of Your lotus eyes, the sanctity of this sacrificial arena may be again invoked.

34 The sages prayed: Dear Lord, Your activities are most wonderful, and although You do everything by Your different potencies, You are not at all attached to such activities. You are not even attached to the goddess of fortune, who is worshiped by the great demigods like Brahmā, who pray to achieve her mercy.

35 The Siddhas prayed: Like an elephant that has suffered in a forest fire but can forget all its troubles by entering a river, our minds, O Lord, always merge in the nectarean river of Your transcendental pastimes, and they desire never to leave such transcendental bliss, which is as good as the pleasure of merging in the Absolute.

36 The wife of Dakṣa prayed as follows: My dear Lord, it is very fortunate that You have appeared in this arena of sacrifice. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, and I request that You be pleased on this occasion. The sacrificial arena is not beautiful without You, just as a body is not beautiful without the head.

37 The governors of various planets spoke as follows: Dear Lord, we believe only in our direct perception, and therefore we see You as a creation of the material world. But under the circumstances we do not know whether we have actually seen You with our material senses. By our material senses we can simply perceive the cosmic manifestation, but You are beyond the five elements. You are the sixth.

38 The great mystics said: Dear Lord, persons who see You as nondifferent from themselves, knowing that You are the Supersoul of all living entities, are certainly very, very dear to You. You are very favorable toward those who engage in devotional service, accepting You as the Lord and themselves as the servants. By Your mercy, You are always inclined in their favor.

39 We offer our respectful obeisances unto the Supreme, who has created varieties of manifestations and put them under the spell of the three qualities of the material world in order to create, maintain and annihilate them. He Himself is not under the control of the external energy: in His personal feature He is completely devoid of the variegated manifestation of material qualities, and He is under no illusion of false identification.

40 The personified Vedas said: We offer our respectful obeisances unto You, the Lord, the shelter of the quality of goodness and therefore the source of all religion, austerity and penance, for You are transcendental to all material qualities and no one knows You or Your actual situation.

41 The fire-god said: My dear Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because by Your favor I am as luminous as blazing fire and I accept the offerings mixed with butter and offered in sacrifice. The five kinds of offerings according to the Yajur Veda are all Your different energies, and You are worshiped by five kinds of Vedic hymns. Sacrifice means You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

42 The demigods said: Dear Lord, formerly, when there was a devastation, You conserved all the different energies of material manifestation. At that time, all the inhabitants of the higher planets, represented by such liberated souls as Sanaka, were meditating on You by philosophical speculation. You are therefore the original person, and You rest in the water of devastation on the bed of the Śeṣa snake. Now, today, You are visible to us, who are all Your servants. Please give us protection.

43 The Gandharvas said: Dear Lord, all the demigods, including Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā and Indra, along with Marīci and the other great sages, are all only differentiated parts and parcels of Your body. You are the Supreme Almighty Great; the whole creation is just like a plaything for You. We always accept You as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

44 The Vidyādhara said: Dear Lord, this human form of body is meant for attaining the highest perfectional objective, but, impelled by Your external energy, the living entity misidentifies himself with his body and with the material energy, and therefore, influenced by māyā, he wants to become happy by material enjoyment. He is misled and always attracted by temporary, illusory happiness. But Your transcendental activities are so powerful that if one engages in hearing and chanting such topics, he can be delivered from illusion.

45 The brāhmaṇas said: Dear Lord, You are sacrifice personified. You are the offering of clarified butter, You are the fire, You are the chanting of Vedic hymns by which the sacrifice is conducted, You are the fuel, You are the flame, You are the kuśa grass, and You are the sacrificial pots. You are the priests who perform the yajña, You are the demigods headed by Indra, and You are the sacrificial animal. Everything that is sacrificed is You or Your energy.

46 Dear Lord, O personified Vedic knowledge, in the past millennium, long, long ago, when You appeared as the great boar incarnation, You picked up the world from the water, as an elephant picks up a lotus flower from a lake. When You vibrated transcendental sound in that gigantic form of a boar, the sound was accepted as a sacrificial hymn, and great sages like Sanaka meditated upon it and offered prayers for Your glorification.

47 Dear Lord, we were awaiting Your audience because we have been unable to perform the yajñas according to the Vedic rituals. We pray unto You, therefore, to be pleased with us. Simply by chanting Your holy name, one can surpass all obstacles. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You in Your presence.

48 Śrī Maitreya said: After Lord Viṣṇu was glorified by all present, Dakṣa, his consciousness purified, arranged to begin again the yajña which had been devastated by the followers of Lord Śiva.

49 Maitreya continued: My dear sinless Vidura, Lord Viṣṇu is actually the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices, yet because of His being the Supersoul of all living entities, He was satisfied simply with His share of the sacrificial offerings. He therefore addressed Dakṣa in a pleasing attitude.

50 Lord Viṣṇu replied: Brahmā, Lord Śiva and I are the supreme cause of the material manifestation. I am the Supersoul, the self-sufficient witness. But impersonally there is no difference between Brahmā, Lord Śiva and Me.

51 The Lord continued: My dear Dakṣa Dvija, I am the original Personality of Godhead, but in order to create, maintain and annihilate this cosmic manifestation, I act through My material energy, and according to the different grades of activity, My representations are differently named.

52 The Lord continued: One who is not in proper knowledge thinks that demigods like Brahmā and Śiva are independent, or he even thinks that the living entities are independent.

53 A person with average intelligence does not think the head and other parts of the body to be separate. Similarly, My devotee does not differentiate Viṣṇu, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, from any thing or any living entity.

54 The Lord continued: One who does not consider Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva or the living entities in general to be separate from the Supreme, and who knows Brahman, actually realizes peace; others do not.

55 The sage Maitreya said: Thus Dakṣa, the head of all Prajāpatis, having been nicely instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, worshiped Lord Viṣṇu. After worshiping Him by performing the prescribed sacrificial ceremonies, Dakṣa separately worshiped Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva.

56 With all respect, Dakṣa worshiped Lord Śiva with his share of the remnants of the yajña. After finishing the ritualistic sacrificial activities, he satisfied all the other demigods and the other people assembled there. Then, after finishing all these duties with the priests, he took a bath and was fully satisfied.

57 Thus worshiping the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu by the ritualistic performance of sacrifice, Dakṣa was completely situated on the religious path. Moreover, all the demigods who had assembled at the sacrifice blessed him that he might increase his piety, and then they left.

58 Maitreya said: I have heard that after giving up the body she had received from Dakṣa, Dākṣāyaṇī (his daughter) took her birth in the kingdom of the Himālayas. She was born as the daughter of Menā. I heard this from authoritative sources.

59 Ambikā [goddess Durgā], who was known as Dākṣāyaṇī [Satī], again accepted Lord Śiva as her husband, just as different energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead act during the

course of a new creation.

60 Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, I heard this story of the Dakṣa yajña, which was devastated by Lord Śiva, from Uddhava, a great devotee and a disciple of Bṛhaspati.

61 The great sage Maitreya concluded: If one hears and again narrates, with faith and devotion, this story of the Dakṣa yajña as it was conducted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, then certainly one is cleared of all contamination of material existence, O son of Kuru.

SB 4.8: Dhruva Mahārāja Leaves Home for the Forest

1 The great sage Maitreya said: The four great Kumāra sages headed by Sanaka, as well as Nārada, Ṛbhu, Haṁsa, Aruṇi and Yati, all sons of Brahmā, did not live at home, but became ūrdhva-retā, or naiṣṭhika-brahmacārīs, unadulterated celibates.

2 Another son of Lord Brahmā was Irreligion, whose wife's name was Falsity. From their combination were born two demons named Dambha, or Bluffing, and Māyā, or Cheating. These two demons were taken by a demon named Nirṛti, who had no children.

3 Maitreya told Vidura: O great soul, from Dambha and Māyā were born Greed and Nikṛti, or Cunning. From their combination came children named Krodha [Anger] and Himsā [Envy], and from their combination were born Kali and his sister Durukti (Harsh Speech).

4 O greatest of all good men, by the combination of Kali and Harsh Speech were born children named Mṛtyu (Death) and Bhīti (Fear). From the combination of Mṛtyu and Bhīti came children named Yātanā (Excessive Pain) and Niraya (Hell).

5 My dear Vidura, I have summarily explained the causes of devastation. One who hears this description three times attains piety and washes the sinful contamination from his soul.

6 Maitreya continued: O best of the Kuru dynasty, I shall now describe to you the descendants of Svāyambhuva Manu, who was born of a part of a plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

7 Svāyambhuva Manu had two sons by his wife, Śatarūpā, and the names of the sons were Uttānapāda and Priyavrata. Because both of them were descendants of a plenary expansion of Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they were very competent to rule the universe to maintain and protect the citizens.

8 King Uttānapāda had two queens, named Sunīti and Suruci. Suruci was much more dear to the King; Sunīti, who had a son named Dhruva, was not his favorite.

9 Once upon a time, King Uttānapāda was patting the son of Suruci, Uttama, placing him on his lap. Dhruva Mahārāja was also trying to get on the King's lap, but the King did not very much welcome him.

10 While the child, Dhruva Mahārāja, was trying to get on the lap of his father, Suruci, his stepmother, became very envious of the child, and with great pride she began to speak so as to be heard by the King himself.

11 Queen Suruci told Dhruva Mahārāja: My dear child, you do not deserve to sit on the throne or on the lap of the King. Surely you are also the son of the King, but because you did not take your birth from my womb, you are not qualified to sit on your father's lap.

12 My dear child, you are unaware that you were born not of my womb but of another woman. Therefore you should know that your attempt is doomed to failure. You are trying to fulfill a desire which is impossible to fulfill.

13 If you at all desire to rise to the throne of the King, then you have to undergo severe austerities. First of all you must satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, and then, when you are favored by Him because of such worship, you shall have to take your next birth from my womb.

14 The sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, as a snake, when struck by a stick, breathes very heavily, Dhruva Mahārāja, having been struck by the strong words of his stepmother, began to breathe very heavily because of great anger. When he saw that his father was silent and did not protest, he immediately left the palace and went to his mother.

15 When Dhruva Mahārāja reached his mother, his lips were trembling in anger, and he was crying very grievously. Queen Sunīti immediately lifted her son onto her lap, while the palace residents who had heard all the harsh words of Suruci related everything in detail. Thus Sunīti also became greatly aggrieved.

16 This incident was unbearable to Sunīti's patience. She began to burn as if in a forest fire, and in her grief she became just like a burnt leaf and so lamented. As she remembered the words of her co-wife, her bright, lotuslike face filled with tears, and thus she spoke.

17 She also was breathing very heavily, and she did not know the factual remedy for the painful situation. Not finding any remedy, she said to her son: My dear son, don't wish for anything inauspicious for others. Anyone who inflicts pains upon others suffers himself from that pain.

18 Sunīti said: My dear boy, whatever has been spoken by Suruci is so, because the King, your father, does not consider me his wife or even his maidservant. He feels ashamed to accept me. Therefore it is a fact that you have taken birth from the womb of an unfortunate woman, and by being fed from her breast you have grown up.

19 My dear boy, whatever has been spoken by Suruci, your stepmother, although very harsh to hear, is factual. Therefore, if you desire at all to sit on the same throne as your stepbrother, Uttama, then give up your envious attitude and immediately try to execute the instructions of your stepmother. Without further delay, you must engage yourself in worshiping the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

20 Sunīti continued: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so great that simply by worshiping His lotus feet, your great-grandfather, Lord Brahmā, acquired the necessary qualifications to create this universe. Although he is unborn and is the chief of all living creatures, he is situated in that exalted post because of the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whom even great yogīs worship by controlling the mind and regulating the life air [prāṇa].

21 Sunīti informed her son: Your grandfather Svāyambhuva Manu executed great sacrifices with distribution of charity, and thereby, with unflinching faith and devotion, he worshiped and satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By acting in that way, he achieved the greatest success in material happiness and afterwards achieved liberation, which is impossible to obtain by worshiping the demigods.

22 My dear boy, you also should take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees. Persons seeking liberation from the cycle of birth and death always

take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord in devotional service. Becoming purified by executing your allotted occupation, just situate the Supreme Personality of Godhead in your heart, and without deviating for a moment, engage always in His service.

23 My dear Dhruva, as far as I am concerned, I do not find anyone who can mitigate your distress but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose eyes are like lotus petals. Many demigods such as Lord Brahmā seek the pleasure of the goddess of fortune, but the goddess of fortune herself, with a lotus flower in her hand, is always ready to render service to the Supreme Lord.

24 The great sage Maitreya continued: The instruction of Dhruva Mahārāja's mother, Sunīti, was actually meant for fulfilling his desired objective. Therefore, after deliberate consideration and with intelligence and fixed determination, he left his father's house.

25 The great sage Nārada overheard this news, and understanding all the activities of Dhruva Mahārāja, he was struck with wonder. He approached Dhruva, and touching the boy's head with his all-virtuous hand, he spoke as follows.

26 How wonderful are the powerful kṣatriyas! They cannot tolerate even a slight infringement upon their prestige. Just imagine! This boy is only a small child, yet harsh words from his stepmother proved unbearable to him.

27 The great sage Nārada told Dhruva: My dear boy, you are only a little boy whose attachment is to sports and other frivolities. Why are you so affected by words insulting your honor?

28 My dear Dhruva, if you feel that your sense of honor has been insulted, you still have no cause for dissatisfaction. This kind of dissatisfaction is another feature of the illusory energy; every living entity is controlled by his previous actions, and therefore there are different varieties of life for enjoying or suffering.

29 The process of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very wonderful. One who is intelligent should accept that process and be satisfied with whatever comes, favorable or unfavorable, by His supreme will.

30 Now you have decided to undertake the mystic process of meditation under the instruction of your mother, just to achieve the mercy of the Lord, but in my opinion such austerities are not possible for any ordinary man. It is very difficult to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31 Nārada Muni continued: After trying this process for many, many births and remaining unattached to material contamination, placing themselves continually in trance and executing many types of austerities, many mystic yogīs were unable to find the end of the path of God realization.

32 For this reason, my dear boy, you should not endeavor for this; it will not be successful. It is better that you go home. When you are grown up, by the mercy of the Lord you will get a chance for these mystic performances. At that time you may execute this function.

33 One should try to keep himself satisfied in any condition of life whether distress or happiness which is offered by the supreme will. A person who endures in this way is able to cross over the darkness of nescience very easily.

34 Every man should act like this: when he meets a person more qualified than himself, he should be very pleased; when he meets someone less qualified than himself, he should be compassionate toward him; and when he meets someone equal to himself, he should make

friendship with him. In this way one is never affected by the threefold miseries of this material world.

35 Dhruva Mahārāja said: My dear Lord Nāradaḥ, for a person whose heart is disturbed by the material conditions of happiness and distress, whatever you have so kindly explained for attainment of peace of mind is certainly a very good instruction. But as far as I am concerned, I am covered by ignorance, and this kind of philosophy does not touch my heart.

36 My dear lord, I am very impudent for not accepting your instructions, but this is not my fault. It is due to my having been born in a kṣatriya family. My stepmother, Suruci, has pierced my heart with her harsh words. Therefore your valuable instruction does not stand in my heart.

37 O learned brāhmaṇa, I want to occupy a position more exalted than any yet achieved within the three worlds by anyone, even by my father and grandfather. If you will oblige, kindly advise me of an honest path to follow by which I can achieve the goal of my life.

38 My dear lord, you are a worthy son of Lord Brahmā, and you travel, playing on your musical instrument, the vīṇā, for the welfare of the entire universe. You are like the sun, which rotates in the universe for the benefit of all living beings.

39 The sage Maitreya continued: The great personality Nārada Muni, upon hearing the words of Dhruva Mahārāja, became very compassionate toward him, and in order to show him his causeless mercy, he gave him the following expert advice.

40 The great sage Nārada told Dhruva Mahārāja: The instruction given by your mother, Sunīti, to follow the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is just suitable for you. You should therefore completely absorb yourself in the devotional service of the Lord.

41 Any person who desires the fruits of the four principles religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and, at the end, liberation, should engage himself in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for worship of His lotus feet yields the fulfillment of all of these.

42 My dear boy, I therefore wish all good fortune for you. You should go to the bank of the Yamunā, where there is a virtuous forest named Madhuvana, and there be purified. Just by going there, one draws nearer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always lives there.

43 Nārada Muni instructed: My dear boy, in the waters of the Yamunā River, which is known as Kālindī, you should take three baths daily because the water is very auspicious, sacred and clear. After bathing, you should perform the necessary regulative principles for aṣṭāṅga-yoga and then sit down on your āsana [sitting place] in a calm and quiet position.

44 After sitting on your seat, practice the three kinds of breathing exercises, and thus gradually control the life air, the mind and the senses. Completely free yourself from all material contamination, and with great patience begin to meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

45 [The form of the Lord is described herein.] The Lord's face is perpetually very beautiful and pleasing in attitude. To the devotees who see Him, He appears never to be displeased, and He is always prepared to award benedictions to them. His eyes, His nicely decorated eyebrows, His raised nose and His broad forehead are all very beautiful. He is more beautiful than all the demigods.

46 Nārada Muni continued: The Lord's form is always youthful. Every limb and every part of

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His body is properly formed, free from defect. His eyes and lips are pinkish like the rising sun. He is always prepared to give shelter to the surrendered soul, and anyone so fortunate as to look upon Him feels all satisfaction. The Lord is always worthy to be the master of the surrendered soul, for He is the ocean of mercy.

47 The Lord is further described as having the mark of Śrīvatsa, or the sitting place of the goddess of fortune, and His bodily hue is deep bluish. The Lord is a person, He wears a garland of flowers, and He is eternally manifest with four hands, which hold [beginning from the lower left hand] a conchshell, wheel, club and lotus flower.

48 The entire body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, is decorated. He wears a valuable jeweled helmet, necklaces and bracelets, His neck is adorned with the Kaustubha jewel, and He is dressed in yellow silk garments.

49 The Lord is decorated with small golden bells around His waist, and His lotus feet are decorated with golden ankle bells. All His bodily features are very attractive and pleasing to the eyes. He is always peaceful, calm and quiet and very pleasing to the eyes and the mind.

50 Real yogīs meditate upon the transcendental form of the Lord as He stands on the whorl of the lotus of their hearts, the jewellike nails of His lotus feet glittering.

51 The Lord is always smiling, and the devotee should constantly see the Lord in this form, as He looks very mercifully toward the devotee. In this way the meditator should look toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the bestower of all benedictions.

52 One who meditates in this way, concentrating his mind upon the always auspicious form of the Lord, is very soon freed from all material contamination, and he does not come down from meditation upon the Lord.

53 O son of the King, now I shall speak unto you the mantra which is to be chanted with this process of meditation. One who carefully chants this mantra for seven nights can see the perfect human beings flying in the sky.

54 Om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya. This is the twelve-syllable mantra for worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa. One should install the physical forms of the Lord, and with the chanting of the mantra one should offer flowers and fruits and other varieties of foodstuffs exactly according to the rules and regulations prescribed by authorities. But this should be done in consideration of place, time, and attendant conveniences and inconveniences.

55 One should worship the Lord by offering pure water, pure flower garlands, fruits, flowers and vegetables which are available in the forest, or by collecting newly grown grasses, small buds of flowers or even the skins of trees, and if possible, by offering tulasī leaves, which are very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

56 It is possible to worship a form of the Lord made of physical elements such as earth, water, pulp, wood and metal. In the forest one can make a form with no more than earth and water and worship Him according to the above principles. A devotee who has full control over his self should be very sober and peaceful and must be satisfied simply with eating whatever fruits and vegetables are available in the forest.

57 My dear Dhruva, besides worshiping the Deity and chanting the mantra three times a day, you should meditate upon the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different incarnations, as exhibited by His supreme will and personal potencies.

58 One should follow in the footsteps of previous devotees regarding how to worship the

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Supreme Lord with the prescribed paraphernalia, or one should offer worship within the heart by reciting the mantra to the Personality of Godhead, who is nondifferent from the mantra.

59-60 Anyone who thus engages in the devotional service of the Lord, seriously and sincerely, with his mind, words and body, and who is fixed in the activities of the prescribed devotional methods, is blessed by the Lord according to his desire. If a devotee desires material religiosity, economic development, sense gratification or liberation from the material world, he is awarded these results.

61 If one is very serious about liberation, he must stick to the process of transcendental loving service, engaging twenty-four hours a day in the highest stage of ecstasy, and he must certainly be aloof from all activities of sense gratification.

62 When Dhruva Mahārāja, the son of the King, was thus advised by the great sage Nārada, he circumambulated Nārada, his spiritual master, and offered him respectful obeisances. Then he started for Madhuvana, which is always imprinted with the lotus footprints of Lord Kṛṣṇa and which is therefore especially auspicious.

63 After Dhruva entered Madhuvana Forest to execute devotional service, the great sage Nārada thought it wise to go to the King to see how he was faring within the palace. When Nārada Muni approached, the King received him properly, offering him due obeisances. After being seated comfortably, Nārada began to speak.

64 The great sage Nārada inquired: My dear King, your face appears to be withering up, and you look like you have been thinking of something for a very long time. Why is that? Have you been hampered in following your path of religious rites, economic development and sense gratification?

65 The King replied: O best of the brāhmaṇas, I am very much addicted to my wife, and I am so fallen that I have abandoned all merciful behavior, even to my son, who is only five years old. I have banished him and his mother, even though he is a great soul and a great devotee.

66 My dear brāhmaṇa, the face of my son was just like a lotus flower. I am thinking of his precarious condition. He is unprotected, and he might be very hungry. He might have lain down somewhere in the forest, and the wolves might have attacked him to eat his body.

67 Alas, just see how I was conquered by my wife! Just imagine my cruelty! Out of love and affection the boy was trying to get up on my lap, but I did not receive him, nor did I even pat him for a moment. Just imagine how hardhearted I am.

68 The great sage Nārada replied: My dear King, please do not be aggrieved about your son. He is well protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although you have no actual information of his influence, his reputation is already spread all over the world.

69 My dear King, your son is very competent. He will perform activities which would be impossible even for great kings and sages. Very soon he will complete his task and come back home. You should know that he will also spread your reputation all over the world.

70 The great Maitreya continued: The King, Uttānapāda, after being advised by Nārada Muni, practically gave up all duties in relation with his kingdom, which was very vast and wide, opulent like the goddess of fortune, and he simply began to think of his son Dhruva.

71 Elsewhere, Dhruva Mahārāja, having arrived at Madhuvana, took his bath in the river Yamunā and observed fasting in the night with great care and attention. After that, as advised

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by the great sage Nārada, he engaged himself in worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

72 For the first month Dhruva Mahārāja ate only fruits and berries on every third day, only to keep his body and soul together, and in this way he progressed in his worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

73 In the second month Dhruva Mahārāja ate only every six days, and for his eatables he took dry grass and leaves. Thus he continued his worship.

74 In the third month he drank water only every nine days. Thus he remained completely in trance and worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is adored by selected verses.

75 In the fourth month Dhruva Mahārāja became a complete master of the breathing exercise, and thus he inhaled air only every twelfth day. In this way he became completely fixed in his position and worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

76 By the fifth month, Mahārāja Dhruva, the son of the King, had controlled his breathing so perfectly that he was able to stand on only one leg, just as a column stands, without motion, and concentrate his mind fully on the Parabrahman.

77 He completely controlled his senses and their objects, and in this way he fixed his mind, without diversion to anything else, upon the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

78 When Dhruva Mahārāja thus captured the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the refuge of the total material creation and who is the master of all living entities, the three worlds began to tremble.

79 As Dhruva Mahārāja, the King's son, kept himself steadily standing on one leg, the pressure of his big toe pushed down half the earth, just as an elephant being carried on a boat rocks the boat left and right with his every step.

80 When Dhruva Mahārāja became practically one in heaviness with Lord Viṣṇu, the total consciousness, due to his fully concentrating and his closing all the holes of his body, the total universal breathing became choked up, and all the great demigods in all the planetary systems felt suffocated and thus took shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

81 The demigods said: Dear Lord, You are the refuge of all moving and nonmoving living entities. We feel all living entities to be suffocating, their breathing processes choked up. We have never experienced such a thing. Since You are the ultimate shelter of all surrendered souls, we have therefore approached You; kindly save us from this danger.

82 The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied: My dear demigods, do not be perturbed by this. It is due to the severe austerity and full determination of the son of King Uttānapāda, who is now fully absorbed in thought of Me. He has obstructed the universal breathing process. You can safely return to your respective homes. I shall stop this boy in his severe acts of austerities, and you will be saved from this situation.

SB 4.9: Dhruva Mahārāja Returns Home

1 The great sage Maitreya told Vidura: When the demigods were thus reassured by the Personality of Godhead, they were freed from all fears, and after offering their obeisances they returned to their heavenly planets. Then the Lord, who is nondifferent from the Sahasraśīrṣā incarnation, got on the back of Garuḍa, who carried Him to the Madhuvana Forest to see His servant Dhruva.

2 The form of the Lord, which was brilliant like lightning and in which Dhruva Mahārāja, in his mature yogic process, was fully absorbed in meditation, all of a sudden disappeared. Thus Dhruva was perturbed, and his meditation broke. But as soon as he opened his eyes he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally present, just as he had been seeing the Lord in his heart.

3 When Dhruva Mahārāja saw his Lord just in front of him, he was greatly agitated and offered Him obeisances and respect. He fell flat before Him like a rod and became absorbed in love of Godhead. Dhruva Mahārāja, in ecstasy, looked upon the Lord as if he were drinking the Lord with his eyes, kissing the lotus feet of the Lord with his mouth, and embracing the Lord with his arms.

4 Although Dhruva Mahārāja was a small boy, he wanted to offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in suitable language. But because he was inexperienced, he could not adjust himself immediately. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being situated in everyone's heart, could understand Dhruva Mahārāja's awkward position. Out of His causeless mercy He touched His conchshell to the forehead of Dhruva Mahārāja, who stood before Him with folded hands.

5 At that time Dhruva Mahārāja became perfectly aware of the Vedic conclusion and understood the Absolute Truth and His relationship with all living entities. In accordance with the line of devotional service to the Supreme Lord, whose fame is widespread, Dhruva, who in the future would receive a planet which would never be annihilated, even during the time of dissolution, offered his deliberate and conclusive prayers.

6 Dhruva Mahārāja said: My dear Lord, You are all-powerful. After entering within me, You have enlivened all my sleeping senses—my hands, legs, ears, touch sensation, life force and especially my power of speech. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

7 My Lord, You are the supreme one, but by Your different energies You appear differently in the spiritual and material worlds. You create the total energy of the material world by Your external potency, and after creation You enter within the material world as the Supersoul. You are the Supreme Person, and through the temporary modes of material nature You create varieties of manifestation, just as fire, entering into wood of different shapes, burns brilliantly in different varieties.

8 O my master, Lord Brahmā is fully surrendered unto You. In the beginning You gave him knowledge, and thus he could see and understand the entire universe, just as a person awakens from sleep and visualizes his immediate duties. You are the only shelter of all persons who desire liberation, and You are the friend of all who are distressed. How, therefore, can a learned person who has perfect knowledge ever forget You?

9 Persons who worship You simply for the sense gratification of this bag of skin are certainly influenced by Your illusory energy. In spite of having You, who are like a desire tree and are the cause of liberation from birth and death, foolish persons, such as me, desire benedictions from You for sense gratification, which is available even for those who live in hellish conditions.

10 My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of brahmānanda, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since brahmānanda is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the

heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time.

11 Dhruva Mahārāja continued: O unlimited Lord, kindly bless me so that I may associate with great devotees who engage in Your transcendental loving service constantly, as the waves of a river constantly flow. Such transcendental devotees are completely situated in an uncontaminated state of life. By the process of devotional service I shall surely be able to cross the nescient ocean of material existence, which is filled with the waves of blazing, firelike dangers. It will be very easy for me, for I am becoming mad to hear about Your transcendental qualities and pastimes, which are eternally existent.

12 O Lord who have a lotus navel, if a person happens to associate with a devotee whose heart always hankers after Your lotus feet, seeking always their fragrance, he is never attached to the material body or, in a bodily relationship, to offspring, friends, home, wealth and wife, which are very, very dear to materialistic persons. Indeed, he does not care for them.

13 My dear Lord, O Supreme Unborn, I know that the different varieties of living entities, such as animals, trees, birds, reptiles, demigods and human beings, are spread throughout the universe, which is caused by the total material energy, and I know that they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest; but I have never experienced the supreme form I behold as I see You now. Now all kinds of methods of theorizing have come to an end.

14 My dear Lord, at the end of each millennium the Supreme Personality of Godhead Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu dissolves everything manifested within the universe into His belly. He lies down on the lap of Śeṣa Nāga, from His navel sprouts a golden lotus flower on a stem, and on that lotus Lord Brahmā is created. I can understand that You are the same Supreme Godhead. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

15 My Lord, by Your unbroken transcendental glance You are the supreme witness of all stages of intellectual activities. You are eternally liberated, Your existence is situated in pure goodness, and You are existent in the Supersoul without change. You are the original Personality of Godhead, full with six opulences, and You are eternally the master of the three modes of material nature. Thus, You are always different from the ordinary living entities. As Lord Viṣṇu, You maintain all the affairs of the entire universe, and yet You stand aloof and are the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices.

16 My dear Lord, in Your impersonal manifestation of Brahman there are always two opposing elements—knowledge and ignorance. Your multi-energies are continually manifest, but the impersonal Brahman, which is undivided, original, changeless, unlimited and blissful, is the cause of the material manifestation. Because You are the same impersonal Brahman, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

17 My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the supreme personified form of all benediction. Therefore, for one who abides in Your devotional service with no other desire, worshiping Your lotus feet is better than becoming king and lording it over a kingdom. That is the benediction of worshiping Your lotus feet. To ignorant devotees like me, You are the causelessly merciful maintainer, just like a cow, who takes care of the newly born calf by supplying milk and giving it protection from attack.

18 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, when Dhruva Mahārāja, who had good intentions in his heart, finished his prayer, the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees and servants, congratulated him, speaking as follows.

19 The Personality of Godhead said: My dear Dhruva, son of the King, you have executed

pious vows, and I also know the desire within your heart. Although your desire is very ambitious and very difficult to fulfill, I shall favor you with its fulfillment. All good fortune unto you.

20-21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead continued: My dear Dhruva, I shall award you the glowing planet known as the polestar, which will continue to exist even after the dissolution at the end of the millennium. No one has ever ruled this planet, which is surrounded by all the solar systems, planets and stars. All the luminaries in the sky circumambulate this planet, just as bulls tread around a central pole for the purpose of crushing grains. Keeping the polestar to their right, all the stars inhabited by the great sages like Dharma, Agni, Kaśyapa and Śukra circumambulate this planet, which continues to exist even after the dissolution of all others.

22 After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of his kingdom, you will rule continuously the entire world for thirty-six thousand years, and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old.

23 The Lord continued: Sometime in the future your brother, Uttama, will go hunting in the forest, and while absorbed in hunting, he will be killed. Your stepmother, Suruci, being maddened upon the death of her son, will go to search him out in the forest, but she will be devoured by a forest fire.

24 The Lord continued: I am the heart of all sacrifices. You will be able to perform many great sacrifices and also give great charities. In this way you will be able to enjoy the blessings of material happiness in this life, and at the time of your death you will be able to remember Me.

25 The Personality of Godhead continued: My dear Dhruva, after your material life in this body, you will go to My planet, which is always offered obeisances by the residents of all other planetary systems. It is situated above the planets of the seven ṛṣis, and having gone there you will never have to come back again to this material world.

26 The great sage Maitreya said: After being worshiped and honored by the boy [Dhruva Mahārāja], and after offering him His abode, Lord Viṣṇu, on the back of Garuḍa, returned to His abode as Dhruva Mahārāja looked on.

27 Despite having achieved the desired result of his determination by worshiping the lotus feet of the Lord, Dhruva Mahārāja was not very pleased. Thus he returned to his home.

28 Śrī Vidura inquired: My dear brāhmaṇa, the abode of the Lord is very difficult to attain. It can be attained only by pure devotional service, which alone pleases the most affectionate, merciful Lord. Dhruva Mahārāja achieved this position even in one life, and he was very wise and conscientious. Why, then, was he not very pleased?

29 Maitreya answered: Dhruva Mahārāja's heart, which was pierced by the arrows of the harsh words of his stepmother, was greatly aggrieved, and thus when he fixed upon his goal of life he did not forget her misbehavior. He did not demand actual liberation from this material world, but at the end of his devotional service, when the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared before him, he was simply ashamed of the material demands he had in his mind.

30 Dhruva Mahārāja thought to himself: To endeavor to be situated in the shade of the lotus feet of the Lord is not an ordinary task, because even the great brahmacārīs headed by Sanandana, who practiced aṣṭāṅga-yoga in trance, attained the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet only after many, many births. Within six months I achieved the same result, yet due to my thinking differently from the Lord, I fell down from my position.

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31 Alas, just look at me! I am so unfortunate. I approached the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can immediately cut the chain of the repetition of birth and death, but still, out of my foolishness, I prayed for things which are perishable.

32 Since all the demigods who are situated in the higher planetary system will have to come down again, they are all envious of my being elevated to Vaikuṅṭhaloka by devotional service. These intolerant demigods have dissipated my intelligence, and only for this reason could I not accept the genuine benediction of the instructions of Sage Nārada.

33 Dhruva Mahārāja lamented: I was under the influence of the illusory energy; being ignorant of the actual facts, I was sleeping on her lap. Under a vision of duality, I saw my brother as my enemy, and falsely I lamented within my heart, thinking, “They are my enemies.”

34 It is very difficult to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but in my case, although I have satisfied the Supersoul of the whole universe, I have prayed only for useless things. My activities were exactly like treatment given to a person who is already dead. Just see how unfortunate I am, for in spite of meeting the Supreme Lord, who can cut one’s link with birth and death, I have prayed for the same conditions again.

35 Because of my state of complete foolishness and paucity of pious activities, although the Lord offered me His personal service, I wanted material name, fame and prosperity. My case is just like that of the poor man who, when he satisfied a great emperor who wanted to give him anything he might ask, out of ignorance asked only a few broken grains of husked rice.

36 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, persons like you, who are pure devotees of the lotus feet of Mukunda [the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can offer liberation] and who are always attached to the honey of His lotus feet, are always satisfied in serving at the lotus feet of the Lord. In any condition of life, such persons remain satisfied, and thus they never ask the Lord for material prosperity.

37 When King Uttānapāda heard that his son Dhruva was coming back home, as if coming back to life after death, he could not put his faith in this message, for he was doubtful of how it could happen. He considered himself the most wretched, and therefore he thought that it was not possible for him to attain such good fortune.

38 Although he could not believe the words of the messenger, he had full faith in the word of the great sage Nārada. Thus he was greatly overwhelmed by the news, and he immediately offered the messenger a highly valuable necklace in great satisfaction.

39-40 Then King Uttānapāda, being very eager to see the face of his lost son, mounted a chariot drawn by excellent horses and bedecked with golden filigree. Taking with him many learned brāhmaṇas, all the elderly personalities of his family, his officers, his ministers and his immediate friends, he immediately left the city. As he proceeded in this parade, there were auspicious sounds of conchshells, kettledrums, flutes, and the chanting of Vedic mantras to indicate all good fortune.

41 Both the queens of King Uttānapāda, namely Sunīti and Suruci, along with his other son, Uttama, appeared in the procession. The queens were seated on a palanquin.

42-43 Upon seeing Dhruva Mahārāja approaching the neighboring small forest, King Uttānapāda with great haste got down from his chariot. He had been very anxious for a long time to see his son Dhruva, and therefore with great love and affection he went forward to embrace his long-lost boy. Breathing very heavily, the King embraced him with both arms. But Dhruva Mahārāja was not the same as before; he was completely sanctified by spiritual

advancement due to having been touched by the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44 Reunion with Dhruva Mahārāja fulfilled King Uttānapāda's long-cherished desire, and for this reason he smelled Dhruva's head again and again and bathed him with torrents of very cold tears.

45 Then Dhruva Mahārāja, the foremost of all nobles, first of all offered his obeisances at the feet of his father and was honored by his father with various questions. He then bowed his head at the feet of his two mothers.

46 Suruci, the younger mother of Dhruva Mahārāja, seeing that the innocent boy had fallen at her feet, immediately picked him up, embracing him with her hands, and with tears of feeling she blessed him with the words "My dear boy, long may you live!"

47 Unto one who has transcendental qualities due to friendly behavior with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all living entities offer honor, just as water automatically flows down by nature.

48 The two brothers Uttama and Dhruva Mahārāja also exchanged their tears. They were overwhelmed by the ecstasy of love and affection, and when they embraced one another, the hair on their bodies stood up.

49 Sunīti, the real mother of Dhruva Mahārāja, embraced the tender body of her son, who was dearer to her than her own life, and thus forgot all material grief, for she was very pleased.

50 My dear Vidura, Sunīti was the mother of a great hero. Her tears, together with the milk flowing from her breasts, wet the whole body of Dhruva Mahārāja. This was a great, auspicious sign.

51 The residents of the palace praised the Queen: Dear Queen, your beloved son was lost a long time ago, and it is your great fortune that he now has come back. It appears, therefore, that your son will be able to protect you for a very long time and will put an end to all your material pangs.

52 Dear Queen, you must have worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who delivers His devotees from the greatest danger. Persons who constantly meditate upon Him surpass the course of birth and death. This perfection is very difficult to achieve.

53 The sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, when everyone was thus praising Dhruva Mahārāja, the King was very happy, and he had Dhruva and his brother seated on the back of a she-elephant. Thus he returned to his capital, where he was praised by all classes of men.

54 The whole city was decorated with columns of banana trees containing bunches of fruits and flowers, and betel-nut trees with leaves and branches were seen here and there. There were also many gates set up which were structured to give the appearance of sharks.

55 At each and every gate there were burning lamps and big waterpots decorated with differently colored cloth, strings of pearls, flower garlands and hanging mango leaves.

56 In the capital city there were many palaces, city gates and surrounding walls, which were already very, very beautiful, and on this occasion all of them were decorated with golden ornaments. The domes of the city palaces glittered, as did the domes of the beautiful airplanes which hovered over the city.

57 All the quadrangles, lanes and streets in the city, and the raised sitting places at the crossings, were thoroughly cleansed and sprinkled with sandalwood water; and auspicious grains such as rice and barley, and flowers, fruits and many other auspicious presentations, were scattered all over the city.

58-59 Thus as Dhruva Mahārāja passed on the road, from every place in the neighborhood all the gentle household ladies assembled to see him, and out of maternal affection they offered their blessings, showering him with white mustard seed, barley, curd, water, newly grown grass, fruits and flowers. In this way Dhruva Mahārāja, while hearing the pleasing songs sung by the ladies, entered the palace of his father.

60 Dhruva Mahārāja thereafter lived in his father's palace, which had walls bedecked with highly valuable jewels. His affectionate father took particular care of him, and he dwelled in that house just as the demigods live in their palaces in the higher planetary systems.

61 The bedding in the palace was as white as the foam of milk and was very soft. The bedsteads were made of ivory with embellishments of gold, and the chairs, benches and other sitting places and furniture were made of gold.

62 The palace of the King was surrounded by walls made of marble with many engravings made of valuable jewels like sapphires, which depicted beautiful women with shining jewel lamps in their hands.

63 The King's residence was surrounded by gardens wherein there were varieties of trees brought from the heavenly planets. In those trees there were pairs of sweetly singing birds and almost-mad bumblebees, which made a very relishable buzzing sound.

64 There were emerald staircases which led to lakes full of variously colored lotus flowers and lilies, and swans, kāraṇḍavas, cakravākas, cranes and similar other valuable birds were visible in those lakes.

65 The saintly King Uttānapāda, hearing of the glorious deeds of Dhruva Mahārāja and personally seeing also how influential and great he was, felt very satisfied, for Dhruva's activities were wonderful to the supreme degree.

66 When, after concentration, King Uttānapāda saw that Dhruva Mahārāja was suitably mature to take charge of the kingdom and that his ministers were agreeable and the citizens were also very fond of him, he enthroned Dhruva as emperor of this planet.

67 After considering his advanced age and deliberating on the welfare of his spiritual self, King Uttānapāda detached himself from worldly affairs and entered the forest.

SB 4.10: Dhruva Mahārāja's Fight with the Yakṣas

1 The great sage Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, thereafter Dhruva Mahārāja married the daughter of Prajāpati Śiśumāra, whose name was Bhrami, and two sons named Kalpa and Vatsara were born of her.

2 The greatly powerful Dhruva Mahārāja had another wife, named Ilā, who was the daughter of the demigod Vāyu. By her he begot a son named Utkala and a very beautiful daughter.

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3 Dhruva Mahārāja's younger brother Uttama, who was still unmarried, once went on a hunting excursion and was killed by a powerful Yakṣa in the Himālaya Mountains. Along with him, his mother, Suruci, also followed the path of her son [she died].

4 When Dhruva Mahārāja heard of the killing of his brother Uttama by the Yakṣas in the Himālaya Mountains, being overwhelmed with lamentation and anger, he got on his chariot and went out for victory over the city of the Yakṣas, Alakāpurī.

5 Dhruva Mahārāja went to the northern direction of the Himālayan range. In a valley he saw a city full of ghostly persons who were followers of Lord Śiva.

6 Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, as soon as Dhruva Mahārāja reached Alakāpurī, he immediately blew his conchshell, and the sound reverberated throughout the entire sky and in every direction. The wives of the Yakṣas became very much frightened. From their eyes it was apparent that they were full of anxiety.

7 O hero Vidura, the greatly powerful heroes of the Yakṣas, unable to tolerate the resounding vibration of the conchshell of Dhruva Mahārāja, came forth from their city with weapons and attacked Dhruva.

8 Dhruva Mahārāja, who was a great charioteer and certainly a great bowman also, immediately began to kill them by simultaneously discharging arrows three at a time.

9 When the heroes of the Yakṣas saw that all their heads were being thus threatened by Dhruva Mahārāja, they could very easily understand their awkward position, and they concluded that they would certainly be defeated. But, as heroes, they lauded the action of Dhruva.

10 Just like serpents, who cannot tolerate being trampled upon by anyone's feet, the Yakṣas, being intolerant of the wonderful prowess of Dhruva Mahārāja, threw twice as many arrows six from each of their soldiers and thus they very valiantly exhibited their prowess.

11-12 The Yakṣa soldiers were 130,000 strong, all greatly angry and all desiring to defeat the wonderful activities of Dhruva Mahārāja. With full strength they showered upon Mahārāja Dhruva, along with his chariot and charioteer, various types of feathered arrows, pariḡhas [iron bludgeons], nistrimśas [swords], prāśāsūlas [tridents], paraśvadhās [lances], śaktis [pikes], ṛṣṭis [spears] and bhuśuṇḍī weapons.

13 Dhruva Mahārāja was completely covered by an incessant shower of weapons, just as a mountain is covered by incessant rainfall.

14 All the Siddhas from the higher planetary systems were observing the fight from the sky, and when they saw that Dhruva Mahārāja had been covered by the incessant arrows of the enemy, they roared tumultuously, "The grandson of Manu, Dhruva, is now lost!" They cried that Dhruva Mahārāja was just like the sun and that now he had set within the ocean of the Yakṣas.

15 The Yakṣas, being temporarily victorious, exclaimed that they had conquered Dhruva Mahārāja. But in the meantime Dhruva's chariot suddenly appeared, just as the sun suddenly appears from within foggy mist.

16 Dhruva Mahārāja's bow and arrows twanged and hissed, causing lamentation in the hearts of his enemies. He began to shoot incessant arrows, shattering all their different weapons, just as the blasting wind scatters the assembled clouds in the sky.

17 The sharp arrows released from the bow of Dhruva Mahārāja pierced the shields and bodies of the enemy, like the thunderbolts released by the King of heaven, which dismantle the bodies of the mountains.

18-19 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, the heads of those who were cut to pieces by the arrows of Dhruva Mahārāja were decorated very beautifully with earrings and turbans. The legs of their bodies were as beautiful as golden palm trees, their arms were decorated with golden bracelets and armlets, and on their heads there were very valuable helmets bedecked with gold. All these ornaments lying on that battlefield were very attractive and could bewilder the mind of a hero.

20 The remaining Yakṣas who somehow or other were not killed had their limbs cut to pieces by the arrows of the great warrior Dhruva Mahārāja. Thus they began to flee, just as elephants flee when defeated by a lion.

21 Dhruva Mahārāja, the best of human beings, observed that in that great battlefield not one of the opposing soldiers was left standing with proper weapons. He then desired to see the city of Alakāpurī, but he thought to himself, “No one knows the plans of the mystic Yakṣas.”

22 In the meantime, while Dhruva Mahārāja, doubtful of his mystic enemies, was talking with his charioteer, they heard a tremendous sound, as if the whole ocean were there, and they found that from the sky a great dust storm was coming over them from all directions.

23 Within a moment the whole sky was overcast with dense clouds, and severe thundering was heard. There was glittering electric lightning and severe rainfall.

24 My dear faultless Vidura, in that rainfall there was blood, mucus, pus, stool, urine and marrow falling heavily before Dhruva Mahārāja, and there were trunks of bodies falling from the sky.

25 Next, a great mountain was visible in the sky, and from all directions hailstones fell, along with lances, clubs, swords, iron bludgeons and great pieces of stone.

26 Dhruva Mahārāja also saw many big serpents with angry eyes, vomiting forth fire and coming to devour him, along with groups of mad elephants, lions and tigers.

27 Then, as if it were the time of the dissolution of the whole world, the fierce sea with foaming waves and great roaring sounds came forward before him.

28 The demon Yakṣas are by nature very heinous, and by their demoniac power of illusion they can create many strange phenomena to frighten one who is less intelligent.

29 When the great sages heard that Dhruva Mahārāja was overpowered by the illusory mystic tricks of the demons, they immediately assembled to offer him auspicious encouragement.

30 All the sages said: Dear Dhruva, O son of King Uttānapāda, may the Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Śārṅgadhanvā, who relieves the distresses of His devotees, kill all your threatening enemies. The holy name of the Lord is as powerful as the Lord Himself. Therefore, simply by chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, many men can be fully protected from fierce death without difficulty. Thus a devotee is saved.

SB 4.11: Svāyambhuva Manu Advises Dhruva Mahārāja to Stop Fighting

1Śrī Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, when Dhruva Mahārāja heard the encouraging words of the great sages, he performed the ācamana by touching water and then took up his arrow made by

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Lord Nārāyaṇa and fixed it upon his bow.

2 As soon as Dhruva Mahārāja joined the nārāyaṇāstra arrow to his bow, the illusion created by the Yakṣas was immediately vanquished, just as all material pains and pleasures are vanquished when one becomes fully cognizant of the self.

3 Even as Dhruva Mahārāja fixed the weapon made by Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi onto his bow, arrows with golden shafts and feathers like the wings of a swan flew out from it. They entered the enemy soldiers with a great hissing sound, just as peacocks enter a forest with tumultuous crowing.

4 Those sharp arrows dismayed the enemy soldiers, who became almost unconscious, but various Yakṣas on the battlefield, in a rage against Dhruva Mahārāja, somehow or other collected their weapons and attacked. Just as serpents agitated by Garuḍa rush towards Garuḍa with upraised hoods, all the Yakṣa soldiers prepared to overcome Dhruva Mahārāja with their upraised weapons.

5 When Dhruva Mahārāja saw the Yakṣas coming forward, he immediately took his arrows and cut the enemies to pieces. Separating their arms, legs, heads and bellies from their bodies, he delivered the Yakṣas to the planetary system which is situated above the sun globe and which is attainable only by first-class brahmācārīs, who have never discharged their semen.

6 When Svāyambhuva Manu saw that his grandson Dhruva Mahārāja was killing so many of the Yakṣas who were not actually offenders, out of his great compassion he approached Dhruva with great sages to give him good instruction.

7 Lord Manu said: My dear son, please stop. It is not good to become unnecessarily angry it is the path to hellish life. Now you are going beyond the limit by killing Yakṣas who are actually not offenders.

8 My dear son, the killing of the sinless Yakṣas which you have undertaken is not at all approved by authorities, and it does not befit our family, which is supposed to know the laws of religion and irreligion.

9 My dear son, it has been proved that you are very much affectionate towards your brother and are greatly aggrieved at his being killed by the Yakṣas, but just consider: for one Yakṣa's offense, you have killed many others, who are innocent.

10 One should not accept the body as the self and thus, like the animals, kill the bodies of others. This is especially forbidden by saintly persons, who follow the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

11 It is very difficult to achieve the spiritual abode of Hari, in the Vaikuṅṭha planets, but you are so fortunate that you are already destined to go to that abode by worshipping Him as the supreme abode of all living entities.

12 Because you are a pure devotee of the Lord, the Lord is always thinking of you, and you are also recognized by all His confidential devotees. Your life is meant for exemplary behavior. I am therefore surprised why have you undertaken such an abominable task?

13 The Lord is very satisfied with His devotee when the devotee greets other people with tolerance, mercy, friendship and equality.

14 One who actually satisfies the Supreme Personality of Godhead during one's lifetime becomes liberated from the gross and subtle material conditions. Thus being freed from all

material modes of nature, he achieves unlimited spiritual bliss.

15 The creation of the material world begins with the five elements, and thus everything, including the body of a man or a woman, is created of these elements. By the sexual life of man and woman, the number of men and women in this material world is further increased.

16 Manu continued: My dear King Dhruva, it is simply by the illusory material energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by the interaction of the three modes of material nature that creation, maintenance and annihilation take place.

17 My dear Dhruva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is uncontaminated by the material modes of nature. He is the remote cause of the creation of this material cosmic manifestation. When He gives the impetus, many other causes and effects are produced, and thus the whole universe moves, just as iron moves by the integrated force of a magnet.

18 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, by His inconceivable supreme energy, time, causes the interaction of the three modes of material nature, and thus varieties of energy become manifest. It appears that He is acting, but He is not the actor. He is killing, but He is not the killer. Thus it is understood that only by His inconceivable power is everything happening.

19 My dear Dhruva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is ever existing, but in the form of time He is the killer of everything. He has no beginning, although He is the beginning of everything, nor is He ever exhaustible, although everything is exhausted in due course of time. The living entities are created through the agency of the father and killed through the agency of death, but He is perpetually free of birth and death.

20 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His feature of eternal time, is present in the material world and is neutral towards everyone. No one is His ally, and no one is His enemy. Within the jurisdiction of the time element, everyone enjoys or suffers the result of his own karma, or fruitive activities. As, when the wind blows, small particles of dust fly in the air, so, according to one's particular karma, one suffers or enjoys material life.

21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is all-powerful, and He awards the results of one's fruitive activities. Thus, although one living entity's duration of life is very small whereas that of another is very great, He is always in His transcendental position, and there is no question of lessening or increasing His duration of life.

22 The differentiation among varieties of life and their suffering and enjoyment is explained by some to be the result of karma. Others say it is due to nature, others due to time, others due to fate, and still others say that it is due to desire.

23 The Absolute Truth, Transcendence, is never subject to the understanding of imperfect sensory endeavor, nor is He subject to direct experience. He is the master of varieties of energies, like the full material energy, and no one can understand His plans or actions; therefore it should be concluded that although He is the original cause of all causes, no one can know Him by mental speculation.

24 My dear son, those Yakṣas, who are descendants of Kuvera, are not actually the killers of your brother; the birth and death of every living entity are caused by the Supreme, who is certainly the cause of all causes.

25 The Supreme Personality of Godhead creates this material world, maintains it, and annihilates it in due course of time, but because He is transcendental to such activities, He is never affected by ego in such action or by the modes of material nature.

26 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supersoul of all living entities. He is the controller and maintainer of everyone; through the agency of His external energy, He creates, maintains and annihilates everyone.

27 My dear boy Dhruva, please surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the ultimate goal of the progress of the world. Everyone, including the demigods headed by Lord Brahmā, is working under His control, just as a bull, prompted by a rope in its nose, is controlled by its owner.

28 My dear Dhruva, at the age of only five years you were very grievously afflicted by the words of your mother's co-wife, and you very boldly gave up the protection of your mother and went to the forest to engage in the yogic process for realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As a result of this you have already achieved the topmost position in all the three worlds.

29 Therefore, my dear Dhruva, please turn your attention to the Supreme Person, who is the infallible Brahman. Face the Supreme Personality of Godhead in your original position, and thus, by self-realization, you will find this material differentiation to be merely flickering.

30 Thus regaining your natural position and rendering service unto the Supreme Lord, who is the all-powerful reservoir of all pleasure and who lives in all living entities as the Supersoul, you will very soon forget the illusory understanding of "I" and "my."

31 My dear King, just consider what I have said to you, which will act as medicinal treatment upon disease. Control your anger, for anger is the foremost enemy on the path of spiritual realization. I wish all good fortune for you. Please follow my instructions.

32 A person who desires liberation from this material world should not fall under the control of anger because when bewildered by anger one becomes a source of dread for all others.

33 My dear Dhruva, you thought that the Yakṣas killed your brother, and therefore you have killed great numbers of them. But by this action you have agitated the mind of Lord Śiva's brother Kuvera, who is the treasurer of the demigods. Please note that your actions have been very disrespectful to Kuvera and Lord Śiva.

34 For this reason, my son, you should immediately pacify Kuvera with gentle words and prayers, and thus his wrath may not affect our family.

35 Thus Svāyambhuva Manu, after giving instruction to Dhruva Mahārāja, his grandson, received respectful obeisances from him. Then Lord Manu and the great sages went back to their respective homes.

SB 4.12: Dhruva Mahārāja Goes Back to Godhead

1 The great sage Maitreya said: My dear Vidura, Dhruva Mahārāja's anger subsided, and he completely ceased killing Yakṣas. When Kuvera, the most blessed master of the treasury, learned this news, he appeared before Dhruva. While being worshiped by Yakṣas, Kinnaras and Cāraṇas, he spoke to Dhruva Mahārāja, who stood before him with folded hands.

2 The master of the treasury, Kuvera, said: O sinless son of a kṣatriya, I am very glad to know that under the instruction of your grandfather you have given up your enmity, although it is very difficult to avoid. I am very pleased with you.

3 Actually, you have not killed the Yakṣas, nor have they killed your brother, for the ultimate cause of generation and annihilation is the eternal time feature of the Supreme Lord.

4 Misidentification of oneself and others as “I” and “you” on the basis of the bodily concept of life is a product of ignorance. This bodily concept is the cause of repeated birth and death, and it makes us go on continuously in material existence.

5 My dear Dhruva, come forward. May the Lord always grace you with good fortune. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond our sensory perception, is the Supersoul of all living entities, and thus all entities are one, without distinction. Therefore begin rendering service unto the transcendental form of the Lord, who is the ultimate shelter of all living entities.

6 Engage yourself fully, therefore, in the devotional service of the Lord, for only He can deliver us from this entanglement of materialistic existence. Although the Lord is attached to His material potency, He is aloof from her activities. Everything in this material world is happening by the inconceivable potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

7 My dear Dhruva Mahārāja, son of Mahārāja Uttānapāda, we have heard that you are constantly engaged in transcendental loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known for His lotus navel. You are therefore worthy to take all benedictions from us. Please, therefore, ask without hesitation whatever benediction you want from me.

8 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, when thus asked to accept a benediction from Kuvera the Yakṣarāja [King of the Yakṣas], Dhruva Mahārāja, that most elevated pure devotee, who was an intelligent and thoughtful king, begged that he might have unflinching faith in and remembrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for thus a person can cross over the ocean of nescience very easily, although it is very difficult for others to cross.

9 The son of Iḍaviḍā, Lord Kuvera, was very pleased, and happily he gave Dhruva Mahārāja the benediction he wanted. Thereafter he disappeared from Dhruva’s presence, and Dhruva Mahārāja returned to his capital city.

10 As long as he remained at home, Dhruva Mahārāja performed many great ceremonial sacrifices in order to please the enjoyer of all sacrifices, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Prescribed ceremonial sacrifices are especially meant to please Lord Viṣṇu, who is the objective of all such sacrifices and who awards the resultant benedictions.

11 Dhruva Mahārāja rendered devotional service unto the Supreme, the reservoir of everything, with unrelenting force. While carrying out his devotional service to the Lord, he could see that everything is situated in Him only and that He is situated in all living entities. The Lord is called Acyuta because He never fails in His prime duty, to give protection to His devotees.

12 Dhruva Mahārāja was endowed with all godly qualities; he was very respectful to the devotees of the Supreme Lord and very kind to the poor and innocent, and he protected religious principles. With all these qualifications, he was considered to be the direct father of all the citizens.

13 Dhruva Mahārāja ruled over this planet for thirty-six thousand years; he diminished the reactions of pious activities by enjoyment, and by practicing austerities he diminished inauspicious reactions.

14 The self-controlled great soul Dhruva Mahārāja thus passed many, many years favorably executing three kinds of worldly activities, namely religiosity, economic development and satisfaction of all material desires. Thereafter he handed over the charge of the royal throne to

his son.

15 Śrīla Dhruva Mahārāja realized that this cosmic manifestation bewilders living entities like a dream or phantasmagoria because it is a creation of the illusory, external energy of the Supreme Lord.

16 Thus Dhruva Mahārāja, at the end, left his kingdom, which extended all over the earth and was bounded by the great oceans. He considered his body, his wives, his children, his friends, his army, his rich treasury, his very comfortable palaces and his many enjoyable pleasure-grounds to be creations of the illusory energy. Thus in due course of time he retired to the forest in the Himālayas known as Badarikāśrama.

17 In Badarikāśrama Dhruva Mahārāja's senses became completely purified because he bathed regularly in the crystal-clear, purified water. He fixed his sitting position and by yogic practice controlled the breathing process and the air of life; in this way his senses were completely withdrawn. Then he concentrated his mind on the arcā-vigraha form of the Lord, which is the exact replica of the Lord and, thus meditating upon Him, entered into complete trance.

18 Because of his transcendental bliss, incessant tears flowed from his eyes, his heart melted, and there was shivering and standing of the hairs all over his body. Thus transformed, in a trance of devotional service, Dhruva Mahārāja completely forgot his bodily existence, and thus he immediately became liberated from material bondage.

19 As soon as the symptoms of his liberation were manifest, he saw a very beautiful airplane coming down from the sky, as if the brilliant full moon were coming down, illuminating all the ten directions.

20 Dhruva Mahārāja saw two very beautiful associates of Lord Viṣṇu in the plane. They had four hands and a blackish bodily luster, they were very youthful, and their eyes were just like reddish lotus flowers. They held clubs in their hands, and they were dressed in very attractive garments with helmets and were decorated with necklaces, bracelets and earrings.

21 Dhruva Mahārāja, seeing that these uncommon personalities were direct servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, immediately stood up. But, being puzzled, in hastiness he forgot how to receive them in the proper way. Therefore he simply offered obeisances with folded hands and chanted and glorified the holy names of the Lord.

22 Dhruva Mahārāja was always absorbed in thinking of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. His heart was full with Kṛṣṇa. When the two confidential servants of the Supreme Lord, who were named Nanda and Sunanda, approached him, smiling happily, Dhruva stood with folded hands, bowing humbly. They then addressed him as follows.

23 Nanda and Sunanda, the two confidential associates of Lord Viṣṇu, said: Dear King, let there be all good fortune unto you. Please attentively hear what we shall say. When you were only five years old, you underwent severe austerities, and you thereby greatly satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

24 We are representatives of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the whole universe, who carries in His hand the bow named Śārṅga. We have been specifically deputed to take you to the spiritual world.

25 To achieve Viṣṇuloka is very difficult, but by your austerity you have conquered. Even the great ṛṣis and demigods cannot achieve this position. Simply to see the supreme abode [the Viṣṇu planet], the sun and moon and all the other planets, stars, lunar mansions and solar

systems are circumambulating it. Now please come; you are welcome to go there.

26 Dear King Dhruva, neither your forefathers nor anyone else before you ever achieved such a transcendental planet. The planet known as Viṣṇuloka, where Lord Viṣṇu personally resides, is the highest of all. It is worshipable by the inhabitants of all other planets within the universe. Please come with us and live there eternally.

27 O immortal one, this unique airplane has been sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is worshiped by selected prayers and who is the chief of all living entities. You are quite worthy to board such a plane.

28 The great sage Maitreya continued: Mahārāja Dhruva was very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When he heard the sweet speeches of the Lord's chief associates in the Vaikuṅṭha planet, he immediately took his sacred bath, dressed himself with suitable ornaments, and performed his daily spiritual duties. Thereafter he offered his respectful obeisances to the great sages present there and accepted their blessings.

29 Before getting aboard, Dhruva Mahārāja worshiped the airplane, circumambulated it, and also offered obeisances to the associates of Viṣṇu. In the meantime he became as brilliant and illuminating as molten gold. He was thus completely prepared to board the transcendental plane.

30 When Dhruva Mahārāja was attempting to get on the transcendental plane, he saw death personified approach him. Not caring for death, however, he took advantage of the opportunity to put his feet on the head of death, and thus he got up on the airplane, which was as big as a house.

31 At that time drums and kettledrums resounded from the sky, the chief Gandharvas began to sing, and other demigods showered flowers like torrents of rain upon Dhruva Mahārāja.

32 Dhruva was seated in the transcendental airplane, which was just about to start, when he remembered his poor mother, Sunīti. He thought to himself, "How shall I go alone to the Vaikuṅṭha planet and leave behind my poor mother?"

33 The great associates of Vaikuṅṭhaloka, Nanda and Sunanda, could understand the mind of Dhruva Mahārāja, and thus they showed him that his mother, Sunīti, was going forward in another plane.

34 While Dhruva Mahārāja was passing through space, he gradually saw all the planets of the solar system, and on the path he saw all the demigods in their airplanes showering flowers upon him like rain.

35 Dhruva Mahārāja thus surpassed the seven planetary systems of the great sages who are known as saptarṣi. Beyond that region, he achieved the transcendental situation of permanent life in the planet where Lord Viṣṇu lives.

36 The self-effulgent Vaikuṅṭha planets, by whose illumination alone all the illuminating planets within this material world give off reflected light, cannot be reached by those who are not merciful to other living entities. Only persons who constantly engage in welfare activities for other living entities can reach the Vaikuṅṭha planets.

37 Persons who are peaceful, equipoised, cleansed and purified, and who know the art of pleasing all other living entities, keep friendship only with devotees of the Lord; they alone can very easily achieve the perfection of going back home, back to Godhead.

38 In this way, the fully Kṛṣṇa conscious Dhruva Mahārāja, the exalted son of Mahārāja Uttānapāda, attained the summit of the three statuses of planetary systems.

39 Saint Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, descendant of Kuru, as a herd of bulls circumambulates a central pole on their right side, all the luminaries within the universal sky unceasingly circumambulate the abode of Dhruva Mahārāja with great force and speed.

40 After observing the glories of Dhruva Mahārāja, the great sage Nārada, playing his vīṇā, went to the sacrificial arena of the Pracetās and very happily chanted the following three verses.

41 The great sage Nārada said: Simply by the influence of his spiritual advancement and powerful austerity, Dhruva Mahārāja, the son of Sunīti, who was devoted to her husband, acquired an exalted position not possible to attain even for the so-called Vedāntists or strict followers of the Vedic principles, not to speak of ordinary human beings.

42 The great sage Nārada continued: Just see how Dhruva Mahārāja, aggrieved at the harsh words of his stepmother, went to the forest at the age of only five years and under my direction underwent austerity. Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is unconquerable, Dhruva Mahārāja defeated Him with the specific qualifications possessed by the Lord's devotees.

43 Dhruva Mahārāja attained an exalted position at the age of only five or six years, after undergoing austerity for six months. Alas, a great kṣatriya cannot achieve such a position even after undergoing austerities for many, many years.

44 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, whatever you have asked from me about the great reputation and character of Dhruva Mahārāja I have explained to you in all detail. Great saintly persons and devotees very much like to hear about Dhruva Mahārāja.

45 By hearing the narration of Dhruva Mahārāja one can fulfill desires for wealth, reputation and increased duration of life. It is so auspicious that one can even go to a heavenly planet or attain Dhruvaloka, which was achieved by Dhruva Mahārāja, just by hearing about him. The demigods also become pleased because this narration is so glorious, and it is so powerful that it can counteract all the results of one's sinful actions.

46 Anyone who hears the narration of Dhruva Mahārāja, and who repeatedly tries with faith and devotion to understand his pure character, attains the pure devotional platform and executes pure devotional service. By such activities one can diminish the threefold miserable conditions of material life.

47 Anyone who hears this narration of Dhruva Mahārāja acquires exalted qualities like him. For anyone who desires greatness, prowess or influence, here is the process by which to acquire them, and for thoughtful men who want adoration, here is the proper means.

48 The great sage Maitreya recommended: One should chant of the character and activities of Dhruva Mahārāja both in the morning and in the evening, with great attention and care, in a society of brāhmaṇas or other twice-born persons.

49-50 Persons who have completely taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord should recite this narration of Dhruva Mahārāja without taking remuneration. Specifically, recitation is recommended on the full-moon or dark-moon day, on the day after Ekādaśī, on the appearance of the Śravaṇa star, at the end of a particular tithi, or the occasion of Vyatīpāta, at the end of the month, or on Sunday. Such recitation should of course be performed before a favorable audience. When recitation is performed this way, without professional motive, the

reciter and audience become perfect.

51 The narration of Dhruva Mahārāja is sublime knowledge for the attainment of immortality. Persons unaware of the Absolute Truth can be led to the path of truth. Those who out of transcendental kindness take on the responsibility of becoming master-protectors of the poor living entities automatically gain the interest and blessings of the demigods.

52 The transcendental activities of Dhruva Mahārāja are well known all over the world, and they are very pure. In childhood Dhruva Mahārāja rejected all kinds of toys and playthings, left the protection of his mother and seriously took shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. My dear Vidura, I therefore conclude this narration, for I have described to you all its details.

SB 4.13: Description of the Descendants of Dhruva Mahārāja

1 Sūta Gosvāmī, continuing to speak to all the ṛṣis, headed by Śaunaka, said: After hearing Maitreya Ṛṣi describe Dhruva Mahārāja's ascent to Lord Viṣṇu's abode, Vidura became very much enlightened in devotional emotion, and he inquired from Maitreya as follows.

2 Vidura inquired from Maitreya: O greatly advanced devotee, who were the Pracetās? To which family did they belong? Whose sons were they, and where did they perform the great sacrifices?

3 Vidura continued: I know that the great sage Nārada is the greatest of all devotees. He has compiled the pāṣcarātrika procedure of devotional service and has directly met the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

4 While all the Pracetās were executing religious rituals and sacrificial ceremonies and thus worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead for His satisfaction, the great sage Nārada described the transcendental qualities of Dhruva Mahārāja.

5 My dear brāhmaṇa, how did Nārada Muni glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and what pastimes were described in that meeting? I am very eager to hear of them. Kindly explain fully about that glorification of the Lord.

6 The great sage Maitreya replied: My dear Vidura, when Mahārāja Dhruva departed for the forest, his son, Utkala, did not desire to accept the opulent throne of his father, which was meant for the ruler of all the lands of this planet.

7 From his very birth, Utkala was fully satisfied and unattached to the world. He was equipoised, for he could see everything resting in the Supersoul and the Supersoul present in everyone's heart.

8-9 By expansion of his knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, he had already attained liberation from the bondage of the body. This liberation is known as nirvāṇa. He was situated in transcendental bliss, and he continued always in that blissful existence, which expanded more and more. This was possible for him by continual practice of bhakti-yoga, which is compared to fire because it burns away all dirty, material things. He was always situated in his constitutional position of self-realization, and he could not see anything else but the Supreme Lord and himself engaged in discharging devotional service.

10 Utkala appeared to the less intelligent persons on the road to be foolish, blind, dumb, deaf and mad, although actually he was not so. He remained like fire covered with ashes, without blazing flames.

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11 For this reason the ministers and all the elderly members of the family thought Utkala to be without intelligence and, in fact, mad. Thus his younger brother, named Vatsara, the son of Bhrami, was elevated to the royal throne, and he became king of the world.

12 King Vatsara had a very dear wife whose name was Svarvīthi, and she gave birth to six sons, named Puṣpārṇa, Tigmaketu, Iṣa, Ūrja, Vasu and Jaya.

13 Puṣpārṇa had two wives, named Prabhā and Doṣā. Prabhā had three sons, named Prātar, Madhyandinam and Sāyam.

14 Doṣā had three sons Pradoṣa, Niśitha and Vyūṣṭa. Vyūṣṭa's wife was named Puṣkariṇī, and she gave birth to a very powerful son named Sarvatejā.

15-16 Sarvatejā's wife, Ākūti, gave birth to a son named Cākṣuṣa, who became the sixth Manu at the end of the Manu millennium. Naḍvalā, the wife of Cākṣuṣa Manu, gave birth to the following faultless sons: Puru, Kutsa, Trita, Dyumna, Satyavān, Ṛta, Vrata, Agniṣṭoma, Atīrātra, Pradyumna, Śibi and Ulmuka.

17 Of the twelve sons, Ulmuka begot six sons in his wife Puṣkariṇī. They were all very good sons, and their names were Aṅga, Sumanā, Khyāti, Kratu, Aṅgirā and Gaya.

18 The wife of Aṅga, Sunīthā, gave birth to a son named Vena, who was very crooked. The saintly King Aṅga was very disappointed with Vena's bad character, and he left home and kingdom and went out to the forest.

19-20 My dear Vidura, when great sages curse, their words are as invincible as a thunderbolt. Thus when they cursed King Vena out of anger, he died. After his death, since there was no king, all the rogues and thieves flourished, the kingdom became unregulated, and all the citizens suffered greatly. On seeing this, the great sages took the right hand of Vena as a churning rod, and as a result of their churning, Lord Viṣṇu in His partial representation made His advent as King Pṛthu, the original emperor of the world.

21 Vidura inquired from the sage Maitreya: My dear brāhmaṇa, King Aṅga was very gentle. He had high character and was a saintly personality and lover of brahminical culture. How is it that such a great soul got a bad son like Vena, because of whom he became indifferent to his kingdom and left it?

22 Vidura also inquired: How is it that the great sages, who were completely conversant with religious principles, desired to curse King Vena, who himself carried the rod of punishment, and thus awarded him the greatest punishment [brahma-śāpa]?

23 It is the duty of all citizens in a state never to insult the king, even though he sometimes appears to have done something very sinful. Because of his prowess, the king is always more influential than all other ruling chiefs.

24 Vidura requested Maitreya: My dear brāhmaṇa, you are well conversant with all subjects, both past and future. Therefore I wish to hear from you all the activities of King Vena. I am your faithful devotee, so please explain this.

25 Śrī Maitreya replied: My dear Vidura, once the great King Aṅga arranged to perform the great sacrifice known as aśvamedha. All the expert brāhmaṇas present knew how to invite the demigods, but in spite of their efforts, no demigods participated or appeared in that sacrifice.

26 The priests engaged in the sacrifice then informed King Aṅga: O King, we are properly

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offering the clarified butter in the sacrifice, but despite all our efforts the demigods do not accept it.

27 O King, we know that the paraphernalia to perform the sacrifice is well collected by you with great faith and care and is not polluted. Our chanting of the Vedic hymns is also not deficient in any way, for all the brāhmaṇas and priests present here are expert and are executing the performances properly.

28 Dear King, we do not find any reason that the demigods should feel insulted or neglected in any way, but still the demigods who are witnesses for the sacrifice do not accept their shares. We do not know why this is so.

29 Maitreya explained that King Aṅga, after hearing the statements of the priests, was greatly aggrieved. At that time he took permission from the priests to break his silence and inquired from all the priests who were present in the sacrificial arena.

30 King Aṅga addressed the priestly order: My dear priests, kindly tell me what offense I have committed. Although invited, the demigods are neither taking part in the sacrifice nor accepting their shares.

31 The head priests said: O King, in this life we do not find any sinful activity, even within your mind, so you are not in the least offensive. But we can see that in your previous life you performed sinful activities due to which, in spite of your having all qualifications, you have no son.

32 O King, we wish all good fortune for you. You have no son, but if you pray at once to the Supreme Lord and ask for a son, and if you execute the sacrifice for that purpose, the enjoyer of the sacrifice, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will fulfill your desire.

33 When Hari, the supreme enjoyer of all sacrifices, is invited to fulfill your desire for a son, all the demigods will come with Him and take their shares in the sacrifice.

34 The performer of the sacrifices [under karma-kāṇḍa activities] achieves the fulfillment of the desire for which he worships the Lord.

35 Thus for the sake of a son for King Aṅga, they decided to offer oblations to Lord Viṣṇu, who is situated in the hearts of all living entities.

36 As soon as the oblation was offered in the fire, a person appeared from the fire altar wearing a golden garland and a white dress. He was carrying a golden pot filled with rice boiled in milk.

37 The King was very liberal, and after taking permission from the priests, he took the preparation in his joined palms, and after smelling it he offered a portion to his wife.

38 Although the Queen had no son, after eating that food, which had the power to produce a male child, she became pregnant by her husband, and in due course of time she gave birth to a son.

39 That boy was born partially in the dynasty of irreligion. His grandfather was death personified, and the boy grew up as his follower; he became a greatly irreligious person.

40 After fixing his bow and arrow, the cruel boy used to go to the forest and unnecessarily kill innocent deer, and as soon as he came all the people would cry, "Here comes cruel Vena! Here comes cruel Vena!"

41 The boy was so cruel that while playing with young boys of his age he would kill them very mercilessly, as if they were animals meant for slaughter.

42 After seeing the cruel and merciless behavior of his son, Vena, King Aṅga punished him in different ways to reform him, but was unable to bring him to the path of gentleness. He thus became greatly aggrieved.

43 The King thought to himself: Persons who have no son are certainly fortunate. They must have worshiped the Lord in their previous lives so that they would not have to suffer the unbearable unhappiness caused by a bad son.

44 A sinful son causes a person's reputation to vanish. His irreligious activities at home cause irreligion and quarrel among everyone, and this creates only endless anxiety.

45 Who, if he is considerate and intelligent, would desire such a worthless son? Such a son is nothing but a bond of illusion for the living entity, and he makes one's home miserable.

46 Then the King thought: A bad son is better than a good son because a good son creates an attachment for home, whereas a bad son does not. A bad son creates a hellish home from which an intelligent man naturally becomes very easily detached.

47 Thinking like that, King Aṅga could not sleep at night. He became completely indifferent to household life. Once, therefore, in the dead of night, he got up from bed and left Vena's mother [his wife], who was sleeping deeply. He gave up all attraction for his greatly opulent kingdom, and, unseen by anyone, he very silently gave up his home and opulence and proceeded towards the forest.

48 When it was understood that the King had indifferently left home, all the citizens, priests, ministers, friends, and people in general were greatly aggrieved. They began to search for him all over the world, just as a less experienced mystic searches out the Supersoul within himself.

49 When the citizens could not find any trace of the King after searching for him everywhere, they were very disappointed, and they returned to the city, where all the great sages of the country assembled because of the King's absence. With tears in their eyes the citizens offered respectful obeisances and informed the sages in full detail that they were unable to find the King anywhere.

SB 4.14: The Story of King Vena

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: O great hero Vidura, the great sages, headed by Bhṛgu, were always thinking of the welfare of the people in general. When they saw that in the absence of King Aṅga there was no one to protect the interests of the people, they understood that without a ruler the people would become independent and nonregulated.

2 The great sages then called for the Queen Mother, Sunīthā, and with her permission they installed Vena on the throne as master of the world. All the ministers, however, disagreed with this.

3 It was already known that Vena was very severe and cruel; therefore, as soon as all the thieves and rogues in the state heard of his ascendance to the royal throne, they became very much afraid of him. Indeed, they hid themselves here and there as rats hide themselves from snakes.

4 When the King ascended to the throne, he became all-powerful with eight kinds of opulences. Consequently he became too proud. By virtue of his false prestige, he considered

himself to be greater than anyone. Thus he began to insult great personalities.

5 When he became overly blind due to his opulences, King Vena mounted a chariot and, like an uncontrolled elephant, began to travel through the kingdom, causing the sky and earth to tremble wherever he went.

6 All the twice-born [brāhmaṇas] were forbidden henceforward to perform any sacrifice, and they were also forbidden to give charity or offer clarified butter. Thus King Vena sounded kettledrums throughout the countryside. In other words, he stopped all kinds of religious rituals.

7 Therefore all the great sages assembled together and, after observing cruel Vena's atrocities, concluded that a great danger and catastrophe was approaching the people of the world. Thus out of compassion they began to talk amongst themselves, for they themselves were the performers of the sacrifices.

8 When the great sages consulted one another, they saw that the people were in a dangerous position from both directions. When a fire blazes on both ends of a log, the ants in the middle are in a very dangerous situation. Similarly, at that time the people in general were in a dangerous position due to an irresponsible king on one side and thieves and rogues on the other.

9 Thinking to save the state from irregularity, the sages began to consider that it was due to a political crisis that they made Vena king although he was not qualified. But alas, now the people were being disturbed by the king himself. Under such circumstances, how could the people be happy?

10 The sages began to think within themselves: Because he was born from the womb of Sunīthā, King Vena is by nature very mischievous. Supporting this mischievous king is exactly like maintaining a snake with milk. Now he has become a source of all difficulties.

11 We appointed this Vena king of the state in order to give protection to the citizens, but now he has become the enemy of the citizens. Despite all these discrepancies, we should at once try to pacify him. By doing so, we may not be touched by the sinful results caused by him.

12 The saintly sages continued thinking: Of course, we were completely aware of his mischievous nature, yet we nevertheless enthroned Vena. If we cannot persuade King Vena to accept our advice, he will be condemned by the public, and we will join them. Thus by our prowess we shall burn him to ashes.

13 The great sages, having thus decided, approached King Vena. Concealing their real anger, they pacified him with sweet words and then spoke as follows.

14 The great sages said: Dear King, we have come to give you good advice. Kindly hear us with great attention. By doing so, your duration of life and your opulence, strength and reputation will increase.

15 Those who live according to religious principles and who follow them by words, mind, body and intelligence are elevated to the heavenly kingdom, which is devoid of all miseries. Being thus rid of the material influence, they achieve unlimited happiness in life.

16 The sages continued: O great hero, for this reason you should not be the cause of spoiling the spiritual life of the general populace. If their spiritual life is spoiled because of your activities, you will certainly fall down from your opulent and royal position.

17 The saintly persons continued: When the king protects the citizens from the disturbances of mischievous ministers as well as from thieves and rogues, he can, by virtue of such pious activities, accept taxes given by his subjects. Thus a pious king can certainly enjoy himself in this world as well as in the life after death.

18 The king is supposed to be pious in whose state and cities the general populace strictly observes the system of eight social orders of varṇa and āśrama, and where all citizens engage in worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead by their particular occupations.

19 O noble one, if the king sees that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original cause of the cosmic manifestation and the Supersoul within everyone, is worshiped, the Lord will be satisfied.

20 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped by the great demigods who are controllers of universal affairs. When He is satisfied, nothing is impossible to achieve. For this reason all the demigods, presiding deities of different planets, as well as the inhabitants of their planets, take great pleasure in offering all kinds of paraphernalia for His worship.

21 Dear King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, along with the predominating deities, is the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices in all planets. The Supreme Lord is the sum total of the three Vedas, the owner of everything, and the ultimate goal of all austerity. Therefore your countrymen should engage in performing various sacrifices for your elevation. Indeed, you should always direct them towards the offering of sacrifices.

22 When all the brāhmaṇas engage in performing sacrifices in your kingdom, all the demigods, who are plenary expansions of the Lord, will be very much satisfied by their activities and will give you your desired result. Therefore, O hero, do not stop the sacrificial performances. If you stop them, you will disrespect the demigods.

23 King Vena replied: You are not at all experienced. It is very much regrettable that you are maintaining something which is not religious and are accepting it as religious. Indeed, I think you are giving up your real husband, who maintains you, and are searching after some paramour to worship.

24 Those who, out of gross ignorance, do not worship the king, who is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, experience happiness neither in this world nor in the world after death.

25 You are so much devoted to the demigods, but who are they? Indeed, your affection for these demigods is exactly like the affection of an unchaste woman who neglects her married life and gives all attention to her paramour.

26-27 Lord Viṣṇu; Lord Brahmā; Lord Śiva; Lord Indra; Vāyu, the master of air; Yama, the superintendent of death; the sun-god; the director of rainfall; Kuvera, the treasurer; the moon-god; the predominating deity of the earth; Agni, the fire-god; Varuṇa, the lord of waters; and all others who are great and competent to bestow benedictions or to curse all abide in the body of the king. For this reason the king is known as the reservoir of all demigods, who are simply parts and parcels of the king's body.

28 King Vena continued: For this reason, O brāhmaṇas, you should abandon your envy of me, and by your ritualistic activities you should worship me and offer me all paraphernalia. If you are intelligent, you should know that there is no personality superior to me who can accept the first oblations of all sacrifices.

29 The great sage Maitreya continued: Thus the King, who became unintelligent due to his sinful life and deviation from the right path, became actually bereft of all good fortune. He could not accept the requests of the great sages, which the sages put before him with great respect, and therefore he was condemned.

30 My dear Vidura, all good fortune unto you. The foolish King, who thought himself very learned, thus insulted the great sages, and the sages, being brokenhearted by the King's words, became very angry at him.

31 All the great saintly sages immediately cried: Kill him! Kill him! He is the most dreadful, sinful person. If he lives, he will certainly turn the whole world into ashes in no time.

32 The saintly sages continued: This impious, impudent man does not deserve to sit on the throne at all. He is so shameless that he even dared insult the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu.

33 But for King Vena, who is simply inauspicious, who would blaspheme the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose mercy one is awarded all kinds of fortune and opulence?

34 The great sages, thus manifesting their covert anger, immediately decided to kill the King. King Vena was already as good as dead due to his blasphemy against the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus without using any weapons, the sages killed King Vena simply by high-sounding words.

35 After all the sages returned to their respective hermitages, the mother of King Vena, Sunīthā, became very much aggrieved because of her son's death. She decided to preserve the dead body of her son by the application of certain ingredients and by chanting mantras [mantra-yogena].

36 Once upon a time, the same saintly persons, after taking their bath in the river Sarasvatī, began to perform their daily duties by offering oblations into the sacrificial fires. After this, sitting on the bank of the river, they began to talk about the transcendental person and His pastimes.

37 In those days there were various disturbances in the country that were creating a panic in society. Therefore all the sages began to talk amongst themselves: Since the King is dead and there is no protector in the world, misfortune may befall the people in general on account of rogues and thieves.

38 When the great sages were carrying on their discussion in this way, they saw a dust storm arising from all directions. This storm was caused by the running of thieves and rogues, who were engaged in plundering the citizens.

39-40 Upon seeing the dust storm, the saintly persons could understand that there were a great deal of irregularities due to the death of King Vena. Without government, the state was devoid of law and order, and consequently there was a great uprising of murderous thieves and rogues, who were plundering the riches of the people in general. Although the great sages could subdue the disturbance by their powers just as they could kill the King they considered it improper on their part to do so. Thus they did not attempt to stop the disturbance.

41 The great sages began to think that although a brāhmaṇa is peaceful and impartial because he is equal to everyone, it is still not his duty to neglect poor humans. By such neglect, a brāhmaṇa's spiritual power diminishes, just as water kept in a cracked pot leaks out.

42 The sages decided that the descendants of the family of the saintly King Aṅga should not be

stopped, for in this family the semen was very powerful and the children were prone to become devotees of the Lord.

43 After making a decision, the saintly persons and sages churned the thighs of the dead body of King Vena with great force and according to a specific method. As a result of this churning, a dwarflike person was born from King Vena's body.

44 This person born from King Vena's thighs was named Bāhuka, and his complexion was as black as a crow's. All the limbs of his body were very short, his arms and legs were short, and his jaws were large. His nose was flat, his eyes were reddish, and his hair copper-colored.

45 He was very submissive and meek, and immediately after his birth he bowed down and inquired, "Sirs, what shall I do?" The great sages replied, "Please sit down [niṣīda]." Thus Niṣāda, the father of the Naiṣāda race, was born.

46 After his [Niṣāda's] birth, he immediately took charge of all the resultant actions of King Vena's sinful activities. As such, this Naiṣāda class are always engaged in sinful activities like stealing, plundering and hunting. Consequently they are only allowed to live in the hills and forests.

SB 4.15: King Pṛthu's Appearance and Coronation

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, thus the brāhmaṇas and the great sages again churned the two arms of King Vena's dead body. As a result a male and female couple came out of his arms.

2 The great sages were highly learned in Vedic knowledge. When they saw the male and female born of the arms of Vena's body, they were very pleased, for they could understand that the couple was an expansion of a plenary portion of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3 The great sages said: The male is a plenary expansion of the power of Lord Viṣṇu, who maintains the entire universe, and the female is a plenary expansion of the goddess of fortune, who is never separated from the Lord.

4 Of the two, the male will be able to expand his reputation throughout the world. His name will be Pṛthu. Indeed, he will be the first among kings.

5 The female has such beautiful teeth and beautiful qualities that she will actually beautify the ornaments she wears. Her name will be Arci. In the future she will accept King Pṛthu as her husband.

6 In the form of King Pṛthu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has appeared through a part of His potency to protect the people of the world. The goddess of fortune is the constant companion of the Lord, and therefore she has incarnated partially as Arci to become King Pṛthu's queen.

7 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidurajī, at that time all the brāhmaṇas highly praised and glorified King Pṛthu, and the best singers of Gandharvaloka chanted his glories. The inhabitants of Siddhaloka showered flowers, and the beautiful women in the heavenly planets danced in ecstasy.

8 Conchshells, bugles, drums and kettledrums vibrated in outer space. Great sages, forefathers and personalities from the heavenly planets all came to earth from various planetary systems.

9-10 Lord Brahmā, the master of the entire universe, arrived there accompanied by all the demigods and their chiefs. Seeing the lines of Lord Viṣṇu's palm on King Pṛthu's right hand and impressions of lotus flowers on the soles of his feet, Lord Brahmā could understand that King Pṛthu was a partial representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One whose palm bears the sign of a disc, as well as other such lines, should be considered a partial representation or incarnation of the Supreme Lord.

11 The learned brāhmaṇas, who were very attached to the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies, then arranged for the King's coronation. People from all directions collected all the different paraphernalia for the ceremony. Thus everything was complete.

12 All the rivers, seas, hills, mountains, serpents, cows, birds, animals, heavenly planets, the earthly planet and all other living entities collected various presentations, according to their ability, to offer the King.

13 Thus the great King Pṛthu, exquisitely dressed with garments and ornaments, was coronated and placed on the throne. The King and his wife, Arci, who was also exquisitely ornamented, appeared exactly like fire.

14 The great sage continued: My dear Vidura, Kuvera presented the great King Pṛthu with a golden throne. The demigod Varuṇa presented him with an umbrella that constantly sprayed fine particles of water and was as brilliant as the moon.

15 The demigod of air, Vāyu, presented King Pṛthu with two whisks [cāmaras] of hair; the King of religion, Dharma, presented him with a flower garland which would expand his fame; the King of heaven, Indra, presented him with a valuable helmet; and the superintendent of death, Yamarāja, presented him with a scepter with which to rule the world.

16 Lord Brahmā presented King Pṛthu with a protective garment made of spiritual knowledge. Bhārati [Sarasvatī], the wife of Brahmā, gave him a transcendental necklace. Lord Viṣṇu presented him with a Sudarśana disc, and Lord Viṣṇu's wife, the goddess of fortune, gave him imperishable opulences.

17 Lord Śiva presented him with a sword within a sheath marked with ten moons, and his wife, the goddess Durgā, presented him with a shield marked with one hundred moons. The moon-demigod presented him with horses made of nectar, and the demigod Viśvakarmā presented him with a very beautiful chariot.

18 The demigod of fire, Agni, presented him with a bow made of the horns of goats and cows. The sun-god presented him with arrows as brilliant as sunshine. The predominating deity of Bhūrloka presented him with slippers full of mystic power. The demigods from outer space brought him presentations of flowers again and again.

19 The demigods who always travel in outer space gave King Pṛthu the arts to perform dramas, sing songs, play musical instruments and disappear at his will. The great sages also offered him infallible blessings. The ocean offered him a conchshell produced from the ocean.

20 The seas, mountains and rivers gave him room to drive his chariot without impediments, and a sūta, a māgadha and a vandī offered prayers and praises. They all presented themselves before him to perform their respective duties.

21 Thus when the greatly powerful King Pṛthu, the son of Vena, saw the professionals before him, to congratulate them he smiled, and with the gravity of the vibrating sounds of clouds he spoke as follows.

22 King Pṛthu said: O gentle sūta, māgadha and other devotee offering prayers, the qualities of which you have spoken are not distinct in me. Why then should you praise me for all these qualities when I do not shelter these features? I do not wish for these words meant for me to go in vain, but it is better that they be offered to someone else.

23 O gentle reciters, offer such prayers in due course of time, when the qualities of which you have spoken actually manifest themselves in me. The gentle who offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not attribute such qualities to a human being, who does not actually have them.

24 How could an intelligent man competent enough to possess such exalted qualities allow his followers to praise him if he did not actually have them? Praising a man by saying that if he were educated he might have become a great scholar or great personality is nothing but a process of cheating. A foolish person who agrees to accept such praise does not know that such words simply insult him.

25 As a person with a sense of honor and magnanimity does not like to hear about his abominable actions, a person who is very famous and powerful does not like to hear himself praised.

26 King Pṛthu continued: My dear devotees, headed by the sūta, just now I am not very famous for my personal activities because I have not done anything praiseworthy you could glorify. Therefore how could I engage you in praising my activities exactly like children?

SB 4.16: Praise of King Pṛthu by the Professional Reciters

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: While King Pṛthu thus spoke, the humility of his nectarean speeches pleased the reciters very much. Then again they continued to praise the King highly with exalted prayers, as they had been instructed by the great sages.

2 The reciters continued: Dear King, you are a direct incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, and by His causeless mercy you have descended to this earth. Therefore it is not possible for us to actually glorify your exalted activities. Although you have appeared through the body of King Vena, even great orators and speakers like Lord Brahmā and other demigods cannot exactly describe the glorious activities of Your Lordship.

3 Although we are unable to glorify you adequately, we nonetheless have a transcendental taste for glorifying your activities. We shall try to glorify you according to the instructions received from authoritative sages and scholars. Whatever we speak, however, is always inadequate and very insignificant. Dear King, because you are a direct incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all your activities are liberal and ever laudable.

4 This King, Mahārāja Pṛthu, is the best amongst those who are following religious principles. As such, he will engage everyone in the pursuit of religious principles and give those principles all protection. He will also be a great chastiser to the irreligious and atheistic.

5 This King alone, in his own body, will be able in due course of time to maintain all living entities and keep them in a pleasant condition by manifesting himself as different demigods to perform various departmental activities. Thus he will maintain the upper planetary system by inducing the populace to perform Vedic sacrifices. In due course of time he will also maintain this earthly planet by discharging proper rainfall.

6 This King Pṛthu will be as powerful as the sun-god, and just as the sun-god equally distributes his sunshine to everyone, King Pṛthu will distribute his mercy equally. Similarly, just

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as the sun-god evaporates water for eight months and, during the rainy season, returns it profusely, this King will also exact taxes from the citizens and return these monies in times of need.

7 This King Pṛthu will be very, very kind to all citizens. Even though a poor person may trample over the King's head by violating the rules and regulations, the King, out of his causeless mercy, will be forgetful and forgiving. As a protector of the world, he will be as tolerant as the earth itself.

8 When there is no rainfall and the citizens are in great danger due to the scarcity of water, this royal Personality of Godhead will be able to supply rains exactly like the heavenly King Indra. Thus he will very easily be able to protect the citizens from drought.

9 This King, Pṛthu Mahārāja, by virtue of his affectionate glances and beautiful moonlike face, which is always smiling with great affection for the citizens, will enhance everyone's peaceful life.

10 The reciters continued: No one will be able to understand the policies the King will follow. His activities will also be very confidential, and it will not be possible for anyone to know how he will make every activity successful. His treasury will always remain unknown to everyone. He will be the reservoir of unlimited glories and good qualities, and his position will be maintained and covered just as Varuṇa, the deity of the seas, is covered all around by water.

11 King Pṛthu was born of the dead body of King Vena as fire is produced from araṇi wood. Thus King Pṛthu will always remain just like fire, and his enemies will not be able to approach him. Indeed, he will be unbearable to his enemies, for although staying very near him, they will never be able to approach him but will have to remain as if far away. No one will be able to overcome the strength of King Pṛthu.

12 King Pṛthu will be able to see all the internal and external activities of every one of his citizens. Still, no one will be able to know his system of espionage, and he himself will remain neutral regarding all matters of glorification or vilification paid to him. He will be exactly like air, the life force within the body, which is exhibited internally and externally but is always neutral to all affairs.

13 Since this King will always remain on the path of piety, he will be neutral to both his son and the son of his enemy. If the son of his enemy is not punishable, he will not punish him, but if his own son is punishable, he will immediately punish him.

14 Just as the sun-god expands his shining rays up to the Arctic region without impedance, the influence of King Pṛthu will cover all tracts of land up to the Arctic region and will remain undisturbed as long as he lives.

15 This King will please everyone by his practical activities, and all of his citizens will remain very satisfied. Because of this the citizens will take great satisfaction in accepting him as their ruling king.

16 The King will be firmly determined and always situated in truth. He will be a lover of the brahminical culture and will render all service to old men and give shelter to all surrendered souls. Giving respect to all, he will always be merciful to the poor and innocent.

17 The King will respect all women as if they were his own mother, and he will treat his own wife as the other half of his body. He will be just like an affectionate father to his citizens, and he will treat himself as the most obedient servant of the devotees, who always preach the

glories of the Lord.

18 The King will consider all embodied living entities as dear as his own self, and he will always be increasing the pleasures of his friends. He will intimately associate with liberated persons, and he will be a chastising hand to all impious persons.

19 This King is the master of the three worlds, and he is directly empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is without change, and he is an incarnation of the Supreme known as a śaktyāveśa-avatāra. Being a liberated soul and completely learned, he sees all material varieties as meaningless because their basic principle is nescience.

20 This King, being uniquely powerful and heroic, will have no competitor. He will travel around the globe on his victorious chariot, holding his invincible bow in his hand and appearing exactly like the sun, which rotates in its own orbit from the south.

21 When the King travels all over the world, other kings, as well as the demigods, will offer him all kinds of presentations. Their queens will also consider him the original king, who carries in His hands the emblems of club and disc, and will sing of his fame, for he will be as reputable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 This King, this protector of the citizens, is an extraordinary king and is equal to the Prajāpati demigods. For the living facility of all citizens, he will milk the earth, which is like a cow. Not only that, but he will level the surface of the earth with the pointed ends of his bow, breaking all the hills exactly as King Indra, the heavenly King, breaks mountains with his powerful thunderbolt.

23 When the lion travels in the forest with its tail turned upward, all menial animals hide themselves. Similarly, when King Pṛthu will travel over his kingdom and vibrate the string of his bow, which is made of the horns of goats and bulls and is irresistible in battle, all demoniac rogues and thieves will hide themselves in all directions.

24 At the source of the river Sarasvatī, this King will perform one hundred sacrifices known as aśvamedha. In the course of the last sacrifice, the heavenly King Indra will steal the sacrificial horse.

25 This King Pṛthu will meet Sanat-kumāra, one of the four Kumāras, in the garden of his palace compound. The King will worship him with devotion and will be fortunate to receive instructions by which one can enjoy transcendental bliss.

26 In this way, when the chivalrous activities of King Pṛthu come to be known to the people in general, King Pṛthu will always hear about himself and his uniquely powerful activities.

27 No one will be able to disobey the orders of Pṛthu Mahārāja. After conquering the world, he will completely eradicate the threefold miseries of the citizens. Then he will be recognized all over the world. At that time both the suras and the asuras will undoubtedly glorify his magnanimous activities.

SB 4.17: Mahārāja Pṛthu Becomes Angry at the Earth

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: In this way the reciters who were glorifying Mahārāja Pṛthu readily described his qualities and chivalrous activities. At the end, Mahārāja Pṛthu offered them various presentations with all due respect and worshiped them adequately.

2 King Pṛthu thus satisfied and offered all respect to all the leaders of the brāhmaṇas and other castes, to his servants, to his ministers and to the priests, citizens, general countrymen, people

from other communities, admirers and others, and thus they all became happy.

3 Vidura inquired from the great sage Maitreya: My dear brāhmaṇa, since mother earth can appear in different shapes, why did she take the shape of a cow? And when King Pṛthu milked her, who became the calf, and what was the milking pot?

4 The surface of the earth is by nature low in some places and high in others. How did King Pṛthu level the surface of the earth, and why did the King of heaven, Indra, steal the horse meant for the sacrifice?

5 The great saintly King, Mahārāja Pṛthu, received knowledge from Sanat-kumāra, who was the greatest Vedic scholar. After receiving knowledge to be applied practically in his life, how did the saintly King attain his desired destination?

6-7 Pṛthu Mahārāja was a powerful incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's potencies; consequently any narration concerning his activities is surely very pleasing to hear, and it produces all good fortune. As far as I am concerned, I am always your devotee as well as a devotee of the Lord, who is known as Adhokṣaja. Please therefore narrate all the stories of King Pṛthu, who, in the form of the son of King Vena, milked the cow-shaped earth.

8 Sūta Gosvāmī continued: When Vidura became inspired to hear of the activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His various incarnations, Maitreya, also being inspired and being very pleased with Vidura, began to praise him. Then Maitreya spoke as follows.

9 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, at the time King Pṛthu was enthroned by the great sages and brāhmaṇas and declared to be the protector of the citizens, there was a scarcity of food grains. The citizens actually became skinny due to starvation. Therefore they came before the King and informed him of their real situation.

10-11 Dear King, just as a tree with a fire burning in the hollow of the trunk gradually dries up, we are drying up due to the fire of hunger in our stomachs. You are the protector of surrendered souls, and you have been appointed to give employment to us. Therefore we have all come to you for protection. You are not only a king, but the incarnation of God as well. Indeed, you are the king of all kings. You can give us all kinds of occupational engagements, for you are the master of our livelihood. Therefore, O king of all kings, please arrange to satisfy our hunger by the proper distribution of food grains. Please take care of us, lest we soon die for want of food.

12 After hearing this lamentation and seeing the pitiable condition of the citizens, King Pṛthu contemplated this matter for a long time to see if he could find out the underlying causes.

13 Having arrived at a conclusion, the King took up his bow and arrow and aimed them at the earth, exactly like Lord Śiva, who destroys the whole world out of anger.

14 When the earth saw that King Pṛthu was taking his bow and arrow to kill her, she became very much afraid and began to tremble. She then began to flee, exactly like a deer, which runs very swiftly when followed by a hunter. Being afraid of King Pṛthu, she took the shape of a cow and began to run.

15 Seeing this, Mahārāja Pṛthu became very angry, and his eyes became as red as the early-morning sun. Placing an arrow on his bow, he chased the cow-shaped earth wherever she would run.

16 The cow-shaped earth ran here and there in outer space between the heavenly planets and

the earth, and wherever she ran, the King chased her with his bow and arrows.

17 Just as a man cannot escape the cruel hands of death, the cow-shaped earth could not escape the hands of the son of Vena. At length the earth, fearful, her heart aggrieved, turned back in helplessness.

18 Addressing the great, opulent King Pṛthu as the knower of religious principles and shelter of the surrendered, she said: Please save me. You are the protector of all living entities. Now you are situated as the King of this planet.

19 The cow-shaped earth continued to appeal to the King: I am very poor and have not committed any sinful activities. I do not know why you want to kill me. Since you are supposed to be the knower of all religious principles, why are you so envious of me, and why are you so anxious to kill a woman?

20 Even if a woman does commit some sinful activity, no one should place his hand upon her. And what to speak of you, dear King, who are so merciful. You are a protector, and you are affectionate to the poor.

21 The cow-shaped earth continued: My dear King, I am just like a strong boat, and all the paraphernalia of the world is standing upon me. If you break me to pieces, how can you protect yourself and your subjects from drowning?

22 King Pṛthu replied to the earthly planet: My dear earth, you have disobeyed my orders and rulings. In the form of a demigod you accepted your share of the yajñas we performed, but in return you have not produced sufficient food grains. For this reason I must kill you.

23 Although you are eating green grass every day, you are not filling your milk bag so we can utilize your milk. Since you are willfully committing offenses, it cannot be said that you are not punishable due to your assuming the form of a cow.

24 You have so lost your intelligence that, despite my orders, you do not deliver the seeds of herbs and grains formerly created by Brahmā and now hidden within yourself.

25 Now, with the help of my arrows, I shall cut you to pieces and with your flesh satisfy the hunger-stricken citizens, who are now crying for want of grains. Thus I shall satisfy the crying citizens of my kingdom.

26 Any cruel person be he a man, woman or impotent eunuch who is only interested in his personal maintenance and has no compassion for other living entities may be killed by the king. Such killing can never be considered actual killing.

27 You are very much puffed up with pride and have become almost insane. Presently you have assumed the form of a cow by your mystic powers. Nonetheless I shall cut you into small pieces like grain, and I will uphold the entire population by my personal mystic powers.

28 At this time Pṛthu Mahārāja became exactly like Yamarāja, and his whole body appeared very angry. In other words, he was anger personified. After hearing him, the planet earth began to tremble. She surrendered, and with folded hands began to speak as follows.

29 The planet earth spoke: My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are transcendental in Your position, and by Your material energy You have expanded Yourself in various forms and species of life through the interaction of the three modes of material nature. Unlike some other masters, You always remain in Your transcendental position and are not affected by the material creation, which is subject to different material interactions.

Consequently You are not bewildered by material activities.

30 The planet earth continued: My dear Lord, You are the complete conductor of the material creation. You have created this cosmic manifestation and the three material qualities, and therefore You have created me, the planet earth, the resting place of all living entities. Yet You are always fully independent, my Lord. Now that You are present before me and ready to kill me with Your weapons, let me know where I should go to take shelter, and tell me who can give me protection.

31 In the beginning of creation You created all these moving and nonmoving living entities by Your inconceivable energy. Through this very same energy You are now prepared to protect the living entities. Indeed, You are the supreme protector of religious principles. Why are You so anxious to kill me, even though I am in the form of a cow?

32 My dear Lord, although You are one, by Your inconceivable potencies You have expanded Yourself in many forms. Through the agency of Brahmā, You have created this universe. You are therefore directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those who are not sufficiently experienced cannot understand Your transcendental activities because these persons are covered by Your illusory energy.

33 My dear Lord, by Your own potencies You are the original cause of the material elements, the performing instruments (the senses), the workers of the senses (the controlling demigods), the intelligence and the ego, as well as everything else. By Your energy You manifest this entire cosmic creation, maintain it and dissolve it. Through Your energy alone everything is sometimes manifest and sometimes not manifest. You are therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

34 My dear Lord, You are always unborn. Once, in the form of the original boar, You rescued me from the waters in the bottom of the universe. Through Your own energy You created all the physical elements, the senses and the heart, for the maintenance of the world.

35 My dear Lord, in this way You once protected me by rescuing me from the water, and consequently Your name has been famous as Dharādhara He who holds the planet earth. Yet at the present moment, in the form of a great hero, You are about to kill me with sharpened arrows. I am, however, just like a boat on the water, keeping everything afloat.

36 My dear Lord, I am also the creation of one of Your energies, composed of the three modes of material nature. Consequently I am bewildered by Your activities. Even the activities of Your devotees cannot be understood, and what to speak of Your pastimes. Thus everything appears to us to be contradictory and wonderful.

SB 4.18: Pṛthu Mahārāja Milks the Earth Planet

1 The great saint Maitreya continued to address Vidura: My dear Vidura, at that time, after the planet earth finished her prayers, King Pṛthu was still not pacified, and his lips trembled in great anger. Although the planet earth was frightened, she made up her mind and began to speak as follows in order to convince the King.

2 My dear Lord, please pacify your anger completely and hear patiently whatever I submit before you. Please turn your kind attention to this. I may be very poor, but a learned man takes the essence of knowledge from all places, just as a bumblebee collects honey from each and every flower.

3 To benefit all human society, not only in this life but in the next, the great seers and sages have prescribed various methods conducive to the prosperity of the people in general.

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4 One who follows the principles and instructions enjoined by the great sages of the past can utilize these instructions for practical purposes. Such a person can very easily enjoy life and pleasures.

5 A foolish person who manufactures his own ways and means through mental speculation and does not recognize the authority of the sages who lay down unimpeachable directions is simply unsuccessful again and again in his attempts.

6 My dear King, the seeds, roots, herbs and grains, which were created by Lord Brahmā in the past, are now being used by nondevotees, who are devoid of all spiritual understanding.

7 My dear King, not only are grains and herbs being used by nondevotees, but, as far as I am concerned, I am not being properly maintained. Indeed, I am being neglected by kings who are not punishing these rascals who have turned into thieves by using grains for sense gratification. Consequently I have hidden all these seeds, which were meant for the performance of sacrifice.

8 Due to being stocked for a very long time, all the grain seeds within me have certainly deteriorated. Therefore you should immediately arrange to take these seeds out by the standard process, which is recommended by the ācāryas or śāstras.

9-10 O great hero, protector of living entities, if you desire to relieve the living entities by supplying them sufficient grain, and if you desire to nourish them by taking milk from me, you should make arrangements to bring a calf suitable for this purpose and a pot in which the milk can be kept, as well as a milkman to do the work. Since I will be very much affectionate towards my calf, your desire to take milk from me will be fulfilled.

11 My dear King, may I inform you that you have to make the entire surface of the globe level. This will help me, even when the rainy season has ceased. Rainfall comes by the mercy of King Indra. Rainfall will remain on the surface of the globe, always keeping the earth moistened, and thus it will be auspicious for all kinds of production.

12 After hearing the auspicious and pleasing words of the planet earth, the King accepted them. He then transformed Svāyambhuva Manu into a calf and milked all the herbs and grains from the earth in the form of a cow, keeping them in his cupped hands.

13 Others, who were as intelligent as King Pṛthu, also took the essence out of the earthly planet. Indeed, everyone took this opportunity to follow in the footsteps of King Pṛthu and get whatever he desired from the planet earth.

14 All the great sages transformed Bṛhaspati into a calf, and making the senses into a pot, they milked all kinds of Vedic knowledge to purify words, mind and hearing.

15 All the demigods made Indra, the King of heaven, into a calf, and from the earth they milked the beverage soma, which is nectar. Thus they became very powerful in mental speculation and bodily and sensual strength.

16 The sons of Diti and the demons transformed Prahāda Mahārāja, who was born in an asura family, into a calf, and they extracted various kinds of liquor and beer, which they put into a pot made of iron.

17 The inhabitants of Gandharvaloka and Apsaroloka made Viśvāvasu into a calf, and they drew the milk into a lotus-flower pot. The milk took the shape of sweet musical art and beauty.

18 The fortunate inhabitants of Pitṛloka, who preside over the funeral ceremonies, made

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Aryamā into a calf. With great faith they milked kavya, food offered to the ancestors, into an unbaked earthen pot.

19 After this, the inhabitants of Siddhaloka, as well as the inhabitants of Vidyādhara-loka, transformed the great sage Kapila into a calf, and making the whole sky into a pot, they milked out specific yogic mystic powers, beginning with aṇimā. Indeed, the inhabitants of Vidyādhara-loka acquired the art of flying in the sky.

20 Others also, the inhabitants of planets known as Kimpuruṣa-loka, made the demon Maya into a calf, and they milked out mystic powers by which one can disappear immediately from another's vision and appear again in a different form.

21 Then the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, ghosts and witches, who are habituated to eating flesh, transformed Lord Śiva's incarnation Rudra [Bhūtanātha] into a calf and milked out beverages made of blood and put them in a pot made of skulls.

22 Thereafter cobras and snakes without hoods, large snakes, scorpions and many other poisonous animals took poison out of the planet earth as their milk and kept this poison in snake holes. They made a calf out of Takṣaka.

23-24 The four-legged animals like the cows made a calf out of the bull who carries Lord Śiva and made a milking pot out of the forest. Thus they got fresh green grasses to eat. Ferocious animals like tigers transformed a lion into a calf, and thus they were able to get flesh for milk. The birds made a calf out of Garuḍa and took milk from the planet earth in the form of moving insects and nonmoving plants and grasses.

25 The trees made a calf out of the banyan tree, and thus they derived milk in the form of many delicious juices. The mountains transformed the Himālayas into a calf, and they milked a variety of minerals into a pot made of the peaks of hills.

26 The planet earth supplied everyone his respective food. During the time of King Pṛthu, the earth was fully under the control of the King. Thus all the inhabitants of the earth could get their food supply by creating various types of calves and putting their particular types of milk in various pots.

27 My dear Vidura, chief of the Kurus, in this way King Pṛthu and all the others who subsist on food created different types of calves and milked out their respective eatables. Thus they received their various foodstuffs, which were symbolized as milk.

28 Thereafter King Pṛthu was very satisfied with the planet earth, for she sufficiently supplied all food to various living entities. Thus he developed an affection for the planet earth, just as if she were his own daughter.

29 After this, the king of all kings, Mahārāja Pṛthu, leveled all rough places on the surface of the globe by breaking up the hills with the strength of his bow. By his grace the surface of the globe almost became flat.

30 To all the citizens of the state, King Pṛthu was as good as a father. Thus he was visibly engaged in giving them proper subsistence and proper employment for subsistence. After leveling the surface of the globe, he earmarked different places for residential quarters, inasmuch as they were desirable.

31 In this way the King founded many types of villages, settlements and towns and built forts, residences for cowherdsmen, stables for the animals, places for the royal camps, mining places,

agricultural towns and mountain villages.

32 Before the reign of King Pṛthu there was no planned arrangement for different cities, villages, pasturing grounds, etc. Everything was scattered, and everyone constructed his residential quarters according to his own convenience. However, from the time of King Pṛthu, plans were made for towns and villages.

SB 4.19: King Pṛthu's One Hundred Horse Sacrifices

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, King Pṛthu initiated the performance of one hundred horse sacrifices at the spot where the river Sarasvatī flows towards the east. This piece of land is known as Brahmāvarta, and it was controlled by Svāyambhuva Manu.

2 When the most powerful Indra, the King of heaven, saw this, he considered the fact that King Pṛthu was going to exceed him in fruitive activities. Thus Indra could not tolerate the great sacrificial ceremonies performed by King Pṛthu.

3 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is present in everyone's heart as the Supersoul, and He is the proprietor of all planets and the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices. He was personally present at the sacrifices made by King Pṛthu.

4 When Lord Viṣṇu appeared in the sacrificial arena, Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and all the chief predominating personalities of every planet, as well as their followers, came with Him. When He appeared on the scene, the residents of Gandharvaloka, the great sages, and the residents of Apsaroloka all praised Him.

5 The Lord was accompanied by the residents of Siddhaloka and Vidyādhara-loka, all the descendants of Diti, and the demons and the Yakṣas. He was also accompanied by His chief associates, headed by Sunanda and Nanda.

6 Great devotees, who were always engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as well as the great sages named Kapila, Nārada and Dattātreya, and masters of mystic powers, headed by Sanaka Kumāra, all attended the great sacrifice with Lord Viṣṇu.

7 My dear Vidura, in that great sacrifice the entire land came to be like the milk-producing kāma-dhenu, and thus, by the performance of yajṣa, all daily necessities for life were supplied.

8 The flowing rivers supplied all kinds of tastes sweet, pungent, sour, etc. and very big trees supplied fruit and honey in abundance. The cows, having eaten sufficient green grass, supplied profuse quantities of milk, curd, clarified butter and similar other necessities.

9 King Pṛthu was presented with various gifts from the general populace and predominating deities of all planets. The oceans and seas were full of valuable jewels and pearls, and the hills were full of chemicals and fertilizers. Four kinds of edibles were produced profusely.

10 King Pṛthu was dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Adhokṣaja. Because King Pṛthu performed so many sacrifices, he was superhumanly enhanced by the mercy of the Supreme Lord. King Pṛthu's opulence, however, could not be tolerated by the King of heaven, Indra, who tried to impede the progress of his opulence.

11 When Pṛthu Mahārāja was performing the last horse sacrifice [aśvamedha-yajṣa], King Indra, invisible to everyone, stole the horse intended for sacrifice. He did this because of his great envy of King Pṛthu.

12 When King Indra was taking away the horse, he dressed himself to appear as a liberated person. Actually this dress was a form of cheating, for it falsely created an impression of religion. When Indra went into outer space in this way, the great sage Atri saw him and understood the whole situation.

13 When the son of King Pṛthu was informed by Atri of King Indra's trick, he immediately became very angry and followed Indra to kill him, calling, "Wait! Wait!"

14 King Indra was fraudulently dressed as a sannyāsī, having knotted his hair on his head and smeared ashes all over his body. Upon seeing such dress, the son of King Pṛthu considered Indra a religious man and pious sannyāsī. Therefore he did not release his arrows.

15 When Atri Muni saw that the son of King Pṛthu did not kill Indra but returned deceived by him, Atri Muni again instructed him to kill the heavenly King because he thought that Indra had become the lowliest of all demigods due to his impeding the execution of King Pṛthu's sacrifice.

16 Being thus informed, the grandson of King Vena immediately began to follow Indra, who was fleeing through the sky in great haste. He was very angry with him, and he chased him just as the king of the vultures chased Rāvaṇa.

17 When Indra saw that the son of Pṛthu was chasing him, he immediately abandoned his false dress and left the horse. Indeed, he disappeared from that very spot, and the great hero, the son of Mahārāja Pṛthu, returned the horse to his father's sacrificial arena.

18 My dear Lord Vidura, when the great sages observed the wonderful prowess of the son of King Pṛthu, they all agreed to give him the name Vijitāśva.

19 My dear Vidura, Indra, being the King of heaven and very powerful, immediately brought a dense darkness upon the sacrificial arena. Covering the whole scene in this way, he again took away the horse, which was chained with golden shackles near the wooden instrument where animals were sacrificed.

20 The great sage Atri again pointed out to the son of King Pṛthu that Indra was fleeing through the sky. The great hero, the son of Pṛthu, chased him again. But when he saw that Indra was carrying in his hand a staff with a skull at the top and was again wearing the dress of a sannyāsī, he still chose not to kill him.

21 When the great sage Atri again gave directions, the son of King Pṛthu became very angry and placed an arrow on his bow. Upon seeing this, King Indra immediately abandoned the false dress of a sannyāsī and, giving up the horse, made himself invisible.

22 Then the great hero, Vijitāśva, the son of King Pṛthu, again took the horse and returned to his father's sacrificial arena. Since that time, certain men with a poor fund of knowledge have adopted the dress of a false sannyāsī. It was King Indra who introduced this.

23 Whatever different forms Indra assumed as a mendicant because of his desire to seize the horse were symbols of atheistic philosophy.

24-25 In this way King Indra, in order to steal the horse from King Pṛthu's sacrifice, adopted several orders of sannyāsa. Some sannyāsīs go naked, and sometimes they wear red garments and pass under the name of kṛpālika. These are simply symbolic representations of their sinful activities. These so-called sannyāsīs are very much appreciated by sinful men because they are all godless atheists and very expert in putting forward arguments and reasons to support their

case. We must know, however, that they are only passing as adherents of religion and are not so in fact. Unfortunately, bewildered persons accept them as religious, and being attracted to them, they spoil their life.

26 Mahārāja Pṛthu, who was celebrated as very powerful, immediately took up his bow and arrows and prepared to kill Indra himself, because Indra had introduced such irregular sannyāsa orders.

27 When the priests and all the others saw Mahārāja Pṛthu very angry and prepared to kill Indra, they requested him: O great soul, do not kill him, for only sacrificial animals can be killed in a sacrifice. Such are the directions given by śāstra.

28 Dear King, Indra's powers are already reduced due to his attempt to impede the execution of your sacrifice. We shall call him by Vedic mantras which were never before used, and certainly he will come. Thus by the power of our mantra, we shall cast him into the fire because he is your enemy.

29 My dear Vidura, after giving the King this advice, the priests who had been engaged in performing the sacrifice called for Indra, the King of heaven, in a mood of great anger. When they were just ready to put the oblation in the fire, Lord Brahmā appeared on the scene and forbade them to start the sacrifice.

30 Lord Brahmā addressed them thus: My dear sacrificial performers, you cannot kill Indra, the King of heaven. It is not your duty. You should know that Indra is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, he is one of the most powerful assistants of the Personality of Godhead. You are trying to satisfy all the demigods by the performance of this yajña, but you should know that all these demigods are but parts and parcels of Indra, the King of heaven. How, then, can you kill him in this great sacrifice?

31 In order to make trouble and impede the performance of King Pṛthu's great sacrifice, King Indra has adopted some means that in the future will destroy the clear path of religious life. I draw your attention to this fact. If you oppose him any further, he will further misuse his power and introduce many other irreligious systems.

32 "Let there be only ninety-nine sacrificial performances for Mahārāja Pṛthu," Lord Brahmā concluded. Lord Brahmā then turned towards Mahārāja Pṛthu and informed him that since he was thoroughly aware of the path of liberation, what was the use in performing more sacrifices?

33 Lord Brahmā continued: Let there be good fortune to both of you, for you and King Indra are both part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you should not be angry with King Indra, who is nondifferent from you.

34 My dear King, do not be agitated and anxious because your sacrifices have not been properly executed due to providential impediments. Kindly take my words with great respect. We should always remember that if something happens by providential arrangement, we should not be very sorry. The more we try to rectify such reversals, the more we enter into the darkest region of materialistic thought.

35 Lord Brahmā continued: Stop the performance of these sacrifices, for they have induced Indra to introduce so many irreligious aspects. You should know very well that even amongst the demigods there are many unwanted desires.

36 Just see how Indra, the King of heaven, was creating a disturbance in the midst of the

sacrifice by stealing the sacrificial horse. These attractive sinful activities he has introduced will be carried out by the people in general.

37 O King Pṛthu, son of Vena, you are the part-and-parcel expansion of Lord Viṣṇu. Due to the mischievous activities of King Vena, religious principles were almost lost. At that opportune moment you descended as the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. Indeed, for the protection of religious principles you have appeared from the body of King Vena.

38 O protector of the people in general, please consider the purpose of your being incarnated by Lord Viṣṇu. The irreligious principles created by Indra are but mothers of so many unwanted religions. Please therefore stop these imitations immediately.

39 The great sage Maitreya continued: When King Pṛthu was thus advised by the supreme teacher, Lord Brahmā, he abandoned his eagerness to perform yajṣas and with great affection concluded a peace with King Indra.

40 After this, Pṛthu Mahārāja took his bath, which is customarily taken after the performance of a yajṣa, and received the benedictions and due blessings of the demigods, who were very pleased by his glorious activities.

41 With great respect, the original king, Pṛthu, offered all kinds of rewards to the brāhmaṇas present at the sacrifice. Since all these brāhmaṇas were very much satisfied, they gave their heartfelt blessings to the King.

42 All the great sages and brāhmaṇas said: O mighty King, by your invitation all classes of living entities have attended this assembly. They have come from Piṭṛloka and the heavenly planets, and great sages as well as common men have attended this meeting. Now all of them are very much satisfied by your dealings and your charity towards them.

SB 4.20: Lord Viṣṇu's Appearance in the Sacrificial Arena of Mahārāja Pṛthu

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, being very much satisfied by the performance of ninety-nine horse sacrifices, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, appeared on the scene. Accompanying Him was King Indra. Lord Viṣṇu then began to speak.

2 Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, said: My dear King Pṛthu, Indra, the King of heaven, has disturbed your execution of one hundred sacrifices. Now he has come with Me to be forgiven by you. Therefore excuse him.

3 O King, one who is advanced in intelligence and eager to perform welfare activities for others is considered best amongst human beings. An advanced human being is never malicious to others. Those with advanced intelligence are always conscious that this material body is different from the soul.

4 If a personality like you, who are so much advanced because of executing the instructions of the previous ācāryas, is carried away by the influence of My material energy, then all your advancement may be considered simply a waste of time.

5 Those who are in full knowledge of the bodily conception of life, who know that this body is composed of nescience, desires and activities resulting from illusion, do not become addicted to the body.

6 How can a highly learned person who has absolutely no affinity for the bodily conception of life be affected by the bodily conception in regard to house, children, wealth and similar other

bodily productions?

7 The individual soul is one, pure, nonmaterial and self-effulgent. He is the reservoir of all good qualities, and He is all-pervading. He is without material covering, and He is the witness of all activities. He is completely distinguished from other living entities, and He is transcendental to all embodied souls.

8 Although within the material nature, one who is thus situated in full knowledge of the Paramātmā and ātmā is never affected by the modes of material nature, for he is always situated in My transcendental loving service.

9 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, continued: My dear King Pṛthu, when one situated in his occupational duty engages in My loving service without motive for material gain, he gradually becomes very satisfied within.

10 When the heart is cleansed of all material contamination, the devotee's mind becomes broader and transparent and he can see things equally. At that stage of life there is peace, and one is situated equally with Me as sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha.

11 Anyone who knows that this material body, made of the five gross elements, the sense organs, the working senses and the mind, is simply supervised by the fixed soul is eligible to be liberated from material bondage.

12 Lord Viṣṇu told King Pṛthu: My dear King, the constant change of this material world is due to the interaction of the three modes of material nature. The five elements, the senses, the demigods who control the senses, as well as the mind, which is agitated by the spirit soul all these taken together comprise the body. Since the spirit soul is completely different from this combination of gross and subtle material elements, My devotee who is connected with Me in intense friendship and affection, being completely in knowledge, is never agitated by material happiness and distress.

13 My dear heroic King, please keep yourself always equipoised and treat people equally, whether they are greater than you, in the intermediate stage or lower than you. Do not be disturbed by temporary distress or happiness. Fully control your mind and senses. In this transcendental position, try to execute your duty as king in whatever condition of life you may be posted by My arrangement, for your only duty here is to give protection to the citizens of your kingdom.

14 To give protection to the general mass of people who are citizens of the state is the prescribed occupational duty for a king. By acting in that way, the king in his next life shares one sixth of the result of the pious activities of the citizens. But a king or executive head of state who simply collects taxes from the citizens but does not give them proper protection as human beings has the results of his own pious activities taken away by the citizens, and in exchange for his not giving protection he becomes liable to punishment for the impious activities of his subjects.

15 Lord Viṣṇu continued: My dear King Pṛthu, if you continue to protect the citizens according to the instructions of the learned brāhmaṇa authorities, as they are received by the disciplic succession by hearing from master to disciple, and if you follow the religious principles laid down by them, without attachment to ideas manufactured by mental concoction, then every one of your citizens will be happy and will love you, and very soon you will be able to see such already liberated personalities as the four Kumāras [Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra].

16 My dear King, I am very captivated by your elevated qualities and excellent behavior, and thus I am very favorably inclined toward you. You may therefore ask from Me any benediction you like. One who does not possess elevated qualities and behavior cannot possibly achieve My favor simply by performance of sacrifices, severe austerities or mystic yoga. But I always remain equipoised in the heart of one who is also equipoised in all circumstances.

17 The great saint Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, in this way Mahārāja Pṛthu, the conqueror of the entire world, accepted the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead on his head.

18 As King Indra was standing by, he became ashamed of his own activities and fell down before King Pṛthu to touch his lotus feet. But Pṛthu Mahārāja immediately embraced him in great ecstasy and gave up all envy against him for his having stolen the horse meant for the sacrifice.

19 King Pṛthu abundantly worshiped the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was so merciful to him. While worshiping the lotus feet of the Lord, Pṛthu Mahārāja gradually increased his ecstasy in devotional service.

20 The Lord was just about to leave, but because He was so greatly inclined toward the behavior of King Pṛthu, He did not depart. Seeing the behavior of Mahārāja Pṛthu with His lotus eyes, He was detained because He is always the well-wisher of His devotees.

21 The original king, Mahārāja Pṛthu, his eyes full of tears and his voice faltering and choked up, could neither see the Lord very distinctly nor speak to address the Lord in any way. He simply embraced the Lord within his heart and remained standing in that way with folded hands.

22 The Supreme Personality of Godhead stood with His lotus feet almost touching the ground while He rested the front of His hand on the raised shoulder of Garuḍa, the enemy of the snakes. Mahārāja Pṛthu, wiping the tears from his eyes, tried to look upon the Lord, but it appeared that the King was not fully satisfied by looking at Him. Thus the King offered the following prayers.

23 My dear Lord, You are the best of the demigods who can offer benedictions. Why, therefore, should any learned person ask You for benedictions meant for living entities bewildered by the modes of nature? Such benedictions are available automatically, even in the lives of living entities suffering in hellish conditions. My dear Lord, You can certainly bestow merging into Your existence, but I do not wish to have such a benediction.

24 My dear Lord, I therefore do not wish to have the benediction of merging into Your existence, a benediction in which there is no existence of the nectarean beverage of Your lotus feet. I want the benediction of at least one million ears, for thus I may be able to hear about the glories of Your lotus feet from the mouths of Your pure devotees.

25 My dear Lord, You are glorified by the selected verses uttered by great personalities. Such glorification of Your lotus feet is just like saffron particles. When the transcendental vibration from the mouths of great devotees carries the aroma of the saffron dust of Your lotus feet, the forgetful living entity gradually remembers his eternal relationship with You. Devotees thus gradually come to the right conclusion about the value of life. My dear Lord, I therefore do not need any other benediction but the opportunity to hear from the mouth of Your pure devotee.

26 My dear highly glorified Lord, if one, in the association of pure devotees, hears even once the glories of Your activities, he does not, unless he is nothing but an animal, give up the

association of devotees, for no intelligent person would be so careless as to leave their association. The perfection of chanting and hearing about Your glories was accepted even by the goddess of fortune, who desired to hear of Your unlimited activities and transcendental glories.

27 Now I wish to engage in the service of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and to serve just like the goddess of fortune, who carries a lotus flower in her hand, because His Lordship, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the reservoir of all transcendental qualities. I am afraid that the goddess of fortune and I would quarrel because both of us would be attentively engaged in the same service.

28 My dear Lord of the universe, the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, is the mother of the universe, and yet I think that she may be angry with me because of my intruding upon her service and acting on that very platform to which she is so much attached. Yet I am hopeful that even though there is some misunderstanding, You will take my part, for You are very much inclined to the poor, and You always magnify even insignificant service unto You. Therefore even though she becomes angry, I think that there is no harm for You, because You are so self-sufficient that You can do without her.

29 Great saintly persons who are always liberated take to Your devotional service because only by devotional service can one be relieved from the illusions of material existence. O my Lord, there is no reason for the liberated souls to take shelter at Your lotus feet except that such souls are constantly thinking of Your feet.

30 My dear Lord, what You have said to Your unalloyed devotee is certainly very much bewildering. The allurements You offer in the Vedas are certainly not suitable for pure devotees. People in general, bound by the sweet words of the Vedas, engage themselves again and again in fruitive activities, enamored by the results of their actions.

31 My Lord, due to Your illusory energy, all living beings in this material world have forgotten their real constitutional position, and out of ignorance they are always desirous of material happiness in the form of society, friendship and love. Therefore, please do not ask me to take some material benefits from You, but as a father, not waiting for the son's demand, does everything for the benefit of the son, please bestow upon me whatever You think best for me.

32 The great sage Maitreya continued by saying that the Lord, the seer of the universe, after hearing Pṛthu Mahārāja's prayer, addressed the King: My dear King, may you always be blessed by engaging in My devotional service. Only by such purity of purpose, as you yourself very intelligently express, can one cross over the insurmountable illusory energy of māyā.

33 My dear King, O protector of the citizens, henceforward be very careful to execute My orders and not be misled by anything. Anyone who lives in that way, simply carrying out My orders faithfully, will always find good fortune all over the world.

34 The great saint Maitreya told Vidura: The Supreme Personality of Godhead amply appreciated the meaningful prayers of Mahārāja Pṛthu. Thus, after being properly worshiped by the King, the Lord blessed him and decided to depart.

35-36 King Pṛthu worshiped the demigods, the great sages, the inhabitants of Pitr̥loka, the inhabitants of Gandharvaloka, and those of Siddhaloka, Cāraṇaloka, Pannagaloka, Kinnaraloka, Apsaroloka, the earthly planets and the planets of the birds. He also worshiped many other living entities who presented themselves in the sacrificial arena. With folded hands he worshiped all these, as well as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the personal associates of the Lord, by offering sweet words and as much wealth as possible. After this

function, they all went back to their respective abodes, following in the footsteps of Lord Viṣṇu.

37 The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, having captivated the minds of the King and the priests who were present, returned to His abode in the spiritual sky.

38 King Pṛthu then offered his respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supreme Lord of all demigods. Although not an object of material vision, the Lord revealed Himself to the sight of Mahārāja Pṛthu. After offering obeisances to the Lord, the King returned to his home.

SB 4.21: Instructions by Mahārāja Pṛthu

1 The great sage Maitreya told Vidura: When the King entered his city, it was very beautifully decorated to receive him with pearls, flower garlands, beautiful cloth and golden gates, and the entire city was perfumed with highly fragrant incense.

2 Fragrant water distilled from sandalwood and aguru herb was sprinkled everywhere on the lanes, roads and small parks throughout the city, and everywhere were decorations of unbroken fruits, flowers, wetted grains, varied minerals, and lamps, all presented as auspicious paraphernalia.

3 At the street crossings there were bunches of fruits and flowers, as well as pillars of banana trees and betel nut branches. All these combined decorations everywhere looked very attractive.

4 As the King entered the gate of the city, all the citizens received him with many auspicious articles like lamps, flowers and yogurt. The King was also received by many beautiful unmarried girls whose bodies were bedecked with various ornaments, especially with earrings which collided with one another.

5 When the King entered the palace, conchshells and kettledrums were sounded, priests chanted Vedic mantras, and professional reciters offered different prayers. But in spite of all this ceremony to welcome him, the King was not the least bit affected.

6 Both the important citizens and the common citizens welcomed the King very heartily, and he also bestowed upon them their desired blessings.

7 King Pṛthu was greater than the greatest soul and was therefore worshipable by everyone. He performed many glorious activities in ruling over the surface of the world and was always magnanimous. After achieving such great success and a reputation which spread throughout the universe, he at last obtained the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

8 Sūta Gosvāmī continued: O Śaunaka, leader of the great sages, after hearing Maitreya speak about the various activities of King Pṛthu, the original king, who was fully qualified, glorified and widely praised all over the world, Vidura, the great devotee, very submissively worshiped Maitreya Ṛṣi and asked him the following question.

9 Vidura said: My dear brāhmaṇa Maitreya, it is very enlightening to understand that King Pṛthu was enthroned by the great sages and brāhmaṇas. All the demigods presented him with innumerable gifts, and he also expanded his influence upon personally receiving strength from Lord Viṣṇu. Thus he greatly developed the earth.

10 Pṛthu Mahārāja was so great in his activities and magnanimous in his method of ruling that

all the kings and demigods on the various planets still follow in his footsteps. Who is there who will not try to hear about his glorious activities? I wish to hear more and more about Pṛthu Mahārāja because his activities are so pious and auspicious.

11 The great saintly sage Maitreya told Vidura: My dear Vidura, King Pṛthu lived in the tract of land between the two great rivers Ganges and Yamunā. Because he was very opulent, it appeared that he was enjoying his destined fortune in order to diminish the results of his past pious activities.

12 Mahārāja Pṛthu was an unrivaled king and possessed the scepter for ruling all the seven islands on the surface of the globe. No one could disobey his irrevocable orders but the saintly persons, the brāhmaṇas and the descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead [the Vaiṣṇavas].

13 Once upon a time King Pṛthu initiated the performance of a very great sacrifice in which great saintly sages, brāhmaṇas, demigods from higher planetary systems and great saintly kings known as rājarṣis all assembled together.

14 In that great assembly, Mahārāja Pṛthu first of all worshiped all the respectable visitors according to their respective positions. After this, he stood up in the midst of the assembly, and it appeared that the full moon had arisen amongst the stars.

15 King Pṛthu's body was tall and sturdy, and his complexion was fair. His arms were full and broad and his eyes as bright as the rising sun. His nose was straight, his face very beautiful, and his personality grave. His teeth were set beautifully in his smiling face.

16 The chest of Mahārāja Pṛthu was very broad, his waist was very thick, and his abdomen, wrinkled by lines of skin, resembled in construction a leaf of a banyan tree. His navel was coiled and deep, his thighs were of a golden hue, and his instep was arched.

17 The black, slick hair on his head was very fine and curly, and his neck, like a conchshell, was decorated with auspicious lines. He wore a very valuable dhotī, and there was a nice wrapper on the upper part of his body.

18 As Mahārāja Pṛthu was being initiated to perform the sacrifice, he had to leave aside his valuable dress, and therefore his natural bodily beauty was visible. It was very pleasing to see him put on a black deerskin and wear a ring of kuśa grass on his finger, for this increased the natural beauty of his body. It appears that Mahārāja Pṛthu observed all the regulative principles before he performed the sacrifice.

19 Just to encourage the members of the assembly and to enhance their pleasure, King Pṛthu glanced over them with eyes that seemed like stars in a sky wet with dew. He then spoke to them in a great voice.

20 Mahārāja Pṛthu's speech was very beautiful, full of metaphorical language, clearly understandable and very pleasing to hear. His words were all grave and certain. It appears that when he spoke, he expressed his personal realization of the Absolute Truth in order to benefit all who were present.

21 King Pṛthu said: O gentle members of the assembly, may all good fortune be upon you! May all of you great souls who have come to attend this meeting kindly hear my prayer attentively. A person who is actually inquisitive must present his decision before an assembly of noble souls.

22 King Pṛthu continued: By the grace of the Supreme Lord I have been appointed the king of this planet, and I carry the scepter to rule the citizens, protect them from all danger, and give them employment according to their respective positions in the social order established by Vedic injunction.

23 Mahārāja Pṛthu said: I think that upon the execution of my duties as king, I shall be able to achieve the desirable objectives described by experts in Vedic knowledge. This destination is certainly achieved by the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the seer of all destiny.

24 Any king who does not teach his citizens about their respective duties in terms of varṇa and āśrama but who simply exacts tolls and taxes from them is liable to suffer for the impious activities which have been performed by the citizens. In addition to such degradation, the king also loses his own fortune.

25 Pṛthu Mahārāja continued: Therefore, my dear citizens, for the welfare of your king after his death, you should execute your duties properly in terms of your positions of varṇa and āśrama and should always think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within your hearts. By doing so, you will protect your own interests, and you will bestow mercy upon your king for his welfare after death.

26 I request all the purehearted demigods, forefathers and saintly persons to support my proposal, for after death the result of an action is equally shared by its doer, its director and its supporter.

27 My dear respectable ladies and gentlemen, according to the authoritative statements of śāstra, there must be a supreme authority who is able to award the respective benefits of our present activities. Otherwise, why should there be persons who are unusually beautiful and powerful both in this life and in the life after death?

28-29 This is confirmed not only by the evidence of the Vedas but also by the personal behavior of great personalities like Manu, Uttānapāda, Dhruva, Priyavrata and my grandfather Aṅga, as well as by many other great personalities and ordinary living entities, exemplified by Mahārāja Prahlāda and Bali, all of whom are theists, believing in the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who carries a club.

30 Although abominable persons like my father, Vena, the grandson of death personified, are bewildered on the path of religion, all the great personalities like those mentioned agree that in this world the only bestower of the benedictions of religion, economic development, sense gratification, liberation or elevation to the heavenly planets is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31 By the inclination to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the dirt which has accumulated in their minds during innumerable births. Like the Ganges water, which emanates from the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, such a process immediately cleanses the mind, and thus spiritual or Kṛṣṇa consciousness gradually increases.

32 When a devotee takes shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is completely cleansed of all misunderstanding or mental speculation, and he manifests renunciation. This is possible only when one is strengthened by practicing bhakti-yoga. Once having taken shelter at the root of the lotus feet of the Lord, a devotee never comes back to this material existence, which is full of the threefold miseries.

33 Pr̥thu Mahārāja advised his citizens: Engaging your minds, your words, your bodies and the results of your occupational duties, and being always open-minded, you should all render devotional service to the Lord. According to your abilities and the occupations in which you are situated, you should engage your service at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead with full confidence and without reservation. Then you will surely be successful in achieving the final objective in your lives.

34 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental and not contaminated by this material world. But although He is concentrated spirit soul without material variety, for the benefit of the conditioned soul He nevertheless accepts different types of sacrifice performed with various material elements, rituals and mantras and offered to the demigods under different names according to the interests and purposes of the performers.

35 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading, but He is also manifested in different types of bodies which arise from a combination of material nature, time, desires and occupational duties. Thus different types of consciousness develop, just as fire, which is always basically the same, blazes in different ways according to the shape and dimension of firewood.

36 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master and enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices, and He is the supreme spiritual master as well. All of you citizens on the surface of the globe who have a relationship with me and are worshiping Him by dint of your occupational duties are bestowing your mercy upon me. Therefore, O my citizens, I thank you.

37 The brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas are personally glorified by their characteristic powers of tolerance, penance, knowledge and education. By dint of all these spiritual assets, Vaiṣṇavas are more powerful than royalty. It is therefore advised that the princely order not exhibit its material prowess before these two communities and should avoid offending them.

38 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ancient, eternal Godhead, who is foremost amongst all great personalities, obtained the opulence of His staunch reputation, which purifies the entire universe, by worshiping the lotus feet of those brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas.

39 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is everlastingly independent and who exists in everyone's heart, is very pleased with those who follow in His footsteps and engage without reservation in the service of the descendants of brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, for He is always dear to brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas and they are always dear to Him.

40 By regular service to the brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, one can clear the dirt from his heart and thus enjoy supreme peace and liberation from material attachment and be satisfied. In this world there is no fruitive activity superior to serving the brāhmaṇa class, for this can bring pleasure to the demigods, for whom the many sacrifices are recommended.

41 Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Ananta, eats through the fire sacrifices offered in the names of the different demigods, He does not take as much pleasure in eating through fire as He does in accepting offerings through the mouths of learned sages and devotees, for then He does not leave the association of devotees.

42 In brahminical culture a brāhmaṇa's transcendental position is eternally maintained because the injunctions of the Vedas are accepted with faith, austerity, scriptural conclusions, full sense and mind control, and meditation. In this way the real goal of life is illuminated, just as one's face is fully reflected in a clear mirror.

43 O respectable personalities present here, I beg the blessings of all of you that I may perpetually carry on my crown the dust of the lotus feet of such brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas until

the end of my life. He who can carry such dust on his head is very soon relieved of all the reactions which arise from sinful life, and eventually he develops all good and desirable qualities.

44 Whoever acquires the brahminical qualifications whose only wealth is good behavior, who is grateful, and who takes shelter of experienced persons gets all the opulence of the world. I therefore wish that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His associates be pleased with the brāhmaṇa class, with the cows and with me.

45 The great sage Maitreya said: After hearing King Pṛthu speak so nicely, all the demigods, the denizens of Pitrloka, the brāhmaṇas and the saintly persons present at the meeting congratulated him by expressing their good will.

46 They all declared that the Vedic conclusion that one can conquer the heavenly planets by the action of a putra, or son, was fulfilled, for the most sinful Vena, who had been killed by the curse of the brāhmaṇas, was now delivered from the darkest region of hellish life by his son, Mahārāja Pṛthu.

47 Similarly, Hiranyakaśipu, who by dint of his sinful activities always defied the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, entered into the darkest region of hellish life; but by the grace of his great son, Prahlāda Mahārāja, he also was delivered and went back home, back to Godhead.

48 All the saintly brāhmaṇas thus addressed Pṛthu Mahārāja: O best of the warriors, O father of this globe, may you be blessed with a long life, for you have great devotion to the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of all the universe.

49 The audience continued: Dear King Pṛthu, your reputation is the purest of all, for you are preaching the glories of the most glorified of all, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord of the brāhmaṇas. Since, due to our great fortune, we have you as our master, we think that we are living directly under the agency of the Lord.

50 Our dear lord, it is your occupational duty to rule over your citizens. That is not a very wonderful task for a personality like you, who are so affectionate in seeing to the interests of the citizens, because you are full of mercy. That is the greatness of your character.

51 The citizens continued: Today you have opened our eyes and revealed how to cross to the other side of the ocean of darkness. By our past deeds and by the arrangement of superior authority, we are entangled in a network of fruitive activities and have lost sight of the destination of life; thus we have been wandering within the universe.

52 Dear lord, you are situated in your pure existential position of goodness; therefore you are the perfect representative of the Supreme Lord. You are glorified by your own prowess, and thus you are maintaining the entire world by introducing brahminical culture and protecting everyone in your line of duty as a kṣatriya.

SB 4.22: Pṛthu Mahārāja's Meeting with the Four Kumāras

1 The great sage Maitreya said: While the citizens were thus praying to the most powerful King Pṛthu, the four Kumāras, who were as bright as the sun, arrived on the spot.

2 Seeing the glowing effulgence of the four Kumāras, the masters of all mystic power, the King and his associates could recognize them as they descended from the sky.

3 Seeing the four Kumāras, Pṛthu Mahārāja was greatly anxious to receive them. Therefore the King, with all his officers, very hastily got up, as anxiously as a conditioned soul whose senses are immediately attracted by the modes of material nature.

4 When the great sages accepted their reception, according to the instructions of the śāstras, and finally took their seats offered by the King, the King, influenced by the glories of the sages, immediately bowed down. Thus he worshiped the four Kumāras.

5 After this, the King took the water which had washed the lotus feet of the Kumāras and sprinkled it over his hair. By such respectful actions, the King, as an exemplary personality, showed how to receive a spiritually advanced personality.

6 The four great sages were elder to Lord Śiva, and when they were seated on the golden throne, they appeared just like fire blazing on an altar. Mahārāja Pṛthu, out of his great gentleness and respect for them, began to speak with great restraint as follows.

7 King Pṛthu spoke: My dear great sages, auspiciousness personified, it is very difficult for even the mystic yogīs to see you. Indeed, you are very rarely seen. I do not know what kind of pious activity I performed for you to grace me by appearing before me without difficulty.

8 Any person upon whom the brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas are pleased can achieve anything which is very rare to obtain in this world as well as after death. Not only that, but one also receives the favor of the auspicious Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu, who accompany the brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas.

9 Pṛthu Mahārāja continued: Although you are traveling in all planetary systems, people cannot know you, just as they cannot know the Supersoul, although He is within everyone's heart as the witness of everything. Even Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva cannot understand the Supersoul.

10 A person who is not very rich and is attached to family life becomes highly glorified when saintly persons are present in his home. The master and servants who are engaged in offering the exalted visitors water, a sitting place and paraphernalia for reception are glorified, and the home itself is also glorified.

11 On the contrary, even though full of all opulence and material prosperity, any householder's house where the devotees of the Lord are never allowed to come in, and where there is no water for washing their feet, is to be considered a tree in which all venomous serpents live.

12 Mahārāja Pṛthu offered his welcome to the four Kumāras, addressing them as the best of the brāhmaṇas. He welcomed them, saying: From the beginning of your birth you strictly observed the vows of celibacy, and although you are experienced in the path of liberation, you are keeping yourselves just like small children.

13 Pṛthu Mahārāja inquired from the sages about persons entangled in this dangerous material existence because of their previous actions. Could such persons, whose only aim is sense gratification, be blessed with any good fortune?

14 Pṛthu Mahārāja continued: My dear sirs, there is no need to ask about your good and bad fortune because you are always absorbed in spiritual bliss. The mental concoction of the auspicious and inauspicious does not exist in you.

15 I am completely assured that personalities like you are the only friends for persons who are blazing in the fire of material existence. I therefore ask you how in this material world we can

very soon achieve the ultimate goal of life.

16 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always anxious to elevate the living entities, who are His parts and parcels, and for their special benefit the Lord travels all over the world in the form of self-realized persons like you.

17 The great sage Maitreya continued: Thus Sanat-kumāra, the best of the celibates, after hearing the speech of Pṛthu Mahārāja, which was meaningful, appropriate, full of precise words and very sweet to hear, smiled with full satisfaction and began to speak as follows.

18 Sanat-kumāra said: My dear King Pṛthu, I am very nicely questioned by you. Such questions are beneficial for all living entities, especially because they are raised by you, who are always thinking of the good of others. Although you know everything, you ask such questions because that is the behavior of saintly persons. Such intelligence is befitting your position.

19 When there is a congregation of devotees, their discussions, questions and answers become conclusive to both the speaker and the audience. Thus such a meeting is beneficial for everyone's real happiness.

20 Sanat-kumāra continued: My dear King, you already have an inclination to glorify the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such attachment is very difficult to achieve, but when one has attained such unflinching faith in the Lord, it automatically cleanses lusty desires from the core of the heart.

21 It has been conclusively decided in the scriptures, after due consideration, that the ultimate goal for the welfare of human society is detachment from the bodily concept of life and increased and steadfast attachment for the Supreme Lord, who is transcendental, beyond the modes of material nature.

22 Attachment for the Supreme can be increased by practicing devotional service, inquiring about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, applying bhakti-yoga in life, worshiping the Yogeśvara, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by hearing and chanting about the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These actions are pious in themselves.

23 One has to make progress in spiritual life by not associating with persons who are simply interested in sense gratification and making money. Not only such persons, but one who associates with such persons should be avoided. One should mold his life in such a way that he cannot live in peace without drinking the nectar of the glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari. One can be thus elevated by being disgusted with the taste for sense enjoyment.

24 A candidate for spiritual advancement must be nonviolent, must follow in the footsteps of great ācāryas, must always remember the nectar of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must follow the regulative principles without material desire and, while following the regulative principles, should not blaspheme others. A devotee should lead a very simple life and not be disturbed by the duality of opposing elements. He should learn to tolerate them.

25 The devotee should gradually increase the culture of devotional service by constant hearing of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These pastimes are like ornamental decorations on the ears of devotees. By rendering devotional service and transcending the material qualities, one can easily be fixed in transcendence in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

26 Upon becoming fixed in his attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the

grace of the spiritual master and by awakening knowledge and detachment, the living entity, situated within the heart of the body and covered by the five elements, burns up his material surroundings exactly as fire, arising from wood, burns the wood itself.

27 When a person becomes devoid of all material desires and liberated from all material qualities, he transcends distinctions between actions executed externally and internally. At that time the difference between the soul and the Supersoul, which was existing before self-realization, is annihilated. When a dream is over, there is no longer a distinction between the dream and the dreamer.

28 When the soul exists for sense gratification, he creates different desires, and for that reason he becomes subjected to designations. But when one is in the transcendental position, he is no longer interested in anything except fulfilling the desires of the Lord.

29 Only because of different causes does a person see a difference between himself and others, just as one sees the reflection of a body appearing differently manifested on water, on oil or in a mirror.

30 When one's mind and senses are attracted to sense objects for enjoyment, the mind becomes agitated. As a result of continually thinking of sense objects, one's real consciousness almost becomes lost, like the water in a lake that is gradually sucked up by the big grass straws on its bank.

31 When one deviates from his original consciousness, he loses the capacity to remember his previous position or recognize his present one. When remembrance is lost, all knowledge acquired is based on a false foundation. When this occurs, learned scholars consider that the soul is lost.

32 There is no stronger obstruction to one's self-interest than thinking other subject matters to be more pleasing than one's self-realization.

33 For human society, constantly thinking of how to earn money and apply it for sense gratification brings about the destruction of everyone's interests. When one becomes devoid of knowledge and devotional service, he enters into species of life like those of trees and stones.

34 Those who strongly desire to cross the ocean of nescience must not associate with the modes of ignorance, for hedonistic activities are the greatest obstructions to realization of religious principles, economic development, regulated sense gratification and, at last, liberation.

35 Out of the four principles namely religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation liberation has to be taken very seriously. The other three are subject to destruction by the stringent law of nature death.

36 We accept as blessings different states of higher life, distinguishing them from lower states of life, but we should know that such distinctions exist only in relation to the interchange of the modes of material nature. Actually these states of life have no permanent existence, for all of them will be destroyed by the supreme controller.

37 Sanat-kumāra advised the King: Therefore, my dear King Pṛthu, try to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is living within everyone's heart along with the individual soul, in each and every body, either moving or not moving. The individual souls are fully covered by the gross material body and subtle body made of the life air and intelligence.

38 The Supreme Personality of Godhead manifests Himself as one with the cause and effect

within this body, but one who has transcended the illusory energy by deliberate consideration, which clears the misconception of a snake for a rope, can understand that the Paramātmā is eternally transcendental to the material creation and situated in pure internal energy. Thus the Lord is transcendental to all material contamination. Unto Him only must one surrender.

39 The devotees, who are always engaged in the service of the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, can very easily overcome hard-knotted desires for fruitive activities. Because this is very difficult, the nondevotees the *ṣānīs* and *yogīs* although trying to stop the waves of sense gratification, cannot do so. Therefore you are advised to engage in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva.

40 The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are nondevotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers.

41 The great sage Maitreya continued: Being thus enlightened in complete spiritual knowledge by the son of Brahmā one of the Kumāras, who was complete in spiritual knowledge the King worshiped them in the following words.

42 The King said: O brāhmaṇa, O powerful one, formerly Lord Viṣṇu showed me His causeless mercy, indicating that you would come to my house, and to confirm that blessing, you have all come.

43 My dear brāhmaṇa, you have carried out the order thoroughly because you are also as compassionate as the Lord. It is my duty, therefore, to offer you something, but all I possess are but remnants of food taken by great saintly persons. What shall I give?

44 The King continued: Therefore, my dear brāhmaṇas, my life, wife, children, home, furniture and household paraphernalia, my kingdom, strength, land and especially my treasury are all offered unto you.

45 Since only a person who is completely educated according to the principles of Vedic knowledge deserves to be commander-in-chief, ruler of the state, the first to chastise or the proprietor of the whole planet, Pṛthu Mahārāja offered everything to the Kumāras.

46 The kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras eat their food by virtue of the brāhmaṇas' mercy. It is the brāhmaṇas who enjoy their own property, clothe themselves with their own property and give charity with their own property.

47 Pṛthu Mahārāja continued: How can such persons, who have rendered unlimited service by explaining the path of self-realization in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and whose explanations are given for our enlightenment with complete conviction and Vedic evidence, be repaid except by folded palms containing water for their satisfaction? Such great personalities can be satisfied only by their own activities, which are distributed amongst human society out of their unlimited mercy.

48 The great sage Maitreya continued: Being thus worshiped by Mahārāja Pṛthu, the four Kumāras, who were masters of devotional service, became very pleased. Indeed, they appeared in the sky and praised the character of the King, and everyone observed them.

49 Amongst great personalities, Mahārāja Pṛthu was the chief by virtue of his fixed position in relation to spiritual enlightenment. He remained satisfied as one who has achieved all success

in spiritual understanding.

50 Being self-satisfied, Mahārāja Pṛthu executed his duties as perfectly as possible according to the time and his situation, strength and financial position. His only aim in all his activities was to satisfy the Absolute Truth. In this way, he duly acted.

51 Mahārāja Pṛthu completely dedicated himself to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, transcendental to material nature. Consequently all the fruits of his activities were dedicated to the Lord, and he always thought of himself as the servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of everything.

52 Mahārāja Pṛthu, who was very opulent due to the prosperity of his entire empire, remained at home as a householder. Since he was never inclined to utilize his opulences for the gratification of his senses, he remained unattached, exactly like the sun, which is unaffected in all circumstances.

53 Being situated in the liberated position of devotional service, Pṛthu Mahārāja not only performed all fruitive activities but also begot five sons by his wife, Arci. Indeed, all his sons were begotten according to his own desire.

54 After begetting five sons, named Vijitāśva, Dhūmrakeśa, Haryakṣa, Draviṇa and Vṛka, Pṛthu Mahārāja continued to rule the planet. He accepted all the qualities of the deities who governed all other planets.

55 Since Mahārāja Pṛthu was a perfect devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he wanted to protect the Lord's creation by pleasing the various citizens according to their various desires. Therefore Pṛthu Mahārāja used to please them in all respects by his words, mentality, works and gentle behavior.

56 Mahārāja Pṛthu became as celebrated a king as Soma-rāja, the king of the moon. He was also powerful and exacting, just like the sun-god, who distributes heat and light and at the same time exacts all the planetary waters.

57 Mahārāja Pṛthu was so strong and powerful that no one could disobey his orders, any more than one could conquer fire itself. He was so strong that he was compared to Indra, the King of heaven, whose power is insuperable. On the other hand, Mahārāja Pṛthu was also as tolerant as the earth, and in fulfilling various desires of human society, he was like heaven itself.

58 Just as rainfall satisfies everyone's desires, Mahārāja Pṛthu used to satisfy everyone. He was like the sea in that no one could understand his depths, and he was like Meru, the king of hills, in the fixity of his purpose.

59 Mahārāja Pṛthu's intelligence and education were exactly like that of Yamarāja, the superintendent of death. His opulence was comparable to the Himālaya Mountains, where all valuable jewels and metals are stocked. He possessed great riches like Kuvera, the treasurer of the heavenly planets, and no one could reveal his secrets, for they were like the demigod Varuṇa's.

60 In his bodily strength and in the strength of his senses, Mahārāja Pṛthu was as strong as the wind, which can go anywhere and everywhere. As far as his intolerance was concerned, he was just like the all-powerful Rudra expansion of Lord Śiva, or Sadāśiva.

61 In his bodily beauty he was just like Cupid, and in his thoughtfulness he was like a lion. In his affection he was just like Svāyambhuva Manu, and in his ability to control he was like Lord

Brahmā.

62 In his personal behavior, Pṛthu Mahārāja exhibited all good qualities, and in spiritual knowledge he was exactly like Bṛhaspati. In self-control he was like the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. As far as his devotional service was concerned, he was a great follower of devotees who were attached to cow protection and the rendering of all service to the spiritual master and the brāhmaṇas. He was perfect in his shyness and in his gentle behavior, and when he engaged in some philanthropic activity, he worked as if he were working for his own personal self.

63 Throughout the whole universe in the higher, lower and middle planetary systems Pṛthu Mahārāja's reputation was loudly declared, and all ladies and saintly persons heard his glories, which were as sweet as the glories of Lord Rāmacandra.

SB 4.23: Mahārāja Pṛthu's Going Back Home

1-3 At the last stage of his life, when Mahārāja Pṛthu saw himself getting old, that great soul, who was king of the world, divided whatever opulence he had accumulated amongst all kinds of living entities, moving and nonmoving. He arranged pensions for everyone according to religious principles, and after executing the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in complete coordination with Him, he dedicated his sons unto the earth, which was considered to be his daughter. Then Mahārāja Pṛthu left the presence of his citizens, who were almost lamenting and crying from feeling separation from the King, and went to the forest alone with his wife to perform austerities.

4 After retiring from family life, Mahārāja Pṛthu strictly followed the regulations of retired life and underwent severe austerities in the forest. He engaged in these activities as seriously as he had formerly engaged in leading the government and conquering everyone.

5 In the tapo-vana, Mahārāja Pṛthu sometimes ate the trunks and roots of trees, sometimes he ate fruit and dried leaves, and for some weeks he drank only water. Finally he lived simply by breathing air.

6 Following the principles of forest living and the footsteps of the great sages and munis, Pṛthu Mahārāja accepted five kinds of heating processes during the summer season, exposed himself to torrents of rain in the rainy season and, in the winter, stood in water up to his neck. He also used to simply lie down on the floor to sleep.

7 Mahārāja Pṛthu underwent all these severe austerities in order to control his words and his senses, to refrain from discharging his semen and to control the life air within his body. All this he did for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. He had no other purpose.

8 By thus practicing severe austerities, Mahārāja Pṛthu gradually became steadfast in spiritual life and completely free of all desires for fruitive activities. He also practiced breathing exercises to control his mind and senses, and by such control he became completely free from all desires for fruitive activity.

9 Thus the best amongst human beings, Mahārāja Pṛthu, followed that path of spiritual advancement which was advised by Sanat-kumāra. That is to say, he worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

10 Mahārāja Pṛthu thus engaged completely in devotional service, executing the rules and regulations strictly according to principles, twenty-four hours daily. Thus his love and devotion unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, developed and became unflinching and

fixed.

11 By regularly discharging devotional service, Pṛthu Mahārāja became transcendental in mind and could therefore constantly think of the lotus feet of the Lord. Because of this, he became completely detached and attained perfect knowledge by which he could transcend all doubt. Thus he was freed from the clutches of false ego and the material conception of life.

12 When he became completely free from the conception of bodily life, Mahārāja Pṛthu realized Lord Kṛṣṇa sitting in everyone's heart as the Paramātmā. Being thus able to get all instructions from Him, he gave up all other practices of yoga and Jnana. He was not even interested in the perfection of the yoga and Jnana systems, for he thoroughly realized that devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate goal of life and that unless the yogīs and jñānīs become attracted to kṛṣṇa-kathā [narrations about Kṛṣṇa], their illusions concerning existence can never be dispelled.

13 In due course of time, when Pṛthu Mahārāja was to give up his body, he fixed his mind firmly upon the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and thus, completely situated on the brahma-bhūta platform, he gave up the material body.

14 When Mahārāja Pṛthu practiced a particular yogic sitting posture, he blocked the door of his anus with his ankles, pressed his right and left calves and gradually raised his life air upward, passing it on to the circle of his navel, up to his heart and throat, and finally pushed it upward to the central position between his two eyebrows.

15 In this way, Pṛthu Mahārāja gradually raised his air of life up to the hole in his skull, whereupon he lost all desire for material existence. Gradually he merged his air of life with the totality of air, his body with the totality of earth, and the fire within his body with the totality of fire.

16 In this way, according to the different positions of the various parts of the body, Pṛthu Mahārāja merged the holes of his senses with the sky; his bodily liquids, such as blood and various secretions, with the totality of water; and he merged earth with water, then water with fire, fire with air, air with sky, and so on.

17 He amalgamated the mind with the senses and the senses with the sense objects, according to their respective positions, and he also amalgamated the material ego with the total material energy, mahat-tattva.

18 Pṛthu Mahārāja then offered the total designation of the living entity unto the supreme controller of illusory energy. Being released from all the designations by which the living entity became entrapped, he became free by knowledge and renunciation and by the spiritual force of his devotional service. In this way, being situated in his original constitutional position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he gave up this body as a prabhu, or controller of the senses.

19 The Queen, the wife of Pṛthu Mahārāja, whose name was Arci, followed her husband into the forest. Since she was a queen, her body was very delicate. Although she did not deserve to live in the forest, she voluntarily touched her lotus feet to the ground.

20 Although she was not accustomed to such difficulties, Queen Arci followed her husband in the regulative principles of living in the forest like great sages. She lay down on the ground and ate only fruits, flowers and leaves, and because she was not fit for these activities, she became frail and thin. Yet because of the pleasure she derived in serving her husband, she did not feel any difficulties.

21 When Queen Arci saw that her husband, who had been so merciful to her and the earth, no longer showed symptoms of life, she lamented for a little while and then built a fiery pyre on top of a hill and placed the body of her husband on it.

22 After this, the Queen executed the necessary funerary functions and offered oblations of water. After bathing in the river, she offered obeisances to various demigods situated in the sky in the different planetary systems. She then circumambulated the fire and, while thinking of the lotus feet of her husband, entered its flames.

23 After observing this brave act performed by the chaste wife Arci, the wife of the great King Pṛthu, many thousands of the wives of the demigods, along with their husbands, offered prayers to the Queen, for they were very much satisfied.

24 At that time the demigods were situated on the top of Mandara Hill, and all their wives began to shower flowers on the funeral pyre and began to talk amongst themselves as follows.

25 The wives of the demigods said: All glories to Queen Arci! We can see that this queen of the great King Pṛthu, the emperor of all the kings of the world, has served her husband with mind, speech and body exactly as the goddess of fortune serves the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yajñeśa, or Viṣṇu.

26 The wives of the demigods continued: Just see how this chaste lady, Arci, by dint of her inconceivable pious activities, is still following her husband upward, as far as we can see.

27 In this material world, every human being has a short span of life, but those who are engaged in devotional service go back home, back to Godhead, for they are actually on the path of liberation. For such persons, there is nothing which is not available.

28 Any person who engages himself within this material world in performing activities that necessitate great struggle, and who, after obtaining a human form of life which is a chance to attain liberation from miseries undertakes the difficult tasks of fruitive activities, must be considered to be cheated and envious of his own self.

29 The great sage Maitreya continued speaking: My dear Vidura, when the wives of the denizens of heaven were thus talking amongst themselves, Queen Arci reached the planet which her husband, Mahārāja Pṛthu, the topmost self-realized soul, had attained.

30 Maitreya continued: The greatest of all devotees, Mahārāja Pṛthu, was very powerful, and his character was liberal, magnificent and magnanimous. Thus I have described him to you as far as possible.

31 Any person who describes the great characteristics of King Pṛthu with faith and determination whether he reads or hears of them himself or helps others to hear of them is certain to attain the very planet which Mahārāja Pṛthu attained. In other words, such a person also returns home to the Vaikuṅṭha planets, back to Godhead.

32 If one hears of the characteristics of Pṛthu Mahārāja and is a brāhmaṇa, he becomes perfectly qualified with brahminical powers; if he is a kṣatriya, he becomes a king of the world; if he is a vaiśya, he becomes a master of other vaiśyas and many animals; and if he is a śūdra, he becomes the topmost devotee.

33 It does not matter whether one is a man or woman. Anyone who, with great respect, hears this narration of Mahārāja Pṛthu will become the parent of many children if without children, and will become the richest if without money.

34 Also, one who hears this narration three times will become very reputable if he is not recognized in society, and he will become a great scholar if he is illiterate. In other words, hearing of the narrations of Pṛthu Mahārāja is so auspicious that it drives away all bad luck.

35 By hearing the narration of Pṛthu Mahārāja, one can become great, increase his duration of life, gain promotion to the heavenly planets and counteract the contaminations of this Age of Kali. In addition, one can promote the causes of religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. Therefore from all sides it is advisable for a materialistic person who is interested in such things to read and hear the narrations of the life and character of Pṛthu Mahārāja.

36 If a king, who is desirous of attaining victory and ruling power, chants the narration of Pṛthu Mahārāja three times before going forth on his chariot, all subordinate kings will automatically render all kinds of taxes unto him as they rendered them unto Mahārāja Pṛthu simply upon his order.

37 A pure devotee who is executing the different processes of devotional service may be situated in the transcendental position, being completely absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but even he, while discharging devotional service, must hear, read and induce others to hear about the character and life of Pṛthu Mahārāja.

38 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, I have as far as possible spoken the narrations about Pṛthu Mahārāja, which enrich one's devotional attitude. Whoever takes advantage of these benefits also goes back home, back to Godhead, like Mahārāja Pṛthu.

39 Whoever, with great reverence and adoration, regularly reads, chants and describes the history of Mahārāja Pṛthu's activities will certainly increase unflinching faith and attraction for the lotus feet of the Lord. The Lord's lotus feet are the boat by which one can cross the ocean of nescience.

SB 4.24: Chanting the Song Sung by Lord Śiva

1 The great sage Maitreya continued: Vijitāśva, the eldest son of Mahārāja Pṛthu, who had a reputation like his father's, became emperor and gave his younger brothers different directions of the world to govern, for he was very affectionate toward his brothers.

2 Mahārāja Vijitāśva offered the eastern part of the world to his brother Haryakṣa, the southern part to Dhūmrakeśa, the western part to Vṛka and the northern part to Draviṇa.

3 Formerly, Mahārāja Vijitāśva pleased the King of heaven, Indra, and from him received the title Antardhāna. His wife's name was Śikhaṇḍinī, and by her he begot three good sons.

4 The three sons of Mahārāja Antardhāna were named Pāvaka, Pavamāna and Śuci. Formerly these three personalities were the demigods of fire, but due to the curse of the great sage Vasiṣṭha, they became the sons of Mahārāja Antardhāna. As such, they were as powerful as the fire-gods, and they attained the destination of mystic yoga power, being again situated as the demigods of fire.

5 Mahārāja Antardhāna had another wife, named Nabhasvatī, and by her he was happy to beget another son, named Havirdhāna. Since Mahārāja Antardhāna was very liberal, he did not kill Indra while the demigod was stealing his father's horse at the sacrifice.

6 Whenever Antardhāna, the supreme royal power, had to exact taxes, punish his citizens or fine them severely, he was not willing to do so. Consequently he retired from the execution of

such duties and engaged himself in the performance of different sacrifices.

7 Although Mahārāja Antardhāna was engaged in performing sacrifices, because he was a self-realized soul he very intelligently rendered devotional service to the Lord, who eradicates all the fears of His devotees. By thus worshiping the Supreme Lord, Mahārāja Antardhāna, rapt in ecstasy, attained His planet very easily.

8 Havirdhāna, the son of Mahārāja Antardhāna, had a wife named Havirdhānī, who gave birth to six sons, named Barhiṣat, Gaya, Śukla, Kṛṣṇa, Satya and Jitavrata.

9 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, Havirdhāna's very powerful son named Barhiṣat was very expert in performing various kinds of fruitive sacrifices, and he was also expert in the practice of mystic yoga. By his great qualifications, he became known as Prajāpati.

10 Mahārāja Barhiṣat executed many sacrifices all over the world. He scattered kuśa grasses and kept the tops of the grasses pointed eastward.

11 Mahārāja Barhiṣat henceforward known as Prācīnabarhi was ordered by the supreme demigod Brahmā to marry the daughter of the ocean named Śatadruti. Her bodily features were completely beautiful, and she was very young. She was decorated with the proper garments, and when she came into the marriage arena and began circumambulating it, the fire-god Agni became so attracted to her that he desired her company, exactly as he had formerly desired to enjoy Śukī.

12 While Śatadruti was thus being married, the demons, the denizens of Gandharvaloka, the great sages, and the denizens of Siddhaloka, the earthly planets and Nāgaloka, although highly exalted, were all captivated by the tinkling of her ankle bells.

13 King Prācīnabarhi begot ten children in the womb of Śatadruti. All of them were equally endowed with religiosity, and all of them were known as the Pracetās.

14 When all these Pracetās were ordered by their father to marry and beget children, they all entered the ocean and practiced austerities and penances for ten thousand years. Thus they worshiped the master of all austerity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

15 When all the sons of Prācīnabarhi left home to execute austerities, they met Lord Śiva, who, out of great mercy, instructed them about the Absolute Truth. All the sons of Prācīnabarhi meditated upon the instructions, chanting and worshiping them with great care and attention.

16 Vidura asked Maitreya: My dear brāhmaṇa, why did the Pracetās meet Lord Śiva on the way? Please tell me how the meeting happened, how Lord Śiva became very pleased with them and how he instructed them. Certainly such talks are important, and I wish that you please be merciful upon me and describe them.

17 The great sage Vidura continued: O best of the brāhmaṇas, it is very difficult for living entities engaged within this material body to have personal contact with Lord Śiva. Even great sages who have no material attachments do not contact him, despite their always being absorbed in meditation to attain his personal contact.

18 Lord Śiva, the most powerful demigod, second only to Lord Viṣṇu, is self-sufficient. Although he has nothing to aspire for in the material world, for the benefit of those in the material world he is always busily engaged everywhere and is accompanied by his dangerous energies like the goddess Kālī and the goddess Durgā.

19 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, because of their pious nature, all the sons of Prācīnabarhi very seriously accepted the words of their father with heart and soul, and with these words on their heads, they went toward the west to execute their father's order.

20 While traveling, the Pracetās happened to see a great reservoir of water which seemed almost as big as the ocean. The water of this lake was so calm and quiet that it seemed like the mind of a great soul, and its inhabitants, the aquatics, appeared very peaceful and happy to be under the protection of such a watery reservoir.

21 In that great lake there were different types of lotus flowers. Some of them were bluish, and some of them were red. Some of them grew at night, some in the day and some, like the indīvara lotus flower, in the evening. Combined together, the lotus flowers filled the lake so full that the lake appeared to be a great mine of such flowers. Consequently, on the shores there were swans and cranes, cakravākas, kāraṇḍavas and other beautiful water birds standing about.

22 There were various trees and creepers on all sides of the lake, and there were mad bumblebees humming all about them. The trees appeared to be very jolly due to the sweet humming of the bumblebees, and the saffron, which was contained in the lotus flowers, was being thrown into the air. These all created such an atmosphere that it appeared as though a festival were taking place there.

23 The sons of the King became very much amazed when they heard vibrations from various drums and kettledrums along with other orderly musical sounds pleasing to the ear.

24-25 The Pracetās were fortunate to see Lord Śiva, the chief of the demigods, emerging from the water with his associates. His bodily luster was just like molten gold, his throat was bluish, and he had three eyes, which looked very mercifully upon his devotees. He was accompanied by many musicians, who were glorifying him. As soon as the Pracetās saw Lord Śiva, they immediately offered their obeisances in great amazement and fell down at the lotus feet of the lord.

26 Lord Śiva became very pleased with the Pracetās because generally Lord Śiva is the protector of pious persons and persons of gentle behavior. Being very much pleased with the princes, he began to speak as follows.

27 Lord Śiva said: You are all the sons of King Prācīnabarhi, and I wish all good fortune to you. I also know what you are going to do, and therefore I am visible to you just to show my mercy upon you.

28 Lord Śiva continued: Any person who is surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the controller of everything material nature as well as the living entity is actually very dear to me.

29 A person who executes his occupational duty properly for one hundred births becomes qualified to occupy the post of Brahmā, and if he becomes more qualified, he can approach Lord Śiva. A person who is directly surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, in unalloyed devotional service is immediately promoted to the spiritual planets. Lord Śiva and other demigods attain these planets after the destruction of this material world.

30 You are all devotees of the Lord, and as such I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. I know in this way that the devotees also respect me and that I am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am.

31 Now I shall chant one mantra which is not only transcendental, pure and auspicious, but is the best prayer for anyone who is aspiring to attain the ultimate goal of life. When I chant this mantra, please hear it carefully and attentively.

32 The great sage Maitreya continued: Out of his causeless mercy, the exalted personality Lord Śiva, a great devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, continued to speak to the King's sons, who were standing with folded hands.

33 Lord Śiva addressed the Supreme Personality of Godhead with the following prayer: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all glories unto You. You are the most exalted of all self-realized souls. Since You are always auspicious for the self-realized, I wish that You be auspicious for me. You are worshipable by virtue of the all-perfect instructions You give. You are the Supersoul; therefore I offer my obeisances unto You as the supreme living being.

34 My Lord, You are the origin of the creation by virtue of the lotus flower which sprouts from Your navel. You are the supreme controller of the senses and the sense objects, and You are also the all-pervading Vāsudeva. You are most peaceful, and because of Your self-illuminated existence, You are not disturbed by the six kinds of transformations.

35 My dear Lord, You are the origin of the subtle material ingredients, the master of all integration as well as the master of all disintegration, the predominating Deity named Saṅkarṣaṇa, and the master of all intelligence, known as the predominating Deity Pradyumna. Therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

36 My Lord, as the supreme directing Deity known as Aniruddha, You are the master of the senses and the mind. I therefore offer my obeisances unto You again and again. You are known as Ananta as well as Saṅkarṣaṇa because of Your ability to destroy the whole creation by the blazing fire from Your mouth.

37 My Lord, O Aniruddha, You are the authority by which the doors of the higher planetary systems and liberation are opened. You are always within the pure heart of the living entity. Therefore I offer my obeisances unto You. You are the possessor of semen which is like gold, and thus, in the form of fire, You help the Vedic sacrifices, beginning with cātur-hotra. Therefore I offer my obeisances unto You.

38 My Lord, You are the provider of the Piṭṛloka as well as all the demigods. You are the predominating deity of the moon and the master of all three Vedas. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because You are the original source of satisfaction for all living entities.

39 My dear Lord, You are the gigantic universal form which contains all the individual bodies of the living entities. You are the maintainer of the three worlds, and as such You maintain the mind, senses, body, and air of life within them. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

40 My dear Lord, by expanding Your transcendental vibrations, You reveal the actual meaning of everything. You are the all-pervading sky within and without, and You are the ultimate goal of pious activities executed both within this material world and beyond it. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances again and again unto You.

41 My dear Lord, You are the viewer of the results of pious activities. You are inclination, disinclination and their resultant activities. You are the cause of the miserable conditions of life caused by irreligion, and therefore You are death. I offer You my respectful obeisances.

42 My dear Lord, You are the topmost of all bestowers of all benediction, the oldest and

supreme enjoyer amongst all enjoyers. You are the master of all the worlds' metaphysical philosophy, for You are the supreme cause of all causes, Lord Kṛṣṇa. You are the greatest of all religious principles, the supreme mind, and You have a brain which is never checked by any condition. Therefore I repeatedly offer my obeisances unto You.

43 My dear Lord, You are the supreme controller of the worker, sense activities and results of sense activities [karma]. Therefore You are the controller of the body, mind and senses. You are also the supreme controller of egotism, known as Rudra. You are the source of knowledge and the activities of the Vedic injunctions.

44 My dear Lord, I wish to see You exactly in the form that Your very dear devotees worship. You have many other forms, but I wish to see Your form that is especially liked by the devotees. Please be merciful upon me and show me that form, for only that form worshiped by the devotees can perfectly satisfy all the demands of the senses.

45-46 The Lord's beauty resembles a dark cloud during the rainy season. As the rainfall glistens, His bodily features also glisten. Indeed, He is the sum total of all beauty. The Lord has four arms and an exquisitely beautiful face with eyes like lotus petals, a beautiful highly raised nose, a mind-attracting smile, a beautiful forehead and equally beautiful and fully decorated ears.

47-48 The Lord is superexcellently beautiful on account of His open and merciful smile and His sidelong glance upon His devotees. His black hair is curly, and His garments, waving in the wind, appear like flying saffron pollen from lotus flowers. His glittering earrings, shining helmet, bangles, garland, ankle bells, waist belt and various other bodily ornaments combine with conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower to increase the natural beauty of the Kaustubha pearl on His chest.

49 The Lord has shoulders just like a lion's. Upon these shoulders are garlands, necklaces and epaulets, and all of these are always glittering. Besides these, there is the beauty of the Kaustubha-maṇi pearl, and on the dark chest of the Lord there are streaks named Śrīvatsa, which are signs of the goddess of fortune. The glittering of these streaks excels the beauty of the golden streaks on a gold-testing stone. Indeed, such beauty defeats a gold-testing stone.

50 The Lord's abdomen is beautiful due to three ripples in the flesh. Being so round, His abdomen resembles the leaf of a banyan tree, and when He exhales and inhales, the movement of the ripples appears very, very beautiful. The coils within the navel of the Lord are so deep that it appears that the entire universe sprouted out of it and yet again wishes to go back.

51 The lower part of the Lord's waist is dark and covered with yellow garments and a belt bedecked with golden embroidery work. His symmetrical lotus feet and the calves, thighs and joints of His legs are extraordinarily beautiful. Indeed, the Lord's entire body appears to be well built.

52 My dear Lord, Your two lotus feet are so beautiful that they appear like two blossoming petals of the lotus flower which grows during the autumn season. Indeed, the nails of Your lotus feet emanate such a great effulgence that they immediately dissipate all the darkness in the heart of a conditioned soul. My dear Lord, kindly show me that form of Yours which always dissipates all kinds of darkness in the heart of a devotee. My dear Lord, You are the supreme spiritual master of everyone; therefore all conditioned souls covered with the darkness of ignorance can be enlightened by You as the spiritual master.

53 My dear Lord, those who desire to purify their existence must always engage in meditation

upon Your lotus feet, as described above. Those who are serious about executing their occupational duties and who want freedom from fear must take to this process of bhakti-yoga.

54 My dear Lord, the king in charge of the heavenly kingdom is also desirous of obtaining the ultimate goal of life—devotional service. Similarly, You are the ultimate destination of those who identify themselves with You [aham brahmāsmi]. However, it is very difficult for them to attain You, whereas a devotee can very easily attain Your Lordship.

55 My dear Lord, pure devotional service is even difficult for liberated persons to discharge, but devotional service alone can satisfy You. Who will take to other processes of self-realization if he is actually serious about the perfection of life?

56 Simply by expansion of His eyebrows, invincible time personified can immediately vanquish the entire universe. However, formidable time does not approach the devotee who has taken complete shelter at Your lotus feet.

57 If one by chance associates with a devotee, even for a fraction of a moment, he no longer is subject to attraction by the results of karma or Jnana. What interest then can he have in the benedictions of the demigods, who are subject to the laws of birth and death?

58 My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the cause of all auspicious things and the destroyer of all the contamination of sin. I therefore beg Your Lordship to bless me by the association of Your devotees, who are completely purified by worshiping Your lotus feet and who are so merciful upon the conditioned souls. I think that Your real benediction will be to allow me to associate with such devotees.

59 The devotee whose heart has been completely cleansed by the process of devotional service and who is favored by Bhaktidevī does not become bewildered by the external energy, which is just like a dark well. Being completely cleansed of all material contamination in this way, a devotee is able to understand very happily Your name, fame, form, activities, etc.

60 My dear Lord, the impersonal Brahman spreads everywhere, like the sunshine or the sky. And that impersonal Brahman, which spreads throughout the universe and in which the entire universe is manifested, is You.

61 My dear Lord, You have manifold energies, and these energies are manifested in manifold forms. With such energies You have also created this cosmic manifestation, and although You maintain it as if it were permanent, You ultimately annihilate it. Although You are never disturbed by such changes and alterations, the living entities are disturbed by them, and therefore they find the cosmic manifestation to be different or separated from You. My Lord, You are always independent, and I can clearly see this fact.

62 My dear Lord, Your universal form consists of all five elements, the senses, mind, intelligence, false ego (which is material) and the Paramātmā, Your partial expansion, who is the director of everything. Yogīs other than the devotees—namely the karma-yogī and Jnana-yogī—worship You by their respective actions in their respective positions. It is stated both in the Vedas and in the śāstras that are corollaries of the Vedas, and indeed everywhere, that it is only You who are to be worshiped. That is the expert version of all the Vedas.

63 My dear Lord, You are the only Supreme Person, the cause of all causes. Before the creation of this material world, Your material energy remains in a dormant condition. When Your material energy is agitated, the three qualities—namely goodness, passion and ignorance—act, and as a result the total material energy—egotism, ether, air, fire, water, earth and all the various demigods and saintly persons—becomes manifest. Thus the material world is created.

64 My dear Lord, after creating by Your own potencies, You enter within the creation in four kinds of forms. Being within the hearts of the living entities, You know them and know how they are enjoying their senses. The so-called happiness of this material creation is exactly like the bees' enjoyment of honey after it has been collected in the honeycomb.

65 My dear Lord, Your absolute authority cannot be directly experienced, but one can guess by seeing the activities of the world that everything is being destroyed in due course of time. The force of time is very strong, and everything is being destroyed by something else just as one animal is being eaten by another animal. Time scatters everything, exactly as the wind scatters clouds in the sky.

66 My dear Lord, all living entities within this material world are mad after planning for things, and they are always busy with a desire to do this or that. This is due to uncontrollable greed. The greed for material enjoyment is always existing in the living entity, but Your Lordship is always alert, and in due course of time You strike him, just as a snake seizes a mouse and very easily swallows him.

67 My dear Lord, any learned person knows that unless he worships You, his entire life is spoiled. Knowing this, how could he give up worshipping Your lotus feet? Even our father and spiritual master, Lord Brahmā, unhesitatingly worshiped You, and the fourteen Manus followed in his footsteps.

68 My dear Lord, all actually learned persons know You as the Supreme Brahman and the Supersoul. Although the entire universe is afraid of Lord Rudra, who ultimately annihilates everything, for the learned devotees You are the fearless destination of all.

69 My dear sons of the King, just execute your occupational duty as kings with a pure heart. Just chant this prayer fixing your mind on the lotus feet of the Lord. That will bring you all good fortune, for the Lord will be very much pleased with you.

70 Therefore, O sons of the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is situated in everyone's heart. He is also within your hearts. Therefore chant the glories of the Lord and always meditate upon Him continuously.

71 My dear princes, in the form of a prayer I have delineated the yoga system of chanting the holy name. All of you should take this important stotra within your minds and promise to keep it in order to become great sages. By acting silently like a great sage and by giving attention and reverence, you should practice this method.

72 This prayer was first spoken to us by Lord Brahmā, the master of all creators. The creators, headed by Bhṛgu, were instructed in these prayers because they wanted to create.

73 When all the Prajāpatis were ordered to create by Lord Brahmā, we chanted these prayers in praise of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and became completely free from all ignorance. Thus we were able to create different types of living entities.

74 A devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa whose mind is always absorbed in Him, who with great attention and reverence chants this stotra [prayer], will achieve the greatest perfection of life without delay.

75 In this material world there are different types of achievement, but of all of them the achievement of knowledge is considered to be the highest because one can cross the ocean of nescience only on the boat of knowledge. Otherwise the ocean is impassable.

76 Although rendering devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and

worshiping Him are very difficult, if one vibrates or simply reads this stotra [prayer] composed and sung by me, he will very easily be able to invoke the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

77 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the dearest objective of all auspicious benedictions. A human being who sings this song sung by me can please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a devotee, being fixed in the Lord's devotional service, can acquire whatever he wants from the Supreme Lord.

78 A devotee who rises early in the morning and with folded hands chants these prayers sung by Lord Śiva, and gives facility to others to hear them, certainly becomes free from all bondage to fruitive activities.

79 My dear sons of the King, the prayers I have recited to you are meant for pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul. I advise you to recite these prayers, which are as effective as great austerities. In this way, when you are mature, your life will be successful, and you will certainly achieve all your desired objectives without fail.

SB 4.25: The Descriptions of the Characteristics of King Puraṣjana

1 The great sage Maitreya continued speaking to Vidura: My dear Vidura, in this way Lord Śiva instructed the sons of King Barhiṣat. The sons of the King also worshiped Lord Śiva with great devotion and respect. Finally, Lord Śiva became invisible to the princes.

2 All the Pracetā princes simply stood in the water for ten thousand years and recited the prayers given to them by Lord Śiva.

3 While the princes were undergoing severe austerities in the water, their father was performing different types of fruitive activities. At this time the great saint Nārada, master and teacher of all spiritual life, became very compassionate upon the King and decided to instruct him about spiritual life.

4 Nārada Muni asked King Prācīnabarhiṣat: My dear King, what do you desire to achieve by performing these fruitive activities? The chief aim of life is to get rid of all miseries and enjoy happiness, but these two things cannot be realized by fruitive activity.

5 The King replied: O great soul, Nārada, my intelligence is entangled in fruitive activities; therefore I do not know the ultimate goal of life. Kindly instruct me in pure knowledge so that I can get out of the entanglement of fruitive activities.

6 Those who are interested only in a so-called dutiful life—namely remaining as a householder entangled by sons and a wife and searching after wealth—think that such things are life's ultimate goal. Such people simply wander in different types of bodies throughout this material existence without finding out the ultimate goal of life.

7 The great saint Nārada said: O ruler of the citizens, my dear King, please see in the sky those animals which you have sacrificed without compassion and without mercy in the sacrificial arena.

8 All these animals are awaiting your death so that they can avenge the injuries you have inflicted upon them. After you die, they will angrily pierce your body with iron horns.

9 In this connection I wish to narrate an old history connected with the character of a king called Puraṣjana. Please try to hear me with great attention.

10 My dear King, once in the past lived a king named Puraṣjana, who was celebrated for his great activities. He had a friend named Avijṣāta [“the unknown one”]. No one could understand the activities of Avijṣāta.

11 King Puraṣjana began to search for a suitable place to live, and thus he traveled all over the world. Even after a great deal of traveling, he could not find a place just to his liking. Finally he became morose and disappointed.

12 King Puraṣjana had unlimited desires for sense enjoyment; consequently he traveled all over the world to find a place where all his desires could be fulfilled. Unfortunately he found a feeling of insufficiency everywhere.

13 Once, while wandering in this way, he saw on the southern side of the Himālayas, in a place named Bhārata-varṣa [India], a city that had nine gates all about and was characterized by all auspicious facilities.

14 That city was surrounded by walls and parks, and within it were towers, canals, windows and outlets. The houses there were decorated with domes made of gold, silver and iron.

15 The floors of the houses in that city were made of sapphire, crystal, diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies. Because of the luster of the houses in the capital, the city was compared to the celestial town named Bhogavatī.

16 In that city there were many assembly houses, street crossings, streets, restaurants, gambling houses, markets, resting places, flags, festoons and beautiful parks. All these surrounded the city.

17 On the outskirts of that city were many beautiful trees and creepers encircling a nice lake. Also surrounding that lake were many groups of birds and bees that were always chanting and humming.

18 The branches of the trees standing on the bank of the lake received particles of water carried by the spring air from the falls coming down from the icy mountain.

19 In such an atmosphere even the animals of the forest became nonviolent and nonenvious like great sages. Consequently, the animals did not attack anyone. Over and above everything was the cooing of the cuckoos. Any passenger passing along that path was invited by that atmosphere to take rest in that nice garden.

20 While wandering here and there in that wonderful garden, King Puraṣjana suddenly came in contact with a very beautiful woman who was walking there without any engagement. She had ten servants with her, and each servant had hundreds of wives accompanying him.

21 The woman was protected on all sides by a five-hooded snake. She was very beautiful and young, and she appeared very anxious to find a suitable husband.

22 The woman’s nose, teeth and forehead were all very beautiful. Her ears were equally very beautiful and were bedecked with dazzling earrings.

23 The waist and hips of the woman were very beautiful. She was dressed in a yellow sārī with a golden belt. While she walked, her ankle bells rang. She appeared exactly like a denizen of the heavens.

24 With the end of her sārī the woman was trying to cover her breasts, which were equally round and well placed side by side. She again and again tried to cover them out of shyness

while she walked exactly like a great elephant.

25 Puraṣjana, the hero, became attracted by the eyebrows and smiling face of the very beautiful girl and was immediately pierced by the arrows of her lusty desires. When she smiled shyly, she looked very beautiful to Puraṣjana, who, although a hero, could not refrain from addressing her.

26 My dear lotus-eyed, kindly explain to me where you are coming from, who you are, and whose daughter you are. You appear very chaste. What is the purpose of your coming here? What are you trying to do? Please explain all these things to me.

27 My dear lotus-eyed, who are those eleven strong bodyguards with you, and who are those ten specific servants? Who are those women following the ten servants, and who is the snake that is preceding you?

28 My dear beautiful girl, you are exactly like the goddess of fortune or the wife of Lord Śiva or the goddess of learning, the wife of Lord Brahmā. Although you must be one of them, I see that you are loitering in this forest. Indeed, you are as silent as the great sages. Is it that you are searching after your own husband? Whoever your husband may be, simply by understanding that you are so faithful to him, he will come to possess all opulences. I think you must be the goddess of fortune, but I do not see the lotus flower in your hand. Therefore I am asking you where you have thrown that lotus.

29 O greatly fortunate one, it appears that you are none of the women I have mentioned because I see that your feet are touching the ground. But if you are some woman of this planet, you can, like the goddess of fortune who, accompanied by Lord Viṣṇu, increases the beauty of the Vaikuṅṭha planets also increase the beauty of this city by associating with me. You should understand that I am a great hero and a very powerful king on this planet.

30 Certainly your glancing upon me today has very much agitated my mind. Your smile, which is full of shyness but at the same time lusty, is agitating the most powerful cupid within me. Therefore, O most beautiful, I ask you to be merciful upon me.

31 My dear girl, your face is so beautiful with your nice eyebrows and eyes and with your bluish hair scattered about. In addition, very sweet sounds are coming from your mouth. Nonetheless, you are so covered with shyness that you do not see me face to face. I therefore request you, my dear girl, to smile and kindly raise your head to see me.

32 Nārada continued: My dear King, when Puraṣjana became so attracted and impatient to touch the girl and enjoy her, the girl also became attracted by his words and accepted his request by smiling. By this time she was certainly attracted by the King.

33 The girl said: O best of human beings, I do not know who has begotten me. I cannot speak to you perfectly about this. Nor do I know the names or the origin of the associates with me.

34 O great hero, we only know that we are existing in this place. We do not know what will come after. Indeed, we are so foolish that we do not care to understand who has created this beautiful place for our residence.

35 My dear gentleman, all these men and women with me are known as my friends, and the snake, who always remains awake, protects this city even during my sleeping hours. So much I know. I do not know anything beyond this.

36 O killer of the enemy, you have somehow or other come here. This is certainly great fortune for me. I wish all auspicious things for you. You have a great desire to satisfy your

senses, and all my friends and I shall try our best in all respects to fulfill your desires.

37 My dear lord, I have just arranged this city of nine gates for you so that you can have all kinds of sense gratification. You may live here for one hundred years, and everything for your sense gratification will be supplied.

38 How can I expect to unite with others, who are neither conversant about sex nor capable of knowing how to enjoy life while living or after death? Such foolish persons are like animals because they do not know the process of sense enjoyment in this life and after death.

39 The woman continued: In this material world, a householder's life brings all kinds of happiness in religion, economic development, sense gratification and the begetting of children, sons and grandsons. After that, one may desire liberation as well as material reputation. The householder can appreciate the results of sacrifices, which enable him to gain promotion to superior planetary systems. All this material happiness is practically unknown to the transcendentalists. They cannot even imagine such happiness.

40 The woman continued: According to authorities, the householder life is pleasing not only to oneself but to all the forefathers, demigods, great sages, saintly persons and everyone else. A householder life is thus beneficial.

41 O my dear hero, who in this world will not accept a husband like you? You are so famous, so magnanimous, so beautiful and so easily gotten.

42 O mighty-armed, who in this world will not be attracted by your arms, which are just like the bodies of serpents? Actually you relieve the distress of husbandless women like us by your attractive smile and your aggressive mercy. We think that you are traveling on the surface of the earth just to benefit us only.

43 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King, those two the man and the woman supporting one another through mutual understanding, entered that city and enjoyed life for one hundred years.

44 Many professional singers used to sing about the glories of King Puraṣjana and his glorious activities. When it was too hot in the summer, he used to enter a reservoir of water. He would surround himself with many women and enjoy their company.

45 Of the nine gates in that city, seven were on the surface and two were subterranean. A total of nine doors were constructed, and these led to different places. All the gates were used by the city's governor.

46 My dear King, of the nine doors, five led toward the eastern side, one led toward the northern side, one led toward the southern side, and two led toward the western side. I shall try to give the names of these different doors.

47 The two gates named Khadyotā and Āvirmukhī were situated facing the eastern side, but they were constructed in one place. Through those two gates the King used to go to the city of Vibhrājita accompanied by a friend whose name was Dyumān.

48 Similarly in the east there were two sets of gates named Nalinī and Nālinī, and these were also constructed in one place. Through these gates the King, accompanied by a friend named Avadhūta, used to go to the city of Saurabha.

49 The fifth gate situated on the eastern side was named Mukhyā, or the chief. Through this gate, accompanied by his friends named Rasajṣa and Vipāṇa, he used to visit two places named

Bahūdāna and Āpaṇa.

50 The southern gate of the city was known as Pitṛhū, and through that gate King Puraṣjana used to visit the city named Dakṣiṇa-paścāla, accompanied by his friend Śrutadhara.

51 On the northern side was the gate named Devahū. Through that gate, King Puraṣjana used to go with his friend Śrutadhara to the place known as Uttara-paścāla.

52 On the western side was a gate named Āsurī. Through that gate King Puraṣjana used to go to the city of Grāmaka, accompanied by his friend Durmada.

53 Another gate on the western side was known as Nirṛti. Puraṣjana used to go through this gate to the place known as Vaiśasa, accompanied by his friend Lubdhaka.

54 Of the many inhabitants of this city, there are two persons named Nirvāk and Peśaskṛt. Although King Puraṣjana was the ruler of citizens who possessed eyes, he unfortunately used to associate with these blind men. Accompanied by them, he used to go here and there and perform various activities.

55 Sometimes he used to go to his private home with one of his chief servants [the mind], who was named Viṣūcīna. At that time, illusion, satisfaction and happiness used to be produced from his wife and children.

56 Being thus entangled in different types of mental concoction and engaged in fruitive activities, King Puraṣjana came completely under the control of material intelligence and was thus cheated. Indeed, he used to fulfill all the desires of his wife, the Queen.

57-61 When the Queen drank liquor, King Puraṣjana also engaged in drinking. When the Queen dined, he used to dine with her, and when she chewed, King Puraṣjana used to chew along with her. When the Queen sang, he also sang. Similarly, when the Queen cried, he also cried, and when the Queen laughed, he also laughed. When the Queen talked loosely, he also talked loosely, and when the Queen walked, the King walked behind her. When the Queen would stand still, the King would also stand still, and when the Queen would lie down in bed, he would also follow and lie down with her. When the Queen sat, he would also sit, and when the Queen heard something, he would follow her to hear the same thing. When the Queen saw something, the King would also look at it, and when the Queen smelled something, the King would follow her to smell the same thing. When the Queen touched something, the King would also touch it, and when the dear Queen was lamenting, the poor King also had to follow her in lamentation. In the same way, when the Queen felt enjoyment, he also enjoyed, and when the Queen was satisfied, the King also felt satisfaction.

62 In this way, King Puraṣjana was captivated by his nice wife and was thus cheated. Indeed, he became cheated in his whole existence in the material world. Even against that poor foolish King's desire, he remained under the control of his wife, just like a pet animal that dances according to the order of its master.

SB 4.26: King Puraṣjana Goes to the Forest to Hunt, and His Queen Becomes Angry

1-3 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King, once upon a time King Puraṣjana took up his great bow, and equipped with golden armor and a quiver of unlimited arrows and accompanied by eleven commanders, he sat on his chariot driven by five swift horses and went to the forest named Paścā-prastha. He took with him in that chariot two explosive arrows. The chariot itself was situated on two wheels and one revolving axle. On the chariot were three flags, one rein, one chariot driver, one sitting place, two poles to which the harness was fixed,

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five weapons and seven coverings. The chariot moved in five different styles, and five obstacles lay before it. All the decorations of the chariot were made of gold.

4 It was almost impossible for King Puraṣjana to give up the company of his Queen even for a moment. Nonetheless, on that day, being very much inspired by the desire to hunt, he took up his bow and arrow with great pride and went to the forest, not caring for his wife.

5 At that time King Puraṣjana was very much influenced by demoniac propensities. Because of this, his heart became very hard and merciless, and with sharp arrows he killed many innocent animals in the forest, taking no consideration.

6 If a king is too attracted to eating flesh, he may, according to the directions of the revealed scriptures on sacrificial performances, go to the forest and kill some animals that are recommended for killing. One is not allowed to kill animals unnecessarily or without restrictions. The Vedas regulate animal-killing to stop the extravagance of foolish men influenced by the modes of passion and ignorance.

7 Nārada Muni continued to speak to King Prācīnabarhiṣat: My dear King, any person who works according to the directions of the Vedic scriptures does not become involved in fruitive activities.

8 Otherwise, a person who acts whimsically falls down due to false prestige. Thus he becomes involved in the laws of nature, which are composed of the three qualities [goodness, passion and ignorance]. In this way a living entity becomes devoid of his real intelligence and becomes perpetually lost in the cycle of birth and death. Thus he goes up and down from a microbe in stool to a high position in the Brahmaloḳa planet.

9 When King Puraṣjana was hunting in this way, many animals within the forest lost their lives with great pain, being pierced by the sharp arrowheads. Upon seeing these devastating, ghastly activities performed by the King, all the people who were merciful by nature became very unhappy. Such merciful persons could not tolerate seeing all this killing.

10 In this way King Puraṣjana killed many animals, including rabbits, boars, buffalo, bison, black deer, porcupines and other game animals. After killing and killing, the King became very tired.

11 After this, the King, very much fatigued, hungry and thirsty, returned to his royal palace. After returning, he took a bath and had an appropriate dinner. Then he took rest and thus became freed from all restlessness.

12 After this, King Puraṣjana decorated his body with suitable ornaments. He also smeared scented sandalwood pulp over his body and put on flower garlands. In this way he became completely refreshed. After this, he began to search out his Queen.

13 After taking his dinner and having his thirst and hunger satisfied, King Puraṣjana felt some joy within his heart. Instead of being elevated to a higher consciousness, he became captivated by Cupid, and was moved by a desire to find his wife, who kept him satisfied in his household life.

14 At that time King Puraṣjana was a little anxious, and he inquired from the household women: My dear beautiful women, are you and your mistress all very happy like before, or not?

15 King Puraṣjana said: I do not understand why my household paraphernalia does not attract me as before. I think that if there is neither a mother nor devoted wife at home, the home is

like a chariot without wheels. Where is the fool who will sit down on such an unworkable chariot?

16 Kindly let me know the whereabouts of that beautiful woman who always saves me when I am drowning in the ocean of danger. By giving me good intelligence at every step, she always saves me.

17 All the women addressed the King: O master of the citizens, we do not know why your dear wife has taken on this sort of existence. O killer of enemies, kindly look! She is lying on the ground without bedding. We cannot understand why she is acting this way.

18 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King Prācīnabarhi, as soon as King Puraṣjana saw his Queen lying on the ground, appearing like a mendicant, he immediately became bewildered.

19 The King, with aggrieved mind, began to speak to his wife with very pleasing words. Although he was filled with regret and tried to pacify her, he could not see any symptom of anger caused by love within the heart of his beloved wife.

20 Because the King was very expert in flattery, he began to pacify his Queen very slowly. First he touched her two feet, then embraced her nicely, seating her on his lap, and began to speak as follows.

21 King Puraṣjana said: My dear beautiful wife, when a master accepts a servant as his own man, but does not punish him for his offenses, the servant must be considered unfortunate.

22 My dear slender maiden, when a master chastises his servant, the servant should accept this as great mercy. One who becomes angry must be very foolish not to know that such is the duty of his friend.

23 My dear wife, your teeth are very beautifully set, and your attractive features make you appear very thoughtful. Kindly give up your anger, be merciful upon me, and please smile upon me with loving attachment. When I see a smile on your beautiful face, and when I see your hair, which is as beautiful as the color blue, and see your raised nose and hear your sweet talk, you will become more beautiful to me and thus attract me and oblige me. You are my most respected mistress.

24 O hero's wife, kindly tell me if someone has offended you. I am prepared to give such a person punishment as long as he does not belong to the brāhmaṇa caste. But for the servant of Muraripu [Kṛṣṇa], I excuse no one within or beyond these three worlds. No one can freely move after offending you, for I am prepared to punish him.

25 My dear wife, until this day I have never seen your face without tilaka decorations, nor have I seen you so morose and without luster or affection. Nor have I seen your two nice breasts wet with tears from your eyes. Nor have I ever before seen your lips, which are ordinarily as red as the bimba fruit, without their reddish hue.

26 My dear Queen, due to my sinful desires I went to the forest to hunt without asking you. Therefore I must admit that I have offended you. Nonetheless, thinking of me as your most intimate subordinate, you should still be very much pleased with me. Factually I am very much bereaved, but being pierced by the arrow of Cupid, I am feeling lusty. But where is the beautiful woman who would give up her lusty husband and refuse to unite with him?

SB 4.27: Attack by Caṇḍavega on the City of King Puraṣjana; the Character of Kālakanyā

1 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King, after bewildering her husband in different ways and bringing him under her control, the wife of King Puraṣjana gave him all satisfaction and enjoyed sex life with him.

2 The Queen took her bath and dressed herself nicely with all auspicious garments and ornaments. After taking food and becoming completely satisfied, she returned to the King. Upon seeing her beautifully decorated attractive face, the King welcomed her with all devotion.

3 Queen Puraṣjanī embraced the King, and the King also responded by embracing her shoulders. In this way, in a solitary place, they enjoyed joking words. Thus King Puraṣjana became very much captivated by his beautiful wife and deviated from his good sense. He forgot that the passing of days and nights meant that his span of life was being reduced without profit.

4 In this way, increasingly overwhelmed by illusion, King Puraṣjana, although advanced in consciousness, remained always lying down with his head on the pillow of his wife's arms. In this way he considered woman to be his ultimate life and soul. Becoming thus overwhelmed by the mode of ignorance, he could not understand the meaning of self-realization, whether regarding his own self or the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

5 My dear King Prācīnabarhiṣat, in this way King Puraṣjana, with his heart full of lust and sinful reactions, began to enjoy sex with his wife, and in this way his new life and youth expired in half a moment.

6 The great sage Nārada then addressed King Prācīnabarhiṣat: O one whose life span is great [virāṭ], in this way King Puraṣjana begot 1,100 sons within the womb of his wife, Puraṣjanī. However, in this business he passed away half of his life span.

7 O Prajāpati, King Prācīnabarhiṣat, in this way King Puraṣjana also begot 110 daughters. All of these were equally glorified like the father and mother. Their behavior was gentle, and they possessed magnanimity and other good qualities.

8 After this, King Puraṣjana, King of the Paścāla country, in order to increase the descendants of his paternal family, married his sons with qualified wives and married his daughters with qualified husbands.

9 Of these many sons, each produced hundreds and hundreds of grandsons. In this way the whole city of Paścāla became overcrowded by these sons and grandsons of King Puraṣjana.

10 These sons and grandsons were virtually plunderers of King Puraṣjana's riches, including his home, treasury, servants, secretaries and all other paraphernalia. Puraṣjana's attachment for these things was very deep-rooted.

11 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King Prācīnabarhiṣat, like you King Puraṣjana also became implicated in so many desires. Thus he worshiped demigods, forefathers and social leaders with various sacrifices which were all very ghastly because they were inspired by the desire to kill animals.

12 Thus King Puraṣjana, being attached to fruitive activities [karma-kāṇḍīya] as well as kith and kin, and being obsessed with polluted consciousness, eventually arrived at that point not very much liked by those who are overly attached to material things.

13 O King! In Gandharvaloka there is a king named Caṇḍavega. Under him there are 360 very

powerful Gandharva soldiers.

14 Along with Caṇḍavega were as many female Gandharvīs as there were soldiers, and all of them repetitively plundered all the paraphernalia for sense enjoyment.

15 When King Gandharva-rāja [Caṇḍavega] and his followers began to plunder the city of Puraṣjana, a snake with five hoods began to defend the city.

16 The five-hooded serpent, the superintendent and protector of the city of King Puraṣjana, fought with the Gandharvas for one hundred years. He fought alone, with all of them, although they numbered 720.

17 Because he had to fight alone with so many soldiers, all of whom were great warriors, the serpent with five hoods became very weak. Seeing that his most intimate friend was weakening, King Puraṣjana and his friends and citizens living within the city all became very anxious.

18 King Puraṣjana collected taxes in the city known as Paścāla and thus was able to engage in sexual indulgence. Being completely under the control of women, he could not understand that his life was passing away and that he was reaching the point of death.

19 My dear King Prācīnabarhiṣat, at this time the daughter of formidable Time was seeking her husband throughout the three worlds. Although no one agreed to accept her, she came.

20 The daughter of Time [Jarā] was very unfortunate. Consequently she was known as Durbhagā ["ill-fated"]. However, she was once pleased with a great king, and because the king accepted her, she granted him a great benediction.

21 When I once came to this earth from Brahmaloḳa, the highest planetary system, the daughter of Time, wandering over the universe, met me. Knowing me to be an avowed brahmacārī, she became lusty and proposed that I accept her.

22 The great sage Nārada continued: When I refused to accept her request, she became very angry at me and cursed me severely. Because I refused her request, she said that I would not be able to stay in one place for a long time.

23 After she was thus disappointed by me, with my permission she approached the King of the Yavanas, whose name was Bhaya, or Fear, and she accepted him as her husband.

24 Approaching the King of the Yavanas, Kālakanyā addressed him as a great hero, saying: My dear sir, you are the best of the untouchables. I am in love with you, and I want you as my husband. I know that no one is baffled if he makes friends with you.

25 One who does not give charity according to the customs or injunctions of the scriptures and one who does not accept charity in that way are considered to be in the mode of ignorance. Such persons follow the path of the foolish. Surely they must lament at the end.

26 Kālakanyā continued: O gentle one, I am now present before you to serve you. Please accept me and thus show me mercy. It is a gentleman's greatest duty to be compassionate upon a person who is distressed.

27 After hearing the statement of Kālakanyā, daughter of Time, the King of the Yavanas began to smile and devise a means for executing his confidential duty on behalf of providence. He then addressed Kālakanyā as follows.

28 The King of the Yavanas replied: After much consideration, I have arrived at a husband for you. Actually, as far as everyone is concerned, you are inauspicious and mischievous. Since no one likes you, how can anyone accept you as his wife?

29 This world is a product of fruitive activities. Therefore you may imperceptibly attack people in general. Helped by my soldiers, you can kill them without opposition.

30 The King of the Yavanas continued: Here is my brother Prajvāra. I now accept you as my sister. I shall employ both of you, as well as my dangerous soldiers, to act imperceptibly within this world.

SB 4.28: Puraṣjana Becomes a Woman in the Next Life

1 The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King Prācīnabarhiṣat, afterward the King of the Yavanas, whose name is fear itself, as well as Prajvāra, Kālakanyā, and his soldiers, began to travel all over the world.

2 Once the dangerous soldiers attacked the city of Puraṣjana with great force. Although the city was full of paraphernalia for sense gratification, it was being protected by the old serpent.

3 Gradually Kālakanyā, with the help of dangerous soldiers, attacked all the inhabitants of Puraṣjana's city and thus rendered them useless for all purposes.

4 When Kālakanyā, daughter of Time, attacked the body, the dangerous soldiers of the King of the Yavanas entered the city through different gates. They then began to give severe trouble to all the citizens.

5 When the city was thus endangered by the soldiers and Kālakanyā, King Puraṣjana, being overly absorbed in affection for his family, was placed in difficulty by the attack of Yavana-rāja and Kālakanyā.

6 When King Puraṣjana was embraced by Kālakanyā, he gradually lost all his beauty. Having been too much addicted to sex, he became very poor in intelligence and lost all his opulence. Being bereft of all possessions, he was conquered forcibly by the Gandharvas and the Yavanas.

7 King Puraṣjana then saw that everything in his town was scattered and that his sons, grandsons, servants and ministers were all gradually opposing him. He also noted that his wife was becoming cold and indifferent.

8 When King Puraṣjana saw that all his family members, relatives, followers, servants, secretaries and everyone else had turned against him, he certainly became very anxious. But he could not counteract the situation because he was thoroughly overwhelmed by Kālakanyā.

9 The objects of enjoyment became stale by the influence of Kālakanyā. Due to the continuance of his lusty desires, King Puraṣjana became very poor in everything. Thus he did not understand the aim of life. He was still very affectionate toward his wife and children, and he worried about maintaining them.

10 The city of King Puraṣjana was overcome by the Gandharva and Yavana soldiers, and although the King had no desire to leave the city, he was circumstantially forced to do so, for it was smashed by Kālakanyā.

11 Under the circumstances, the elder brother of Yavana-rāja, known as Prajvāra, set fire to the city to please his younger brother, whose other name is fear itself.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

12 When the city was set ablaze, all the citizens and servants of the King, as well as all family members, sons, grandsons, wives and other relatives, were within the fire. King Puraṣjana thus became very unhappy.

13 The city's superintendent of police, the serpent, saw that the citizens were being attacked by Kālakanyā, and he became very aggrieved to see his own residence set ablaze after being attacked by the Yavanas.

14 As a serpent living within the cavity of a tree wishes to leave when there is a forest fire, so the city's police superintendent, the snake, wished to leave the city due to the fire's severe heat.

15 The limbs of the serpent's body were slackened by the Gandharvas and Yavana soldiers, who had thoroughly defeated his bodily strength. When he attempted to leave the body, he was checked by his enemies. Being thus baffled in his attempt, he began to cry loudly.

16 King Puraṣjana then began to think of his daughters, sons, grandsons, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, servants and other associates, as well as his house, his household paraphernalia and his little accumulation of wealth.

17 King Puraṣjana was overly attached to his family and conceptions of "I" and "mine." Because he was overly attracted to his wife, he was already quite poverty-stricken. At the time of separation, he became very sorry.

18 King Puraṣjana was anxiously thinking, "Alas, my wife is encumbered by so many children. When I pass from this body, how will she be able to maintain all these family members? Alas, she will be greatly harassed by thoughts of family maintenance."

19 King Puraṣjana then began to think of his past dealings with his wife. He recalled that his wife would not take her dinner until he had finished his, that she would not take her bath until he had finished his, and that she was always very much attached to him, so much so that if he would sometimes become angry and chastise her, she would simply remain silent and tolerate his miSBehavior.

20 King Puraṣjana continued thinking how, when he was in a state of bewilderment, his wife would give him good counsel and how she would become aggrieved when he was away from home. Although she was the mother of so many sons and heroes, the King still feared that she would not be able to maintain the responsibility of household affairs.

21 King Puraṣjana continued worrying: "After I pass from this world, how will my sons and daughters, who are now fully dependent on me, live and continue their lives? Their position will be similar to that of passengers aboard a ship wrecked in the midst of the ocean."

22 Although King Puraṣjana should not have lamented over the fate of his wife and children, he nonetheless did so due to his miserly intelligence. In the meantime, Yavana-rāja, whose name was fear itself, immediately drew near to arrest him.

23 When the Yavanas were taking King Puraṣjana away to their place, binding him like an animal, the King's followers became greatly aggrieved. While they lamented, they were forced to go along with him.

24 The serpent, who had already been arrested by the soldiers of Yavana-rāja and was out of the city, began to follow his master along with the others. As soon as they all left the city, it was immediately dismantled and smashed to dust.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

25 When King Puraṣjana was being dragged with great force by the powerful Yavana, out of his gross ignorance he still could not remember his friend and well-wisher, the Supersoul.

26 That most unkind king, Puraṣjana, had killed many animals in various sacrifices. Now, taking advantage of this opportunity, all these animals began to pierce him with their horns. It was as though he were being cut to pieces by axes.

27 Due to his contaminated association with women, a living entity like King Puraṣjana eternally suffers all the pangs of material existence and remains in the dark region of material life, bereft of all remembrance for many, many years.

28 King Puraṣjana gave up his body while remembering his wife, and consequently in his next life he became a very beautiful and well-situated woman. He took his next birth as the daughter of King Vidarbha in the very house of the King.

29 It was fixed that Vaidarbhī, daughter of King Vidarbha, was to be married to a very powerful man, Malayadhvaja, an inhabitant of the Pāṇḍu country. After conquering other princes, he married the daughter of King Vidarbha.

30 King Malayadhvaja fathered one daughter, who had very black eyes. He also had seven sons, who later became rulers of that tract of land known as Draviḍa. Thus there were seven kings in that land.

31 My dear King Prācīnabarhiṣat, the sons of Malayadhvaja gave birth to many thousands and thousands of sons, and all of these have been protecting the entire world up to the end of one Manu's life span and even afterward.

32 The great sage named Agastya married the first-born daughter of Malayadhvaja, the avowed devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. From her one son was born, whose name was Dṛḍhacyuta, and from him another son was born, whose name was Idhmavāha.

33 After this, the great saintly King Malayadhvaja divided his entire kingdom among his sons. Then, in order to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa with full attention, he went to a solitary place known as Kulācala.

34 Just as the moonshine follows the moon at night, immediately after King Malayadhvaja departed for Kulācala, his devoted wife, whose eyes were very enchanting, followed him, giving up all homely happiness, despite family and children.

35-36 In the province of Kulācala, there were rivers named Candravasā, Tāmraparṇī and Vaṭodakā. King Malayadhvaja used to go to those pious rivers regularly and take his bath there. Thus he purified himself externally and internally. He took his bath and ate bulbs, seeds, leaves, flowers, roots, fruits and grasses and drank water. In this way he underwent severe austerities. Eventually he became very skinny.

37 Through austerity, King Malayadhvaja in body and mind gradually became equal to the dualities of cold and heat, happiness and distress, wind and rain, hunger and thirst, the pleasant and the unpleasant. In this way he conquered all relativities.

38 By worshiping, executing austerities and following the regulative principles, King Malayadhvaja conquered his senses, his life and his consciousness. Thus he fixed everything on the central point of the Supreme Brahman [Kṛṣṇa].

39 In this way he stayed immovable in one place for one hundred years by the calculation of the demigods. After this time, he developed pure devotional attraction for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, and remained fixed in that position.

40 King Malayadhvaja attained perfect knowledge by being able to distinguish the Supersoul from the individual soul. The individual soul is localized, whereas the Supersoul is all-pervasive. He became perfect in knowledge that the material body is not the soul but that the soul is the witness of the material body.

41 In this way King Malayadhvaja attained perfect knowledge because in his pure state he was directly instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By means of such enlightening transcendental knowledge, he could understand everything from all angles of vision.

42 King Malayadhvaja could thus observe that the Supersoul was sitting by his side, and that he, as the individual soul, was sitting by the side of the Supersoul. Since both were together, there was no need for separate interests; thus he ceased from such activities.

43 The daughter of King Vidarbha accepted her husband all in all as the Supreme. She gave up all sensual enjoyment and in complete renunciation followed the principles of her husband, who was so advanced. Thus she remained engaged in his service.

44 The daughter of King Vidarbha wore old garments, and she was lean and thin because of her vows of austerity. Since she did not arrange her hair, it became entangled and twisted in locks. Although she remained always near her husband, she was as silent and unagitated as the flame of an undisturbed fire.

45 The daughter of King Vidarbha continued as usual to serve her husband, who was seated in a steady posture, until she could ascertain that he had passed away from the body.

46 While she was serving her husband by massaging his legs, she could feel that his feet were no longer warm and could thus understand that he had already passed from the body. She felt great anxiety upon being left alone. Bereft of her husband's company, she felt exactly as the deer feels upon being separated from its mate.

47 Being now alone and a widow in that forest, the daughter of Vidarbha began to lament, incessantly shedding tears, which soaked her breasts, and crying very loudly.

48 O best of kings, please get up! Get up! Just see this world surrounded by water and infested with rogues and so-called kings. This world is very much afraid, and it is your duty to protect her.

49 That most obedient wife thus fell down at the feet of her dead husband and began to cry pitifully in that solitary forest. Thus the tears rolled down from her eyes.

50 She then prepared a blazing fire with firewood and placed the dead body of her husband upon it. When this was finished, she lamented severely and prepared herself to perish in the fire with her husband.

51 My dear King, one brāhmaṇa, who was an old friend of King Puraṣjana, came to that place and began to pacify the Queen with sweet words.

52 The brāhmaṇa inquired as follows: Who are you? Whose wife or daughter are you? Who is the man lying here? It appears you are lamenting for this dead body. Don't you recognize Me? I am your eternal friend. You may remember that many times in the past you have consulted Me.

53 The brāhmaṇa continued: My dear friend, even though you cannot immediately recognize Me, can't you remember that in the past you had a very intimate friend? Unfortunately, you

gave up My company and accepted a position as enjoyer of this material world.

54 My dear gentle friend, both you and I are exactly like two swans. We live together in the same heart, which is just like the Mānasa Lake. Although we have been living together for many thousands of years, we are still far away from our original home.

55 My dear friend, you are now My very same friend. Since you left Me, you have become more and more materialistic, and not seeing Me, you have been traveling in different forms throughout this material world, which was created by some woman.

56 In that city [the material body] there are five gardens, nine gates, one protector, three apartments, six families, five stores, five material elements, and one woman who is lord of the house.

57 My dear friend, the five gardens are the five objects of sense enjoyment, and the protector is the life air, which passes through the nine gates. The three apartments are the chief ingredients fire, water and earth. The six families are the aggregate total of the mind and five senses.

58 The five stores are the five working sensory organs. They transact their business through the combined forces of the five elements, which are eternal. Behind all this activity is the soul. The soul is a person and an enjoyer in reality. However, because he is now hidden within the city of the body, he is devoid of knowledge.

59 My dear friend, when you enter such a body along with the woman of material desires, you become overly absorbed in sense enjoyment. Because of this, you have forgotten your spiritual life. Due to your material conceptions, you are placed in various miserable conditions.

60 Actually, you are not the daughter of Vidarbha, nor is this man, Malayadhvaja, your well-wishing husband. Nor were you the actual husband of Puraṣjanī. You were simply captivated in this body of nine gates.

61 Sometimes you think yourself a man, sometimes a chaste woman and sometimes a neutral eunuch. This is all because of the body, which is created by the illusory energy. This illusory energy is My potency, and actually both of us you and I are pure spiritual identities. Now just try to understand this. I am trying to explain our factual position.

62 My dear friend, I, the Supersoul, and you, the individual soul, are not different in quality, for we are both spiritual. In fact, My dear friend, you are qualitatively not different from Me in your constitutional position. Just try to consider this subject. Those who are actually advanced scholars, who are in knowledge, do not find any qualitative difference between you and Me.

63 As a person sees the reflection of his body in a mirror to be one with himself and not different, whereas others actually see two bodies, so in our material condition, in which the living being is affected and yet not affected, there is a difference between God and the living entity.

64 In this way both swans live together in the heart. When the one swan is instructed by the other, he is situated in his constitutional position. This means he regains his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which was lost because of his material attraction.

65 My dear King Prācīnabarhi, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, is celebrated to be known indirectly. Thus I have described the story of Puraṣjana to you. Actually it is an instruction for self-realization.

1 King Prācīnabarhi replied: My dear lord, we could not appreciate completely the purport of your allegorical story of King Puraṣjana. Actually, those who are perfect in spiritual knowledge can understand, but for us, who are overly attached to fruitive activities, to realize the purpose of your story is very difficult.

2 The great sage Nārada Muni continued: You must understand that Puraṣjana, the living entity, transmigrates according to his own work into different types of bodies, which may be one-legged, two-legged, three-legged, four-legged, many-legged or simply legless. Transmigrating into these various types of bodies, the living entity, as the so-called enjoyer, is known as Puraṣjana.

3 The person I have described as unknown is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master and eternal friend of the living entity. Since the living entities cannot realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead by material names, activities or qualities, He remains everlastingly unknown to the conditioned soul.

4 When the living entity wants to enjoy the modes of material nature in their totality, he prefers, out of many bodily forms, to accept that body which has nine gates, two hands and two legs. Thus he prefers to become a human being or a demigod.

5 The great sage Nārada continued: The word pramadā mentioned in this regard refers to material intelligence, or ignorance. It is to be understood as such. When one takes shelter of this kind of intelligence, he identifies himself with the material body. Influenced by the material consciousness of “I” and “mine,” he begins to enjoy and suffer through his senses. Thus the living entity is entrapped.

6 The five working senses and the five senses that acquire knowledge are all male friends of Puraṣjanī. The living entity is assisted by these senses in acquiring knowledge and engaging in activity. The engagements of the senses are known as girlfriends, and the serpent, which was described as having five heads, is the life air acting within the five circulatory processes.

7 The eleventh attendant, who is the commander of the others, is known as the mind. He is the leader of the senses both in the acquisition of knowledge and in the performance of work. The Paścāla kingdom is that atmosphere in which the five sense objects are enjoyed. Within that Paścāla kingdom is the city of the body, which has nine gates.

8 The eyes, nostrils and ears are pairs of gates situated in one place. The mouth, genitals and rectum are also different gates. Being placed into a body having these nine gates, the living entity acts externally in the material world and enjoys sense objects like form and taste.

9 Two eyes, two nostrils and a mouth all together five are situated in the front. The right ear is accepted as the southern gate, and the left ear is the northern gate. The two holes, or gates, situated in the west are known as the rectum and genital organ.

10 The two gates named Khadyotā and Āvirmukhī, which have been spoken of, are the two eyes side by side in one place. The town named Vibhrājita should be understood as form. In this way the two eyes are always engaged in seeing different kinds of forms.

11 The two doors named Nalinī and Nālinī should be known as the two nostrils, and the city named Saurabha represents aroma. The companion spoken of as Avadhūta is the sense of smell. The door called Mukhyā is the mouth, and Vipaṇa is the faculty of speech. Rasajṣa is the sense of taste.

12 The city called Āpaṇa represents engagement of the tongue in speech, and Bahūdana is the

variety of foodstuffs. The right ear is called the gate of Pitṛhū, and the left ear is called the gate of Devahū.

13 Nārada Muni continued: The city spoken of as Dakṣiṇa-paścāla represents the scriptures meant for directing pravṛtti, the process of sense enjoyment in fruitive activities. The other city, named Uttara-paścāla, represents the scriptures meant for decreasing fruitive activities and increasing knowledge. The living entity receives different kinds of knowledge by means of two ears, and some living entities are promoted to Pitṛloka and some to Devaloka. All this is made possible by the two ears.

14 The city called Grāmaka, which is approached through the lower gate of Āsurī [the genital organ], is meant for sex, which is very pleasing to common men who are simply fools and rascals. The faculty of procreation is called Durmada, and the rectum is called Nirṛti.

15 When it is said that Puraṣjana goes to Vaiśasa, it is meant that he goes to hell. He is accompanied by Lubdhaka, which is the working sense in the rectum. Formerly I have also spoken of two blind associates. These associates should be understood to be the hands and legs. Being helped by the hands and legs, the living entity performs all kinds of work and moves hither and thither.

16 The word antaḥ-pura refers to the heart. The word viṣūcīna, meaning “going everywhere,” indicates the mind. Within the mind the living entity enjoys the effects of the modes of material nature. These effects sometimes cause illusion, sometimes satisfaction and sometimes jubilation.

17 Formerly it was explained that the Queen is one’s intelligence. While one is awake or asleep, that intelligence creates different situations. Being influenced by contaminated intelligence, the living entity envisions something and simply imitates the actions and reactions of his intelligence.

18-20 Nārada Muni continued: What I referred to as the chariot was in actuality the body. The senses are the horses that pull that chariot. As time passes, year after year, these horses run without obstruction, but in fact they make no progress. Pious and impious activities are the two wheels of the chariot. The three modes of material nature are the chariot’s flags. The five types of life air constitute the living entity’s bondage, and the mind is considered to be the rope. Intelligence is the chariot driver. The heart is the sitting place in the chariot, and the dualities of life, such as pleasure and pain, are the knotting place. The seven elements are the coverings of the chariot, and the working senses are the five external processes. The eleven senses are the soldiers. Being engrossed in sense enjoyment, the living entity, seated on the chariot, hankers after fulfillment of his false desires and runs after sense enjoyment life after life.

21 What was previously explained as Caṇḍavega, powerful time, is covered by days and nights, named Gandharvas and Gandharvīs. The body’s life span is gradually reduced by the passage of days and nights, which number 360.

22 What was described as Kālakanyā should be understood as old age. No one wants to accept old age, but Yavaneśvara [Yavana-rāja], who is death, accepts Jarā [old age] as his sister.

23-25 The followers of Yavaneśvara [Yamarāja] are called the soldiers of death, and they are known as the various types of disturbances that pertain to the body and mind. Prajvāra represents the two types of fever: extreme heat and extreme cold typhoid and pneumonia. The living entity lying down within the body is disturbed by many tribulations pertaining to providence, to other living entities and to his own body and mind. Despite all kinds of

tribulations, the living entity, subjected to the necessities of the body, mind and senses and suffering from various types of disease, is carried away by many plans due to his lust to enjoy the world. Although transcendental to this material existence, the living entity, out of ignorance, accepts all these material miseries under the pretext of false egoism (“I” and “mine”). In this way he lives for a hundred years within this body.

26-27 The living entity by nature has minute independence to choose his own good or bad fortune, but when he forgets his supreme master, the Personality of Godhead, he gives himself up unto the modes of material nature. Being influenced by the modes of material nature, he identifies himself with the body and, for the interest of the body, becomes attached to various activities. Sometimes he is under the influence of the mode of ignorance, sometimes the mode of passion and sometimes the mode of goodness. The living entity thus gets different types of bodies under the modes of material nature.

28 Those who are situated in the mode of goodness act piously according to Vedic injunctions. Thus they are elevated to the higher planetary systems where the demigods live. Those who are influenced by the mode of passion engage in various types of productive activities in the planetary systems where human beings live. Similarly, those influenced by the mode of darkness are subjected to various types of misery and live in the animal kingdom.

29 Covered by the mode of ignorance in material nature, the living entity is sometimes a male, sometimes a female, sometimes a eunuch, sometimes a human being, sometimes a demigod, sometimes a bird, an animal, and so on. In this way he is wandering within the material world. His acceptance of different types of bodies is brought about by his activities under the influence of the modes of nature.

30-31 The living entity is exactly like a dog who, overcome with hunger, goes from door to door for some food. According to his destiny, he sometimes receives punishment and is driven out and at other times receives a little food to eat. Similarly, the living entity, being influenced by so many desires, wanders in different species of life according to destiny. Sometimes he is high, and sometimes he is low. Sometimes he goes to the heavenly planets, sometimes to hell, sometimes to the middle planets, and so on.

32 The living entities are trying to counteract different miserable conditions pertaining to providence, other living entities or the body and mind. Still, they must remain conditioned by the laws of nature, despite all attempts to counter these laws.

33 A man may carry a burden on his head, and when he feels it to be too heavy, he sometimes gives relief to his head by putting the burden on his shoulder. In this way he tries to relieve himself of the burden. However, whatever process he devises to counteract the burden does nothing more than put the same burden from one place to another.

34 Nārada continued: O you who are free from all sinful activity! No one can counteract the effects of fruitive activity simply by manufacturing a different activity devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All such activity is due to our ignorance. When we have a troublesome dream, we cannot relieve it with a troublesome hallucination. One can counteract a dream only by awaking. Similarly, our material existence is due to our ignorance and illusion. Unless we awaken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we cannot be relieved of such dreams. For the ultimate solution to all problems, we must awaken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

35 Sometimes we suffer because we see a tiger in a dream or a snake in a vision, but actually there is neither a tiger nor a snake. Thus we create some situation in a subtle form and suffer the consequences. These sufferings cannot be mitigated unless we are awakened from our dream.

36-37 The real interest of the living entity is to get out of the nescience that causes him to endure repeated birth and death. The only remedy is to surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead through His representative. Unless one renders devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, one cannot possibly become completely detached from this material world, nor can he possibly manifest real knowledge.

38 O best of kings, one who is faithful, who is always hearing the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always engaged in the culture of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and in hearing of the Lord's activities, very soon becomes eligible to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face.

39-40 My dear King, in the place where pure devotees live, following the rules and regulations and thus purely conscious and engaged with great eagerness in hearing and chanting the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in that place if one gets a chance to hear their constant flow of nectar, which is exactly like the waves of a river, one will forget the necessities of life, namely hunger and thirst, and become immune to all kinds of fear, lamentation and illusion.

41 Because the conditioned soul is always disturbed by the bodily necessities such as hunger and thirst, he has very little time to cultivate attachment to hearing the nectarean words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

42-44 The most powerful Lord Brahmā, the father of all progenitors; Lord Śiva; Manu, Dakṣa and the other rulers of humankind; the four saintly first-class brahmacārīs headed by Sanaka and Sanātana; the great sages Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu and Vasiṣṭha; and my humble self [Nārada] are all stalwart brāhmaṇas who can speak authoritatively on Vedic literature. We are very powerful because of austerities, meditation and education. Nonetheless, even after inquiring about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whom we always see, we do not know perfectly about Him.

45 Despite the cultivation of Vedic knowledge, which is unlimited, and the worship of different demigods by the symptoms of Vedic mantras, demigod worship does not help one to understand the supreme powerful Personality of Godhead.

46 When a person is fully engaged in devotional service, he is favored by the Lord, who bestows His causeless mercy. At such a time, the awakened devotee gives up all material activities and ritualistic performances mentioned in the Vedas.

47 My dear King Barhiṣmān, you should never out of ignorance take to the Vedic rituals or to fruitive activity, which may be pleasing to hear about or which may appear to be the goal of self-interest. You should never take these to be the ultimate goal of life.

48 Those who are less intelligent accept the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies as all in all. They do not know that the purpose of the Vedas is to understand one's own home, where the Supreme Personality of Godhead lives. Not being interested in their real home, they are illusioned and search after other homes.

49 My dear King, the entire world is covered with the sharp points of kuśa grass, and on the strength of this you have become proud because you have killed various types of animals in sacrifices. Because of your foolishness, you do not know that devotional service is the only way one can please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You cannot understand this fact. Your only activities should be those that can please the Personality of Godhead. Our education should be such that we can become elevated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

50 Śrī Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the Supersoul and guide of all living entities who have accepted material bodies within this world. He is the supreme controller of all material activities in material nature. He is also our best friend, and everyone should take shelter at His lotus feet. In doing so, one's life will be auspicious.

51 One who is engaged in devotional service has not the least fear in material existence. This is because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supersoul and friend of everyone. One who knows this secret is actually educated, and one thus educated can become the spiritual master of the world. One who is an actually bona fide spiritual master, representative of Kṛṣṇa, is not different from Kṛṣṇa.

52 The great saint Nārada continued: O great personality, I have replied properly about all that you have asked me. Now hear another narration that is accepted by saintly persons and is very confidential.

53 My dear King, please search out that deer who is engaged in eating grass in a very nice flower garden along with his wife. That deer is very much attached to his business, and he is enjoying the sweet singing of the bumblebees in his garden. Just try to understand his position. He is unaware that before him is a tiger, which is accustomed to living at the cost of another's flesh. Behind the deer is a hunter, who is threatening to pierce him with sharp arrows. Thus the deer's death is imminent.

54 My dear King, woman, who is very attractive in the beginning but in the end very disturbing, is exactly like the flower, which is attractive in the beginning and detestable at the end. With woman, the living entity is entangled with lusty desires, and he enjoys sex, just as one enjoys the aroma of a flower. He thus enjoys a life of sense gratification from his tongue to his genitals and in this way the living entity considers himself very happy in family life. United with his wife, he always remains absorbed in such thoughts. He feels great pleasure in hearing the talks of his wife and children, which are like the sweet humming of bumblebees that collect honey from flower to flower. He forgets that before him is time, which is taking away his life span with the passing of day and night. He does not see the gradual diminishing of his life, nor does he care about the superintendent of death, who is trying to kill him from behind. Just try to understand this. You are in a precarious position and are threatened from all sides.

55 My dear King, just try to understand the allegorical position of the deer. Be fully conscious of yourself, and give up the pleasure of hearing about promotion to heavenly planets by fruitive activity. Give up household life, which is full of sex, as well as stories about such things, and take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the mercy of the liberated souls. In this way, please give up your attraction for material existence.

56 The King replied: My dear brāhmaṇa, whatever you have said I have heard with great attention and, considering all of it, have come to the conclusion that the ācāryas [teachers] who engaged me in fruitive activity did not know this confidential knowledge. If they were aware of it, why did they not explain it to me?

57 My dear brāhmaṇa, there are contradictions between your instructions and those of my spiritual teachers who engaged me in fruitive activities. I now can understand the distinction between devotional service, knowledge and renunciation. I had some doubts about them, but you have now very kindly dissipated all these doubts. I can now understand how even the great sages are bewildered by the real purpose of life. Of course, there is no question of sense gratification.

58 The results of whatever a living entity does in this life are enjoyed in the next life.

59 The expert knowers of the Vedic conclusions say that one enjoys or suffers the results of his past activities. But practically it is seen that the body that performed the work in the last birth is already lost. So how is it possible to enjoy or suffer the reactions of that work in a different body?

60 The great sage Nārada continued: The living entity acts in a gross body in this life. This body is forced to act by the subtle body, composed of mind, intelligence and ego. After the gross body is lost, the subtle body is still there to enjoy or suffer. Thus there is no change.

61 The living entity, while dreaming, gives up the actual living body. Through the activities of his mind and intelligence, he acts in another body, either as a god or a dog. After giving up this gross body, the living entity enters either an animal body or a demigod's body on this planet or on another planet. He thus enjoys the results of the actions of his past life.

62 The living entity labors under the bodily conception of "I am this, I am that. My duty is this, and therefore I shall do it." These are all mental impressions, and all these activities are temporary; nonetheless, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the living entity gets a chance to execute all his mental concoctions. Thus he gets another body.

63 One can understand the mental or conscious position of a living entity by the activities of two kinds of senses—the knowledge-acquiring senses and the executive senses. Similarly, by the mental condition or consciousness of a person, one can understand his position in the previous life.

64 Sometimes we suddenly experience something that was never experienced in the present body by sight or hearing. Sometimes we see such things suddenly in dreams.

65 Therefore, my dear King, the living entity, who has a subtle mental covering, develops all kinds of thoughts and images because of his previous body. Take this from me as certain. There is no possibility of concocting anything mentally without having perceived it in the previous body.

66 O King, all good fortune unto you! The mind is the cause of the living entity's attaining a certain type of body in accordance with his association with material nature. According to one's mental composition, one can understand what the living entity was in his past life as well as what kind of body he will have in the future. Thus the mind indicates the past and future bodies.

67 Sometimes in a dream we see something never experienced or heard of in this life, but all these incidents have been experienced at different times, in different places and in different conditions.

68 The mind of the living entity continues to exist in various gross bodies, and according to one's desires for sense gratification, the mind records different thoughts. In the mind these appear together in different combinations; therefore these images sometimes appear as things never seen or never heard before.

69 Kṛṣṇa consciousness means constantly associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in such a mental state that the devotee can observe the cosmic manifestation exactly as the Supreme Personality of Godhead does. Such observation is not always possible, but it becomes manifest exactly like the dark planet known as Rāhu, which is observed in the presence of the full moon.

70 As long as there exists the subtle material body composed of intelligence, mind, senses, sense objects, and the reactions of the material qualities, the consciousness of false

identification and its relative objective, the gross body, exist as well.

71 When the living entity is in deep sleep, when he faints, when there is some great shock on account of severe loss, at the time of death, or when the body temperature is very high, the movement of the life air is arrested. At that time the living entity loses knowledge of identifying the body with the self.

72 When one is a youth, all the ten senses and the mind are completely visible. However, in the mother's womb or in the boyhood state, the sense organs and the mind remain covered, just as the full moon is covered by the darkness of the dark-moon night.

73 When the living entity dreams, the sense objects are not actually present. However, because one has associated with the sense objects, they become manifest. Similarly, the living entity with undeveloped senses does not cease to exist materially, even though he may not be exactly in contact with the sense objects.

74 The five sense objects, the five sense organs, the five knowledge-acquiring senses and the mind are the sixteen material expansions. These combine with the living entity and are influenced by the three modes of material nature. Thus the existence of the conditioned soul is understood.

75 By virtue of the processes of the subtle body, the living entity develops and gives up gross bodies. This is known as the transmigration of the soul. Thus the soul becomes subjected to different types of so-called enjoyment, lamentation, fear, happiness and unhappiness.

76-77 The caterpillar transports itself from one leaf to another by capturing one leaf before giving up the other. Similarly, according to his previous work, the living entity must capture another body before giving up the one he has. This is because the mind is the reservoir of all kinds of desires.

78 As long as we desire to enjoy sense gratification, we create material activities. When the living entity acts in the material field, he enjoys the senses, and while enjoying the senses, he creates another series of material activities. In this way the living entity becomes entrapped as a conditioned soul.

79 You should always know that this cosmic manifestation is created, maintained and annihilated by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently, everything within this cosmic manifestation is under the control of the Lord. To be enlightened by this perfect knowledge, one should always engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord.

80 The great sage Maitreya continued: The supreme devotee, the great saint Nārada, thus explained to King Prācīnabarhi the constitutional position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entity. After giving an invitation to the King, Nārada Muni left to return to Siddhaloka.

81 In the presence of his ministers, the saintly King Prācīnabarhi left orders for his sons to protect the citizens. He then left home and went off to undergo austerities in a holy place known as Kapilāśrama.

82 Having undergone austerities and penances at Kapilāśrama, King Prācīnabarhi attained full liberation from all material designations. He constantly engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord and attained a spiritual position qualitatively equal to that of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

83 My dear Vidura, one who hears this narration concerning the understanding of the living

entity's spiritual existence, as described by the great sage Nārada, or who relates it to others, will be liberated from the bodily conception of life.

84 This narration spoken by the great sage Nārada is full of the transcendental fame of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently this narration, when described, certainly sanctifies this material world. It purifies the heart of the living entity and helps him attain his spiritual identity. One who relates this transcendental narration will be liberated from all material bondage and will no longer have to wander within this material world.

85 The allegory of King Puraṣjana, described herein according to authority, was heard by me from my spiritual master, and it is full of spiritual knowledge. If one can understand the purpose of this allegory, he will certainly be relieved from the bodily conception and will clearly understand life after death. Although one may not understand what transmigration of the soul actually is, one can fully understand it by studying this narration.

Texts 29.1a-2a A desire to maintain body, wife and children is also observed in animal society. The animals have full intelligence to manage such affairs. If a human being is simply advanced in this respect, what is the difference between him and an animal? One should be very careful to understand that this human life is attained after many, many births in the evolutionary process. A learned man who gives up the bodily conception of life, both gross and subtle, will, by the enlightenment of spiritual knowledge, become a prominent individual spirit soul, as the Supreme Lord is also.

Text 29.1b If a living entity is developed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is merciful to others, and if his spiritual knowledge of self-realization is perfect, he will immediately attain liberation from the bondage of material existence.

Text 29.2b Everything happening within time, which consists of past, present and future, is merely a dream. That is the secret understanding in all Vedic literature.

SB 4.30: The Activities of the Pracetās

1 Vidura inquired from Maitreya: O brāhmaṇa, you formerly spoke about the sons of Prācīnabarhi and informed me that they satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead by chanting a song composed by Lord Śiva. What did they achieve in this way?

2 My dear Bārhaspatya, what did the sons of King Barhiṣat, known as the Pracetās, obtain after meeting Lord Śiva, who is very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the bestower of liberation? Certainly they were transferred to the spiritual world, but apart from that, what did they obtain within this material world, either in this life or in other lives?

3 The great sage Maitreya said: The sons of King Prācīnabarhi, known as the Pracetās, underwent severe austerities within the seawater to carry out the order of their father. By chanting and repeating the mantras given by Lord Śiva, they were able to satisfy Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

4 At the end of ten thousand years of severe austerities performed by the Pracetās, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to reward their austerities, appeared before them in His very pleasing form. This appealed to the Pracetās and satisfied the labor of their austerities.

5 The Personality of Godhead, appearing on the shoulder of Garuḍa, seemed like a cloud resting on the summit of the mountain known as Meru. The transcendental body of the Personality of Godhead was covered by attractive yellow garments, and His neck was decorated with the jewel known as Kaustubha-maṇi. The bodily effulgence of the Lord

dissipated all the darkness of the universe.

6 The Lord's face was very beautiful, and His head was decorated with a shining helmet and golden ornaments. The helmet was dazzling and was very beautifully situated on His head. The Lord had eight arms, which each held a particular weapon. The Lord was surrounded by demigods, great sages and other associates. These were all engaged in His service. Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord, glorified the Lord with Vedic hymns by flapping his wings. Garuḍa appeared to be an inhabitant of the planet known as Kinnaraloka.

7 Around the neck of the Personality of Godhead hung a flower garland that reached to His knees. His eight stout and elongated arms were decorated with that garland, which challenged the beauty of the goddess of fortune. With a merciful glance and a voice like thunder, the Lord addressed the sons of King Prācīnabarhiṣat, who were very much surrendered unto Him.

8 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear sons of the King, I am very much pleased by the friendly relationships among you. All of you are engaged in one occupation devotional service. I am so pleased with your mutual friendship that I wish you all good fortune. Now you may ask a benediction of Me.

9 The Lord continued: Those who remember you every evening of every day will become friendly with their brothers and with all other living entities.

10 Those who will offer Me the prayers composed by Lord Śiva, both in the morning and in the evening, will be given benedictions by Me. In this way they can both fulfill their desires and attain good intelligence.

11 Because you have with pleasure accepted within your hearts the orders of your father and have executed those orders very faithfully, your attractive qualities will be celebrated all over the world.

12 You will have a nice son, who will be in no way inferior to Lord Brahmā. Consequently, he will be very famous all over the universe, and the sons and grandsons generated by him will fill the three worlds.

13 O sons of King Prācīnabarhiṣat, the heavenly society girl named Pramlocā kept the lotus-eyed daughter of Kaṇḍu in the care of the forest trees. Then she went back to the heavenly planet. This daughter was born by the coupling of the Apsarā named Pramlocā with the sage Kaṇḍu.

14 Thereafter the child, who was left to the care of the trees, began to cry in hunger. At that time the king of the forest, namely the king of the moon planet, out of compassion placed his finger, which poured forth nectar, within the child's mouth. Thus the child was raised by the mercy of the king of the moon.

15 Since all of you are very much obedient to My orders, I ask you to immediately marry that girl, who is so well qualified with beauty and good qualities. According to the order of your father, create progeny through her.

16 You brothers are all of the same nature, being My devotees and obedient sons of your father. Similarly, that girl is also of the same type and is dedicated to all of you. Thus both the girl and you, the sons of Prācīnabarhiṣat, are on the same platform, being united on a common principle.

17 The Lord then blessed all the Pracetās, saying: My dear princes, by My mercy you can enjoy

all the facilities of this world as well as the heavenly world. Indeed, you can enjoy all of them without hindrance and with full strength for one million celestial years.

18 Thereafter you will develop unadulterated devotional service unto Me and be freed from all material contamination. At that time, being completely unattached to material enjoyment in the so-called heavenly planets as well as in hellish planets, you will return home, back to Godhead.

19 Those who are engaged in auspicious activities in devotional service certainly understand that the ultimate enjoyer or beneficiary of all activities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus when one acts, he offers the results to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and passes life always engaged in the topics of the Lord. Even though such a person may be participating in family life, he is not affected by the results of his actions.

20 Always engaging in the activities of devotional service, devotees feel ever-increasingly fresh and new in all their activities. The all-knower, the Supersoul within the heart of the devotee, makes everything increasingly fresh. This is known as the Brahman position by the advocates of the Absolute Truth. In such a liberated stage [brahma-bhūta], one is never bewildered. Nor does one lament or become unnecessarily jubilant. This is due to the brahma-bhūta situation.

21 The great sage Maitreya said: After the Personality of Godhead spoke thus, the Pracetās began to offer Him prayers. The Lord is the bestower of all success in life and is the supreme benefactor. He is also the supreme friend who takes away all miserable conditions experienced by a devotee. In a faltering voice, due to ecstasy, the Pracetās began to offer prayers. They were purified by the presence of the Lord, who was before them face to face.

22 The Pracetās spoke as follows: Dear Lord, You relieve all kinds of material distress. Your magnanimous transcendental qualities and holy name are all-auspicious. This conclusion is already settled. You can go faster than the speed of mind and words. You cannot be perceived by material senses. We therefore offer You respectful obeisances again and again.

23 Dear Lord, we beg to offer our obeisances unto You. When the mind is fixed upon You, the world of duality, although a place for material enjoyment, appears meaningless. Your transcendental form is full of transcendental bliss. We therefore offer our respects unto You. Your appearances as Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva are meant for the purpose of creating, maintaining and annihilating this cosmic manifestation.

24 Dear Lord, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You because Your existence is completely independent of all material influences. Your Lordship always takes away the devotee's miserable conditions, for Your brain plans how to do so. You live everywhere as Paramātmā; therefore You are known as Vāsudeva. You also accept Vasudeva as Your father, and You are celebrated by the name Kṛṣṇa. You are so kind that You always increase the influence of all kinds of devotees.

25 Dear Lord, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You because from Your abdomen sprouts the lotus flower, the origin of all living entities. You are always decorated with a lotus garland, and Your feet resemble the lotus flower with all its fragrance. Your eyes are also like the petals of a lotus flower. Therefore we always offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

26 Dear Lord, the garment You have put on is yellowish in color, like the saffron of a lotus flower, but it is not made of anything material. Since You live in everyone's heart, You are the direct witness of all the activities of all living entities. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You again and again.

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27 Dear Lord, we conditioned souls are always covered by ignorance in the bodily conception of life. We therefore always prefer the miserable conditions of material existence. To deliver us from these miserable conditions, You have advented Yourself in this transcendental form. This is evidence of Your unlimited causeless mercy upon those of us who are suffering in this way. Then what to speak of the devotees to whom You are always so favorably disposed?

28 Dear Lord, You are the killer of all inauspicious things. You are compassionate upon Your poor devotees through the expansion of Your arcā-vigraha. You should certainly think of us as Your eternal servants.

29 When the Lord, out of His natural compassion, thinks of His devotee, by that process only are all desires of the neophyte devotee fulfilled. The Lord is situated in every living entity's heart, although the living entity may be very insignificant. The Lord knows everything about the living entity, including all his desires. Although we are very insignificant, why should the Lord not know our desires?

30 O Lord of the universe, You are the actual teacher of the science of devotional service. We are satisfied that Your Lordship is the ultimate goal of our life, and we pray that You will be satisfied with us. That is our benediction. We do not desire anything other than Your full satisfaction.

31 Dear Lord, we shall therefore pray for Your benediction because You are the Supreme, beyond all transcendence, and because there is no end to Your opulences. Consequently, You are celebrated by the name Ananta.

32 Dear Lord, when the bee approaches the celestial tree called the pārijāta, it certainly does not leave the tree, because there is no need for such action. Similarly, when we have approached Your lotus feet and taken shelter of them, what further benediction may we ask of You?

33 Dear Lord, as long as we have to remain within this material world due to our material contamination and wander from one type of body to another and from one planet to another, we pray that we may associate with those who are engaged in discussing Your pastimes. We pray for this benediction life after life, in different bodily forms and on different planets.

34 Even a moment's association with a pure devotee cannot be compared to being transferred to heavenly planets or even merging into the Brahman effulgence in complete liberation. For living entities who are destined to give up the body and die, association with pure devotees is the highest benediction.

35 Whenever pure topics of the transcendental world are discussed, the members of the audience forget all kinds of material hankerings, at least for the time being. Not only that, but they are no longer envious of one another, nor do they suffer from anxiety or fear.

36 The Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, is present among devotees who are engaged in hearing and chanting the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Nārāyaṇa is the ultimate goal of sannyāsīs, those in the renounced order of life, and Nārāyaṇa is worshiped through this saṅkīrtana movement by those who are liberated from material contamination. Indeed, they recite the holy name again and again.

37 Dear Lord, Your personal associates, devotees, wander all over the world to purify even the holy places of pilgrimage. Is not such activity pleasing to those who are actually afraid of material existence?

38 Dear Lord, by virtue of a moment's association with Lord Śiva, who is very dear to You and who is Your most intimate friend, we were fortunate to attain You. You are the most expert physician, capable of treating the incurable disease of material existence. On account of our great fortune, we have been able to take shelter at Your lotus feet.

39-40 Dear Lord, we have studied the Vedas, accepted a spiritual master and offered respect to brāhmaṇas, advanced devotees and aged personalities who are spiritually very advanced. We have offered our respects to them, and we have not been envious of any brother, friends or anyone else. We have also undergone severe austerities within the water and have not taken food for a long time. All these spiritual assets of ours are simply offered for Your satisfaction. We pray for this benediction only, and nothing more.

41 Dear Lord, even great yogīs and mystics who are very much advanced by virtue of austerities and knowledge and who have completely situated themselves in pure existence, as well as great personalities like Manu, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, cannot fully understand Your glories and potencies. Nonetheless they have offered their prayers according to their own capacities. In the same way, we, although much lower than these personalities, also offer our prayers according to our own capability.

42 Dear Lord, You have no enemies or friends. Therefore You are equal to everyone. You cannot be contaminated by sinful activities, and Your transcendental form is always beyond the material creation. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead because You remain everywhere within all existence. You are consequently known as Vāsudeva. We offer You our respectful obeisances.

43 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of surrendered souls, being thus addressed by the Pracetās and worshiped by them, replied, "May whatever you have prayed for be fulfilled." After saying this, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose prowess is never defeated, left. The Pracetās were unwilling to be separated from Him because they had not seen Him to their full satisfaction.

44 Thereafter all the Pracetās emerged from the waters of the sea. They then saw that all the trees on land had grown very tall, as if to obstruct the path to the heavenly planets. These trees had covered the entire surface of the world. At this time the Pracetās became very angry.

45 My dear King, at the time of devastation, Lord Śiva emits fire and air from his mouth out of anger. To make the surface of the earth completely treeless, the Pracetās also emitted fire and air from their mouths.

46 After seeing that all the trees on the surface of the earth were being turned to ashes, Lord Brahmā immediately came to the sons of King Barhiṣmān and pacified them with words of logic.

47 The remaining trees, being very much afraid of the Pracetās, immediately delivered their daughter at the advice of Lord Brahmā.

48 Following the order of Lord Brahmā, all the Pracetās accepted the girl as their wife. From the womb of this girl, the son of Lord Brahmā named Dakṣa took birth. Dakṣa had to take birth from the womb of Māriṣā due to his disobeying and disrespecting Lord Mahādeva [Śiva]. Consequently he had to give up his body twice.

49 His previous body had been destroyed, but he, the same Dakṣa, inspired by the supreme will, created all the desired living entities in the Cākṣuṣa manvantara.

50-51 After being born, Dakṣa, by the superexcellence of his bodily luster, covered all others' bodily opulence. Because he was very expert in performing fruitive activity, he was called by the name Dakṣa, meaning "the very expert." Lord Brahmā therefore engaged Dakṣa in the work of generating living entities and maintaining them. In due course of time, Dakṣa also engaged other Prajāpatis [progenitors] in the process of generation and maintenance.

SB 4.31: Nārada Instructs the Pracetās

1 The great saint Maitreya continued: After that, the Pracetās lived at home for thousands of years and developed perfect knowledge in spiritual consciousness. At last they remembered the blessings of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and left home, putting their wife in charge of a perfect son.

2 The Pracetās went to the seashore in the west where the great liberated sage Jājali was residing. After perfecting the spiritual knowledge by which one becomes equal toward all living entities, the Pracetās became perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

3 After practicing the yogāsana for mystic yoga, the Pracetās managed to control their life air, mind, words and external vision. Thus by the prāṇāyāma process they were completely relieved of material attachment. By remaining perpendicular, they could concentrate their minds on the uppermost Brahman. While they were practicing this prāṇāyāma, the great sage Nārada, who is worshiped both by demons and by demigods, came to see them.

4 As soon as the Pracetās saw that the great sage Nārada had appeared, they immediately got up even from their āsanas. As required, they immediately offered obeisances and worshiped him, and when they saw that Nārada Muni was properly seated, they began to ask him questions.

5 All the Pracetās began to address the great sage Nārada: O great sage, O brāhmaṇa, we hope you met with no disturbances while coming here. It is due to our great fortune that we are now able to see you. By the traveling of the sun, people are relieved from the fear of the darkness of night a fear brought about by thieves and rogues. Similarly, your traveling is like the sun's, for you drive away all kinds of fear.

6 O master, may we inform you that because of our being overly attached to family affairs, we almost forgot the instructions we received from Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu.

7 Dear master, kindly enlighten us in transcendental knowledge, which may act as a torchlight by which we may cross the dark nescience of material existence.

8 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, being thus petitioned by the Pracetās, the supreme devotee Nārada, who is always absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, began to reply.

9 The great sage Nārada said: When a living entity is born to engage in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme controller, his birth, all his fruitive activities, his life span, his mind and his words are all factually perfect.

10 A civilized human being has three kinds of births. The first birth is by a pure father and mother, and this birth is called birth by semen. The next birth takes place when one is initiated by the spiritual master, and this birth is called sāvitra. The third birth, called yājñika, takes place when one is given the opportunity to worship Lord Viṣṇu. Despite the opportunities for attaining such births, even if one gets the life span of a demigod, if one does not actually engage in the service of the Lord, everything is useless. Similarly, one's activities may be

mundane or spiritual, but they are useless if they are not meant for satisfying the Lord.

11 Without devotional service, what is the meaning of severe austerities, the process of hearing, the power of speech, the power of mental speculation, elevated intelligence, strength, and the power of the senses?

12 Transcendental practices that do not ultimately help one realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead are useless, be they mystic yoga practices, the analytical study of matter, severe austerity, the acceptance of sannyāsa, or the study of Vedic literature. All these may be very important aspects of spiritual advancement, but unless one understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, all these processes are useless.

13 Factually the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the original source of all self-realization. Consequently, the goal of all auspicious activities karma, Jnana, yoga and bhakti is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

14 As pouring water on the root of a tree energizes the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality.

15 During the rainy season, water is generated from the sun, and in due course of time, during the summer season, the very same water is again absorbed by the sun. Similarly, all living entities, moving and inert, are generated from the earth, and again, after some time, they all return to the earth as dust. Similarly, everything emanates from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in due course of time everything enters into Him again.

16 Just as the sunshine is nondifferent from the sun, the cosmic manifestation is also nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality is therefore all-pervasive within this material creation. When the senses are active, they appear to be part and parcel of the body, but when the body is asleep, their activities are unmanifest. Similarly, the whole cosmic creation appears different and yet nondifferent from the Supreme Person.

17 My dear Kings, sometimes in the sky there are clouds, sometimes there is darkness, and sometimes there is illumination. The appearance of all these takes place consecutively. Similarly, in the Supreme Absolute, the modes of passion, darkness and goodness appear as consecutive energies. Sometimes they appear, and sometimes they disappear.

18 Because the Supreme Lord is the cause of all causes, He is the Supersoul of all individual living entities, and He exists as both the remote and immediate cause. Since He is aloof from the material emanations, He is free from their interactions and is Lord of material nature. You should therefore engage in His devotional service, thinking yourself qualitatively one with Him.

19 By showing mercy to all living entities, being satisfied somehow or other, and restricting the senses from sense enjoyment, one can very quickly satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Janārdana.

20 Being completely cleansed of all material desires, the devotees are freed from all mental contamination. Thus they can always think of the Lord constantly and address Him very feelingly. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, knowing Himself to be controlled by His devotees, does not leave them for a second, just as the sky overhead never becomes invisible.

21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes very dear to those devotees who have no material possessions but are fully happy in possessing the devotional service of the Lord.

Indeed, the Lord relishes the devotional activities of such devotees. Those who are puffed up with material education, wealth, aristocracy and fruitive activity are very proud of possessing material things, and they often deride the devotees. Even if such people offer the Lord worship, the Lord never accepts them.

22 Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is self-sufficient, He becomes dependent on His devotees. He does not care for the goddess of fortune, nor for the kings and demigods who are after the favors of the goddess of fortune. Where is that person who is actually grateful and will not worship the Personality of Godhead?

23 The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear King Vidura, Śrī Nārada Muni, the son of Lord Brahmā, thus described all these relationships with the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the Pracetās. Afterward, he returned to Brahmaloaka.

24 Hearing from Nārada's mouth the glories of the Lord, which vanquish all the ill fortune of the world, the Pracetās also became attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Meditating on His lotus feet, they advanced to the ultimate destination.

25 My dear Vidura, I have told you everything you wanted to know about the conversation between Nārada and the Pracetās, the conversation describing the glories of the Lord. I have related this as far as possible.

26 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O best of kings [King Parīkṣit], I have now finished telling about the descendants of the first son of Svāyambhuva Manu, Uttānapāda. I shall now try to relate the activities of the descendants of Priyavrata, the second son of Svāyambhuva Manu. Please hear them attentively.

27 Although Mahārāja Priyavrata received instructions from the great sage Nārada, he still engaged in ruling the earth. After fully enjoying material possessions, he divided his property among his sons. He then attained a position by which he could return home, back to Godhead.

28 My dear King, in this way, after hearing the transcendental messages of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotees from the great sage Maitreya, Vidura was overwhelmed with ecstasy. With tears in his eyes, he immediately fell down at the lotus feet of his guru, his spiritual master. He then fixed the Supreme Personality of Godhead within the core of his heart.

29 Śrī Vidura said: O great mystic, O greatest of all devotees, by your causeless mercy I have been shown the path of liberation from this world of darkness. By following this path, a person liberated from the material world can return home, back to Godhead.

30 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Vidura thus offered obeisances unto the great sage Maitreya and, taking his permission, started for the city of Hastināpura to see his own kinsmen, although he had no material desires.

31 O King, those who hear these topics about kings who are completely surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead obtain without difficulty a long life, wealth, good reputation, good fortune and, ultimately, the opportunity to return home, back to Godhead.

Canto 5: The Creative Impetus

SB 5.1: The Activities of Mahārāja Priyavrata

This chapter describes how King Priyavrata enjoyed royal opulence and majesty and then returned to full knowledge. King Priyavrata was detached from worldly opulence, and then he

became attached to his kingdom, but finally he again became detached from material enjoyment and thus achieved liberation. When King Parīkṣit heard about this, he was struck with wonder, but he was somewhat bewildered as to how a devotee with no attachment for material enjoyment could later become attached to it. Thus in astonishment he questioned Śukadeva Gosvāmī about this.

In response to the King's inquiries, Śukadeva Gosvāmī said that devotional service, being transcendental, cannot be deviated by any material influences. Priyavrata had received transcendental knowledge from the instructions of Nārada, and therefore he did not want to enter a materialistic life of enjoyment in a kingdom. He accepted the kingdom, however, at the request of such superior demigods as Lord Brahmā and Lord Indra, the King of heaven.

Everything is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, and everyone must work accordingly. Just as a bull is controlled by a rope tied to its nose, so all conditioned souls are forced to work under the spells of the modes of nature. A civilized man, therefore, works according to the institution of *vāṃśa* and *āśrama*. Even in materialistic life, however, no one is free to act. Everyone is compelled to accept a certain type of body offered by the Supreme Lord and thus be allotted different grades of happiness and distress. Therefore even if one artificially leaves home and goes to the forest, he again becomes attached to materialistic life. Family life is compared to a fortress for practicing sense control. When the senses are controlled, one may live either at home or in the forest; there is no difference.

When Mahārāja Priyavrata, following the instruction of Lord Brahmā, accepted the royal throne, his father, Manu, left home for the forest. Mahārāja Priyavrata then married Barhiṣmatī, the daughter of Viśvakarmā. In the womb of Barhiṣmatī he begot ten sons, named Āgnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yajṣabāhu, Mahāvīra, Hiranyaretā, Ghr̥tapṛṣṭha, Savana, Medhātithi, Vītihoṭra and Kavi. He also begot one daughter, whose name was Ūrjasvatī. Mahārāja Priyavrata lived with his wife and family for many thousands of years. The impressions from the rims of Mahārāja Priyavrata's chariot wheels created seven oceans and seven islands. Of the ten sons of Priyavrata, three sons named Kavi, Mahāvīra and Savana accepted *sannyāsa*, the fourth order of life, and the remaining seven sons became the rulers of the seven islands. Mahārāja Priyavrata also had a second wife, in whom he begot three sons named Uttama, Raivata and Tāmasa. All of them were elevated to the post of Manu. Śukadeva Gosvāmī thus described how Mahārāja Priyavrata achieved liberation.

1King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O great sage, why did King Priyavrata, who was a great, self-realized devotee of the Lord, remain in household life, which is the root cause of the bondage of karma [fruitive activities] and which defeats the mission of human life?

2Devotees are certainly liberated persons. Therefore, O greatest of the brāhmaṇas, they cannot possibly be absorbed in family affairs.

3Elevated mahātmās who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are fully satiated by the shade of those lotus feet. Their consciousness cannot possibly become attached to family members.

4The King continued: O great brāhmaṇa, this is my great doubt. How was it possible for a person like King Priyavrata, who was so attached to wife, children and home, to achieve the topmost infallible perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

5ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: What you have said is correct. The glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is praised in eloquent, transcendental verses by such exalted

personalities as Brahmā, are very pleasing to great devotees and liberated persons. One who is attached to the nectarean honey of the Lord's lotus feet, and whose mind is always absorbed in His glories, may sometimes be checked by some impediment, but he still never gives up the exalted position he has acquired.

6Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, Prince Priyavrata was a great devotee because he sought the lotus feet of Nārada, his spiritual master, and thus achieved the highest perfection in transcendental knowledge. With advanced knowledge, he always engaged in discussing spiritual subjects and did not divert his attention to anything else. The Prince's father then asked him to take charge of ruling the world. He tried to convince Priyavrata that this was his duty as indicated in the revealed scriptures. Prince Priyavrata, however, was continuously practicing bhakti-yoga by constantly remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thus engaging all his senses in the service of the Lord. Therefore, although the order of his father could not be rejected, the Prince did not welcome it. Thus he very conscientiously raised the question of whether he might be diverted from devotional service by accepting the responsibility of ruling over the world.

7ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The first created being and most powerful demigod in this universe is Lord Brahmā, who is always responsible for developing universal affairs. Born directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he dedicates his activities to the welfare of the entire universe, for he knows the purpose of the universal creation. This supremely powerful Lord Brahmā, accompanied by his associates and the personified Vedas, left his own abode in the highest planetary system and descended to the place of Prince Priyavrata's meditation.

8As Lord Brahmā descended on his carrier, the great swan, all the residents of the planets named Siddhaloka, Gandharvaloka, Sādhya-loka and Cāraṇaloka, as well as great sages and demigods flying in their different airplanes, assembled within the canopy of the sky to receive Lord Brahmā and worship him. As he received respect and adoration from the residents of the various planets, Lord Brahmā appeared just like the full moon surrounded by illuminating stars. Lord Brahmā's great swan then arrived at the border of Gandhamādana Hill and approached Prince Priyavrata, who was sitting there.

9Lord Brahmā, the father of Nārada Muni, is the supreme person within this universe. As soon as Nārada saw the great swan, he could understand that Lord Brahmā had arrived. Therefore he immediately stood up, along with Svāyambhuva Manu and his son Priyavrata, whom Nārada was instructing. Then they folded their hands and began to worship Lord Brahmā with great respect.

10My dear King Parīkṣit, because Lord Brahmā had finally descended from Satyaloka to Bhūloka, Nārada Muni, Prince Priyavrata and Svāyambhuva Manu came forward to offer him objects of worship and to praise him in highly qualified language, according to Vedic etiquette. At that time, Lord Brahmā, the original person of this universe, felt compassion for Priyavrata and, looking upon him with a smiling face, spoke to him as follows.

11Lord Brahmā, the supreme person within this universe, said: My dear Priyavrata, kindly hear attentively what I shall say to you. Do not be jealous of the Supreme Lord, who is beyond our experimental measurements. All of us, including Lord Śiva, your father and the great sage Mahārṣi Nārada, must carry out the order of the Supreme. We cannot deviate from His order.

12One cannot avoid the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, not by the strength of severe austerities, an exalted Vedic education, or the power of mystic yoga, physical prowess or intellectual activities. Nor can one use his power of religion, his material opulence or any

other means, either by himself or with the help of others, to defy the orders of the Supreme Lord. That is not possible for any living being, from Brahmā down to the ant.

13My dear Priyavrata, by the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all living entities accept different types of bodies for birth and death, activity, lamentation, illusion, fear of future dangers, and happiness and distress.

14My dear boy, all of us are bound by the Vedic injunctions to the divisions of varṇāśrama according to our qualities and work. These divisions are difficult to avoid because they are scientifically arranged. We must therefore carry out our duties of varṇāśrama-dharma, like bulls obliged to move according to the direction of a driver pulling on ropes knotted to their noses.

15My dear Priyavrata, according to our association with different modes of material nature, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives us our specific bodies and the happiness and distress we achieve. One must therefore remain situated as he is and be conducted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, exactly as a blind man is led by a person who has eyes with which to see.

16Even if one is liberated, he nevertheless accepts the body he has received according to his past karma. Without misconceptions, however, he regards his enjoyment and suffering due to that karma the way an awakened person regards a dream he had while sleeping. He thus remains steadfast and never works to achieve another material body under the influence of the three modes of material nature.

17Even if he goes from forest to forest, one who is not self-controlled must always fear material bondage because he is living with six co-wives—the mind and knowledge-acquiring senses. Even householder life, however, cannot harm a self-satisfied, learned man who has conquered his senses.

18One who is situated in household life and who systematically conquers his mind and five sense organs is like a king in his fortress who conquers his powerful enemies. After one has been trained in household life and his lusty desires have decreased, he can move anywhere without danger.

19Lord Brahmā continued: My dear Priyavrata, seek shelter inside the opening in the lotus of the feet of the Lord, whose navel is also like a lotus. Thus conquer the six sense organs [the mind and knowledge-acquiring senses]. Accept material enjoyment because the Lord, extraordinarily, has ordered you to do this. You will thus always be liberated from material association and be able to carry out the Lord's orders in your constitutional position.

20ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After thus being fully instructed by Lord Brahmā, who is the spiritual master of the three worlds, Priyavrata, his own position being inferior, offered obeisances, accepted the order and carried it out with great respect.

21Lord Brahmā was then worshiped by Manu, who respectfully satisfied him as well as he could. Priyavrata and Nārada also looked upon Brahmā with no tinges of resentment. Having engaged Priyavrata in accepting his father's request, Lord Brahmā returned to his abode, Satyaloka, which is indescribable by the endeavor of mundane mind or words.

22Svāyambhuva Manu, with the assistance of Lord Brahmā, thus fulfilled his desires. With the permission of the great sage Nārada, he delivered to his son the governmental responsibility for maintaining and protecting all the planets of the universe. He thus achieved relief from the most dangerous, poisonous ocean of material desires.

23 Following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahārāja Priyavrata fully engaged in worldly affairs, yet he always thought of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are the cause of liberation from all material attachment. Although Priyavrata Mahārāja was completely freed from all material contamination, he ruled the material world just to honor the orders of his superiors.

24 Thereafter, Mahārāja Priyavrata married Barhiṣmatī, the daughter of the prajāpati named Viśvakarmā. In her he begot ten sons equal to him in beauty, character, magnanimity and other qualities. He also begot a daughter, the youngest of all, named Ūrjasvatī.

25 The ten sons of Mahārāja Priyavrata were named Āgnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yajṣabāhu, Mahāvīra, Hiraṇyaretā, Ghṛtapṛṣṭha, Savana, Medhātithi, Vītihotra and Kavi. These are also names of Agni, the fire-god.

26 Three among these ten namely Kavi, Mahāvīra and Savana lived in complete celibacy. Thus trained in brahmachārī life from the beginning of childhood, they were very conversant with the highest perfection, known as the paramahansa-āśrama.

27 Thus situated in the renounced order from the beginning of their lives, all three of them completely controlled the activities of their senses and thus became great saints. They concentrated their minds always upon the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the resting place of the totality of living entities and who is therefore celebrated as Vāsudeva. Lord Vāsudeva is the only shelter of those who are actually afraid of material existence. By constantly thinking of His lotus feet, these three sons of Mahārāja Priyavrata became advanced in pure devotional service. By the prowess of their devotional service, they could directly perceive the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone's heart as the Supersoul, and realize that there was qualitatively no difference between themselves and Him.

28 In his other wife, Mahārāja Priyavrata begot three sons, named Uttama, Tāmasa and Raivata. All of them later took charge of manvantara millenniums.

29 After Kavi, Mahāvīra and Savana were completely trained in the paramahansa stage of life, Mahārāja Priyavrata ruled the universe for eleven arbudas of years. Whenever he was determined to fix his arrow upon his bowstring with his two powerful arms, all opponents of the regulative principles of religious life would flee from his presence in fear of the unparalleled prowess he displayed in ruling the universe. He greatly loved his wife Barhiṣmatī, and with the increase of days, their exchange of nuptial love also increased. By her feminine behavior as she dressed herself, walked, got up, smiled, laughed, and glanced about, Queen Barhiṣmatī increased his energy. Thus although he was a great soul, he appeared lost in the feminine conduct of his wife. He behaved with her just like an ordinary man, but actually he was a great soul.

30 While so excellently ruling the universe, King Priyavrata once became dissatisfied with the circumambulation of the most powerful sun-god. Encircling Sumeru Hill on his chariot, the sun-god illuminates all the surrounding planetary systems. However, when the sun is on the northern side of the hill, the south receives less light, and when the sun is in the south, the north receives less. King Priyavrata disliked this situation and therefore decided to make daylight in the part of the universe where there was night. He followed the orbit of the sun-god on a brilliant chariot and thus fulfilled his desire. He could perform such wonderful activities because of the power he had achieved by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31 When Priyavrata drove his chariot behind the sun, the rims of his chariot wheels created

impressions that later became seven oceans, dividing the planetary system known as Bhūmaṇḍala into seven islands.

32The names of the islands are Jambū, Plakṣa, Śālmali, Kuśa, Krauṣca, Śāka and Puṣkara. Each island is twice as large as the one preceding it, and each is surrounded by a liquid substance, beyond which is the next island.

33The seven oceans respectively contain salt water, sugarcane juice, liquor, clarified butter, milk, emulsified yogurt, and sweet drinking water. All the islands are completely surrounded by these oceans, and each ocean is equal in breadth to the island it surrounds. Mahārāja Priyavrata, the husband of Queen Barhiṣmatī, gave sovereignty over these islands to his respective sons, namely Āgnīdhra, Idhmajihva, Yaṅṣabāhu, Hiranyaretā, Ghṛtapṛṣṭha, Medhātithi and Vītihoṭra. Thus they all became kings by the order of their father.

34King Priyavrata then gave his daughter, Ūrjasvatī, in marriage to Śukrācārya, who begot in her a daughter named Devayānī.

35My dear King, a devotee who has taken shelter of the dust from the lotus feet of the Lord can transcend the influence of the six material waves—namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death—and he can conquer the mind and five senses. However, this is not very wonderful for a pure devotee of the Lord because even a person beyond the jurisdiction of the four castes—in other words, an untouchable—is immediately relieved of bondage to material existence if he utters the holy name of the Lord even once.

36While enjoying his material opulences with full strength and influence, Mahārāja Priyavrata once began to consider that although he had fully surrendered to the great saint Nārada and was actually on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he had somehow become again entangled in material activities. Thus his mind now became restless, and he began to speak in a spirit of renunciation.

37The King thus began criticizing himself: Alas, how condemned I have become because of my sense gratification! I have now fallen into material enjoyment, which is exactly like a covered well. I have had enough! I am not going to enjoy any more. Just see how I have become like a dancing monkey in the hands of my wife. Because of this, I am condemned.

38By the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahārāja Priyavrata reawakened to his senses. He divided all his earthly possessions among his obedient sons. He gave up everything, including his wife, with whom he had enjoyed so much sense gratification, and his great and opulent kingdom, and he completely renounced all attachment. His heart, having been cleansed, became a place of pastimes for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus he was able to return to the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, spiritual life, and resume the position he had attained by the grace of the great saint Nārada.

39There are many famous verses regarding Mahārāja Priyavrata's activities:

40“To stop the quarreling among different peoples, Mahārāja Priyavrata marked boundaries at rivers and at the edges of mountains and forests so that no one would trespass upon another's property.”

41“As a great follower and devotee of the sage Nārada, Mahārāja Priyavrata considered hellish the opulences he had achieved by dint of fruitive activities and mystic power, whether in the lower or heavenly planetary systems or in human society.”

In this chapter, the character of Mahārāja Āgnīdhra is described. When Mahārāja Priyavrata went off for spiritual realization, his son Āgnīdhra became the ruler of Jambūdvīpa, in accordance with Mahārāja Priyavrata's instructions, and maintained its residents with the same affection a father feels for his sons. Once Mahārāja Āgnīdhra desired to have a son, and therefore he entered a cave of Mandara Mountain to practice austerity. Understanding his desire, Lord Brahmā sent a celestial girl named Pūrvacitti to Āgnīdhra's hermitage. After dressing herself very attractively, she presented herself before him with various feminine movements, and Āgnīdhra was naturally attracted to her. The girl's actions, expressions, smile, sweet words and moving eyes were fascinating to him. Āgnīdhra was expert in flattery. Thus he attracted the celestial girl, who was pleased to accept him as her husband because of his mellifluous words. She enjoyed royal happiness with Āgnīdhra for many years before returning to her abode in the heavenly planets. In her womb Āgnīdhra begot nine sons Nābhi, Kimpuruṣa, Harivarṣa, Ilāvṛta, Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya, Kuru, Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla. He gave them nine islands with names corresponding to theirs. Āgnīdhra, however, his senses unsatisfied, was always thinking of his celestial wife, and therefore in his next life he was born in her celestial planet. After the death of Āgnīdhra, his nine sons married nine daughters of Meru named Merudevī, Pratrīrūpā, Ugradamṣṭrī, Latā, Ramyā, Śyāmā, Nārī, Bhadrā and Devavīti.

1ŚrīSukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After his father, Mahārāja Priyavrata, departed to follow the path of spiritual life by undergoing austerities, King Āgnīdhra completely obeyed his order. Strictly observing the principles of religion, he gave full protection to the inhabitants of Jambūdvīpa as if they were his own begotten sons.

2Desiring to get a perfect son and become an inhabitant of Pitṛloka, Mahārāja Āgnīdhra once worshiped Lord Brahmā, the master of those in charge of material creation. He went to a valley of Mandara Hill, where the damsels of the heavenly planets come down to stroll. There he collected garden flowers and other necessary paraphernalia and then engaged in severe austerities and worship.

3Understanding King Āgnīdhra's desire, the first and most powerful created being of this universe, Lord Brahmā, selected the best of the dancing girls in his assembly, whose name was Pūrvacitti, and sent her to the King.

4The Apsarā sent by Lord Brahmā began strolling in a beautiful park near the place where the King was meditating and worshiping. The park was beautiful because of its dense green foliage and golden creepers. There were pairs of varied birds such as peacocks, and in a lake there were ducks and swans, all vibrating very sweet sounds. Thus the park was magnificently beautiful because of the foliage, the clear water, the lotus flowers and the sweet singing of various kinds of birds.

5As Pūrvacitti passed by on the road in a very beautiful style and mood of her own, the pleasing ornaments on her ankles tinkled with her every step. Although Prince Āgnīdhra was controlling his senses, practicing yoga with half-open eyes, he could see her with his lotuslike eyes, and when he heard the sweet tinkling of her bangles, he opened his eyes slightly more and could see that she was just nearby.

6Like a honeybee, the Apsarā smelled the beautiful and attractive flowers. She could attract the minds and vision of both humans and demigods by her playful movements, her shyness and humility, her glances, the very pleasing sounds that poured from her mouth as she spoke, and the motion of her limbs. By all these qualities, she opened for Cupid, who bears an arrow of flowers, a path of aural reception into the minds of men. When she spoke, nectar seemed to flow from her mouth. As she breathed, the bees, mad for the taste of her breath, tried to hover

about her beautiful lotuslike eyes. Disturbed by the bees, she tried to move hastily, but as she raised her feet to walk quickly, her hair, the belt on her hips, and her breasts, which were like water jugs, also moved in a way that made her extremely beautiful and attractive. Indeed, she seemed to be making a path for the entrance of Cupid, who is most powerful. Therefore the prince, completely subdued by seeing her, spoke to her as follows.

7The Prince mistakenly addressed the Apsarā: O best of saintly persons, who are you? Why are you on this hill, and what do you want to do? Are you one of the illusory potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? You seem to be carrying two bows without strings. What is the reason you carry these bows? Is it for some purpose of your own or for the sake of a friend? Perhaps you carry them to kill the mad animals in this forest.

8Then Āgnīdhra observed the glancing eyes of Pūrvacitti and said: My dear friend, you have two very powerful arrows, namely your glancing eyes. Those arrows have feathers like the petals of a lotus flower. Although they have no shafts, they are very beautiful, and they have very sharp, piercing points. They appear very peaceful, and thus it seems that they will not be shot at anyone. You must be loitering in this forest to shoot those arrows at someone, but I cannot understand whom. My intelligence is dull, and I cannot combat you. Indeed, no one can equal you in prowess, and therefore I pray that your prowess will be for my good fortune.

9Seeing the bumblebees following Pūrvacitti, Mahārāja Āgnīdhra said: My dear Lord, the bumblebees surrounding your body are like disciples surrounding your worshipable self. They are incessantly chanting the mantras of the Sāma Veda and the Upaniṣads, thus offering prayers to you. Just as great sages resort to the branches of Vedic literatures, the bumblebees are enjoying the showers of flowers falling from your hair.

10O brāhmaṇa, I can simply hear the tinkling of your ankle bells. Within those bells, tittiri birds seem to be chirping among themselves. Although I do not see their forms, I can hear how they are chirping. When I look at your beautiful circular hips, I see they are the lovely color of kadamba flowers, and your waist is encircled by a belt of burning cinders. Indeed, you seem to have forgotten to dress yourself.

11Āgnīdhra then praised Pūrvacitti's raised breasts. He said: My dear brāhmaṇa your waist is very thin, yet with great difficulty you are carefully carrying two horns, to which my eyes have become attracted. What is filling those two beautiful horns? You seem to have spread fragrant red powder upon them, powder that is like the rising morning sun. O most fortunate one, I beg to inquire where you have gotten this fragrant powder that is perfuming my āśrama, my place of residence.

12O best friend, will you kindly show me the place where you reside? I cannot imagine how the residents of that place have gotten such wonderful bodily features as your raised breasts, which agitate the mind and eyes of a person like me who sees them. Judging by the sweet speech and kind smiles of those residents, I think that their mouths must contain nectar.

13My dear friend, what do you eat to maintain your body? Because you are chewing betel, a pleasing scent is emanating from your mouth. This proves that you always eat the remnants of food offered to Viṣṇu. Indeed, you must also be an expansion of Lord Viṣṇu's body. Your face is as beautiful as a pleasing lake. Your jeweled earrings resemble two brilliant sharks with unblinking eyes like those of Viṣṇu, and your own eyes resemble two restless fish. Simultaneously, therefore, two sharks and two restless fish are swimming in the lake of your face. Besides them, the white rows of your teeth seem like rows of very beautiful swans in the water, and your scattered hair resembles swarms of bumblebees following the beauty of your face.

14My mind is already restless, and by playing with a ball, moving it all about with your lotuslike palm, you are also agitating my eyes. Your curling black hair is now scattered, but you are not attentive to arranging it. Are you not going to arrange it? Like a man attached to women, the most cunning wind is trying to take off your lower garment. Are you not mindful of it?

15O best among those performing austerities, where did you get this wonderful beauty that dismantles the austerities performed by others? Where have you learned this art? What austerity have you undergone to achieve this beauty, my dear friend? I desire that you join me to perform austerity and penance, for it may be that the creator of the universe, Lord Brahmā, being pleased with me, has sent you to become my wife.

16Lord Brahmā, who is worshiped by the brāhmaṇas, has very mercifully given you to me, and that is why I have met you. I do not want to give up your company, for my mind and eyes are fixed upon you and cannot be drawn away. O woman with beautiful raised breasts, I am your follower. You may take me wherever you like, and your friends may also follow me.

17Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Mahārāja Āgnīdhra, whose intelligence was like that of a demigod, knew the art of flattering women to win them to his side. He therefore pleased that celestial girl with his lusty words and gained her favor.

18Attracted by the intelligence, learning, youth, beauty, behavior, opulence and magnanimity of Āgnīdhra, the King of Jambūdvīpa and master of all heroes, Pūrvacitti lived with him for many thousands of years and luxuriously enjoyed both worldly and heavenly happiness.

19In the womb of Pūrvacitti, Mahārāja Āgnīdhra, the best of kings, begot nine sons, named Nābhi, Kimpuruṣa, Harivarṣa, Ilāvṛta, Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya, Kuru, Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla.

20Pūrvacitti gave birth to these nine sons, one each year, but after they grew up she left them at home and again approached Lord Brahmā to worship him.

21Because of drinking the breast milk of their mother, the nine sons of Āgnīdhra naturally had strong, well-built bodies. Their father gave them each a kingdom in a different part of Jambūdvīpa. The kingdoms were named according to the names of the sons. Thus the sons of Āgnīdhra ruled the kingdoms they received from their father.

22After Pūrvacitti's departure, King Āgnīdhra, his lusty desires not at all satisfied, always thought of her. Therefore, in accordance with the Vedic injunctions, the King, after his death, was promoted to the same planet as his celestial wife. That planet, which is called Pitṛloka, is where the pitās, the forefathers, live in great delight.

23After the departure of their father, the nine brothers married the nine daughters of Meru named Merudevī, Pratiṛūpā, Ugradamṣṭrī, Latā, Ramyā, Śyāmā, Nārī, Bhadrā and Devavīti.

SB 5.3: Ṛṣabhadeva's Appearance in the Womb of Merudevī, the Wife of King Nābhi

In this chapter the spotless character of King Nābhi, the oldest son of Āgnīdhra, is described. Wanting to have sons, Mahārāja Nābhi underwent severe austerities and penances. He performed many sacrifices along with his wife and worshiped Lord Viṣṇu, master of all sacrifices. Being very kind to His devotees, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was very pleased with the austerities of Mahārāja Nābhi. He personally appeared before the King in His four-handed feature, and the priests who were performing the sacrifices, began to offer their prayers unto Him. They prayed for a son like the Lord, and Lord Viṣṇu agreed to take birth in the womb of Merudevī, the wife of King Nābhi, and incarnate as King Ṛṣabhadeva.

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1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued to speak: Mahārāja Nābhi, the son of Āgnīdhra, wished to have sons, and therefore he attentively began to offer prayers and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the master and enjoyer of all sacrifices. Mahārāja Nābhi's wife, Merudevī, who had not given birth to any children at that time, also worshiped Lord Viṣṇu along with her husband.

2In the performance of a sacrifice, there are seven transcendental means to obtain the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead: (1) by sacrificing valuable things or eatables, (2) by acting in terms of place, (3) by acting in terms of time, (4) by offering hymns, (5) by going through the priest, (6) by offering gifts to the priests and (7) by observing the regulative principles. However, one cannot always obtain the Supreme Lord through this paraphernalia. Nonetheless, the Lord is affectionate to His devotee; therefore when Mahārāja Nābhi, who was a devotee, worshiped and offered prayers to the Lord with great faith and devotion and with a pure uncontaminated mind, superficially performing some yajña in the line of pravargya, the kind Supreme Personality of Godhead, due to His affection for His devotees, appeared before King Nābhi in His unconquerable and captivating form with four hands. In this way, to fulfill the desire of His devotee, the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifested Himself in His beautiful body before His devotee. This body pleases the mind and eyes of the devotees.

3Lord Viṣṇu appeared before King Nābhi with four arms. He was very bright, and He appeared to be the best of all personalities. Around the lower portion of His body, He wore a yellow silken garment. On His chest was the mark of Śrīvatsa, which always displays beauty. He carried a conchshell, lotus flower, disc and club, and He wore a garland of forest flowers and the Kaustubha gem. He was beautifully decorated with a helmet, earrings, bangles, belt, pearl necklace, armllets, ankle bells and other bodily ornaments bedecked with radiant jewels. Seeing the Lord present before them, King Nābhi and his priests and associates felt just like poor people who have suddenly attained great riches. They received the Lord and respectfully bent their heads and offered Him things in worship.

4-5The priests began to offer prayers to the Lord, saying: O most worshipable one, we are simply Your servants. Although You are full in Yourself, please, out of Your causeless mercy, accept a little service from us, Your eternal servants. We are not actually aware of Your transcendental form, but we can simply offer our respectful obeisances again and again, as instructed by the Vedic literatures and authorized ācāryas. Materialistic living entities are very much attracted to the modes of material nature, and therefore they are never perfect, but You are above the jurisdiction of all material conceptions. Your name, form and qualities are all transcendental and beyond the conception of experimental knowledge. Indeed, who can conceive of You? In the material world we can perceive only material names and qualities. We have no other power than to offer our respectful obeisances and prayers unto You, the transcendental person. The chanting of Your auspicious transcendental qualities will wipe out the sins of all mankind. That is the most auspicious activity for us, and we can thus partially understand Your supernatural position.

6O Supreme Lord, You are full in every respect. You are certainly very satisfied when Your devotees offer You prayers with faltering voices and in ecstasy bring You tulasī leaves, water, twigs bearing new leaves, and newly grown grass. This surely makes You satisfied.

7We have engaged in Your worship with many things and have offered sacrifices unto You, but we think that there is no need for so many arrangements to please Your Lordship.

8All of life's goals and opulences are directly, self-sufficiently, unceasingly and unlimitedly increasing in You at every moment. Indeed, You are unlimited enjoyment and blissful existence itself. As far as we are concerned, O Lord, we are always after material enjoyment.

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You do not need all these sacrificial arrangements, but they are meant for us so that we may be benedicted by Your Lordship. All these sacrifices are performed for our fruitive results, and they are not actually needed by You.

90 Lord of lords, we are completely ignorant of the execution of dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa, the process of liberation, because we do not actually know the goal of life. You have appeared personally before us like a person soliciting worship, but actually You are present here just so we can see You. You have come out of Your abundant and causeless mercy in order to serve our purpose, our interest, and give us the benefit of Your personal glory called apavarga, liberation. You have come, although You are not properly worshiped by us due to our ignorance.

100 most worshipable of all, You are the best of all benefactors, and Your appearance at saintly King Nābhi's sacrificial arena is meant for our benediction. Because You have been seen by us, You have bestowed upon us the most valuable benediction.

11Dear Lord, all the great sages who are thoughtful and saintly persons incessantly recount Your spiritual qualities. These sages have already burned up all the unlimited dirty things and, by the fire of knowledge, strengthened their detachment from the material world. Thus they have attained Your qualities and are self-satisfied. Yet even for those who feel spiritual bliss in chanting Your attributes, Your personal presence is very rare.

12Dear Lord, we may not be able to remember Your name, form and qualities due to stumbling, hunger, falling down, yawning or being in a miserable diseased condition at the time of death when there is a high fever. We therefore pray unto You, O Lord, for You are very affectionate to Your devotees. Please help us remember You and utter Your holy names, attributes and activities, which can dispel all the reactions of our sinful lives.

13Dear Lord, here is the great King Nābhi, whose ultimate goal in life is to have a son like You. Your Lordship, his position is like that of a person approaching a very rich man and begging for a little grain. Mahārāja Nābhi is so desirous of having a son that he is worshiping You for a son, although You can offer him any exalted position, including elevation to the heavenly planets or liberation back to Godhead.

14Dear Lord, unless one worships the lotus feet of great devotees, one will be conquered by the illusory energy, and his intelligence will be bewildered. Indeed, who has not been carried away by the waves of material enjoyment, which are like poison? Your illusory energy is unconquerable. No one can see the path of this material energy or tell how it is working.

15O Lord, You perform many wonderful activities. Our only aim was to acquire a son by performing this great sacrifice; therefore our intelligence is not very sharp. We are not experienced in ascertaining life's goal. By inviting You to this negligible sacrifice for some material motive, we have certainly committed a great offense at Your lotus feet. Therefore, O Lord of lords, please excuse our offense because of Your causeless mercy and equal mind.

16ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: The priests, who were even worshiped by King Nābhi, the Emperor of Bhārata-varṣa, offered prayers in prose [generally they were in poetry] and bowed down at the Lord's lotus feet. The Lord of lords, the ruler of the demigods, was very pleased with them, and He began to speak as follows.

17The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied: O great sages, I am certainly very pleased with your prayers. You are all truthful. You have prayed for the benediction of a son like Me for King Nābhi, but this is very difficult to obtain. Since I am the Supreme Person without a second and since no one is equal to Me, another personality like Me is not possible to find. In any

case, because you are all qualified brāhmaṇas, your vibrations should not prove untrue. I consider the brāhmaṇas who are well qualified with brahminical qualities to be as good as My own mouth.

18 Since I cannot find anyone equal to Me, I shall personally expand Myself into a plenary portion and thus advent Myself in the womb of Merudevī, the wife of Mahārāja Nābhi, the son of Āgnīdhra.

19 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After saying this, the Lord disappeared. The wife of King Nābhi, Queen Merudevī, was sitting by the side of her husband, and consequently she could hear everything the Supreme Lord had spoken.

20 Viṣṇudatta, Parīkṣit Mahārāja, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was pleased by the great sages at that sacrifice. Consequently the Lord decided to personally exhibit the method of executing religious principles [as observed by brahmacārīs, sannyāsīs, vānaprasthas and gr̥hasthas engaged in rituals] and also satisfy Mahārāja Nābhi's desire. Consequently He appeared as the son of Merudevī in His original spiritual form, which is above the modes of material nature.

SB 5.4: The Characteristics of Ṛṣabhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

In this chapter, Ṛṣabhadeva, the son of Mahārāja Nābhi, begot a hundred sons, and during the reign of those sons the world was very happy in all respects. When Ṛṣabhadeva appeared as the son of Mahārāja Nābhi, He was appreciated by the people as the most exalted and beautiful personality of that age. His poise, influence, strength, enthusiasm, bodily luster and other transcendental qualities were beyond compare. The word *ṛṣabha* refers to the best, or the supreme. Due to the superexcellent attributes of the son of Mahārāja Nābhi, the King named his son Ṛṣabha, or “the best.” His influence was incomparable. Although there was a scarcity of rain, Ṛṣabhadeva did not care for Indra, the King of heaven, who is in charge of supplying rain. Through His own potency, Ṛṣabhadeva sumptuously covered Ajanābha with ample rain. Upon receiving Ṛṣabhadeva, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as his son, King Nābhi began to raise Him very carefully. After that, he entrusted the ruling power to Him and, retiring from family life, lived at Badarikāśrama completely engaged in the worship of Vāsudeva, the Supreme Lord. To follow social customs, Lord Ṛṣabhadeva for a while became a student in the *gurukula*, and after returning, He followed the orders of His *guru* and accepted a wife named Jayantī, who had been given to Him by the King of heaven, Indra. He begot a hundred sons in the womb of Jayantī. Of these hundred sons, the eldest was known as Bharata. Since the reign of Mahārāja Bharata, this planet has been called Bhārata-varṣa. Ṛṣabhadeva's other sons were headed by Kuśāvarta, Ilāvarta, Brahmāvarta, Malaya, Ketu, Bhadrāsena, Indraspṛk, Vidarbha and Kīkaṭa. There were also other sons named Kavi, Havi, Antarikṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana. Instead of ruling the kingdom, these nine became mendicant preachers of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, following the religious precepts of the *Bhāgavatam*. Their characteristics and activities are described in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* during the talks between Vasudeva and Nārada at Kurukṣetra. To teach the general populace, King Ṛṣabhadeva performed many sacrifices and taught His sons how to rule the citizens.

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: As soon as the Lord was born as the son of Mahārāja Nābhi, He manifested symptoms of the Supreme Lord, such as marks on the bottoms of His feet [the flag, thunderbolt, etc.]. This son was equal to everyone and very peaceful. He could control His senses and His mind, and, possessing all opulence, He did not hanker for material enjoyment. Endowed with all these attributes, the son of Mahārāja Nābhi became more powerful day after

day. Due to this, the citizens, learned brāhmaṇas, demigods and ministers wanted Ṛṣabhadeva to be appointed ruler of the earth.

2When the son of Mahārāja Nābhi became visible, He evinced all good qualities described by the great poetsnamely, a well-built body with all the symptoms of the Godhead, prowess, strength, beauty, name, fame, influence and enthusiasm. When the father, Mahārāja Nābhi, saw all these qualities, he thought his son to be the best of human beings or the supreme being. Therefore he gave Him the name Ṛṣabha.

3Indra, the King of heaven, who is very materially opulent, became envious of King Ṛṣabhadeva. Consequently he stopped pouring water on the planet known as Bhārata-varṣa. At that time the Supreme Lord, Ṛṣabhadeva, the master of all mystic power, understood King Indra's purpose and smiled a little. Then, by His own prowess, through yoga-māyā [His internal potency], He profusely poured water upon His own place, which was known as Ajanābha.

4Due to getting a perfect son according to his desire, King Nābhi was always overwhelmed with transcendental bliss and was very affectionate to his son. It was with ecstasy and a faltering voice that he addressed Him, "My dear son, my darling." This mentality was brought about by yoga-māyā, whereby he accepted the Supreme Lord, the supreme father, as his own son. Out of His supreme good will, the Lord became his son and dealt with everyone as if He were an ordinary human being. Thus King Nābhi began to raise his transcendental son with great affection, and he was overwhelmed with transcendental bliss, joy and devotion.

5King Nābhi understood that his son, Ṛṣabhadeva, was very popular among the citizens and among government officers and ministers. Understanding the popularity of his son, Mahārāja Nābhi enthroned Him as the emperor of the world to give protection to the general populace in terms of the Vedic religious system. To do this, he entrusted Him into the hands of learned brāhmaṇas, who would guide Him in administering the government. Then Mahārāja Nābhi and his wife, Merudevī, went to Badarikāśrama in the Himālaya Mountains, where the King engaged Himself very expertly in austerities and penances with great jubilation. In full samādhi he worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nara-Nārāyaṇa, who is Kṛṣṇa in His plenary expansion. By doing so, in course of time Mahārāja Nābhi was elevated to the spiritual world known as Vaikuṅṭha.

6O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, to glorify Mahārāja Nābhi the old sages composed two verses. One of them is this: "Who can attain the perfection of Mahārāja Nābhi? Who can attain his activities? Because of his devotional service, the Supreme Personality of Godhead agreed to become his son."

7[The second prayer is this.] "Who is a better worshiper of brāhmaṇas than Mahārāja Nābhi? Because he worshiped the qualified brāhmaṇas to their full satisfaction, the brāhmaṇas, by their brahminical prowess, showed Mahārāja Nābhi the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, in person."

8After Nābhi Mahārāja departed for Badarikāśrama, the Supreme Lord, Ṛṣabhadeva, understood that His kingdom was His field of activities. He therefore showed Himself as an example and taught the duties of a householder by first accepting brahmacharya under the direction of spiritual masters. He also went to live at the spiritual masters' place, gurukula. After His education was finished, He gave gifts (guru-dakṣiṇā) to His spiritual masters and then accepted the life of a householder. He took a wife named Jayantī and begot one hundred sons who were as powerful and qualified as He Himself. His wife Jayantī had been offered to Him by Indra, the King of heaven. Ṛṣabhadeva and Jayantī performed householder life in an exemplary way,

carrying out ritualistic activities ordained by the śruti and smṛti śāstra.

9Of R̥ṣabhadeva's one hundred sons, the eldest, named Bharata, was a great, exalted devotee qualified with the best attributes. In his honor, this planet has become known as Bhārata-varṣa.

10Following Bharata, there were ninety-nine other sons. Among these were nine elderly sons, named Kuśāvarta, Ilāvarta, Brahmāvarta, Malaya, Ketu, Bhadrasena, Indraspṛk, Vidarbha and Kīkaṭa.

11-12In addition to these sons were Kavi, Havi, Antarikṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana. These were all very exalted, advanced devotees and authorized preachers of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. These devotees were glorified due to their strong devotion to Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore they were very exalted. To satisfy the mind perfectly, I [Śukadeva Gosvāmī] shall hereafter describe the characteristics of these nine devotees when I discuss the conversation between Nārada and Vasudeva.

13In addition to these nineteen sons mentioned above, there were eighty-one younger ones, all born of R̥ṣabhadeva and Jayantī. According to the order of their father, they became well-cultured, well-behaved, very pure in their activities and expert in Vedic knowledge and the performance of Vedic rituals. Thus they all became perfectly qualified brāhmaṇas.

14Being an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva was fully independent because His form was spiritual, eternal and full of transcendental bliss. He eternally had nothing to do with the four principles of material misery [birth, death, old age and disease]. Nor was He materially attached. He was always equipoised, and He saw everyone on the same level. He was unhappy to see others unhappy, and He was the well-wisher of all living entities. Although He was a perfect personality, the Supreme Lord and controller of all, He nonetheless acted as if He were an ordinary conditioned soul. Therefore He strictly followed the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma and acted accordingly. In due course of time, the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma had become neglected; therefore through His personal characteristics and behavior, He taught the ignorant public how to perform duties within the varṇāśrama-dharma. In this way He regulated the general populace in householder life, enabling them to develop religion and economic well-being and to attain reputations, sons and daughters, material pleasure and finally eternal life. By His instructions, He showed how people could remain householders and at the same time become perfect by following the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma.

15Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow.

16Although Lord R̥ṣabhadeva knew everything about confidential Vedic knowledge, which includes information about all types of occupational duties, He still maintained Himself as a kṣatriya and followed the instructions of the brāhmaṇas as they related to mind control, sense control, tolerance and so forth. Thus He ruled the people according to the system of varṇāśrama-dharma, which enjoins that the brāhmaṇas instruct the kṣatriyas and the kṣatriyas administer to the state through the vaiśyas and sūdras.

17Lord R̥ṣabhadeva performed all kinds of sacrifices one hundred times according to the instructions of the Vedic literatures. Thus He satisfied Lord Viṣṇu in every respect. All the rituals were enriched by first-class ingredients. They were executed in holy places according to the proper time by priests who were all young and faithful. In this way Lord Viṣṇu was worshiped, and the prasāda was offered to all the demigods. Thus the functions and festivals were all successful.

18No one likes to possess anything that is like a will-o'-the-wisp or a flower in the sky, for everyone knows very well that such things do not exist. When Lord R̥ṣabhadeva ruled this planet of Bhāratavar̥ṣa, even common men did not want to ask for anything, at any time or by any means. No one ever asks for a will-o'-the-wisp. In other words, everyone was completely satisfied, and therefore there was no chance of anyone's asking for anything. The people were absorbed in great affection for the King. Since this affection was always expanding, they were not inclined to ask for anything.

19Once while touring the world, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva, the Supreme Lord, reached a place known as Brahmāvarta. There was a great conference of learned br̥āhmaṇas at that place, and all the King's sons attentively heard the instructions of the br̥āhmaṇas there. At that assembly, within the hearing of the citizens, R̥ṣabhadeva instructed His sons, although they were already very well-behaved, devoted and qualified. He instructed them so that in the future they could rule the world very perfectly. Thus he spoke as follows.

SB 5.5: Lord R̥ṣabhadeva's Teachings to His Sons

In this chapter there is a description of *bhāgavata-dharma*, religious principles in devotional service that transcend religious principles for liberation and the mitigation of material misery. It is stated in this chapter that a human being should not work hard like dogs and hogs for sense gratification. The human life is especially meant for the revival of our relationship with the Supreme Lord, and to this end all kinds of austerities and penances should be accepted. By austere activities, one's heart can be cleansed of material contamination, and as a result one can be situated on the spiritual platform. To attain this perfection, one has to take shelter of a devotee and serve him. Then the door of liberation will be open. Those who are materially attached to women and sense gratification gradually become entangled in material consciousness and suffer the miseries of birth, old age, disease and death. Those who are engaged in the general welfare of all and who are not attached to children and family are called *mahātmās*. Those who are engaged in sense gratification, who act piously or impiously, cannot understand the purpose of the soul. Therefore they should approach a highly elevated devotee and accept him as a spiritual master. By his association, one will be able to understand the purpose of life. Under the instructions of such a spiritual master, one can attain devotional service to the Lord, detachment from material things, and tolerance of material misery and distress. One can then see all living entities equally, and one becomes very eager to know about transcendental subject matters. Endeavoring persistently for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, one becomes detached from wife, children and home. He is not interested in wasting time. In this way one becomes self-realized. A person advanced in spiritual knowledge does not engage anyone in material activity. And one who cannot deliver another person by instructing him in devotional service should not become a spiritual master, father, mother, demigod or husband. Instructing His one hundred sons, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva advised them to accept their eldest brother, Bharata, as their guide and lord, and thereby serve him. Of all living entities, the *br̥āhmaṇas* are the best, and above the *br̥āhmaṇas* the Vaiṣṇavas are situated in an even better position. Serving a Vaiṣṇava means serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the characteristics of Bharata Mahārāja and the sacrificial performance executed by Lord R̥ṣabhadeva for the instruction of the general populace.

1Lord R̥ṣabhadeva told His sons: My dear boys, of all the living entities who have accepted material bodies in this world, one who has been awarded this human form should not work hard day and night simply for sense gratification, which is available even for dogs and hogs that eat stool. One should engage in penance and austerity to attain the divine position of

devotional service. By such activity, one's heart is purified, and when one attains this position, he attains eternal, blissful life, which is transcendental to material happiness and which continues forever.

2One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities. These personalities are impersonalists and devotees. Whether one wants to merge into the Lord's existence or wants to associate with the Personality of Godhead, one should render service to the mahātmās. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The mahātmās are equipoised. They do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are very peaceful and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger, and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such people are known as mahātmās.

3Those who are interested in reviving Kṛṣṇa consciousness and increasing their love of Godhead do not like to do anything that is not related to Kṛṣṇa. They are not interested in mingling with people who are busy maintaining their bodies, eating, sleeping, mating and defending. They are not attached to their homes, although they may be householders. Nor are they attached to wives, children, friends or wealth. At the same time, they are not indifferent to the execution of their duties. Such people are interested in collecting only enough money to keep the body and soul together.

4When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and engages in all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Actually the living entity should not have taken on a material body, but he has been awarded the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent man to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another.

5As long as one does not inquire about the spiritual values of life, one is defeated and subjected to miseries arising from ignorance. Be it sinful or pious, karma has its resultant actions. If a person is engaged in any kind of karma, his mind is called karmātmaka, colored with fruitive activity. As long as the mind is impure, consciousness is unclear, and as long as one is absorbed in fruitive activity, he has to accept a material body.

6When the living entity is covered by the mode of ignorance, he does not understand the individual living being and the supreme living being, and his mind is subjugated by fruitive activity. Therefore, until one has love for Lord Vāsudeva, who is none other than Myself, he is certainly not delivered from having to accept a material body again and again.

7Even though one may be very learned and wise, he is mad if he does not understand that the endeavor for sense gratification is a useless waste of time. Being forgetful of his own interest, he tries to be happy in the material world, centering his interests around his home, which is based on sexual intercourse and which brings him all kinds of material miseries. In this way one is no better than a foolish animal.

8The attraction between male and female is the basic principle of material existence. On the basis of this misconception, which ties together the hearts of the male and female, one becomes attracted to his body, home, property, children, relatives and wealth. In this way one increases life's illusions and thinks in terms of "I and mine."

9When the strong knot in the heart of a person implicated in material life due to the results of past action is slackened, one turns away from his attachment to home, wife and children. In

this way, one gives up the basic principle of illusion [I and mine] and becomes liberated. Thus one goes to the transcendental world.

10-13O My sons, you should accept a highly elevated paramahansa, a spiritually advanced spiritual master. In this way, you should place your faith and love in Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You should detest sense gratification and tolerate the duality of pleasure and pain, which are like the seasonal changes of summer and winter. Try to realize the miserable condition of living entities, who are miserable even in the higher planetary systems. Philosophically inquire about the truth. Then undergo all kinds of austerities and penances for the sake of devotional service. Give up the endeavor for sense enjoyment and engage in the service of the Lord. Listen to discussions about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and always associate with devotees. Chant about and glorify the Supreme Lord, and look upon everyone equally on the spiritual platform. Give up enmity and subdue anger and lamentation. Abandon identifying the self with the body and the home, and practice reading the revealed scriptures. Live in a secluded place and practice the process by which you can completely control your life air, mind and senses. Have full faith in the revealed scriptures, the Vedic literatures, and always observe celibacy. Perform your prescribed duties and avoid unnecessary talks. Always thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, acquire knowledge from the right source. Thus practicing bhakti-yoga, you will patiently and enthusiastically be elevated in knowledge and will be able to give up the false ego.

14As I have advised you, My dear sons, you should act accordingly. Be very careful. By these means you will be freed from the ignorance of the desire for fruitive activity, and the knot of bondage in the heart will be completely severed. For further advancement, you should also give up the means. That is, you should not become attached to the process of liberation itself.

15If one is serious about going back home, back to Godhead, he must consider the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the summum bonum and chief aim of life. If he is a father instructing his sons, a spiritual master instructing his disciples, or a king instructing his citizens, he must instruct them as I have advised. Without being angry, he should continue giving instructions, even if his disciple, son or citizen is sometimes unable to follow his order. Ignorant people who engage in pious and impious activities should be engaged in devotional service by all means. They should always avoid fruitive activity. If one puts into the bondage of karmic activity his disciple, son or citizen who is bereft of transcendental vision, how will one profit? It is like leading a blind man to a dark well and causing him to fall in.

16Due to ignorance, the materialistic person does not know anything about his real self-interest, the auspicious path in life. He is simply bound to material enjoyment by lusty desires, and all his plans are made for this purpose. For temporary sense gratification, such a person creates a society of envy, and due to this mentality, he plunges into the ocean of suffering. Such a foolish person does not even know about this.

17If someone is ignorant and addicted to the path of saṁsāra, how can one who is actually learned, merciful and advanced in spiritual knowledge engage him in fruitive activity and thus further entangle him in material existence? If a blind man is walking down the wrong path, how can a gentleman allow him to continue on his way to danger? How can he approve this method? No wise or kind man can allow this.

18One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demigod.

19My transcendental body [sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha] looks exactly like a human form, but it is not a material human body. It is inconceivable. I am not forced by nature to accept a particular type of body; I take on a body by My own sweet will. My heart is also spiritual, and I always

think of the welfare of My devotees. Therefore within My heart can be found the process of devotional service, which is meant for the devotees. Far from My heart have I abandoned irreligion [adharmal] and nondevotional activities. They do not appeal to Me. Due to all these transcendental qualities, people generally pray to Me as Ṛṣabhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all living entities.

20My dear boys, you are all born of My heart, which is the seat of all spiritual qualities. Therefore you should not be like materialistic and envious men. You should accept your eldest brother, Bharata, who is exalted in devotional service. If you engage yourselves in Bharata's service, your service to him will include My service, and you will rule the citizens automatically.

21-22Of the two energies manifest [spirit and dull matter], beings possessing living force [vegetables, grass, trees and plants] are superior to dull matter [stone, earth, etc.]. Superior to nonmoving plants and vegetables are worms and snakes, which can move. Superior to worms and snakes are animals that have developed intelligence. Superior to animals are human beings, and superior to human beings are ghosts because they have no material bodies. Superior to ghosts are the Gandharvas, and superior to them are the Siddhas. Superior to the Siddhas are the Kinnaras, and superior to them are the asuras. Superior to the asuras are the demigods, and of the demigods, Indra, the King of heaven, is supreme. Superior to Indra are the direct sons of Lord Brahmā, sons like King Dakṣa, and supreme among Brahmā's sons is Lord Śiva. Since Lord Śiva is the son of Lord Brahmā, Brahmā is considered superior, but Brahmā is also subordinate to Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because I am inclined to the brāhmaṇas, the brāhmaṇas are best of all.

23O respectful brāhmaṇas, as far as I am concerned, no one is equal or superior to the brāhmaṇas in this world. I do not find anyone comparable to them. When people know My motive, after performing rituals according to the Vedic principles they offer food to Me with faith and love through the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. When food is thus offered unto Me, I eat it with full satisfaction. Indeed, I derive more pleasure from food offered in that way than from the food offered in the sacrificial fire.

24The Vedas are My eternal transcendental sound incarnation. Therefore the Vedas are śabda-brahma. In this world, the brāhmaṇas thoroughly study all the Vedas, and because they assimilate the Vedic conclusions, they are also to be considered the Vedas personified. The brāhmaṇas are situated in the supreme transcendental mode of naturesattva-guṇa. Because of this, they are fixed in mind control [śama], sense control [dama], and truthfulness [satya]. They describe the Vedas in their original sense, and out of mercy [anugraha] they preach the purpose of the Vedas to all conditioned souls. They practice penance [tapasya] and tolerance [titikṣā], and they realize the position of the living entity and the Supreme Lord [anubhava]. These are the eight qualifications of the brāhmaṇas. Therefore among all living entities, no one is superior to the brāhmaṇas.

25I am fully opulent, almighty and superior to Lord Brahmā and Indra, the King of the heavenly planets. I am also the bestower of all happiness obtained in the heavenly kingdom and by liberation. Nonetheless, the brāhmaṇas do not seek material comforts from Me. They are very pure and do not want to possess anything. They simply engage in My devotional service. What is the need of their asking for material benefits from anyone else?

26My dear sons, you should not envy any living entitybe he moving or nonmoving. Knowing that I am situated in them, you should offer respect to all of them at every moment. In this way, you offer respect to Me.

27The true activity of the sense organs—mind, sight, words and all the knowledge-gathering and working senses—is to engage fully in My service. Unless his senses are thus engaged, a living entity cannot think of getting out of the great entanglement of material existence, which is exactly like Yamarāja's stringent rope.

28Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus the great well-wisher of everyone, the Supreme Lord Rṣabhadeva, instructed His own sons. Although they were perfectly educated and cultured, He instructed them just to set an example of how a father should instruct his sons before retiring from family life. Sannyāsīs, who are no longer bound by fruitive activity and who have taken to devotional service after all their material desires have been vanquished, also learn by these instructions. Lord Rṣabhadeva instructed His one hundred sons, of whom the eldest, Bharata, was a very advanced devotee and a follower of Vaiṣṇavas. In order to rule the whole world, the Lord enthroned His eldest son on the royal seat. Thereafter, although still at home, Lord Rṣabhadeva lived like a madman, naked and with disheveled hair. Then the Lord took the sacrificial fire within Himself, and He left Brahmāvarta to tour the whole world.

29After accepting the feature of avadhūta, a great saintly person without material cares, Lord Rṣabhadeva passed through human society like a blind, deaf and dumb man, an idle stone, a ghost or a madman. Although people called Him such names, He remained silent and did not speak to anyone.

30Rṣabhadeva began to tour through cities, villages, mines, countrysides, valleys, gardens, military camps, cow pens, the homes of cowherd men, transient hotels, hills, forests and hermitages. Wherever He traveled, all bad elements surrounded Him, just as flies surround the body of an elephant coming from a forest. He was always being threatened, beaten, urinated upon and spat upon. Sometimes people threw stones, stool and dust at Him, and sometimes people passed foul air before Him. Thus people called Him many bad names and gave Him a great deal of trouble, but He did not care about this, for He understood that the body is simply meant for such an end. He was situated on the spiritual platform, and, being in His spiritual glory, He did not care for all these material insults. In other words, He completely understood that matter and spirit are separate, and He had no bodily conception. Thus, without being angry at anyone, He walked through the whole world alone.

31Lord Rṣabhadeva's hands, feet and chest were very long. His shoulders, face and limbs were all very delicate and symmetrically proportioned. His mouth was beautifully decorated with His natural smile, and He appeared all the more lovely with His reddish eyes spread wide like the petals of a newly grown lotus flower covered with dew in the early morning. The irises of His eyes were so pleasing that they removed all the troubles of everyone who saw Him. His forehead, ears, neck, nose and all His other features were very beautiful. His gentle smile always made His face beautiful, so much so that He even attracted the hearts of married women. It was as though they had been pierced by arrows of Cupid. About His head was an abundance of curly, matted brown hair. His hair was disheveled because His body was dirty and not taken care of. He appeared as if He were haunted by a ghost.

32When Lord Rṣabhadeva saw that the general populace was very antagonistic to His execution of mystic yoga, He accepted the behavior of a python in order to counteract their opposition. Thus He stayed in one place and lay down. While lying down, He ate and drank, and He passed stool and urine and rolled in it. Indeed, He smeared His whole body with His own stool and urine so that opposing elements might not come and disturb Him.

33Because Lord Rṣabhadeva remained in that condition, the public did not disturb Him, but no bad aroma emanated from His stool and urine. Quite the contrary, His stool and urine were so aromatic that they filled eighty miles of the countryside with a pleasant fragrance.

34In this way Lord R̥ṣabhadeva followed the behavior of cows, deer and crows. Sometimes He moved or walked, and sometimes He sat down in one place. Sometimes He lay down, behaving exactly like cows, deer and crows. In that way, He ate, drank, passed stool and urine and cheated the people in this way.

35O King Parīkṣit, just to show all the yogīs the mystic process, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva, the plenary expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, performed wonderful activities. Actually He was the master of liberation and was fully absorbed in transcendental bliss, which increased a thousandfold. Lord Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, the son of Vasudeva, is the original source of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva. There is no difference in Their constitution, and consequently Lord R̥ṣabhadeva awakened the loving symptoms of crying, laughing and shivering. He was always absorbed in transcendental love. Due to this, all mystic powers automatically approached Him, such as the ability to travel in outer space at the speed of mind, to appear and disappear, to enter the bodies of others, and to see things far, far away. Although He could do all this, He did not exercise these powers.

SB 5.6: The Activities of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva

This chapter tells how Lord R̥ṣabhadeva left His body. He was not attached to His body even when it was being burned up in a forest fire. When the seed of fruitive activity is burned by the fire of knowledge, the spiritual properties and mystic powers are automatically manifest, yet *bhakti-yoga* is not affected by these mystic powers. An ordinary *yogī* is captivated by mystic powers and his progress checked; therefore a perfect *yogī* does not welcome them. Because the mind is restless and undependable, it must remain always under control. Even the mind of the advanced *yogī* Saubhari created such a disturbance that he lost his yogic mystic powers. Due to a restless mind, even a very advanced *yogī* can fall down. The mind is so restless that it induces even a perfect *yogī* to be controlled by the senses. Therefore Lord R̥ṣabhadeva, for the instruction of all *yogīs*, showed the process of quitting the body. While traveling in South India, through the provinces of Karnāṭa, Koṅka, Veṅka and Kuṭaka, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva arrived in the neighborhood of Kuṭakācala. Suddenly there was a forest fire that burned the forest and Lord R̥ṣabhadeva's body to ashes. The pastimes of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva as a liberated soul were known by the King of Koṅka, Veṅka and Kuṭaka. This King's name was Arhat. He later became captivated by the illusory energy, and in this condition he set forth the basic principles of Jainism. Lord R̥ṣabhadeva set forth the principles of religion that can free one from material bondage, and He put an end to all kinds of atheistic activities. On this earth, the place known as Bhārata-varṣa was a very pious land because the Supreme Lord appeared there when He wanted to incarnate.

Lord R̥ṣabhadeva neglected all the mystic powers for which the so-called *yogīs* hanker. Because of the beauty of devotional service, devotees are not at all interested in so-called mystic power. The master of all yogic power, Lord Kṛṣṇa, can exhibit all powers on behalf of His devotee. Devotional service is more valuable than yogic mystic powers. Devotees who are sometimes misled aspire for liberation and mystic powers. The Supreme Lord gives these devotees whatever they desire, but they cannot attain the most important function of devotional service. Devotional service to the Lord is guaranteed for those who do not desire liberation and mystic power.

1King Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear Lord, for those who are completely pure in heart, knowledge is attained by the practice of *bhakti-yoga*, and attachment for fruitive activity is completely burned to ashes. For such people, the powers of mystic yoga automatically arise. They do not cause distress. Why, then, did R̥ṣabhadeva neglect them?

2Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied: My dear King, you have spoken correctly. However, after

capturing animals, a cunning hunter does not put faith in them, for they might run away. Similarly, those who are advanced in spiritual life do not put faith in the mind. Indeed, they always remain vigilant and watch the mind's action.

3All the learned scholars have given their opinion. The mind is by nature very restless, and one should not make friends with it. If we place full confidence in the mind, it may cheat us at any moment. Even Lord Śiva became agitated upon seeing the Mohinī form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Saubhari Muni also fell down from the mature stage of yogic perfection.

4An unchaste woman is very easily carried away by paramours, and it sometimes happens that her husband is violently killed by her paramours. If the yogī gives his mind a chance and does not restrain it, his mind will give facility to enemies like lust, anger and greed, and they will doubtlessly kill the yogī.

5The mind is the root cause of lust, anger, pride, greed, lamentation, illusion and fear. Combined, these constitute bondage to fruitive activity. What learned man would put faith in the mind?

6Lord Rṣabhadeva was the head of all kings and emperors within this universe, but assuming the dress and language of an avadhūta, He acted as if dull and materially bound. Consequently no one could observe His divine opulence. He adopted this behavior just to teach yogīs how to give up the body. Nonetheless, He maintained His original position as a plenary expansion of Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa. Remaining always in that state, He gave up His pastimes as Lord Rṣabhadeva within the material world. If, following in the footsteps of Lord Rṣabhadeva, one can give up his subtle body, there is no chance that one will accept a material body again.

7Actually Lord Rṣabhadeva had no material body, but due to yoga-māyā He considered His body material, and therefore, because He played like an ordinary human being, He gave up the mentality of identifying with it. Following this principle, He began to wander all over the world. While traveling, He came to the province of Karnāṭa in South India and passed through Koṅka, Veṅka and Kuṭaka. He had no plan to travel this way, but He arrived near Kuṭakācala and entered a forest there. He placed stones within His mouth and began to wander through the forest, naked and with His hair disheveled like a madman.

8While He was wandering about, a wild forest fire began. This fire was caused by the friction of bamboos, which were being blown by the wind. In that fire, the entire forest near Kuṭakācala and the body of Lord Rṣabhadeva were burnt to ashes.

9Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued speaking to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: My dear King, the King of Koṅka, Veṅka and Kuṭaka whose name was Arhat, heard of the activities of Rṣabhadeva and, imitating Rṣabhadeva's principles, introduced a new system of religion. Taking advantage of Kali-yuga, the age of sinful activity, King Arhat, being bewildered, gave up the Vedic principles, which are free from risk, and concocted a new system of religion opposed to the Vedas. That was the beginning of the Jain dharma. Many other so-called religions followed this atheistic system.

10People who are lowest among men and bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord will give up the original varṇāśrama-dharma and its rules and regulations. They will abandon bathing three times daily and worshiping the Lord. Abandoning cleanliness and neglecting the Supreme Lord, they will accept nonsensical principles. Not regularly bathing or washing their mouths regularly, they will always remain unclean, and they will pluck out their hair. Following a concocted religion, they will flourish. During this Age of Kali, people are more inclined to irreligious systems. Consequently these people will naturally deride Vedic authority, the followers of Vedic authority, the brāhmaṇas, the Supreme Personality of

Godhead and the devotees.

11Low-class people, due to their gross ignorance, introduce a system of religion that deviates from the Vedic principles. Following their own mental concoctions, they automatically fall down into the darkest regions of existence.

12In this Age of Kali, people are overwhelmed by the modes of passion and ignorance. Lord R̥ṣabhadeva incarnated Himself to deliver them from the clutches of māyā.

13Learned scholars chant about the transcendental qualities of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva in this way: “Oh, this earthly planet contains seven seas and many islands and lands, of which Bhārata-varṣa is considered the most pious. People of Bhārata-varṣa are accustomed to glorifying the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnations as Lord R̥ṣabhadeva and others. All these activities are very auspicious for the welfare of humanity.

14“Oh, what shall I say of the dynasty of Priyavrata, which is pure and very much celebrated. In that dynasty, the Supreme Person, the original Personality of Godhead, descended as an incarnation and executed religious principles that could free one from the results of fruitive activity.

15“Who is that mystic yogī who can follow the examples of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva even with his mind? Lord R̥ṣabhadeva rejected all kinds of yogic perfection, which other yogīs hanker to attain. Who is that yogī who can compare to Lord R̥ṣabhadeva?”

16Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Lord R̥ṣabhadeva is the master of all Vedic knowledge, human beings, demigods, cows and brāhmaṇas. I have already explained His pure, transcendental activities, which will vanquish the sinful activities of all living entities. This narration of Lord R̥ṣabhadeva’s pastimes is the reservoir of all auspicious things. Whoever attentively hears or speaks of them, following in the footsteps of the ācāryas, will certainly attain unalloyed devotional service at the lotus feet of Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

17Devotees always bathe themselves in devotional service in order to be relieved from the various tribulations of material existence. By doing this, the devotees enjoy supreme bliss, and liberation personified comes to serve them. Nonetheless, they do not accept that service, even if it is offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. For the devotees, liberation [mukti] is very unimportant because, having attained the Lord’s transcendental loving service, they have attained everything desirable and have transcended all material desires.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, the Supreme Person, Mukunda, is actually the maintainer of all the members of the Pāṇḍava and Yadu dynasties. He is your spiritual master, worshipable Deity, friend, and the director of your activities. To say nothing of this, He sometimes serves your family as a messenger or servant. This means He worked just as ordinary servants do. Those engaged in getting the Lord’s favor attain liberation from the Lord very easily, but He does not very easily give the opportunity to render direct service unto Him.

19The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva, was fully aware of His true identity; therefore He was self-sufficient, and He did not desire external gratification. There was no need for Him to aspire for success, since He was complete in Himself. Those who unnecessarily engage in bodily conceptions and create an atmosphere of materialism are always ignorant of their real self-interest. Out of His causeless mercy, Lord R̥ṣabhadeva taught the self’s real identity and the goal of life. We therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who appeared as Lord R̥ṣabhadeva.

SB 5.7: The Activities of King Bharata

In this chapter, the activities of King Bharata Mahārāja, the emperor of the whole world, are described. Bharata Mahārāja performed various ritualistic ceremonies (Vedic *yajñas*) and satisfied the Supreme Lord by his different modes of worship. In due course of time, he left home and resided in Hardwar and passed his days in devotional activities. Being ordered by his father, Lord Ṛṣabhadeva, Bharata Mahārāja married Paścajanī, the daughter of Viśvarūpa. After this, he ruled the whole world peacefully. Formerly this planet was known as Ajanābha, and after the reign of Bharata Mahārāja it became known as Bhārata-varṣa. Bharata Mahārāja begot five sons in the womb of Paścajanī, and he named the sons Sumati, Rāṣṭrabhṛta, Sudarśana, Āvaraṇa and Dhūmraketu. Bharata Mahārāja was very rigid in executing religious principles and following in the footsteps of his father. He therefore ruled the citizens very successfully. Because he performed various *yajñas* to satisfy the Supreme Lord, he was personally very satisfied. Being of undisturbed mind, he increased his devotional activities unto Lord Vāsudeva. Bharata Mahārāja was competent in understanding the principles of saintly persons like Nārada, and he followed in the footsteps of the sages. He also kept Lord Vāsudeva constantly within his heart. After finishing his kingly duties, he divided his kingdom among his five sons. He then left home and went to the place of Pulaha known as Pulahāśrama. There he ate forest vegetables and fruits, and worshiped Lord Vāsudeva with everything available. Thus he increased his devotion toward Vāsudeva, and he automatically began to realize further his transcendental, blissful life. Due to his highly advanced spiritual position, there were sometimes visible in his body the *aṣṭa-sāttvika* transformations, such as ecstatic crying and bodily trembling, which are symptoms of love of Godhead. It is understood that Mahārāja Bharata worshiped the Supreme Lord with the *mantras* mentioned in the *Ṛg Veda*, generally known as *Gāyatrīmantra*, which aim at the Supreme Nārāyaṇa situated within the sun.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued speaking to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: My dear King, Bharata Mahārāja was a topmost devotee. Following the orders of his father, who had already decided to install him on the throne, he began to rule the earth accordingly. When Bharata Mahārāja ruled the entire globe, he followed the orders of his father and married Paścajanī, the daughter of Viśvarūpa.

2Just as the false ego creates the subtle sense objects, Mahārāja Bharata created five sons in the womb of Paścajanī, his wife. These sons were named Sumati, Rāṣṭrabhṛta, Sudarśana, Āvaraṇa and Dhūmraketu.

3Formerly this planet was known as Ajanābha-varṣa, but since Mahārāja Bharata's reign it has become known as Bhārata-varṣa.

4Mahārāja Bharata was a very learned and experienced king on this earth. He perfectly ruled the citizens, being himself engaged in his own respective duties. Mahārāja Bharata was as affectionate to the citizens as his father and grandfather had been. Keeping them engaged in their occupational duties, he ruled the earth.

5With great faith King Bharata performed various kinds of sacrifice. He performed the sacrifices known as agni-hotra, darśa, pūrṇamāsa, cāturmāsya, paśu-yajña [wherein a horse is sacrificed] and soma-yajña [wherein a kind of beverage is offered]. Sometimes these sacrifices were performed completely and sometimes partially. In any case, in all the sacrifices the regulations of cāturhotra were strictly followed. In this way Bharata Mahārāja worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

6After performing the preliminaries of various sacrifices, Mahārāja Bharata offered the results in

the name of religion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. In other words, he performed all the yajñas for the satisfaction of Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa. Mahārāja Bharata thought that since the demigods were different parts of Vāsudeva's body, He controls those who are explained in the Vedic mantras. By thinking in this way, Mahārāja Bharata was freed from all material contamination, such as attachment, lust and greed. When the priests were about to offer the sacrificial ingredients into the fire, Mahārāja Bharata expertly understood how the offering made to different demigods was simply an offering to the different limbs of the Lord. For instance, Indra is the arm of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Sūrya [the sun] is His eye. Thus Mahārāja Bharata considered that the oblations offered to different demigods were actually offered unto the different limbs of Lord Vāsudeva.

7In this way, being purified by ritualistic sacrifices, the heart of Mahārāja Bharata was completely uncontaminated. His devotional service unto Vāsudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa, increased day after day. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, is the original Personality of Godhead manifest as the Supersoul [Paramātmā] as well as the impersonal Brahman. Yogīs meditate upon the localized Paramātmā situated in the heart, jñānīs worship the impersonal Brahman as the Supreme Absolute Truth, and devotees worship Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose transcendental body is described in the śāstras. His body is decorated with the Śrīvatsa, the Kaustubha jewel and a flower garland, and His hands hold a conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower. Devotees like Nārada always think of Him within their hearts.

8Destiny fixed the time for Mahārāja Bharata's enjoyment of material opulence at one thousand times ten thousand years. When that period was finished, he retired from family life and divided the wealth he had received from his forefathers among his sons. He left his paternal home, the reservoir of all opulence, and started for Pulahāśrama, which is situated in Hardwar. The śālagrāma-śilās are obtainable there.

9At Pulaha-āśrama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, out of His transcendental affection for His devotee, becomes visible to His devotee, satisfying His devotee's desires.

10In Pulaha-āśrama is the Gaṇḍakī River, which is the best of all rivers. The śālagrāma-śilā, the marble pebbles, purify all those places. On each and every marble pebble, up and down, circles like navels are visible.

11In the gardens of Pulaha-āśrama, Mahārāja Bharata lived alone and collected a variety of flowers, twigs and tulasī leaves. He also collected the water of the Gaṇḍakī River, as well as various roots, fruits and bulbs. With these he offered food to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, and, worshiping Him, he remained satisfied. In this way his heart was completely uncontaminated, and he did not have the least desire for material enjoyment. All material desires vanished. In this steady position, he felt full satisfaction and was situated in devotional service.

12That most exalted devotee, Mahārāja Bharata, in this way engaged constantly in the devotional service of the Lord. Naturally his love for Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, increased more and more and melted his heart. Consequently he gradually lost all attachment for regulative duties. The hairs of his body stood on end, and all the ecstatic bodily symptoms were manifest. Tears flowed from his eyes, so much so that he could not see anything. Thus he constantly meditated on the reddish lotus feet of the Lord. At that time, his heart, which was like a lake, was filled with the water of ecstatic love. When his mind was immersed in that lake, he even forgot the regulative service to the Lord.

13Mahārāja Bharata appeared very beautiful. He had a wealth of curly hair on his head, which

was wet from bathing three times daily. He dressed in a deerskin. He worshiped Lord Nārāyaṇa, whose body was composed of golden effulgence and who resided within the sun. Mahārāja Bharata worshiped Lord Nārāyaṇa by chanting the hymns given in the Ṛg Veda, and he recited the following verse as the sun rose.

14“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated in pure goodness. He illuminates the entire universe and bestows all benedictions upon His devotees. The Lord has created this universe from His own spiritual potency. According to His desire, the Lord entered this universe as the Supersoul, and by virtue of His different potencies He is maintaining all living entities desiring material enjoyment. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who is the giver of intelligence.”

SB 5.8: A Description of the Character of Bharata Mahārāja

Although Bharata Mahārāja was very elevated, he fell down due to his attachment to a young deer. One day after Bharata Mahārāja had taken his bath as usual in the river Gaṇḍakī and was chanting his *mantra*, he saw a pregnant deer come to the river to drink water. Suddenly there could be heard the thundering roar of a lion, and the deer was so frightened that it immediately gave birth to its calf. It then crossed the river, but died immediately thereafter. Mahārāja Bharata took compassion upon the motherless calf, rescued it from the water, took it to his *āśrama* and cared for it affectionately. He gradually became attached to this young deer and always thought of it affectionately. As it grew up, it became Mahārāja Bharata’s constant companion, and he always took care of it. Gradually he became so absorbed in thinking of this deer that his mind became agitated. As he became more attached to the deer, his devotional service slackened. Although he was able to give up his opulent kingdom, he became attached to the deer. Thus he fell down from his mystic *yoga* practice. Once when the deer was absent, Mahārāja Bharata was so disturbed that he began to search for it. While searching and lamenting the deer’s absence, Mahārāja Bharata fell down and died. Because his mind was fully absorbed thinking of the deer, he naturally took his next birth from the womb of a deer. However, because he was considerably advanced spiritually, he did not forget his past activities, even though he was in the body of a deer. He could understand how he had fallen down from his exalted position, and remembering this, he left his mother deer and again went to Pulaha-āśrama. He finally ended his fruitive activities in the form of a deer, and when he died he was released from the deer’s body.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, one day, after finishing his morning duties evacuating, urinating and bathing Mahārāja Bharata sat down on the bank of the river Gaṇḍakī for a few minutes and began chanting his mantra, beginning with omkāra.

2O King, while Bharata Mahārāja was sitting on the bank of that river, a doe, being very thirsty, came there to drink.

3While the doe was drinking with great satisfaction, a lion, which was very close, roared very loudly. This was frightful to every living entity, and it was heard by the doe.

4By nature the doe was always afraid of being killed by others, and it was always looking about suspiciously. When it heard the lion’s tumultuous roar, it became very agitated. Looking here and there with disturbed eyes, the doe, although it had not fully satisfied itself by drinking water, suddenly leaped across the river.

5The doe was pregnant, and when it jumped out of fear, the baby deer fell from its womb into

the flowing waters of the river.

6Being separated from its flock and distressed by its miscarriage, the black doe, having crossed the river, was very much distressed. Indeed, it fell down in a cave and died immediately.

7The great King Bharata, while sitting on the bank of the river, saw the small deer, bereft of its mother, floating down the river. Seeing this, he felt great compassion. Like a sincere friend, he lifted the infant deer from the waves, and, knowing it to be motherless, brought it to his āśrama.

8Gradually Mahārāja Bharata became very affectionate toward the deer. He began to raise it and maintain it by giving it grass. He was always careful to protect it from the attacks of tigers and other animals. When it itched, he petted it, and in this way he always tried to keep it in a comfortable condition. He sometimes kissed it out of love. Being attached to raising the deer, Mahārāja Bharata forgot the rules and regulations for the advancement of spiritual life, and he gradually forgot to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After a few days, he forgot everything about his spiritual advancement.

9The great King Mahārāja Bharata began to think: Alas, this helpless young deer, by the force of time, an agent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, has now lost its relatives and friends and has taken shelter of me. It does not know anyone but me, as I have become its father, mother, brother and relatives. This deer is thinking in this way, and it has full faith in me. It does not know anyone but me; therefore I should not be envious and think that for the deer my own welfare will be destroyed. I should certainly raise, protect, gratify and fondle it. When it has taken shelter with me, how can I neglect it? Even though the deer is disturbing my spiritual life, I realize that a helpless person who has taken shelter cannot be neglected. That would be a great fault.

10Even though one is in the renounced order, one who is advanced certainly feels compassion for suffering living entities. One should certainly neglect his own personal interests, although they may be very important, to protect one who has surrendered.

11Due to attachment for the deer, Mahārāja Bharata lay down with it, walked about with it, bathed with it and even ate with it. Thus his heart became bound to the deer in affection.

12When Mahārāja Bharata wanted to enter the forest to collect kuśa grass, flowers, wood, leaves, fruits, roots and water, he would fear that dogs, jackals, tigers and other ferocious animals might kill the deer. He would therefore always take the deer with him when entering the forest.

13When entering the forest, the animal would appear very attractive to Mahārāja Bharata due to its childish behavior. Mahārāja Bharata would even take the deer on his shoulders and carry it due to affection. His heart was so filled with great love for the deer that he would sometimes keep it on his lap or, when sleeping, on his chest. In this way he felt great pleasure in fondling the animal.

14When Mahārāja Bharata was actually worshiping the Lord or was engaged in some ritualistic ceremony, although his activities were unfinished, he would still, at intervals, get up and see where the deer was. In this way he would look for it, and when he could see that the deer was comfortably situated, his mind and heart would be very satisfied, and he would bestow his blessings upon the deer, saying, “My dear calf, may you be happy in all respects.”

15If Bharata Mahārāja sometimes could not see the deer, his mind would be very agitated. He would become like a miser, who, having obtained some riches, had lost them and had then

become very unhappy. When the deer was gone, he would be filled with anxiety and would lament due to separation. Thus he would become illusioned and speak as follows.

16Bharata Mahārāja would think: Alas, the deer is now helpless. I am now very unfortunate, and my mind is like a cunning hunter, for it is always filled with cheating propensities and cruelty. The deer has put its faith in me, just as a good man who has a natural interest in good behavior forgets the misbehavior of a cunning friend and puts his faith in him. Although I have proved faithless, will this deer return and place its faith in me?

17Alas, is it possible that I shall again see this animal protected by the Lord and fearless of tigers and other animals? Shall I again see him wandering in the garden eating soft grass?

18I do not know, but the deer might have been eaten by a wolf or a dog or by the boars that flock together or the tiger who travels alone.

19Alas, when the sun rises, all auspicious things begin. Unfortunately, they have not begun for me. The sun-god is the Vedas personified, but I am bereft of all Vedic principles. That sun-god is now setting, yet the poor animal who trusted in me since its mother died has not returned.

20That deer is exactly like a prince. When will it return? When will it again display its personal activities, which are so pleasing? When will it again pacify a wounded heart like mine? I certainly must have no pious assets, otherwise the deer would have returned by now.

21Alas, the small deer, while playing with me and seeing me feigning meditation with closed eyes, would circumambulate me due to anger arising from love, and it would fearfully touch me with the points of its soft horns, which felt like drops of water.

22When I placed all the sacrificial ingredients on the kuśa grass, the deer, when playing, would touch the grass with its teeth and thus pollute it. When I chastised the deer by pushing it away, it would immediately become fearful and sit down motionless, exactly like the son of a saintly person. Thus it would stop its play.

23After speaking like a madman in this way, Mahārāja Bharata got up and went outside. Seeing the footprints of the deer on the ground, he praised the footprints out of love, saying: O unfortunate Bharata, your austerities and penances are very insignificant compared to the penance and austerity undergone by this earth planet. Due to the earth's severe penances, the footprints of this deer, which are small, beautiful, most auspicious and soft, are imprinted on the surface of this fortunate planet. This series of footprints show a person like me, who am bereaved due to loss of the deer, how the animal has passed through the forest and how I can regain my lost wealth. By these footprints, this land has become a proper place for brāhmaṇas who desire heavenly planets or liberation to execute sacrifices to the demigods.

24Mahārāja Bharata continued to speak like a madman. Seeing above his head the dark marks on the rising moon, which resembled a deer, he said: Can it be that the moon, who is so kind to an unhappy man, might also be kind upon my deer, knowing that it has strayed from home and has become motherless? This moon has given the deer shelter near itself just to protect it from the fearful attacks of a lion.

25After perceiving the moonshine, Mahārāja Bharata continued speaking like a crazy person. He said: The deer's son was so submissive and dear to me that due to its separation I am feeling separation from my own son. Due to the burning fever of this separation, I am suffering as if inflamed by a forest fire. My heart, which is like the lily of the land, is now burning. Seeing me so distressed, the moon is certainly splashing its shining nectar upon me just as a friend throws water on another friend who has a high fever. In this way, the moon is bringing me

happiness.

26Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, in this way Bharata Mahārāja was overwhelmed by an uncontrollable desire which was manifest in the form of the deer. Due to the fruitive results of his past deeds, he fell down from mystic yoga, austerity and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If it were not due to his past fruitive activity, how could he have been attracted to the deer after giving up the association of his own son and family, considering them stumbling blocks on the path of spiritual life? How could he show such uncontrollable affection for a deer? This was definitely due to his past karma. The King was so engrossed in petting and maintaining the deer that he fell down from his spiritual activities. In due course of time, insurmountable death, which is compared to a venomous snake that enters the hole created by a mouse, situated itself before him.

27At the time of death, the King saw that the deer was sitting by his side, exactly like his own son, and was lamenting his death. Actually the mind of the King was absorbed in the body of the deer, and consequently like those bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness he left the world, the deer, and his material body and acquired the body of a deer. However, there was one advantage. Although he lost his human body and received the body of a deer, he did not forget the incidents of his past life.

28Although in the body of a deer, Bharata Mahārāja, due to his rigid devotional service in his past life, could understand the cause of his birth in that body. Considering his past and present life, he constantly repented his activities, speaking in the following way.

29In the body of a deer, Bharata Mahārāja began to lament: What misfortune! I have fallen from the path of the self-realized. I gave up my real sons, wife and home to advance in spiritual life, and I took shelter in a solitary holy place in the forest. I became self-controlled and self-realized, and I engaged constantly in devotional service hearing, thinking, chanting, worshipping and remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. I was successful in my attempt, so much so that my mind was always absorbed in devotional service. However, due to my personal foolishness, my mind again became attached this time to a deer. Now I have obtained the body of a deer and have fallen far from my devotional practices.

30Although Bharata Mahārāja received the body of a deer, by constant repentance he became completely detached from all material things. He did not disclose these things to anyone, but he left his mother deer in a place known as Kālaśjara Mountain, where he was born. He again went to the forest of Śālagrāma and to the āśrama of Pulastya and Pulaha.

31Remaining in that āśrama, the great King Bharata Mahārāja was now very careful not to fall victim to bad association. Without disclosing his past to anyone, he remained in that āśrama and ate dry leaves only. He was not exactly alone, for he had the association of the Supersoul. In this way he waited for death in the body of a deer. Bathing in that holy place, he finally gave up that body.

SB 5.9: The Supreme Character of Jaḍa Bharata

In this chapter Bharata Mahārāja's attainment of the body of a *brāhmaṇa* is described. In this body he remained like one dull, deaf and dumb, so much so that when he was brought before the goddess Kālī to be killed as a sacrifice, he never protested but remained silent. After having given up the body of a deer, he took birth in the womb of the youngest wife of a *brāhmaṇa*. In this life he could also remember the activities of his past life, and in order to avoid the influence of society, he remained like a deaf and dumb person. He was very careful not to fall down again. He did not mix with anyone who was not a devotee. This process should be

adopted by every devotee. As advised by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *asat-saṅga-tyāgaei vaiṣṇava-ācāra*. One should strictly avoid the company of nondevotees, even though they may be family members. When Bharata Mahārāja was in the body of a *brāhmaṇa*, the people in the neighborhood thought of him as a crazy, dull fellow, but within he was always chanting and remembering Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although his father wanted to give him an education and purify him as a *brāhmaṇa* by offering him the sacred thread, he remained in such a way that his father and mother could understand that he was crazy and not interested in the reformatory method. Nonetheless, he remained fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, even without undergoing such official ceremonies. Due to his silence, some people who were no better than animals began to tease him in many ways, but he tolerated this. After the death of his father and mother, his stepmother and stepbrothers began to treat him very poorly. They would give him the most condemned food, but still he did not mind; he remained completely absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He was ordered by his stepbrothers and mother to guard a paddy field one night, and at that time the leader of a dacoit party took him away and tried to kill him by offering him as a sacrifice before Bhadra Kālī. When the dacoits brought Bharata Mahārāja before the goddess Kālī and raised a chopper to kill him, the goddess Kālī became immediately alarmed due to the mistreatment of a devotee. She came out of the deity and, taking the chopper in her own hands, killed all the dacoits there. Thus a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can remain silent despite the mistreatment of nondevotees. Rogues and dacoits who misbehave toward a devotee are punished at last by the arrangement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1-Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after giving up the body of a deer, Bharata Mahārāja took birth in a very pure *brāhmaṇa* family. There was a *brāhmaṇa* who belonged to the dynasty of Aṅgirā. He was fully qualified with brahminical qualifications. He could control his mind and senses, and he had studied the Vedic literatures and other subsidiary literatures. He was expert in giving charity, and he was always satisfied, tolerant, very gentle, learned and nonenvious. He was self-realized and engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. He remained always in a trance. He had nine equally qualified sons by his first wife, and by his second wife he begot twinsa brother and a sister, of which the male child was said to be the topmost devotee and foremost of saintly kingsBharata Mahārāja. This, then, is the story of the birth he took after giving up the body of a deer.

3Due to his being especially gifted with the Lord's mercy, Bharata Mahārāja could remember the incidents of his past life. Although he received the body of a *brāhmaṇa*, he was still very much afraid of his relatives and friends who were not devotees. He was always very cautious of such association because he feared that he would again fall down. Consequently he manifested himself before the public eye as a madmandull, blind and deafso that others would not try to talk to him. In this way he saved himself from bad association. Within he was always thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord and chanting the Lord's glories, which save one from the bondage of fruitive action. In this way he saved himself from the onslaught of nondevotee associates.

4The *brāhmaṇa* father's mind was always filled with affection for his son, Jaḍa Bharata [Bharata Mahārāja]. Therefore he was always attached to Jaḍa Bharata. Because Jaḍa Bharata was unfit to enter the *gṛhastha-āśrama*, he simply executed the purificatory process up to the end of the *brahmacarya-āśrama*. Although Jaḍa Bharata was unwilling to accept his father's instructions, the *brāhmaṇa* nonetheless instructed him in how to keep clean and how to wash, thinking that the son should be taught by the father.

5Jaḍa Bharata behaved before his father like a fool, despite his father's adequately instructing him in Vedic knowledge. He behaved in that way so that his father would know that he was

unfit for instruction and would abandon the attempt to instruct him further. He would behave in a completely opposite way. Although instructed to wash his hands after evacuating, he would wash them before. Nonetheless, his father wanted to give him Vedic instructions during the spring and summer. He tried to teach him the Gāyatrī mantra along with omkāra and vyāhṛti, but after four months his father still was not successful in instructing him.

6The brāhmaṇa father of Jaḍa Bharata considered his son his heart and soul, and therefore he was very much attached to him. He thought it wise to educate his son properly, and being absorbed in this unsuccessful endeavor, he tried to teach his son the rules and regulations of brahmacarya including the execution of the Vedic vows, cleanliness, study of the Vedas, the regulative methods, service to the spiritual master and the method of offering a fire sacrifice. He tried his best to teach his son in this way, but all his endeavors failed. In his heart he hoped that his son would be a learned scholar, but all his attempts were unsuccessful. Like everyone, this brāhmaṇa was attached to his home, and he had forgotten that someday he would die. Death, however, was not forgetful. At the proper time, death appeared and took him away.

7Thereafter, the brāhmaṇa's younger wife, after entrusting her twin children the boy and girl to the elder wife, departed for Patiloka, voluntarily dying with her husband.

8After the father died, the nine stepbrothers of Jaḍa Bharata, who considered Jaḍa Bharata dull and brainless, abandoned the father's attempt to give Jaḍa Bharata a complete education. The stepbrothers of Jaḍa Bharata were learned in the three Vedas the Ṛg Veda, Sāma Veda and Yajur Veda which very much encourage fruitive activity. The nine brothers were not at all spiritually enlightened in devotional service to the Lord. Consequently they could not understand the highly exalted position of Jaḍa Bharata.

9-10Degraded men are actually no better than animals. The only difference is that animals have four legs and such men have only two. These two-legged, animalistic men used to call Jaḍa Bharata mad, dull, deaf and dumb. They mistreated him, and Jaḍa Bharata behaved for them like a madman who was deaf, blind or dull. He did not protest or try to convince them that he was not so. If others wanted him to do something, he acted according to their desires. Whatever food he could acquire by begging or by wages, and whatever came of its own accord be it a small quantity, palatable, stale or tasteless he would accept and eat. He never ate anything for sense gratification because he was already liberated from the bodily conception, which induces one to accept palatable or unpalatable food. He was full in the transcendental consciousness of devotional service, and therefore he was unaffected by the dualities arising from the bodily conception. Actually his body was as strong as a bull's, and his limbs were very muscular. He didn't care for winter or summer, wind or rain, and he never covered his body at any time. He lay on the ground, and never smeared oil on his body or took a bath. Because his body was dirty, his spiritual effulgence and knowledge were covered, just as the splendor of a valuable gem is covered by dirt. He only wore a dirty loin cloth and his sacred thread, which was blackish. Understanding that he was born in a brāhmaṇa family, people would call him a brahma-bandhu and other names. Being thus insulted and neglected by materialistic people, he wandered here and there.

11Jaḍa Bharata used to work only for food. His stepbrothers took advantage of this and engaged him in agricultural field work in exchange for some food, but actually he did not know how to work very well in the field. He did not know where to spread dirt or where to make the ground level or uneven. His brothers used to give him broken rice, oil cakes, the chaff of rice, worm-eaten grains and burned grains that had stuck to the pot, but he gladly accepted all this as if it were nectar. He did not hold any grudges and ate all this very gladly.

12At this time, being desirous of obtaining a son, a leader of dacoits who came from a śūdra

family wanted to worship the goddess Bhadra Kālī by offering her in sacrifice a dull man, who is considered no better than an animal.

13The leader of the dacoits captured a man-animal for sacrifice, but he escaped, and the leader ordered his followers to find him. They ran in different directions but could not find him. Wandering here and there in the middle of the night, covered by dense darkness, they came to a paddy field where they saw the exalted son of the Āṅgirā family [Jaḍa Bharata], who was sitting in an elevated place guarding the field against the attacks of deer and wild pigs.

14The followers and servants of the dacoit chief considered Jaḍa Bharata to possess qualities quite suitable for a man-animal, and they decided that he was a perfect choice for sacrifice. Their faces bright with happiness, they bound him with ropes and brought him to the temple of the goddess Kālī.

15After this, all the thieves, according to their imaginative ritual for killing animalistic men, bathed Jaḍa Bharata, dressed him in new clothes, decorated him with ornaments befitting an animal, smeared his body with scented oils and decorated him with tilaka, sandalwood pulp and garlands. They fed him sumptuously and then brought him before the goddess Kālī, offering her incense, lamps, garlands, parched grain, newly grown twigs, sprouts, fruits and flowers. In this way they worshiped the deity before killing the man-animal, and they vibrated songs and prayers and played drums and bugles. Jaḍa Bharata was then made to sit down before the deity.

16At this time, one of the thieves, acting as the chief priest, was ready to offer the blood of Jaḍa Bharata, whom they imagined to be an animal-man, to the goddess Kālī to drink as a liquor. He therefore took up a very fearsome sword, which was very sharp and, consecrating it by the mantra of Bhadra Kālī, raised it to kill Jaḍa Bharata.

17All the rogues and thieves who had made arrangements for the worship of Goddess Kālī were low minded and bound to the modes of passion and ignorance. They were overpowered by the desire to become very rich; therefore they had the audacity to disobey the injunctions of the Vedas, so much so that they were prepared to kill Jaḍa Bharata, a self-realized soul born in a brāhmaṇa family. Due to their envy, these dacoits brought him before the goddess Kālī for sacrifice. Such people are always addicted to envious activities, and therefore they dared to try to kill Jaḍa Bharata. Jaḍa Bharata was the best friend of all living entities. He was no one's enemy, and he was always absorbed in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He was born of a good brāhmaṇa father, and killing him was forbidden, even though he might have been an enemy or aggressive person. In any case, there was no reason to kill Jaḍa Bharata, and the goddess Kālī could not bear this. She could immediately understand that these sinful dacoits were about to kill a great devotee of the Lord. Suddenly the deity's body burst asunder, and the goddess Kālī personally emerged from it in a body burning with an intense and intolerable effulgence.

18Intolerant of the offenses committed, the infuriated Goddess Kālī flashed her eyes and displayed her fierce, curved teeth. Her reddish eyes glowed, and she displayed her fearsome features. She assumed a frightening body, as if she were prepared to destroy the entire creation. Leaping violently from the altar, she immediately decapitated all the rogues and thieves with the very sword with which they had intended to kill Jaḍa Bharata. She then began to drink the hot blood that flowed from the necks of the beheaded rogues and thieves, as if this blood were liquor. Indeed, she drank this intoxicant with her associates, who were witches and female demons. Becoming intoxicated with this blood, they all began to sing very loudly and dance as though prepared to annihilate the entire universe. At the same time, they began to

play with the heads of the rogues and thieves, tossing them about as if they were balls.

19When an envious person commits an offense before a great personality, he is always punished in the way mentioned above.

20Śukadeva Gosvāmī then said to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: O Viṣṇudatta, those who already know that the soul is separate from the body, who are liberated from the invincible knot in the heart, who are always engaged in welfare activities for all living entities and who never contemplate harming anyone are always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who carries His disc [the Sudarśana cakṛa] and acts as supreme time to kill the demons and protect His devotees. The devotees always take shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord. Therefore at all times, even if threatened by decapitation, they remain unagitated. For them, this is not at all wonderful.

SB 5.10: The Discussion Between Jaḍa Bharata and Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa

In this chapter Bharata Mahārāja, now Jaḍa Bharata, was successfully accepted by King Rahūgaṇa, ruler of the states known as Sindhu and Sauvīra. The King forced Jaḍa Bharata to carry his palanquin and chastised him because he did not carry it properly. A carrier of King Rahūgaṇa's palanquin was needed, and to fulfill this need the chief carriers found Jaḍa Bharata as the most likely person to do the work. He was therefore forced to carry the palanquin. Jaḍa Bharata, however, did not protest this proud order, but humbly accepted the job and carried the palanquin. While carrying it, however, he was very careful to see that he did not step on an ant, and whenever he saw one he would stop until the ant had passed. Because of this, he could not keep pace with the other carriers. The King within the palanquin became very disturbed and chastised Jaḍa Bharata with filthy language, but Jaḍa Bharata, being completely freed from the bodily conception, did not protest; he proceeded carrying the palanquin. When he continued as before, the King threatened him with punishment, and being threatened by the King, Jaḍa Bharata began to talk. He protested against the filthy language used by the King when the King chastised him, and the King, hearing the instructions of Jaḍa Bharata, was awakened to his real knowledge. When he came to his consciousness, he understood that he had offended a great, learned and saintly person. At that time he very humbly and respectfully prayed to Jaḍa Bharata. He now wanted to understand the deep meaning of the philosophical words used by Jaḍa Bharata, and with great sincerity he begged his pardon. He admitted that if one offends the lotus feet of a pure devotee he is certainly punished by the trident of Lord Śiva.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after this, King Rahūgaṇa, ruler of the states known as Sindhu and Sauvīra, was going to Kapilāśrama. When the King's chief palanquin carriers reached the banks of the river Ikṣumatī, they needed another carrier. Therefore they began searching for someone, and by chance they came upon Jaḍa Bharata. They considered the fact that Jaḍa Bharata was very young and strong and had firm limbs. Like cows and asses, he was quite fit to carry loads. Thinking in this way, although the great soul Jaḍa Bharata was unfit for such work, they nonetheless unhesitatingly forced him to carry the palanquin.

2The palanquin, however, was very erratically carried by Jaḍa Bharata due to his sense of nonviolence. As he stepped forward, he checked before him every three feet to see whether he was about to step on ants. Consequently he could not keep pace with the other carriers. Due to this, the palanquin was shaking, and King Rahūgaṇa immediately asked the carriers, "Why are you carrying this palanquin unevenly? Better carry it properly."

3When the palanquin carriers heard the threatening words of Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa, they became very afraid of his punishment and began to speak to him as follows.

4O lord, please note that we are not at all negligent in discharging our duties. We have been faithfully carrying this palanquin according to your desire, but this man who has been recently engaged to work with us cannot walk very swiftly. Therefore we are not able to carry the palanquin with him.

5King Rahūgaṇa could understand the speeches given by the carriers, who were afraid of being punished. He could also understand that simply due to the fault of one person, the palanquin was not being carried properly. Knowing this perfectly well and hearing their appeal, he became a little angry, although he was very advanced in political science and was very experienced. His anger arose due to his inborn nature as a king. Actually King Rahūgaṇa's mind was covered by the mode of passion, and he therefore spoke as follows to Jaḍa Bharata, whose Brahman effulgence was not clearly visible, being covered like a fire covered by ashes.

6King Rahūgaṇa told Jaḍa Bharata: How troublesome this is, my dear brother. You certainly appear very fatigued because you have carried this palanquin alone without assistance for a long time and for a long distance. Besides that, due to your old age you have become greatly troubled. My dear friend, I see that you are not very firm, nor very strong and stout. Aren't your fellow carriers cooperating with you?

7Thereafter, when the King saw that his palanquin was still being shaken by the carriers, he became very angry and said: You rascal, what are you doing? Are you dead despite the life within your body? Do you not know that I am your master? You are disregarding me and are not carrying out my order. For this disobedience I shall now punish you just as Yamarāja, the superintendent of death, punishes sinful people. I shall give you proper treatment so that you will come to your senses and do the correct thing.

8Thinking himself a king, King Rahūgaṇa was in the bodily conception and was influenced by material nature's modes of passion and ignorance. Due to madness, he chastised Jaḍa Bharata with uncalled-for and contradictory words. Jaḍa Bharata was a topmost devotee and the dear abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although considering himself very learned, the King did not know about the position of an advanced devotee situated in devotional service, nor did he know his characteristics. Jaḍa Bharata was the residence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; he always carried the form of the Lord within his heart. He was the dear friend of all living beings, and he did not entertain any bodily conception. He therefore smiled and spoke the following words.

9The great brāhmaṇa Jaḍa Bharata said: My dear King and hero, whatever you have spoken sarcastically is certainly true. Actually these are not simply words of chastisement, for the body is the carrier. The load carried by the body does not belong to me, for I am the spirit soul. There is no contradiction in your statements because I am different from the body. I am not the carrier of the palanquin; the body is the carrier. Certainly, as you have hinted, I have not labored carrying the palanquin, for I am detached from the body. You have said that I am not stout and strong, and these words are befitting a person who does not know the distinction between the body and the soul. The body may be fat or thin, but no learned man would say such things of the spirit soul. As far as the spirit soul is concerned, I am neither fat nor skinny; therefore you are correct when you say that I am not very stout. Also, if the object of this journey and the path leading there were mine, there would be many troubles for me, but because they relate not to me but to my body, there is no trouble at all.

10Fatness, thinness, bodily and mental distress, thirst, hunger, fear, disagreement, desires for material happiness, old age, sleep, attachment for material possessions, anger, lamentation, illusion and identification of the body with the self are all transformations of the material covering of the spirit soul. A person absorbed in the material bodily conception is affected by

these things, but I am free from all bodily conceptions. Consequently I am neither fat nor skinny nor anything else you have mentioned.

11My dear King, you have unnecessarily accused me of being dead though alive. In this regard, I can only say that this is the case everywhere because everything material has its beginning and end. As far as your thinking that you are the king and master and are thus trying to order me, this is also incorrect because these positions are temporary. Today you are a king and I am your servant, but tomorrow the position may be changed, and you may be my servant and I your master. These are temporary circumstances created by providence.

12My dear King, if you still think that you are the King and that I am your servant, you should order me, and I should follow your order. I can then say that this differentiation is temporary, and it expands only from usage or convention. I do not see any other cause. In that case, who is the master, and who is the servant? Everyone is being forced by the laws of material nature; therefore no one is master, and no one is servant. Nonetheless, if you think that you are the master and that I am the servant, I shall accept this. Please order me. What can I do for you?

13My dear King, you have said, “You rascal, you dull, crazy fellow! I am going to chastise you, and then you will come to your senses.” In this regard, let me say that although I live like a dull, deaf and dumb man, I am actually a self-realized person. What will you gain by punishing me? If your calculation is true and I am a madman, then your punishment will be like beating a dead horse. There will be no effect. When a madman is punished, he is not cured of his madness.

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, when King Rahūgaṇa chastised the exalted devotee Jaḍa Bharata with harsh words, that peaceful, saintly person tolerated it all and replied properly. Nescience is due to the bodily conception, and Jaḍa Bharata was not affected by this false conception. Out of his natural humility, he never considered himself a great devotee, and he agreed to suffer the results of his past karma. Like an ordinary man, he thought that by carrying the palanquin he was destroying the reactions of his past misdeeds. Thinking in this way, he began to carry the palanquin as before.

15Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O best of the Pāṇḍu dynasty [Mahārāja Parīkṣit], the King of the Sindhu and Sauvīra states [Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa] had great faith in discussions of the Absolute Truth. Being thus qualified, he heard from Jaḍa Bharata that philosophical presentation which is approved by all scriptures on the mystic yoga process and which slackens the knot in the heart. His material conception of himself as a king was thus destroyed. He immediately descended from his palanquin and fell flat on the ground with his head at the lotus feet of Jaḍa Bharata in such a way that he might be excused for his insulting words against the great brāhmaṇa. He then prayed as follows.

16King Rahūgaṇa said: O brāhmaṇa, you appear to be moving in this world very much covered and unknown to others. Who are you? Are you a learned brāhmaṇa and saintly person? I see that you are wearing a sacred thread. Are you one of those exalted, liberated saints such as Dattātreya and other highly advanced, learned scholars? May I ask whose disciple you are? Where do you live? Why have you come to this place? Is your mission in coming here to do good for us? Please let me know who you are.

17My dear sir, I am not at all afraid of the thunderbolt of King Indra, nor am I afraid of the serpentine, piercing trident of Lord Śiva. I do not care about the punishment of Yamarāja, the superintendent of death, nor am I afraid of fire, scorching sun, moon, wind, nor the weapons of Kuvera. Yet I am afraid of offending a brāhmaṇa. I am very much afraid of this.

18My dear sir, it appears that the influence of your great spiritual knowledge is hidden. Factually you are bereft of all material association and fully absorbed in the thought of the Supreme. Consequently you are unlimitedly advanced in spiritual knowledge. Please tell me why you are wandering around like a dullard. O great saintly person, you have spoken words approved by the yogic process, but it is not possible for us to understand what you have said. Therefore kindly explain it.

19I consider your good self the most exalted master of mystic power. You know the spiritual science perfectly well. You are the most exalted of all learned sages, and you have descended for the benefit of all human society. You have come to give spiritual knowledge, and you are a direct representative of Kapiladeva, the incarnation of God and the plenary portion of knowledge. I am therefore asking you, O spiritual master, what is the most secure shelter in this world?

20Is it not a fact that your good self is the direct representative of Kapiladeva, the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? To examine people and see who is actually a human being and who is not, you have presented yourself to be a deaf and dumb person. Are you not moving this way upon the surface of the world? I am very attached to family life and worldly activities, and I am blind to spiritual knowledge. Nonetheless, I am now present before you and am seeking enlightenment from you. How can I advance in spiritual life?

21You have said, "I am not fatigued from labor." Although the soul is different from the body, there is fatigue because of bodily labor, and it appears to be the fatigue of the soul. When you are carrying the palanquin, there is certainly labor for the soul. This is my conjecture. You have also said that the external behavior exhibited between the master and the servant is not factual, but although in the phenomenal world it is not factual, the products of the phenomenal world can actually affect things. That is visible and experienced. As such, even though material activities are impermanent, they cannot be said to be untrue.

22King Rahūgaṇa continued: My dear sir, you have said that designations like bodily fatness and thinness are not characteristics of the soul. That is incorrect because designations like pain and pleasure are certainly felt by the soul. You may put a pot of milk and rice within fire, and the milk and rice are automatically heated one after the other. Similarly, due to bodily pains and pleasures, the senses, mind and soul are affected. The soul cannot be completely detached from this conditioning.

23My dear sir, you have said that the relationship between the king and the subject or between the master and the servant are not eternal, but although such relationships are temporary, when a person takes the position of a king his duty is to rule the citizens and punish those who are disobedient to the laws. By punishing them, he teaches the citizens to obey the laws of the state. Again, you have said that punishing a person who is deaf and dumb is like chewing the chewed or grinding the pulp; that is to say, there is no benefit in it. However, if one is engaged in his own occupational duty as ordered by the Supreme Lord, his sinful activities are certainly diminished. Therefore if one is engaged in his occupational duty by force, he benefits because he can vanquish all his sinful activities in that way.

24Whatever you have spoken appears to me to be contradictory. O best friend of the distressed, I have committed a great offense by insulting you. I was puffed up with false prestige due to possessing the body of a king. For this I have certainly become an offender. Therefore I pray that you kindly glance at me with your causeless mercy. If you do so, I can be relieved from sinful activities brought about by insulting you.

25O my dear lord, you are the friend of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the friend of all living entities. You are therefore equal to everyone, and you are free from the bodily

conception. Although I have committed an offense by insulting you, I know that there is no loss or gain for you due to my insult. You are fixed in your determination, but I have committed an offense. Because of this, even though I may be as strong as Lord Śiva, I shall be vanquished without delay due to my offense at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava.

SB 5.11: Jaḍa Bharata Instructs King Rahūgaṇa

In this chapter the *brāhmaṇa* Jaḍa Bharata instructs Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa in detail. He tells the King: “You are not very experienced, yet you pose yourself as a learned person because you are very proud of your knowledge. Actually a person who is on the transcendental platform does not care for social behavior that sacrifices spiritual advancement. Social behavior comes within the jurisdiction of *karma-kāṇḍa*, material benefit. No one can spiritually advance by such activities. The conditioned soul is always overpowered by the modes of material nature, and consequently he is simply concerned with material benefits and auspicious and inauspicious material things. In other words, the mind, which is the leader of the senses, is absorbed in material activities life after life. Thus he continuously gets different types of bodies and suffers miserable material conditions. On the basis of mental concoction, social behavior has been formulated. If one’s mind is absorbed in these activities, he certainly remains conditioned within the material world. According to different opinions, there are eleven or twelve mental activities, which can be transformed into hundreds and thousands. A person who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious is subjected to all these mental concoctions and is thus governed by the material energy. The living entity who is free from mental concoctions attains the platform of pure spirit soul, devoid of material contamination. There are two types of living entities: *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*, the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. That Supreme Soul in His ultimate realization is Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa. He enters into everyone’s heart and controls the living entity in his different activities. He is therefore the supreme shelter of all living entities. One can understand the Supreme Soul and one’s position in relationship with Him when one is completely freed from the unwanted association of ordinary men. In this way one can become fit to cross the ocean of nescience. The cause of conditional life is attachment to the external energy. One has to conquer these mental concoctions: unless one does so, he will never be freed from material anxieties. Although mental concoctions have no value, their influence is still very formidable. No one should neglect to control the mind. If one does, the mind becomes so powerful that one immediately forgets his real position. Forgetting that he is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa and that service to Kṛṣṇa is his only business, one is doomed by material nature to serve the objects of the senses. One should kill mental concoctions by the sword of service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotee (*guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*).”

1The *brāhmaṇa* Jaḍa Bharata said: My dear King, although you are not at all experienced, you are trying to speak like a very experienced man. Consequently you cannot be considered an experienced person. An experienced person does not speak the way you are speaking about the relationship between a master and a servant or about material pains and pleasures. These are simply external activities. Any advanced, experienced man, considering the Absolute Truth, does not talk in this way.

2My dear King, talks of the relationship between the master and the servant, the king and the subject and so forth are simply talks about material activities. People interested in material activities which are expounded in the Vedas are intent on performing material sacrifices and placing faith in their material activities. For such people, spiritual advancement is definitely not manifest.

3A dream becomes automatically known to a person as false and immaterial, and similarly one eventually realizes that material happiness in this life or the next, on this planet or a higher

planet, is insignificant. When one realizes this, the Vedas, although an excellent source, are insufficient to bring about direct knowledge of the truth.

4As long as the mind of the living entity is contaminated by the three modes of material nature (goodness, passion and ignorance), his mind is exactly like an independent, uncontrolled elephant. It simply expands its jurisdiction of pious and impious activities by using the senses. The result is that the living entity remains in the material world to enjoy and suffer pleasures and pains due to material activity.

5Because the mind is absorbed in desires for pious and impious activities, it is naturally subjected to the transformations of lust and anger. In this way, it becomes attracted to material sense enjoyment. In other words, the mind is conducted by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There are eleven senses and five material elements, and out of these sixteen items, the mind is the chief. Therefore the mind brings about birth in different types of bodies among demigods, human beings, animals and birds. When the mind is situated in a higher or lower position, it accepts a higher or lower material body.

6The materialistic mind covering the living entity's soul carries it to different species of life. This is called continued material existence. Due to the mind, the living entity suffers or enjoys material distress and happiness. Being thus illusioned, the mind further creates pious and impious activities and their karma, and thus the soul becomes conditioned.

7The mind makes the living entity within this material world wander through different species of life, and thus the living entity experiences mundane affairs in different forms as a human being, demigod, fat person, skinny person and so forth. Learned scholars say that bodily appearance, bondage and liberation are caused by the mind.

8When the living entity's mind becomes absorbed in the sense gratification of the material world, it brings about his conditioned life and suffering within the material situation. However, when the mind becomes unattached to material enjoyment, it becomes the cause of liberation. When the flame in a lamp burns the wick improperly, the lamp is blackened, but when the lamp is filled with ghee and is burning properly, there is bright illumination. Similarly, when the mind is absorbed in material sense gratification, it causes suffering, and when detached from material sense gratification it brings about the original brightness of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

9There are five working senses and five knowledge-acquiring senses. There is also the false ego. In this way, there are eleven items for the mind's functions. O hero, the objects of the senses [such as sound and touch], the organic activities [such as evacuation] and the different types of bodies, society, friendship and personality are considered by learned scholars the fields of activity for the functions of the mind.

10Sound, touch, form, taste and smell are the objects of the five knowledge-acquiring senses. Speech, touch, movement, evacuation and sexual intercourse are the objects of the working senses. Besides this, there is another conception by which one thinks, "This is my body, this is my society, this is my family, this is my nation," and so forth. This eleventh function of the mind is called the false ego. According to some philosophers, this is the twelfth function, and its field of activity is the body.

11The physical elements, nature, the original cause, culture, destiny and the time element are all material causes. Agitated by these material causes, the eleven functions transform into hundreds of functions and then into thousands and then into millions. But all these transformations do not take place automatically by mutual combination. Rather, they are under the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

12The individual soul bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has many ideas and activities created in the mind by the external energy. They have been existing from time immemorial. Sometimes they are manifest in the waking state and in the dream state, but during deep sleep [unconsciousness] or trance, they disappear. A person who is liberated in this life [jīvan-mukta] can see all these things vividly.

13-14There are two kinds of kṣetrajaṣathe living entity, as explained above, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is explained as follows. He is the all-pervading cause of creation. He is full in Himself and is not dependent on others. He is perceived by hearing and direct perception. He is self-effulgent and does not experience birth, death, old age or disease. He is the controller of all the demigods, beginning with Lord Brahmā. He is called Nārāyaṇa, and He is the shelter of living entities after the annihilation of this material world. He is full of all opulences, and He is the resting place of everything material. He is therefore known as Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By His own potency, He is present within the hearts of all living entities, just as the air or vital force is within the bodies of all beings, moving and nonmoving. In this way He controls the body. In His partial feature, the Supreme Personality of Godhead enters all bodies and controls them.

15My dear King Rahūgaṇa, as long as the conditioned soul accepts the material body and is not freed from the contamination of material enjoyment, and as long as he does not conquer his six enemies and come to the platform of self-realization by awakening his spiritual knowledge, he has to wander among different places and different species of life in this material world.

16The soul's designation, the mind, is the cause of all tribulations in the material world. As long as this fact is unknown to the conditioned living entity, he has to accept the miserable condition of the material body and wander within this universe in different positions. Because the mind is affected by disease, lamentation, illusion, attachment, greed and enmity, it creates bondage and a false sense of intimacy within this material world.

17This uncontrolled mind is the greatest enemy of the living entity. If one neglects it or gives it a chance, it will grow more and more powerful and will become victorious. Although it is not factual, it is very strong. It covers the constitutional position of the soul. O King, please try to conquer this mind by the weapon of service to the lotus feet of the spiritual master and of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Do this with great care.

SB 5.12: Conversation Between Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa and Jaḍa Bharata

Because Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa was still doubtful about his enlightenment, he asked the *brāhmaṇa* Jaḍa Bharata to repeat his instructions and clarify ideas he could not understand. In this chapter, Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa offers his respectful obeisances to Jaḍa Bharata, who was concealing his real position. The King could understand by his speech how exalted and advanced he was in spiritual knowledge. He very much regretted his offense against him. Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa was bitten by the serpent of ignorance, but was cured by the nectarean words of Jaḍa Bharata. Later, because he was doubtful about the subjects discussed, he made further inquiries, one question after another. First he wanted to be released from the offense he had committed at the lotus feet of Jaḍa Bharata.

Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa was somewhat unhappy at not being able to grasp Jaḍa Bharata's instructions, which were full of meaning that could not be understood by a materialistic person. Therefore Jaḍa Bharata repeated his instructions more clearly. He said that on the surface of the globe all living entities, moving and unmoving, were but transformations of the earth in different ways. The King was very proud of his king's body, but that body was simply another transformation of the earth. Out of his false prestige, the King was misbehaving

toward the palanquin carrier, as a master toward a servant, and he was actually very unkind to other living entities. Consequently King Rahūgaṇa was unfit to give protection to the citizens, and because he was ignorant, he was unfit to be counted among advanced philosophers. Everything in the material world is but a transformation of the earth, although things have different names according to their transformations. Actually the varieties are one and the same, and ultimately all these varieties are vanquished into atoms. Nothing is permanent in this material world. The variety of things and their distinctions are simply mental concoctions. The Absolute Truth is beyond illusion and is manifest in three features: impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Ultimate realization of the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, called Vāsudeva by His devotees. Unless one is blessed with the dust from the feet of a pure devotee on his head, one cannot possibly become a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Jaḍa Bharata also told about his own previous birth and informed the King that by the grace of the Lord he still remembered all the incidents of his past life. Due to the activities of his past life, Jaḍa Bharata was being very cautious and was therefore assuming the characteristics of a deaf and dumb man to avoid mingling with the material world. Association with the material modes of nature is very powerful. The bad association of materialistic men can be avoided only in the association of devotees. In the association of devotees, one is given an opportunity to render devotional service in nine different ways: *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam arcanam vandanam dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*. In this way, in the association of devotees, one can pass over material association, cross over the ocean of nescience and return home, back to Godhead.

1 King Rahūgaṇa said: O most exalted personality, you are not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the influence of your true self, all kinds of contradiction in the śāstras have been removed. In the dress of a friend of a brāhmaṇa, you are hiding your transcendental blissful position. I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

2 O best of the brāhmaṇas, my body is filled with dirty things, and my vision has been bitten by the serpent of pride. Due to my material conceptions, I am diseased. Your nectarean instructions are the proper medicine for one suffering from such a fever, and they are cooling waters for one scorched by the heat.

3 Whatever doubts I have about a particular subject matter I shall ask you about later. For the time being, these mysterious yoga instructions you have given me for self-realization appear very difficult to understand. Please repeat them in a simple way so that I can understand them. My mind is very inquisitive, and I want to understand this clearly.

4 O master of yogic power, you said that fatigue resulting from moving the body here and there is appreciated by direct perception but actually there is no fatigue. It simply exists as a matter of formality. By such inquiries and answers, no one can come to the conclusion of the Absolute Truth. Because of your presentation of this statement, my mind is a little disturbed.

5-6 The self-realized brāhmaṇa Jaḍa Bharata said: Among the various material combinations and permutations, there are various forms and earthly transformations. For some reason, these move on the surface of the earth and are called palanquin carriers. Those material transformations which do not move are gross material objects like stones. In any case, the material body is made of earth and stone in the form of feet, ankles, calves, knees, thighs, torso, throat and head. Upon the shoulders is the wooden palanquin, and within the palanquin is the so-called King of Sauvīra. The body of the King is simply another transformation of earth, but within that body Your Lordship is situated and falsely thinking that you are the King of the state of Sauvīra.

7It is a fact, however, that these innocent people carrying your palanquin without payment are certainly suffering due to this injustice. Their condition is very lamentable because you have forcibly engaged them in carrying your palanquin. This proves that you are cruel and unkind, yet due to false prestige you were thinking that you were protecting the citizens. This is ludicrous. You were such a fool that you could not have been adored as a great man in an assembly of persons advanced in knowledge.

8All of us on the surface of the globe are living entities in different forms. Some of us are moving and some not moving. All of us come into existence, remain for some time and are annihilated when the body is again mingled with the earth. We are all simply different transformations of the earth. Different bodies and capacities are simply transformations of the earth that exist in name only, for everything grows out of the earth and when everything is annihilated it again mingles with the earth. In other words, we are but dust, and we shall but be dust. Everyone can consider this point.

9One may say that varieties arise from the planet earth itself. However, although the universe may temporarily appear to be the truth, it ultimately has no real existence. The earth was originally created by a combination of atomic particles, but these particles are impermanent. Actually the atom is not the cause of the universe, although some philosophers think so. It is not a fact that the varieties found in this material world simply result from atomic juxtaposition or combination.

10Since this universe has no real ultimate existence, the things within its shortness, differences, grossness, skinniness, smallness, bigness, result, cause, living symptoms, and materials are all imagined. They are all pots made of the same substance, earth, but they are named differently. The differences are characterized by the substance, nature, predisposition, time and activity. You should know that all these are simply mechanical manifestations created by material nature.

11What, then, is the ultimate truth? The answer is that nondual knowledge is the ultimate truth. It is devoid of the contamination of material qualities. It gives us liberation. It is the one without a second, all-pervading and beyond imagination. The first realization of that knowledge is Brahman. Then Paramātmā, the Supersoul, is realized by the yogīs who try to see Him without grievance. This is the second stage of realization. Finally, full realization of the same supreme knowledge is realized in the Supreme Person. All learned scholars describe the Supreme Person as Vāsudeva, the cause of Brahman, Paramātmā and others.

12My dear King Rahūgaṇa, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realize the Absolute Truth. One cannot realize the Absolute Truth simply by observing celibacy [brahmacarya], strictly following the rules and regulations of householder life, leaving home as a vānaprastha, accepting sannyāsa, or undergoing severe penances in winter by keeping oneself submerged in water or surrounding oneself in summer by fire and the scorching heat of the sun. There are many other processes to understand the Absolute Truth, but the Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee.

13Who are the pure devotees mentioned here? In an assembly of pure devotees, there is no question of discussing material subjects like politics and sociology. In an assembly of pure devotees, there is discussion only of the qualities, forms and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is praised and worshiped with full attention. In the association of pure devotees, by constantly hearing such topics respectfully, even a person who wants to merge into the existence of the Absolute Truth abandons this idea and gradually becomes attached to the service of Vāsudeva.

14In a previous birth I was known as Mahārāja Bharata. I attained perfection by becoming completely detached from material activities through direct experience, and through indirect experience I received understanding from the Vedas. I was fully engaged in the service of the Lord, but due to my misfortune, I became very affectionate to a small deer, so much so that I neglected my spiritual duties. Due to my deep affection for the deer, in my next life I had to accept the body of a deer.

15My dear heroic King, due to my past sincere service to the Lord, I could remember everything of my past life even while in the body of a deer. Because I am aware of the fall-down in my past life, I always keep myself separate from the association of ordinary men. Being afraid of their bad, materialistic association, I wander alone unnoticed by others.

16Simply by associating with exalted devotees, anyone can attain perfection of knowledge and with the sword of knowledge can cut to pieces the illusory associations within this material world. Through the association of devotees, one can engage in the service of the Lord by hearing and chanting [śravaṇam kīrtanam]. Thus one can revive his dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness and, sticking to the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, return home, back to Godhead, even in this life.

SB 5.13: Further Talks Between King Rahūgaṇa and Jaḍa Bharata

The *brāhmaṇa* Jaḍa Bharata became very kind to King Rahūgaṇa, and to disassociate him from the material world, he spoke figuratively of the forest of the material world. He explained that this material world is like a great forest in which one becomes entangled due to association with material life. In this forest there are plunderers (the six senses) as well as carnivorous animals like jackals, wolves and lions (wife, children and other relatives) who are always anxious to suck the blood from the head of the family. The forest plunderers and the carnivorous blood-sucking animals combine to exploit the energy of a man within this material world. In this forest there is also a black hole, covered by grass, into which one may fall. Coming into the forest and being captivated by so many material attractions, one identifies himself with this material world, society, friendship, love and family. Having lost the path and not knowing where to go, being harassed by animals and birds, one is also victimized by many desires. Thus one works very hard within the forest and wanders here and there. He becomes captivated by temporary happiness and becomes aggrieved by so-called distress. Actually one simply suffers in the forest from so-called happiness and distress. Sometimes he is attacked by a snake (deep sleep), and due to the snakebite he loses consciousness and becomes puzzled and bewildered about discharging his duties. Sometimes he is attracted by women other than his wife, and thus he thinks he enjoys extramarital love with another woman. He is attacked by various diseases, by lamentation and by summer and winter. Thus one within the forest of the material world suffers the pains of material existence. Expecting to become happy, the living entity changes his position from one place to another, but actually a materialistic person within the material world is never happy. Being constantly engaged in materialistic activities, he is always disturbed. He forgets that one day he has to die. Although he suffers severely, being illusioned by the material energy, he still hankers after material happiness. In this way he completely forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

By hearing this from Jaḍa Bharata, Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa revived his Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus benefited from Jaḍa Bharata's association. He could understand that his illusion was over, and he begged pardon from Jaḍa Bharata for his miSBehavior. All this was told to Mahārāja Parīkṣit by Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

1Jaḍa Bharata, who had fully realized Brahman, continued: My dear King Rahūgaṇa, the living entity wanders on the path of the material world, which is very difficult for him to traverse, and

he accepts repeated birth and death. Being captivated by the material world under the influence of the three modes of material nature (sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa), the living entity can see only the three fruits of activities under the spell of material nature. These fruits are auspicious, inauspicious and mixed. He thus becomes attached to religion, economic development, sense gratification and the monistic theory of liberation (merging with the Supreme). He works very hard day and night exactly like a merchant who enters a forest to acquire some articles to sell later for profit. However, he cannot really achieve happiness within this material world.

20 King Rahūgaṇa, in this forest of material existence there are six very powerful plunderers. When the conditioned soul enters the forest to acquire some material gain, the six plunderers misguide him. Thus the conditioned merchant does not know how to spend his money, and it is taken away by these plunderers. Like tigers, jackals and other ferocious animals in a forest that are ready to take away a lamb from the custody of its protector, the wife and children enter the heart of the merchant and plunder him in so many ways.

3In this forest there are dense bowers composed of thickets of bushes, grass and creepers. In these bowers the conditioned soul is always disturbed by cruelly biting mosquitoes [envious people]. Sometimes he sees an imaginary palace in the forest, and sometimes he is bewildered by seeing a fleeting fiend or ghost, which appears like a meteor in the sky.

4My dear King, the merchant on the forest path of the material world, his intelligence victimized by home, wealth, relatives and so forth, runs from one place to another in search of success. Sometimes his eyes are covered by the dust of a whirlwind that is to say, in his lust he is captivated by the beauty of his wife, especially during her menstrual period. Thus his eyes are blinded, and he cannot see where to go or what he is doing.

5Wandering in the forest of the material world, the conditioned soul sometimes hears an invisible cricket making harsh sounds, and his ears become very much aggrieved. Sometimes his heart is pained by the sounds of owls, which are just like the harsh words of his enemies. Sometimes he takes shelter of a tree that has no fruits or flowers. He approaches such a tree due to his strong appetite, and thus he suffers. He would like to acquire water, but he is simply illusioned by a mirage, and he runs after it.

6Sometimes the conditioned soul jumps into a shallow river, or being short of food grains, he goes to beg food from people who are not at all charitable. Sometimes he suffers from the burning heat of household life, which is like a forest fire, and sometimes he becomes sad to have his wealth, which is as dear as life, plundered by kings in the name of heavy income taxes.

7Sometimes, being defeated or plundered by a superior, powerful agent, a living entity loses all his possessions. He then becomes very morose, and lamenting their loss, he sometimes becomes unconscious. Sometimes he imagines a great palatial city in which he desires to live happily with his family members and riches. He thinks himself fully satisfied if this is possible, but such so-called happiness continues only for a moment.

8Sometimes the merchant in the forest wants to climb the hills and mountains, but due to insufficient footwear, his feet are pricked by small stone fragments and by thorns on the mountain. Being pricked by them, he becomes very aggrieved. Sometimes a person who is very attached to his family becomes overwhelmed with hunger, and due to his miserable condition he becomes furious with his family members.

9The conditioned soul in the material forest is sometimes swallowed by a python or crushed. At such a time he is left lying in the forest like a dead person, devoid of consciousness and

knowledge. Sometimes other poisonous snakes bite him. Being blind to his consciousness, he falls down into a dark well of hellish life with no hope of being rescued.

10 Sometimes, in order to have a little insignificant sex enjoyment, one searches after debauched women. In this attempt, one is insulted and chastised by the women's kinsmen. This is like going to take honey from a beehive and being attacked by the bees. Sometimes, after spending lots of money, one may acquire another woman for some extra sense enjoyment. Unfortunately, the object of sense enjoyment, the woman, is taken away or kidnapped by another debauchee.

11 Sometimes the living entity is busy counteracting the natural disturbances of freezing cold, scorching heat, strong wind, excessive rainfall and so forth. When he is unable to do so, he becomes very unhappy. Sometimes he is cheated in business transactions one after another. In this way, by cheating, living entities create enmity among themselves.

12 On the forest path of material existence, sometimes a person is without wealth and due to this does not have a proper home, bed or sitting place, nor proper family enjoyment. He therefore goes to beg money from others, but when his desires are not fulfilled by begging, he wants to borrow or steal the property of others. Thus he is insulted in society.

13 Due to monetary transactions, relationships become very strained and end in enmity. Sometimes the husband and wife walk on the path of material progress, and to maintain their relationship they work very hard. Sometimes due to scarcity of money or due to diseased conditions, they are embarrassed and almost die.

14 My dear King, on the forest path of material life, first a person is bereft of his father and mother, and after their death he becomes attached to his newly born children. In this way he wanders on the path of material progress and is eventually embarrassed. Nonetheless, no one knows how to get out of this, even up to the moment of death.

15 There were and are many political and social heroes who have conquered enemies of equal power, yet due to their ignorance in believing that the land is theirs, they fight one another and lay down their lives in battle. They are not able to take up the spiritual path accepted by those in the renounced order. Although they are big heroes and political leaders, they cannot take to the path of spiritual realization.

16 Sometimes the living entity in the forest of material existence takes shelter of creepers and desires to hear the chirping of the birds in those creepers. Being afraid of roaring lions in the forest, he makes friends with cranes, herons and vultures.

17 Being cheated by them, the living entity in the forest of the material world tries to give up the association of these so-called yogīs, svāmīs and incarnations and come to the association of real devotees, but due to misfortune he cannot follow the instructions of the spiritual master or advanced devotees; therefore he gives up their company and again returns to the association of monkeys who are simply interested in sense gratification and women. He derives satisfaction by associating with sense gratifiers and enjoying sex and intoxication. In this way he spoils his life simply by indulging in sex and intoxication. Looking into the faces of other sense gratifiers, he becomes forgetful and thus approaches death.

18 When the living entity becomes exactly like a monkey jumping from one branch to another, he remains in the tree of household life without any profit but sex. Thus he is kicked by his wife just like the he-ass. Unable to gain release, he remains helplessly in that position. Sometimes he falls victim to an incurable disease, which is like falling into a mountain cave. He becomes afraid of death, which is like the elephant in the back of that cave, and he remains

stranded, grasping at the twigs and branches of a creeper.

19O killer of enemies, Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa, if the conditioned soul somehow or other gets out of his dangerous position, he again returns to his home to enjoy sex life, for that is the way of attachment. Thus, under the spell of the Lord's material energy, he continues to loiter in the forest of material existence. He does not discover his real interest even at the point of death.

20My dear King Rahūgaṇa, you are also a victim of the external energy, being situated on the path of attraction to material pleasure. So that you may become an equal friend to all living entities, I now advise you to give up your kingly position and the rod by which you punish criminals. Give up attraction to the sense objects and take up the sword of knowledge sharpened by devotional service. Then you will be able to cut the hard knot of illusory energy and cross to the other side of the ocean of nescience.

21King Rahūgaṇa said: This birth as a human being is the best of all. Even birth among the demigods in the heavenly planets is not as glorious as birth as a human being on this earth. What is the use of the exalted position of a demigod? In the heavenly planets, due to profuse material comforts, there is no possibility of associating with devotees.

22It is not at all wonderful that simply by being covered by the dust of your lotus feet, one immediately attains the platform of pure devotional service to Adhokṣaja, which is not available even to great demigods like Brahmā. By associating with you just for a moment, I am now freed from all argument, false prestige and lack of discrimination, which are the roots of entanglement in the material world. Now I am free from all these problems.

23I offer my respectful obeisances unto the great personalities, whether they walk on the earth's surface as children, young boys, avadhūtas or great brāhmaṇas. Even if they are hidden under different guises, I offer my respects to all of them. By their mercy, may there be good fortune in the royal dynasties that are always offending them.

24Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, O son of mother Uttarā, there were some waves of dissatisfaction in the mind of Jaḍa Bharata due to his being insulted by King Rahūgaṇa, who made him carry his palanquin, but Jaḍa Bharata neglected this, and his heart again became calm and quiet like an ocean. Although King Rahūgaṇa had insulted him, he was a great paramahansa. Being a Vaiṣṇava, he was naturally very kindhearted, and he therefore told the King about the constitutional position of the soul. He then forgot the insult because King Rahūgaṇa pitifully begged pardon at his lotus feet. After this, he began to wander all over the earth, just as before.

25After receiving lessons from the great devotee Jaḍa Bharata, King Rahūgaṇa of the state of Sauvīra became completely aware of the constitutional position of the soul. He thus gave up the bodily conception completely. My dear King, whoever takes shelter of the servant of the servant of the Lord is certainly glorified because he can without difficulty give up the bodily conception.

26King Parīkṣit then told Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear lord, O great devotee sage, you are omniscient. You have very nicely described the position of the conditioned soul, who is compared to a merchant in the forest. From these instructions intelligent men can understand that the senses of a person in the bodily conception are like rogues and thieves in that forest, and one's wife and children are like jackals and other ferocious animals. However, it is not very easy for the unintelligent to understand the purport of this story because it is difficult to extricate the exact meaning from the allegory. I therefore request Your Holiness to give the direct meaning.

SB 5.14: The Material World as the Great Forest of Enjoyment

The direct meaning of the forest of material existence is given in this chapter. Merchants sometimes enter the forest to collect many rare things and sell them at a good profit in the city, but the forest path is always bedecked with dangers. When the pure soul wants to give up the Lord's service to enjoy the material world, Kṛṣṇa certainly gives him a chance to enter the material world. As stated in the *Prema-vivarta:kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha haṣā bhoga vāṣchā kare*. This is the reason the pure spirit soul falls down to the material world. Due to his activities under the influence of the three modes of material nature, the living entity takes different positions in different species. Sometimes he is a demigod in the heavenly planets and sometimes a most insignificant creature in the lower planetary systems. In this regard, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says, *nānāyoni sadā phire*: the living entity passes through various species. *Kardarya bhakṣaṇa kare*: he is obliged to eat and enjoy abominable things. *Tāra janma adhaḥ-pāte yāya*: in this way his whole life is spoiled. Without the protection of an all-merciful Vaiṣṇava, the conditioned soul cannot get out of the clutches of *māyā*. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā (manaḥsaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛti-sthāni karṣati)*, the living entity begins material life with his mind and the five knowledge-acquiring senses, and with these he struggles for existence within the material world. These senses are compared to rogues and thieves within the forest. They take away a man's knowledge and place him in a network of nescience. Thus the senses are like rogues and thieves that plunder his spiritual knowledge. Over and above this, there are family members, wife and children, who are exactly like ferocious animals in the forest. The business of such ferocious animals is to eat a man's flesh. The living entity allows himself to be attacked by jackals and foxes (wife and children), and thus his real spiritual life is finished. In the forest of material life, everyone is envious like mosquitoes, and rats and mice are always creating disturbances. Everyone in this material world is placed in many awkward positions and surrounded by envious people and disturbing animals. The result is that the living entity in the material world is always plundered and bitten by many living entities. Nonetheless, despite these disturbances, he does not want to give up his family life, and he continues his fruitive activities in an attempt to become happy in the future. He thus becomes more and more entangled in the results of *karma*, and thus he is forced to act impiously. His witnesses are the sun during the day and the moon during the night. The demigods also witness, but the conditioned soul thinks that his attempts at sense gratification are not being witnessed by anyone. Sometimes, when he is detected, he temporarily renounces everything, but due to his great attachment for the body, his renunciation is given up before he can attain perfection.

In this material world there are many envious people. There is the tax-exacting government, which is compared to an owl, and there are invisible crickets that create unbearable sounds. The conditioned soul is certainly greatly harassed by the agents of material nature, but his intelligence is lost due to undesirable association. In an attempt to gain relief from the disturbances of material existence, he falls victim to so-called *yogīs*, *sādhus* and incarnations who can display some magic but who do not understand devotional service. Sometimes the conditioned soul is bereft of all money, and consequently he becomes unkind to his family members. In this material world there is not a pinch of actual happiness, for which the conditioned soul is longing life after life. The government officials are like carnivorous Rākṣasas who exact heavy taxes for the maintenance of the government. The hard-working conditioned soul is very saddened due to these heavy taxes.

The path of fruitive activities leads to difficult mountains, and sometimes the conditioned soul wants to cross these mountains, but he is never successful, and consequently he becomes more and more aggrieved and disappointed. Becoming materially and financially embarrassed, the conditioned soul unnecessarily chastises his family. In the material condition there are four

principal needs, out of which sleep is compared to a python. When asleep, the conditioned soul completely forgets his real existence, and in sleep he does not feel the tribulations of material life. Sometimes, being in need of money, the conditioned soul steals and cheats, although he may apparently be associated with devotees for spiritual advancement. His only business is getting out of the clutches of *māyā*, but due to improper guidance he becomes more and more entangled in material dealings. This material world is simply an embarrassment and is composed of tribulations presented as happiness, distress, attachment, enmity and envy. On the whole it is simply full of tribulation and misery. When a person loses his intelligence due to attachment to wife and sex, his entire consciousness becomes polluted. He thus only thinks of the association of women. The time factor, which is like a serpent, takes away everyone's life, including that of Lord Brahmā and the insignificant ant. Sometimes the conditioned soul tries to save himself from inexorable time and thus takes shelter of some bogus savior. Unfortunately, the bogus savior cannot even save himself. How, then, can he protect others? The bogus saviors do not care for bona fide knowledge received from qualified *brāhmaṇas* and Vedic sources. Their only business is indulging in sex and recommending sexual freedom even for widows. Thus they are like monkeys in the forest. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī thus explains the material forest and its difficult path to Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

1When King Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī about the direct meaning of the material forest, Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied as follows: My dear King, a man belonging to the mercantile community [vaṇik] is always interested in earning money. Sometimes he enters the forest to acquire some cheap commodities like wood and earth and sell them in the city at good prices. Similarly, the conditioned soul, being greedy, enters this material world for some material profit. Gradually he enters the deepest part of the forest, not really knowing how to get out. Having entered the material world, the pure soul becomes conditioned by the material atmosphere, which is created by the external energy under the control of Lord Viṣṇu. Thus the living entity comes under the control of the external energy, *daivī māyā*. Living independently and bewildered in the forest, he does not attain the association of devotees who are always engaged in the service of the Lord. Once in the bodily conception, he gets different types of bodies one after the other under the influence of material energy and impelled by the modes of material nature [sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa]. In this way the conditioned soul goes sometimes to the heavenly planets, sometimes to the earthly planets and sometimes to the lower planets and lower species. Thus he suffers continuously due to different types of bodies. These sufferings and pains are sometimes mixed. Sometimes they are very severe, and sometimes they are not. These bodily conditions are acquired due to the conditioned soul's mental speculation. He uses his mind and five senses to acquire knowledge, and these bring about the different bodies and different conditions. Using the senses under the control of the external energy, *māyā*, the living entity suffers the miserable conditions of material existence. He is actually searching for relief, but he is generally baffled, although sometimes he is relieved after great difficulty. Struggling for existence in this way, he cannot get the shelter of pure devotees, who are like bumblebees engaged in loving service at the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu.

2In the forest of material existence, the uncontrolled senses are like plunderers. The conditioned soul may earn some money for the advancement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but unfortunately the uncontrolled senses plunder his money through sense gratification. The senses are plunderers because they make one spend his money unnecessarily for seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, hearing, desiring and willing. In this way the conditioned soul is obliged to gratify his senses, and thus all his money is spent. This money is actually acquired for the execution of religious principles, but it is taken away by the plundering senses.

3My dear King, family members in this material world go under the names of wife and children, but actually they behave like tigers and jackals. A herdsman tries to protect his sheep

to the best of his ability, but the tigers and foxes take them away by force. Similarly, although a miserly man wants to guard his money very carefully, his family members take away all his assets forcibly, even though he is very vigilant.

4Every year the plowman plows over his grain field, completely uprooting all weeds. Nonetheless, the seeds lie there and, not being completely burned, again come up with the plants sown in the field. Even after being plowed under, the weeds come up densely. Similarly, the gr̥hastha-āśrama [family life] is a field of fruitive activity. Unless the desire to enjoy family life is completely burned out, it grows up again and again. Even though camphor may be removed from a pot, the pot nonetheless retains the aroma of camphor. As long as the seeds of desire are not destroyed, fruitive activities are not destroyed.

5Sometimes the conditioned soul in household life, being attached to material wealth and possessions, is disturbed by gadflies and mosquitoes, and sometimes locusts, birds of prey and rats give him trouble. Nonetheless, he still wanders down the path of material existence. Due to ignorance he becomes lusty and engages in fruitive activity. Because his mind is absorbed in these activities, he sees the material world as permanent, although it is temporary like a phantasmagoria, a house in the sky.

6Sometimes in this house in the sky [gandharva-pura] the conditioned soul drinks, eats and has sex. Being overly attached, he chases after the objects of the senses just as a deer chases a mirage in the desert.

7Sometimes the living entity is interested in the yellow stool known as gold and runs after it. That gold is the source of material opulence and envy, and it can enable one to afford illicit sex, gambling, meat-eating and intoxication. Those whose minds are overcome by the mode of passion are attracted by the color of gold, just as a man suffering from cold in the forest runs after a phosphorescent light in a marshy land, considering it to be fire.

8Sometimes the conditioned soul is absorbed in finding residential quarters or apartments and getting a supply of water and riches to maintain his body. Absorbed in acquiring a variety of necessities, he forgets everything and perpetually runs around the forest of material existence.

9Sometimes, as if blinded by the dust of a whirlwind, the conditioned soul sees the beauty of the opposite sex, which is called pramadā. Being thus bewildered, he is raised upon the lap of a woman, and at that time his good senses are overcome by the force of passion. He thus becomes almost blind with lusty desire and disobeys the rules and regulations governing sex life. He does not know that his disobedience is witnessed by different demigods, and he enjoys illicit sex in the dead of night, not seeing the future punishment awaiting him.

10The conditioned soul sometimes personally appreciates the futility of sense enjoyment in the material world, and he sometimes considers material enjoyment to be full of miseries. However, due to his strong bodily conception, his memory is destroyed, and again and again he runs after material enjoyment, just as an animal runs after a mirage in the desert.

11Sometimes the conditioned soul is very aggrieved by the chastisement of his enemies and government servants, who use harsh words against him directly or indirectly. At that time his heart and ears become very saddened. Such chastisement may be compared to the sounds of owls and crickets.

12Due to his pious activities in previous lives, the conditioned soul attains material facilities in this life, but when they are finished, he takes shelter of wealth and riches, which cannot help him in this life or the next. Because of this, he approaches the living dead who possess these things. Such people are compared to impure trees, creepers and poisonous wells.

13 Sometimes, to mitigate distresses in this forest of the material world, the conditioned soul receives cheap blessings from atheists. He then loses all intelligence in their association. This is exactly like jumping in a shallow river. As a result one simply breaks his head. He is not able to mitigate his sufferings from the heat, and in both ways he suffers. The misguided conditioned soul also approaches so-called sādhus and svāmīs who preach against the principles of the Vedas. He does not receive benefit from them, either in the present or in the future.

14 In this material world, when the conditioned soul cannot arrange for his own maintenance, despite exploiting others, he tries to exploit his own father or son, taking away that relative's possessions, although they may be very insignificant. If he cannot acquire things from his father, son or other relatives, he is prepared to give them all kinds of trouble.

15 In this world, family life is exactly like a blazing fire in the forest. There is not the least happiness, and gradually one becomes more and more implicated in unhappiness. In household life, there is nothing favorable for perpetual happiness. Being implicated in home life, the conditioned soul is burned by the fire of lamentation. Sometimes he condemns himself as being very unfortunate, and sometimes he claims that he suffers because he performed no pious activities in his previous life.

16 Government men are always like carnivorous demons called Rākṣasas [man-eaters]. Sometimes these government men turn against the conditioned soul and take away all his accumulated wealth. Being bereft of his life's reserved wealth, the conditioned soul loses all enthusiasm. Indeed, it is as though he loses his life.

17 Sometimes the conditioned soul imagines that his father or grandfather has again come in the form of his son or grandson. In this way he feels the happiness one sometimes feels in a dream, and the conditioned soul sometimes takes pleasure in such mental concoctions.

18 In household life one is ordered to execute many yajñas and fruitive activities, especially the vivāha-yajña [the marriage ceremony for sons and daughters] and the sacred thread ceremony. These are all the duties of a gṛhastha, and they are very extensive and troublesome to execute. They are compared to a big hill over which one must cross when one is attached to material activities. A person desiring to cross over these ritualistic ceremonies certainly feels pains like the piercing of thorns and pebbles endured by one attempting to climb a hill. Thus the conditioned soul suffers unlimitedly.

19 Sometimes, due to bodily hunger and thirst, the conditioned soul becomes so disturbed that he loses his patience and becomes angry with his own beloved sons, daughters and wife. Thus, being unkind to them, he suffers all the more.

20 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued speaking to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: My dear King, sleep is exactly like a python. Those who wander in the forest of material life are always devoured by the python of sleep. Being bitten by this python, they always remain in the darkness of ignorance. They are like dead bodies thrown in a distant forest. Thus the conditioned souls cannot understand what is going on in life.

21 In the forest of the material world, the conditioned soul is sometimes bitten by envious enemies, which are compared to serpents and other creatures. Through the tricks of the enemy, the conditioned soul falls from his prestigious position. Being anxious, he cannot even sleep properly. He thus becomes more and more unhappy, and he gradually loses his intelligence and consciousness. In that state he becomes almost perpetually like a blind man who has fallen into a dark well of ignorance.

22 The conditioned soul is sometimes attracted to the little happiness derived from sense

gratification. Thus he has illicit sex or steals another's property. At such a time he may be arrested by the government or chastised by the woman's husband or protector. Thus simply for a little material satisfaction, he falls into a hellish condition and is put into jail for rape, kidnapping, theft and so forth.

23 Learned scholars and transcendentalists therefore condemn the materialistic path of fruitive activity because it is the original source and breeding ground of material miseries, both in this life and in the next.

24 Stealing or cheating another person out of his money, the conditioned soul somehow or other keeps it in his possession and escapes punishment. Then another man, named Devadatta, cheats him and takes the money away. Similarly, another man, named Viṣṇumitra, steals the money from Devadatta and takes it away. In any case, the money does not stay in one place. It passes from one hand to another. Ultimately no one can enjoy the money, and it remains the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

25 Being unable to protect himself from the threefold miseries of material existence, the conditioned soul becomes very morose and lives a life of lamentation. These threefold miseries are miseries suffered by mental calamity at the hands of the demigods [such as freezing wind and scorching heat], miseries offered by other living entities, and miseries arising from the mind and body themselves.

26 As far as transactions with money are concerned, if one person cheats another by a farthing or less, they become enemies.

27 In this materialistic life, there are many difficulties, as I have just mentioned, and all of these are insurmountable. In addition, there are difficulties arising from so-called happiness, distress, attachment, hate, fear, false prestige, illusion, madness, lamentation, bewilderment, greed, envy, enmity, insult, hunger, thirst, tribulation, disease, birth, old age and death. All these combine together to give the materialistic conditioned soul nothing but misery.

28 Sometimes the conditioned soul is attracted by illusion personified (his wife or girlfriend) and becomes eager to be embraced by a woman. Thus he loses his intelligence as well as knowledge of life's goal. At that time, no longer attempting spiritual cultivation, he becomes overly attached to his wife or girlfriend and tries to provide her with a suitable apartment. Again, he becomes very busy under the shelter of that home and is captivated by the talks, glances and activities of his wife and children. In this way he loses his Kṛṣṇa consciousness and throws himself in the dense darkness of material existence.

29 The personal weapon used by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the disc, is called hari-cakra, the disc of Hari. This cakra is the wheel of time. It expands from the beginning of the atoms up to the time of Brahmā's death, and it controls all activities. It is always revolving and spending the lives of the living entities, from Lord Brahmā down to an insignificant blade of grass. Thus one changes from infancy, to childhood, to youth and maturity, and thus one approaches the end of life. It is impossible to check this wheel of time. This wheel is very exacting because it is the personal weapon of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sometimes the conditioned soul, fearing the approach of death, wants to worship someone who can save him from imminent danger. Yet he does not care for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose weapon is the indefatigable time factor. The conditioned soul instead takes shelter of a man-made god described in unauthorized scriptures. Such gods are like buzzards, vultures, herons and crows. Vedic scriptures do not refer to them. Imminent death is like the attack of a lion, and neither vultures, buzzards, crows nor herons can save one from such an attack. One who takes shelter of unauthorized man-made gods cannot be saved from the clutches of death.

30The pseudo svāmīs, yogīs and incarnations who do not believe in the Supreme Personality of Godhead are known as pāṣaṇḍīs. They themselves are fallen and cheated because they do not know the real path of spiritual advancement, and whoever goes to them is certainly cheated in his turn. When one is thus cheated, he sometimes takes shelter of the real followers of Vedic principles [brāhmaṇas or those in Kṛṣṇa consciousness], who teach everyone how to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead according to the Vedic rituals. However, being unable to stick to these principles, these rascals again fall down and take shelter among śūdras who are very expert in making arrangements for sex indulgence. Sex is very prominent among animals like monkeys, and such people who are enlivened by sex may be called descendants of monkeys.

31In this way the descendants of the monkeys intermingle with each other, and they are generally known as śūdras. Without hesitating, they live and move freely, not knowing the goal of life. They are captivated simply by seeing the faces of one another, which remind them of sense gratification. They are always engaged in material activities, known as grāmya-karma, and they work hard for material benefit. Thus they forget completely that one day their small life spans will be finished and they will be degraded in the evolutionary cycle.

32Just as a monkey jumps from one tree to another, the conditioned soul jumps from one body to another. As the monkey is ultimately captured by the hunter and is unable to get out of captivity, the conditioned soul, being captivated by momentary sex pleasure, becomes attached to different types of bodies and is engaged in family life. Family life affords the conditioned soul a festival of momentary sex pleasure, and thus he is completely unable to get out of the material clutches.

33In this material world, when the conditioned soul forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and does not care for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he simply engages in different types of mischievous and sinful activities. He is then subjected to the threefold miseries, and, out of fear of the elephant of death, he falls into the darkness found in a mountain cave.

34The conditioned soul suffers many miserable bodily conditions, such as being affected by severe cold and strong winds. He also suffers due to the activities of other living beings and due to natural disturbances. When he is unable to counteract them and has to remain in a miserable condition, he naturally becomes very morose because he wants to enjoy material facilities.

35Sometimes conditioned souls exchange money, but in due course of time, enmity arises because of cheating. Although there may be a tiny profit, the conditioned souls cease to be friends and become enemies.

36Sometimes, having no money, the conditioned soul does not get sufficient accommodations. Sometimes he doesn't even have a place to sit, nor does he have the other necessities. In other words, he falls into scarcity, and at that time, when he is unable to secure the necessities by fair means, he decides to seize the property of others unfairly. When he cannot get the things he wants, he simply receives insults from others and thus becomes very morose.

37Although people may be enemies, in order to fulfill their desires again and again, they sometimes get married. Unfortunately, these marriages do not last very long, and the people involved are separated again by divorce or other means.

38The path of this material world is full of material miseries, and various troubles disturb the conditioned souls. Sometimes he loses, and sometimes he gains. In either case, the path is full of danger. Sometimes the conditioned soul is separated from his father by death or other

circumstances. Leaving him aside he gradually becomes attached to others, such as his children. In this way, the conditioned soul is sometimes illusioned and afraid. Sometimes he cries loudly out of fear. Sometimes he is happy maintaining his family, and sometimes he is overjoyed and sings melodiously. In this way he becomes entangled and forgets his separation from the Supreme Personality of Godhead since time immemorial. Thus he traverses the dangerous path of material existence, and on this path he is not at all happy. Those who are self-realized simply take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in order to get out of this dangerous material existence. Without accepting the devotional path, one cannot get out of the clutches of material existence. The conclusion is that no one can be happy in material life. One must take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

39 Sainly persons, who are friends to all living entities, have a peaceful consciousness. They have controlled their senses and minds, and they easily attain the path of liberation, the path back to Godhead. Being unfortunate and attached to the miserable material conditions, a materialistic person cannot associate with them.

40 There were many great saintly kings who were very expert in performing sacrificial rituals and very competent in conquering other kingdoms, yet despite their power they could not attain the loving service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is because those great kings could not even conquer the false consciousness of “I am this body, and this is my property.” Thus they simply created enmity with rival kings, fought with them and died without having discharged life’s real mission.

41 When the conditioned soul accepts the shelter of the creeper of fruitive activity, he may be elevated by his pious activities to higher planetary systems and thus gain liberation from hellish conditions, but unfortunately he cannot remain there. After reaping the results of his pious activities, he has to return to the lower planetary systems. In this way he perpetually goes up and comes down.

42 Having summarized the teachings of Jaḍa Bharata, Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King Parīkṣit, the path indicated by Jaḍa Bharata is like the path followed by Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord, and ordinary kings are just like flies. Flies cannot follow the path of Garuḍa, and to date none of the great kings and victorious leaders could follow this path of devotional service, not even mentally.

43 While in the prime of life, the great Mahārāja Bharata gave up everything because he was fond of serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Uttamaśloka. He gave up his beautiful wife, nice children, great friends and an enormous empire. Although these things were very difficult to give up, Mahārāja Bharata was so exalted that he gave them up just as one gives up stool after evacuating. Such was the greatness of His Majesty.

44 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, the activities of Bharata Mahārāja are wonderful. He gave up everything difficult for others to give up. He gave up his kingdom, his wife and his family. His opulence was so great that even the demigods envied it, yet he gave it up. It was quite befitting a great personality like him to be a great devotee. He could renounce everything because he was so attracted to the beauty, opulence, reputation, knowledge, strength and renunciation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is so attractive that one can give up all desirable things for His sake. Indeed, even liberation is considered insignificant for those whose minds are attracted to the loving service of the Lord.

45 Even though in the body of a deer, Mahārāja Bharata did not forget the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore when he was giving up the body of a deer, he loudly uttered the following prayer: “The Supreme Personality of Godhead is sacrifice personified. He gives the

results of ritualistic activity. He is the protector of religious systems, the personification of mystic yoga, the source of all knowledge, the controller of the entire creation, and the Supersoul in every living entity. He is beautiful and attractive. I am quitting this body offering obeisances unto Him and hoping that I may perpetually engage in His transcendental loving service.” Uttering this, Mahārāja Bharata left his body.

46Devotees interested in hearing and chanting [śravaṇam kīrtanam] regularly discuss the pure characteristics of Bharata Mahārāja and praise his activities. If one submissively hears and chants about the all-auspicious Mahārāja Bharata, one’s life span and material opulences certainly increase. One can become very famous and easily attain promotion to the heavenly planets, or attain liberation by merging into the existence of the Lord. Whatever one desires can be attained simply by hearing, chanting and glorifying the activities of Mahārāja Bharata. In this way, one can fulfill all his material and spiritual desires. One does not have to ask anyone else for these things, for simply by studying the life of Mahārāja Bharata, one can attain all desirable things.

SB 5.15: The Glories of the Descendants of King Priyavrata

In this chapter the descendants of Bharata Mahārāja and many other kings are described. The son of Mahārāja Bharata was named Sumati. He followed the path of liberation given by Ṛṣabhadeva. Some people mistakenly thought Sumati to be the direct incarnation of Lord Buddha. The son of Sumati was Devatājī, and his son was Devadyumna. Devadyumna’s son was Parameṣṭhī, and his son was Pratīha. Pratīha was a very great devotee of Lord Viṣṇu, and he had three sons, named Pratihartā, Prastotā and Udgātā. Pratihartā had two sons, Aja and Bhūmā. The son of Bhūmā was Udgītha, and the son of Udgītha was Prastāva. The son of Prastāva was Vibhu, and the son of Vibhu was Pṛthuṣeṇa, whose son was Nakta. The wife of Nakta, Druti, gave birth to Gaya, who was a very famous and saintly king. Actually King Gaya was a partial incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, and because of his great devotion to Lord Viṣṇu he received the title Mahāpuruṣa. King Gaya had sons named Citraratha, Sumati and Avarodhana. The son of Citraratha was the emperor Samrāt, and his son was Marīci, whose son was Bindu. Bindu’s son was Madhu, and Madhu’s son was Vīravrata. Vīravrata’s two sons were Manthu and Pramanthu, and the son of Manthu was Bhauvana. The son of Bhauvana was Tvaṣṭā, and the son of Tvaṣṭā was Viraja, who glorified the whole dynasty. Viraja had one hundred sons and one daughter. Of these, the son named Śatajit became very famous.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The son of Mahārāja Bharata known as Sumati followed the path of Ṛṣabhadeva, but in the Age of Kali some unscrupulous people will imagine him to be Lord Buddha himself. These people, who will actually be atheistic and of bad character, will interpret the Vedic principles in an imaginary, infamous way to support their activities. Thus these sinful people will accept Sumati as Lord Buddhadeva and propagate the theory that everyone should follow the principles of Sumati. In this way they will be carried away by mental concoction.

2From Sumati, a son named Devatājī was born by the womb of his wife named Vṛddhasenā.

3Thereafter, in the womb of Āsurī, the wife of Devatājī, a son named Devadyumna was begotten. Devadyumna begot in the womb of his wife, Dhenumatī, a son named Parameṣṭhī. Parameṣṭhī begot a son named Pratīha in the womb of his wife, Suvarcalā.

4King Pratīha personally propagated the principles of self-realization. In this way, not only was he purified, but he became a great devotee of the Supreme Person, Lord Viṣṇu, and directly realized Him.

5In the womb of his wife Suvarcalā, Pratīha begot three sons, named Pratihartā, Prastotā and Udgātā. These three sons were very expert in performing Vedic rituals. Pratihartā begot two sons, named Aja and Bhūmā, in the womb of his wife, named Stutī.

6In the womb of his wife, Rṣikulyā, King Bhūmā begot a son named Udgītha. From Udgītha's wife, Devakulyā, a son named Prastāva was born, and Prastāva begot a son named Vibhu through his wife, Niyutsā. In the womb of his wife, Ratī, Vibhu begot a son named Pṛthuṣeṇa. Pṛthuṣeṇa begot a son named Nakta in the womb of his wife, named Ākūti. Nakta's wife was Druti, and from her womb the great King Gaya was born. Gaya was very famous and pious; he was the best of saintly kings. Lord Viṣṇu and His expansions, who are meant to protect the universe, are always situated in the transcendental mode of goodness, known as viśuddha-sattva. Being the direct expansion of Lord Viṣṇu, King Gaya was also situated in the viśuddha-sattva. Because of this, Mahārāja Gaya was fully equipped with transcendental knowledge. Therefore he was called Mahāpuruṣa.

7King Gaya gave full protection and security to the citizens so that their personal property would not be disturbed by undesirable elements. He also saw that there was sufficient food to feed all the citizens. [This is called poṣaṇa.] He would sometimes distribute gifts to the citizens to satisfy them. [This is called pṛiṇana.] He would sometimes call meetings and satisfy the citizens with sweet words. [This is called upalālana.] He would also give them good instructions on how to become first-class citizens. [This is called anuśāsana.] Such were the characteristics of King Gaya's royal order. Besides all this, King Gaya was a householder who strictly observed the rules and regulations of household life. He performed sacrifices and was an unalloyed pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He was called Mahāpuruṣa because as a king he gave the citizens all facilities, and as a householder he executed all his duties so that at the end he became a strict devotee of the Supreme Lord. As a devotee, he was always ready to give respect to other devotees and to engage in the devotional service of the Lord. This is the bhakti-yoga process. Due to all these transcendental activities, King Gaya was always free from the bodily conception. He was full in Brahman realization, and consequently he was always jubilant. He did not experience material lamentation. Although he was perfect in all respects, he was not proud, nor was he anxious to rule the kingdom.

8My dear King Parīkṣit, those who are learned scholars in the histories of the Purāṇas eulogize and glorify King Gaya with the following verses.

9The great King Gaya used to perform all kinds of Vedic rituals. He was highly intelligent and expert in studying all the Vedic literatures. He maintained the religious principles and possessed all kinds of opulence. He was a leader among gentlemen and a servant of the devotees. He was a totally qualified plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore who could equal him in the performance of gigantic ritualistic ceremonies?

10All the chaste and honest daughters of Mahārāja Dakṣa, such as Śraddhā, Mairī and Dayā, whose blessings were always effective, bathed Mahārāja Gaya with sanctified water. Indeed, they were very satisfied with Mahārāja Gaya. The planet earth personified came as a cow, and, as though she saw her calf, she delivered milk profusely when she saw all the good qualities of Mahārāja Gaya. In other words, Mahārāja Gaya was able to derive all benefits from the earth and thus satisfy the desires of his citizens. However, he personally had no desire.

11Although King Gaya had no personal desire for sense gratification, all his desires were fulfilled by virtue of his performance of Vedic rituals. All the kings with whom Mahārāja Gaya had to fight were forced to fight on religious principles. They were very satisfied with his fighting, and they would present all kinds of gifts to him. Similarly, all the brāhmaṇas in his

kingdom were very satisfied with King Gaya's munificent charities. Consequently the brāhmaṇas contributed a sixth of their pious activities for King Gaya's benefit in the next life.

12In Mahārāja Gaya's sacrifices, there was a great supply of the intoxicant known as soma. King Indra used to come and become intoxicated by drinking large quantities of soma-rasa. Also, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu [the yajña-puruṣa] also came and personally accepted all the sacrifices offered unto Him with pure and firm devotion in the sacrificial arena.

13When the Supreme Lord is pleased by a person's actions, automatically all the demigods, human beings, animals, birds, bees, creepers, trees, grass and all other living entities, beginning with Lord Brahmā, are pleased. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supersoul of everyone, and He is by nature fully pleased. Nonetheless, He came to the arena of Mahārāja Gaya and said, "I am fully pleased."

14-15In the womb of Gayantī, Mahārāja Gaya begot three sons, named Citraratha, Sugati and Avarodhana. In the womb of his wife Ūṛṇā, Citraratha begot a son named Samrāt. The wife of Samrāt was Utkalā, and in her womb Samrāt begot a son named Marīci. In the womb of his wife Bindumatī, Marīci begot a son named Bindu. In the womb of his wife Saraghā, Bindu begot a son named Madhu. In the womb of his wife named Sumanā, Madhu begot a son named Vīravrata. In the womb of his wife Bhojā, Vīravrata begot two sons named Manthu and Pramanthu. In the womb of his wife Satyā, Manthu begot a son named Bhauvana, and in the womb of his wife Dūṣaṇā, Bhauvana begot a son named Tvaṣṭā. In the womb of his wife Virocanā, Tvaṣṭā begot a son named Viraja. The wife of Viraja was Viṣūcī, and in her womb Viraja begot one hundred sons and one daughter. Of all these sons, the son named Śatajit was predominant.

16There is a famous verse about King Viraja. "Because of his high qualities and wide fame, King Viraja became the jewel of the dynasty of King Priyavrata, just as Lord Viṣṇu, by His transcendental potency, decorates and blesses the demigods."

SB 5.16: A Description of Jambūdvīpa

While describing the character of Mahārāja Priyavrata and his descendants, Śukadeva Gosvāmī also described Meru Mountain and the planetary system known as Bhū-maṇḍala. Bhū-maṇḍala is like a lotus flower, and its seven islands are compared to the whorl of the lotus. The place known as Jambūdvīpa is in the middle of that whorl. In Jambūdvīpa there is a mountain known as Sumeru, which is made of solid gold. The height of this mountain is 84,000 *yojanas*, of which 16,000 *yojanas* are below the earth. Its width is estimated to be 32,000 *yojanas* at its summit and 16,000 *yojanas* at its foot. (One *yojana* equals approximately eight miles.) This king of mountains, Sumeru, is the support of the planet earth.

On the southern side of the land known as Ilāvṛta-varṣa are the mountains known as Himavān, Hemakūṭa and Niṣadha, and on the northern side are the mountains Nīla, Śveta and Śrīga. Similarly, on the eastern and western side there are Mālyavān and Gandhamādana, two large mountains. Surrounding Sumeru Mountain are four mountains known as Mandara, Merumandara, Supārśva and Kumuda, each 10,000 *yojanas* long and 10,000 *yojanas* high. On these four mountains there are trees 1,100 *yojanas* high a mango tree, a rose apple tree, a kadamba tree and a banyan tree. There are also lakes full of milk, honey, sugarcane juice and pure water. These lakes can fulfill all desires. There are also gardens named Nandana, Citraratha, Vaibhrājaka and Sarvatobhadra. On the side of Supārśva Mountain is a *kadamba*

tree with streams of honey flowing from its hollows, and on Kumuda Mountain there is a banyan tree named Śatavalśa, from whose roots flow rivers containing milk, yogurt and many other desirable things. Surrounding Sumeru Mountain like filaments of the whorl of a lotus are twenty mountain ranges such as Kuraṅga, Kurara, Kusumbha, Vaikaṅka and Trikūṭa. To the east of Sumeru are the mountains Jaṭhara and Devakūṭa, to the west are Pavana and Pāriyātra, to the south are Kailāsa and Karavīra, and to the north are Triśṛṅga and Makara. These eight mountains are about 18,000 *yojanas* long, 2,000 *yojanas* wide and 2,000 *yojanas* high. On the summit of Mount Sumeru is Brahmaṇḍa, the residence of Lord Brahmā. Each of its four sides is 10,000 *yojanas* long. Surrounding Brahmaṇḍa are the cities of King Indra and seven other demigods. These cities are one fourth the size of Brahmaṇḍa.

1King Parīkṣit said to Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O brāhmaṇa, you have already informed me that the radius of Bhū-maṇḍala extends as far as the sun spreads its light and heat and as far as the moon and all the stars can be seen.

2My dear Lord, the rolling wheels of Mahārāja Priyavrata's chariot created seven ditches, in which the seven oceans came into existence. Because of these seven oceans, Bhū-maṇḍala is divided into seven islands. You have given a very general description of their measurement, names and characteristics. Now I wish to know of them in detail. Kindly fulfill my desire.

3When the mind is fixed upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His external feature made of the material modes of nature the gross universal form is brought to the platform of pure goodness. In that transcendental position, one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, who in His subtler form is self-effulgent and beyond the modes of nature. O my lord, please describe vividly how that form, which covers the entire universe, is perceived.

4The great ṛṣi Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, there is no limit to the expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's material energy. This material world is a transformation of the material qualities [sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa], yet no one could possibly explain it perfectly, even in a lifetime as long as that of Brahmā. No one in the material world is perfect, and an imperfect person could not describe this material universe accurately, even after continued speculation. O King, I shall nevertheless try to explain to you the principal regions, such as Bhūloka, with their names, forms, measurements and various symptoms.

5The planetary system known as Bhū-maṇḍala resembles a lotus flower, and its seven islands resemble the whorl of that flower. The length and breadth of the island known as Jambūdvīpa, which is situated in the middle of the whorl, are one million *yojanas* [eight million miles]. Jambūdvīpa is round like the leaf of a lotus flower.

6In Jambūdvīpa there are nine divisions of land, each with a length of 9,000 *yojanas* [72,000 miles]. There are eight mountains that mark the boundaries of these divisions and separate them nicely.

7Amidst these divisions, or varṣas, is the varṣa named Ilāvṛta, which is situated in the middle of the whorl of the lotus. Within Ilāvṛta-varṣa is Sumeru Mountain, which is made of gold. Sumeru Mountain is like the pericarp of the lotuslike Bhū-maṇḍala planetary system. The mountain's height is the same as the width of Jambūdvīpa or, in other words, 100,000 *yojanas* [800,000 miles]. Of that, 16,000 *yojanas* [128,000 miles] are within the earth, and therefore the mountain's height above the earth is 84,000 *yojanas* [672,000 miles]. The mountain's width is 32,000 *yojanas* [256,000 miles] at its summit and 16,000 *yojanas* at its base.

8Just north of Ilāvṛta-varṣa and going further northward, one after another are three mountains

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named Nīla, Śveta and Śṛṅgavān. These mark the borders of the three varṣas named Ramyaka, Hiraṇmaya and Kuru and separate them from one another. The width of these mountains is 2,000 yojanas [16,000 miles]. Lengthwise, they extend east and west to the beaches of the ocean of salt water. Going from south to north, the length of each mountain is one tenth that of the previous mountain, but the height of them all is the same.

9Similarly, south of Ilāvṛta-varṣa and extending from east to west are three great mountains named (from north to south) Niṣadha, Hemakūṭa and Himālaya. Each of them is 10,000 yojanas [80,000 miles] high. They mark the boundaries of the three varṣas named Hari-varṣa, Kimpuruṣa-varṣa and Bhārata-varṣa [India].

10In the same way, west and east of Ilāvṛta-varṣa are two great mountains named Mālyavān and Gandhamādana respectively. These two mountains, which are 2,000 yojanas [16,000 miles] high, extend as far as Nīla Mountain in the north and Niṣadha in the south. They indicate the borders of Ilāvṛta-varṣa and also the varṣas known as Ketumāla and Bhadrāśva.

11On the four sides of the great mountain known as Sumeru are four mountainsMandara, Merumandara, Supārśva and Kumudawhich are like its belts. The length and height of these mountains are calculated to be 10,000 yojanas [80,000 miles].

12Standing like flagstuffs on the summits of these four mountains are a mango tree, a rose apple tree, a kadamba tree and a banyan tree. Those trees are calculated to have a width of 100 yojanas [800 miles] and a height of 1,100 yojanas [8,800 miles]. Their branches also spread to a radius of 1,100 yojanas.

13-14O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Bharata dynasty, between these four mountains are four huge lakes. The water of the first tastes just like milk; the water of the second, like honey; and that of the third, like sugarcane juice. The fourth lake is filled with pure water. The celestial beings such as the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas, who are also known as demigods, enjoy the facilities of those four lakes. Consequently they have the natural perfections of mystic yoga, such as the power to become smaller than the smallest or greater than the greatest. There are also four celestial gardens named Nandana, Caitraratha, Vaibhrājaka and Sarvatobhadra.

15The best of the demigods, along with their wives, who are like ornaments of heavenly beauty, meet together and enjoy within those gardens, while their glories are sung by lesser demigods known as Gandharvas.

16On the lower slopes of Mandara Mountain is a mango tree named Devacūta. It is 1,100 yojanas high. Mangoes as big as mountain peaks and as sweet as nectar fall from the top of this tree for the enjoyment of the denizens of heaven.

17When all those solid fruits fall from such a height, they break, and the sweet, fragrant juice within them flows out and becomes increasingly more fragrant as it mixes with other scents. That juice cascades from the mountain in waterfalls and becomes a river called Aruṇodā, which flows pleasantly through the eastern side of Ilāvṛta.

18The pious wives of the Yakṣas act as personal maidservants to assist Bhavānī, the wife of Lord Śiva. Because they drink the water of the river Aruṇodā, their bodies become fragrant, and as the air carries away that fragrance, it perfumes the entire atmosphere for eighty miles around.

19Similarly, the fruits of the jambū tree, which are full of pulp and have very small seeds, fall from a great height and break to pieces. Those fruits are the size of elephants, and the juice

gliding from them becomes a river named Jambū-nadī. This river falls a distance of 10,000 yojanas, from the summit of Merumandara to the southern side of Ilāvṛta, and floods the entire land of Ilāvṛta with juice.

20-21The mud on both banks of the river Jambū-nadī, being moistened by the flowing juice and then dried by the air and the sunshine, produces huge quantities of gold called Jāmbū-nada. The denizens of heaven use this gold for various kinds of ornaments. Therefore all the inhabitants of the heavenly planets and their youthful wives are fully decorated with golden helmets, bangles and belts, and thus they enjoy life.

22On the side of Supārśva Mountain stands a big tree called Mahākadamba, which is very celebrated. From the hollows of this tree flow five rivers of honey, each about five vyāmas wide. This flowing honey falls incessantly from the top of Supārśva Mountain and flows all around Ilāvṛta-varṣa, beginning from the western side. Thus the whole land is saturated with the pleasing fragrance.

23The air carrying the scent from the mouths of those who drink that honey perfumes the land for a hundred yojanas around.

24Similarly, on Kumuda Mountain there is a great banyan tree, which is called Śatavalśa because it has a hundred main branches. From those branches come many roots, from which many rivers are flowing. These rivers flow down from the top of the mountain to the northern side of Ilāvṛta-varṣa for the benefit of those who live there. Because of these flowing rivers, all the people have ample supplies of milk, yogurt, honey, clarified butter [ghee], molasses, food grains, clothes, bedding, sitting places and ornaments. All the objects they desire are sufficiently supplied for their prosperity, and therefore they are very happy.

25The residents of the material world who enjoy the products of these flowing rivers have no wrinkles on their bodies and no grey hair. They never feel fatigue, and perspiration does not give their bodies a bad odor. They are not afflicted by old age, disease or untimely death, they do not suffer from chilly cold or scorching heat, nor do their bodies lose their luster. They all live very happily, without anxieties, until death.

26There are other mountains beautifully arranged around the foot of Mount Meru like the filaments around the whorl of a lotus flower. Their names are Kuraṅga, Kurara, Kusumbha, Vaikaṅka, Trikūṭa, Śiśira, Pataṅga, Rucaka, Niṣadha, Sinīvāsa, Kapila, Śaṅkha, Vaidūrya, Jārudhi, Hamsa, Rṣabha, Nāga, Kālaṣjara and Nārada.

27On the eastern side of Sumeru Mountain are two mountains named Jaṭhara and Devakūṭa, which extend to the north and south for 18,000 yojanas [144,000 miles]. Similarly, on the western side of Sumeru are two mountains named Pavana and Pāriyātra, which also extend north and south for the same distance. On the southern side of Sumeru are two mountains named Kailāsa and Karavīra, which extend east and west for 18,000 yojanas, and on the northern side of Sumeru, extending for the same distance east and west, are two mountains named Triśṅga and Makara. The width and height of all these mountains is 2,000 yojanas [16,000 miles]. Sumeru, a mountain of solid gold shining as brilliantly as fire, is surrounded by these eight mountains.

28In the middle of the summit of Meru is the township of Lord Brahmā. Each of its four sides is calculated to extend for ten million yojanas [eighty million miles]. It is made entirely of gold, and therefore learned scholars and sages call it Śātakaumbhī.

29Surrounding Brahmaṇḍa in all directions are the residences of the eight principal governors

of the planetary systems, beginning with King Indra. These abodes are similar to Brahmaṇḍa but are one fourth the size.

SB 5.17: The Descent of the River Ganges

The Seventeenth Chapter describes the origin of the Ganges River and how it flows in and around Ilāvṛta-varṣa. There is also a description of the prayers Lord Śiva offers to Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, part of the quadruple expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Viṣṇu once approached Bali Mahārāja while the King was performing a sacrifice. The Lord appeared before him as Trivikrama, or Vāmana, and begged alms from the King in the form of three steps of land. With two steps, Lord Vāmana covered all three planetary systems and pierced the covering of the universe with the toes of His left foot. A few drops of water from the Causal Ocean leaked through this hole and fell on the head of Lord Śiva, where they remained for one thousand millenniums. These drops of water are the sacred Ganges River. It first flows onto the heavenly planets, which are located on the soles of Lord Viṣṇu's feet. The Ganges River is known by many names, such as the Bhāgīrathī and the Jāhnavī. It purifies Dhruvaloka and the planets of the seven sages because both Dhruva and the sages have no other desire than to serve the Lord's lotus feet.

The Ganges River, emanating from the lotus feet of the Lord, inundates the heavenly planets, especially the moon, and then flows through Brahmaṇḍa atop Mount Meru. Here the river divides into four branches (known as Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā), which then flow down to the ocean of salt water. The branch known as Sītā flows through Śekhara-parvata and Gandhamādana-parvata and then flows down to Bhadrāśva-varṣa, where it mixes with the ocean of salt water in the west. The Cakṣu branch flows through Mālyavān-giri and, after reaching Ketumāla-varṣa, mixes with the ocean of salt water in the west. The branch known as Bhadrā flows onto Mount Meru, Mount Kumuda, and the Nīla, Śveta and Śṛṅgavān mountains before it reaches Kuru-deśa, where it flows into the ocean of salt water in the north. The Alakanandā branch flows through Brahmālaya, crosses over many mountains, including Hemakūṭa and Himakūṭa, and then reaches Bhārata-varṣa, where it flows into the southern side of the ocean of salt water. Many other rivers and their branches flow through the nine *varṣas*.

The tract of land known as Bhārata-varṣa is the field of activities, and the other eight *varṣas* are for persons who are meant to enjoy heavenly comfort. In each of these eight beautiful provinces, the celestial denizens enjoy various standards of material comfort and pleasure. A different incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead distributes His mercy in each of the nine *varṣas* of Jambūdvīpa.

In the Ilāvṛta-varṣa, Lord Śiva is the only male. There he lives with his wife, Bhavānī, who is attended by many maidservants. If any other male enters that province, Bhavānī curses him to become a woman. Lord Śiva worships Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa by offering various prayers, one of which is as follows: “My dear Lord, please liberate all Your devotees from material life and bind all the nondevotees to the material world. Without Your mercy, no one can be released from the bondage of material existence.”

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, Lord Viṣṇu, the enjoyer of all sacrifices, appeared as Vāmanadeva in the sacrificial arena of Bali Mahārāja. Then He extended His left foot to the end of the universe and pierced a hole in its covering with the nail of His big toe. Through the hole, the pure water of the Causal Ocean entered this universe as the Ganges River. Having washed the lotus feet of the Lord, which are covered with reddish powder, the water of the Ganges acquired a very beautiful pink color. Every living being can immediately purify his mind of material contamination by touching the transcendental water of the Ganges, yet its waters

remain ever pure. Because the Ganges directly touches the lotus feet of the Lord before descending within this universe, she is known as Viṣṇupadī. Later she received other names like Jāhnavī and Bhāgīrathī. After one thousand millenniums, the water of the Ganges descended to Dhruvaloka, the topmost planet in this universe. Therefore all learned sages and scholars proclaim Dhruvaloka to be Viṣṇupada [“situated on Lord Viṣṇu’s lotus feet”].

2Dhruva Mahārāja, the famous son of Mahārāja Uttānapāda, is known as the most exalted devotee of the Supreme Lord because of his firm determination in executing devotional service. Knowing that the sacred Ganges water washes the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu, Dhruva Mahārāja, situated on his own planet, to this very day accepts that water on his head with great devotion. Because he constantly thinks of Kṛṣṇa very devoutly within the core of his heart, he is overcome with ecstatic anxiety. Tears flow from his half-open eyes, and eruptions appear on his entire body.

3The seven great sages [Marīci, Vasiṣṭha, Atri and so on] reside on planets beneath Dhruvaloka. Well aware of the influence of the water of the Ganges, to this day they keep Ganges water on the tufts of hair on their heads. They have concluded that this is the ultimate wealth, the perfection of all austerities, and the best means of prosecuting transcendental life. Having obtained uninterrupted devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they neglect all other beneficial processes like religion, economic development, sense gratification and even merging into the Supreme. Just as jñānīs think that merging into the existence of the Lord is the highest truth, these seven exalted personalities accept devotional service as the perfection of life.

4After purifying the seven planets near Dhruvaloka [the polestar], the Ganges water is carried through the spaceways of the demigods in billions of celestial airplanes. Then it inundates the moon [Candraloka] and finally reaches Lord Brahmā’s abode atop Mount Meru.

5On top of Mount Meru, the Ganges divides into four branches, each of which gushes in a different direction [east, west, north and south]. These branches, known by the names Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā, flow down to the ocean.

6The branch of the Ganges known as the Sītā flows through Brahmapurī atop Mount Meru, and from there it runs down to the nearby peaks of the Kesarācala Mountains, which stand almost as high as Mount Meru itself. These mountains are like a bunch of filaments around Mount Meru. From the Kesarācala Mountains, the Ganges falls to the peak of Gandhamādana Mountain and then flows into the land of Bhadrāśva-varṣa. Finally it reaches the ocean of salt water in the west.

7The branch of the Ganges known as Cakṣu falls onto the summit of Mālyavān Mountain and from there cascades onto the land of Ketumāla-varṣa. The Ganges flows incessantly through Ketumāla-varṣa and in this way also reaches the ocean of salt water in the west.

8The branch of the Ganges known as Bhadrā flows from the northern side of Mount Meru. Its waters fall onto the peaks of Kumuda Mountain, Mount Nīla, Śveta Mountain and Śṛṅgavān Mountain in succession. Then it runs down into the province of Kuru and, after crossing through that land, flows into the saltwater ocean in the north.

9Similarly, the branch of the Ganges known as Alakanandā flows from the southern side of Brahmapurī [Brahma-sadana]. Passing over the tops of mountains in various lands, it falls down with fierce force upon the peaks of the mountains Hemakūṭa and Himakūṭa. After inundating the tops of those mountains, the Ganges falls down onto the tract of land known as Bhārata-varṣa, which she also inundates. Then the Ganges flows into the ocean of salt water in the

south. Persons who come to bathe in this river are fortunate. It is not very difficult for them to achieve with every step the results of performing great sacrifices like the Rājasūya and Aśvamedha yajñas.

10 Many other rivers, both big and small, flow from the top of Mount Meru. These rivers are like daughters of the mountain, and they flow to the various tracts of land in hundreds of branches.

11 Among the nine varṣas, the tract of land known as Bhārata-varṣa is understood to be the field of fruitive activities. Learned scholars and saintly persons declare the other eight varṣas to be meant for very highly elevated pious persons. After returning from the heavenly planets, they enjoy the remaining results of their pious activities in these eight earthly varṣas.

12 In these eight varṣas, or tracts of land, human beings live ten thousand years according to earthly calculations. All the inhabitants are almost like demigods. They have the bodily strength of ten thousand elephants. Indeed, their bodies are as sturdy as thunderbolts. The youthful duration of their lives is very pleasing, and both men and women enjoy sexual union with great pleasure for a long time. After years of sensual pleasure when a balance of one year of life remains the wife conceives a child. Thus the standard of pleasure for the residents of these heavenly regions is exactly like that of the human beings who lived during Tretā-yuga.

13 In each of those tracts of land, there are many gardens filled with flowers and fruits according to the season, and there are beautifully decorated hermitages as well. Between the great mountains demarcating the borders of those lands lie enormous lakes of clear water filled with newly grown lotus flowers. Aquatic birds such as swans, ducks, water chickens, and cranes become greatly excited by the fragrance of lotus flowers, and the charming sound of bumblebees fills the air. The inhabitants of those lands are important leaders among the demigods. Always attended by their respective servants, they enjoy life in gardens alongside the lakes. In this pleasing situation, the wives of the demigods smile playfully at their husbands and look upon them with lusty desires. All the demigods and their wives are constantly supplied with sandalwood pulp and flower garlands by their servants. In this way, all the residents of the eight heavenly varṣas enjoy, attracted by the activities of the opposite sex.

14 To show mercy to His devotees in each of these nine tracts of land, the Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Nārāyaṇa expands Himself in His quadruple principles of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. In this way He remains near His devotees to accept their service.

15 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In the tract of land known as Ilāvṛta-varṣa, the only male person is Lord Śiva, the most powerful demigod. Goddess Durgā, the wife of Lord Śiva, does not like any man to enter that land. If any foolish man dares to do so, she immediately turns him into a woman. I shall explain this later [in the Ninth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam].

16 In Ilāvṛta-varṣa, Lord Śiva is always encircled by ten billion maidservants of Goddess Durgā, who minister to him. The quadruple expansion of the Supreme Lord is composed of Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa. Saṅkarṣaṇa, the fourth expansion, is certainly transcendental, but because His activities of destruction in the material world are in the mode of ignorance, He is known as tāmasī, the Lord's form in the mode of ignorance. Lord Śiva knows that Saṅkarṣaṇa is the original cause of his own existence, and thus he always meditates upon Him in trance by chanting the following mantra.

17 The most powerful Lord Śiva says: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You in Your expansion as Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. You are the reservoir of all transcendental qualities. Although You are unlimited, You remain unmanifest to the

nondevotees.

18O my Lord, You are the only worshipable person, for You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of all opulences. Your secure lotus feet are the only source of protection for all Your devotees, whom You satisfy by manifesting Yourself in various forms. O my Lord, You deliver Your devotees from the clutches of material existence. Nondevotees, however, remain entangled in material existence by Your will. Kindly accept me as Your eternal servant.

19We cannot control the force of our anger. Therefore when we look at material things, we cannot avoid feeling attraction or repulsion for them. But the Supreme Lord is never affected in this way. Although He glances over the material world for the purpose of creating, maintaining and destroying it, He is not affected, even to the slightest degree. Therefore, one who desires to conquer the force of the senses must take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. Then he will be victorious.

20For persons with impure vision, the Supreme Lord's eyes appear like those of someone who indiscriminately drinks intoxicating beverages. Thus bewildered, such unintelligent persons become angry at the Supreme Lord, and due to their angry mood the Lord Himself appears angry and very fearful. However, this is an illusion. When the wives of the serpent demon were agitated by the touch of the Lord's lotus feet, due to shyness they could proceed no further in their worship of Him. Yet the Lord remained unagitated by their touch, for He is equipoised in all circumstances. Therefore who will not worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

21Lord Śiva continued: All the great sages accept the Lord as the source of creation, maintenance and destruction, although He actually has nothing to do with these activities. Therefore the Lord is called unlimited. Although the Lord in His incarnation as Śeṣa holds all the universes on His hoods, each universe feels no heavier than a mustard seed to Him. Therefore, what person desiring perfection will not worship the Lord?

22-23From that Supreme Personality of Godhead appears Lord Brahmā, whose body is made from the total material energy, the reservoir of intelligence predominated by the passionate mode of material nature. From Lord Brahmā, I myself am born as a representation of false ego known as Rudra. By my own power I create all the other demigods, the five elements and the senses. Therefore, I worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than any of us and under whose control are situated all the demigods, material elements and senses, and even Lord Brahmā and I myself, like birds bound by a rope. Only by the Lord's grace can we create, maintain and annihilate the material world. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Being.

24The illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead binds all of us conditioned souls to this material world. Therefore, without being favored by Him, persons like us cannot understand how to get out of that illusory energy. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who is the cause of creation and annihilation.

SB 5.18: The Prayers Offered to the Lord by the Residents of Jambūdvīpa

In this chapter Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the different *varṣas* of Jambūdvīpa and the incarnation of the Supreme Lord worshiped in each. The predominating ruler of Bhadrāśva-varṣa is Bhadrāśravā. He and his many servants always worship the incarnation known as Lord Hayagrīva. At the end of each *kalpa*, when the demon Ajnana steals the Vedic knowledge, Lord Hayagrīva appears and preserves it. Then He delivers it to Lord Brahmā. In the land known as Hari-varṣa, the exalted devotee Prahlaḍa Mahārāja worships Lord Nṛsimhadeva. (The

appearance of Lord Nṛsimhadeva is described in the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.) Following in the footsteps of Prahlāda Mahārāja, the inhabitants of Hari-varṣa always worship Lord Nṛsimhadeva to receive from Him the benediction of being engaged in His loving service. In the tract of land known as Ketumāla-varṣa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Lord Hṛṣīkeśa) appears in the form of Cupid. The goddess of fortune and the demigods living there engage in His service day and night. Manifesting Himself in sixteen parts, Lord Hṛṣīkeśa is the source of all encouragement, strength and influence. The conditioned living entity has the defect of being always fearful, but simply by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he can rid himself of this defect of material life. Therefore the Lord alone can be addressed as master. In the tract of land known as Ranyaka-varṣa, Manu and all the inhabitants worship Matsyadeva to this very day. Matsyadeva, whose form is pure goodness, is the ruler and maintainer of the whole universe, and as such He is the director of all the demigods, headed by King Indra. In Hiraṇmaya-varṣa Lord Viṣṇu has assumed the form of a tortoise (Kūrma *mūrti*) and is worshiped there by Aryamā, along with all the other residents. Similarly, in the tract of land known as Uttarakuru-varṣa, Lord Śrī Hari has assumed the form of a boar, and in that form He accepts service from all the inhabitants living there.

All the information in this chapter can be fully realized by one who associates with devotees of the Lord. Therefore in the *śāstras* it is recommended that one associate with devotees. This is better than residing on the banks of the Ganges. In the hearts of pure devotees reside all good sentiments as well as all the superior qualities of the demigods. In the hearts of nondevotees, however, there cannot be any good qualities, for such people are simply enchanted by the external, illusory energy of the Lord. Following in the footsteps of devotees, one should know that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only worshipable Deity. Everyone should accept this proposal and worship the Lord. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15), *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: the purpose of studying all Vedic literature is to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. If after studying all the Vedic literature, one does not awaken his dormant love for the Supreme Lord, it is to be understood that he has labored for nothing. He has simply wasted his time. Lacking attachment for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he remains attached to family life in this material world. Thus the lesson of this chapter is that one should get out of family life and completely take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Bhadrāśravā, the son of Dharmarāja, rules the tract of land known as Bhadrāśva-varṣa. Just as Lord Śiva worships Saṅkarṣaṇa in Ilāvṛta-varṣa, Bhadrāśravā, accompanied by his intimate servants and all the residents of the land, worships the plenary expansion of Vāsudeva known as Hayaśīrṣa. Lord Hayaśīrṣa is very dear to the devotees, and He is the director of all religious principles. Fixed in the topmost trance, Bhadrāśravā and his associates offer their respectful obeisances to the Lord and chant the following prayers with careful pronunciation.

2The ruler Bhadrāśravā and his intimate associates utter the following prayer: We offer our respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of all religious principles, who cleanses the heart of the conditioned soul in this material world. Again and again we offer our respectful obeisances unto Him.

3Alas! How wonderful it is that the foolish materialist does not heed the great danger of impending death! He knows that death will surely come, yet he is nevertheless callous and neglectful. If his father dies, he wants to enjoy his father's property, and if his son dies, he wants to enjoy his son's possessions as well. In either case, he heedlessly tries to enjoy material happiness with the acquired money.

4O unborn one, learned Vedic scholars who are advanced in spiritual knowledge certainly know that this material world is perishable, as do other logicians and philosophers. In trance they realize the factual position of this world, and they preach the truth as well. Yet even they are sometimes bewildered by Your illusory energy. This is Your own wonderful pastime. Therefore, I can understand that Your illusory energy is very wonderful, and I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

5O Lord, although You are completely detached from the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this material world and are not directly affected by these activities, they are all attributed to You. We do not wonder at this, for Your inconceivable energies perfectly qualify You to be the cause of all causes. You are the active principle in everything, although You are separate from everything. Thus we can realize that everything is happening because of Your inconceivable energy.

6At the end of the millennium, ignorance personified assumed the form of a demon, stole all the Vedas and took them down to the planet of Rasātala. The Supreme Lord, however, in His form of Hayagrīva retrieved the Vedas and returned them to Lord Brahmā when he begged for them. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, whose determination never fails.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, Lord Nṛsimhadeva resides in the tract of land known as Hari-varṣa. In the Seventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, I shall describe to you how Prahlāda Mahārāja caused the Lord to assume the form of Nṛsimhadeva. Prahlāda Mahārāja, the topmost devotee of the Lord, is a reservoir of all the good qualities of great personalities. His character and activities have delivered all the fallen members of his demoniac family. Lord Nṛsimhadeva is very dear to this exalted personality. Thus Prahlāda Mahārāja, along with his servants and all the denizens of Hari-varṣa, worships Lord Nṛsimhadeva by chanting the following mantra.

8I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Nṛsimhadeva, the source of all power. O my Lord who possess nails and teeth just like thunderbolts, kindly vanquish our demonlike desires for fruitive activity in this material world. Please appear in our hearts and drive away our ignorance so that by Your mercy we may become fearless in the struggle for existence in this material world.

9May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing bhakti-yoga, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other's welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.

10My dear Lord, we pray that we may never feel attraction for the prison of family life, consisting of home, wife, children, friends, bank balance, relatives and so on. If we do have some attachment, let it be for devotees, whose only dear friend is Kṛṣṇa. A person who is actually self-realized and who has controlled his mind is perfectly satisfied with the bare necessities of life. He does not try to gratify his senses. Such a person quickly advances in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereas others, who are too attached to material things, find advancement very difficult.

11By associating with persons for whom the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, is the all in all, one can hear of His powerful activities and soon come to understand them. The activities of Mukunda are so potent that simply by hearing of them one immediately associates with the Lord. For a person who constantly and very eagerly hears narrations of the Lord's powerful activities, the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead in the form of sound

vibrations, enters within his heart and cleanses it of all contamination. On the other hand, although bathing in the Ganges diminishes bodily contaminations and infections, this process and the process of visiting holy places can cleanse the heart only after a long time. Therefore who is the sane man who will not associate with devotees to quickly perfect his life?

12All the demigods and their exalted qualities, such as religion, knowledge and renunciation, become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. On the other hand, a person devoid of devotional service and engaged in material activities has no good qualities. Even if he is adept at the practice of mystic yoga or the honest endeavor of maintaining his family and relatives, he must be driven by his own mental speculations and must engage in the service of the Lord's external energy. How can there be any good qualities in such a man?

13Just as aquatics always desire to remain in the vast mass of water, all conditioned living entities naturally desire to remain in the vast existence of the Supreme Lord. Therefore if someone very great by material calculations fails to take shelter of the Supreme Soul but instead becomes attached to material household life, his greatness is like that of a young, low-class couple. One who is too attached to material life loses all good spiritual qualities.

14Therefore, O demons, give up the so-called happiness of family life and simply take shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, which are the actual shelter of fearlessness. Entanglement in family life is the root cause of material attachment, indefatigable desires, moroseness, anger, despair, fear and the desire for false prestige, all of which result in the repetition of birth and death.

15Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: In the tract of land called Ketumāla-varṣa, Lord Viṣṇu lives in the form of Kāmadeva, only for the satisfaction of His devotees. These include Lakṣmī [the goddess of fortune], the Prajāpati Saṁvatsara and all of Saṁvatsara's sons and daughters. The daughters of Prajāpati are considered the controlling deities of the nights, and his sons are considered the controllers of the days. The Prajāpati's offspring number 36,000, one for each day and each night in the lifetime of a human being. At the end of each year, the Prajāpati's daughters become very agitated upon seeing the extremely effulgent disc of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus they all suffer miscarriages.

16In Ketumāla-varṣa, Lord Kāmadeva [Pradyumna] moves very graciously. His mild smile is very beautiful, and when He increases the beauty of His face by slightly raising His eyebrows and glancing playfully, He pleases the goddess of fortune. Thus He enjoys His transcendental senses.

17Accompanied during the daytime by the sons of the Prajāpati [the predominating deities of the days] and accompanied at night by his daughters [the deities of the nights], Lakṣmīdevī worships the Lord during the period known as the Saṁvatsara in His most merciful form as Kāmadeva. Fully absorbed in devotional service, she chants the following mantras.

18Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, the controller of all my senses and the origin of everything. As the supreme master of all bodily, mental and intellectual activities, He is the only enjoyer of their results. The five sense objects and eleven senses, including the mind, are His partial manifestations. He supplies all the necessities of life, which are His energy and thus nondifferent from Him, and He is the cause of everyone's bodily and mental prowess, which is also nondifferent from Him. Indeed, He is the husband and provider of necessities for all living entities. The purpose of all the Vedas is to worship Him. Therefore let us all offer Him our respectful obeisances. May He always be favorable toward us in this life and the next.

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19My dear Lord, You are certainly the fully independent master of all the senses. Therefore all women who worship You by strictly observing vows because they wish to acquire a husband to satisfy their senses are surely under illusion. They do not know that such a husband cannot actually give protection to them or their children. Nor can he protect their wealth or duration of life, for he himself is dependent on time, fruitive results and the modes of nature, which are all subordinate to You.

20He alone who is never afraid but who, on the contrary, gives complete shelter to all fearful persons can actually become a husband and protector. Therefore, my Lord, You are the only husband, and no one else can claim this position. If You were not the only husband, You would be afraid of others. Therefore persons learned in all Vedic literature accept only Your Lordship as everyone's master, and they think no one else a better husband and protector than You.

21My dear Lord, You automatically fulfill all the desires of a woman who worships Your lotus feet in pure love. However, if a woman worships Your lotus feet for a particular purpose, You also quickly fulfill her desires, but in the end she becomes broken-hearted and laments. Therefore one need not worship Your lotus feet for some material benefit.

22O supreme unconquerable Lord, when they become absorbed in thoughts of material enjoyment, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, as well as other demigods and demons, undergo severe penances and austerities to receive my benedictions. But I do not favor anyone, however great he may be, unless he is always engaged in the service of Your lotus feet. Because I always keep You within my heart, I cannot favor anyone but a devotee.

23O infallible one, Your lotus palm is the source of all benediction. Therefore Your pure devotees worship it, and You very mercifully place Your hand on their heads. I wish that You may also place Your hand on My head, for although You already bear my insignia of golden streaks on Your chest, I regard this honor as merely a kind of false prestige for me. You show Your real mercy to Your devotees, not to me. Of course, You are the supreme absolute controller, and no one can understand Your motives.

24Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: In Rāmyaka-varṣa, where Vaivasvata Manu rules, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as Lord Matsya at the end of the last era [the Cākṣuṣa-manvantara]. Vaivasvata Manu now worships Lord Matsya in pure devotional service and chants the following mantra.

25I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is pure transcendence. He is the origin of all life, bodily strength, mental power and sensory ability. Known as Matsyāvatāra, the gigantic fish incarnation, He appears first among all the incarnations. Again I offer my obeisances unto Him.

26My dear Lord, just as a puppeteer controls his dancing dolls and a husband controls his wife, Your Lordship controls all the living entities in the universe, such as the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. Although You are in everyone's heart as the supreme witness and commander and are outside everyone as well, the so-called leaders of societies, communities and countries cannot realize You. Only those who hear the vibration of the Vedic mantras can appreciate You.

27My Lord, from the great leaders of the universe, such as Lord Brahmā and other demigods, down to the political leaders of this world, all are envious of Your authority. Without Your help, however, they could neither separately nor concertedly maintain the innumerable living entities within the universe. You are actually the only maintainer of all human beings, of animals like cows and asses, and of plants, reptiles, birds, mountains and whatever else is

visible within this material world.

28O almighty Lord, at the end of the millennium this planet earth, which is the source of all kinds of herbs, drugs and trees, was inundated by water and drowned beneath the devastating waves. At that time, You protected me along with the earth and roamed the sea with great speed. O unborn one, You are the actual maintainer of the entire universal creation, and therefore You are the cause of all living entities. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

29Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: In Hiraṇmaya-varṣa, the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, lives in the form of a tortoise [kūrma-śarīra]. This most dear and beautiful form is always worshiped there in devotional service by Aryamā, the chief resident of Hiraṇmaya-varṣa, along with the other inhabitants of that land. They chant the following hymns.

30O my Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who have assumed the form of a tortoise. You are the reservoir of all transcendental qualities, and being entirely untinged by matter, You are perfectly situated in pure goodness. You move here and there in the water, but no one can discern Your position. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. Because of Your transcendental position, You are not limited by past, present and future. You are present everywhere as the shelter of all things, and therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You again and again.

31My dear Lord, this visible cosmic manifestation is a demonstration of Your own creative energy. Since the countless varieties of forms within this cosmic manifestation are simply a display of Your external energy, this virāṭ-rūpa [universal body] is not Your real form. Except for a devotee in transcendental consciousness, no one can perceive Your actual form. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

32My dear Lord, You manifest Your different energies in countless forms: as living entities born from wombs, from eggs and from perspiration; as plants and trees that grow out of the earth; as all living entities, both moving and standing, including the demigods, the learned sages and the pitās; as outer space, as the higher planetary system containing the heavenly planets, and as the planet earth with its hills, rivers, seas, oceans and islands. Indeed, all the stars and planets are simply manifestations of Your different energies, but originally You are one without a second. Therefore there is nothing beyond You. This entire cosmic manifestation is therefore not false but is simply a temporary manifestation of Your inconceivable energy.

33O my Lord, Your name, form and bodily features are expanded in countless forms. No one can determine exactly how many forms exist, yet You Yourself, in Your incarnation as the learned scholar Kapiladeva, have analyzed the cosmic manifestation as containing twenty-four elements. Therefore if one is interested in Sāṅkhya philosophy, by which one can enumerate the different truths, he must hear it from You. Unfortunately, nondevotees simply count the different elements and remain ignorant of Your actual form. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

34Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Dear King, the Supreme Lord in His boar incarnation, who accepts all sacrificial offerings, lives in the northern part of Jambūdvīpa. There, in the tract of land known as Uttarakuru-varṣa, mother earth and all the other inhabitants worship Him with unfailing devotional service by repeatedly chanting the following Upaniṣadic mantra.

35O Lord, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You as the gigantic person. Simply by chanting mantras, we shall be able to understand You fully. You are yajña [sacrifice], and You are the kratu [ritual]. Therefore all the ritualistic ceremonies of sacrifice are part of Your transcendental body, and You are the only enjoyer of all sacrifices. Your form is composed of

transcendental goodness. You are known as tri-yuga because in Kali-yuga You appeared as a concealed incarnation and because You always fully possess the three pairs of opulences.

36By manipulating a fire-generating stick, great saints and sages can bring forth the fire lying dormant within wood. In the same way, O Lord, those expert in understanding the Absolute Truth try to see You in everything even in their own bodies. Yet you remain concealed. You are not to be understood by indirect processes involving mental or physical activities. Because You are self-manifested, only when You see that a person is wholeheartedly engaged in searching for You do You reveal Yourself. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

37The objects of material enjoyment [sound, form, taste, touch and smell], the activities of the senses, the controllers of sensory activities [the demigods], the body, eternal time and egotism are all creations of Your material energy. Those whose intelligence has become fixed by perfect execution of mystic yoga can see that all these elements result from the actions of Your external energy. They can also see Your transcendental form as Supersoul in the background of everything. Therefore I repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

38O Lord, You do not desire the creation, maintenance or annihilation of this material world, but You perform these activities for the conditioned souls by Your creative energy. Exactly as a piece of iron moves under the influence of a lodestone, inert matter moves when You glance over the total material energy.

39My Lord, as the original boar within this universe, You fought and killed the great demon Hiranyakṣa. Then You lifted me [the earth] from the Garbhodaka Ocean on the end of Your tusk, exactly as a sporting elephant plucks a lotus flower from the water. I bow down before You.

SB 5.19: A Description of the Island of Jambūdvīpa

This chapter describes the glories of Bhārata-varṣa, and it also describes how Lord Rāmacandra is being worshiped in the tract of land known as Kimpuruṣa-varṣa. The inhabitants of Kimpuruṣa-varṣa are fortunate because they worship Lord Rāmacandra with His faithful servant Hanumān. Lord Rāmacandra exemplifies an incarnation of Godhead who descends for the mission of *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām* protecting the devotees and destroying the miscreants. Lord Rāmacandra exhibits the actual purpose of an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the devotees take the opportunity to offer loving transcendental service to Him. One should surrender fully to the Lord, forgetting one's so-called material happiness, opulence and education, which are not at all useful for pleasing the Lord. The Lord is pleased only by the process of surrender unto Him.

When Devarṣi Nārada descended to instruct Sārvaṇi Manu, he described the opulence of Bhārata-varṣa, India. Sārvaṇi Manu and the inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the origin of creation, maintenance and annihilation and who is always worshiped by self-realized souls. In the planet known as Bhārata-varṣa there are many rivers and mountains, as there are in other tracts of land, yet Bhārata-varṣa has special significance because in this tract of land there exists the Vedic principle of *vaṁśrama-dharma*, which divides society into four *vaṁsas* and four *āśramas*. Furthermore, Nārada Muni's opinion is that even if there is some temporary disturbance in the execution of the *vaṁśrama-dharma* principles, they can be revived at any moment. The effect of adhering to the institution of *vaṁśrama* is gradual elevation to the spiritual platform and liberation from material bondage. By following the principles of *vaṁśrama-dharma*, one gets the opportunity to associate with devotees. Such association gradually awakens one's dormant propensity to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead and frees one from all the

basic principles of sinful life. One then gets the opportunity to offer unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva. Because of this opportunity, the inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa are praised even in the heavenly planets. Even in the topmost planet of this universe, Brahmaloḥka, the position of Bhārata-varṣa is discussed with great relish.

All the conditioned living entities are evolving within the universe in different planets and different species of life. Thus one may be elevated to Brahmaloḥka, but then one must again descend to earth, as confirmed in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna)*. If those who live in Bhārata-varṣa rigidly follow the principles of *vamāśrama-dharma* and develop their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they need not return to this material world after death. Any place where one cannot hear about the Supreme Personality of Godhead from realized souls, even if it be Brahmaloḥka, is not very congenial to the living entity. If one who has taken birth in the land of Bhārata-varṣa as a human being does not take advantage of the opportunity for spiritual elevation, his position is certainly the most miserable. In the land known as Bhāratavarṣa, even if one is a *sarva-kāma-bhakta*, a devotee seeking the fulfillment of some material desire, he is freed from all material desires by his association with devotees, and ultimately he becomes a pure devotee and returns home, back to Godhead, without difficulty.

At the end of this chapter, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes to Mahārāja Parīkṣit the eight sub-islands within the island of Jambūdvīpa.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, in Kimpuruṣa-varṣa the great devotee Hanumān is always engaged with the inhabitants of that land in devotional service to Lord Rāmacandra, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa and dear husband of Sītādevī.

2A host of Gandharvas is always engaged in chanting the glories of Lord Rāmacandra. That chanting is always extremely auspicious. Hanumānjī and Arṣṭiṣeṇa, the chief person in Kimpuruṣa-varṣa, constantly hear those glories with complete attention. Hanumān chants the following mantras.

3Let me please Your Lordship by chanting the bīja-mantra omkāra. I wish to offer my respectful obeisances unto the Personality of Godhead, who is the best among the most highly elevated personalities. Your Lordship is the reservoir of all the good qualities of Āryans, people who are advanced. Your character and behavior are always consistent, and You always control Your senses and mind. Acting just like an ordinary human being, You exhibit exemplary character to teach others how to behave. There is a touchstone that can be used to examine the quality of gold, but You are like a touchstone that can verify all good qualities. You are worshiped by brāhmaṇas who are the foremost of all devotees. You, the Supreme Person, are the King of kings, and therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

4The Lord, whose pure form [sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha] is uncontaminated by the modes of material nature, can be perceived by pure consciousness. In the Vedānta He is described as being one without a second. Because of His spiritual potency, He is untouched by the contamination of material nature, and because He is not subjected to material vision, He is known as transcendental. He has no material activities, nor has He a material form or name. Only in pure consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, can one perceive the transcendental form of the Lord. Let us be firmly fixed at the lotus feet of Lord Rāmacandra, and let us offer our respectful obeisances unto those transcendental lotus feet.

5It was ordained that Rāvaṇa, chief of the Rākṣasas, could not be killed by anyone but a man, and for this reason Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared in the

form of a human being. Lord Rāmacandra's mission, however, was not only to kill Rāvaṇa but also to teach mortal beings that material happiness centered around sex life or centered around one's wife is the cause of many miseries. He is the self-sufficient Supreme Personality of Godhead, and nothing is lamentable for Him. Therefore why else could He be subjected to tribulations by the kidnapping of mother Sītā?

6Since Lord Śrī Rāmacandra is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, He is not attached to anything in this material world. He is the most beloved Supersoul of all self-realized souls, and He is their very intimate friend. He is full of all opulences. Therefore He could not possibly have suffered because of separation from His wife, nor could He have given up His wife and Lakṣmaṇa, His younger brother. To give up either would have been absolutely impossible.

7One cannot establish a friendship with the Supreme Lord Rāmacandra on the basis of material qualities such as one's birth in an aristocratic family, one's personal beauty, one's eloquence, one's sharp intelligence or one's superior race or nation. None of these qualifications is actually a prerequisite for friendship with Lord Śrī Rāmacandra. Otherwise how is it possible that although we uncivilized inhabitants of the forest have not taken noble births, although we have no physical beauty and although we cannot speak like gentlemen, Lord Rāmacandra has nevertheless accepted us as friends?

8Therefore, whether one is a demigod or a demon, a man or a creature other than man, such as a beast or bird, everyone should worship Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appears on this earth just like a human being. There is no need of great austerities or penances to worship the Lord, for He accepts even a small service offered by His devotee. Thus He is satisfied, and as soon as He is satisfied, the devotee is successful. Indeed, Lord Śrī Rāmacandra brought all the devotees of Ayodhyā back home, back to Godhead [Vaikuṅṭha].

9[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] The glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are inconceivable. He has appeared in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa in the land of Bhārata-varṣa, at the place known as Badarikāśrama, to favor His devotees by teaching them religion, knowledge, renunciation, spiritual power, sense control and freedom from false ego. He is advanced in the opulence of spiritual assets, and He engages in executing austerity until the end of this millennium. This is the process of self-realization.

10In his own book, known as Nārada Paścaraṭra, Bhagavān Nārada has very vividly described how to work to achieve the ultimate goal of lifedevotionthrough knowledge and through execution of the mystic yoga system. He has also described the glories of the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The great sage Nārada instructed the tenets of this transcendental literature to Sāvarni Manu in order to teach those inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa who strictly follow the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma how to achieve the devotional service of the Lord. Thus Nārada Muni, along with the other inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa, always engages in the service of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, and he chants as follows.

11Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the best of all saintly persons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the most self-controlled and self-realized, He is free from false prestige, and He is the asset of persons who have no material possessions. He is the spiritual master of all paramahāṁsas, who are the most exalted human beings, and He is the master of the self-realized. Let me offer my repeated obeisances at His lotus feet.

12Nārada, the most powerful saintly sage, also worships Nara-Nārāyaṇa by chanting the following mantra: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of the creation,

maintenance and annihilation of this visible cosmic manifestation, yet He is completely free from false prestige. Although to the foolish He appears to have accepted a material body like us, He is unaffected by bodily tribulations like hunger, thirst and fatigue. Although He is the witness who sees everything, His senses are unpolluted by the objects He sees. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto that unattached, pure witness of the world, the Supreme Soul, the Personality of Godhead.

13O my Lord, master of all mystic yoga, this is the explanation of the yogic process spoken of by Lord Brahmā [Hiraṇyagarbha], who is self-realized. At the time of death, all yogīs give up the material body with full detachment simply by placing their minds at Your lotus feet. That is the perfection of yoga.

14Materialists are generally very attached to their present bodily comforts and to the bodily comforts they expect in the future. Therefore they are always absorbed in thoughts of their wives, children and wealth and are afraid of giving up their bodies, which are full of stool and urine. If a person engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, is also afraid of giving up his body, what is the use of his having labored to study the śāstras? It was simply a waste of time.

15Therefore, O Lord, O Transcendence, kindly help us by giving us the power to execute bhakti-yoga so that we can control our restless minds and fix them upon You. We are all infected by Your illusory energy; therefore we are very attached to the body, which is full of stool and urine, and to anything related with the body. Except for devotional service, there is no way to give up this attachment. Therefore kindly bestow upon us this benediction.

16In the tract of land known as Bhārata-varṣa, as in Ilāvṛta-varṣa, there are many mountains and rivers. Some of the mountains are known as Malaya, Maṅgala-prastha, Maināka, Trikūṭa, Rṣabha, Kūṭaka, Kollaka, Sahya, Devagiri, Rṣyamūka, Śrī-śaila, Veṅkaṭa, Mahendra, Vāridhāra, Vindhya, Śuktimān, Rkṣagiri, Pāriyātra, Droṇa, Citrakūṭa, Govardhana, Raivataka, Kakubha, Nīla, Gokāmukha, Indrakīla and Kāmagiri. Besides these, there are many other hills, with many large and small rivers flowing from their slopes.

17-18Two of the rivers the Brahmaputra and the Śoṇa are called nadas, or main rivers. These are other great rivers that are very prominent: Candravasā, Tāmraparṇī, Avaṭodā, Kṛtamālā, Vaihāyasī, Kāverī, Veṅī, Payasvinī, Śarkarāvartā, Tuṅgabhadrā, Kṛṣṇāveṅyā, Bhīmarathī, Godāvārī, Nirvindhyā, Payoṣṇī, Tāpī, Revā, Surasā, Narmadā, Carmaṇvatī, Mahānadī, Vedasmṛti, Rṣikulyā, Trisāmā, Kauśikī, Mandākinī, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī, Gomatī, Sarayū, Rodhasvatī, Saptavatī, Suṣomā, Śatadrū, Candrabhāgā, Marudvṛdhā, Vitastā, Asiknī and Viśvā. The inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa are purified because they always remember these rivers. Sometimes they chant the names of these rivers as mantras, and sometimes they go directly to the rivers to touch them and bathe in them. Thus the inhabitants of Bhārata-varṣa become purified.

19The people who take birth in this tract of land are divided according to the qualities of material nature the modes of goodness [sattva-guṇa], passion [rajo-guṇa], and ignorance [tamo-guṇa]. Some of them are born as exalted personalities, some are ordinary human beings, and some are extremely abominable, for in Bhārata-varṣa one takes birth exactly according to one's past karma. If one's position is ascertained by a bona fide spiritual master and one is properly trained to engage in the service of Lord Viṣṇu according to the four social divisions [brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra] and the four spiritual divisions [brahmacārī, gṛhastha, vānaprastha and sannyāsa], one's life becomes perfect.

20After many, many births, when the results of one's pious activities mature, one gets an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. Then one is able to cut the knot of bondage to

ignorance, which bound him because of varied fruitive activities. As a result of associating with devotees, one gradually renders service to Lord Vāsudeva, who is transcendental, free from attachment to the material world, beyond the mind and words, and independent of everything else. That bhakti-yoga, devotional service to Lord Vāsudeva, is the real path of liberation.

21 Since the human form of life is the sublime position for spiritual realization, all the demigods in heaven speak in this way: How wonderful it is for these human beings to have been born in the land of Bhārata-varṣa. They must have executed pious acts of austerity in the past, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself must have been pleased with them. Otherwise, how could they engage in devotional service in so many ways? We demigods can only aspire to achieve human births in Bhārata-varṣa to execute devotional service, but these human beings are already engaged there.

22 The demigods continue: After performing the very difficult tasks of executing Vedic ritualistic sacrifices, undergoing austerities, observing vows and giving charity, we have achieved this position as inhabitants of the heavenly planets. But what is the value of this achievement? Here we are certainly very engaged in material sense gratification, and therefore we can hardly remember the lotus feet of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Indeed, because of our excessive sense gratification, we have almost forgotten His lotus feet.

23 A short life in the land of Bharata-varṣa is preferable to a life achieved in Brahmaloḥka for millions and billions of years because even if one is elevated to Brahmaloḥka, he must return to repeated birth and death. Although life in Bhārata-varṣa, in a lower planetary system, is very short, one who lives there can elevate himself to full Kṛṣṇa consciousness and achieve the highest perfection, even in this short life, by fully surrendering unto the lotus feet of the Lord. Thus one attains Vaikuṅṭhaloḥka, where there is neither anxiety nor repeated birth in a material body.

24 An intelligent person does not take interest in a place, even in the topmost planetary system, if the pure Ganges of topics concerning the Supreme Lord's activities does not flow there, if there are not devotees engaged in service on the banks of such a river of piety, or if there are no festivals of saṅkīrtana-yajña to satisfy the Lord [especially since saṅkīrtana-yajña is recommended in this age].

25 Bhārata-varṣa offers the proper land and circumstances in which to execute devotional service, which can free one from the results of Jnana and karma. If one obtains a human body in the land of Bhārata-varṣa, with clear sensory organs with which to execute the saṅkīrtana-yajña, but in spite of this opportunity he does not take to devotional service, he is certainly like liberated forest animals and birds that are careless and are therefore again bound by a hunter.

26 In India [Bhārata-varṣa], there are many worshipers of the demigods, the various officials appointed by the Supreme Lord, such as Indra, Candra and Sūrya, all of whom are worshiped differently. The worshipers offer the demigods their oblations, considering the demigods part and parcel of the whole, the Supreme Lord. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead accepts these offerings and gradually raises the worshipers to the real standard of devotional service by fulfilling their desires and aspirations. Because the Lord is complete, He offers the worshipers the benedictions they desire even if they worship only part of His transcendental body.

27 The Supreme Personality of Godhead fulfills the material desires of a devotee who approaches Him with such motives, but He does not bestow benedictions upon the devotee that will cause him to demand more benedictions again. However, the Lord willingly gives the devotee shelter at His own lotus feet, even though such a person does not aspire for it, and that

shelter satisfies all his desires. That is the Supreme Personality's special mercy.

28We are now living in the heavenly planets, undoubtedly as a result of our having performed ritualistic ceremonies, pious activities and yajñas and having studied the Vedas. However, our lives here will one day be finished. We pray that at that time, if any merit remains from our pious activities, we may again take birth in Bhārata-varṣa as human beings able to remember the lotus feet of the Lord. The Lord is so kind that He personally comes to the land of Bhārata-varṣa and expands the good fortune of its people.

29-30ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, in the opinion of some learned scholars, eight smaller islands surround Jambūdvīpa. When the sons of Mahārāja Sagara were searching all over the world for their lost horse, they dug up the earth, and in this way eight adjoining islands came into existence. The names of these islands are Svarṇaprastha, Candraśukla, Āvartana, Ramaṇaka, Mandara-hariṇa, Pāścājanya, Simhala and Laṅkā.

31My dear King Parīkṣit, O best of the descendants of Bharata Mahārāja, I have thus described to you, as I myself have been instructed, the island of Bhārata-varṣa and its adjoining islands. These are the islands that constitute Jambūdvīpa.

SB 5.20: Studying the Structure of the Universe

In this chapter there is a description of various islands, beginning with Plakṣadvīpa, and the oceans that surround them. There is also a description of the location and dimensions of the mountain known as Lokāloka. The island of Plakṣadvīpa is twice as broad as Jambūdvīpa, which is surrounded by an ocean of salt water. The master of this island is Idhmajihva, one of the sons of Mahārāja Priyavrata. The island is divided into seven regions, each with a mountain and a large river.

The second island is called Śālmādvīpa. It is surrounded by an ocean of liquor and is 3,200,000 miles wide, twice as wide as Plakṣadvīpa. The master of this island is Yajñabāhu, one of the sons of Mahārāja Priyavrata. Like Plakṣadvīpa, this island is also divided into seven regions, each with a mountain and a very large river. The inhabitants of this island worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Candrātmā.

The third island, which is surrounded by an ocean of clarified butter and is also divided into seven regions, is called Kuśadvīpa. Its master is Hiraṇyaretā, another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata, and its inhabitants worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Agni, the fire-god. The width of this island is 6,400,000 miles, or, in other words, twice the width of Śālmādvīpa.

The fourth island, Krauṣadvīpa, which is surrounded by an ocean of milk, is 12,800,000 miles wide and is also divided, like the others, into seven regions, each with a large mountain and a large river. The master of this island is Ghr̥tapṛṣṭha, another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata. The inhabitants of this island worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of water.

The fifth island, Śākadvīpa, which is 25,600,000 miles wide, is surrounded by an ocean of yogurt. Its master is Medhātithi, another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata. It is also divided into seven regions, each with a large mountain and a large river. Its inhabitants worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Vāyu, air.

The sixth island, Puṣkaradvīpa, which is twice as wide as the previous island, is surrounded by an ocean of clear water. Its master is Vītihoṭra, another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata. The island is divided in two by a large mountain named Mānasottara. The inhabitants of this island worship

Svayambhū, another feature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Beyond Puṣkaradvīpa there are two islands, one always lit by the sunshine and the other always dark. Between them is a mountain called Lokāloka, which is situated one billion miles from the edge of the universe. Lord Nārāyaṇa, expanding His opulence, resides upon this mountain. The area beyond Lokāloka Mountain is called Aloka-varṣa, and beyond Aloka-varṣa is the pure destination of persons who desire liberation.

Vertically, the sun-globe is situated just in the middle of the universe, in Antarikṣa, the space between Bhūrloka and Bhuvarloka. The distance between the sun and the circumference of Aṇḍa-golaka, the globe of the universe, is estimated to be twenty-five *koṭi yojanas* (two billion miles). Because the sun enters the universe and divides the sky, it is known as Mārtaṇḍa, and because it is produced from Hiraṇyagarbha, the body of the *mahat-tattva*, it is also called Hiraṇyagarbha.

1The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hereafter I shall describe the dimensions, characteristics and forms of the six islands beginning with the island of Plakṣa.

2As Sumeru Mountain is surrounded by Jambūdvīpa, Jambūdvīpa is also surrounded by an ocean of salt water. The breadth of Jambūdvīpa is 100,000 yojanas [800,000 miles], and the breadth of the saltwater ocean is the same. As a moat around a fort is sometimes surrounded by gardenlike forest, the saltwater ocean surrounding Jambūdvīpa is itself surrounded by Plakṣadvīpa. The breadth of Plakṣadvīpa is twice that of the saltwater ocean in other words 200,000 yojanas [1,600,000 miles]. On Plakṣadvīpa there is a tree shining like gold and as tall as the jambū tree on Jambūdvīpa. At its root is a fire with seven flames. It is because this tree is a plakṣa tree that the island is called Plakṣadvīpa. Plakṣadvīpa was governed by Idhmajihva, one of the sons of Mahārāja Priyavrata. He endowed the seven islands with the names of his seven sons, divided the islands among the sons, and then retired from active life to engage in the devotional service of the Lord.

3-4The seven islands [varṣas] are named according to the names of those seven sons Śiva, Yavasa, Subhadra, Śānta, Kṣema, Amṛta and Abhaya. In those seven tracts of land, there are seven mountains and seven rivers. The mountains are named Maṇikūṭa, Vajrakūṭa, Indrasena, Jyotiṣmān, Suparṇa, Hiraṇyaṣṭhīva and Meghamāla, and the rivers are named Aruṇā, Nṛmṇā, Āṅgirasī, Sāvitrī, Suptabhātā, Rtambarā and Satyambharā. One can immediately be free from material contamination by touching or bathing in those rivers, and the four castes of people who live in Plakṣadvīpa the Hamsas, Pataṅgas, Ūrdhvāyanas and Satyāṅgas purify themselves in that way. The inhabitants of Plakṣadvīpa live for one thousand years. They are beautiful like the demigods, and they also beget children like the demigods. By completely performing the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas and by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead as represented by the sun-god, they attain the sun, which is a heavenly planet.

5[This is the mantra by which the inhabitants of Plakṣadvīpa worship the Supreme Lord.] Let us take shelter of the sun-god, who is a reflection of Lord Viṣṇu, the all-expanding Supreme Personality of Godhead, the oldest of all persons. Viṣṇu is the only worshipable Lord. He is the Vedas, He is religion, and He is the origin of all auspicious and inauspicious results.

6O King, longevity, sensory prowess, physical and mental strength, intelligence and bravery are naturally and equally manifested in all the inhabitants of the five islands headed by Plakṣadvīpa.

7Plakṣadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of sugarcane juice, equal in breadth to the island itself. Similarly, there is then another island Sālmālidvīpatwice as broad as Plakṣadvīpa [400,000

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yojanas, or 3,200,000 miles] and surrounded by an equally broad body of water called Surāsāgara, the ocean that tastes like liquor.

8On Sālmalīdvīpa there is a śālmalī tree, from which the island takes its name. That tree is as broad and tall as the plakṣa tree in other words 100 yojanas [800 miles] broad and 1,100 yojanas [8,800 miles] tall. Learned scholars say that this gigantic tree is the residence of Garuḍa, the king of all birds and carrier of Lord Viṣṇu. In that tree, Garuḍa offers Lord Viṣṇu his Vedic prayers.

9The son of Mahārāja Priyavrata named Yaśabāhu, the master of Sālmalīdvīpa, divided the island into seven tracts of land, which he gave to his seven sons. The names of those divisions, which correspond to the names of the sons, are Surocana, Saumanasya, Ramaṇaka, Deva-varṣa, Pāribhadra, Āpyāyana and Avijsāta.

10In those tracts of land there are seven mountains Svarasa, Śataśṛṅga, Vāmadeva, Kunda, Mukunda, Puṣpa-varṣa and Sahasra-śruti. There are also seven rivers Anumati, Sinīvālī, Sarasvatī, Kuhū, Rajanī, Nandā and Rākā. They are still existing.

11Strictly following the cult of varṇāśrama-dharma, the inhabitants of those islands, who are known as Śrutidharas, Vīryadharas, Vasundharas and Iṣandharas, all worship the expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead named Soma, the moon-god.

12[The inhabitants of Śālmalīdvīpa worship the demigod of the moon in the following words.] By his own rays, the moon-god has divided the month into two fortnights, known as śukla and kṛṣṇa, for the distribution of food grains to the pitās and the demigods. The demigod of the moon is he who divides time, and he is the king of all the residents of the universe. We therefore pray that he may remain our king and guide, and we offer him our respectful obeisances.

13Outside the ocean of liquor is another island, known as Kuśadvīpa, which is 800,000 yojanas [6,400,000 miles] wide, twice as wide as the ocean of liquor. As Śālmalīdvīpa is surrounded by a liquor ocean, Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of liquid ghee as broad as the island itself. On Kuśadvīpa there are clumps of kuśa grass, from which the island takes its name. This kuśa grass, which was created by the demigods by the will of the Supreme Lord, appears like a second form of fire, but with very mild and pleasing flames. Its young shoots illuminate all directions.

14O King, another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata, Hiraṇyaretā, was the king of this island. He divided it into seven parts, which he delivered to his seven sons according to the rights of inheritance. The King then retired from family life to engage in austerities. The names of those sons are Vasu, Vasudāna, Dṛḍharuci, Stutyavrata, Nābhigupta, Vivikta and Vāmadeva.

15In those seven islands there are seven boundary mountains, known as Cakra, Catuḥśṛṅga, Kapila, Citrakūṭa, Devānīka, Ūrdhvaromā and Draviṇa. There are also seven rivers, known as Ramakulyā, Madhukulyā, Mitravindā, Śrutavindā, Devagarbhā, Ghṛtacyutā and Mantramālā.

16The inhabitants of the island of Kuśadvīpa are celebrated as the Kuśalas, Kovidas, Abhiyuktas and Kulakas. They are like the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras respectively. By bathing in the waters of those rivers, they all become purified. They are expert in performing ritualistic ceremonies according to the orders of the Vedic scriptures. Thus they worship the Lord in His aspect as the demigod of fire.

17[This is the mantra by which the inhabitants of Kuśadvīpa worship the fire-god.] O fire-god, you are a part of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, and you carry to Him all the

offerings of sacrifices. Therefore we request you to offer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead the yajñic ingredients we are offering the demigods, for the Lord is the real enjoyer.

18Outside the ocean of clarified butter is another island, known as Krauṣadvīpa, which has a width of 1,600,000 yojanas [12,800,000 miles], twice the width of the ocean of clarified butter. As Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of clarified butter, Krauṣadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of milk as broad as the island itself. On Krauṣadvīpa there is a great mountain known as Krauṣca, from which the island takes its name.

19Although the vegetables living on the slopes of Mount Krauṣca were attacked and devastated by the weapons of Kārttikeya, the mountain has become fearless because it is always bathed on all sides by the Ocean of Milk and protected by Varuṇadeva.

20The ruler of this island was another son of Mahārāja Priyavrata. His name was Ghṛtapṛṣṭha, and he was a very learned scholar. He also divided his own island among his seven sons. After dividing the island into seven parts, named according to the names of his sons, Ghṛtapṛṣṭha Mahārāja completely retired from family life and took shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord, the soul of all souls, who has all auspicious qualities. Thus he attained perfection.

21The sons of Mahārāja Ghṛtapṛṣṭha were named Āma, Madhuruha, Meghapṛṣṭha, Sudhāmā, Bhrājīṣṭha, Lohitārṇa and Vanaspati. In their island there are seven mountains, which indicate the boundaries of the seven tracts of land, and there are also seven rivers. The mountains are named Śukla, Vardhamāna, Bhojana, Upabarhiṇa, Nanda, Nandana and Sarvatobhadra. The rivers are named Abhayā, Amṛtaughā, Āryakā, Tīrthavatī, Rūpavatī, Pavitravatī and Śuklā.

22The inhabitants of Krauṣadvīpa are divided into four castes, called the Puruṣas, Ṛṣabhas, Draviṇas and Devakas. Using the waters of those sanctified rivers, they worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead by offering a palmful of water at the lotus feet of Varuṇa, the demigod who has a form of water.

23[The inhabitants of Krauṣadvīpa worship with this mantra.] O water of the rivers, you have obtained energy from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you purify the three planetary systems, known as Bhūloka, Bhuvarloka and Svarloka. By your constitutional nature, you take away sins, and that is why we are touching you. Kindly continue to purify us.

24Outside the Ocean of Milk is another island, Śākadvīpa, which has a width of 3,200,000 yojanas [25,600,000 miles]. As Krauṣadvīpa is surrounded by its own ocean of milk, Śākadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of churned yogurt as broad as the island itself. In Śākadvīpa there is a big śāka tree, from which the island takes its name. This tree is very fragrant. Indeed, it lends its scent to the entire island.

25The master of this island, also one of the sons of Priyavrata, was known as Medhātithi. He also divided his island into seven sections, named according to the names of his own sons, whom he made the kings of that island. The names of those sons are Purojava, Manojava, Pavamāna, Dhūmrānīka, Citrarepha, Bahurūpa and Viśvadhāra. After dividing the island and situating his sons as its rulers, Medhātithi personally retired, and to fix his mind completely upon the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he entered a forest suitable for meditation.

26For these lands also, there are seven boundary mountains and seven rivers. The mountains are Īsāna, Uruśṅga, Balabhadra, Śatakesara, Sahasrasrota, Devapāla and Mahānasa. The rivers are Anaghā, Āyurdā, Ubhayasprṣṭi, Aparājītā, Paṣcapadī, Sahasra-śruti and Nijadhṛti.

27The inhabitants of those islands are also divided into four castes—Ṛtavrata, Satyavrata, Dānavrata and Anuvrata—which exactly resemble brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra. They practice prāṇāyāma and mystic yoga, and in trance they worship the Supreme Lord in the form of Vāyu.

28[The inhabitants of Śākadvīpa worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Vāyu in the following words.] O Supreme Person, situated as the Supersoul within the body, You direct the various actions of the different airs, such as prāṇa, and thus You maintain all living entities. O Lord, O Supersoul of everyone, O controller of the cosmic manifestation under whom everything exists, may You protect us from all dangers.

29Outside the ocean of yogurt is another island, known as Puṣkaradvīpa, which is 6,400,000 yojanas [51,200,000 miles] wide, twice as wide as the ocean of yogurt. It is surrounded by an ocean of very tasteful water as broad as the island itself. On Puṣkaradvīpa there is a great lotus flower with 100,000,000 pure golden petals, as effulgent as the flames of fire. That lotus flower is considered the sitting place of Lord Brahmā, who is the most powerful living being and who is therefore sometimes called bhagavān.

30In the middle of that island is a great mountain named Mānasottara, which forms the boundary between the inner side and the outer side of the island. Its breadth and height are 10,000 yojanas [80,000 miles]. On that mountain, in the four directions, are the residential quarters of demigods such as Indra. In the chariot of the sun-god, the sun travels on the top of the mountain in an orbit called the Saṁvatsara, encircling Mount Meru. The sun's path on the northern side is called Uttarāyaṇa, and its path on the southern side is called Dakṣiṇāyaṇa. One side represents a day for the demigods, and the other represents their night.

31The ruler of this island, the son of Mahārāja Priyavrata named Vītihotra, had two sons named Ramaṇaka and Dhātaki. He granted the two sides of the island to these two sons and then personally engaged himself in activities for the sake of the Supreme Personality of Godhead like his elder brother Medhātithi.

32For the fulfillment of material desires, the inhabitants of this tract of land worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead as represented by Lord Brahmā. They offer prayers to the Lord as follows.

33Lord Brahmā is known as karma-maya, the form of ritualistic ceremonies, because by performing ritualistic ceremonies one may attain his position and because the Vedic ritualistic hymns become manifest from him. He is devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead without deviation, and therefore in one sense he is not different from the Lord. Nevertheless, he should be worshiped not as the monists worship him, but in duality. One should always remain a servitor of the Supreme Lord, the supreme worshipable Deity. We therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto Lord Brahmā, the form of manifest Vedic knowledge.

34Thereafter, beyond the ocean of sweet water and fully surrounding it, is a mountain named Lokāloka, which divides the countries that are full of sunlight from those not lit by the sun.

35Beyond the ocean of sweet water is a tract of land as broad as the area between the middle of Mount Sumeru and the boundary of Mānasottara Mountain. In that tract of land there are many living beings. Beyond it, extending to Lokāloka Mountain, is another land, which is made of gold. Because of its golden surface, it reflects light like the surface of a mirror, and any physical article that falls on that land can never be perceived again. All living entities, therefore, have abandoned that golden land.

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36Between the lands inhabited by living entities and those that are uninhabited stands the great mountain which separates the two and which is therefore celebrated as Lokāloka.

37By the supreme will of Kṛṣṇa, the mountain known as Lokāloka has been installed as the outer border of the three worldsBhūrloka, Bhuvarloka and Svarlokato control the rays of the sun throughout the universe. All the luminaries, from the sun up to Dhruvaloka, distribute their rays throughout the three worlds, but only within the boundary formed by this mountain. Because it is extremely high, extending even higher than Dhruvaloka, it blocks the rays of the luminaries, which therefore can never extend beyond it.

38Learned scholars who are free from mistakes, illusions and propensities to cheat have thus described the planetary systems and their particular symptoms, measurements and locations. With great deliberation, they have established the truth that the distance between Sumeru and the mountain known as Lokāloka is one fourth of the diameter of the universeor, in other words, 125,000,000 yojanas [1 billion miles].

39On the top of Lokāloka Mountain are the four gaja-patis, the best of elephants, which were established in the four directions by Lord Brahmā, the supreme spiritual master of the entire universe. The names of those elephants are Ṛṣabha, Puṣkaracūḍa, Vāmana and Aparājita. They are responsible for maintaining the planetary systems of the universe.

40The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of all transcendental opulences and the master of the spiritual sky. He is the Supreme Person, Bhagavān, the Supersoul of everyone. The demigods, led by Indra, the King of heaven, are entrusted with seeing to the affairs of the material world. To benefit all living beings in all the varied planets and to increase the power of those elephants and of the demigods, the Lord manifests Himself on top of that mountain in a spiritual body, uncontaminated by the modes of material nature. Surrounded by His personal expansions and assistants like Viṣvaksena, He exhibits all His perfect opulences, such as religion and knowledge, and His mystic powers such as aṇimā, laghimā and mahimā. He is beautifully situated, and He is decorated by the different weapons in His four hands.

41The various forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, such as Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu, are beautifully decorated with different weapons. The Lord exhibits those forms to maintain all the varied planets created by His personal potency, yoga-māyā.

42My dear King, outside Lokāloka Mountain is the tract of land known as Aloka-varṣa, which extends for the same breadth as the area within the mountainin other words, 125,000,000 yojanas [one billion miles]. Beyond Aloka-varṣa is the destination of those who aspire for liberation from the material world. It is beyond the jurisdiction of the material modes of nature, and therefore it is completely pure. Lord Kṛṣṇa took Arjuna through this place to bring back the sons of the brāhmaṇa.

43The sun is situated [vertically] in the middle of the universe, in the area between Bhūrloka and Bhuvarloka, which is called antarikṣa, outer space. The distance between the sun and the circumference of the universe is twenty-five koṭi yojanas [two billion miles].

44The sun-god is also known as Vairāja, the total material body for all living entities. Because he entered this dull egg of the universe at the time of creation, he is also called Mārtaṇḍa. He is also known as Hiraṇyagarbha because he received his material body from Hiraṇyagarbha [Lord Brahmā].

45O King, the sun-god and the sun planet divide all the directions of the universe. It is only because of the presence of the sun that we can understand what the sky, the higher planets,

this world and the lower planets are. It is also only because of the sun that we can understand which places are for material enjoyment, which are for liberation, which are hellish and subterranean.

46All living entities, including demigods, human beings, animals, birds, insects, reptiles, creepers and trees, depend upon the heat and light given by the sun-god from the sun planet. Furthermore, it is because of the sun's presence that all living entities can see, and therefore he is called *ḍṛg-īśvara*, the Personality of Godhead presiding over sight.

SB 5.21: The Movements of the Sun

This chapter informs us of the movements of the sun. The sun is not stationary; it is also moving like the other planets. The sun's movements determine the duration of night and day. When the sun travels north of the equator, it moves slowly during the day and very quickly at night, thus increasing the duration of the daytime and decreasing the duration of night. Similarly, when the sun travels south of the equator, the exact opposite is true: the duration of the day decreases, and the duration of night increases. When the sun enters *Karkaṭa-rāśi* (Cancer) and then travels to *Siṁha-rāśi* (Leo) and so on through *Dhanuḥ-rāśi* (Sagittarius), its course is called *Dakṣiṇāyana*, the southern way, and when the sun enters *Makara-rāśi* (Capricorn) and thereafter travels through *Kumbhārāśi* (Aquarius) and so on through *Mithunārāśi* (Gemini), its course is called *Uttarāyana*, the northern way. When the sun is in *Meṣa-rāśi* (Aries) and *Tulā-rāśi* (Libra), the duration of day and night are equal.

On *Mānasottara* Mountain are the abodes of four demigods. East of *Sumeru* Mountain is *Devadhānī*, where King *Indra* lives, and south of *Sumeru* is *Saṁyamanī*, the abode of *Yamarāja*, the superintendent of death. Similarly, west of *Sumeru* is *Nimlocanī*, the abode of *Varuṇa*, the demigod who controls the water, and north of *Sumeru* is *Vibhāvarī*, where the demigod of the moon lives. Sunrise, noon, sunset and midnight occur in all these places because of the movements of the sun. Diametrically opposite the place where the sunrise takes place and the sun is seen by human eyes, the sun will be setting and passing away from human vision. Similarly, the people residing diametrically opposite the point where it is midday will be experiencing midnight. The sun rises and sets with all the other planets, headed by the moon and other luminaries.

The entire *kāla-cakra*, or wheel of time, is established on the wheel of the sun-god's chariot. This wheel is known as *Saṁvatsara*. The seven horses pulling the chariot of the sun are known as *Gāyatrī*, *Bṛhatī*, *Uṣṇik*, *Jagatī*, *Triṣṭup*, *Anuṣṭup* and *Pañkti*. They are harnessed by a demigod known as *Aruṇadeva* to a yoke 900,000 *yojanas* wide. Thus the chariot carries *Ādityadeva*, the sun-god. Always staying in front of the sun-god and offering their prayers are sixty thousand sages known as *Vālikhilyas*. There are fourteen *Gandharvas*, *Apsarās* and other demigods, who are divided into seven parties and who perform ritualistic activities every month to worship the Supersoul through the sun-god according to different names. Thus the sun-god travels through the universe for a distance of 95,100,000 *yojanas* (760,800,000 miles) at a speed of 16,004 miles at every moment.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, I have thus far described the diameter of the universe [fifty crores of *yojanas*, or four billion miles] and its general characteristics, according to the estimations of learned scholars.

2As a grain of wheat is divided into two parts and one can estimate the size of the upper part by knowing that of the lower, so, expert geographers instruct, one can understand the measurements of the upper part of the universe by knowing those of the lower part. The sky between the earthly sphere and heavenly sphere is called *antarikṣa*, or outer space. It adjoins

the top of the sphere of earth and the bottom of that of heaven.

3In the midst of that region of outer space [antarikṣa] is the most opulent sun, the king of all the planets that emanate heat, such as the moon. By the influence of its radiation, the sun heats the universe and maintains its proper order. It also gives light to help all living entities see. While passing toward the north, toward the south or through the equator, in accordance with the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is said to move slowly, swiftly or moderately. According to its movements in rising above, going beneath or passing through the equator and correspondingly coming in touch with various signs of the zodiac, headed by Makara [Capricorn] days and nights are short, long or equal to one another.

4When the sun passes through Meṣa [Aries] and Tulā [Libra], the durations of day and night are equal. When it passes through the five signs headed by Vṛṣabha [Taurus], the duration of the days increases [until Cancer], and then it gradually decreases by half an hour each month, until day and night again become equal [in Libra].

5When the sun passes through the five signs beginning with Vṛścika [Scorpio], the duration of the days decreases [until Capricorn], and then gradually it increases month after month, until day and night become equal [in Aries].

6Until the sun travels to the south the days grow longer, and until it travels to the north the nights grow longer.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued; My dear King, as stated before, the learned say that the sun travels over all sides of Mānasottara Mountain in a circle whose length is 95,100,000 yojanas [760,800,000 miles]. On Mānasottara Mountain, due east of Mount Sumeru, is a place known as Devadhānī, possessed by King Indra. Similarly, in the south is a place known as Saṁyamanī, possessed by Yamarāja, in the west is a place known as Nimlocanī, possessed by Varuṇa, and in the north is a place named Vibhāvarī, possessed by the moon-god. Sunrise, midday, sunset and midnight occur in all those places according to specific times, thus engaging all living entities in their various occupational duties and also making them cease such duties.

8-9The living entities residing on Sumeru Mountain are always very warm, as at midday, because for them the sun is always overhead. Although the sun moves counterclockwise, facing the constellations, with Sumeru Mountain on its left, it also moves clockwise and appears to have the mountain on its right because it is influenced by the dakṣiṇāvarta wind. People living in countries at points diametrically opposite to where the sun is first seen rising will see the sun setting, and if a straight line were drawn from a point where the sun is at midday, the people in countries at the opposite end of the line would be experiencing midnight. Similarly, if people residing where the sun is setting were to go to countries diametrically opposite, they would not see the sun in the same condition.

10When the sun travels from Devadhānī, the residence of Indra, to Saṁyamanī, the residence of Yamarāja, it travels 23,775,000 yojanas [190,200,000 miles] in fifteen ghaṭikās [six hours].

11From the residence of Yamarāja the sun travels to Nimlocanī, the residence of Varuṇa, from there to Vibhāvarī, the residence of the moon-god, and from there again to the residence of Indra. In a similar way, the moon, along with the other stars and planets, becomes visible in the celestial sphere and then sets and again becomes invisible.

12Thus the chariot of the sun-god, which is trayīmaya, or worshiped by the words om bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ, travels through the four residences mentioned above at a speed of 3,400,800 yojanas [27,206,400 miles] in a muhūrta.

13The chariot of the sun-god has only one wheel, which is known as Saṁvatsara. The twelve months are calculated to be its twelve spokes, the six seasons are the sections of its rim, and the three cātur-māsyā periods are its three-sectioned hub. One side of the axle carrying the wheel rests upon the summit of Mount Sumeru, and the other rests upon Mānasottara Mountain. Affixed to the outer end of the axle, the wheel continuously rotates on Mānasottara Mountain like the wheel of an oil-pressing machine.

14As in an oil-pressing machine, this first axle is attached to a second axle, which is one-fourth as long [3,937,500 yojanas, or 31,500,000 miles]. The upper end of this second axle is attached to Dhruvaloka by a rope of wind.

15My dear King, the carriage of the sun-god's chariot is estimated to be 3,600,000 yojanas [28,800,000 miles] long and one-fourth as wide [900,000 yojanas, or 7,200,000 miles]. The chariot's horses, which are named after Gāyatrī and other Vedic meters, are harnessed by Aruṇadeva to a yoke that is also 900,000 yojanas wide. This chariot continuously carries the sun-god.

16Although Aruṇadeva sits in front of the sun-god and is engaged in driving the chariot and controlling the horses, he looks backward toward the sun-god.

17There are sixty thousand saintly persons named Vālikhilyas, each the size of a thumb, who are located in front of the sun-god and who offer him eloquent prayers of glorification.

18Similarly, fourteen other saints, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and demigods, who are divided into groups of two, assume different names every month and continuously perform different ritualistic ceremonies to worship the Supreme Lord as the most powerful demigod Sūryadeva, who holds many names.

19My dear King, in his orbit through Bhū-maṇḍala, the sun-god traverses a distance of 95,100,000 yojanas [760,800,000 miles] at the speed of 2,000 yojanas and two krośas [16,004 miles] in a moment.

SB 5.22: The Orbits of the Planets

In this chapter the orbits of the planets are described. According to the movements of the moon and other planets, all the inhabitants of the universe are prone to auspicious and inauspicious situations. This is referred to as the influence of the stars.

The sun-god, who controls the affairs of the entire universe, especially in regard to heat, light, seasonal changes and so on, is considered an expansion of Nārāyaṇa. He represents the three *Vedas*—*Rg*, *Yajur* and *Sāma*—and therefore he is known as Trayīmaya, the form of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Sometimes the sun-god is also called Sūrya Nārāyaṇa. The sun-god has expanded himself in twelve divisions, and thus he controls the six seasonal changes and causes winter, summer, rain and so on. *Yogīs* and *karmīs* following the *vaṁśrama* institution, who practice *haṭha* or *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* or who perform *agnihotra* sacrifices, worship Sūrya Nārāyaṇa for their own benefit. The demigod Sūrya is always in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. Residing in outer space, which is in the middle of the universe, between Bhūloka and Bhuvarloka, the sun rotates through the time circle of the zodiac, represented by twelve *nāśīs*, or signs, and assumes different names according to the sign he is in. For the moon, every month is divided into two fortnights. Similarly, according to solar calculations, a month is equal to the time the sun spends in one constellation; two months constitute one season, and there are twelve months in a year. The entire area of the sky is divided into two halves, each representing an *ayana*, the course traversed by the sun within a period of six months. The sun

travels sometimes slowly, sometimes swiftly and sometimes at a moderate speed. In this way it travels within the three worlds, consisting of the heavenly planets, the earthly planets and outer space. These orbits are referred to by great learned scholars by the names Saṁvatsara, Parivatsara, Idāvatsara, Anuvatsara and Vatsara.

The moon is situated 100,000 *yojanas* above the rays of the sunshine. Day and night on the heavenly planets and Pitṛloka are calculated according to its waning and waxing. Above the moon by a distance of 200,000 *yojanas* are some stars, and above these stars is Śukra-graha (Venus), whose influence is always auspicious for the inhabitants of the entire universe. Above Śukra-graha by 200,000 *yojanas* is Budha-graha (Mercury), whose influence is sometimes auspicious and sometimes inauspicious. Next, above Budha-graha by 200,000 *yojanas*, is Aṅgāraka (Mars), which almost always has an unfavorable influence. Above Aṅgāraka by another 200,000 *yojanas* is the planet called Bṛhaspati-graha (Jupiter), which is always very favorable for qualified *brāhmaṇas*. Above Bṛhaspati-graha is the planet Śanaiścara (Saturn), which is very inauspicious, and above Saturn is a group of seven stars occupied by great saintly persons who are always thinking of the welfare of the entire universe. These seven stars circumambulate Dhruvaloka, which is the residence of Lord Viṣṇu within this universe.

1King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear lord, you have already affirmed the truth that the supremely powerful sun-god travels around Dhruvaloka with both Dhruvaloka and Mount Sumeru on his right. Yet at the same time the sun-god faces the signs of the zodiac and keeps Sumeru and Dhruvaloka on his left. How can we reasonably accept that the sun-god proceeds with Sumeru and Dhruvaloka on both his left and right simultaneously?

2ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī clearly answered: When a potter's wheel is moving and small ants located on that big wheel are moving with it, one can see that their motion is different from that of the wheel because they appear sometimes on one part of the wheel and sometimes on another. Similarly, the signs and constellations, with Sumeru and Dhruvaloka on their right, move with the wheel of time, and the antlike sun and other planets move with them. The sun and planets, however, are seen in different signs and constellations at different times. This indicates that their motion is different from that of the zodiac and the wheel of time itself.

3The original cause of the cosmic manifestation is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. When great saintly persons, fully aware of the Vedic knowledge, offered prayers to the Supreme Person, He descended to this material world in the form of the sun to benefit all the planets and purify fruitive activities. He divided Himself into twelve parts and created seasonal forms, beginning with spring. In this way He created the seasonal qualities, such as heat, cold and so on.

4According to the system of four varṇas and four āśramas, people generally worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, who is situated as the sun-god. With great faith they worship the Supreme Personality as the Supersoul according to ritualistic ceremonies handed down in the three Vedas, such as agnihotra and similar higher and lower fruitive acts, and according to the process of mystic yoga. In this way they very easily attain the ultimate goal of life.

5The sun-god, who is Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu, the soul of all the worlds, is situated in outer space between the upper and lower portions of the universe. Passing through twelve months on the wheel of time, the sun comes in touch with twelve different signs of the zodiac and assumes twelve different names according to those signs. The aggregate of those twelve months is called a saṁvatsara, or an entire year. According to lunar calculations, two fortnightsone of the waxing moon and the other of the waningform one month. That same period is one day and night for the planet Pitṛloka. According to stellar calculations, a month equals two and one

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quarter constellations. When the sun travels for two months, a season passes, and therefore the seasonal changes are considered parts of the body of the year.

6Thus the time the sun takes to rotate through half of outer space is called an ayana, or its period of movement [in the north or in the south].

7The sun-god has three speeds—slow, fast and moderate. The time he takes to travel entirely around the spheres of heaven, earth and space at these three speeds is referred to, by learned scholars, by the five names Saṁvatsara, Parivatsara, Idāvatsara, Anuvatsara and Vatsara.

8Above the rays of the sunshine by a distance of 100,000 yojanas [800,000 miles] is the moon, which travels at a speed faster than that of the sun. In two lunar fortnights the moon travels through the equivalent of a saṁvatsara of the sun, in two and a quarter days it passes through a month of the sun, and in one day it passes through a fortnight of the sun.

9When the moon is waxing, the illuminating portions of it increase daily, thus creating day for the demigods and night for the pitās. When the moon is waning, however, it causes night for the demigods and day for the pitās. In this way the moon passes through each constellation of stars in thirty muhūrtas [an entire day]. The moon is the source of nectarean coolness that influences the growth of food grains, and therefore the moon-god is considered the life of all living entities. He is consequently called Jīva, the chief living being within the universe.

10Because the moon is full of all potentialities, it represents the influence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The moon is the predominating deity of everyone's mind, and therefore the moon-god is called Manomaya. He is also called Annamaya because he gives potency to all herbs and plants, and he is called Amṛtamaya because he is the source of life for all living entities. The moon pleases the demigods, pitās, human beings, animals, birds, reptiles, trees, plants and all other living entities. Everyone is satisfied by the presence of the moon. Therefore the moon is also called Sarvamaya [all-pervading].

11There are many stars located 200,000 yojanas [1,600,000 miles] above the moon. By the supreme will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are fixed to the wheel of time, and thus they rotate with Mount Sumeru on their right, their motion being different from that of the sun. There are twenty-eight important stars, headed by Abhijit.

12Some 1,600,000 miles above this group of stars is the planet Venus, which moves at almost exactly the same pace as the sun according to swift, slow and moderate movements. Sometimes Venus moves behind the sun, sometimes in front of the sun and sometimes along with it. Venus nullifies the influence of planets that are obstacles to rainfall. Consequently its presence causes rainfall, and it is therefore considered very favorable for all living beings within this universe. This has been accepted by learned scholars.

13Mercury is described to be similar to Venus, in that it moves sometimes behind the sun, sometimes in front of the sun and sometimes along with it. It is 1,600,000 miles above Venus, or 7,200,000 miles above earth. Mercury, which is the son of the moon, is almost always very auspicious for the inhabitants of the universe, but when it does not move along with the sun, it forbodes cyclones, dust, irregular rainfall, and waterless clouds. In this way it creates fearful conditions due to inadequate or excessive rainfall.

14Situated 1,600,000 miles above Mercury, or 8,800,000 miles above earth, is the planet Mars. If this planet does not travel in a crooked way, it crosses through each sign of the zodiac in three fortnights and in this way travels through all twelve, one after another. It almost always creates unfavorable conditions in respect to rainfall and other influences.

15 Situated 1,600,000 miles above Mars, or 10,400,000 miles above earth, is the planet Jupiter, which travels through one sign of the zodiac within the period of a Parivatsara. If its movement is not curved, the planet Jupiter is very favorable to the brāhmaṇas of the universe.

16 Situated 1,600,000 miles above Jupiter, or 12,000,000 miles above earth, is the planet Saturn, which passes through one sign of the zodiac in thirty months and covers the entire zodiac circle in thirty Anuvatsaras. This planet is always very inauspicious for the universal situation.

17 Situated 8,800,000 miles above Saturn, or 20,800,000 miles above earth, are the seven saintly sages, who are always thinking of the well-being of the inhabitants of the universe. They circumambulate the supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu, known as Dhruvaloka, the polestar.

SB 5.23: The Śiśumāra Planetary Systems

This chapter describes how all the planetary systems take shelter of the polestar, Dhruvaloka. It also describes the totality of these planetary systems to be Śiśumāra, another expansion of the external body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Dhruvaloka, the abode of Lord Viṣṇu within this universe, is situated 1,300,000 *yojanas* from the seven stars. In the planetary system of Dhruvaloka are the planets of the fire-god, Indra, Prajāpati, Kaśyapa and Dharma, all of whom are very respectful to the great devotee Dhruva, who lives on the polestar. Like bulls yoked to a central pivot, all the planetary systems revolve around Dhruvaloka, impelled by eternal time. Those who worship the *virāt-puruṣa*, the universal form of the Lord, conceive of this entire rotating system of planets as an animal known as *śiśumāra*. This imaginary *śiśumāra* is another form of the Lord. The head of the *śiśumāra* form is downward, and its body appears like that of a coiled snake. On the end of its tail is Dhruvaloka, on the body of the tail are Prajāpati, Agni, Indra and Dharma, and on the root of the tail are Dhātā and Vidhātā. On its waist are the seven great sages. The entire body of the *śiśumāra* faces toward its right and appears like a coil of stars. On the right side of this coil are the fourteen prominent stars from Abhijit to Punarvasu, and on the left side are the fourteen prominent stars from Puṣyā to Uttarāṣāḍhā. The stars known as Punarvasu and Puṣyā are on the right and left hips of the *śiśumāra*, and the stars known as Ārdrā and Aśleṣā are on the right and left feet of the *śiśumāra*. Other stars are also fixed on different sides of the Śiśumāra planetary system according to the calculations of Vedic astronomers. To concentrate their minds, *yogīs* worship the Śiśumāra planetary system, which is technically known as the *kuṇḍalini-cakra*.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, 1,300,000 *yojanas* [10,400,000 miles] above the planets of the seven sages is the place that learned scholars describe as the abode of Lord Viṣṇu. There the son of Mahārāja Uttānapāda, the great devotee Mahārāja Dhruva, still resides as the life source of all the living entities who live until the end of the creation. Agni, Indra, Prajāpati, Kaśyapa and Dharma all assemble there to offer him honor and respectful obeisances. They circumambulate him with their right sides toward him. I have already described the glorious activities of Mahārāja Dhruva [in the Fourth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam].

2 Established by the supreme will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the polestar, which is the planet of Mahārāja Dhruva, constantly shines as the central pivot for all the stars and planets. The unsleeping, invisible, most powerful time factor causes these luminaries to revolve around the polestar without cessation.

3 When bulls are yoked together and tied to a central post to thresh rice, they tread around that pivot without deviating from their proper positions one bull being closest to the post, another in the middle, and a third on the outside. Similarly, all the planets and all the hundreds and

thousands of stars revolve around the polestar, the planet of Mahārāja Dhruva, in their respective orbits, some higher and some lower. Fastened by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the machine of material nature according to the results of their fruitive acts, they are driven around the polestar by the wind and will continue to be so until the end of creation. These planets float in the air within the vast sky, just as clouds with hundreds of tons of water float in the air or as the great śyena eagles, due to the results of past activities, fly high in the sky and have no chance of falling to the ground.

4This great machine, consisting of the stars and planets, resembles the form of a śiśumāra [dolphin] in the water. It is sometimes considered an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva. Great yogīs meditate upon Vāsudeva in this form because it is actually visible.

5This form of the śiśumāra has its head downward and its body coiled. On the end of its tail is the planet of Dhruva, on the body of its tail are the planets of the demigods Prajāpati, Agni, Indra and Dharma, and at the base of its tail are the planets of the demigods Dhātā and Vidhātā. Where the hips might be on the śiśumāra are the seven saintly sages like Vasiṣṭha and Aṅgirā. The coiled body of the Śiśumāra-cakra turns toward its right side, on which the fourteen constellations from Abhijit to Punarvasu are located. On its left side are the fourteen stars from Puṣyā to Uttarāśādhā. Thus its body is balanced because its sides are occupied by an equal number of stars. On the back of the śiśumāra is the group of stars known as Ajavīthī, and on its abdomen is the Ganges that flows in the sky [the Milky Way].

6On the right and left sides of where the loins might be on the Śiśumāra-cakra are the stars named Punarvasu and Puṣyā. Ārdrā and Aśleṣā are on its right and left feet, Abhijit and Uttarāśādhā are on its right and left nostrils, Śravaṇā and Pūrvāśādhā are at its right and left eyes, and Dhaniṣṭhā and Mūlā are on its right and left ears. The eight stars from Maghā to Anurādhā, which mark the southern course, are on the ribs of the left of its body, and the eight stars from Mṛgaśīrṣā to Pūrvabhādra, which mark the northern course, are on the ribs on the right side. Śatabhiṣā and Jyeṣṭhā are on the right and left shoulders.

7On the upper chin of the śiśumāra is Agasti; on its lower chin, Yamarāja; on its mouth, Mars; on its genitals, Saturn; on the back of its neck, Jupiter; on its chest, the sun; and within the core of its heart, Nārāyaṇa. Within its mind is the moon; on its navel, Venus; and on its breasts, the Aśvinī-kumāras. Within its life air, which is known as prāṇāpāna, is Mercury, on its neck is Rāhu, all over its body are comets, and in its pores are the numerous stars.

8My dear King, the body of the śiśumāra, as thus described, should be considered the external form of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Morning, noon and evening, one should silently observe the form of the Lord as the Śiśumāra-cakra and worship Him with this mantra: “O Lord who have assumed the form of time! O resting place of all the planets moving in different orbits! O master of all demigods, O Supreme Person, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You and meditate upon You.”

9The body of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, which forms the Śiśumāra-cakra, is the resting place of all the demigods and all the stars and planets. One who chants this mantra to worship that Supreme Person three times a day morning, noon and evening will surely be freed from all sinful reactions. If one simply offers his obeisances to this form or remembers this form three times a day, all his recent sinful activities will be destroyed.

SB 5.24: The Subterranean Heavenly Planets

This chapter describes the planet Rāhu, which is 10,000 *yojanas* (80,000 miles) below the sun,

and it also describes Atala and the other lower planetary systems. Rāhu is situated below the sun and moon. It is between these two planets and the earth. When Rāhu conceals the sun and moon, eclipses occur, either total or partial, depending on whether Rāhu moves in a straight or curving way.

Below Rāhu by another 1,000,000 *yojanas* are the planets of the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Vidyādharas, and below these are planets such as Yakṣaloka and Rakṣaloka. Below these planets is the earth, and 70,000 *yojanas* below the earth are the lower planetary systems Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala and Pātāla. Demons and Rakṣasas live in these lower planetary systems with their wives and children, always engaged in sense gratification and not fearing their next births. The sunshine does not reach these planets, but they are illuminated by jewels fixed upon the hoods of snakes. Because of these shining gems there is practically no darkness. Those living in these planets do not become old or diseased, and they are not afraid of death from any cause but the time factor, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the planet Atala, the yawning of a demon has produced three kinds of women, called *svairiṇī* (independent), *kāmiṇī* (lusty) and *pumścalī* (very easily subdued by men). Below Atala is the planet Vitala, wherein Lord Śiva and his wife Gaurī reside. Because of their presence, a kind of gold is produced called *hāṭaka*. Below Vitala is the planet Sutala, the abode of Bali Mahārāja, the most fortunate king. Bali Mahārāja was favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāmanadeva, because of his intense devotional service. The Lord went to the sacrificial arena of Bali Mahārāja and begged him for three paces of land, and on this plea the Lord took from him all his possessions. When Bali Mahārāja agreed to all this, the Lord was very pleased, and therefore the Lord serves as his doorkeeper. The description of Bali Mahārāja appears in the Eighth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead offers a devotee material happiness, this is not His real favor. The demigods, who are very puffed up by their material opulence, pray to the Lord only for material happiness, not knowing anything better. Devotees like Prahlāda Mahārāja, however, do not want material happiness. Not to speak of material happiness, they do not want even liberation from material bondage, although one can achieve this liberation simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, even with improper pronunciation.

Below Sutala is the planet Talātala, the abode of the demon Maya. This demon is always materially happy because he is favored by Lord Śiva, but he cannot achieve spiritual happiness at any time. Below Talātala is the planet Mahātala, where there are many snakes with hundreds and thousands of hoods. Below Mahātala is Rasātala, and below that is Pātāla, where the serpent Vasukī lives with his associates.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, some historians, the speakers of the Purāṇas, say that 10,000 *yojanas* [80,000 miles] below the sun is the planet known as Rāhu, which moves like one of the stars. The presiding deity of that planet, who is the son of Simhikā, is the most abominable of all asuras, but although he is completely unfit to assume the position of a demigod or planetary deity, he has achieved that position by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Later I shall speak further about him.

2The sun globe, which is a source of heat, extends for 10,000 *yojanas* [80,000 miles]. The moon extends for 20,000 *yojanas* [160,000 miles], and Rāhu extends for 30,000 *yojanas* [240,000 miles]. Formerly, when nectar was being distributed, Rāhu tried to create dissension between the sun and moon by interposing himself between them. Rāhu is inimical toward both the sun and the moon, and therefore he always tries to cover the sunshine and moonshine on the dark-moon day and full-moon night.

3After hearing from the sun and moon demigods about Rāhu's attack, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, engages His disc, known as the Sudarśana cakra, to protect them. The Sudarśana cakra is the Lord's most beloved devotee and is favored by the Lord. The intense heat of its effulgence, meant for killing non-Vaiṣṇavas, is unbearable to Rāhu, and he therefore flees in fear of it. During the time Rāhu disturbs the sun or moon, there occurs what people commonly know as an eclipse.

4Below Rāhu by 10,000 yojanas [80,000 miles] are the planets known as Siddhaloka, Cāraṇaloka and Vidyādhara-loka.

5Beneath Vidyādhara-loka, Cāraṇaloka and Siddhaloka, in the sky called antarikṣa, are the places of enjoyment for the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas, ghosts and so on. Antarikṣa extends as far as the wind blows and the clouds float in the sky. Above this there is no more air.

6Below the abodes of the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas by a distance of 100 yojanas [800 miles] is the planet earth. Its upper limits extend as high as swans, hawks, eagles and similar large birds can fly.

7My dear King, beneath this earth are seven other planets, known as Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala and Pātāla. I have already explained the situation of the planetary systems of earth. The width and length of the seven lower planetary systems are calculated to be exactly the same as those of earth.

8In these seven planetary systems, which are also known as the subterranean heavens [bila-svarga], there are very beautiful houses, gardens and places of sense enjoyment, which are even more opulent than those in the higher planets because the demons have a very high standard of sensual pleasure, wealth and influence. Most of the residents of these planets, who are known as Daityas, Dānavas and Nāgas, live as householders. Their wives, children, friends and society are all fully engaged in illusory material happiness. The sense enjoyment of the demigods is sometimes disturbed, but the residents of these planets enjoy life without disturbances. Thus they are understood to be very attached to illusory happiness.

9My dear King, in the imitation heavens known as bila-svarga there is a great demon named Maya Dānava, who is an expert artist and architect. He has constructed many brilliantly decorated cities. There are many wonderful houses, walls, gates, assembly houses, temples, yards and temple compounds, as well as many hotels serving as residential quarters for foreigners. The houses for the leaders of these planets are constructed with the most valuable jewels, and they are always crowded with living entities known as Nāgas and Asuras, as well as many pigeons, parrots and similar birds. All in all, these imitation heavenly cities are most beautifully situated and attractively decorated.

10The parks and gardens in the artificial heavens surpass in beauty those of the upper heavenly planets. The trees in those gardens, embraced by creepers, bend with a heavy burden of twigs with fruits and flowers, and therefore they appear extraordinarily beautiful. That beauty could attract anyone and make his mind fully blossom in the pleasure of sense gratification. There are many lakes and reservoirs with clear, transparent water, agitated by jumping fish and decorated with many flowers such as lilies, kuvalayas, kahlāras and blue and red lotuses. Pairs of cakravākas and many other water birds nest in the lakes and always enjoy in a happy mood, making sweet, pleasing vibrations that are very satisfying and conducive to enjoyment of the senses.

11Since there is no sunshine in those subterranean planets, time is not divided into days and nights, and consequently fear produced by time does not exist.

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12 Many great serpents reside there with gems on their hoods, and the effulgence of these gems dissipates the darkness in all directions.

13 Since the residents of these planets drink and bathe in juices and elixirs made from wonderful herbs, they are freed from all anxieties and physical diseases. They have no experience of grey hair, wrinkles or invalidity, their bodily lusters do not fade, their perspiration does not cause a bad smell, and they are not troubled by fatigue or by lack of energy or enthusiasm due to old age.

14 They live very auspiciously and do not fear death from anything but death's established time, which is the effulgence of the Sudarśana cakra of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

15 When the Sudarśana disc enters those provinces, the pregnant wives of the demons all have miscarriages due to fear of its effulgence.

16 My dear King, now I shall describe to you the lower planetary systems, one by one, beginning from Atala. In Atala there is a demon, the son of Maya Dānava named Bala, who created ninety-six kinds of mystic power. Some so-called yogīs and svāmīs take advantage of this mystic power to cheat people even today. Simply by yawning, the demon Bala created three kinds of women, known as svairiṇī, kāmīṇī and puṁścalī. The svairiṇīs like to marry men from their own group, the kāmīṇīs marry men from any group, and the puṁścalīs change husbands one after another. If a man enters the planet of Atala, these women immediately capture him and induce him to drink an intoxicating beverage made with a drug known as hāṭaka [cannabis indica]. This intoxicant endows the man with great sexual prowess, of which the women take advantage for enjoyment. A woman will enchant him with attractive glances, intimate words, smiles of love and then embraces. In this way she induces him to enjoy sex with her to her full satisfaction. Because of his increased sexual power, the man thinks himself stronger than ten thousand elephants and considers himself most perfect. Indeed, illusioned and intoxicated by false pride, he thinks himself God, ignoring impending death.

17 The next planet below Atala is Vitala, wherein Lord Śiva, who is known as the master of gold mines, lives with his personal associates, the ghosts and similar living entities. Lord Śiva, as the progenitor, engages in sex with Bhavānī, the progenitress, to produce living entities, and from the mixture of their vital fluid the river named Hāṭakī is generated. When fire, being made to blaze by the wind, drinks of this river and then sizzles and spits it out, it produces gold called Hāṭaka. The demons who live on that planet with their wives decorate themselves with various ornaments made from that gold, and thus they live there very happily.

18 Below the planet Vitala is another planet, known as Sutala, where the great son of Mahārāja Virocana, Bali Mahārāja, who is celebrated as the most pious king, resides even now. For the welfare of Indra, the King of heaven, Lord Viṣṇu appeared in the form of a dwarf brahmācārī as the son of Aditi and tricked Bali Mahārāja by begging for only three paces of land but taking all the three worlds. Being very pleased with Bali Mahārāja for giving all his possessions, the Lord returned his kingdom and made him richer than the opulent King Indra. Even now, Bali Mahārāja engages in devotional service by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the planet of Sutala.

19 My dear King, Bali Mahārāja donated all his possessions to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāmanadeva, but one should certainly not conclude that he achieved his great worldly opulence in bila-svarga as a result of his charitable disposition. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the source of life for all living entities, lives within everyone as the friendly Supersoul, and under His direction a living entity enjoys or suffers in the material world. Greatly appreciating the transcendental qualities of the Lord, Bali Mahārāja offered

everything at His lotus feet. His purpose, however, was not to gain anything material, but to become a pure devotee. For a pure devotee, the door of liberation is automatically opened. One should not think that Bali Mahārāja was given so much material opulence merely because of his charity. When one becomes a pure devotee in love, he may also be blessed with a good material position by the will of the Supreme Lord. However, one should not mistakenly think that the material opulence of a devotee is the result of his devotional service. The real result of devotional service is the awakening of pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which continues under all circumstances.

20 If one who is embarrassed by hunger or who falls down or stumbles chants the holy name of the Lord even once, willingly or unwillingly, he is immediately freed from the reactions of his past deeds. Karmīs entangled in material activities face many difficulties in the practice of mystic yoga and other endeavors to achieve that same freedom.

21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone's heart as the Supersoul, sells Himself to His devotees such as Nārada Muni. In other words, the Lord gives pure love to such devotees and gives Himself to those who love Him purely. Great, self-realized mystic yogīs such as the four Kumāras also derive great transcendental bliss from realizing the Supersoul within themselves.

22 The Supreme Personality of Godhead did not award His mercy to Bali Mahārāja by giving him material happiness and opulence, for these make one forget loving service to the Lord. The result of material opulence is that one can no longer absorb his mind in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

23 When the Supreme Personality of Godhead could see no other means of taking everything away from Bali Mahārāja, He adopted the trick of begging from him and took away all the three worlds. Thus only his body was left, but the Lord was still not satisfied. He arrested Bali Mahārāja, bound him with the ropes of Varuṇa and threw him in a cave in a mountain. Nevertheless, although all his property was taken and he was thrown into a cave, Bali Mahārāja was such a great devotee that he spoke as follows.

24 Alas, how pitiable it is for Indra, the King of heaven, that although he is very learned and powerful and although he chose Bṛhaspati as his prime minister to instruct him, he is completely ignorant concerning spiritual advancement. Bṛhaspati is also unintelligent because he did not properly instruct his disciple Indra. Lord Vāmanadeva was standing at Indra's door, but King Indra, instead of begging Him for an opportunity to render transcendental loving service, engaged Him in asking me for alms to gain the three worlds for his sense gratification. Sovereignty over the three worlds is very insignificant because whatever material opulence one may possess lasts only for an age of Manu, which is but a tiny fraction of endless time.

25 Bali Mahārāja said: My grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja is the only person who understood his own self-interest. Upon the death of Prahlāda's father, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Lord Nṛsimhadeva wanted to offer Prahlāda his father's kingdom and even wanted to grant him liberation from material bondage, but Prahlāda accepted neither. Liberation and material opulence, he thought, are obstacles to devotional service, and therefore such gifts from the Supreme Personality of Godhead are not His actual mercy. Consequently, instead of accepting the results of karma and Jnana, Prahlāda Mahārāja simply begged the Lord for engagement in the service of His servant.

26 Bali Mahārāja said: Persons like us, who are still attached to material enjoyment, who are contaminated by the modes of material nature and who lack the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cannot follow the supreme path of Prahlāda Mahārāja, the exalted

devotee of the Lord.

27Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, how shall I glorify the character of Bali Mahārāja? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the three worlds, who is most compassionate to His own devotee, stands with club in hand at Bali Mahārāja's door. When Rāvaṇa, the powerful demon, came to gain victory over Bali Mahārāja, Vāmanadeva kicked him a distance of eighty thousand miles with His big toe. I shall explain the character and activities of Bali Mahārāja later [in the Eighth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam].

28Beneath the planet known as Sutala is another planet, called Talātala, which is ruled by the Dānava demon named Maya. Maya is known as the ācārya [master] of all the māyāvīs, who can invoke the powers of sorcery. For the benefit of the three worlds, Lord Śiva, who is known as Tripurāri, once set fire to the three kingdoms of Maya, but later, being pleased with him, he returned his kingdom. Since that time, Maya Dānava has been protected by Lord Śiva, and therefore he falsely thinks that he need not fear the Sudarśana cakra of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

29The planetary system below Talātala is known as Mahātala. It is the abode of many-hooded snakes, descendants of Kadrū, who are always very angry. The great snakes who are prominent are Kuhaka, Takṣaka, Kāliya and Suṣeṇa. The snakes in Mahātala are always disturbed by fear of Garuḍa, the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu, but although they are full of anxiety, some of them nevertheless sport with their wives, children, friends and relatives.

30Beneath Mahātala is the planetary system known as Rasātala, which is the abode of the demoniac sons of Diti and Danu. They are called Paṇis, Nivāta-kavacas, Kāleyas and Hiraṇya-puravāsīs [those living in Hiraṇya-pura]. They are all enemies of the demigods, and they reside in holes like snakes. From birth they are extremely powerful and cruel, and although they are proud of their strength, they are always defeated by the Sudarśana cakra of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who rules all the planetary systems. When a female messenger from Indra named Saramā chants a particular curse, the serpentine demons of Mahātala become very afraid of Indra.

31Beneath Rasātala is another planetary system, known as Pātāla or Nāgaloka, where there are many demoniac serpents, the masters of Nāgaloka, such as Śaṅkha, Kulika, Mahāśaṅkha, Śveta, Dhanaśjaya, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Śaṅkhacūḍa, Kambala, Aśvatara and Devadatta. The chief among them is Vāsuki. They are all extremely angry, and they have many, many hoodsome snakes five hoods, some seven, some ten, others a hundred and others a thousand. These hoods are bedecked with valuable gems, and the light emanating from the gems illuminates the entire planetary system of bila-svarga.

SB 5.25: The Glories of Lord Ananta

In this chapter, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes Ananta, the source of Lord Śiva. Lord Ananta, whose body is completely spiritual, resides at the root of the planet Pātāla. He always lives in the core of Lord Śiva's heart, and He helps him destroy the universe. Ananta instructs Lord Śiva how to destroy the cosmos, and thus He is sometimes called *tāmasī*, or "one who is in the mode of darkness." He is the original Deity of material consciousness, and because He attracts all living entities, He is sometimes known as Saṅkarṣaṇa. The entire material world is situated on the hoods of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. From His forehead He transmits to Lord Śiva the power to destroy this material world. Because Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa is an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, many devotees offer Him prayers, and in the planetary system of Pātāla, all the *suras*, *asuras*, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and learned sages offer Him their

respectful obeisances. The Lord talks with them in a sweet voice. His bodily construction is completely spiritual and very, very beautiful. Anyone who hears about Him from a proper spiritual master becomes free from all material conceptions of life. The entire material energy is working according to the plans of Anantadeva. Therefore we should regard Him as the root cause of the material creation. There is no end to His strength, and no one can fully describe Him, even with countless mouths. Therefore He is called Ananta (unlimited). Being very merciful toward all living entities, He has exhibited His spiritual body. Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the glories of Anantadeva to Mahārāja Parīkṣit in this way.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: My dear King, approximately 240,000 miles beneath the planet Pātāla lives another incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the expansion of Lord Viṣṇu known as Lord Ananta or Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. He is always in the transcendental position, but because He is worshiped by Lord Śiva, the deity of tamogūṇa or darkness, He is sometimes called tāmasī. Lord Ananta is the predominating Deity of the material mode of ignorance as well as the false ego of all conditioned souls. When a conditioned living being thinks, “I am the enjoyer, and this world is meant to be enjoyed by me,” this conception of life is dictated to him by Saṅkarṣaṇa. Thus the mundane conditioned soul thinks himself the Supreme Lord.

2Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: This great universe, situated on one of Lord Anantadeva’s thousands of hoods, appears just like a white mustard seed. It is infinitesimal compared to the hood of Lord Ananta.

3At the time of devastation, when Lord Anantadeva desires to destroy the entire creation, He becomes slightly angry. Then from between His two eyebrows appears three-eyed Rudra, carrying a trident. This Rudra, who is known as Sāṅkarṣaṇa, is the embodiment of the eleven Rudras, or incarnations of Lord Śiva. He appears in order to devastate the entire creation.

4The pink, transparent toenails on the Lord’s lotus feet are exactly like valuable gems polished to a mirror finish. When the unalloyed devotees and the leaders of the snakes offer their obeisances to Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa with great devotion, they become very joyful upon seeing their own beautiful faces reflected in His toenails. Their cheeks are decorated with glittering earrings, and the beauty of their faces is extremely pleasing to see.

5Lord Ananta’s arms are attractively long, beautifully decorated with bangles and completely spiritual. They are white, and so they appear like silver columns. When the beautiful princesses of the serpent kings, hoping for the Lord’s auspicious blessing, smear His arms with aguru pulp, sandalwood pulp and kuṅkuma, the touch of His limbs awakens lusty desires within them. Understanding their minds, the Lord looks at the princesses with a merciful smile, and they become bashful, realizing that He knows their desires. Then they smile beautifully and look upon the Lord’s lotus face, which is beautified by reddish eyes rolling slightly from intoxication and delighted by love for His devotees.

6Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa is the ocean of unlimited spiritual qualities, and thus He is known as Anantadeva. He is nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For the welfare of all living entities within this material world, He resides in His abode, restraining His anger and intolerance.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The demigods, the demons, the Uragas [serpentine demigods], the Siddhas, the Gandharvas, the Vidyādharas and many highly elevated sages constantly offer prayers to the Lord. Because He is intoxicated, the Lord looks bewildered, and His eyes, appearing like flowers in full bloom, move to and fro. He pleases His personal associates, the heads of the demigods, by the sweet vibrations emanating from His mouth. Dressed in bluish

garments and wearing a single earring, He holds a plow on His back with His two beautiful and well-constructed hands. Appearing as white as the heavenly King Indra, He wears a golden belt around His waist and a vajrayantī garland of ever-fresh tulasī blossoms around His neck. Bees intoxicated by the honeylike fragrance of the tulasī flowers hum very sweetly around the garland, which thus becomes more and more beautiful. In this way, the Lord enjoys His very magnanimous pastimes.

8If persons who are very serious about being liberated from material life hear the glories of Anantadeva from the mouth of a spiritual master in the chain of disciplic succession, and if they always meditate upon Saṅkarṣaṇa, the Lord enters the cores of their hearts, vanquishes all the dirty contamination of the material modes of nature, and cuts to pieces the hard knot within the heart, which has been tied tightly since time immemorial by the desire to dominate material nature through fruitive activities. Nārada Muni, the son of Lord Brahmā, always glorifies Anantadeva in his father's assembly. There he sings blissful verses of his own composition, accompanied by his stringed instrument [or a celestial singer] known as Tumburu.

9By His glance, the Supreme Personality of Godhead enables the modes of material nature to act as the causes of universal creation, maintenance and destruction. The Supreme Soul is unlimited and beginningless, and although He is one, He has manifested Himself in many forms. How can human society understand the ways of the Supreme?

10This manifestation of subtle and gross matter exists within the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Out of causeless mercy toward His devotees, He exhibits various forms, which are all transcendental. The Supreme Lord is most liberal, and He possesses all mystic power. To conquer the minds of His devotees and give pleasure to their hearts, He appears in different incarnations and manifests many pastimes.

11Even if he be distressed or degraded, any person who chants the holy name of the Lord, having heard it from a bona fide spiritual master, is immediately purified. Even if he chants the Lord's name jokingly or by chance, he and anyone who hears him are freed from all sins. Therefore how can anyone seeking disentanglement from the material clutches avoid chanting the name of Lord Śeṣa? Of whom else should one take shelter?

12Because the Lord is unlimited, no one can estimate His power. This entire universe, filled with its many great mountains, rivers, oceans, trees and living entities, is resting just like an atom on one of His many thousands of hoods. Is there anyone, even with thousands of tongues, who can describe His glories?

13There is no end to the great and glorious qualities of that powerful Lord Anantadeva. Indeed, His prowess is unlimited. Though self-sufficient, He Himself is the support of everything. He resides beneath the lower planetary systems and easily sustains the entire universe.

14My dear King, as I heard of it from my spiritual master, I have fully described to you the creation of this material world according to the fruitive activities and desires of the conditioned souls. Those conditioned souls, who are full of material desires, achieve various situations in different planetary systems, and in this way they live within this material creation.

15My dear King, I have thus described how people generally act according to their different desires and, as a result, get different types of bodies in higher or lower planets. You inquired of these things from me, and I have explained to you whatever I have heard from authorities. What shall I speak of now?

SB 5.26: A Description of the Hellish Planets

1King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear sir, why are the living entities put into different material situations? Kindly explain this to me.

2The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, in this material world there are three kinds of activities—those in the mode of goodness, the mode of passion and the mode of ignorance. Because all people are influenced by the three modes of material nature, the results of their activities are also divided into three. One who acts in the mode of goodness is religious and happy, one who acts in passion achieves mixed misery and happiness, and one who acts under the influence of ignorance is always unhappy and lives like an animal. Because of the varying degrees to which the living entities are influenced by the different modes of nature, their destinations are also of different varieties.

3Just as by executing various pious activities one achieves different positions in heavenly life, by acting impiously one achieves different positions in hellish life. Those who are activated by the material mode of ignorance engage in impious activities, and according to the extent of their ignorance, they are placed in different grades of hellish life. If one acts in the mode of ignorance because of madness, his resulting misery is the least severe. One who acts impiously but knows the distinction between pious and impious activities is placed in a hell of intermediate severity. And for one who acts impiously and ignorantly because of atheism, the resultant hellish life is the worst. Because of ignorance, every living entity has been carried by various desires into thousands of different hellish planets since time immemorial. I shall try to describe them as far as possible.

4King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear lord, are the hellish regions outside the universe, within the covering of the universe, or in different places on this planet?

5The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī answered: All the hellish planets are situated in the intermediate space between the three worlds and the Garbhodaka Ocean. They lie on the southern side of the universe, beneath Bhū-maṇḍala, and slightly above the water of the Garbhodaka Ocean. Piṭṛloka is also located in this region between the Garbhodaka Ocean and the lower planetary systems. All the residents of Piṭṛloka, headed by Agniṣvāṭā, meditate in great samādhi on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and always wish their families well.

6The King of the piṭās is Yamarāja, the very powerful son of the sun-god. He resides in Piṭṛloka with his personal assistants and, while abiding by the rules and regulations set down by the Supreme Lord, has his agents, the Yamadūtas, bring all the sinful men to him immediately upon their death. After bringing them within his jurisdiction, he properly judges them according to their specific sinful activities and sends them to one of the many hellish planets for suitable punishments.

7Some authorities say that there is a total of twenty-one hellish planets, and some say twenty-eight. My dear King, I shall outline all of them according to their names, forms and symptoms. The names of the different hells are as follows: Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Raurava, Mahāraurava, Kumbhīpāka, Kālasūtra, Asipatravana, Sūkaramukha, Andhakūpa, Kṛmibhojana, Sandaṁśa, Taptasūrmi, Vajrakaṇṭaka-śālmālī, Vaitaraṇī, Pūyoda, Prāṇarodha, Viśasana, Lālābhakṣa, Sārameyādana, Avīci, Ayaḥpāna, Kṣārakardama, Rakṣogaṇa-bhojana, Śūlaprota, Dandaśūka, Avaṭa-nirodhana, Paryāvartana and Sūcīmukha. All these planets are meant for punishing the living entities.

8My dear King, a person who appropriates another's legitimate wife, children or money is arrested at the time of death by the fierce Yamadūtas, who bind him with the rope of time and forcibly throw him into the hellish planet known as Tāmisra. On this very dark planet, the sinful man is chastised by the Yamadūtas, who beat and rebuke him. He is starved, and he is

given no water to drink. Thus the wrathful assistants of Yamarāja cause him severe suffering, and sometimes he faints from their chastisement.

9The destination of a person who slyly cheats another man and enjoys his wife and children is the hell known as Andhatāmisa. There his condition is exactly like that of a tree being chopped at its roots. Even before reaching Andhatāmisa, the sinful living being is subjected to various extreme miseries. These afflictions are so severe that he loses his intelligence and sight. It is for this reason that learned sages call this hell Andhatāmisa.

10A person who accepts his body as his self works very hard day and night for money to maintain his own body and the bodies of his wife and children. While working to maintain himself and his family, he may commit violence against other living entities. Such a person is forced to give up his body and his family at the time of death, when he suffers the reaction for his envy of other creatures by being thrown into the hell called Raurava.

11In this life, an envious person commits violent acts against many living entities. Therefore after his death, when he is taken to hell by Yamarāja, those living entities who were hurt by him appear as animals called rurus to inflict very severe pain upon him. Learned scholars call this hell Raurava. Not generally seen in this world, the ruru is more envious than a snake.

12Punishment in the hell called Mahāraurava is compulsory for a person who maintains his own body by hurting others. In this hell, ruru animals known as kravyāda torment him and eat his flesh.

13For the maintenance of their bodies and the satisfaction of their tongues, cruel persons cook poor animals and birds alive. Such persons are condemned even by man-eaters. In their next lives they are carried by the Yamadūtas to the hell known as Kumbhīpāka, where they are cooked in boiling oil.

14The killer of a brāhmaṇa is put into the hell known as Kālasūtra, which has a circumference of eighty thousand miles and which is made entirely of copper. Heated from below by fire and from above by the scorching sun, the copper surface of this planet is extremely hot. Thus the murderer of a brāhmaṇa suffers from being burned both internally and externally. Internally he is burning with hunger and thirst, and externally he is burning from the scorching heat of the sun and the fire beneath the copper surface. Therefore he sometimes lies down, sometimes sits, sometimes stands up and sometimes runs here and there. He must suffer in this way for as many thousands of years as there are hairs on the body of an animal.

15If a person deviates from the path of the Vedas in the absence of an emergency, the servants of Yamarāja put him into the hell called Asi-patavana, where they beat him with whips. When he runs hither and thither, fleeing from the extreme pain, on all sides he runs into palm trees with leaves like sharpened swords. Thus injured all over his body and fainting at every step, he cries out, “Oh, what shall I do now! How shall I be saved!” This is how one suffers who deviates from the accepted religious principles.

16In his next life, a sinful king or governmental representative who punishes an innocent person, or who inflicts corporal punishment upon a brāhmaṇa, is taken by the Yamadūtas to the hell named Sūkaramukha, where the most powerful assistants of Yamarāja crush him exactly as one crushes sugarcane to squeeze out the juice. The sinful living entity cries very pitifully and faints, just like an innocent man undergoing punishments. This is the result of punishing a faultless person.

17By the arrangement of the Supreme Lord, low-grade living beings like bugs and mosquitoes suck the blood of human beings and other animals. Such insignificant creatures are unaware

that their bites are painful to the human being. However, first-class human beings brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are developed in consciousness, and therefore they know how painful it is to be killed. A human being endowed with knowledge certainly commits sin if he kills or torments insignificant creatures, who have no discrimination. The Supreme Lord punishes such a man by putting him into the hell known as Andhakūpa, where he is attacked by all the birds and beasts, reptiles, mosquitoes, lice, worms, flies, and any other creatures he tormented during his life. They attack him from all sides, robbing him of the pleasure of sleep. Unable to rest, he constantly wanders about in the darkness. Thus in Andhakūpa his suffering is just like that of a creature in the lower species.

18A person is considered no better than a crow if after receiving some food, he does not divide it among guests, old men and children, but simply eats it himself, or if he eats it without performing the five kinds of sacrifice. After death he is put into the most abominable hell, known as Kṛmibhojana. In that hell is a lake 100,000 yojanas [800,000 miles] wide and filled with worms. He becomes a worm in that lake and feeds on the other worms there, who also feed on him. Unless he atones for his actions before his death, such a sinful man remains in the hellish lake of Kṛmibhojana for as many years as there are yojanas in the width of the lake.

19My dear King, a person who in the absence of an emergency robs a brāhmaṇa or, indeed, anyone else of his gems and gold is put into a hell known as Sandamśa. There his skin is torn and separated by red-hot iron balls and tongs. In this way, his entire body is cut to pieces.

20A man or woman who indulges in sexual intercourse with an unworthy member of the opposite sex is punished after death by the assistants of Yamarāja in the hell known as Taptasūrmi. There such men and women are beaten with whips. The man is forced to embrace a red-hot iron form of a woman, and the woman is forced to embrace a similar form of a man. Such is the punishment for illicit sex.

21A person who indulges in sex indiscriminately even with animals is taken after death to the hell known as Vajrakaṇṭaka-śālmālī. In this hell there is a silk-cotton tree full of thorns as strong as thunderbolts. The agents of Yamarāja hang the sinful man on that tree and pull him down forcibly so that the thorns very severely tear his body.

22A person who is born into a responsible family such as a kṣatriya, a member of royalty or a government servant but who neglects to execute his prescribed duties according to religious principles, and who thus becomes degraded, falls down at the time of death into the river of hell known as Vaitaraṇī. This river, which is a moat surrounding hell, is full of ferocious aquatic animals. When a sinful man is thrown into the river Vaitaraṇī, the aquatic animals there immediately begin to eat him, but because of his extremely sinful life, he does not leave his body. He constantly remembers his sinful activities and suffers terribly in that river, which is full of stool, urine, pus, blood, hair, nails, bones, marrow, flesh and fat.

23The shameless husbands of lowborn śūdra women live exactly like animals, and therefore they have no good behavior, cleanliness or regulated life. After death, such persons are thrown into the hell called Pūyoda, where they are put into an ocean filled with pus, stool, urine, mucus, saliva and similar things. Śūdras who could not improve themselves fall into that ocean and are forced to eat those disgusting things.

24If in this life a man of the higher classes [brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya] is very fond of taking his pet dogs, mules or asses into the forest to hunt and kill animals unnecessarily, he is placed after death into the hell known as Prāṇarodha. There the assistants of Yamarāja make him their targets and pierce him with arrows.

25A person who in this life is proud of his eminent position, and who heedlessly sacrifices animals simply for material prestige, is put into the hell called Viśasana after death. There the assistants of Yamarāja kill him after giving him unlimited pain.

26If a foolish member of the twice-born classes [brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya] forces his wife to drink his semen out of a lusty desire to keep her under control, he is put after death into the hell known as Lālābhakṣa. There he is thrown into a flowing river of semen, which he is forced to drink.

27In this world, some persons are professional plunderers who set fire to others' houses or administer poison to them. Also, members of the royalty or government officials sometimes plunder mercantile men by forcing them to pay income tax and by other methods. After death such demons are put into the hell known as Sārameyādana. On that planet there are 720 dogs with teeth as strong as thunderbolts. Under the orders of the agents of Yamarāja, these dogs voraciously devour such sinful people.

28A person who in this life bears false witness or lies while transacting business or giving charity is severely punished after death by the agents of Yamarāja. Such a sinful man is taken to the top of a mountain eight hundred miles high and thrown headfirst into the hell known as Avīcimat. This hell has no shelter and is made of strong stone resembling the waves of water. There is no water there, however, and thus it is called Avīcimat [waterless]. Although the sinful man is repeatedly thrown from the mountain and his body broken to tiny pieces, he still does not die but continuously suffers chastisement.

29Any brāhmaṇa or brāhmaṇa's wife who drinks liquor is taken by the agents of Yamarāja to the hell known as Ayaḥpāna. This hell also awaits any kṣatriya, vaiśya, or person under a vow who in illusion drinks soma-rasa. In Ayaḥpāna the agents of Yamarāja stand on their chests and pour hot melted iron into their mouths.

30A lowborn and abominable person who in this life becomes falsely proud, thinking "I am great," and who thus fails to show proper respect to one more elevated than he by birth, austerity, education, behavior, caste or spiritual order, is like a dead man even in this lifetime, and after death he is thrown headfirst into the hell known as Kṣārakardama. There he must suffer great tribulation at the hands of the agents of Yamarāja.

31There are men and women in this world who sacrifice human beings to Bhairava or Bhadra Kālī and then eat their victims' flesh. Those who perform such sacrifices are taken after death to the abode of Yamarāja, where their victims, having taken the form of Rākṣasas, cut them to pieces with sharpened swords. Just as in this world the man-eaters drank their victims' blood, dancing and singing in jubilation, their victims now enjoy drinking the blood of the sacrificers and celebrating in the same way.

32In this life some people give shelter to animals and birds that come to them for protection in the village or forest, and after making them believe that they will be protected, such people pierce them with lances or threads and play with them like toys, giving them great pain. After death such people are brought by the assistants of Yamarāja to the hell known as Śūlaprota, where their bodies are pierced with sharp, needlelike lances. They suffer from hunger and thirst, and sharp-beaked birds such as vultures and herons come at them from all sides to tear at their bodies. Tortured and suffering, they can then remember the sinful activities they committed in the past.

33Those who in this life are like envious serpents, always angry and giving pain to other living entities, fall after death into the hell known as Dandaśūka. My dear King, in this hell there are

serpents with five or seven hoods. These serpents eat such sinful persons just as snakes eat mice.

34Those who in this life confine other living entities in dark wells, granaries or mountain caves are put after death into the hell known as Avaṭa-nirodhana. There they themselves are pushed into dark wells, where poisonous fumes and smoke suffocate them and they suffer very severely.

35A householder who receives guests or visitors with cruel glances, as if to burn them to ashes, is put into the hell called Paryāvartana, where he is gazed at by hard-eyed vultures, herons, crows and similar birds, which suddenly swoop down and pluck out his eyes with great force.

36One who in this world or this life is very proud of his wealth always thinks, “I am so rich. Who can equal me?” His vision is twisted, and he is always afraid that someone will take his wealth. Indeed, he even suspects his superiors. His face and heart dry up at the thought of losing his wealth, and therefore he always looks like a wretched fiend. He is not in any way able to obtain actual happiness, and he does not know what it is to be free from anxiety. Because of the sinful things he does to earn money, augment his wealth and protect it, he is put into the hell called Sūcīmukha, where the officials of Yamarāja punish him by stitching thread through his entire body like weavers manufacturing cloth.

37My dear King Parīkṣit, in the province of Yamarāja there are hundreds and thousands of hellish planets. The impious people I have mentioned and also those I have not mentioned must all enter these various planets according to the degree of their impiety. Those who are pious, however, enter other planetary systems, namely the planets of the demigods. Nevertheless, both the pious and impious are again brought to earth after the results of their pious or impious acts are exhausted.

38In the beginning [the second and third Cantos of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam] I have already described how one can progress on the path of liberation. In the Purāṇas the vast universal existence, which is like an egg divided into fourteen parts, is described. This vast form is considered the external body of the Lord, created by His energy and qualities. It is generally called the virāṭ-rūpa. If one reads the description of this external form of the Lord with great faith, or if one hears about it or explains it to others to propagate bhāgavata-dharma, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his faith and devotion in spiritual consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, will gradually increase. Although developing this consciousness is very difficult, by this process one can purify himself and gradually come to an awareness of the Supreme Absolute Truth.

39One who is interested in liberation, who accepts the path of liberation and is not attracted to the path of conditional life, is called yati, or a devotee. Such a person should first control his mind by thinking of the virāṭ-rūpa, the gigantic universal form of the Lord, and then gradually think of the spiritual form of Kṛṣṇa [sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha] after hearing of both forms. Thus one’s mind is fixed in samādhi. By devotional service one can then realize the spiritual form of the Lord, which is the destination of devotees. Thus his life becomes successful.

40My dear King, I have now described for you this planet earth, other planetary systems, and their lands [varṣas], rivers and mountains. I have also described the sky, the oceans, the lower planetary systems, the directions, the hellish planetary systems and the stars. These constitute the virāṭ-rūpa, the gigantic material form of the Lord, on which all living entities repose. Thus I have explained the wonderful expanse of the external body of the Lord.

Canto 6: Prescribed Duties for Mankind

SB 6.1: The History of the Life of Ajāmila

1 Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O my lord, O Śukadeva Gosvāmī, you have already described [in the Second Canto] the path of liberation [nivṛtti-mārga]. By following that path, one is certainly elevated gradually to the highest planetary system, Brahmāloka, from which one is promoted to the spiritual world along with Lord Brahmā. Thus one's repetition of birth and death in the material world ceases.

2O great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī, unless the living entity is freed from the infection of the material modes of nature, he receives different types of bodies in which to enjoy or suffer, and according to the body, he is understood to have various inclinations. By following these inclinations he traverses the path called pravṛtti-mārga, by which one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, as you have already described [in the Third Canto].

3You have also described [at the end of the Fifth Canto] the varieties of hellish life that result from impious activities, and you have described [in the Fourth Canto] the first manvantara, which was presided over by Svāyambhuva Manu, the son of Lord Brahmā.

4-5My dear lord, you have described the dynasties and characteristics of King Priyavrata and King Uttānapāda. The Supreme Personality of Godhead created this material world with various universes, planetary systems, planets and stars, with varied lands, seas, oceans, mountains, rivers, gardens and trees, all with different characteristics. These are divided among this planet earth, the luminaries in the sky and the lower planetary systems. You have very clearly described these planets and the living entities who live on them.

6O greatly fortunate and opulent Śukadeva Gosvāmī, now kindly tell me how human beings may be saved from having to enter hellish conditions in which they suffer terrible pains.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied: My dear King, if before one's next death whatever impious acts one has performed in this life with his mind, words and body are not counteracted through proper atonement according to the description of the Manu-saṁhitā and other dharma-śāstras, one will certainly enter the hellish planets after death and undergo terrible suffering, as I have previously described to you.

8Therefore, before one's next death comes, as long as one's body is strong enough, one should quickly adopt the process of atonement according to śāstra; otherwise one's time will be lost, and the reactions of his sins will increase. As an expert physician diagnoses and treats a disease according to its gravity, one should undergo atonement according to the severity of one's sins.

9Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: One may know that sinful activity is injurious for him because he actually sees that a criminal is punished by the government and rebuked by people in general and because he hears from scriptures and learned scholars that one is thrown into hellish conditions in the next life for committing sinful acts. Nevertheless, in spite of such knowledge, one is forced to commit sins again and again, even after performing acts of atonement. Therefore, what is the value of such atonement?

10Sometimes one who is very alert so as not to commit sinful acts is victimized by sinful life again. I therefore consider this process of repeated sinning and atoning to be useless. It is like the bathing of an elephant, for an elephant cleanses itself by taking a full bath, but then throws dust over its head and body as soon as it returns to the land.

11Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vedavyāsa, answered: My dear King, since acts meant to neutralize impious actions are also fruitive, they will not release one from the tendency to act fruitively. Persons who subject themselves to the rules and regulations of atonement are not at

all intelligent. Indeed, they are in the mode of darkness. Unless one is freed from the mode of ignorance, trying to counteract one action through another is useless because this will not uproot one's desires. Thus even though one may superficially seem pious, he will undoubtedly be prone to act impiously. Therefore real atonement is enlightenment in perfect knowledge, Vedānta, by which one understands the Supreme Absolute Truth.

12My dear King, if a diseased person eats the pure, uncontaminated food prescribed by a physician, he is gradually cured, and the infection of disease can no longer touch him. Similarly, if one follows the regulative principles of knowledge, he gradually progresses toward liberation from material contamination.

13-14To concentrate the mind, one must observe a life of celibacy and not fall down. One must undergo the austerity of voluntarily giving up sense enjoyment. One must then control the mind and senses, give charity, be truthful, clean and nonviolent, follow the regulative principles and regularly chant the holy name of the Lord. Thus a sober and faithful person who knows the religious principles is temporarily purified of all sins performed with his body, words and mind. These sins are like the dried leaves of creepers beneath a bamboo tree, which may be burned by fire although their roots remain to grow again at the first opportunity.

15Only a rare person who has adopted complete, unalloyed devotional service to Kṛṣṇa can uproot the weeds of sinful actions with no possibility that they will revive. He can do this simply by discharging devotional service, just as the sun can immediately dissipate fog by its rays.

16My dear King, if a sinful person engages in the service of a bona fide devotee of the Lord and thus learns how to dedicate his life unto the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, he can be completely purified. One cannot be purified merely by undergoing austerity, penance, brahmacarya and the other methods of atonement I have previously described.

17The path followed by pure devotees, who are well-behaved and fully endowed with the best qualifications, is certainly the most auspicious path in this material world. It is free from fear, and it is authorized by the śāstras.

18My dear King, as a pot containing liquor cannot be purified even if washed in the waters of many rivers, nondevotees cannot be purified by processes of atonement even if they perform them very well.

19Although not having fully realized Kṛṣṇa, persons who have even once surrendered completely unto His lotus feet and who have become attracted to His name, form, qualities and pastimes are completely freed of all sinful reactions, for they have thus accepted the true method of atonement. Even in dreams, such surrendered souls do not see Yamarāja or his order carriers, who are equipped with ropes to bind the sinful.

20In this regard, learned scholars and saintly persons describe a very old historical incident involving a discussion between the order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu and those of Yamarāja. Please hear of this from me.

21In the city known as Kānyakubja there was a brāhmaṇa named Ajāmīla who married a prostitute maidservant and lost all his brahminical qualities because of the association of that low-class woman.

22This fallen brāhmaṇa, Ajāmīla, gave trouble to others by arresting them, by cheating them in gambling or by directly plundering them. This was the way he earned his livelihood and maintained his wife and children.

23My dear King, while he thus spent his time in abominable, sinful activities to maintain his family of many sons, eighty-eight years of his life passed by.

24That old man Ajāmila had ten sons, of whom the youngest was a baby named Nārāyaṇa. Since Nārāyaṇa was the youngest of all the sons, he was naturally very dear to both his father and his mother.

25Because of the child's broken language and awkward movements, old Ajāmila was very much attached to him. He always took care of the child and enjoyed the child's activities.

26When Ajāmila chewed food and ate it, he called the child to chew and eat, and when he drank he called the child to drink also. Always engaged in taking care of the child and calling his name, Nārāyaṇa, Ajāmila could not understand that his own time was now exhausted and that death was upon him.

27When the time of death arrived for the foolish Ajāmila, he began thinking exclusively of his son Nārāyaṇa.

28-29Ajāmila then saw three awkward persons with deformed bodily features, fierce, twisted faces, and hair standing erect on their bodies. With ropes in their hands, they had come to take him away to the abode of Yamarāja. When he saw them he was extremely bewildered, and because of attachment to his child, who was playing a short distance away, Ajāmila began to call him loudly by his name. Thus with tears in his eyes he somehow or other chanted the holy name of Nārāyaṇa.

30My dear King, the order carriers of Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, immediately arrived when they heard the holy name of their master from the mouth of the dying Ajāmila, who had certainly chanted without offense because he had chanted in complete anxiety.

31The order carriers of Yamarāja were snatching the soul from the core of the heart of Ajāmila, the husband of the prostitute, but with resounding voices the messengers of Lord Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, forbade them to do so.

32When the order carriers of Yamarāja, the son of the sun-god, were thus forbidden, they replied: Who are you, sirs, that have the audacity to challenge the jurisdiction of Yamarāja?

33Dear sirs, whose servants are you, where have you come from, and why are you forbidding us to touch the body of Ajāmila? Are you demigods from the heavenly planets, are you sub-demigods, or are you the best of devotees?

34-36The order carriers of Yamarāja said: Your eyes are just like the petals of lotus flowers. Dressed in yellow silken garments, decorated with garlands of lotuses, and wearing very attractive helmets on your heads and earrings on your ears, you all appear fresh and youthful. Your four long arms are decorated with bows and quivers of arrows and with swords, clubs, conchshells, discs and lotus flowers. Your effulgence has dissipated the darkness of this place with extraordinary illumination. Now, sirs, why are you obstructing us?

37Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Being thus addressed by the messengers of Yamarāja, the servants of Vāsudeva smiled and spoke the following words in voices as deep as the sound of rumbling clouds.

38The blessed messengers of Lord Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, said: If you are actually servants of Yamarāja, you must explain to us the meaning of religious principles and the symptoms of irreligion.

39What is the process of punishing others? Who are the actual candidates for punishment? Are all karmīs engaged in fruitive activities punishable, or only some of them?

40The Yamadūtas replied: That which is prescribed in the Vedas constitutes dharma, the religious principles, and the opposite of that is irreligion. The Vedas are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, and are self-born. This we have heard from Yamarāja.

41The supreme cause of all causes, Nārāyaṇa, is situated in His own abode in the spiritual world, but nevertheless He controls the entire cosmic manifestation according to the three modes of material naturesattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa. In this way all living entities are awarded different qualities, different names [such as brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya], different duties according to the varṇāśrama institution, and different forms. Thus Nārāyaṇa is the cause of the entire cosmic manifestation.

42The sun, fire, sky, air, demigods, moon, evening, day, night, directions, water, land and Supersoul Himself all witness the activities of the living entity.

43The candidates for punishment are those who are confirmed by these many witnesses to have deviated from their prescribed regulative duties. Everyone engaged in fruitive activities is suitable to be subjected to punishment according to his sinful acts.

44O inhabitants of Vaikuṇṭha, you are sinless, but those within this material world are all karmīs, whether acting piously or impiously. Both kinds of action are possible for them because they are contaminated by the three modes of nature and must act accordingly. One who has accepted a material body cannot be inactive, and sinful action is inevitable for one acting under the modes of material nature. Therefore all the living entities within this material world are punishable.

45In proportion to the extent of one's religious or irreligious actions in this life, one must enjoy or suffer the corresponding reactions of his karma in the next.

46O best of the demigods, we can see three different varieties of life, which are due to the contamination of the three modes of nature. The living entities are thus known as peaceful, restless and foolish; as happy, unhappy or in-between; or as religious, irreligious and semireligious. We can deduce that in the next life these three kinds of material nature will similarly act.

47Just as springtime in the present indicates the nature of springtimes in the past and future, so this life of happiness, distress or a mixture of both gives evidence concerning the religious and irreligious activities of one's past and future lives.

48The omnipotent Yamarāja is as good as Lord Brahmā, for while situated in his own abode or in everyone's heart like the Paramātmā, he mentally observes the past activities of a living entity and thus understands how the living entity will act in future lives.

49As a sleeping person acts according to the body manifested in his dreams and accepts it to be himself, so one identifies with his present body, which he acquired because of his past religious or irreligious actions, and is unable to know his past or future lives.

50Above the five senses of perception, the five working senses and the five objects of the senses is the mind, which is the sixteenth element. Above the mind is the seventeenth element, the soul, the living being himself, who, in cooperation with the other sixteen, enjoys the material world alone. The living being enjoys three kinds of situations, namely happy, distressful and mixed.

51The subtle body is endowed with sixteen parts—the five knowledge-acquiring senses, the five working senses, the five objects of sense gratification, and the mind. This subtle body is an effect of the three modes of material nature. It is composed of insurmountably strong desires, and therefore it causes the living entity to transmigrate from one body to another in human life, animal life and life as a demigod. When the living entity gets the body of a demigod, he is certainly very jubilant, when he gets a human body he is always in lamentation, and when he gets the body of an animal, he is always afraid. In all conditions, however, he is actually miserable. His miserable condition is called *samsṛti*, or transmigration in material life.

52The foolish embodied living entity, inept at controlling his senses and mind, is forced to act according to the influence of the modes of material nature, against his desires. He is like a silkworm that uses its own saliva to create a cocoon and then becomes trapped in it, with no possibility of getting out. The living entity traps himself in a network of his own fruitive activities and then can find no way to release himself. Thus he is always bewildered, and repeatedly he dies.

53Not a single living entity can remain unengaged even for a moment. One must act by his natural tendency according to the three modes of material nature because this natural tendency forcibly makes him work in a particular way.

54The fruitive activities a living being performs, whether pious or impious, are the unseen cause for the fulfillment of his desires. This unseen cause is the root for the living entity's different bodies. Because of his intense desire, the living entity takes birth in a particular family and receives a body which is either like that of his mother or like that of his father. The gross and subtle bodies are created according to his desire.

55Since the living entity is associated with material nature, he is in an awkward position, but if in the human form of life he is taught how to associate with the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His devotee, this position can be overcome.

56-57In the beginning this *brāhmaṇa* named Ajāmila studied all the Vedic literatures. He was a reservoir of good character, good conduct and good qualities. Firmly established in executing all the Vedic injunctions, he was very mild and gentle, and he kept his mind and senses under control. Furthermore, he was always truthful, he knew how to chant the Vedic mantras, and he was also very pure. Ajāmila was very respectful to his spiritual master, the fire-god, guests, and the elderly members of his household. Indeed, he was free from false prestige. He was upright, benevolent to all living entities, and well-behaved. He would never speak nonsense or envy anyone.

58-60Once this *brāhmaṇa* Ajāmila, following the order of his father, went to the forest to collect fruit, flowers and two kinds of grass, called *samit* and *kuśa*. On the way home, he came upon a *śūdra*, a very lusty, fourth-class man, who was shamelessly embracing and kissing a prostitute. The *śūdra* was smiling, singing and enjoying as if this were proper behavior. Both the *śūdra* and the prostitute were drunk. The prostitute's eyes were rolling in intoxication, and her dress had become loose. Such was the condition in which Ajāmila saw them.

61The *śūdra*, his arm decorated with turmeric powder, was embracing the prostitute. When Ajāmila saw her, the dormant lusty desires in his heart awakened, and in illusion he fell under their control.

62As far as possible he patiently tried to remember the instructions of the *śāstras* not even to see a woman. With the help of this knowledge and his intellect, he tried to control his lusty desires, but because of the force of Cupid within his heart, he failed to control his mind.

63In the same way that the sun and moon are eclipsed by a low planet, the brāhmaṇa lost all his good sense. Taking advantage of this situation, he always thought of the prostitute, and within a short time he took her as a servant in his house and abandoned all the regulative principles of a brāhmaṇa.

64Thus Ajāmila began spending whatever money he had inherited from his father to satisfy the prostitute with various material presentations so that she would remain pleased with him. He gave up all his brahminical activities to satisfy the prostitute.

65Because his intelligence was pierced by the lustful glance of the prostitute, the victimized brāhmaṇa Ajāmila engaged in sinful acts in her association. He even gave up the company of his very beautiful young wife, who came from a very respectable brāhmaṇa family.

66Although born of a brāhmaṇa family, this rascal, bereft of intelligence because of the prostitute's association, earned money somehow or other, regardless of whether properly or improperly, and used it to maintain the prostitute's sons and daughters.

67This brāhmaṇa irresponsibly spent his long lifetime transgressing all the rules and regulations of the holy scripture, living extravagantly and eating food prepared by a prostitute. Therefore he is full of sins. He is unclean and is addicted to forbidden activities.

68This man Ajāmila did not undergo atonement. Therefore because of his sinful life, we must take him into the presence of Yamarāja for punishment. There, according to the extent of his sinful acts, he will be punished and thus purified.

SB 6.2: Ajāmila Delivered by the Viṣṇudūtas

In this chapter the messengers from Vaikuṅṭha explain to the Yamadūtas the glories of chanting the holy name of the Lord. The Viṣṇudūtas said, “Now impious acts are being performed even in an assembly of devotees, for a person who is not punishable is going to be punished in the assembly of Yamarāja. The mass of people are helpless and must depend upon the government for their safety and security, but if the government takes advantage of this to harm the citizens, where will they go? We see perfectly that Ajāmila should not be punished, although you are attempting to take him to Yamarāja for punishment.”

It was due to Ajāmila's glorifying the holy name of the Supreme Lord that he was not punishable. The Viṣṇudūtas explained this as follows: “Simply by once chanting the holy name of Nārāyaṇa, this *brāhmaṇa* has become free from the reactions of sinful life. Indeed, he has been freed not only from the sins of this life, but from the sins of many, many thousands of other lives. He has already undergone true atonement for all his sinful actions. If one atones according to the directions of the *sāstras*, one does not actually become free from sinful reactions, but if one chants the holy name of the Lord, even a glimpse of such chanting can immediately free one from all sins. Chanting the glories of the Lord's holy name awakens all good fortune. Therefore there is no doubt that Ajāmila, being completely free from all sinful reactions, should not be punished by Yamarāja.”

As they were saying this, the Viṣṇudūtas released Ajāmila from the ropes of the Yamadūtas and left for their own abode. The *brāhmaṇa* Ajāmila, however, offered his respectful obeisances to the Viṣṇudūtas. He could understand how fortunate he was to have chanted the holy name of Nārāyaṇa at the end of his life. Indeed, he could realize the full significance of this good fortune. Having thoroughly understood the discussion between the Yamadūtas and the Viṣṇudūtas, he became a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He lamented very much for how very sinful he had been, and he condemned himself again and again.

Finally, because of his association with the Viṣṇudūtas, Ajāmila, his original consciousness aroused, gave up everything and went to Hardwar, where he engaged in devotional service without deviation, always thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus the Viṣṇudūtas went there, seated him on a golden throne and took him away to Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

In summary, although the sinful Ajāmila meant to call his son, the holy name of Lord Nārāyaṇa, even though chanted in the preliminary stage, *nāmābhāsa*, was able to give him liberation. Therefore one who chants the holy name of the Lord with faith and devotion is certainly exalted. He is protected even in his material, conditional life.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, the servants of Lord Viṣṇu are always very expert in logic and arguments. After hearing the statements of the Yamadūtas, they replied as follows.

2The Viṣṇudūtas said: Alas, how painful it is that irreligion is being introduced into an assembly where religion should be maintained. Indeed, those in charge of maintaining the religious principles are needlessly punishing a sinless, unpunishable person.

3A king or governmental official should be so well qualified that he acts as a father, maintainer and protector of the citizens because of affection and love. He should give the citizens good advice and instructions according to the standard scriptures and should be equal to everyone. Yamarāja does this, for he is the supreme master of justice, and so do those who follow in his footsteps. However, if such persons become polluted and exhibit partiality by punishing an innocent, blameless person, where will the citizens go to take shelter for their maintenance and security?

4The mass of people follow the example of a leader in society and imitate his behavior. They accept as evidence whatever the leader accepts.

5-6People in general are not very advanced in knowledge by which to discriminate between religion and irreligion. The innocent, unenlightened citizen is like an ignorant animal sleeping in peace with its head on the lap of its master, faithfully believing in the master's protection. If a leader is actually kindhearted and deserves to be the object of a living entity's faith, how can he punish or kill a foolish person who has fully surrendered in good faith and friendship?

7Ajāmila has already atoned for all his sinful actions. Indeed, he has atoned not only for sins performed in one life but for those performed in millions of lives, for in a helpless condition he chanted the holy name of Nārāyaṇa. Even though he did not chant purely, he chanted without offense, and therefore he is now pure and eligible for liberation.

8The Viṣṇudūtas continued: Even previously, while eating and at other times, this Ajāmila would call his son, saying, "My dear Nārāyaṇa, please come here." Although calling the name of his son, he nevertheless uttered the four syllables *nā-rā-ya-ṇa*. Simply by chanting the name of Nārāyaṇa in this way, he sufficiently atoned for the sinful reactions of millions of lives.

9-10The chanting of the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu is the best process of atonement for a thief of gold or other valuables, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative, for one who kills a brāhmaṇa, or for one who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or another superior. It is also the best method of atonement for one who murders women, the king or his father, for one who slaughters cows, and for all other sinful men. Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu, such sinful persons may attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, "Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection."

11By following the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies or undergoing atonement, sinful men do not become as purified as by chanting once the holy name of Lord Hari. Although ritualistic

atonement may free one from sinful reactions, it does not awaken devotional service, unlike the chanting of the Lord's names, which reminds one of the Lord's fame, qualities, attributes, pastimes and paraphernalia.

12The ritualistic ceremonies of atonement recommended in the religious scriptures are insufficient to cleanse the heart absolutely because after atonement one's mind again runs toward material activities. Consequently, for one who wants liberation from the fruitive reactions of material activities, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, or glorification of the name, fame and pastimes of the Lord, is recommended as the most perfect process of atonement because such chanting eradicates the dirt from one's heart completely.

13At the time of death, this Ajāmila helplessly and very loudly chanted the holy name of the Lord, Nārāyaṇa. That chanting alone has already freed him from the reactions of all sinful life. Therefore, O servants of Yamarāja, do not try to take him to your master for punishment in hellish conditions.

14One who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly [to indicate something else], jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all the learned scholars of the scriptures.

15If one chants the holy name of Hari and then dies because of an accidental misfortune, such as falling from the top of a house, slipping and suffering broken bones while traveling on the road, being bitten by a serpent, being afflicted with pain and high fever, or being injured by a weapon, one is immediately absolved from having to enter hellish life, even though he is sinful.

16Authorities who are learned scholars and sages have carefully ascertained that one should atone for the heaviest sins by undergoing a heavy process of atonement and one should atone for lighter sins by undergoing lighter atonement. Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, however, vanquishes all the effects of sinful activities, regardless of whether heavy or light.

17Although one may neutralize the reactions of sinful life through austerity, charity, vows and other such methods, these pious activities cannot uproot the material desires in one's heart. However, if one serves the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, he is immediately freed from all such contaminations.

18As a fire burns dry grass to ashes, so the holy name of the Lord, whether chanted knowingly or unknowingly, burns to ashes, without fail, all the reactions of one's sinful activities.

19If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient's understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective.

20ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, having thus perfectly judged the principles of devotional service with reasoning and arguments, the order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu released the brāhmaṇa Ajāmila from the bondage of the Yamadūtas and saved him from imminent death.

21My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, O subduer of all enemies, after the servants of Yamarāja had been answered by the order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu, they went to Yamarāja and explained to him everything that had happened.

22 Having been released from the nooses of Yamarāja's servants, the brāhmaṇa Ajāmila, now free from fear, came to his senses and immediately offered obeisances to the Viṣṇudūtas by bowing his head at their lotus feet. He was extremely pleased by their presence, for he had seen them save his life from the hands of the servants of Yamarāja.

23 O sinless Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the order carriers of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Viṣṇudūtas, saw that Ajāmila was attempting to say something, and thus they suddenly disappeared from his presence.

24-25 After hearing the discourses between the Yamadūtas and the Viṣṇudūtas, Ajāmila could understand the religious principles that act under the three modes of material nature. These principles are mentioned in the three Vedas. He could also understand the transcendental religious principles, which are above the modes of material nature and which concern the relationship between the living being and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Furthermore, Ajāmila heard glorification of the name, fame, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He thus became a perfectly pure devotee. He could then remember his past sinful activities, which he greatly regretted having performed.

26 Ajāmila said: Alas, being a servant of my senses, how degraded I became! I fell down from my position as a duly qualified brāhmaṇa and begot children in the womb of a prostitute.

27 Alas, all condemnation upon me! I acted so sinfully that I degraded my family tradition. Indeed, I gave up my chaste and beautiful young wife to have sexual intercourse with a fallen prostitute accustomed to drinking wine. All condemnation upon me!

28 My father and mother were old and had no other son or friend to look after them. Because I did not take care of them, they lived with great difficulty. Alas, like an abominable lower-class man, I ungratefully left them in that condition.

29 It is now clear that as a consequence of such activities, a sinful person like me must be thrown into hellish conditions meant for those who have broken religious principles and must there suffer extreme miseries.

30 Was this a dream I saw, or was it reality? I saw fearsome men with ropes in their hands coming to arrest me and drag me away. Where have they gone?

31 And where have those four liberated and very beautiful persons gone who released me from arrest and saved me from being dragged down to the hellish regions?

32 I am certainly most abominable and unfortunate to have merged in an ocean of sinful activities, but nevertheless, because of my previous spiritual activities, I could see those four exalted personalities who came to rescue me. Now I feel exceedingly happy because of their visit.

33 Were it not for my past devotional service, how could I, a most unclean keeper of a prostitute, have gotten an opportunity to chant the holy name of Vaikuṅṭhpati when I was just ready to die? Certainly it could not have been possible.

34 Ajāmila continued: I am a shameless cheater who has killed his brahminical culture. Indeed, I am sin personified. Where am I in comparison to the all-auspicious chanting of the holy name of Lord Nārāyaṇa?

35 I am such a sinful person, but since I have now gotten this opportunity, I must completely control my mind, life and senses and always engage in devotional service so that I may not fall

again into the deep darkness and ignorance of material life.

36-37 Because of identifying oneself with the body, one is subjected to desires for sense gratification, and thus one engages in many different types of pious and impious action. This is what constitutes material bondage. Now I shall disentangle myself from my material bondage, which has been caused by the Supreme Personality of Godhead's illusory energy in the form of a woman. Being a most fallen soul, I was victimized by the illusory energy and have become like a dancing dog led around by a woman's hand. Now I shall give up all lusty desires and free myself from this illusion. I shall become a merciful, well-wishing friend to all living entities and always absorb myself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

38 Simply because I chanted the holy name of the Lord in the association of devotees, my heart is now becoming purified. Therefore I shall not fall victim again to the false lures of material sense gratification. Now that I have become fixed in the Absolute Truth, henceforward I shall not identify myself with the body. I shall give up false conceptions of "I" and "mine" and fix my mind on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

39 Because of a moment's association with devotees [the Viṣṇudūtas], Ajāmila detached himself from the material conception of life with determination. Thus freed from all material attraction, he immediately started for Hardwar.

40 In Hardwar, Ajāmila took shelter at a Viṣṇu temple, where he executed the process of bhakti-yoga. He controlled his senses and fully applied his mind in the service of the Lord.

41 Ajāmila fully engaged in devotional service. Thus he detached his mind from the process of sense gratification and became fully absorbed in thinking of the form of the Lord.

42 When his intelligence and mind were fixed upon the form of the Lord, the brāhmaṇa Ajāmila once again saw before him four celestial persons. He could understand that they were those he had seen previously, and thus he offered them his obeisances by bowing down before them.

43 Upon seeing the Viṣṇudūtas, Ajāmila gave up his material body at Hardwar on the bank of the Ganges. He regained his original spiritual body, which was a body appropriate for an associate of the Lord.

44 Accompanied by the order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu, Ajāmila boarded an airplane made of gold. Passing through the airways, he went directly to the abode of Lord Viṣṇu, the husband of the goddess of fortune.

45 Ajāmila was a brāhmaṇa who because of bad association had given up all brahminical culture and religious principles. Becoming most fallen, he stole, drank and performed other abominable acts. He even kept a prostitute. Thus he was destined to be carried away to hell by the order carriers of Yamarāja, but he was immediately rescued simply by a glimpse of the chanting of the holy name Nārāyaṇa.

46 Therefore one who desires freedom from material bondage should adopt the process of chanting and glorifying the name, fame, form and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at whose feet all the holy places stand. One cannot derive the proper benefit from other methods, such as pious atonement, speculative knowledge and meditation in mystic yoga, because even after following such methods one takes to fruitive activities again, unable to control his mind, which is contaminated by the base qualities of nature, namely passion and ignorance.

47-48 Because this very confidential historical narration has the potency to vanquish all sinful

reactions, one who hears or describes it with faith and devotion is no longer doomed to hellish life, regardless of his having a material body and regardless of how sinful he may have been. Indeed, the Yamadūtas, who carry out the orders of Yamarāja, do not approach him even to see him. After giving up his body, he returns home, back to Godhead, where he is very respectfully received and worshiped.

49 While suffering at the time of death, Ajāmila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

SB 6.3: Yamarāja Instructs His Messengers

As related in this chapter, the Yamadūtas approached Yamarāja, who very exhaustively explained *bhāgavata-dharma*, the religious principle of devotional service. Yamarāja thus satisfied the Yamadūtas, who had been very disappointed. Yamarāja said, “Although Ajāmila was calling for his son, he chanted the holy name of the Lord, Nārāyaṇa, and simply by a glimpse of the chanting of the holy name, he immediately achieved the association of Lord Viṣṇu’s order carriers, who saved him from your attempt to arrest him. This is quite all right. It is a fact that even a chronically sinful person who chants the holy name of the Lord, although not completely without offenses, does not take another material birth.”

By chanting the holy name of the Lord, Ajāmila had met four order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu. They were very beautiful and had quickly come to rescue him. Yamarāja now described them. “The Viṣṇudūtas are all pure devotees of the Lord, the Supreme Person in regard to the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this cosmic manifestation. Neither King Indra, Varuṇa, Śiva, Brahmā, the seven *ṛṣīs* nor I myself can understand the transcendental activities of the Supreme Lord, who is self-sufficient and beyond the reach of the material senses. With material senses, no one can attain enlightenment about Him. The Lord, the master of the illusory energy, possesses transcendental qualities for the good fortune of everyone, and His devotees are also qualified in that way. The devotees, concerned only with rescuing the fallen souls from this material world, apparently take birth in different places in the material world just to save the conditioned souls. If one is somewhat interested in spiritual life, the devotees of the Lord protect him in many ways.”

Yamarāja continued, “The essence of *sanātana-dharma*, or eternal religion, is extremely confidential. No one but the Lord Himself can deliver that confidential religious system to human society. It is by the mercy of the Lord that the transcendental system of religion can be understood by His pure devotees, and specifically by the twelve *mahājanas* Lord Brahmā, Nārada Muni, Lord Śiva, the Kumāras, Kapila, Manu, Prahlāda, Janaka, Bhīṣma, Bali, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and me. Other learned scholars, headed by Jaimini, are almost always covered by the illusory energy, and therefore they are more or less attracted by the flowery language of the three *Vedas*, namely *R̥g*, *Yajur* and *Sāma*, which are called *trayī*. Instead of becoming pure devotees, people captivated by the flowery words of these three *Vedas* are interested in the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. They cannot understand the glories of chanting the holy name of the Lord. Intelligent persons, however, take to the devotional service of the Lord. When they chant the holy name of the Lord without offenses, they are no longer subject to my rulings. If by chance they commit some sinful act, they are protected by the holy name of the Lord because that is where their interest lies. The four weapons of the Lord, especially the club and the Sudarśana *cakra*, always protect the devotees. One who chants, hears or remembers the holy name of the Lord without duplicity, or who prays or offers obeisances to the Lord, becomes perfect, whereas even a learned person may be called to hell if he is bereft of

devotional service.”

After Yamarāja thus described the glories of the Lord and His devotees, Śukadeva Gosvāmī further explained the potency of chanting the holy name and the futility of performing Vedic ritualistic ceremonies and pious activities for atonement.

1King Parīkṣit said: O my lord, O Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Yamarāja is the controller of all living entities in terms of their religious and irreligious activities, but his order had been foiled. When his servants, the Yamadūtas, informed him of their defeat by the Viṣṇudūtas, who had stopped them from arresting Ajāmila, what did he reply?

2O great sage, never before has it been heard anywhere that an order from Yamarāja has been baffled. Therefore I think that people will have doubts about this that no one but you can eradicate. Since that is my firm conviction, kindly explain the reasons for these events.

3ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī replied: My dear King, when the order carriers of Yamarāja were baffled and defeated by the order carriers of Viṣṇu, they approached their master, the controller of Saṁyamanī-purī and master of sinful persons, to tell him of this incident.

4The Yamadūtas said: Our dear lord, how many controllers or rulers are there in this material world? How many causes are responsible for manifesting the various results of activities performed under the three modes of material nature [sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa]?

5If in this universe there are many rulers and justices who disagree about punishment and reward, their contradictory actions will neutralize each other, and no one will be punished or rewarded. Otherwise, if their contradictory acts fail to neutralize each other, everyone will have to be both punished and rewarded.

6The Yamadūtas continued: Since there are many different karmīs, or workers, there may be different judges or rulers to give them justice, but just as one central emperor controls different departmental rulers, there must be one supreme controller to guide all the judges.

7The supreme judge must be one, not many. It was our understanding that you are that supreme judge and that you have jurisdiction even over the demigods. Our impression was that you are the master of all living entities, the supreme authority who discriminates between the pious and impious activities of all human beings.

8But now we see that the punishment ordained under your authority is no longer effective, since your order has been transgressed by four wonderful and perfect persons.

9We were bringing the most sinful Ajāmila toward the hellish planets, following your order, when those beautiful persons from Siddhaloka forcibly cut the knots of the ropes with which we were arresting him.

10As soon as the sinful Ajāmila uttered the name Nārāyaṇa, these four beautiful men immediately arrived and reassured him, saying, “Do not fear. Do not fear.” We wish to know about them from Your Lordship. If you think we are able to understand them, kindly describe who they are.

11ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus having been questioned, Lord Yamarāja, the supreme controller of the living entities, was very pleased with his order carriers because of hearing from them the holy name of Nārāyaṇa. He remembered the lotus feet of the Lord and began to reply.

12Yamarāja said: My dear servants, you have accepted me as the Supreme, but factually I am not. Above me, and above all the other demigods, including Indra and Candra, is the one supreme master and controller. The partial manifestations of His personality are Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, who are in charge of the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this universe. He is like the two threads that form the length and breadth of a woven cloth. The entire world is controlled by Him just as a bull is controlled by a rope in its nose.

13Just as the driver of a bullock cart ties ropes through the nostrils of his bulls to control them, the Supreme Personality of Godhead binds all men through the ropes of His words in the Vedas, which set forth the names and activities of the distinct orders of human society [brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra]. In fear, the members of these orders all worship the Supreme Lord by offering Him presentations according to their respective activities.

14-15I, Yamarāja; Indra, the King of heaven; Nirṛti; Varuṇa; Candra, the moon-god; Agni; Lord Śiva; Pavana; Lord Brahmā; Sūrya, the sun-god; Viśvāsu; the eight Vasus; the Sādhyas; the Maruts; the Rudras; the Siddhas; and Marīci and the other great ṛṣis engaged in maintaining the departmental affairs of the universe, as well as the best of the demigods headed by Bṛhaspati, and the great sages headed by Bhṛgu are all certainly freed from the influence of the two base material modes of nature, namely passion and ignorance. Nevertheless, although we are in the mode of goodness, we cannot understand the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What, then, is to be said of others, who, under illusion, merely speculate to know God?

16As the different limbs of the body cannot see the eyes, the living entities cannot see the Supreme Lord, who is situated as the Supersoul in everyone's heart. Not by the senses, by the mind, by the life air, by thoughts within the heart, or by the vibration of words can the living entities ascertain the real situation of the Supreme Lord.

17The Supreme Personality of Godhead is self-sufficient and fully independent. He is the master of everyone and everything, including the illusory energy. He has His form, qualities and features; and similarly His order carriers, the Vaiṣṇavas, who are very beautiful, possess bodily features, transcendental qualities and a transcendental nature almost like His. They always wander within this world with full independence.

18The order carriers of Lord Viṣṇu, who are worshiped even by the demigods, possess wonderful bodily features exactly like those of Viṣṇu and are very rarely seen. The Viṣṇudūtas protect the devotees of the Lord from the hands of enemies, from envious persons and even from my jurisdiction, as well as from natural disturbances.

19Real religious principles are enacted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although fully situated in the mode of goodness, even the great ṛṣis who occupy the topmost planets cannot ascertain the real religious principles, nor can the demigods or the leaders of Siddhaloka, to say nothing of the asuras, ordinary human beings, Vidyādharas and Cāraṇas.

20-21Lord Brahmā, Bhagavān Nārada, Lord Śiva, the four Kumāras, Lord Kapila [the son of Devahūti], Svāyambhuva Manu, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Janaka Mahārāja, Grandfather Bhīṣma, Bali Mahārāja, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and I myself know the real religious principle. My dear servants, this transcendental religious principle, which is known as bhāgavata-dharma, or surrender unto the Supreme Lord and love for Him, is uncontaminated by the material modes of nature. It is very confidential and difficult for ordinary human beings to understand, but if by chance one fortunately understands it, he is immediately liberated, and thus he returns home, back to Godhead.

22 Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.

23 My dear servants, who are as good as my sons, just see how glorious is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The greatly sinful Ajāmila chanted only to call his son, not knowing that he was chanting the Lord's holy name. Nevertheless, by chanting the holy name of the Lord, he remembered Nārāyaṇa, and thus he was immediately saved from the ropes of death.

24 Therefore it should be understood that one is easily relieved from all sinful reactions by chanting the holy name of the Lord and chanting of His qualities and activities. This is the only process recommended for relief from sinful reactions. Even if one chants the holy name of the Lord with improper pronunciation, he will achieve relief from material bondage if he chants without offenses. Ajāmila, for example, was extremely sinful, but while dying he merely chanted the holy name, and although calling his son, he achieved complete liberation because he remembered the name of Nārāyaṇa.

25 Because they are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yāṅsavalkya and Jaimini and other compilers of the religious scriptures cannot know the secret, confidential religious system of the twelve mahājānas. They cannot understand the transcendental value of performing devotional service or chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Because their minds are attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas especially the Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda and Ṛg Veda their intelligence has become dull. Thus they are busy collecting the ingredients for ritualistic ceremonies that yield only temporary benefits, such as elevation to Svargaloka for material happiness. They are not attracted to the saṅkīrtana movement; instead, they are interested in dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa.

26 Considering all these points, therefore, intelligent men decide to solve all problems by adopting the devotional service of chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart and who is a mine of all auspicious qualities. Such persons are not within my jurisdiction for punishment. Generally they never commit sinful activities, but even if by mistake or because of bewilderment or illusion they sometimes commit sinful acts, they are protected from sinful reactions because they always chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

27 My dear servants, please do not approach such devotees, for they have fully surrendered to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are equal to everyone, and their narrations are sung by the demigods and the inhabitants of Siddhaloka. Please do not even go near them. They are always protected by the club of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore Lord Brahmā and I and even the time factor are not competent to chastise them.

28 Paramahāṁsas are exalted persons who have no taste for material enjoyment and who drink the honey of the Lord's lotus feet. My dear servants, bring to me for punishment only persons who are averse to the taste of that honey, who do not associate with paramahāṁsas and who are attached to family life and worldly enjoyment, which form the path to hell.

29 My dear servants, please bring to me only those sinful persons who do not use their tongues to chant the holy name and qualities of Kṛṣṇa, whose hearts do not remember the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa even once, and whose heads do not bow down even once before Lord Kṛṣṇa. Send me those who do not perform their duties toward Viṣṇu, which are the only duties in human life. Please bring me all such fools and rascals.

30 [Then Yamarāja, considering himself and his servants to be offenders, spoke as follows, begging pardon from the Lord.] O my Lord, my servants have surely committed a great offense

by arresting a Vaiṣṇava such as Ajāmila. O Nārāyaṇa, O supreme and oldest person, please forgive us. Because of our ignorance, we failed to recognize Ajāmila as a servant of Your Lordship, and thus we have certainly committed a great offense. Therefore with folded hands we beg Your pardon. My Lord, since You are supremely merciful and are always full of good qualities, please pardon us. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

31 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is able to uproot even the reactions of the greatest sins. Therefore the chanting of the saṅkīrtana movement is the most auspicious activity in the entire universe. Please try to understand this so that others will take it seriously.

32 One who constantly hears and chants the holy name of the Lord and hears and chants about His activities can very easily attain the platform of pure devotional service, which can cleanse the dirt from one's heart. One cannot achieve such purification merely by observing vows and performing Vedic ritualistic ceremonies.

33 Devotees who always lick the honey from the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa do not care at all for material activities, which are performed under the three modes of material nature and which bring only misery. Indeed, devotees never give up the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa to return to material activities. Others, however, who are addicted to Vedic rituals because they have neglected the service of the Lord's lotus feet and are enchanted by lusty desires, sometimes perform acts of atonement. Nevertheless, being incompletely purified, they return to sinful activities again and again.

34 After hearing from the mouth of their master about the extraordinary glories of the Lord and His name, fame and attributes, the Yamadūtas were struck with wonder. Since then, as soon as they see a devotee, they fear him and dare not look at him again.

35 When the great sage Agastya, the son of Kumbha, was residing in the Malaya Hills and worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I approached him, and he explained to me this confidential history.

SB 6.4: The Hamsa-guhya Prayers Offered to the Lord by Prajāpati Dakṣa

After Mahārāja Parīkṣit appealed to Śukadeva Gosvāmī to describe in further detail the creation of the living entities within this universe, Śukadeva Gosvāmī informed him that when the Pracetās, the ten sons of Prācīnabarhi, entered the sea to execute austerities, the planet earth was neglected because of the absence of a king. Naturally many weeds and unnecessary trees grew, and no food grains were produced. Indeed, all the land became like a forest. When the ten Pracetās came out of the sea and saw the entire world full of trees, they were very angry with the trees and decided to destroy them all to rectify the situation. Thus the Pracetās created wind and fire to burn the trees to ashes. Soma, however, the king of the moon and the king of all vegetation, forbade the Pracetās to destroy the trees, since the trees are the source of fruit and flowers for all living beings. Just to satisfy the Pracetās, Soma gave them a beautiful girl born of Pramlocā Apsarā. By the semen of all the Pracetās, Dakṣa was born of that girl.

In the beginning, Dakṣa created all the demigods, demons and human beings, but when he found the population not increasing properly, he took *sannyāsa* and went to Vindhya Mountain, where he underwent severe austerities and offered Lord Viṣṇu a particular prayer known as *Hamsa-guhya*, by which Lord Viṣṇu became very pleased with him. The contents of the prayer were as follows.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, Lord Hari, is the controller of both the

living entities and the material nature. He is self-sufficient and self-effulgent. As the subject matter of perception is not the cause of our perceiving senses, so the living entity, although within his body, does not cause his eternal friend the Supersoul, who is the cause of creation of all the senses. Because of the living entity's ignorance, his senses are engaged with material objects. Since the living entity is alive, he can understand the creation of this material world to some extent, but he cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond the conception of the body, mind and intelligence. Nevertheless, great sages who are always in meditation can see the personal form of the Lord within their hearts.

“Since an ordinary living being is materially contaminated, his words and intelligence are also material. Therefore he cannot ascertain the Supreme Personality of Godhead by manipulating his material senses. The conception of God derived through the material senses is inaccurate because the Supreme Lord is beyond the material senses, but when one engages his senses in devotional service, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead is revealed on the platform of the soul. When that Supreme Godhead becomes the aim of one's life, one is said to have attained spiritual knowledge.

“The Supreme Brahman is the cause of all causes because He originally existed before the creation. He is the original cause of everything, both material and spiritual, and His existence is independent. However, the Lord has a potency called *avidyā*, the illusory energy, which induces the false arguer to think himself perfect and which induces the illusory energy to bewilder the conditioned soul. That Supreme Brahman, the Supersoul, is very affectionate to His devotees. To bestow mercy upon them, He discloses His form, name, attributes and qualities to be worshiped within this material world.

“Unfortunately, however, those who are materially absorbed worship various demigods. As the air passes over a lotus flower and carries the scent of the flower with it, or as the air sometimes carries dust and therefore assumes colors, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears as the various demigods according to the desires of His various foolish worshipers, but actually He is the supreme truth, Lord Viṣṇu. To fulfill the desires of His devotees, He appears in various incarnations, and therefore there is no need to worship the demigods.”

Being very satisfied by the prayers of Dakṣa, Lord Viṣṇu appeared before Dakṣa with eight arms. The Lord was dressed in yellow garments and had a blackish complexion. Understanding that Dakṣa was very eager to follow the path of enjoyment, the Lord awarded him the potency to enjoy the illusory energy. The Lord offered him the daughter of Paścajana named Asiknī, who was suitable for Mahārāja Dakṣa to enjoy in sex. Indeed, Dakṣa received his name because he was very expert in sex life. After awarding this benediction, Lord Viṣṇu disappeared.

1-2The blessed King said to Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My dear lord, the demigods, demons, human beings, Nāgas, beasts and birds were created during the reign of Svāyambhuva Manu. You have spoken about this creation briefly [in the Third Canto]. Now I wish to know about it elaborately. I also wish to know about the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by which He brought about the secondary creation.

3Sūta Gosvāmī said: O great sages [assembled at Naimiṣāraṇya], after the great yogi Śukadeva Gosvāmī heard King Parīkṣit's inquiry, he praised it and thus replied.

4Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the ten sons of Prācīnabarhi emerged from the waters, in which they were performing austerities, they saw that the entire surface of the world was covered by trees.

5Because of having undergone long austerities in the water, the Pracetās were very angry at the

trees. Desiring to burn them to ashes, they generated wind and fire from their mouths.

6My dear King Parīkṣit, when Soma, the king of the trees and predominating deity of the moon, saw the fire and wind burning all the trees to ashes, he felt great sympathy because he is the maintainer of all herbs and trees. To appease the anger of the Pracetās, Soma spoke as follows.

7O greatly fortunate ones, you should not kill these poor trees by burning them to ashes. Your duty is to wish the citizens [prajāś] all prosperity and to act as their protectors.

8The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, is the master of all living entities, including all the prajāpatis, such as Lord Brahmā. Because He is the all-pervading and indestructible master, He has created all these trees and vegetables as eatables for other living entities.

9By nature's arrangement, fruits and flowers are considered the food of insects and birds; grass and other legless living entities are meant to be the food of four-legged animals like cows and buffalo; animals that cannot use their front legs as hands are meant to be the food of animals like tigers, which have claws; and four-legged animals like deer and goats, as well as food grains, are meant to be the food of human beings.

10O pure-hearted ones, your father, Prācīnabarhi, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead have ordered you to generate population. Therefore how can you burn to ashes these trees and herbs, which are needed for the maintenance of your subjects and descendants?

11The path of goodness traversed by your father, grandfather and great-grandfathers is that of maintaining the subjects [prajāś], including the men, animals and trees. That is the path you should follow. Unnecessary anger is contrary to your duty. Therefore I request you to control your anger.

12As the father and mother are the friends and maintainers of their children, as the eyelid is the protector of the eye, as the husband is the maintainer and protector of a woman, as the householder is the maintainer and protector of beggars, and as the learned is the friend of the ignorant, so the king is the protector and giver of life to all his subjects. The trees are also subjects of the king. Therefore they should be given protection.

13The Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated as the Supersoul within the cores of the hearts of all living entities, whether moving or nonmoving, including men, birds, animals, trees and, indeed, all living entities. Therefore you should consider every body a residence or temple of the Lord. By such vision you will satisfy the Lord. You should not angrily kill these living entities in the forms of trees.

14One who inquires into self-realization and thus subdues his powerful anger which awakens suddenly in the body as if falling from the sky transcends the influence of the modes of material nature.

15There is no need to burn these poor trees any longer. Let whatever trees still remain be happy. Indeed, you should also be happy. Now, here is a beautiful, well-qualified girl named Māriṣā, who was raised by the trees as their daughter. You may accept this beautiful girl as your wife.

16Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after thus pacifying the Pracetās, Soma, the king of the moon, gave them the beautiful girl born of Pramlocā Apsarā. The Pracetās all received Pramlocā's daughter, who had high, very beautiful hips, and married her according to the religious system.

17In the womb of that girl the Pracetās all begot a son named Dakṣa, who filled the three worlds with living entities.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Please hear from me with great attention how Prajāpati Dakṣa, who was very affectionate to his daughters, created different types of living entities through his semen and through his mind.

19With his mind, Prajāpati Dakṣa first created all kinds of demigods, demons, human beings, birds, beasts, aquatics and so on.

20But when Prajāpati Dakṣa saw that he was not properly generating all kinds of living entities, he approached a mountain near the Vindhya mountain range, and there he executed very difficult austerities.

21Near that mountain was a very holy place named Aghamarṣaṇa. There Prajāpati Dakṣa executed ritualistic ceremonies and satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, by engaging in great austerities to please Him.

22My dear King, I shall fully explain to you the Hamsa-guhya prayers, which were offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by Dakṣa, and I shall explain how the Lord was pleased with him for those prayers.

23Prajāpati Dakṣa said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental to the illusory energy and the physical categories it produces. He possesses the potency for unfailing knowledge and supreme willpower, and He is the controller of the living entities and the illusory energy. The conditioned souls who have accepted this material manifestation as everything cannot see Him, for He is above the evidence of experimental knowledge. Self-evident and self-sufficient, He is not caused by any superior cause. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

24As the sense objects [form, taste, touch, smell and sound] cannot understand how the senses perceive them, so the conditioned soul, although residing in his body along with the Supersoul, cannot understand how the supreme spiritual person, the master of the material creation, directs his senses. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto that Supreme Person, who is the supreme controller.

25Because they are only matter, the body, the life airs, the external and internal senses, the five gross elements and the subtle sense objects [form, taste, smell, sound and touch] cannot know their own nature, the nature of the other senses or the nature of their controllers. But the living being, because of his spiritual nature, can know his body, the life airs, the senses, the elements and the sense objects, and he can also know the three qualities that form their roots. Nevertheless, although the living being is completely aware of them, he is unable to see the Supreme Being, who is omniscient and unlimited. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

26When one's consciousness is completely purified of the contamination of material existence, gross and subtle, without being agitated as in the working and dreaming states, and when the mind is not dissolved as in suṣupti, deep sleep, one comes to the platform of trance. Then one's material vision and the memories of the mind, which manifests names and forms, are vanquished. Only in such a trance is the Supreme Personality of Godhead revealed. Thus let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seen in that uncontaminated, transcendental state.

27-28Just as great learned brāhmaṇas who are expert in performing ritualistic ceremonies and

sacrifices can extract the fire dormant within wooden fuel by chanting the fifteen Sāmidhenī mantras, thus proving the efficacy of the Vedic mantras, so those who are actually advanced in consciousness in other words, those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious can find the Supersoul, who by His own spiritual potency is situated within the heart. The heart is covered by the three modes of material nature and the nine material elements [material nature, the total material energy, the ego, the mind and the five objects of sense gratification], and also by the five material elements and the ten senses. These twenty-seven elements constitute the external energy of the Lord. Great yogīs meditate upon the Lord, who is situated as the Supersoul, Paramātmā, within the core of the heart. May that Supersoul be pleased with me. The Supersoul is realized when one is eager for liberation from the unlimited varieties of material life. One actually attains such liberation when he engages in the transcendental loving service of the Lord and realizes the Lord because of his attitude of service. The Lord may be addressed by various spiritual names, which are inconceivable to the material senses. When will that Supreme Personality of Godhead be pleased with me?

29 Anything expressed by material vibrations, anything ascertained by material intelligence and anything experienced by the material senses or concocted within the material mind is but an effect of the modes of material nature and therefore has nothing to do with the real nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Lord is beyond the creation of this material world, for He is the source of the material qualities and creation. As the cause of all causes, He exists before the creation and after the creation. I wish to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

30 The Supreme Brahman, Kṛṣṇa, is the ultimate resting place and source of everything. Everything is done by Him, everything belongs to Him, and everything is offered to Him. He is the ultimate objective, and whether acting or causing others to act, He is the ultimate doer. There are many causes, high and low, but since He is the cause of all causes, He is well known as the Supreme Brahman who existed before all activities. He is one without a second and has no other cause. I therefore offer my respects unto Him.

31 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-pervading Supreme Personality of Godhead, who possesses unlimited transcendental qualities. Acting from within the cores of the hearts of all philosophers, who propagate various views, He causes them to forget their own souls while sometimes agreeing and sometimes disagreeing among themselves. Thus He creates within this material world a situation in which they are unable to come to a conclusion. I offer my obeisances unto Him.

32 There are two parties namely, the theists and the atheists. The theist, who accepts the Supersoul, finds the spiritual cause through mystic yoga. The Sāṅkhyite, however, who merely analyzes the material elements, comes to a conclusion of impersonalism and does not accept a supreme cause whether Bhagavān, Paramātmā or even Brahman. Instead, he is preoccupied with the superfluous, external activities of material nature. Ultimately, however, both parties demonstrate the Absolute Truth because although they offer opposing statements, their object is the same ultimate cause. They are both approaching the same Supreme Brahman, to whom I offer my respectful obeisances.

33 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is inconceivably opulent, who is devoid of all material names, forms and pastimes, and who is all-pervading, is especially merciful to the devotees who worship His lotus feet. Thus He exhibits transcendental forms and names with His different pastimes. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, be merciful to me.

34 As the air carries various characteristics of the physical elements, like the aroma of a flower

or colors resulting from a mixture of dust in the air, the Lord appears through lower systems of worship according to one's desires, although He appears as the demigods and not in His original form. What is the use of these other forms? May the original Supreme Personality of Godhead please fulfill my desires.

35-39 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is extremely affectionate to His devotees, was very pleased by the prayers offered by Dakṣa, and thus He appeared at that holy place known as Aghamaṣṇa. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Kuru dynasty, the Lord's lotus feet rested on the shoulders of His carrier, Garuḍa, and He appeared with eight long, mighty, very beautiful arms. In His hands He held a disc, conchshell, sword, shield, arrow, bow, rope and club in each hand a different weapon, all brilliantly shining. His garments were yellow and His bodily hue deep bluish. His eyes and face were very cheerful, and from His neck to His feet hung a long garland of flowers. His chest was decorated with the Kaustubha jewel and the mark of Śrīvatsa. On His head was a gorgeous round helmet, and His ears were decorated with earrings resembling sharks. All these ornaments were uncommonly beautiful. The Lord wore a golden belt on His waist, bracelets on His arms, rings on His fingers, and ankle bells on His feet. Thus decorated by various ornaments, Lord Hari, who is attractive to all the living entities of the three worlds, is known as Puruṣottama, the best personality. He was accompanied by great devotees like Nārada, Nanda and all the principal demigods, led by the heavenly king, Indra, and the residents of various upper planetary systems such as Siddhaloka, Gandharvaloka and Cāraṇaloka. Situated on both sides of the Lord and behind Him as well, these devotees offered Him prayers continuously.

40 Seeing that wonderful and effulgent form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Prajāpati Dakṣa was first somewhat afraid, but then he was very pleased to see the Lord, and he fell to the ground like a stick to offer his respects to the Lord.

41 As rivers are filled by water flowing from a mountain, all of Dakṣa's senses were filled with pleasure. Because of his highly elevated happiness, Dakṣa could not say anything, but simply remained flat on the ground.

42 Although Prajāpati Dakṣa could not say anything, when the Lord, who knows everyone's heart, saw His devotee prostrate in that manner and desiring to increase the population, He addressed him as follows.

43 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O most fortunate Prācetasā, because of your great faith in Me, you have attained the supreme devotional ecstasy. Indeed, because of your austerities, combined with exalted devotion, your life is now successful. You have achieved complete perfection.

44 My dear Prajāpati Dakṣa, you have performed extreme austerities for the welfare and growth of the world. My desire also is that everyone within this world be happy. I am therefore very pleased with you because you are endeavoring to fulfill My desire for the welfare of the entire world.

45 Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, the Manus, all the other demigods in the higher planetary systems, and you prajāpatīs, who are increasing the population, are working for the benefit of all living entities. Thus your expansions of My marginal energy are incarnations of My various qualities.

46 My dear brāhmaṇa, austerity in the form of meditation is My heart, Vedic knowledge in the form of hymns and mantras constitutes My body, and spiritual activities and ecstatic emotions are My actual form. The ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices, when properly conducted, are the various limbs of My body, the unseen good fortune proceeding from pious or spiritual activities

constitutes My mind, and the demigods who execute My orders in various departments are My life and soul.

47 Before the creation of this cosmic manifestation, I alone existed with My specific spiritual potencies. Consciousness was then unmanifested, just as one's consciousness is unmanifested during the time of sleep.

48 I am the reservoir of unlimited potency, and therefore I am known as unlimited or all-pervading. From My material energy the cosmic manifestation appeared within Me, and in this universal manifestation appeared the chief being, Lord Brahmā, who is your source and is not born of a material mother.

49-50 When the chief lord of the universe, Lord Brahmā [Svayambhū], having been inspired by My energy, was attempting to create, he thought himself incapable. Therefore I gave him advice, and in accordance with My instructions he underwent extremely difficult austerities. Because of these austerities, the great Lord Brahmā was able to create nine personalities, including you, to help him in the functions of creation.

51 O My dear son Dakṣa, Prajāpati Paścajana has a daughter named Asiknī, whom I offer to you so that you may accept her as your wife.

52 Now unite in sexual life as man and woman, and in this way, by sexual intercourse, you will be able to beget hundreds of children in the womb of this girl to increase the population.

53 After you give birth to many hundreds and thousands of children, they will also be captivated by My illusory energy and will engage, like You, in sexual intercourse. But because of My mercy to you and them, they will also be able to give Me presentations in devotion.

54 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After the creator of the entire universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, had spoken in this way in the presence of Prajāpati Dakṣa, He immediately disappeared as if He were an object experienced in a dream.

SB 6.5: Nārada Muni Cursed by Prajāpati Dakṣa

This chapter relates how all the sons of Dakṣa were delivered from the clutches of the material energy by following the advice of Nārada, who was therefore cursed by Dakṣa.

Influenced by the external energy of Lord Viṣṇu, Prajāpati Dakṣa begot ten thousand sons in the womb of his wife, Pāścajanī. These sons, who were all of the same character and mentality, were known as the Haryaśvas. Ordered by their father to create more and more population, the Haryaśvas went west to the place where the river Sindhu (now the Indus) meets the Arabian Sea. In those days this was the site of a holy lake named Nārāyaṇa-saras, where there were many saintly persons. The Haryaśvas began practicing austerities, penances and meditation, which are the engagements of the highly exalted renounced order of life. However, when Śrīla Nārada Muni saw these boys engaged in such commendable austerities simply for material creation, he thought it better to release them from this tendency. Nārada Muni described to the boys their ultimate goal of life and advised them not to become ordinary *karmīs* to beget children. Thus all the sons of Dakṣa became enlightened and left, never to return.

Prajāpati Dakṣa, who was very sad at the loss of his sons, begot one thousand more sons in the womb of his wife, Pāścajanī, and ordered them to increase progeny. These sons, who were named the Savalāśvas, also engaged in worshipping Lord Viṣṇu to beget children, but Nārada Muni convinced them to become mendicants and not beget children. Foiled twice in his

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attempts to increase population, Prajāpati Dakṣa became most angry at Nārada Muni and cursed him, saying that in the future he would not be able to stay anywhere. Since Nārada Muni, being fully qualified, was fixed in tolerance, he accepted Dakṣa's curse.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Impelled by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, Prajāpati Dakṣa begot ten thousand sons in the womb of Pāścjanī [Asiknī]. My dear King, these sons were called the Haryaśvas.

2My dear King, all the sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa were alike in being very gentle and obedient to the orders of their father. When their father ordered them to beget children, they all went in the western direction.

3In the west, where the river Sindhu meets the sea, there is a great place of pilgrimage known as Nārāyaṇa-saras. Many sages and others advanced in spiritual consciousness live there.

4-5In that holy place, the Haryaśvas began regularly touching the lake's waters and bathing in them. Gradually becoming very much purified, they became inclined toward the activities of paramahānsas. Nevertheless, because their father had ordered them to increase the population, they performed severe austerities to fulfill his desires. One day, when the great sage Nārada saw those boys performing such fine austerities to increase the population, Nārada approached them.

6-8The great sage Nārada said: My dear Haryaśvas, you have not seen the extremities of the earth. There is a kingdom where only one man lives and where there is a hole from which, having entered, no one emerges. A woman there who is extremely unchaste adorns herself with various attractive dresses, and the man who lives there is her husband. In that kingdom, there is a river flowing in both directions, a wonderful home made of twenty-five materials, a swan that vibrates various sounds, and an automatically revolving object made of sharp razors and thunderbolts. You have not seen all this, and therefore you are inexperienced boys without advanced knowledge. How, then, will you create progeny?

9Alas, your father is omniscient, but you do not know his actual order. Without knowing the actual purpose of your father, how will you create progeny?

10Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing these enigmatic words of Nārada Muni, the Haryaśvas considered them with their natural intelligence, without help from others.

11[The Haryaśvas understood the meaning of Nārada's words as follows.] The word "bhūḥ" ["the earth"] refers to the field of activities. The material body, which is a result of the living being's actions, is his field of activities, and it gives him false designations. Since time immemorial, he has received various types of material bodies, which are the roots of bondage to the material world. If one foolishly engages in temporary fruitive activities and does not look toward the cessation of this bondage, what will be the benefit of his actions?

12[Nārada Muni had said that there is a kingdom where there is only one male. The Haryaśvas realized the purport of this statement.] The only enjoyer is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who observes everything, everywhere. He is full of six opulences and fully independent of everyone else. He is never subject to the three modes of material nature, for He is always transcendental to this material creation. If the members of human society do not understand Him, the Supreme, through their advancement in knowledge and activities, but simply work very hard like cats and dogs all day and night for temporary happiness, what will be the benefit of their activities?

13[Nārada Muni had described that there is a bila, or hole, from which, having entered, one

does not return. The Haryaśvas understood the meaning of this allegory.] Hardly once has a person who has entered the lower planetary system called Pātāla been seen to return. Similarly, if one enters the Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma [pratyag-dhāma], he does not return to this material world. If there is such a place, from which, having gone, one does not return to the miserable material condition of life, what is the use of jumping like monkeys in the temporary material world and not seeing or understanding that place? What will be the profit?

14[Nārada Muni had described a woman who is a professional prostitute. The Haryaśvas understood the identity of this woman.] Mixed with the mode of passion, the unsteady intelligence of every living entity is like a prostitute who changes dresses just to attract one's attention. If one fully engages in temporary fruitive activities, not understanding how this is taking place, what does he actually gain?

15[Nārada Muni had also spoken of a man who is the husband of the prostitute. The Haryaśvas understood this as follows.] If one becomes the husband of a prostitute, he loses all independence. Similarly, if a living entity has polluted intelligence, he prolongs his materialistic life. Frustrated by material nature, he must follow the movements of the intelligence, which brings various conditions of happiness and distress. If one performs fruitive activities under such conditions, what will be the benefit?

16[Nārada Muni had said that there is a river flowing in both directions. The Haryaśvas understood the purport of this statement.] Material nature functions in two ways by creation and dissolution. Thus the river of material nature flows both ways. A living entity who unknowingly falls in this river is submerged in its waves, and since the current is swifter near the banks of the river, he is unable to get out. What will be the benefit of performing fruitive activities in that river of māyā?

17[Nārada Muni had said that there is a house made of twenty-five elements. The Haryaśvas understood this analogy.] The Supreme Lord is the reservoir of the twenty-five elements, and as the Supreme Being, the conductor of cause and effect, He causes their manifestation. If one engages in temporary fruitive activities, not knowing that Supreme Person, what benefit will he derive?

18[Nārada Muni had spoken of a swan. That swan is explained in this verse.] The Vedic literatures [śāstras] vividly describe how to understand the Supreme Lord, the source of all material and spiritual energy. Indeed, they elaborately explain these two energies. The swan [hamsa] is one who discriminates between matter and spirit, who accepts the essence of everything, and who explains the means of bondage and the means of liberation. The words of scriptures consist of variegated vibrations. If a foolish rascal leaves aside the study of these śāstras to engage in temporary activities, what will be the result?

19[Nārada Muni had spoken of a physical object made of sharp blades and thunderbolts. The Haryaśvas understood this allegory as follows.] Eternal time moves very sharply, as if made of razors and thunderbolts. Uninterrupted and fully independent, it drives the activities of the entire world. If one does not try to study the eternal element of time, what benefit can he derive from performing temporary material activities?

20[Nārada Muni had asked how one could ignorantly defy one's own father. The Haryaśvas understood the meaning of this question.] One must accept the original instructions of the śāstra. According to Vedic civilization, one is offered a sacred thread as a sign of second birth. One takes his second birth by dint of having received instructions in the śāstra from a bona fide spiritual master. Therefore, śāstra, scripture, is the real father. All the śāstras instruct that one should end his material way of life. If one does not know the purpose of the father's orders, the

śāstras, he is ignorant. The words of a material father who endeavors to engage his son in material activities are not the real instructions of the father.

21 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after hearing the instructions of Nārada, the Haryaśvas, the sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa, were firmly convinced. They all believed in his instructions and reached the same conclusion. Having accepted him as their spiritual master, they circumambulated that great sage and followed the path by which one never returns to this world.

22 The seven musical notes ṣa, ṛ, gā, ma, pa, dha and ni are used in musical instruments, but originally they come from the Sāma Veda. The great sage Nārada vibrates sounds describing the pastimes of the Supreme Lord. By such transcendental vibrations, such as Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, he fixes his mind at the lotus feet of the Lord. Thus he directly perceives Hṛṣīkeśa, the master of the senses. After delivering the Haryaśvas, Nārada Muni continued traveling throughout the planetary systems, his mind always fixed at the lotus feet of the Lord.

23 The Haryaśvas, the sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa, were very well-behaved, cultured sons, but unfortunately, because of the instructions of Nārada Muni, they deviated from the order of their father. When Dakṣa heard this news, which was brought to him by Nārada Muni, he began to lament. Although he was the father of such good sons, he had lost them all. Certainly this was lamentable.

24 When Prajāpati Dakṣa was lamenting for his lost children, Lord Brahmā pacified him with instructions, and thereafter Dakṣa begot one thousand more children in the womb of his wife, Pāścājanī. This time his sons were known as the Savalāśvas.

25 In accordance with their father's order to beget children, the second group of sons also went to Nārāyaṇa-saras, the same place where their brothers had previously attained perfection by following the instructions of Nārada. Undertaking great vows of austerity, the Savalāśvas remained at that holy place.

26 At Nārāyaṇa-saras, the second group of sons performed penances in the same way as the first. They bathed in the holy water, and by its touch all the dirty material desires in their hearts were cleansed away. They murmured mantras beginning with omkāra and underwent a severe course of austerities.

27-28 For a few months the sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa drank only water and ate only air. Thus undergoing great austerities, they recited this mantra: "Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always situated in His transcendental abode. Since He is the Supreme Person [paramahamsa], let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Him."

29 O King Parīkṣit, Nārada Muni approached these sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa, who were engaged in tapasya to beget children, and spoke enigmatic words to them just as he had spoken to their elder brothers.

30 O sons of Dakṣa, please hear my words of instruction attentively. You are all very affectionate to your elder brothers, the Haryaśvas. Therefore you should follow their path.

31 A brother aware of the principles of religion follows in the footsteps of his elder brothers. Because of being highly elevated, such a pious brother gets the opportunity to associate and enjoy with demigods like the Maruts, who are all affectionate to their brothers.

32Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O best of the advanced Āryans, after saying this much to the sons of Prajāpati Dakṣa, Nārada Muni, whose merciful glance never goes in vain, left as he had planned. The sons of Dakṣa followed their elder brothers. Not attempting to produce children, they engaged themselves in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

33The Savalāśvas took to the correct path, which is obtainable by a mode of life meant to achieve devotional service, or the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Like nights that have gone to the west, they have not returned even until now.

34At this time, Prajāpati Dakṣa observed many inauspicious signs, and he heard from various sources that his second group of sons, the Savalāśvas, had followed the path of their elder brothers in accordance with the instructions of Nārada.

35When he heard that the Savalāśvas had also left this world to engage in devotional service, Dakṣa was angry at Nārada, and he almost fainted due to lamentation. When Dakṣa met Nārada, Dakṣa's lips began trembling in anger, and he spoke as follows.

36Prajāpati Dakṣa said: Alas, Nārada Muni, you wear the dress of a saintly person, but you are not actually a saint. Indeed, although I am now in gr̥hastha life, I am a saintly person. By showing my sons the path of renunciation, you have done me an abominable injustice.

37Prajāpati Dakṣa said: My sons were not at all freed from their three debts. Indeed, they did not properly consider their obligations. O Nārada Muni, O personality of sinful action, you have obstructed their progress toward good fortune in this world and the next because they are still indebted to the saintly persons, the demigods and their father.

38Prajāpati Dakṣa continued: Thus committing violence against other living entities and yet claiming to be an associate of Lord Viṣṇu, you are defaming the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You needlessly created a mentality of renunciation in innocent boys, and therefore you are shameless and devoid of compassion. How could you travel with the personal associates of the Supreme Lord?

39All the devotees of the Lord but you are very kind to the conditioned souls and are eager to benefit others. Although you wear the dress of a devotee, you create enmity with people who are not your enemies, or you break friendship and create enmity between friends. Are you not ashamed of posing as a devotee while performing these abominable actions?

40Prajāpati Dakṣa continued: If you think that simply awakening the sense of renunciation will detach one from the material world, I must say that unless full knowledge is awakened, simply changing dresses as you have done cannot possibly bring detachment.

41Material enjoyment is indeed the cause of all unhappiness, but one cannot give it up unless one has personally experienced how much suffering it is. Therefore one should be allowed to remain in so-called material enjoyment while simultaneously advancing in knowledge to experience the misery of this false material happiness. Then, without help from others, one will find material enjoyment detestful. Those whose minds are changed by others do not become as renounced as those who have personal experience.

42Although I live in household life with my wife and children, I honestly follow the Vedic injunctions by engaging in fruitive activities to enjoy life without sinful reactions. I have performed all kinds of yajñas, including the deva-yajña, ṛṣi-yajña, pitṛ-yajña and nṛ-yajña. Because these yajñas are called vratas [vows], I am known as a gr̥havrata. Unfortunately, you have given me great displeasure by misguiding my sons, for no reason, to the path of

renunciation. This can be tolerated once.

43You have made me lose my sons once, and now you have again done the same inauspicious thing. Therefore you are a rascal who does not know how to behave toward others. You may travel all over the universe, but I curse you to have no residence anywhere.

44ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, since Nārada Muni is an approved saintly person, when cursed by Prajāpati Dakṣa he replied, “*tad bāḍham*: Yes, what you have said is good. I accept this curse.” He could have cursed Prajāpati Dakṣa in return, but because he is a tolerant and merciful sādhu, he took no action.

SB 6.6: The Progeny of the Daughters of Dakṣa

As described in this chapter, Prajāpati Dakṣa begot sixty daughters in the womb of his wife Asiknī. These daughters were given in charity to various persons to increase the population. Since these offspring of Dakṣa were women, Nārada Muni did not try to lead them toward the renounced order of life. Thus the daughters were saved from Nārada Muni. Ten of the daughters were given in marriage to Dharmarāja, thirteen to Kaśyapa Muni, and twenty-seven to the moon-god, Candra. In this way fifty daughters were distributed, and of the other ten daughters, four were given to Kaśyapa and two each to Bhūta, Aṅgirā and Kṛśāśva. One should know that it is because of the union of these sixty daughters with various exalted personalities that the entire universe was filled with various kinds of living entities, such as human beings, demigods, demons, beasts, birds and serpents.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, thereafter, at the request of Lord Brahmā, Prajāpati Dakṣa, who is known as Prācetasā, begot sixty daughters in the womb of his wife Asiknī. All the daughters were very affectionate toward their father.

2He gave ten daughters in charity to Dharmarāja [Yamarāja], thirteen to Kaśyapa [first twelve and then one more], twenty-seven to the moon-god, and two each to Aṅgirā, Kṛśāśva and Bhūta. The other four daughters were given to Kaśyapa. [Thus Kaśyapa received seventeen daughters in all.]

3Now please hear from me the names of all these daughters and their descendants, who filled all the three worlds.

4The ten daughters given to Yamarāja were named Bhānu, Lambā, Kakud, Yāmi, Viśvā, Sādhyā, Marutvatī, Vasu, Muhūrtā and Saṅkalpā. Now hear the names of their sons.

5O King, a son named Deva-ṛṣabha was born from the womb of Bhānu, and from him came a son named Indrasena. From the womb of Lambā came a son named Vidyota, who generated all the clouds.

6From the womb of Kakud came the son named Saṅkaṭa, whose son was named Kīkaṭa. From Kīkaṭa came the demigods named Durgā. From Yāmi came the son named Svarga, whose son was named Nandi.

7The sons of Viśvā were the Viśvadevas, who had no progeny. From the womb of Sādhyā came the Sādhyas, who had a son named Arthasiddhi.

8The two sons who took birth from the womb of Marutvatī were Marutvān and Jayanta. Jayanta, who is an expansion of Lord Vāsudeva, is known as Upendra.

9The demigods named the Mauhūrtikas took birth from the womb of Muhūrtā. These demigods

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deliver the results of actions to the living entities of their respective times.

10-11The son of Saṅkalpā was known as Saṅkalpa, and from him lust was born. The sons of Vasu were known as the eight Vasus. Just hear their names from me: Droṇa, Prāṇa, Dhruva, Arka, Agni, Doṣa, Vāstu and Vibhāvasu. From Abhimati, the wife of the Vasu named Droṇa, were generated the sons named Harṣa, Śoka, Bhaya and so on.

12Ūrjasvatī, the wife of Prāṇa, gave birth to three sons, named Saha, Āyus and Purojava. The wife of Dhruva was known as Dharāṇi, and from her womb various cities took birth.

13From the womb of Vāsanā, the wife of Arka, came many sons, headed by Tarṣa. Dhārā, the wife of the Vasu named Agni, gave birth to many sons, headed by Draviṇaka.

14From Kṛttikā, another wife of Agni, came the son named Skanda, Kārttikeya, whose sons were headed by Viśākha. From the womb of Śarvarī, the wife of the Vasu named Doṣa, came the son named Śiśumāra, who was an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

15From Āṅgirasī, the wife of the Vasu named Vāstu, was born the great architect Viśvakarmā. Viśvakarmābecame the husband of Ākṛtī, from whom the Manu named Cākṣuṣa was born. The sons of Manu were known as the Viśvadevas and Sādhyas.

16Ūṣā, the wife of Vibhāvasu, gave birth to three sonsVyūṣṭa, Rociṣa and Ātapa. From Ātapa came Paṣcayāma, the span of day, who awakens all living entities to material activities.

17-18Sarūpā, the wife of Bhūta, gave birth to the ten million Rudras, of whom the eleven principle Rudras were Raivata, Aja, Bhava, Bhīma, Vāma, Ugra, Vṛṣākapi, Ajaikapāt, Ahirbradhna, Bahurūpa and Mahān. Their associates, the ghosts and goblins, who are very fearful, were born of the other wife of Bhūta.

19The prajāpati ṅgirā had two wives, named Svadhā and Satī. The wife named Svadhā accepted all the Pitās as her sons, and Satī accepted the Atharvāṅgirasa Veda as her son.

20Kṛśāśva had two wives, named Arcis and Dhiṣaṇā. In the wife named Arcis he begot Dhūmaketu and in Dhiṣaṇā he begot four sons, named Vedaśirā, Devala, Vayuna and Manu.

21-22Kaśyapa, who is also named Tārṣya, had four wivesVinatā [Suparṇā], Kadrū, Pataṅgī and Yāminī. Pataṅgī gave birth to many kinds of birds, and Yāminī gave birth to locusts. Vinatā [Suparṇā] gave birth to Garuḍa, the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu, and to Anūru, or Aruṇa, the chariot driver of the sun-god. Kadrū gave birth to different varieties of serpents.

23O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Bhāratas, the constellations named Kṛttikā were all wives of the moon-god. However, because Prajāpati Dakṣa had cursed him to suffer from a disease causing gradual destruction, the moon-god could not beget children in any of his wives.

24-26Thereafter the King of the moon pacified Prajāpati Dakṣa with courteous words and thus regained the portions of light he had lost during his disease. Nevertheless he could not beget children. The moon loses his shining power during the dark fortnight, and in the bright fortnight it is manifest again. O King Parīkṣit, now please hear from me the names of Kaśyapa's wives, from whose wombs the population of the entire universe has come. They are the mothers of almost all the population of the entire universe, and their names are very auspicious to hear. They are Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kāṣṭhā, Ariṣṭā, Surasā, Ilā, Muni, Krodhavaśā, Tāmṛā, Surabhi, Saramā and Timi. From the womb of Timi all the aquatics took birth, and from the womb of Saramā the ferocious animals like the tigers and lions took birth.

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27My dear King Parīkṣit, from the womb of Surabhi the buffalo, cow and other animals with cloven hooves took birth, from the womb of Tāmrā the eagles, vultures and other large birds of prey took birth, and from the womb of Muni the angels took birth.

28The sons born of Krodhavaśā were the serpents known as dandaśūka, as well as other serpents and the mosquitoes. All the various creepers and trees were born from the womb of Ilā. The Rākṣasas, bad spirits, were born from the womb of Surasā.

29-31The Gandharvas were born from the womb of Ariṣṭā, and animals whose hooves are not split, such as the horse, were born from the womb of Kāṣṭhā. O King, from the womb of Danu came sixty-one sons, of whom these eighteen were very important: Dvimūrdhā, Śambara, Ariṣṭa, Hayagrīva, Vibhāvasu, Ayomukha, Śaṅkuśirā, Svarbhānu, Kapila, Aruṇa, Pulomā, Vṛṣaparvā, Ekacakra, Anutāpana, Dhūmrakeśa, Virūpākṣa, Vipracitti and Durjaya.

32The daughter of Svarbhānu named Suprabhā was married by Namuci. The daughter of Vṛṣaparvā named Śarmiṣṭhā was given to the powerful King Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa.

33-36Vaiśvānara, the son of Danu, had four beautiful daughters, named Upadānavī, Hayaśirā, Pulomā and Kālakā. Hiranyākṣa married Upadānavī, and Kratu married Hayaśirā. Thereafter, at the request of Lord Brahmā, Prajāpati Kaśyapa married Pulomā and Kālakā, the other two daughters of Vaiśvānara. From the wombs of these two wives of Kaśyapa came sixty thousand sons, headed by Nivātakavaca, who are known as the Paulomas and the Kālakeyas. They were physically very strong and expert in fighting, and their aim was to disturb the sacrifices performed by the great sages. My dear King, when your grandfather Arjuna went to the heavenly planets, he alone killed all these demons, and thus King Indra became extremely affectionate toward him.

37In his wife Simhikā, Vipracitti begot one hundred and one sons, of whom the eldest is Rāhu and the others are the one hundred Ketus. All of them attained positions in the influential planets.

38-39Now please hear me as I describe the descendants of Aditi in chronological order. In this dynasty the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa descended by His plenary expansion. The names of the sons of Aditi are as follows: Vivasvān, Aryamā, Pūṣā, Tvaṣṭā, Savitā, Bhaga, Dhātā, Vidhātā, Varuṇa, Mitra, Śatru and Urukrama.

40Samjṣā, the wife of Vivasvān, the sun-god, gave birth to the Manu named Śrāddhadeva, and the same fortunate wife also gave birth to the twins Yamarāja and the river Yamunā. Then Yamī, while wandering on the earth in the form of a mare, gave birth to the Aśvinī-kumāras.

41Chāyā, another wife of the sun-god, begot two sons named Śanaiścara and Sāvarni Manu, and one daughter, Tapatī, who married Samvaraṇa.

42From the womb of Māṭrkā, the wife of Aryamā, were born many learned scholars. Among them Lord Brahmā created the human species, which are endowed with an aptitude for self-examination.

43Pūṣā had no sons. When Lord Śiva was angry at Dakṣa, Pūṣā had laughed at Lord Śiva and shown his teeth. Therefore he lost his teeth and had to live by eating only ground flour.

44Racanā, the daughter of the Daityas, became the wife of Prajāpati Tvaṣṭā. By his semen he begot in her womb two very powerful sons named Sanniveśa and Viśvarūpa.

45Although Viśvarūpa was the son of the daughter of their eternal enemies the demons, the demigods accepted him as their priest in accordance with the order of Brahmā when they were abandoned by their spiritual master, Bṛhaspati, whom they had disrespected.

SB 6.7: Indra Offends His Spiritual Master, Bṛhaspati.

As related in this chapter, Indra, the King of heaven, committed an offense at the feet of his spiritual master, Bṛhaspati. Bṛhaspati therefore left the demigods, who then had no priest. However, at the request of the demigods, Viśvarūpa, the son of the *brāhmaṇa* Tvaṣṭā, became their priest.

Once upon a time, Indra, the King of the demigods, was sitting with his wife Śacīdevī and being praised by various demigods like the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas when Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods, entered the assembly. Indra, being too absorbed in material opulence, forgot himself and did not respect Bṛhaspati, who thus became aware of Indra's pride in his material opulence and immediately disappeared from the assembly to teach him a lesson. Indra became most repentant, understanding that because of his opulence he had forgotten to respect his spiritual master. He left the palace to beg pardon from his spiritual master, but could not find Bṛhaspati anywhere.

Because of his disrespectful behavior toward his spiritual master. Indra lost all his opulence and was conquered by the demons, who defeated the demigods in a great fight and occupied Indra's throne. King Indra, along with the other demigods, later took shelter of Lord Brahmā. Understanding the situation, Lord Brahmā chastised the demigods for their offense to their spiritual master. Following Lord Brahmā's orders, the demigods accepted Viśvarūpa, who was a *brāhmaṇa* and the son of Tvaṣṭā, as their priest. Then they performed *yajñas* under the priesthood of Viśvarūpa and were able to conquer the demons.

1Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O great sage, why did the spiritual master of the demigods, Bṛhaspati, reject the demigods, who were his own disciples? What offense did the demigods commit against their spiritual master? Please describe to me this incident.

2-8Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, once upon a time, the King of heaven, Indra, being extremely proud because of his great opulence of the three worlds, transgressed the law of Vedic etiquette. Seated on his throne, he was surrounded by the Maruts, Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Rbhus, Viśvadevas, Sādhyas, Aśvinī-kumāras, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas and by great saintly persons. Also surrounding him were the Vidyādharas, Apsarās, Kinnaras, Patagas [birds] and Uragas [snakes]. All of them were offering Indra their respects and services, and the Apsarās and Gandharvas were dancing and singing with very sweet musical instruments. Over Indra's head was a white umbrella as effulgent as the full moon. Fanned by yak-tail whisks and served with all the paraphernalia of a great king, Indra was sitting with his wife, Śacīdevī, who occupied half the throne, when the great sage Bṛhaspati appeared in that assembly. Bṛhaspati, the best of the sages, was the spiritual master of Indra and the demigods and was respected by the demigods and demons alike. Nevertheless, although Indra saw his spiritual master before him, he did not rise from his own seat or offer a seat to his spiritual master, nor did Indra offer him a respectful welcome. Indra did nothing to show him respect.

9Bṛhaspati knew everything that would happen in the future. Seeing Indra's transgression of etiquette, he completely understood that Indra was puffed up by his material opulence. Although able to curse Indra, he did not do so. Instead, he left the assembly and in silence returned to his home.

10Indra, the King of heaven, could immediately understand his mistake. Realizing he had

disrespected his spiritual master, he condemned himself in the presence of all the members of the assembly.

11Alas, what a regrettable deed I have committed because of my lack of intelligence and my pride in my material opulences. I failed to show respect to my spiritual master when he entered this assembly, and thus I have insulted him.

12Although I am King of the demigods, who are situated in the mode of goodness, I was proud of a little opulence and polluted by false ego. Under the circumstances, who in this world would accept such riches at the risk of falling down? Alas! I condemn my wealth and opulence.

13If a person says, “One who is situated on the exalted throne of a king should not stand up to show respect to another king or a brāhmaṇa,” it is to be understood that he does not know the superior religious principles.

14Leaders who have fallen into ignorance and who mislead people by directing them to the path of destruction [as described in the previous verse] are, in effect, boarding a stone boat, and so too are those who blindly follow them. A stone boat would be unable to float and would sink in the water with its passengers. Similarly, those who mislead people go to hell, and their followers go with them.

15King Indra said: Therefore with great frankness and without duplicity I shall now bow my head at the lotus feet of Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods. Because he is in the mode of goodness, he is fully aware of all knowledge and is the best of the brāhmaṇas. Now I shall touch his lotus feet and offer my obeisances unto him to try to satisfy him.

16While Indra, the King of the demigods, thought in this way and repented in his own assembly, Bṛhaspati, the most powerful spiritual master, understood his mind. Thus he became invisible to Indra and left home, for Bṛhaspati was spiritually more powerful than King Indra.

17Although Indra searched vigorously with the assistance of the other demigods, he could not find Bṛhaspati. Then Indra thought, “Alas, my spiritual master has become dissatisfied with me, and now I have no means of achieving good fortune.” Although Indra was surrounded by demigods, he could not find peace of mind.

18Hearing of the pitiable condition of King Indra, the demons, following the instructions of their guru, Śukrācārya, equipped themselves with weapons and declared war against the demigods.

19The demigods’ heads, thighs and arms and the other parts of their bodies were injured by the sharp arrows of the demons. The demigods, headed by Indra, saw no other course than to immediately approach Lord Brahmā with bowed heads for shelter and proper instruction.

20When the most powerful Lord Brahmā saw the demigods coming toward him, their bodies gravely injured by the arrows of the demons, he pacified them by his great causeless mercy and spoke as follows.

21Lord Brahmā said: O best of the demigods, unfortunately, because of madness resulting from your material opulence, you failed to receive Bṛhaspati properly when he came to your assembly. Because he is aware of the Supreme Brahman and fully in control of his senses, he is the best of the brāhmaṇas. Therefore it is very astonishing that you have acted impudently toward him.

22Because of your miSBehavior toward Bṛhaspati, you have been defeated by the demons. My

dear demigods, since the demons were weak, having been defeated by you several times, how else could you, who were so advanced in opulence, be defeated by them?

23O Indra, your enemies, the demons, were extremely weak because of their disrespect toward Śukrācārya, but since they have now worshiped Śukrācārya with great devotion, they have again become powerful. By their devotion to Śukrācārya, they have increased their strength so much that now they are even able to easily seize my abode from me.

24Because of their firm determination to follow the instructions of Śukrācārya, his disciples, the demons, are now unconcerned about the demigods. In fact, kings or others who have determined faith in the mercy of brāhmaṇas, cows and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and who always worship these three are always strong in their position.

25O demigods, I instruct you to approach Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭā, and accept him as your guru. He is a pure and very powerful brāhmaṇa undergoing austerity and penances. Pleased by your worship, he will fulfill your desires, provided that you tolerate his being inclined to side with the demons.

26Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus advised by Lord Brahmā and relieved of their anxiety, all the demigods went to the sage Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭā. My dear King, they embraced him and spoke as follows.

27The demigods said: Beloved Viśvarūpa, may there be all good fortune for you. We, the demigods, have come to your āśrama as your guests. Please try to fulfill our desires according to the time, since we are on the level of your parents.

28O brāhmaṇa, the highest duty of a son, even though he has sons of his own, is to serve his parents, and what to speak of a son who is a brahmacārī?

29-30The ācārya, the spiritual master who teaches all the Vedic knowledge and gives initiation by offering the sacred thread, is the personification of all the Vedas. Similarly, a father personifies Lord Brahmā; a brother, King Indra; a mother, the planet earth; and a sister, mercy. A guest personifies religious principles, an invited guest personifies the demigod Agni, and all living entities personify Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31Dear son, we have been defeated by our enemies, and therefore we are very much aggrieved. Please mercifully fulfill our desires by relieving our distress through the strength of your austerities. Please fulfill our prayers.

32Since you are completely aware of the Supreme Brahman, you are a perfect brāhmaṇa, and therefore you are the spiritual master of all orders of life. We accept you as our spiritual master and director so that by the power of your austerity we may easily defeat the enemies who have conquered us.

33The demigods continued: Do not fear criticism for being younger than us. Such etiquette does not apply in regard to Vedic mantras. Except in relationship to Vedic mantras, seniority is determined by age, but one may offer respectful obeisances even to a younger person who is advanced in chanting Vedic mantras. Therefore although you are junior in relationship to us, you may become our priest without hesitation.

34Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When all the demigods requested the great Viśvarūpa to be their priest, Viśvarūpa, who was advanced in austerities, was very pleased. He replied to them as follows.

35Śrī Viśvarūpa said: O demigods, although the acceptance of priesthood is decried as causing the loss of previously acquired brahminical power, how can someone like me refuse to accept your personal request? You are all exalted commanders of the entire universe. I am your disciple and must take many lessons from you. Therefore I cannot refuse you. I must agree for my own benefit.

36O exalted governors of various planets, the true brāhmaṇa, who has no material possessions, maintains himself by the profession of accepting śiḷoṣhana. In other words, he picks up grains left in the field and on the ground in the wholesale marketplace. By this means, householder brāhmaṇas who actually abide by the principles of austerity and penance maintain themselves and their families and perform all necessary pious activities. A brāhmaṇa who desires to achieve happiness by gaining wealth through professional priesthood must certainly have a very low mind. How shall I accept such priesthood?

37All of you are my superiors. Therefore although accepting priesthood is sometimes reproachable, I cannot refuse even a small request from you. I agree to be your priest. I shall fulfill your request by dedicating my life and possessions.

38ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, after making this promise to the demigods, the exalted Viśvarūpa, surrounded by the demigods, performed the necessary priestly activities with great enthusiasm and attention.

39The opulence of the demons, who are generally known as the enemies of the demigods, was protected by the talents and tactics of Śukrācārya, but Viśvarūpa, who was most powerful, composed a protective prayer known as the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca. By this intelligent mantra, he took away the opulence of the demons and gave it to Mahendra, the King of heaven.

40Viśvarūpa, who was most liberal, spoke to King Indra [Sahasrākṣa] the secret hymn that protected Indra and conquered the military power of the demons.

SB 6.8: The Nārāyaṇa-kavaca Shield

This chapter describes how Indra, the King of heaven, was victorious over the soldiers of the demons, and it also describes the shield of the Viṣṇu *mantra*.

To take protection from this shield, one must first touch *kuśa* grass and wash one's mouth with *ācamana-mantras*. One should observe silence and then place the eight-syllable Viṣṇu *mantra* on the parts of his body and place the twelve-syllable *mantra* on his hands. The eight-syllable *mantra* is *om namo nārāyaṇāya*. This *mantra* should be distributed all over the front and back of the body. The twelve-syllable *mantra*, which begins with the *praṇava*, *omkāra*, is *om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*. One syllable should be placed on each of the fingers and should be preceded by the *praṇava*, *omkāra*. Thereafter, one must chant *om viṣṇave namaḥ*, which is a six-syllable *mantra*. One must progressively place the syllables of the *mantra* on the heart, the head, between the two eyebrows, on the *śikhā* and between the eyes, and then one should chant *maḥ astrāya phaṭ* and with this *mantra* protect himself from all directions. *Nādevo devam arcayet*: one who has not risen to the level of a *deva* cannot chant this *mantra*. According to this direction of the *śāstra*, one must think himself qualitatively nondifferent from the Supreme.

After finishing this dedication, one must offer a prayer to the eight-armed Lord Viṣṇu, who sits on the shoulders of Garuḍadeva. One also has to think of the fish incarnation, Vāmana, Kūrma,

Nṛsimha, Varāha, Paraśurāma, Rāmacandra (the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa), Nara-Nārāyaṇa, Dattātreya (an empowered incarnation), Kapila, Sanat-kumāra, Hayagrīva, Nārada-deva (the incarnation of a devotee), Dhanvantari, Ṛṣabhadeva, Yajña, Balarāma, Vyāsadeva, Buddhadeva and Keśava. One should also think of Govinda, the master of Vṛndāvana, and one should think of Nārāyaṇa, the master of the spiritual sky. One should think of Madhusūdana, Tridhāmā, Mādhava, Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, Janārdana, Dāmodara and Viśveśvara, as well as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa Himself. After offering prayers to the Lord's personal expansions known as the *svāmī* and *śaktyāveśa-avatāras*, one should pray to the weapons of Lord Nārāyaṇa, such as the Sudarśana, *gadā*, *śankha*, *khadga* and bow.

After explaining this process, Śukadeva Gosvāmī told Mahārāja Parīkṣit how Viśvarūpa, the brother of Vṛtrāsura, described the glories of the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca to Indra.

1-2 King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: My lord, kindly explain the Viṣṇu mantra armor that protected King Indra and enabled him to conquer his enemies, along with their carriers, and enjoy the opulence of the three worlds. Please explain to me that Nārāyaṇa armor, by which King Indra achieved success in battle, conquering the enemies who were endeavoring to kill him.

3 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: King Indra, the leader of the demigods, inquired about the armor known as Nārāyaṇa-kavaca from Viśvarūpa, who was engaged by the demigods as their priest. Please hear Viśvarūpa's reply with great attention.

4-6 Viśvarūpa said: If some form of fear arrives, one should first wash his hands and legs clean and then perform ācamana by chanting this mantra: om apavitraḥ pavitro vā sarvāvasthām gato 'pi vā/ yaḥ smaret puṇḍarīkākṣam sa bahyābhyantaraḥśuciḥ/ śrī-viṣṇu śrī-viṣṇu śrī-viṣṇu. Then one should touch kuśa grass and sit gravely and silently, facing north. When completely purified, one should touch the mantra composed of eight syllables to the eight parts of his body and touch the mantra composed of twelve syllables to his hands. Thus, in the following manner, he should bind himself with the Nārāyaṇa coat of armor. First, while chanting the mantra composed of eight syllables [om namo nārāyaṇāya], beginning with the praṇava, the syllable om, one should touch his hands to eight parts of his body, starting with the two feet and progressing systematically to the knees, thighs, abdomen, heart, chest, mouth and head. Then one should chant the mantra in reverse, beginning from the last syllable [ya], while touching the parts of his body in the reverse order. These two processes are known as utpatti-nyāsa and saṁhāra-nyāsa respectively.

7 Then one should chant the mantra composed of twelve syllables [om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya]. Preceding each syllable by the omkāra, one should place the syllables of the mantra on the tips of his fingers, beginning with the index finger of the right hand and concluding with the index finger of the left. The four remaining syllables should be placed on the joints of the thumbs.

8-10 One must then chant the mantra of six syllables [om viṣṇave namaḥ]. One should place the syllable om on his heart, the syllable vi on the top of his head, the syllable sa between his eyebrows, the syllable na on his tuft of hair [śikhā], and the syllable ve between his eyes. The chanter of the mantra should then place the syllable na on all the joints of his body and meditate on the syllable ma as being a weapon. He should thus become the perfect personification of the mantra. Thereafter, adding visarga to the final syllable ma he should chant the mantra maḥ astrāya phaḥ in all directions, beginning from the east. In this way, all directions will be bound by the protective armor of the mantra.

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11After finishing this chanting, one should think himself qualitatively one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is full in six opulences and is worthy to be meditated upon. Then one should chant the following protective prayer to Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca.

12The Supreme Lord, who sits on the back of the bird Garuḍa, touching him with His lotus feet, holds eight weapons—the conchshell, disc, shield, sword, club, arrows, bow and ropes. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead protect me at all times with His eight arms. He is all-powerful because He fully possesses the eight mystic powers [aṇimā, laghimā, etc.].

13May the Lord, who assumes the body of a great fish, protect me in the water from the fierce animals that are associates of the demigod Varuṇa. By expanding His illusory energy, the Lord assumed the form of the dwarf Vāmana. May Vāmana protect me on the land. Since the gigantic form of the Lord, Viśvarūpa, conquers the three worlds, may He protect me in the sky.

14May Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, who appeared as the enemy of Hiraṇyakaśipu, protect me in all directions. His loud laughing vibrated in all directions and caused the pregnant wives of the asuras to have miscarriages. May that Lord be kind enough to protect me in difficult places like the forest and battlefield.

15The Supreme indestructible Lord is ascertained through the performance of ritualistic sacrifices and is therefore known as Yajñeśvara. In His incarnation as Lord Boar, He raised the planet earth from the water at the bottom of the universe and kept it on His pointed tusks. May that Lord protect me from rogues on the street. May Paraśurāma protect me on the tops of mountains, and may the elder brother of Bharata, Lord Rāmacandra, along with His brother Lakṣmaṇa, protect me in foreign countries.

16May Lord Nārāyaṇa protect me from unnecessarily following false religious systems and falling from my duties due to madness. May the Lord in His appearance as Nara protect me from unnecessary pride. May Lord Dattātreya, the master of all mystic power, protect me from falling while performing bhakti-yoga, and may Lord Kapila, the master of all good qualities, protect me from the material bondage of fruitive activities.

17May Sanat-kumāra protect me from lusty desires. As I begin some auspicious activity, may Lord Hayagrīva protect me from being an offender by neglecting to offer respectful obeisances to the Supreme Lord. May Devarṣi Nārada protect me from committing offenses in worshiping the Deity, and may Lord Kūrma, the tortoise, protect me from falling to the unlimited hellish planets.

18May the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Dhanvantari relieve me from undesirable eatables and protect me from physical illness. May Lord Ṛṣabhadeva, who conquered His inner and outer senses, protect me from fear produced by the duality of heat and cold. May Yajña protect me from defamation and harm from the populace, and may Lord Balarāma as Śeṣa protect me from envious serpents.

19May the Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Vyāsadeva protect me from all kinds of ignorance resulting from the absence of Vedic knowledge. May Lord Buddhadeva protect me from activities opposed to Vedic principles and from laziness that causes one to madly forget the Vedic principles of knowledge and ritualistic action. May Kalkideva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appeared as an incarnation to protect religious principles, protect me from the dirt of the Age of Kali.

20May Lord Keśava protect me with His club in the first portion of the day, and may Govinda, who is always engaged in playing His flute, protect me in the second portion of the day. May

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Lord Nārāyaṇa, who is equipped with all potencies, protect me in the third part of the day, and may Lord Viṣṇu, who carries a disc to kill His enemies, protect me in the fourth part of the day.

21May Lord Madhusūdana, who carries a bow very fearful for the demons, protect me during the fifth part of the day. In the evening, may Lord Mādhava, appearing as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, protect me, and in the beginning of night may Lord Hṛṣīkeśa protect me. At the dead of night [in the second and third parts of night] may Lord Padmanābha alone protect me.

22May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who bears the Śrīvatsa on His chest, protect me after midnight until the sky becomes pinkish. May Lord Janārdana, who carries a sword in His hand, protect me at the end of night [during the last four ghaṭikās of night]. May Lord Dāmodara protect me in the early morning, and may Lord Viśveśvara protect me during the junctions of day and night.

23Set into motion by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and wandering in all the four directions, the disc of the Supreme Lord has sharp edges as destructive as the fire of devastation at the end of the millennium. As a blazing fire burns dry grass to ashes with the assistance of the breeze, may that Sudarśana cakra burn our enemies to ashes.

24O club in the hand of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you produce sparks of fire as powerful as thunderbolts, and you are extremely dear to the Lord. I am also His servant. Therefore kindly help me pound to pieces the evil living beings known as Kuṣmāṇḍas, Vaināyakas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Bhūtas and Grahas. Please pulverize them.

25O best of conchshells, O Pāṣcajanya in the hands of the Lord, you are always filled with the breath of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore you create a fearful sound vibration that causes trembling in the hearts of enemies like the Rākṣasas, pramatha ghosts, Pretas, Mātās, Piśācas and brāhmaṇa ghosts with fearful eyes.

26O king of sharp-edged swords, you are engaged by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Please cut the soldiers of my enemies to pieces. Please cut them to pieces! O shield marked with a hundred brilliant moonlike circles, please cover the eyes of the sinful enemies. Pluck out their sinful eyes.

27-28May the glorification of the transcendental name, form, qualities and paraphernalia of the Supreme Personality of Godhead protect us from the influence of bad planets, meteors, envious human beings, serpents, scorpions, and animals like tigers and wolves. May it protect us from ghosts and the material elements like earth, water, fire and air, and may it also protect us from lightning and our past sins. We are always afraid of these hindrances to our auspicious life. Therefore, may they all be completely destroyed by the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

29Lord Garuḍa, the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu, is the most worshipable lord, for he is as powerful as the Supreme Lord Himself. He is the personified Vedas and is worshiped by selected verses. May he protect us from all dangerous conditions, and may Lord Viṣvaksena, the Personality of Godhead, also protect us from all dangers by His holy names.

30May the Supreme Personality of Godhead's holy names, His transcendental forms, His carriers and all the weapons decorating Him as personal associates protect our intelligence, senses, mind and life air from all dangers.

31The subtle and gross cosmic manifestation is material, but nevertheless it is nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead because He is ultimately the cause of all causes.

Cause and effect are factually one because the cause is present in the effect. Therefore the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, can destroy all our dangers by any of His potent parts.

32-33 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the living entities, the material energy, the spiritual energy and the entire creation are all individual substances. In the ultimate analysis, however, together they constitute the supreme one, the Personality of Godhead. Therefore those who are advanced in spiritual knowledge see unity in diversity. For such advanced persons, the Lord's bodily decorations, His name, His fame, His attributes and forms and the weapons in His hand are manifestations of the strength of His potency. According to their elevated spiritual understanding, the omniscient Lord, who manifests various forms, is present everywhere. May He always protect us everywhere from all calamities.

34 Prahlaḍa Mahārāja loudly chanted the holy name of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva. May Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, roaring for His devotee Prahlaḍa Mahārāja, protect us from all fear of dangers created by stalwart leaders in all directions through poison, weapons, water, fire, air and so on. May the Lord cover their influence by His own transcendental influence. May Nṛsiṃhadeva protect us in all directions and in all corners, above, below, within and without.

35 Viśvarūpa continued: O Indra, this mystic armor related to Lord Nārāyaṇa has been described by me to you. By putting on this protective covering, you will certainly be able to conquer the leaders of the demons.

36 If one employs this armor, whomever he sees with his eyes or touches with his feet is immediately freed from all the above-mentioned dangers.

37 This prayer, Nārāyaṇa-kavaca, constitutes subtle knowledge transcendently connected with Nārāyaṇa. One who employs this prayer is never disturbed or put in danger by the government, by plunderers, by evil demons or by any type of disease.

38 O King of heaven, a brāhmaṇa named Kauśika formerly used this armor when he purposely gave up his body in the desert by mystic power.

39 Surrounded by many beautiful women, Citraratha, the King of Gandharvaloka, was once passing in his airplane over the brāhmaṇa's body at the spot where the brāhmaṇa had died.

40 Suddenly Citraratha was forced to fall from the sky headfirst with his airplane. Struck with wonder, he was ordered by the great sages named the Vālikihilyas to throw the brāhmaṇa's bones in the nearby river Sarasvatī. He had to do this and bathe in the river before returning to his own abode.

41 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, one who employs this armor or hears about it with faith and veneration when afraid because of any conditions in the material world is immediately freed from all dangers and is worshiped by all living entities.

42 King Indra, who performed one hundred sacrifices, received this prayer of protection from Viśvarūpa. After conquering the demons, he enjoyed all the opulences of the three worlds.

SB 6.9: Appearance of the Demon Vṛtrāsura

As described in this chapter, Indra, the King of heaven, killed Viśvarūpa, and therefore Viśvarūpa's father performed a *yajsa* to kill Indra. When Vṛtrāsura appeared from that *yajsa*, the demigods, in fear, sought shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and glorified Him.

Because of affection for the demons, Viśvarūpa secretly supplied them the remnants of *yajña*. When Indra learned about this, he beheaded Viśvarūpa, but he later regretted killing Viśvarūpa because Viśvarūpa was a *brāhmaṇa*. Although competent to neutralize the sinful reactions for killing a *brāhmaṇa*, Indra did not do so. Instead he accepted the reactions. Later, he distributed these reactions among the land, water, trees and women in general. Since the land accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions, a portion of the land turned into desert. The trees were also given one fourth of the sinful reactions, and therefore they drip sap, which is prohibited for drinking. Because women accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions, they are untouchable during their menstrual period. Since water was also infested with sinful reactions, when bubbles appear in water it cannot be used for any purpose.

After Viśvarūpa was killed, his father, Tvaṣṭā, performed a sacrifice to kill King Indra. Unfortunately, if *mantras* are chanted irregularly, they yield an opposite result. This happened when Tvaṣṭā performed this *yajña*. While performing the sacrifice to kill Indra, Tvaṣṭā chanted a *mantra* to increase Indra's enemies, but because he chanted the *mantra* wrong, the sacrifice produced an *asura* named Vṛtrāsura, of whom Indra was the enemy. When Vṛtrāsura was generated from the sacrifice, his fierce features made the whole world afraid, and his personal effulgence diminished even the power of the demigods. Finding no other means of protection, the demigods began to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the enjoyer of all the results of sacrifice, who is supreme throughout the entire universe. The demigods all worshiped Him because ultimately no one but Him can protect a living entity from fear and danger. Seeking shelter of a demigod instead of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead is compared to trying to cross the ocean by grasping the tail of a dog. A dog can swim, but that does not mean that one can cross the ocean by grasping a dog's tail.

Being pleased with the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead advised them to approach Dadhīci to beg him for the bones of his own body. Dadhīci would comply with the request of the demigods, and with the help of his bones Vṛtrāsura could be killed.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Viśvarūpa, who was engaged as the priest of the demigods, had three heads. He used one to drink the beverage soma-rasa, another to drink wine and the third to eat food. O King Parīkṣit, thus I have heard from authorities.

2O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the demigods were related to Viśvarūpa from his father's side, and therefore he visibly offered clarified butter in the fire while chanting mantras such as *indrāya idam svāhā* ["this is meant for King Indra"] and *idam agnaye* ["this is for the demigod of fire"]. He loudly chanted these mantras and offered each of the demigods his proper share.

3Although offering clarified butter in the sacrificial fire in the name of the demigods, without the knowledge of the demigods he also offered oblations to the demons because they were his relatives through his mother.

4Once upon a time, however, the King of heaven, Indra, understood that Viśvarūpa was secretly cheating the demigods by offering oblations on behalf of the demons. He became extremely afraid of being defeated by the demons, and in great anger at Viśvarūpa he cut Viśvarūpa's three heads from his shoulders.

5Thereafter, the head meant for drinking soma-rasa was transformed into a *kapiṣjala* [francolin partridge]. Similarly, the head meant for drinking wine was transformed into a *kalaviṅka* [sparrow], and the head meant for eating food became a *tittiri* [common partridge].

6Although Indra was so powerful that he could neutralize the sinful reactions for killing a *brāhmaṇa*, he repentantly accepted the burden of these reactions with folded hands. He

suffered for one year, and then to purify himself he distributed the reactions for this sinful killing among the earth, water, trees and women.

7In return for King Indra's benediction that ditches in the earth would be filled automatically, the land accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa. Because of those sinful reactions, we find many deserts on the surface of the earth.

8In return for Indra's benediction that their branches and twigs would grow back when trimmed, the trees accepted one fourth of the reactions for killing a brāhmaṇa. These reactions are visible in the flowing of sap from trees. [Therefore one is forbidden to drink this sap.]

9In return for Lord Indra's benediction that they would be able to enjoy lusty desires continuously, even during pregnancy for as long as sex is not injurious to the embryo, women accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions. As a result of those reactions, women manifest the signs of menstruation every month.

10And in return for King Indra's benediction that water would increase the volume of other substances with which it was mixed, water accepted one fourth of the sinful reactions. Therefore there are bubbles and foam in water. When one collects water, these should be avoided.

11After Viśvarūpa was killed, his father, Tvaṣṭā, performed ritualistic ceremonies to kill Indra. He offered oblations in the sacrificial fire, saying, "O enemy of Indra, flourish to kill your enemy without delay."

12Thereafter, from the southern side of the sacrificial fire known as Anvāhārya came a fearful personality who looked like the destroyer of the entire creation at the end of the millennium.

13-17Like arrows released in the four directions, the demon's body grew, day after day. Tall and blackish, he appeared like a burnt hill and was as lustrous as a bright array of clouds in the evening. The hair on the demon's body and his beard and moustache were the color of melted copper, and his eyes were piercing like the midday sun. He appeared unconquerable, as if holding the three worlds on the points of his blazing trident. Dancing and shouting with a loud voice, he made the entire surface of the earth tremble as if from an earthquake. As he yawned again and again, he seemed to be trying to swallow the whole sky with his mouth, which was as deep as a cave. He seemed to be licking up all the stars in the sky with his tongue and eating the entire universe with his long, sharp teeth. Seeing this gigantic demon, everyone, in great fear, ran here and there in all directions.

18That very fearful demon, who was actually the son of Tvaṣṭā, covered all the planetary systems by dint of austerity. Therefore he was named Vṛtra, or one who covers everything.

19The demigods, headed by Indra, charged the demon with their soldiers, striking him with their own transcendental bows and arrows and other weapons but Vṛtrāsura swallowed all their weapons.

20Struck with wonder and disappointment upon seeing the strength of the demon, the demigods lost their own strength. Therefore they all met together to try to please the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, by worshiping Him.

21The demigods said: The three worlds are created by the five elementsnamely ether, air, fire, water and earthwhich are controlled by various demigods, beginning from Lord Brahmā. Being very much afraid that the time factor will end our existence, we offer presentations unto time by performing our work as time dictates. The time factor himself, however, is afraid of the

Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore let us now worship that Supreme Lord, who alone can give us full protection.

22Free from all material conceptions of existence and never wonder-struck by anything, the Lord is always jubilant and fully satisfied by His own spiritual perfection. He has no material designations, and therefore He is steady and unattached. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only shelter of everyone. Anyone desiring to be protected by others is certainly a great fool who desires to cross the sea by holding the tail of a dog.

23The Manu named King Satyavrata formerly saved himself by tying the small boat of the entire world to the horn of the Matsya avatāra, the fish incarnation. By the grace of the Matsya avatāra, Manu saved himself from the great danger of the flood. May that same fish incarnation save us from the great and fearful danger caused by the son of Tvaṣṭā.

24In the beginning of creation, a tremendous wind caused fierce waves of inundating water. The great waves made such a horrible sound that Lord Brahmā almost fell from his seat on the lotus into the water of devastation, but he was saved with the help of the Lord. Thus we also expect the Lord to protect us from this dangerous condition.

25The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who created us by His external potency and by whose mercy we expand the creation of the universe, is always situated before us as the Supersoul, but we cannot see His form. We are unable to see Him because all of us think that we are separate and independent gods.

26-27By His inconceivable internal potency, the Supreme Personality of Godhead expands into various transcendental bodies as Vāmanadeva, the incarnation of strength among the demigods; Paraśurāma, the incarnation among saints; Nṛsimhadeva and Varāha, incarnations among animals; and Matsya and Kūrma, incarnations among aquatics. He accepts various transcendental bodies among all types of living entities, and among human beings He especially appears as Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma. By His causeless mercy, He protects the demigods, who are always harassed by the demons. He is the supreme worshipable Deity of all living entities. He is the supreme cause, represented as the male and female creative energies. Although different from this universe, He exists in His universal form [virāt-rūpa]. In our fearful condition, let us take shelter of Him, for we are sure that the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Soul, will give us His protection.

28ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, when all the demigods offered Him their prayers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, carrying His weapons, the conchshell, disc and club, appeared first within their hearts and then before them.

29-30Surrounding and serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, were sixteen personal attendants, decorated with ornaments and appearing exactly like Him but without the mark of Śrīvatsa and the Kaustubha jewel. O King, when all the demigods saw the Supreme Lord in that posture, smiling with eyes like the petals of lotuses grown in autumn, they were overwhelmed with happiness and immediately fell down like rods, offering daṇḍavats. Then they slowly rose and pleased the Lord by offering Him prayers.

31The demigods said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are competent to give the results of sacrifice, and You are also the time factor that destroys all such results in due course. You are the one who releases the cakra to kill the demons. O Lord, who possess many varieties of names, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

32O supreme controller, You control the three destinations [promotion to the heavenly planets,

birth as a human being, and condemnation in hell], yet Your supreme abode is Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma. Since we appeared after You created this cosmic manifestation, Your activities are impossible for us to understand. We therefore have nothing to offer You but our humble obeisances.

33O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O Nārāyaṇa, O Vāsudeva, original person! O most exalted person, supreme experience, welfare personified! O supreme benediction, supremely merciful and changeless! O support of the cosmic manifestation, sole proprietor of all planetary systems, master of everything and husband of the goddess of fortune! Your Lordship is realized by the topmost sannyāsīs, who wander about the world to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, fully absorbed in samādhi through bhakti-yoga. Because their minds are concentrated upon You, they can receive the conception of Your personality in their fully purified hearts. When the darkness in their hearts is completely eradicated and You are revealed to them, the transcendental bliss they enjoy is the transcendental form of Your Lordship. No one but such persons can realize You. Therefore we simply offer You our respectful obeisances.

34O Lord, You need no support, and although You have no material body, You do not need cooperation from us. Since You are the cause of the cosmic manifestation and You supply its material ingredients without being transformed, You create, maintain and annihilate this cosmic manifestation by Yourself. Nevertheless, although You appear engaged in material activity, You are transcendental to all material qualities. Consequently these transcendental activities of Yours are extremely difficult to understand.

35These are our inquiries. The ordinary conditioned soul is subject to the material laws, and he thus receives the fruits of his actions. Does Your Lordship, like an ordinary human being, exist within this material world in a body produced by the material modes? Do You enjoy or suffer the good or bad results of actions under the influence of time, past work and so forth? Or, on the contrary, are You present here only as a neutral witness who is self-sufficient, free from all material desires, and always full of spiritual potency? We certainly cannot understand Your actual position.

36O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all contradictions can be reconciled in You. O Lord, since You are the Supreme Person, the reservoir of unlimited spiritual qualities, the supreme controller, Your unlimited glories are inconceivable to the conditioned souls. Many modern theologians argue about right and wrong without knowing what is actually right. Their arguments are always false and their judgments inconclusive because they have no authorized evidence with which to gain knowledge of You. Because their minds are agitated by scriptures containing false conclusions, they are unable to understand the truth concerning You. Furthermore, because of polluted eagerness to arrive at the right conclusion, their theories are incapable of revealing You, who are transcendental to their material conceptions. You are one without a second, and therefore in You contradictions like doing and not doing, happiness and distress, are not contradictory. Your potency is so great that it can do and undo anything as You like. With the help of that potency, what is impossible for You? Since there is no duality in Your constitutional position, You can do everything by the influence of Your energy.

37A rope causes fear for a bewildered person who considers it a snake, but not for a person with proper intelligence who knows it to be only a rope. Similarly, You, as the Supersoul in everyone's heart, inspire fear or fearlessness according to one's intelligence, but in You there is no duality.

38With deliberation, one will see that the Supreme Soul, although manifested in different ways, is actually the basic principle of everything. The total material energy is the cause of the material manifestation, but the material energy is caused by Him. Therefore He is the cause of

all causes, the manifester of intelligence and the senses. He is perceived as the Supersoul of everything. Without Him, everything would be dead. You, as that Supersoul, the supreme controller, are the only one remaining.

39Therefore, O killer of the Madhu demon, incessant transcendental bliss flows in the minds of those who have even once tasted but a drop of the nectar from the ocean of Your glories. Such exalted devotees forget the tiny reflection of so-called material happiness produced from the material senses of sight and sound. Free from all desires, such devotees are the real friends of all living entities. Offering their minds unto You and enjoying transcendental bliss, they are expert in achieving the real goal of life. O Lord, You are the soul and dear friend of such devotees, who never need return to this material world. How could they give up engagement in Your devotional service?

40O Lord, O personified three worlds, father of the three worlds! O strength of the three worlds, in the form of the Vāmana incarnation! O three-eyed form of Nṛsimhadeva! O most beautiful person within the three worlds! Everything and everyone, including human beings and even the Daitya demons and the Dānavas, is but an expansion of Your energy. O supremely powerful one, You have always appeared in Your forms as the various incarnations to punish the demons as soon as they become very powerful. You appear as Lord Vāmanadeva, Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa. You appear sometimes as an animal like Lord Boar, sometimes a mixed incarnation like Lord Nṛsimhadeva and Lord Hayagrīva, and sometimes an aquatic like Lord Fish and Lord Tortoise. Assuming such various forms, You have always punished the demons and Dānavas. We therefore pray that Your Lordship appear today as another incarnation, if You so desire, to kill the great demon Vṛtrāsura.

41O supreme protector, O grandfather, O supreme pure, O Lord! We are all surrendered souls at Your lotus feet. Indeed, our minds are bound to Your lotus feet in meditation by chains of love. Now please manifest Your incarnation. Accepting us as Your own eternal servants and devotees, be pleased with us and sympathetic toward us. By Your love-filled glance, with its cool and pleasing smile of sympathy, and by the sweet, nectarean words emanating from Your beautiful face, free us from the anxiety caused by this Vṛtrāsura, who always pains the cores of our hearts.

42O Lord, as the small sparks of a fire cannot possibly perform the actions of the whole fire, we sparks of Your Lordship cannot inform You of the necessities of our lives. You are the complete whole. Therefore, of what do we need to inform You? You know everything because You are the original cause of the cosmic manifestation, the maintainer and the annihilator of the entire universal creation. You always engage in Your pastimes with Your spiritual and material energies, for You are the controller of all these varied energies. You exist within all living entities, within the cosmic manifestation, and also beyond them. You exist internally as Parabrahman and externally as the ingredients of the material creation. Therefore, although manifested in various stages, at different times and places, and in various bodies, You, the Personality of Godhead, are the original cause of all causes. Indeed, You are the original element. You are the witness of all activities, but because You are as great as the sky, You are never touched by any of them. You are the witness of everything as Parabrahman and Paramātmā. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, nothing is unknown to You.

43Dear Lord, You are omniscient, and therefore You know very well why we have taken shelter at Your lotus feet, which provide shade that gives relief from all material disturbances. Since You are the supreme spiritual master and You know everything, we have sought shelter of Your lotus feet for instruction. Please give us relief by counteracting our present distress. Your lotus feet are the only shelter for a fully surrendered devotee and are the only means for subduing all the tribulations of this material world.

44Therefore, O Lord, O supreme controller, O Lord Kṛṣṇa, please annihilate this dangerous demon Vṛtrāsura, Tvaṣṭā's son, who has already swallowed all our weapons, our paraphernalia for fighting, and our strength and influence.

45O Lord, O supreme pure, You live within the core of everyone's heart and observe all the desires and activities of the conditioned souls. O Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Lord Kṛṣṇa, Your reputation is bright and illuminating. You have no beginning, for You are the beginning of everything. This is understood by pure devotees because You are easily accessible to the pure and truthful. When the conditioned souls are liberated and sheltered at Your lotus feet after roving throughout the material world for many millions of years, they attain the highest success of life. Therefore, O Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, we offer our respectful obeisances at Your lotus feet.

46ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, when the demigods offered the Lord their sincere prayers in this way, the Lord listened by His causeless mercy. Being pleased, He then replied to the demigods.

47The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O beloved demigods, you have offered your prayers to Me with great knowledge, and I am certainly most pleased with you. A person is liberated by such knowledge, and thus he remembers My exalted position, which is above the conditions of material life. Such a devotee is fully purified by offering prayers in full knowledge. This is the source of devotional service to Me.

48O best of the intelligent demigods, although it is true that nothing is difficult for one to obtain when I am pleased with him, a pure devotee, whose mind is exclusively fixed upon Me, does not ask Me for anything but the opportunity to engage in devotional service.

49Those who think material assets to be everything or to be the ultimate goal of life are called misers [kṛpaṇas]. They do not know the ultimate necessity of the soul. Moreover, if one awards that which is desired by such fools, he must also be considered foolish.

50A pure devotee who is fully accomplished in the science of devotional service will never instruct a foolish person to engage in fruitive activities for material enjoyment, not to speak of helping him in such activities. Such a devotee is like an experienced physician, who never encourages a patient to eat food injurious to his health, even if the patient desires it.

51O Maghavan [Indra], all good fortune unto you. I advise you to approach the exalted saint Dadhyaṣca [Dadhīci]. He has become very accomplished in knowledge, vows and austerities, and his body is very strong. Go ask him for his body without delay.

52That saintly Dadhyaṣca, who is also known as Dadhīci, personally assimilated the spiritual science and then delivered it to the Aśvinī-kumāras. It is said that Dadhyaṣca gave them mantras through the head of a horse. Therefore the mantras are called Aśvaśira. After obtaining the mantras of spiritual science from Dadhīci, the Aśvinī-kumāras became jīvan-mukta, liberated even in this life.

53Dadhyaṣca's invincible protective covering known as the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca was given to Tvaṣṭā, who delivered it to his son Viśvarūpa, from whom you have received it. Because of this Nārāyaṇa-kavaca, Dadhīci's body is now very strong. You should therefore beg him for his body.

54When the Aśvinī-kumāras beg for Dadhyaṣca's body on your behalf, he will surely give it because of affection. Do not doubt this, for Dadhyaṣca is very experienced in religious understanding. When Dadhyaṣca awards you his body, Viśvakarmā will prepare a thunderbolt

from his bones. This thunderbolt will certainly kill Vṛtrāsura because it will be invested with My power.

55When Vṛtrāsura is killed because of My spiritual strength, you will regain your strength, weapons and wealth. Thus there will be all good fortune for all of you. Although Vṛtrāsura can destroy all the three worlds, do not fear that he will harm you. He is also a devotee and will never be envious of you.

SB 6.10: The Battle Between the Demigods and Vṛtrāsura

As described in this chapter, after Indra obtained the body of Dadhīci, a thunderbolt was prepared from Dadhīci's bones, and a fight took place between Vṛtrāsura and the demigods.

Following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demigods approached Dadhīci Muni and begged for his body. Dadhīci Muni, just to hear from the demigods about the principles of religion, jokingly refused to relinquish his body, but for higher purposes he thereafter agreed to give it up, for after death the body is usually eaten by low animals like dogs and jackals. Dadhīci Muni first merged his gross body made of five elements into the original stock of five elements and then engaged his soul at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus he gave up his gross body. With the help of Viśvakarmā, the demigods then prepared a thunderbolt from Dadhīci's bones. Armed with the thunderbolt weapon, they prepared themselves to fight and got up on the backs of elephants.

At the end of Satya-yuga and the beginning of Tretā-yuga, a great fight took place between the demigods and the *asuras*. Unable to tolerate the effulgence of the demigods, the *asuras* fled the battle, leaving Vṛtrāsura, their commander in chief, to fight for himself. Vṛtrāsura, however, seeing the demons fleeing, instructed them in the importance of fighting and dying in the battlefield. One who is victorious in battle gains material possessions, and one who dies in the battlefield attains a residence at once in the celestial heavens. In either way, the fighter benefits.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: After instructing Indra in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the cause of the cosmic manifestation, then and there disappeared from the presence of the onlooking demigods.

2O King Parīkṣit, following the Lord's instructions, the demigods approached Dadhīci, the son of Atharvā. He was very liberal, and when they begged him to give them his body, he at once partially agreed. However, just to hear religious instructions from them, he smiled and jokingly spoke as follows.

3O elevated demigods, at the time of death, severe, unbearable pain takes away the consciousness of all living entities who have accepted material bodies. Don't you know about this pain?

4In this material world, every living entity is very much addicted to his material body. Struggling to keep his body forever, everyone tries to protect it by all means, even at the sacrifice of all his possessions. Therefore, who would be prepared to deliver his body to anyone, even if it were demanded by Lord Viṣṇu?

5The demigods replied: O exalted brāhmaṇa, pious persons like you, whose activities are praiseworthy, are very kind and affectionate to people in general. What can't such pious souls give for the benefit of others? They can give everything, including their bodies.

6Those who are too self-interested beg something from others, not knowing of others' pain.

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But if the beggar knew the difficulty of the giver, he would not ask for anything. Similarly, he who is able to give charity does not know the beggar's difficulty, for otherwise he would not refuse to give the beggar anything he might want as charity.

7The great sage Dadhīci said: Just to hear from you about religious principles, I refused to offer my body at your request. Now, although my body is extremely dear to me, I must give it up for your better purposes since I know that it will leave me today or tomorrow.

8O demigods, one who has no compassion for humanity in its suffering and does not sacrifice his impermanent body for the higher causes of religious principles or eternal glory is certainly pitied even by the immovable beings.

9If one is unhappy to see the distress of other living beings and happy to see their happiness, his religious principles are appreciated as imperishable by exalted persons who are considered pious and benevolent.

10This body, which is eatable by jackals and dogs after death, does not actually do any good for me, the spirit soul. It is usable only for a short time and may perish at any moment. The body and its possessions, its riches and relatives, must all be engaged for the benefit of others, or else they will be sources of tribulation and misery.

11ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Dadhīci Muni, the son of Atharvā, thus resolved to give his body to the service of the demigods. He placed himself, the spirit soul, at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and in this way gave up his gross material body made of five elements.

12Dadhīci Muni controlled his senses, life force, mind and intelligence and became absorbed in trance. Thus he cut all his material bonds. He could not perceive how his material body became separated from his self.

13-14Thereafter, King Indra very firmly took up the thunderbolt manufactured by Viśvakarmā from the bones of Dadhīci. Charged with the exalted power of Dadhīci Muni and enlightened by the power of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Indra rode on the back of his carrier, Airāvata, surrounded by all the demigods, while all the great sages offered him praise. Thus he shone very beautifully, pleasing the three worlds as he rode off to kill Vṛtrāsura.

15My dear King Parīkṣit, as Rudra, being very angry at Antaka [Yamarāja] had formerly run toward Antaka to kill him, Indra angrily and with great force attacked Vṛtrāsura, who was surrounded by the leaders of the demoniac armies.

16Thereafter, at the end of Satya-yuga and the beginning of Tretā-yuga, a fierce battle took place between the demigods and the demons on the bank of the Narmadā.

17-18O King, when all the asuras came onto the battlefield, headed by Vṛtrāsura, they saw King Indra carrying the thunderbolt and surrounded by the Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, Aśvinī-kumāras, Pitās, Vahnīs, Maruts, Ṛbhus, Sādhyas and Viśvadevas. Surrounded by his company, Indra shone so brightly that his effulgence was intolerable to the demons.

19-22Many hundreds and thousands of demons, demi-demons, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas [man-eaters] and others, headed by Sumāli and Māli, resisted the armies of King Indra, which even death personified cannot easily overcome. Among the demons were Namuci, Śambara, Anarvā, Dvimūrdhā, Ṛṣabha, Asura, Hayagrīva, Śaṅkuśirā, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Pulomā, Vṛṣaparvā, Praheti, Heti and Utkala. Roaring tumultuously and fearlessly like lions, these invincible demons, all dressed in golden ornaments, gave pain to the demigods with weapons like clubs,

bludgeons, arrows, barbed darts, mallets and lances.

23 Armed with lances, tridents, axes, swords and other weapons like śatagnīs and bhuśuṇḍis, the demons attacked from different directions and scattered all the chiefs of the demigod armies.

24 As the stars in the sky cannot be seen when covered by dense clouds, the demigods, being completely covered by networks of arrows falling upon them one after another, could not be seen.

25 The showers of various weapons and arrows released to kill the soldiers of the demigods did not reach them because the demigods, acting quickly, cut the weapons into thousands of pieces in the sky.

26 As their weapons and mantras decreased, the demons began showering mountain peaks, trees and stones upon the demigod soldiers, but the demigods were so powerful and expert that they nullified all these weapons by breaking them to pieces in the sky as before.

27 When the soldiers of the demons, commanded by Vṛtrāsura, saw that the soldiers of King Indra were quite well, having not been injured at all by their volleys of weapons, not even by the trees, stones and mountain peaks, the demons were very much afraid.

28 When insignificant persons use rough words to cast false, angry accusations against saintly persons, their fruitless words do not disturb the great personalities. Similarly, all the efforts of the demons against the demigods, who were favorably situated under the protection of Kṛṣṇa, were futile.

29 The asuras, who are never devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, lost their pride in fighting when they found all their endeavors futile. Leaving aside their leader even in the very beginning of the fight, they decided to flee because all their prowess had been taken away by the enemy.

30 Seeing his army broken and all the asuras, even those known as great heroes, fleeing the battlefield out of intense fear, Vṛtrāsura, who was truly a great-minded hero, smiled and spoke the following words.

31 According to his position and the time and circumstances, Vṛtrāsura, the hero among heroes, spoke words that were much to be appreciated by thoughtful men. He called to the heroes of the demons, “O Vipracitti! O Namuci! O Pulomā! O Maya, Anarvā and Śambara! Please hear me and do not flee.”

32 Vṛtrāsura said: All living entities who have taken birth in this material world must die. Surely, no one in this world has found any means to be saved from death. Even providence has not provided a means to escape it. Under the circumstances, death being inevitable, if one can gain promotion to the higher planetary systems and be always celebrated here by dying a suitable death, what man will not accept such a glorious death?

33 There are two ways to meet a glorious death, and both are very rare. One is to die after performing mystic yoga, especially bhakti-yoga, by which one can control the mind and living force and die absorbed in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The second is to die on the battlefield, leading the army and never showing one's back. These two kinds of death are recommended in the śāstra as glorious.

SB 6.11: The Transcendental Qualities of Vṛtrāsura

This chapter describes Vṛtrāsura's great qualities. When the prominent commanders of the demons fled, not hearing Vṛtrāsura's advice. Vṛtrāsura condemned them all as cowards. Speaking very bravely, he stood alone to face the demigods. When the demigods saw Vṛtrāsura's attitude, they were so afraid that they practically fainted, and Vṛtrāsura began trampling them down. Unable to tolerate this, Indra, the King of the demigods, threw his club at Vṛtrāsura, but Vṛtrāsura was such a great hero that he easily caught the club with his left hand and used it to beat Indra's elephant. Struck by the blow of Vṛtrāsura, the elephant was pushed back fourteen yards and fell, with Indra on its back.

King Indra had first accepted Viśvarūpa as his priest and thereafter killed him. Reminding Indra of his heinous activities, Vṛtrāsura said, "If one is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, and depends on Lord Viṣṇu in every respect, then victory, opulence and peace of mind are all inevitably available. Such a person has nothing for which to aspire in the three worlds. The Supreme Lord is so kind that He especially favors such a devotee by not giving him opulence that will hamper his devotional service. Therefore I wish to give up everything for the service of the Lord. I wish always to chant the glories of the Lord and engage in His service. Let me become unattached to my worldly family and make friendships with the devotees of the Lord. I do not desire to be promoted to the higher planetary systems, even to Dhruvaloka or Brahmaloḥka, nor do I desire an unconquerable position within this material world. I have no need for such things."

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Vṛtrāsura, the commander in chief of the demons, advised his lieutenants in the principles of religion, but the cowardly demoniac commanders, intent upon fleeing the battlefield, were so disturbed by fear that they could not accept his words.

2-3O King Parīkṣit, the demigods, taking advantage of a favorable opportunity presented by time, attacked the army of the demons from the rear and began driving away the demoniac soldiers, scattering them here and there as if their army had no leader. Seeing the pitiable condition of his soldiers, Vṛtrāsura, the best of the asuras, who was called Indraśatru, the enemy of Indra, was very much aggrieved. Unable to tolerate such reverses, he stopped and forcefully rebuked the demigods, speaking the following words in an angry mood.

4O demigods, these demoniac soldiers have taken birth uselessly. Indeed, they have come from the bodies of their mothers exactly like stool. What is the benefit of killing such enemies from behind while they are running in fear? One who considers himself a hero should not kill an enemy who is afraid of losing his life. Such killing is never glorious, nor can it promote one to the heavenly planets.

5O insignificant demigods, if you truly have faith in your heroism, if you have patience in the cores of your hearts and if you are not ambitious for sense gratification, please stand before me for a moment.

6Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Vṛtrāsura, the angry and most powerful hero, terrified the demigods with his stout and strongly built body. When he roared with a resounding voice, nearly all living entities fainted.

7When all the demigods heard Vṛtrāsura's tumultuous roar, which resembled that of a lion, they fainted and fell to the ground as if struck by thunderbolts.

8As the demigods closed their eyes in fear, Vṛtrāsura, taking up his trident and making the earth tremble with his great strength, trampled the demigods beneath his feet on the battlefield the way a mad elephant tramples hollow bamboos in the forest.

9 Seeing Vṛtrāsura's disposition, Indra, the King of heaven, became intolerant and threw at him one of his great clubs, which are extremely difficult to counteract. However, as the club flew toward him, Vṛtrāsura easily caught it with his left hand.

10 King Parīkṣit, the powerful Vṛtrāsura, the enemy of King Indra, angrily struck the head of Indra's elephant with that club, making a tumultuous sound on the battlefield. For this heroic deed, the soldiers on both sides glorified him.

11 Struck with the club by Vṛtrāsura like a mountain struck by a thunderbolt, the elephant Airāvata, feeling great pain and spitting blood from its broken mouth, was pushed back fourteen yards. In great distress, the elephant fell, with Indra on its back.

12 When he saw Indra's carrier elephant thus fatigued and injured and when he saw Indra morose because his carrier had been harmed in that way, the great soul Vṛtrāsura, following religious principles, refrained from again striking Indra with the club. Taking this opportunity, Indra touched the elephant with his nectar-producing hand, thus relieving the animal's pain and curing its injuries. Then the elephant and Indra both stood silently.

13 O King, when the great hero Vṛtrāsura saw Indra, his enemy, the killer of his brother, standing before him with a thunderbolt in his hand, desiring to fight, Vṛtrāsura remembered how Indra had cruelly killed his brother. Thinking of Indra's sinful activities, he became mad with lamentation and forgetfulness. Laughing sarcastically, he spoke as follows.

14 Śrī Vṛtrāsura said: He who has killed a brāhmaṇa, he who has killed his spiritual master indeed, he who has killed my brother is now, by good fortune, standing before me face to face as my enemy. O most abominable one, when I pierce your stonelike heart with my trident, I shall be freed from my debt to my brother.

15 Only for the sake of living in the heavenly planets, you killed my elder brother a self-realized, sinless, qualified brāhmaṇa who had been appointed your chief priest. He was your spiritual master, but although you entrusted him with the performance of your sacrifice, you later mercilessly severed his head from his body the way one butchers an animal.

16 Indra, you are bereft of all shame, mercy, glory and good fortune. Deprived of these good qualities by the reactions of your fruitive activities, you are to be condemned even by the man-eaters [Rākṣasas]. Now I shall pierce your body with my trident, and after you die with great pain, even fire will not touch you; only the vultures will eat your body.

17 You are naturally cruel. If the other demigods, unaware of my prowess, follow you by attacking me with raised weapons, I shall sever their heads with this sharp trident. With those heads I shall perform a sacrifice to Bhairava and the other leaders of the ghosts, along with their hordes.

18 But if in this battle you cut off my head with your thunderbolt and kill my soldiers, O Indra, O great hero, I shall take great pleasure in offering my body to other living entities [such as jackals and vultures]. I shall thus be relieved of my obligations to the reactions of my karma, and my fortune will be to receive the dust from the lotus feet of great devotees like Nārada Muni.

19 O King of the demigods, since I, your enemy, am standing before you, why don't you hurl your thunderbolt at me? Although your attack upon me with your club was certainly useless, like a request of money from a miser, the thunderbolt you carry will not be useless. You need have no doubts about this.

20 Indra, King of heaven, the thunderbolt you carry to kill me has been empowered by the prowess of Lord Viṣṇu and the strength of Dadhīci's austerities. Since you have come here to kill me in accordance with Lord Viṣṇu's order, there is no doubt that I shall be killed by the release of your thunderbolt. Lord Viṣṇu has sided with you. Therefore your victory, opulence and all good qualities are assured.

21 By the force of your thunderbolt, I shall be freed of material bondage and shall give up this body and this world of material desires. Fixing my mind upon the lotus feet of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, I shall attain the destination of such great sages as Nārada Muni, just as Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa has said.

22 Persons who fully surrender at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and always think of His lotus feet are accepted and recognized by the Lord as His own personal assistants or servants. The Lord never bestows upon such servants the brilliant opulences of the upper, lower and middle planetary systems of this material world. When one possesses material opulence in any of these three divisions of the universe, his possessions naturally increase his enmity, anxiety, mental agitation, pride and belligerence. Thus one goes through much endeavor to increase and maintain his possessions, and he suffers great unhappiness when he loses them.

23 Our Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, forbids His devotees to endeavor uselessly for religion, economic development and sense gratification. O Indra, one can thus infer how kind the Lord is. Such mercy is obtainable only by unalloyed devotees, not by persons who aspire for material gains.

24 O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, will I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your lotus feet? O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind may always think of Your transcendental attributes, my words always glorify those attributes, and my body always engage in the loving service of Your Lordship?

25 O my Lord, source of all opportunities, I do not desire to enjoy in Dhruvaloka, the heavenly planets or the planet where Lord Brahmā resides, nor do I want to be the supreme ruler of all the earthly planets or the lower planetary systems. I do not desire to be master of the powers of mystic yoga, nor do I want liberation if I have to give up Your lotus feet.

26 O lotus-eyed Lord, as baby birds that have not yet developed their wings always look for their mother to return and feed them, as small calves tied with ropes await anxiously the time of milking, when they will be allowed to drink the milk of their mothers, or as a morose wife whose husband is away from home always longs for him to return and satisfy her in all respects, I always yearn for the opportunity to render direct service unto You.

27 O my Lord, my master, I am wandering throughout this material world as a result of my fruitive activities. Therefore I simply seek friendship in the association of Your pious and enlightened devotees. My attachment to my body, wife, children and home is continuing by the spell of Your external energy, but I wish to be attached to them no longer. Let my mind, my consciousness and everything I have be attached only to You.

SB 6.12: Vṛtrāsura's Glorious Death

This chapter describes how Indra, the King of heaven, killed Vṛtrāsura despite great reluctance.

After Vṛtrāsura finished speaking, he released his trident against King Indra with great anger, but Indra, using his thunderbolt, which was many times more powerful than the trident, broke

the trident to pieces and cut off one of Vṛtrāsura's arms. Nevertheless, Vṛtrāsura used his remaining arm to strike Indra with an iron mace, making the thunderbolt fall from Indra's hand. Indra, being very ashamed of this, did not pick up the thunderbolt from the ground, but Vṛtrāsura encouraged King Indra to pick it up and fight. Vṛtrāsura then spoke to King Indra as follows, instructing him very well.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead,” he said, “is the cause of victory and defeat. Not knowing that the Supreme Lord is the cause of all causes, fools and rascals try to take credit for victory or defeat themselves, but everything is actually under the control of the Lord. No one but Him has any independence. The *puruṣa* (the enjoyer) and *prakṛti* (the enjoyed) are under the control of the Lord, for it is by His supervision that everything works systematically. Not seeing the hand of the Supreme in every action, a fool considers himself the ruler and controller of everything. When one understands, however, that the real controller is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is freed from the relativities of the world, such as distress, happiness, fear and impurity.” Thus Indra and Vṛtrāsura not only fought, but also engaged in philosophical discourses. Then they began to fight again.

This time Indra was more powerful, and he severed Vṛtrāsura's remaining arm. Vṛtrāsura then assumed a gigantic form and swallowed King Indra, but Indra, being protected by the talisman known as Nārāyaṇa-kavaca, was able to protect himself even within Vṛtrāsura's body. Thus he emerged from Vṛtrāsura's abdomen and severed the demon's head from his body with his powerful thunderbolt. Severing the demon's head took one complete year to accomplish.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Desiring to give up his body, Vṛtrāsura considered death in the battle preferable to victory. O King Parīkṣit, he vigorously took up his trident and with great force attacked Lord Indra, the King of heaven, just as Kaiṭabha had forcefully attacked the Supreme Personality of Godhead when the universe was inundated.

2Then Vṛtrāsura, the great hero of the demons, whirled his trident, which had points like the flames of the blazing fire at the end of the millennium. With great force and anger he threw it at Indra, roaring and exclaiming loudly, “O sinful one, thus shall I kill you!”

3Flying in the sky, Vṛtrāsura's trident resembled a brilliant meteor. Although the blazing weapon was difficult to look upon, King Indra, unafraid, cut it to pieces with his thunderbolt. Simultaneously, he cut off one of Vṛtrāsura's arms, which was as thick as the body of Vāsuki, the King of the serpents.

4Although one of his arms was severed from his body, Vṛtrāsura angrily approached King Indra and struck him on the jaw with an iron mace. He also struck the elephant that carried Indra. Thus Indra dropped the thunderbolt from his hand.

5The denizens of various planets, like the demigods, demons, Cāraṇas and Siddhas, praised Vṛtrāsura's deed, but when they observed that Indra was in great danger, they lamented, “Alas! Alas!”

6Having dropped the thunderbolt from his hand in the presence of his enemy, Indra was practically defeated and was very much ashamed. He dared not pick up his weapon again. Vṛtrāsura, however, encouraged him, saying, “Take up your thunderbolt and kill your enemy. This is not the time to lament your fate.”

7Vṛtrāsura continued: O Indra, no one is guaranteed of being always victorious but the original enjoyer, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān. He is the cause of creation, maintenance and annihilation, and He knows everything. Being dependent and being obliged

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to accept material bodies, belligerent subordinates are sometimes victorious and sometimes defeated.

8All living beings in all the planets of this universe, including the presiding deities of all the planets, are fully under the control of the Lord. They work like birds caught in a net, who cannot move independently.

9Our sensory prowess, mental power, bodily strength, living force, immortality and mortality are all subject to the superintendence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Not knowing this, foolish people think the dull material body to be the cause of their activities.

10King Indra, as a wooden doll that looks like a woman or as an animal made of grass and leaves cannot move or dance independently, but depends fully on the person who handles it, all of us dance according to the desire of the supreme controller, the Personality of Godhead. No one is independent.

11The three puruṣasKāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and Kṣīrodakaśāyī-Viṣṇu the material nature, the total material energy, the false ego, the five material elements, the material senses, the mind, the intelligence and consciousness cannot create the material manifestation without the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

12A foolish, senseless person cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although always dependent, he falsely thinks himself the Supreme. If one thinks, "According to one's previous fruitive actions, one's material body is created by the father and mother, and the same body is annihilated by another agent, as another animal is devoured by a tiger," this is not proper understanding. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself creates and devours the living beings through other living beings.

13Just as a person not inclined to die must nonetheless give up his longevity, opulence, fame and everything else at the time of death, so, at the appointed time of victory, one can gain all these when the Supreme Lord awards them by His mercy.

14Since everything is dependent on the supreme will of the Personality of Godhead, one should be equipoised in fame and defamation, victory and defeat, life and death. In their effects, represented as happiness and distress, one should maintain oneself in equilibrium, without anxiety.

15One who knows that the three qualitiesgoodness, passion and ignoranceare not qualities of the soul but qualities of material nature, and who knows that the pure soul is simply an observer of the actions and reactions of these qualities, should be understood to be a liberated person. He is not bound by these qualities.

16O my enemy, just look at me. I have already been defeated, for my weapon and arm have been cut to pieces. You have already overwhelmed me, but nonetheless, with a desire to kill you, I am trying my best to fight. I am not at all morose, even under such adverse conditions. Therefore you should give up your moroseness and continue fighting.

17O my enemy, consider this battle a gambling match in which our lives are the stakes, the arrows are the dice, and the animals acting as carriers are the game board. No one can understand who will be defeated and who will be victorious. It all depends on providence.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing the straightforward, instructive words of Vṛtrāsura, King Indra praised him and again took the thunderbolt in his hand. Without bewilderment or duplicity, he then smiled and spoke to Vṛtrāsura as follows.

19 Indra said: O great demon, I see by your discrimination and endurance in devotional service, despite your dangerous position, that you are a perfect devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul and friend of everyone.

20 You have surmounted the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, and because of this liberation, you have given up the demoniac mentality and have attained the position of an exalted devotee.

21 O Vṛtrāsura, demons are generally conducted by the mode of passion. Therefore, what a great wonder it is that although you are a demon, you have adopted the mentality of a devotee and have fixed your mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, who is always situated in pure goodness.

22 A person fixed in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the Lord of the highest auspiciousness, swims in the ocean of nectar. For him what is the use of the water in small ditches?

23 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Vṛtrāsura and King Indra spoke about devotional service even on the battlefield, and then as a matter of duty they again began fighting. My dear King, both of them were great fighters and were equally powerful.

24 O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Vṛtrāsura, who was completely able to subdue his enemy, took his iron club, whirled it around, aimed it at Indra and then threw it at him with his left hand.

25 With his thunderbolt named Śataparvan, Indra simultaneously cut to pieces Vṛtrāsura's club and his remaining hand.

26 Vṛtrāsura, bleeding profusely, his two arms cut off at their roots, looked very beautiful, like a flying mountain whose wings have been cut to pieces by Indra.

27-29 Vṛtrāsura was very powerful in physical strength and influence. He placed his lower jaw on the ground and his upper jaw in the sky. His mouth became very deep, like the sky itself, and his tongue resembled a large serpent. With his fearful, deathlike teeth, he seemed to be trying to devour the entire universe. Thus assuming a gigantic body, the great demon Vṛtrāsura shook even the mountains and began crushing the surface of the earth with his legs, as if he were the Himālayas walking about. He came before Indra and swallowed him and Airāvata, his carrier, just as a big python might swallow an elephant.

30 When the demigods, along with Brahmā, other prajāpatis and other great saintly persons, saw that Indra had been swallowed by the demon, they became very morose. "Alas," they lamented. "What a calamity! What a calamity!"

31 The protective armor of Nārāyaṇa, which Indra possessed, was identical with Nārāyaṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Protected by that armor and by his own mystic power, King Indra, although swallowed by Vṛtrāsura, did not die within the demon's belly.

32 With his thunderbolt, King Indra, who was also extremely powerful, pierced through Vṛtrāsura's abdomen and came out. Indra, the killer of the demon Bala, then immediately cut off Vṛtrāsura's head, which was as high as the peak of a mountain.

33 Although the thunderbolt revolved around Vṛtrāsura's neck with great speed, separating his head from his body took one complete year³⁶⁰ days, the time in which the sun, moon and other luminaries complete a northern and southern journey. Then, at the suitable time for Vṛtrāsura to be killed, his head fell to the ground.

34When Vṛtrāsura was killed, the Gandharvas and Siddhas in the heavenly planets beat kettledrums in jubilation. With Vedic hymns they celebrated the prowess of Indra, the killer of Vṛtrāsura, praising Indra and showering flowers upon him with great pleasure.

35O King Parīkṣit, subduer of enemies, the living spark then came forth from Vṛtrāsura's body and returned home, back to Godhead. While all the demigods looked on, he entered the transcendental world to become an associate of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa.

SB 6.13: King Indra Afflicted by Sinful Reaction

This chapter describes Indra's fear at having killed a *brāhmaṇa* (Vṛtrāsura), and it also describes how he fled and was saved by the grace of Lord Viṣṇu.

When all the demigods requested Indra to kill Vṛtrāsura, he refused because Vṛtrāsura was a *brāhmaṇa*. The demigods, however, encouraged Indra not to fear killing him because Indra was protected by the Nārāyaṇa-kavaca, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, Lord Nārāyaṇa. Even by a glimpse of the chanting of Nārāyaṇa's name, one becomes free from all the sinful reactions of killing a woman, a cow or a *brāhmaṇa*. The demigods advised Indra to perform an *aśvamedha* sacrifice, by which Nārāyaṇa would be pleased, for the performer of such a sacrifice is not implicated in sinful reactions even if he kills the entire universe.

Following this instruction from the demigods, King Indra fought Vṛtrāsura, but when Vṛtrāsura was killed, everyone was satisfied but King Indra, who knew Vṛtrāsura's position. This is the nature of a great personality. Even if a great personality acquires some opulence, he is always ashamed and regretful if he acquires it illegally. Indra could understand that he was certainly entangled by sinful reactions for killing a *brāhmaṇa*. Indeed, he could see sinful reaction personified following him, and thus he fled here and there in fear, thinking of how to rid himself of his sins. He went to Mānasa-sarovara, and there, under the protection of the goddess of fortune, he meditated for one thousand years. During this time, Nahuṣa reigned over the heavenly planets as the representative of Indra. Unfortunately, however, he was attracted by the beauty of Indra's wife, Śacīdevī, and because of his sinful desire he had to accept the body of a serpent in his next life. Indra later performed a great sacrifice with the help of exalted *brāhmaṇas* and saints. In this way he was released from the reactions of his sinful killing of a *brāhmaṇa*.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, who are so charitably disposed, when Vṛtrāsura was killed, all the presiding deities and everyone else in the three planetary systems was immediately pleased and free from troubleeveryone, that is, except Indra.

2Thereafter, the demigods, the great saintly persons, the inhabitants of Piṭṛloka and Bhūtaloka, the demons, the followers of the demigods, and also Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and the demigods subordinate to Indra all returned to their respective homes. While departing, however, no one spoke to Indra.

3Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O great sage, what was the reason for Indra's unhappiness? I wish to hear about this. When he killed Vṛtrāsura, all the demigods were extremely happy. Why, then, was Indra himself unhappy?

4ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī answered: When all the great sages and demigods were disturbed by the extraordinary power of Vṛtrāsura, they had assembled to ask Indra to kill him. Indra, however, being afraid of killing a *brāhmaṇa*, declined their request.

5King Indra replied: When I killed Viśvarūpa, I received extensive sinful reactions, but I was

avored by the women, land, trees and water, and therefore I was able to divide the sin among them. But now if I kill Vṛtrāsura, another brāhmaṇa, how shall I free myself from the sinful reactions?

6ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing this, the great sages replied to King Indra, “O King of heaven, all good fortune unto you. Do not fear. We shall perform an aśvamedha sacrifice to release you from any sin you may accrue by killing the brāhmaṇa.”

7The ṛṣis continued: O King Indra, by performing an aśvamedha sacrifice and thereby pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the supreme controller, one can be relieved even of the sinful reactions for killing the entire world, not to speak of killing a demon like Vṛtrāsura.

8-9One who has killed a brāhmaṇa, one who has killed a cow or one who has killed his father, mother or spiritual master can be immediately freed from all sinful reactions simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Other sinful persons, such as dog-eaters and caṇḍālas, who are less than śūdras, can also be freed in this way. But you are a devotee, and we shall help you by performing the great horse sacrifice. If you please Lord Nārāyaṇa in that way, why should you be afraid? You will be freed even if you kill the entire universe, including the brāhmaṇas, not to speak of killing a disturbing demon like Vṛtrāsura.

10ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Encouraged by the words of the sages, Indra killed Vṛtrāsura, and when he was killed the sinful reaction for killing a brāhmaṇa [brahma-hatyā] certainly took shelter of Indra.

11Following the advice of the demigods, Indra killed Vṛtrāsura, and he suffered because of this sinful killing. Although the other demigods were happy, he could not derive happiness from the killing of Vṛtrāsura. Indra’s other good qualities, such as tolerance and opulence, could not help him in his grief.

12-13Indra saw personified sinful reaction chasing him, appearing like a caṇḍāla woman, a woman of the lowest class. She seemed very old, and all the limbs of her body trembled. Because she was afflicted with tuberculosis, her body and garments were covered with blood. Breathing an unbearable fishy odor that polluted the entire street, she called to Indra, “Wait! Wait!”

14O King, Indra first fled to the sky, but there also he saw the woman of personified sin chasing him. This witch followed him wherever he went. At last he very quickly went to the northeast and entered the Mānasa-sarovara Lake.

15Always thinking of how he could be relieved from the sinful reaction for killing a brāhmaṇa, King Indra, invisible to everyone, lived in the lake for one thousand years in the subtle fibers of the stem of a lotus. The fire-god used to bring him his share of all yajṣas, but because the fire-god was afraid to enter the water, Indra was practically starving.

16As long as King Indra lived in the water, wrapped in the stem of the lotus, Nahuṣa was equipped with the ability to rule the heavenly kingdom, due to his knowledge, austerity and mystic power. Nahuṣa, however, blinded and maddened by power and opulence, made undesirable proposals to Indra’s wife with a desire to enjoy her. Thus Nahuṣa was cursed by a brāhmaṇa and later became a snake.

17Indra’s sins were diminished by the influence of Rudra, the demigod of all directions. Because Indra was protected by the goddess of fortune, Lord Viṣṇu’s wife, who resides in the

lotus clusters of Mānasa-sarovara Lake, Indra's sins could not affect him. Indra was ultimately relieved of all the reactions of his sinful deeds by strictly worshiping Lord Viṣṇu. Then he was called back to the heavenly planets by the brāhmaṇas and reinstated in his position.

18O King, when Lord Indra reached the heavenly planets, the saintly brāhmaṇas approached him and properly initiated him into a horse sacrifice [aśvamedha-yaḡsa] meant to please the Supreme Lord.

19-20The horse sacrifice performed by the saintly brāhmaṇas relieved Indra of the reactions to all his sins because he worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead in that sacrifice. O King, although he had committed a gravely sinful act, it was nullified at once by that sacrifice, just as fog is vanquished by the brilliant sunrise.

21King Indra was favored by Marīci and the other great sages. They performed the sacrifice just according to the rules and regulations, worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, the original person. Thus Indra regained his exalted position and was again honored by everyone.

22-23In this very great narrative there is glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, there are statements about the exaltedness of devotional service, there are descriptions of devotees like Indra and Vṛtrāsura, and there are statements about King Indra's release from sinful life and about his victory in fighting the demons. By understanding this incident, one is relieved of all sinful reactions. Therefore the learned are always advised to read this narration. If one does so, one will become expert in the activities of the senses, his opulence will increase, and his reputation will become widespread. One will also be relieved of all sinful reactions, he will conquer all his enemies, and the duration of his life will increase. Because this narration is auspicious in all respects, learned scholars regularly hear and repeat it on every festival day.

SB 6.14: King Citraketu's Lamentation

In this Fourteenth Chapter, Parīkṣit Mahārāja asks his spiritual master, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, how such a demon as Vṛtrāsura could become an exalted devotee. In this connection the previous life of Vṛtrāsura is discussed. This involves the story of Citraketu and how he was victimized by lamentation because of the death of his son.

Among many millions of living entities, the number of human beings is extremely small, and among human beings who are actually religious, only some are eager to be liberated from material existence. Among many thousands of people who desire relief from material existence, one is freed from the association of unwanted persons or is relieved of material contamination. And among many millions of such liberated persons, one may become a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Therefore such devotees are extremely rare. Since *bhakti*, devotional service, is not ordinary, Parīkṣit Mahārāja was astonished that an *asura* could rise to the exalted position of a devotee. Being doubtful, Parīkṣit Mahārāja inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who then described Vṛtrāsura with reference to his previous birth as Citraketu, the King of Śūrasena.

Citraketu, who had no sons, got an opportunity to meet the great sage Aṅgirā. When Aṅgirā inquired from the King about his welfare, the King expressed his moroseness, and therefore by the grace of the great sage, the King's first wife, Kṛtadyuti, gave birth to a son, who was the cause of both happiness and lamentation. Upon the birth of this son, the King and all the residents of the palace were very happy. The co-wives of Kṛtadyuti, however, were envious, and later they administered poison to the child. Citraketu was overwhelmed by shock at his

son's death. Then Nārada Muni and Aṅgirā went to see him.

1King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O learned brāhmaṇa, demons are generally sinful, being obsessed with the modes of passion and ignorance. How, then, could Vṛtrāsura have attained such exalted love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa?

2Demigods situated in the mode of goodness and great saints cleansed of the dirt of material enjoyment hardly ever render pure devotional service at the lotus feet of Mukunda. [Therefore how could Vṛtrāsura have become such a great devotee?]

3In this material world there are as many living entities as atoms. Among these living entities, a very few are human beings, and among them, few are interested in following religious principles.

4O best of the brāhmaṇas, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, out of many persons who follow religious principles, only a few desire liberation from the material world. Among many thousands who desire liberation, one may actually achieve liberation, giving up material attachment to society, friendship, love, country, home, wife and children. And among many thousands of such liberated persons, one who can understand the true meaning of liberation is very rare.

5O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.

6Vṛtrāsura was situated in the blazing fire of battle and was an infamous, sinful demon, always engaged in giving troubles and anxieties to others. How could such a demon become so greatly Kṛṣṇa conscious?

7My dear lord, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, although Vṛtrāsura was a sinful demon, he showed the prowess of a most exalted kṣatriya and satisfied Lord Indra in battle. How could such a demon be a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa? These contradictions have caused me great doubt, and they have made me eager to hear of this from you.

8Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing Mahārāja Parīkṣit's very intelligent question, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the most powerful sage, began answering his disciple with great affection.

9Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, I shall speak to you the same history I have heard from the mouths of Vyāsadeva, Nārada and Devala. Please listen with attention.

10King Parīkṣit, in the province of Śūrasena there was a king named Citraketu, who ruled the entire earth. During his reign, the earth produced all the necessities for life.

11This Citraketu had ten million wives, but although he was capable of producing children, he did not receive a child from any of them. By chance, all the wives were barren.

12Citraketu, the husband of these millions of wives, was endowed with a beautiful form, magnanimity and youth. He was born in a high family, he had a complete education, and he was wealthy and opulent. Nevertheless, in spite of being endowed with all these assets, he was full of anxiety because he did not have a son.

13His queens all had beautiful faces and attractive eyes, yet neither his opulences, his hundreds and thousands of queens, nor the lands of which he was the supreme proprietor were sources of happiness for him.

14Once upon a time, when the powerful sage named Aṅgirā was traveling all over the universe

without engagement, by his sweet will he came to the palace of King Citraketu.

15Citraketu immediately stood up from his throne and offered him worship. He offered drinking water and eatables and in this way performed his duty as a host to a great guest. When the ṛṣi was seated very comfortably, the King, restraining his mind and senses, sat on the ground at the side of the ṛṣi's feet.

16O King Parīkṣit, when Citraketu, bent low in humility, was seated at the lotus feet of the great sage, the sage congratulated him for his humility and hospitality. The sage addressed him in the following words.

17The great sage Aṅgirā said: My dear King, I hope that your body and mind and your royal associates and paraphernalia are well. When the seven properties of material nature [the total material energy, the ego and the five objects of sense gratification] are in proper order, the living entity within the material elements is happy. Without these seven elements one cannot exist. Similarly, a king is always protected by seven elements his instructor (svāmī or guru), his ministers, his kingdom, his fort, his treasury, his royal order and his friends.

18O King, O lord of humanity, when a king directly depends upon his associates and follows their instructions, he is happy. Similarly, when his associates offer their gifts and activities to the king and follow his orders, they are also happy.

19O King, are your wives, citizens, secretaries and servants and the merchants who sell spices and oil under your control? Are you also in full control of ministers, the inhabitants of your palace, your provincial governors, your sons and your other dependents?

20If the king's mind is fully controlled, all his family members and governmental officers are subordinate to him. His provincial governors present taxes on time, without resistance, and what to speak of lesser servants?

21O King Citraketu, I can observe that your mind is not pleased. You seem not to have achieved your desired goal. Is this because of you yourself, or has it been caused by others? Your pale face reflects your deep anxiety.

22Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, although the great sage Aṅgirā knew everything, he inquired from the King in this way. Thus King Citraketu, desiring a son, bent low in great humility and spoke to the great sage as follows.

23King Citraketu said: O great lord Aṅgirā, because of austerity, knowledge and transcendental samādhi, you are freed from all the reactions of sinful life. Therefore, as a perfect yogī, you can understand everything external and internal regarding embodied, conditioned souls like us.

24O great soul, you are aware of everything, yet you are asking me why I am full of anxiety. Therefore, in response to your order, let me disclose the cause.

25As a person aggrieved by hunger and thirst is not pleased by the external gratification of flower garlands or sandalwood pulp, I am not pleased with my empire, opulence or possessions, which are desirable even for great demigods, because I have no son.

26Therefore, O great sage, please save me and my forefathers, who are descending to the darkness of hell because I have no progeny. Kindly do something so that I may have a son to deliver us from hellish conditions.

27In response to the request of Mahārāja Citraketu, AṅgirāṚṣi, who was born of Lord Brahmā's mind, was very merciful toward him. Because the sage was a greatly powerful personality, he

performed a sacrifice by offering oblations of sweetrice to Tvaṣṭā.

28O Parīkṣit Mahārāja, best of the Bhāratas, the remnants of the food offered in the yajña were given by the great sage Aṅgirā to the first and most perfect among Citraketu's millions of queens, whose name was Kṛtadyuti.

29Thereafter, the great sage told the King, "O great King, now you will have a son who will be the cause of both jubilation and lamentation." The sage then left, without waiting for Citraketu's response.

30As Kṛttikādevī, after receiving the semen of Lord Śiva from Agni, conceived a child named Skanda [Kārttikeya], Kṛtadyuti, having received semen from Citraketu, became pregnant after eating remnants of food from the yajña performed by Aṅgirā.

31After receiving semen from Mahārāja Citraketu, the King of Śūrasena, Queen Kṛtadyuti gradually developed in her pregnancy, O King Parīkṣit, just as the moon develops during the bright fortnight.

32Thereafter, in due course of time, a son was born to the King. Hearing news of this, all the inhabitants of the state of Śūrasena were extremely pleased.

33King Citraketu was especially pleased. After purifying himself by bathing and by decorating himself with ornaments, he engaged learned brāhmaṇas in offering benedictions to the child and performing the birth ceremony.

34Unto the brāhmaṇas who took part in the ritualistic ceremony the King gave charity of gold, silver, garments, ornaments, villages, horses and elephants, as well as sixty crores of cows [six hundred million cows].

35As a cloud indiscriminately pours water on the earth, the beneficent King Citraketu, to increase the reputation, opulence and longevity of his son, distributed like rainfall all desirable things to everyone.

36When a poor man gets some money after great difficulty, his affection for the money increases daily. Similarly, when King Citraketu, after great difficulty, received a son, his affection for the son increased day after day.

37The mother's attraction and attention to the son, like that of the child's father, excessively increased. The other wives, seeing Kṛtadyuti's son, were very much agitated, as if by high fevers, with a desire to have sons.

38As King Citraketu fostered his son very carefully, his affection for Queen Kṛtadyuti increased, but gradually he lost affection for the other wives, who had no sons.

39The other queens were extremely unhappy due to their being sonless. Because of the King's negligence toward them, they condemned themselves in envy and lamented.

40A wife who has no sons is neglected at home by her husband and dishonored by her co-wives exactly like a maidservant. Certainly such a woman is condemned in every respect because of her sinful life.

41Even maidservants who are constantly engaged in rendering service to the husband are honored by the husband, and thus they have nothing for which to lament. Our position, however, is that we are maidservants of the maidservant. Therefore we are most unfortunate.

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42ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Being neglected by their husband and seeing Kṛtadyuti's opulence in possessing a son, Kṛtadyuti's co-wives always burned in envy, which became extremely strong.

43As their envy increased, they lost their intelligence. Being extremely hardhearted and unable to tolerate the King's neglect, they finally administered poison to the son.

44Unaware of the poison administered by her co-wives, Queen Kṛtadyuti walked within the house, thinking that her son was sleeping deeply. She did not understand that he was dead.

45Thinking that her child had been sleeping for a long time, Queen Kṛtadyuti, who was certainly very intelligent, ordered the nurse, "My dear friend, please bring my son here."

46When the maidservant approached the child, who was lying down, she saw that his eyes were turned upward. There were no signs of life, all his senses having stopped, and she could understand that the child was dead. Seeing this, she immediately cried, "Now I am doomed," and fell to the ground.

47In great agitation, the maidservant struck her breast with both hands and cried loudly in regretful words. Hearing her loud voice, the Queen immediately came, and when she approached her son, she saw that he was suddenly dead.

48In great lamentation, her hair and dress in disarray, the Queen fell to the ground unconscious.

49O King Parīkṣit, hearing the loud crying, all the inhabitants of the palace came, both men and women. Being equally aggrieved, they also began to cry. The queens who had administered the poison also cried pretentiously, knowing full well their offense.

50-51When King Citraketu heard of his son's death from unknown causes, he became almost blind. Because of his great affection for his son, his lamentation grew like a blazing fire, and as he went to see the dead child, he kept slipping and falling on the ground. Surrounded by his ministers and other officers and the learned brāhmaṇas present, the King approached and fell unconscious at the child's feet, his hair and dress scattered. When the King, breathing heavily, regained consciousness, his eyes were tearful, and he could not speak.

52When the Queen saw her husband, King Citraketu, merged in great lamentation and saw the dead child, who was the only son in the family, she lamented in various ways. This increased the pain in the cores of the hearts of all the inhabitants of the palace, the ministers and all the brāhmaṇas.

53The garland of flowers decorating the Queen's head fell, and her hair scattered. Falling tears melted the collyrium on her eyes and moistened her breasts, which were covered with kuṅkuma powder. As she lamented the loss of her son, her loud crying resembled the sweet sound of a kuraī bird.

54Alas, O Providence, O Creator, You are certainly inexperienced in creation, for during the lifetime of a father You have caused the death of his son, thus acting in opposition to Your creative laws. If You are determined to contradict these laws, You are certainly the enemy of living entities and are never merciful.

55My Lord, You may say that there is no law that a father must die in the lifetime of his son and that a son must be born in the lifetime of his father, since everyone lives and dies according to his own fruitive activity. However, if fruitive activity is so strong that birth and death depend upon it, there is no need of a controller, or God. Again, if You say that a controller is needed

because the material energy does not have the power to act, one may answer that if the bonds of affection You have created are disturbed by fruitive action, no one will raise children with affection; instead, everyone will cruelly neglect his children. Since You have cut the bonds of affection that compel a parent to raise his child, You appear inexperienced and unintelligent.

56My dear son, I am helpless and very much aggrieved. You should not give up my company. Just look at your lamenting father. We are helpless because without a son we shall have to suffer the distress of going to the darkest hellish regions. You are the only hope by which we can get out of these dark regions. Therefore I request you not to go any further with the merciless Yama.

57My dear son, you have slept a long time. Now please get up. Your playmates are calling you to play. Since you must be very hungry, please get up and suck my breast and dissipate our lamentation.

58My dear son, I am certainly most unfortunate, for I can no longer see your mild smiling. You have closed your eyes forever. I therefore conclude that you have been taken from this planet to another, from which you will not return. My dear son, I can no longer hear your pleasing voice.

59ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Accompanied by his wife, who was thus lamenting for her dead son, King Citraketu began crying loudly with an open mouth, being greatly aggrieved.

60As the King and Queen lamented, all their male and female followers joined them in crying. Because of the sudden accident, all the citizens of the kingdom were almost unconscious.

61When the great sage Aṅgirā understood that the King was almost dead in an ocean of lamentation, he went there with Nārada Ṛṣi.

SB 6.15: The Saints Nārada and Aṅgirā Instruct King Citraketu

In this chapter, AṅgirāṚṣi, along with Nārada, consoles Citraketu as far as possible. Aṅgirā and Nārada Ṛṣi came to relieve the King from excessive lamentation by instructing him about the spiritual significance of life.

The great saints Aṅgirā and Nārada explained that the relationship between father and son is not factual; it is simply a representation of the illusory energy. The relationship did not exist before, nor will it stay in the future. By the arrangement of time, the relationship exists only in the present. One should not lament for temporary relationships. The entire cosmic manifestation is temporary; although not unreal, it is not factual. By the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, everything created in the material world is transient. By a temporary arrangement, a father begets a child, or a living entity becomes the child of a so-called father. This temporary arrangement is made by the Supreme Lord. Neither the father nor the son exists independently.

As the King listened to the great sages, he was relieved from his false lamentation, and then he inquired about their identity. The great sages presented who they were and instructed that all sufferings are due to the bodily conception of life. When one understands his spiritual identity and surrenders to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme spiritual person, one becomes actually happy. When one searches for happiness in matter, one must certainly lament for bodily relationships. Self-realization means spiritual realization of one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Such realization ends one's miserable material life.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: While King Citraketu, overcome by lamentation, lay like a dead

body at the side of the dead body of his son, the two great sages Nārada and Aṅgirā instructed him about spiritual consciousness as follows.

2O King, what relationship does the dead body for which you lament have with you, and what relationship do you have with him? You may say that you are now related as father and son, but do you think this relationship existed before? Does it truly exist now? Will it continue in the future?

3O King, as small particles of sand sometimes come together and are sometimes separated due to the force of the waves, the living entities who have accepted material bodies sometimes come together and are sometimes separated by the force of time.

4When seeds are sown in the ground, they sometimes grow into plants and sometimes do not. Sometimes the ground is not fertile, and the sowing of seeds is unproductive. Similarly, sometimes a prospective father, being impelled by the potency of the Supreme Lord, can beget a child, but sometimes conception does not take place. Therefore one should not lament over the artificial relationship of parenthood, which is ultimately controlled by the Supreme Lord.

5O King, both you and we your advisers, wives and ministers as well as everything moving and not moving throughout the entire cosmos at this time, are in a temporary situation. Before our birth this situation did not exist, and after our death it will exist no longer. Therefore our situation now is temporary, although it is not false.

6The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master and proprietor of everything, is certainly not interested in the temporary cosmic manifestation. Nonetheless, just as a boy at the beach creates something in which he is not interested, the Lord, keeping everything under His control, causes creation, maintenance and annihilation. He creates by engaging a father to beget a son, He maintains by engaging a government or king to see to the public's welfare, and He annihilates through agents for killing, such as snakes. The agents for creation, maintenance and annihilation have no independent potency, but because of the spell of the illusory energy, one thinks himself the creator, maintainer and annihilator.

7As from one seed another seed is generated, O King, so from one body [the body of the father], through another body [the body of the mother], a third body is generated [the body of a son]. As the elements of the material body are eternal, the living entity who appears through these material elements is also eternal.

8Divisions of generalization and specification, such as nationality and individuality, are the imaginations of persons who are not advanced in knowledge.

9Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus enlightened by the instructions of Nārada and Aṅgirā, King Citraketu became hopeful with knowledge. Wiping his shriveled face with his hand, the King began to speak.

10King Citraketu said: You have both come here dressed like avadhūtas, liberated persons, just to cover your identities, but I see that of all men, you are the most elevated in awareness. You know everything as it is. Therefore you are the greatest of all great personalities.

11Brāhmaṇas who are exalted to the position of Vaiṣṇavas, the most dear servants of Kṛṣṇa, sometimes dress like madmen. Just to benefit materialists like us, who are always attached to sense gratification, and just to dissipate our ignorance, these Vaiṣṇavas wander on the surface of the globe according to their desire.

12-15O great souls, I have heard that among the great and perfect persons wandering the

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surface of the earth to instruct knowledge to people covered by ignorance are Sanat-kumāra, Nārada, Ṛbhu, Aṅgirā, Devala, Asita, Apāntaratamā [Vyāsadeva], Mārkaṇḍeya, Gautama, Vasiṣṭha, Bhagavān Paraśurāma, Kapila, Śukadeva, Durvāsā, Yājñavalkya, Jātukarṇa and Aruṇi. Others are Romaśa, Cyavana, Dattātreya, Āsuri, Patañjali, the great sage Dhaumya who is like the head of the Vedas, the sage Paścaśikha, Hiranyaṅbha, Kauśalya, Śrutadeva and Ṛtadhvaja. You must certainly be among them.

16Because you are great personalities, you can give me real knowledge. I am as foolish as a village animal like a pig or dog because I am merged in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, please ignite the torch of knowledge to save me.

17Aṅgirā said: My dear King, when you desired to have a son, I approached you. Indeed, I am the same AṅgirāṚṣi who gave you this son. As for this ṛṣi, he is the great sage Nārada, the direct son of Lord Brahmā.

18-19My dear King, you are an advanced devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To be absorbed in lamentation for the loss of something material is unsuitable for a person like you. Therefore we have both come to relieve you from this false lamentation, which is due to your being merged in the darkness of ignorance. For those who are advanced in spiritual knowledge to be affected by material loss and gain is not at all desirable.

20When I first came to your home, I could have given you the supreme transcendental knowledge, but when I saw that your mind was absorbed in material things, I gave you only a son, who caused you jubilation and lamentation.

21-23My dear King, now you are actually experiencing the misery of a person who has sons and daughters. O King, owner of the state of Śūrasena, one's wife, his house, the opulence of his kingdom, and his various other opulences and objects of sense perception are all the same in that they are temporary. One's kingdom, military power, treasury, servants, ministers, friends and relatives are all causes of fear, illusion, lamentation and distress. They are like a gandharva-nagara, a nonexistent palace that one imagines to exist in the forest. Because they are impermanent, they are no better than illusions, dreams and mental concoctions.

24These visible objects like wife, children and property are like dreams and mental concoctions. Actually what we see has no permanent existence. It is sometimes seen and sometimes not. Only because of our past actions do we create such mental concoctions, and because of these concoctions, we perform further activities.

25The living entity in the bodily conception of life is absorbed in the body, which is a combination of the physical elements, the five senses for gathering knowledge, and the five senses of action, along with the mind. Through the mind the living entity suffers three kinds of tribulations adhibhautika, adhidaivika and adhyātmika. Therefore this body is a source of all miseries.

26Therefore, O King Citraketu, carefully consider the position of the ātmā. In other words, try to understand who you are whether body, mind or soul. Consider where you have come from, where you are going after giving up this body, and why you are under the control of material lamentation. Try to understand your real position in this way, and then you will be able to give up your unnecessary attachment. You will also be able to give up the belief that this material world, or anything not directly in touch with service to Kṛṣṇa, is eternal. Thus you will obtain peace.

27The great sage Nārada continued: My dear King, attentively receive from me a mantra, which is most auspicious. After accepting it from me, in seven nights you will be able to see the Lord

face to face.

28My dear King, in former days Lord Śiva and other demigods took shelter of the lotus feet of Saṅkarṣaṇa. Thus they immediately got free from the illusion of duality and achieved unequalled and unsurpassed glories in spiritual life. You will very soon attain that very same position.

SB 6.16: King Citraketu Meets the Supreme Lord

As related in this chapter, Citraketu was able to talk with his dead son and hear from him the truth of life. When Citraketu was appeased, the great sage Nārada gave him a *mantra*, and by chanting this *mantra* Citraketu found shelter at the lotus feet of Saṅkarṣaṇa.

The living entity is eternal. Thus he has neither birth nor death (*na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*). According to the reactions of one's fruitive activities, one takes birth in various species of life among the birds, beasts, trees, human beings, demigods and so on, thus rotating through various bodies. For a certain period of time, one receives a particular type of body as a son or father in a false relationship. All our relationships in this material world with friends, relatives or enemies consist of duality, in which one feels happy and distressed on the basis of illusion. The living entity is actually a spiritual soul who is part and parcel of God and has nothing to do with relationships in the world of duality. Therefore Nārada Muni advised Citraketu not to lament for his so-called dead son.

After hearing instructions from their dead child, Citraketu and his wife could understand that all relationships in this material world are causes of misery. The queens who had administered poison to the son of Kṛtadyuti were very much ashamed. They atoned for the sinful act of killing a child and gave up their aspiration to have sons. Thereafter, Nārada Muni chanted prayers to Nārāyaṇa, who exists as *catur-vyūha*, and instructed Citraketu about the Supreme Lord, who creates, maintains and annihilates everything and who is the master of the material nature. After instructing King Citraketu in this way, he returned to Brahmaloaka. These instructions about the Absolute Truth are called the *mahā-vidyā*. After being initiated by Nārada Muni, King Citraketu chanted the *mahā-vidyā*, and after one week he attained the presence of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, who was surrounded by the four Kumāras. The Lord was nicely dressed in bluish garments, with a helmet and ornaments of gold. His face appeared very happy. In the presence of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, Citraketu offered his obeisances and began to offer prayers.

In his prayers, Citraketu said that millions of universes rest in the pores of Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is limitless, having no beginning and end. The Lord is well known to the devotees for His eternity. The difference between worshiping the Lord and worshiping the demigods is that the worshiper of the Lord also becomes eternal, whereas whatever benedictions one can get from the demigods are impermanent. Unless one becomes a devotee, one cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

After Citraketu finished his prayers, the unlimited Supreme Lord explained knowledge of Himself to Citraketu.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King Parīkṣit, by his mystic power the great sage Nārada brought the dead son into the vision of all the lamenting relatives and then spoke as follows.

2Śrī Nārada Muni said: O living entity, all good fortune unto you. Just see your father and mother. All your friends and relatives are overwhelmed with grief because of your passing away.

3Because you died untimely, the balance of your lifetime still remains. Therefore you may reenter your body and enjoy the remainder of your life, surrounded by your friends and relatives. Accept the royal throne and all the opulences given by your father.

4By the mystic power of Nārada Muni, the living entity reentered his dead body for a short time and spoke in reply to Nārada Muni's request. He said: According to the results of my fruitive activities, I, the living being, transmigrate from one body to another, sometimes going to the species of the demigods, sometimes to the species of lower animals, sometimes among the vegetables, and sometimes to the human species. Therefore, in which birth were these my mother and father? No one is actually my mother and father. How can I accept these two people as my parents?

5In this material world, which advances like a river that carries away the living entity, all people become friends, relatives and enemies in due course of time. They also act neutrally, they mediate, they despise one another, and they act in many other relationships. Nonetheless, despite these various transactions, no one is permanently related.

6Just as gold and other commodities are continually transferred from one place to another in due course of purchase and sale, so the living entity, as a result of his fruitive activities, wanders throughout the entire universe, being injected into various bodies in different species of life by one kind of father after another.

7A few living entities are born in the human species, and others are born as animals. Although both are living entities, their relationships are impermanent. An animal may remain in the custody of a human being for some time, and then the same animal may be transferred to the possession of other human beings. As soon as the animal goes away, the former proprietor no longer has a sense of ownership. As long as the animal is in his possession he certainly has an affinity for it, but as soon as the animal is sold, the affinity is lost.

8Even though one living entity becomes connected with another because of a relationship based on bodies that are perishable, the living entity is eternal. Actually it is the body that is born or lost, not the living entity. One should not accept that the living entity takes birth or dies. The living being actually has no relationship with so-called fathers and mothers. As long as he appears as the son of a certain father and mother as a result of his past fruitive activities, he has a connection with the body given by that father and mother. Thus he falsely accepts himself as their son and acts affectionately. After he dies, however, the relationship is finished. Under these circumstances, one should not be falsely involved with jubilation and lamentation.

9The living entity is eternal and imperishable because he actually has no beginning and no end. He never takes birth or dies. He is the basic principle of all types of bodies, yet he does not belong to the bodily category. The living being is so sublime that he is equal in quality to the Supreme Lord. Nonetheless, because he is extremely small, he is prone to be illusioned by the external energy, and thus he creates various bodies for himself according to his different desires.

10For this living entity, no one is dear, nor is anyone unfavorable. He makes no distinction between that which is his own and that which belongs to anyone else. He is one without a second; in other words, he is not affected by friends and enemies, well-wishers or mischief-mongers. He is only an observer, a witness, of the different qualities of men.

11The Supreme Lord [ātmā], the creator of cause and effect, does not accept the happiness and distress that result from fruitive actions. He is completely independent of having to accept a material body, and because He has no material body, He is always neutral. The living entities, being part and parcel of the Lord, possess His qualities in a minute quantity. Therefore one

should not be affected by lamentation.

12ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the conditioned soul [jīva] in the form of Mahārāja Citraketu's son had spoken in this way and then left, Citraketu and the other relatives of the dead son were all astonished. Thus they cut off the shackles of their affection, which was due to their relationship with him, and gave up their lamentation.

13After the relatives had discharged their duties by performing the proper funeral ceremonies and burning the dead child's body, they gave up the affection that leads to illusion, lamentation, fear and pain. Such affection is undoubtedly difficult to give up, but they gave it up very easily.

14Queen Kṛtyadyuti's co-wives, who had poisoned the child, were very much ashamed, and they lost all their bodily luster. While lamenting, O King, they remembered the instructions of Aṅgirā and gave up their ambition to bear children. Following the directions of the brāhmaṇas, they went to the bank of the Yamunā, where they bathed and atoned for their sinful activities.

15Thus enlightened by the instructions of the brāhmaṇas Aṅgirā and Nārada, King Citraketu became fully aware of spiritual knowledge. As an elephant becomes free from a muddy reservoir of water, King Citraketu came out of the dark well of family life.

16The King bathed in the water of the Yamunā, and according to prescribed duties, he offered oblations of water to the forefathers and demigods. Very gravely controlling his senses and mind, he then offered his respects and obeisances to the sons of Lord Brahmā [Aṅgirā and Nārada].

17Thereafter, being very much pleased with Citraketu, who was a self-controlled devotee and surrendered soul, Nārada, the most powerful sage, spoke to him the following transcendental instructions.

18-19[Nārada gave Citraketu the following mantra.] O Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, who are addressed by the oṃkāra [praṇava], I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. O Lord Vāsudeva, I meditate upon You. O Lord Pradyumna, Lord Aniruddha and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, I offer You my respectful obeisances. O reservoir of spiritual potency, O supreme bliss, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are self-sufficient and most peaceful. O ultimate truth, one without a second, You are realized as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān and are therefore the reservoir of all knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

20Perceiving Your personal bliss, You are always transcendental to the waves of material nature. Therefore, my Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. You are the supreme controller of the senses, and Your expansions of form are unlimited. You are the greatest, and therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

21The words and mind of the conditioned soul cannot approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for material names and forms are not applicable to the Lord, who is entirely spiritual, beyond the conception of gross and subtle forms. The impersonal Brahman is another of His forms. May He, by His pleasure, protect us.

22As pots made completely of earth are situated on earth after being created and are transformed into earth again when broken, this cosmic manifestation is caused by the Supreme Brahman, situated in the Supreme Brahman, and annihilated in the same Supreme Brahman. Therefore, since the Supreme Lord is the cause of Brahman, let us offer Him our respectful obeisances.

23The Supreme Brahman emanates from the Supreme Personality of Godhead and expands like the sky. Although untouched by anything material, it exists within and without. Nonetheless, the mind, intelligence, senses and living force can neither touch Him nor know Him. I offer unto Him my respectful obeisances.

24As iron has the power to burn when made red-hot in the association of fire, so the body, senses, living force, mind and intelligence, although merely lumps of matter, can function in their activities when infused with a particle of consciousness by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As iron cannot burn unless heated by fire, the bodily senses cannot act unless favored by the Supreme Brahman.

25O transcendental Lord, who are situated in the topmost planet of the spiritual world, Your two lotus feet are always massaged by a multitude of the best devotees with their lotus-bud hands. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, complete in six opulences. You are the supreme person mentioned in the Puruṣa-sūkta prayers. You are the most perfect, self-realized master of all mystic power. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

26ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Nārada, having become the spiritual master of Citraketu, instructed him fully in this prayer because Citraketu was fully surrendered. O King Parīkṣit, Nārada then left with the great sage Aṅgirā for the topmost planet, known as Brahmaloaka.

27Fasting and drinking only water, Citraketu for one week continuously chanted with great care and attention the mantra given by Nārada Muni.

28O King Parīkṣit, after only one week of repeatedly practicing the mantra received from the spiritual master, Citraketu achieved the rule of the planet of the Vidyādhara as an intermediate product of his spiritual advancement in knowledge.

29Thereafter, within a very few days, by the influence of the mantra that Citraketu had practiced, his mind became increasingly enlightened in spiritual progress, and he attained shelter at the lotus feet of Anantadeva.

30Upon reaching the shelter of Lord Śeṣa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Citraketu saw that He was as white as the white fibers of a lotus flower. He was dressed in bluish garments and adorned with a brilliantly glittering helmet, armlets, belt and bangles. His face was smiling, and His eyes were reddish. He was surrounded by such exalted liberated persons as Sanat-kumāra.

31As soon as Mahārāja Citraketu saw the Supreme Lord, he was cleansed of all material contamination and situated in his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, being completely purified. He became silent and grave, and because of love for the Lord, tears fell from his eyes, and his hairs stood on end. With great devotion and love, he offered his respectful obeisances unto the original Personality of Godhead.

32With tears of love and affection, Citraketu repeatedly moistened the resting place of the Supreme Lord's lotus feet. Because his voice was choked in ecstasy, for a considerable time he was unable to utter any of the letters of the alphabet to offer the Lord suitable prayers.

33Thereafter, by controlling his mind with his intelligence and thus restricting his senses from external engagements, he recovered suitable words with which to express his feelings. Thus he began offering prayers to the Lord, who is the personification of the holy scriptures [the sāvata-saṁhitās like the Brahma-saṁhitā and the Nārada-paṣcarātra] and who is the spiritual master of all. He offered his prayers as follows.

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34Citraketu said: O unconquerable Lord, although You cannot be conquered by anyone, You are certainly conquered by devotees who have control of the mind and senses. They can keep You under their control because You are causelessly merciful to devotees who desire no material profit from You. Indeed, You give Yourself to them, and because of this You also have full control over Your devotees.

35My dear Lord, this cosmic manifestation and its creation, maintenance and annihilation are all but Your opulences. Since Lord Brahmā and the other creators are nothing but small portions of a portion of You, their partial power to create does not make them God [Īśvara]. Their consciousness of themselves as separate Lords is therefore merely false prestige. It is not valid.

36You exist in the beginning, middle and end of everything, from the most minute particle of the cosmic manifestationthe atomto the gigantic universes and total material energy. Nonetheless, You are eternal, having no beginning, end or middle. You are perceived to exist in these three phases, and thus You are permanent. When the cosmic manifestation does not exist, You exist as the original potency.

37Every universe is covered by seven layers earth, water, fire, air, sky, the total energy and false egoeach ten times greater than the previous one. There are innumerable universes besides this one, and although they are unlimitedly large, they move about like atoms in You. Therefore You are called unlimited [ananta].

38O Lord, O Supreme, unintelligent persons who thirst for sense enjoyment and who worship various demigods are no better than animals in the human form of life. Because of their animalistic propensities, they fail to worship Your Lordship, and instead they worship the insignificant demigods, who are but small sparks of Your glory. With the destruction of the entire universe, including the demigods, the benedictions received from the demigods also vanish, just like the nobility when a king is no longer in power.

39O Supreme Lord, if persons obsessed with material desires for sense gratification through material opulence worship You, who are the source of all knowledge and are transcendental to material qualities, they are not subject to material rebirth, just as sterilized or fried seeds do not produce plants. Living entities are subjected to the repetition of birth and death because they are conditioned by material nature, but since You are transcendental, one who is inclined to associate with You in transcendence escapes the conditions of material nature.

40O unconquerable one, when You spoke about bhāgavata-dharma, which is the uncontaminated religious system for achieving the shelter of Your lotus feet, that was Your victory. Persons who have no material desires, like the Kumāras, who are self-satisfied sages, worship You to be liberated from material contamination. In other words, they accept the process of bhāgavata-dharma to achieve shelter at Your lotus feet.

41Being full of contradictions, all forms of religion but bhāgavata-dharma work under conceptions of fruitive results and distinctions of “you and I” and “yours and mine.” The followers of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam have no such consciousness. They are all Kṛṣṇa conscious, thinking that they are Kṛṣṇa’s and Kṛṣṇa is theirs. There are other, low-class religious systems, which are contemplated for the killing of enemies or the gain of mystic power, but such religious systems, being full of passion and envy, are impure and temporary. Because they are full of envy, they are full of irreligion.

42How can a religious system that produces envy of one’s self and of others be beneficial for oneself and for them? What is auspicious about following such a system? What is actually to be gained? By causing pain to one’s own self due to self-envy and by causing pain to others, one

arouses Your anger and practices irreligion.

43My dear Lord, one's occupational duty is instructed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and Bhagavad-gītā according to Your point of view, which never deviates from the highest goal of life. Those who follow their occupational duties under Your supervision, being equal to all living entities, moving and nonmoving, and not considering high and low, are called Āryans. Such Āryans worship You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44My Lord, it is not impossible for one to be immediately freed from all material contamination by seeing You. Not to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing the holy name of Your Lordship only once, even caṇḍālas, men of the lowest class, are freed from all material contamination. Under the circumstances, who will not be freed from material contamination simply by seeing You?

45Therefore, my dear Lord, simply seeing You has now wiped away all the contamination of sinful activities and their results of material attachment and lusty desires, which always filled my mind and the core of my heart. Whatever is predicted by the great sage Nārada Muni cannot be otherwise. In other words, I have obtained Your audience as a result of being trained by Nārada Muni.

46O unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, whatever a living entity does in this material world is well known to You because You are the Supersoul. In the presence of the sun there is nothing to be revealed by the light of a glowworm. Similarly, because You know everything, in Your presence there is nothing for me to make known.

47My dear Lord, You are the creator, maintainer and annihilator of this cosmic manifestation, but persons who are too materialistic and who always see separateness do not have eyes with which to see You. They cannot understand Your real position, and therefore they conclude that the cosmic manifestation is independent of Your opulence. My Lord, You are the supreme pure, and You are full in all six opulences. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

48My dear Lord, it is after You endeavor that Lord Brahmā, Indra and the other directors of the cosmic manifestation become occupied with their activities. It is after You perceive the material energy, My Lord, that the senses begin to perceive. The Supreme Personality of Godhead holds all the universes on His heads like seeds of mustard. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, that Supreme Personality, who has thousands of hoods.

49Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Anantadeva, being very much pleased with the prayers offered by Citraketu, the King of the Vidyādharas, replied to him as follows, O best of the Kuru dynasty, Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

50The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Anantadeva, replied as follows: O King, as a result of your having accepted the instructions spoken about Me by the great sages Nārada and Aṅgirā, you have become completely aware of transcendental knowledge. Because you are now educated in the spiritual science, you have seen Me face to face. Therefore you are now completely perfect.

51All living entities, moving and nonmoving, are My expansions and are separate from Me. I am the Supersoul of all living beings, who exist because I manifest them. I am the form of the transcendental vibrations like omkāra and Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Rāma, and I am the Supreme Absolute Truth. These two forms of Mine namely, the transcendental sound and the eternally blissful spiritual form of the Deity, are My eternal forms; they are not material.

52In this world of matter, which the conditioned soul accepts as consisting of enjoyable resources, the conditioned soul expands, thinking that he is the enjoyer of the material world. Similarly, the material world expands in the living entity as a source of enjoyment. In this way they both expand, but because they are My energies, they are both pervaded by Me. As the Supreme Lord, I am the cause of these effects, and one should know that both of them rest in Me.

53-54When a person is in deep sleep, he dreams and sees in himself many other objects, such as great mountains and rivers or perhaps even the entire universe, although they are far away. Sometimes when one awakens from a dream he sees that he is in a human form, lying in his bed in one place. Then he sees himself, in terms of various conditions, as belonging to a particular nationality, family and so on. All the conditions of deep sleep, dreaming and wakefulness are but energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should always remember the original creator of these conditions, the Supreme Lord, who is unaffected by them.

55Know Me to be the Supreme Brahman, the all-pervading Supersoul through whom the sleeping living entity can understand his dreaming condition and his happiness beyond the activities of the material senses. That is to say, I am the cause of the activities of the sleeping living being.

56If one's dreams during sleep are merely subject matters witnessed by the Supersoul, how can the living entity, who is different from the Supersoul, remember the activities of dreams? The experiences of one person cannot be understood by another. Therefore the knower of the facts, the living entity who inquires into the incidents manifested in dreams and wakefulness, is different from the circumstantial activities. That knowing factor is Brahman. In other words, the quality of knowing belongs to the living entities and to the Supreme Soul. Thus the living entity can also experience the activities of dreams and wakefulness. In both stages the knower is unchanged, but is qualitatively one with the Supreme Brahman.

57When a living entity, thinking himself different from Me, forgets his spiritual identity of qualitative oneness with Me in eternity, knowledge and bliss, his material, conditional life begins. In other words, instead of identifying his interest with Mine, he becomes interested in his bodily expansions like his wife, children and material possessions. In this way, by the influence of his actions, one body comes from another, and after one death, another death takes place.

58A human being can attain perfection in life by self-realization through the Vedic literature and its practical application. This is possible especially for a human being born in India, the land of piety. A man who obtains birth in such a convenient position but does not understand his self is unable to achieve the highest perfection, even if he is exalted to life in the higher planetary systems.

59Remembering the great trouble found in the field of activities performed for fruitive results, and remembering how one receives the reverse of the results one desires whether from material actions or from the fruitive activities recommended in the Vedic literatures an intelligent man should cease from the desire for fruitive actions, for by such endeavors one cannot achieve the ultimate goal of life. On the other hand, if one acts without desires for fruitive results in other words, if one engages in devotional activities he can achieve the highest goal of life with freedom from miserable conditions. Considering this, one should cease from material desires.

60As husband and wife, a man and woman plan together to attain happiness and decrease unhappiness, working jointly in many ways, but because their activities are full of desires, these activities are never a source of happiness, and they never diminish distress. On the

contrary, they are a cause of great unhappiness.

61-62 One should understand that the activities of persons who are proud of their material experience bring only results contradictory to those such persons conceive while awake, sleeping and deeply sleeping. One should further understand that the spirit soul, although very difficult for the materialist to perceive, is above all these conditions, and by the strength of one's discrimination, one should give up the desire for fruitive results in the present life and in the next. Thus becoming experienced in transcendental knowledge, one should become My devotee.

63 Persons who try to reach the ultimate goal of life must expertly observe the Supreme Absolute Person and the living entity, who are one in quality in their relationship as part and whole. This is the ultimate understanding of life. There is no better truth than this.

64 O King, if you accept this conclusion of Mine, being unattached to material enjoyment, adhering to Me with great faith and thus becoming proficient and fully aware of knowledge and its practical application in life, you will achieve the highest perfection by attaining Me.

65 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After thus instructing Citraketu and assuring him of perfection in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme spiritual master, the supreme soul, Saṅkarṣaṇa, disappeared from that place as Citraketu looked on.

SB 6.17: Mother Pārvatī Curses Citraketu

The Seventeenth Chapter is summarized as follows. This chapter describes Citraketu's receiving the body of an *asura*, or demon, because of joking with Lord Śiva.

After personally talking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, King Citraketu enjoyed life in his airplane with the women of the Vidyādhara planet. Engaging in the congregational chanting of the glories of the Lord, he began flying his plane and traveling in outer space. One day while traveling like this, he wandered into the bowers of Sumeru Mountain, where he came upon Lord Śiva embracing Pārvatī, surrounded by an assembly of Siddhas, Cāraṇas and great sages. Seeing Lord Śiva in that situation, Citraketu laughed very loudly, but Pārvatī became very angry at him and cursed him. Because of this curse, Citraketu later appeared as the demon Vṛtrāsura.

Citraketu, however, was not at all afraid of Pārvatī's curse, and thus he spoke as follows: "Everyone in human society enjoys happiness and distress according to his past deeds and in this way travels in the material world. Therefore no one is responsible for his happiness and distress. One is controlled by the influence of material nature in the material world, yet one thinks himself the doer of everything. In this material world, which is made of the external energy of the Supreme Lord, one is sometimes cursed and sometimes favored, and thus he sometimes enjoys in the upper planetary systems and sometimes suffers in the lower planets, but all these situations are the same because they are within this material world. None of these positions has any factual existence, for all of them are temporary. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate controller because the material world is created, maintained and annihilated under His control while He nonetheless remains neutral to these different transformations of the material world in time and space. The material, external energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is in charge of this material world. The Lord helps the world by creating situations for the living entities within it."

When Citraketu spoke in this way, all the members in the great assembly in which Lord Śiva and Pārvatī were present were astonished. Then Lord Śiva began speaking about the devotees of the Lord. A devotee is neutral in all conditions of life, whether in the heavenly planets or

hellish planets, whether liberated from the material world or conditioned by it, and whether blessed with happiness or subjected to distress. These are all merely dualities created by the external energy. Being influenced by the external energy, the living entity accepts a gross and subtle material body, and in this illusory position he apparently suffers miseries, although everyone is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. The so-called demigods consider themselves independent lords, and in this way they are misled from understanding that all living entities are part of the Supreme. This chapter concludes by glorifying the devotee and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After offering obeisances to the direction from which Ananta, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, had disappeared, Citraketu began traveling in outer space as the head of the Vidyādhara.

2-3Being praised by great sages and saints and by the inhabitants of Siddhaloka and Cāraṇaloka, Citraketu, the most powerful mystic yogī, wandered about enjoying life for millions of years. With bodily strength and senses free from deterioration, he traveled within the valleys of Sumeru Mountain, which is the place of perfection for various kinds of mystic power. In those valleys he enjoyed life with the women of Vidyādhara-loka by chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord, Hari.

4-5One time while King Citraketu was traveling in outer space on a brilliantly effulgent airplane given to him by Lord Viṣṇu, he saw Lord Śiva, surrounded by Siddhas and Cāraṇas. Lord Śiva was sitting in an assembly of great saintly persons and embracing Pārvatī on his lap with his arm. Citraketu laughed loudly and spoke, within the hearing of Pārvatī.

6Citraketu said: Lord Śiva, the spiritual master of the general populace, is the best of all living entities who have accepted material bodies. He enunciates the system of religion. Yet how wonderful it is that he is embracing his wife, Pārvatī, in the midst of an assembly of great saintly persons.

7Lord Śiva, whose hair is matted on his head, has certainly undergone great austerities and penances. Indeed, he is the president in the assembly of strict followers of Vedic principles. Nonetheless, he is seated with his wife on his lap in the midst of saintly persons and is embracing her as if he were a shameless, ordinary human being.

8Ordinary conditioned persons generally embrace their wives and enjoy their company in solitary places. How wonderful it is that Lord Mahādeva, although a great master of austerity, is embracing his wife openly in the midst of an assembly of great saints.

9Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after hearing Citraketu's statement, Lord Śiva, the most powerful personality, whose knowledge is fathomless, simply smiled and remained silent, and all the members of the assembly followed the lord by not saying anything.

10Not knowing the prowess of Lord Śiva and Pārvatī, Citraketu strongly criticized them. His statements were not at all pleasing, and therefore the goddess Pārvatī, being very angry, spoke as follows to Citraketu, who thought himself better than Lord Śiva in controlling the senses.

11The goddess Pārvatī said: Alas, has this upstart now received a post from which to punish shameless persons like us? Has he been appointed ruler, carrier of the rod of punishment? Is he now the only master of everything?

12Alas, Lord Brahmā, who has taken his birth from the lotus flower, does not know the principles of religion, nor do the great saints like Bhṛgu and Nārada, nor the four Kumāras,

headed by Sanat-kumāra. Manu and Kapila have also forgotten the religious principles. I suppose it to be because of this that they have not tried to stop Lord Śiva from behaving improperly.

13This Citraketu is the lowest of kṣatriyas, for he has impudently overridden Brahmā and the other demigods by insulting Lord Śiva, upon whose lotus feet they always meditate. Lord Śiva is personified religion and the spiritual master of the entire world, and therefore Citraketu must be punished.

14This person is puffed up because of his achievements, thinking, "I am the best." He does not deserve to approach the shelter of Lord Viṣṇu's lotus feet, which are worshiped by all saintly persons, for he is impudent, thinking himself greatly important.

15O impudent one, my dear son, now take birth in a low, sinful family of demons so that you will not commit such an offense again toward exalted, saintly persons in this world.

16ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King Parīkṣit, when Citraketu was cursed by Pārvatī, he descended from his airplane, bowed before her with great humility and pleased her completely.

17Citraketu said: My dear mother, with my own hands folded together I accept the curse upon me. I do not mind the curse, for happiness and distress are given by the demigods as a result of one's past deeds.

18Deluded by ignorance, the living entity wanders in the forest of this material world, enjoying the happiness and distress resulting from his past deeds, everywhere and at all times. [Therefore, my dear mother, neither you nor I am to be blamed for this incident.]

19In this material world, neither the living entity himself nor others [friends and enemies] are the cause of material happiness and distress. But because of gross ignorance, the living entity thinks that he and others are the cause.

20This material world resembles the waves of a constantly flowing river. Therefore, what is a curse and what is a favor? What are the heavenly planets, and what are the hellish planets? What is actually happiness, and what is actually distress? Because the waves flow constantly, none of them has an eternal effect.

21The Supreme Personality of Godhead is one. Unaffected by the conditions of the material world, He creates all the conditioned souls by His own personal potency. Because of being contaminated by the material energy, the living entity is put into ignorance and thus into different conditions of bondage. Sometimes, by knowledge, the living entity is given liberation. In sattva-guṇa and rajo-guṇa, he is subjected to happiness and distress.

22The Supreme Personality of Godhead is equally disposed toward all living entities. Therefore no one is very dear to Him, and no one is a great enemy for Him; no one is His friend, and no one is His relative. Being unattached to the material world, He has no affection for so-called happiness or hatred for so-called distress. The two terms happiness and distress are relative. Since the Lord is always happy, for Him there is no question of distress.

23Although the Supreme Lord is unattached to our happiness and distress according to karma, and although no one is His enemy or favorite, He creates pious and impious activities through the agency of His material potency. Thus for the continuation of the materialistic way of life He creates happiness and distress, good fortune and bad, bondage and liberation, birth and death.

24O mother, you are now unnecessarily angry, but since all my happiness and distress are

destined by my past activities, I do not plead to be excused or relieved from your curse. Although what I have said is not wrong, please let whatever you think is wrong be pardoned.

25ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, subduer of the enemy, after Citraketu satisfied Lord Śiva and his wife, Pārvatī, he boarded his airplane and left as they looked on. When Lord Śiva and Pārvatī saw that Citraketu, although informed of the curse, was unafraid, they smiled, being fully astonished by his behavior.

26Thereafter, in the presence of the great sage Nārada, the demons, the inhabitants of Siddhaloka, and his personal associates, Lord Śiva, who is most powerful, spoke to his wife, Pārvatī, while they all listened.

27Lord Śiva said: My dear beautiful Pārvatī, have you seen the greatness of the Vaiṣṇavas? Being servants of the servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, they are great souls and are not interested in any kind of material happiness.

28Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord.

29Because of the actions of the Supreme Lord's external energy, the living entities are conditioned in contact with material bodies. The dualities of happiness and distress, birth and death, curses and favors, are natural by-products of this contact in the material world.

30As one mistakenly considers a flower garland to be a snake or experiences happiness and distress in a dream, so, in the material world, by a lack of careful consideration, we differentiate between happiness and distress, considering one good and the other bad.

31Persons engaged in devotional service to Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, have naturally perfect knowledge and detachment from this material world. Therefore such devotees are not interested in the so-called happiness or so-called distress of this world.

32Neither I [Lord Śiva], nor Brahmā, nor the Aśvinī-kumāras, nor Nārada or the other great sages who are Brahmā's sons, nor even the demigods can understand the pastimes and personality of the Supreme Lord. Although we are part of the Supreme Lord, we consider ourselves independent, separate controllers, and thus we cannot understand His identity.

33He holds no one as very dear and no one as inimical. He has no one for His own relative, and no one is alien to Him. He is actually the soul of the soul of all living entities. Thus He is the auspicious friend of all living beings and is very near and dear to all of them.

34-35This magnanimous Citraketu is a dear devotee of the Lord. He is equal to all living entities and is free from attachment and hatred. Similarly, I am also very dear to Lord Nārāyaṇa. Therefore, no one should be astonished to see the activities of the most exalted devotees of Nārāyaṇa, for they are free from attachment and envy. They are always peaceful, and they are equal to everyone.

36ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, after hearing this speech by her husband, the demigoddess [Umā, the wife of Lord Śiva] gave up her astonishment at the behavior of King Citraketu and became steady in intelligence.

37The great devotee Citraketu was so powerful that he was quite competent to curse mother Pārvatī in retaliation, but instead of doing so he very humbly accepted the curse and bowed his head before Lord Śiva and his wife. This is very much to be appreciated as the standard

behavior of a Vaiṣṇava.

38Being cursed by mother Durgā [Bhavānī, the wife of Lord Śiva], that same Citraketu accepted birth in a demoniac species of life. Although still fully equipped with transcendental knowledge and practical application of that knowledge in life, he appeared as a demon at the fire sacrifice performed by Tvaṣṭā, and thus he became famous as Vṛtrāsura.

39My dear King Parīkṣit, you inquired from me how Vṛtrāsura, a great devotee, took birth in a demoniac family. Thus I have tried to explain to you everything about this.

40Citraketu was a great devotee [mahātmā]. If one hears this history of Citraketu from a pure devotee, the listener also is freed from the conditional life of material existence.

41One who rises from bed early in the morning and recites this history of Citraketu, controlling his words and mind and remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will return home, back to Godhead, without difficulty.

SB 6.18: Diti Vows to Kill King Indra

This chapter gives the history of Diti, the wife of Kaśyapa, and how she followed a vow to have a son who would kill Indra. It also describes how Indra attempted to foil her plan by cutting to pieces the son within her womb.

In relation to Tvaṣṭā and his descendants, there is a description of the dynasty of the Ādityas (sons of Aditi) and other demigods. Prṣṇi, the wife of Aditi's fifth son named Savitā, had three daughters Sāvitrī, Vyāhṛti and Trayī and very exalted sons named Agnihotra, Paśu, Soma, Cāturmāsya and the five Mahāyajas. Siddhi, the wife of Bhaga, had three sons, named Mahimā, Vibhu and Prabhu, and she also had one daughter, whose name was Āśī. Dhātā had four wives Kuhū, Sinīvālī, Rākā and Anumati who had four sons, named Sāyam, Darśa, Prātaḥ and Pūrṇamāsa respectively. Kriyā, the wife of Vidhātā, gave birth to the five Purīṣyas, who are representatives of five kinds of fire-gods. Bṛghu, the mind-born son of Brahmā, took his birth again from Carṣaṇī, the wife of Varuṇa, and the great sage Vālmīki appeared from Varuṇa's semen. Agastya and Vasiṣṭha were two sons of Varuṇa and Mitra. Upon seeing the beauty of Urvaśī, Mitra and Varuṇa discharged semen, which they kept in an earthen pot. From that pot, Agastya and Vasiṣṭha appeared. Mitra had a wife named Revatī, who gave birth to three sons Utsarga, Ariṣṭa and Pippala. Aditi had twelve sons, of whom Indra was the eleventh. Indra's wife was named Paulomī (Śacīdevī). She gave birth to three sons Jayanta, Rṣabha and Mīdhuṣa. By His own powers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as Vāmanadeva. From His wife, whose name was Kīrti, appeared a son named Bṛhatśloka. Bṛhatśloka's first son was known as Saubhaga. This is a description of the sons of Aditi. A description of Āditya Urukrama, who is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will be offered in the Eighth Canto.

The demons born of Diti are also described in this chapter. In the dynasty of Diti appeared the great saintly devotee Prahlāda and also Bali, Prahlāda's grandson. Hiranyakaśipu and Hiranyākṣa were the first sons of Diti. Hiranyakaśipu and his wife, whose name was Kayādhu, had four sons Samhlāda, Anuhlāda, Hlāda and Prahlāda. They also had one daughter, whose name was Simhikā. In association with the demon Vipracit, Simhikā bore a son named Rāhu, whose head was severed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛti, the wife of Samhlāda, bore a son named Paścajana. Hlāda's wife, whose name was Dhamani, gave birth to two sons Vātāpi and Ilvala. Ilvala put Vātāpi into the form of a ram and gave him to Agastya to eat. Anuhlāda, in the womb of his wife, Sūryā, begot two sons, named Bāṣkala and Mahiṣa.

Prahlaḍa's son was known as Virocana, and his grandson was known as Bali Mahārāja. Bali Mahārāja had one hundred sons, of whom Bāṇa was the eldest.

After describing the dynasty of the Ādityas and the other demigods, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes Diti's sons known as the Maruts and how they were elevated to the position of demigods. Just to help Indra, Lord Viṣṇu had killed Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu. Because of this, Diti was very envious, and she was eager to have a son who could kill Indra. By her service, she enchanted Kaśyapa Muni in order to beg from him a greater son to do this. In corroboration of the Vedic injunction *vidvāmsam api karṣati*, Kaśyapa Muni was attracted to his beautiful wife and promised to grant her any request. When, however, she requested a son who would kill Indra, he condemned himself, and he advised his wife Diti to follow the Vaiṣṇava ritualistic ceremonies to purify herself. When Diti, following the instructions of Kaśyapa, engaged in devotional service, Indra could understand her purpose, and he began observing all her activities. One day, Indra had the opportunity to see her deviating from devotional service. Thus he entered her womb and cut her son into forty-nine parts. In this way the forty-nine kinds of air known as the Maruts appeared, but because Diti had performed the Vaiṣṇava ritualistic ceremonies, all the sons became Vaiṣṇavas.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Pṛṣṇi, who was the wife of Savitā, the fifth of the twelve sons of Aditi, gave birth to three daughtersSāvitrī, Vyāhṛti and Trayīand the sons named Agnihotra, Paśu, Soma, Cāturmāsyā and the five Mahāyajṣas.

2O King, Siddhi, who was the wife of Bhaga, the sixth son of Aditi, bore three sons, named Mahimā, Vibhu and Prabhu, and one extremely beautiful daughter, whose name was Āśī.

3-4Dhātā, the seventh son of Aditi, had four wives, named Kuhū, Sinīvālī, Rākā and Anumati. These wives begot four sons, named Sāyam, Darśa, Prātaḥ and Pūrṇamāsa respectively. The wife of Vidhātā, the eighth son of Aditi, was named Kriyā. In her Vidhātā begot the five fire-gods named the Purīṣyas. The wife of Varuṇa, the ninth son of Aditi, was named Carṣaṇī. Bhṛgu, the son of Brahmā, took birth again in her womb.

5By the semen of Varuṇa, the great mystic Vālmīki took birth from an anthill. Bhṛgu and Vālmīki were specific sons of Varuṇa, whereas Agastya and Vasiṣṭha Ṛṣis were the common sons of Varuṇa and Mitra, the tenth son of Aditi.

6Upon seeing Urvaśī, the celestial society girl, both Mitra and Varuṇa discharged semen, which they preserved in an earthen pot. The two sons Agastya and Vasiṣṭha later appeared from that pot, and they are therefore the common sons of Mitra and Varuṇa. Mitra begot three sons in the womb of his wife, whose name was Revatī. Their names were Utsarga, Ariṣṭa and Pippala.

7O King Parīkṣit, Indra, the King of the heavenly planets and eleventh son of Aditi, begot three sons, named Jayanta, Ṛṣabha and Mīdhuṣa, in the womb of his wife, Paulomī. Thus we have heard.

8By His own potency, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has multifarious potencies, appeared in the form of a dwarf as Urukrama, the twelfth son of Aditi. In the womb of His wife, whose name was Kīrti, He begot one son, named Bṛhatśloka, who had many sons, headed by Saubhaga.

9Later [in the Eighth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam] I shall describe how Urukrama, Lord Vāmanadeva, appeared as the son of the great sage Kaśyapa and how He covered the three worlds with three steps. I shall describe the uncommon activities He performed, His qualities, His power and how He took birth from the womb of Aditi.

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10 Now let me describe the sons of Diti, who were begotten by Kaśyapa but who became demons. In this demoniac family the great devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja appeared, and Bali Mahārāja also appeared in that family. The demons are technically known as Daityas because they proceeded from the womb of Diti.

11 First the two sons named Hiranyakaśipu and Hiranyākṣa took birth from Diti's womb. Both of them were very powerful and were worshiped by the Daityas and Dānavas.

12-13 The wife of Hiranyakaśipu was known as Kayādhu. She was the daughter of Jambha and a descendant of Danu. She gave birth to four consecutive sons, known as Samhlāda, Anuhlāda, Hlāda and Prahlāda. The sister of these four sons was known as Simhikā. She married the demon named Vipracit and gave birth to another demon, named Rāhu.

14 While Rāhu, in disguise, was drinking nectar among the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead severed his head. The wife of Samhlāda was named Kṛti. By union with Samhlāda, Kṛti gave birth to a son named Paścajana.

15 The wife of Hlāda was named Dhamani. She gave birth to two sons, named Vātāpi and Ilvala. When Agastya Muni became Ilvala's guest, Ilvala served him a feast by cooking Vātāpi, who was in the shape of a ram.

16 The wife of Anuhlāda was named Sūryā. She gave birth to two sons, named Bāṣkala and Mahiṣa. Prahlāda had one son, Virocana, whose wife gave birth to Bali Mahārāja.

17 Thereafter, Bali Mahārāja begot one hundred sons in the womb of Aśanā. Of these one hundred sons, King Bāṇa was the eldest. The activities of Bali Mahārāja, which are very laudable, will be described later [in the Eighth Canto].

18 Since King Bāṇa was a great worshiper of Lord Śiva, he became one of Lord Śiva's most celebrated associates. Even now, Lord Śiva protects King Bāṇa's capital and always stands beside him.

19 The forty-nine Marut demigods were also born from the womb of Diti. None of them had sons. Although they were born of Diti, King Indra gave them a position as demigods.

20 King Parīkṣit inquired: My dear lord, due to their birth, the forty-nine Maruts must have been obsessed with a demoniac mentality. Why did Indra, the King of heaven, convert them into demigods? Did they perform any rituals or pious activities?

21 My dear brāhmaṇa, I and all the sages present with me are eager to know about this. Therefore, O great soul, kindly explain to us the reason.

22 Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: O great sage Śaunaka, after hearing Mahārāja Parīkṣit speak respectfully and briefly on topics essential to hear, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who was well aware of everything, praised his endeavor with great pleasure and replied.

23 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Just to help Indra, Lord Viṣṇu killed the two brothers Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu. Because of their being killed, their mother, Diti, overwhelmed with lamentation and anger, contemplated as follows.

24 Lord Indra, who is very much fond of sense gratification, has killed the two brothers Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu by means of Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore Indra is cruel, hardhearted and sinful. When will I, having killed him, rest with a pacified mind?

25When dead, the bodies of all the rulers known as kings and great leaders will be transformed into worms, stool or ashes. If one enviously kills others for the protection of such a body, does he actually know the true interest of life? Certainly he does not, for if one is envious of other entities, he surely goes to hell.

26Diti thought: Indra considers his body eternal, and thus he has become unrestrained. I therefore wish to have a son who can remove Indra's madness. Let me adopt some means to help me in this.

27-28Thinking in this way [with a desire for a son to kill Indra], Diti began constantly acting to satisfy Kaśyapa by her pleasing behavior. O King, Diti always carried out Kaśyapa's orders very faithfully, as he desired. With service, love, humility and control, with words spoken very sweetly to satisfy her husband, and with smiles and glances at him, Diti attracted his mind and brought it under her control.

29Although Kaśyapa Muni was a learned scholar, he was captivated by Diti's artificial behavior, which brought him under her control. Therefore he assured his wife that he would fulfill her desires. Such a promise by a husband is not at all astonishing.

30In the beginning of creation, Lord Brahmā, the father of the living entities of the universe, saw that all the living entities were unattached. To increase population, he then created woman from the better half of man's body, for woman's behavior carries away a man's mind.

31O my dear one, the most powerful sage Kaśyapa, being extremely pleased by the mild behavior of his wife Diti, smiled and spoke to her as follows.

32Kaśyapa Muni said: O beautiful woman, O irreproachable lady, since I am very much pleased by your behavior, you may ask me for any benediction you want. If a husband is pleased, what desires are difficult for his wife to obtain, either in this world or in the next?

33-34A husband is the supreme demigod for a woman. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vāsudeva, the husband of the goddess of fortune, is situated in everyone's heart and is worshiped through the various names and forms of the demigods by fruitive workers. Similarly, a husband represents the Lord as the object of worship for a woman.

35My dear wife, whose body is so beautiful, your waist being thin, a conscientious wife should be chaste and should abide by the orders of her husband. She should very devoutly worship her husband as a representative of Vāsudeva.

36My dear gentle wife, because you have worshiped me with great devotion, considering me a representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I shall reward you by fulfilling your desires, which are unobtainable for an unchaste wife.

37Diti replied: O my husband, O great soul, I have now lost my sons. If you want to give me a benediction, I ask you for an immortal son who can kill Indra. I pray for this because Indra, with the help of Viṣṇu, has killed my two sons Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu.

38Upon hearing Diti's request, Kaśyapa Muni was very much aggrieved. "Alas," he lamented, "now I face the danger of the impious act of killing Indra."

39Kaśyapa Muni thought: Alas, I have now become too attached to material enjoyment. Taking advantage of this, my mind has been attracted by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of a woman [my wife]. Therefore I am surely a wretched person who will glide down toward hell.

40This woman, my wife, has adopted a means that follows her nature, and therefore she is not to be blamed. But I am a man. Therefore, all condemnation upon me! I am not at all conversant with what is good for me, since I could not control my senses.

41A woman's face is as attractive and beautiful as a blossoming lotus flower during autumn. Her words are very sweet, and they give pleasure to the ear, but if we study a woman's heart, we can understand it to be extremely sharp, like the blade of a razor. In these circumstances, who could understand the dealings of a woman?

42To satisfy their own interests, women deal with men as if the men were most dear to them, but no one is actually dear to them. Women are supposed to be very saintly, but for their own interests they can kill even their husbands, sons or brothers, or cause them to be killed by others.

43I promised to give her a benediction, and this promise cannot be violated, but Indra does not deserve to be killed. In these circumstances, the solution I have is quite suitable.

44ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Kaśyapa Muni, thinking in this way, became somewhat angry. Condemning himself, O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, descendant of Kuru, he spoke to Diti as follows.

45Kaśyapa Muni said: My dear gentle wife, if you follow my instructions regarding this vow for at least one year, you will surely get a son who will be able to kill Indra. However, if you deviate from this vow of following the Vaiṣṇava principles, you will get a son who will be favorable to Indra.

46Diti replied: My dear brāhmaṇa, I must accept your advice and follow the vow. Now let me understand what I have to do, what is forbidden and what will not break the vow. Please clearly state all this to me.

47Kaśyapa Muni said: My dear wife, to follow this vow, do not be violent or cause harm to anyone. Do not curse anyone, and do not speak lies. Do not cut your nails and hair, and do not touch impure things like skulls and bones.

48Kaśyapa Muni continued: My dear gentle wife, never enter the water while bathing, never be angry, and do not even speak or associate with wicked people. Never wear clothes that have not been properly washed, and do not put on a garland that has already been worn.

49Never eat leftover food, never eat prasāda offered to the goddess Kālī [Durgā], and do not eat anything contaminated by flesh or fish. Do not eat anything brought or touched by a śūdra nor anything seen by a woman in her menstrual period. Do not drink water by joining your palms.

50After eating, you should not go out to the street without having washed your mouth, hands and feet. You should not go out in the evening or with your hair loose, nor should you go out unless you are properly decorated with ornaments. You should not leave the house unless you are very grave and are sufficiently covered.

51You should not lie down without having washed both of your feet or without being purified, nor with wet feet or with your head pointed west or north. You should not lie naked, or with other women, or during the sunrise or sunset.

52Putting on washed clothing, being always pure and being adorned with turmeric, sandalwood pulp and other auspicious items, before breakfast one should worship the cows, the brāhmaṇas, the goddess of fortune and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

53With flower garlands, sandalwood pulp, ornaments and other paraphernalia, a woman

following this vow should worship women who have sons and whose husbands are living. The pregnant wife should worship her husband and offer him prayers. She should meditate upon him, thinking that he is situated in her womb.

54Kaśyapa Muni continued: If you perform this ceremony called puṁsavana, adhering to the vow with faith for at least one year, you will give birth to a son destined to kill Indra. But if there is any discrepancy in the discharge of this vow, the son will be a friend to Indra.

55O King Parīkṣit, Diti, the wife of Kaśyapa, agreed to undergo the purificatory process known as puṁsavana. “Yes,” she said, “I shall do everything according to your instructions.” With great jubilation she became pregnant, having taken semen from Kaśyapa, and faithfully began discharging the vow.

56O King, who are respectful to everyone, Indra understood Diti’s purpose, and thus he contrived to fulfill his own interests. Following the logic that self-preservation is the first law of nature, he wanted to break Diti’s promise. Thus he engaged himself in the service of Diti, his aunt, who was residing in an āśrama.

57Indra served his aunt daily by bringing flowers, fruits, roots and wood for yajṣas from the forest. He also brought kuśa grass, leaves, sprouts, earth and water exactly at the proper time.

58O King Parīkṣit, as the hunter of a deer becomes like a deer by covering his body with deerskin and serving the deer, so Indra, although at heart the enemy of the sons of Diti, became outwardly friendly and served Diti in a faithful way. Indra’s purpose was to cheat Diti as soon as he could find some fault in the way she discharged the vows of the ritualistic ceremony. However, he wanted to be undetected, and therefore he served her very carefully.

59O master of the entire world, when Indra could find no faults, he thought, “How will there be good fortune for me?” Thus he was full of deep anxiety.

60Having grown weak and thin because of strictly following the principles of the vow, Diti once unfortunately neglected to wash her mouth, hands and feet after eating and went to sleep during the evening twilight.

61Finding this fault, Indra, who has all the mystic powers [the yoga-siddhis such as aṇimā and laghimā], entered Diti’s womb while she was unconscious, being fast asleep.

62After entering Diti’s womb, Indra, with the help of his thunderbolt, cut into seven pieces her embryo, which appeared like glowing gold. In seven places, seven different living beings began crying. Indra told them, “Do not cry,” and then he cut each of them into seven pieces again.

63O King, being very much aggrieved, they pleaded to Indra with folded hands, saying, “Dear Indra, we are the Maruts, your brothers. Why are you trying to kill us?”

64When Indra saw that actually they were his devoted followers, he said to them: If you are all my brothers, you have nothing more to fear from me.

65Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King Parīkṣit, you were burned by the brahmāstra of Aśvatthāmā, but when Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the womb of your mother, you were saved. Similarly, although the one embryo was cut into forty-nine pieces by the thunderbolt of Indra, they were all saved by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

66-67If one worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original person, even once, he receives the benefit of being promoted to the spiritual world and possessing the same bodily

features as Viṣṇu. Diti worshiped Lord Viṣṇu for almost one year, adhering to a great vow. Because of such strength in spiritual life, the forty-nine Maruts were born. How, then, is it wonderful that the Maruts, although born from the womb of Diti, became equal to the demigods by the mercy of the Supreme Lord?

68Because of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Diti was completely purified. When she got up from bed, she saw her forty-nine sons along with Indra. These forty-nine sons were all as brilliant as fire and were in friendship with Indra, and therefore she was very pleased.

69Thereafter, Diti said to Indra: My dear son, I adhered to this difficult vow just to get a son to kill you twelve Ādityas.

70I prayed for only one son, but now I see that there are forty-nine. How has this happened? My dear son Indra, if you know, please tell me the truth. Do not try to speak lies.

71Indra replied: My dear mother, because I was grossly blinded by selfish interests, I lost sight of religion. When I understood that you were observing a great vow in spiritual life, I wanted to find some fault in you. When I found such a fault, I entered your womb and cut the embryo to pieces.

72First I cut the child in the womb into seven pieces, which became seven children. Then I cut each of the children into seven pieces again. By the grace of the Supreme Lord, however, none of them died.

73My dear mother, when I saw that all forty-nine sons were alive, I was certainly struck with wonder. I decided that this was a secondary result of your having regularly executed devotional service in worship of Lord Viṣṇu.

74Although those who are interested only in worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not desire anything material from the Lord and do not even want liberation, Lord Kṛṣṇa fulfills all their desires.

75The ultimate goal of all ambitions is to become a servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If an intelligent man serves the most dear Lord, who gives Himself to His devotees, how can he desire material happiness, which is available even in hell?

76O my mother, O best of all women, I am a fool. Kindly excuse me for whatever offenses I have committed. Your forty-nine sons have been born unhurt because of your devotional service. As an enemy, I cut them to pieces, but because of your great devotional service they did not die.

77ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Diti was extremely satisfied by Indra's good behavior. Then Indra offered his respects to his aunt with profuse obeisances, and with her permission he went away to the heavenly planets with his brothers the Maruts.

78My dear King Parīkṣit, I have replied as far as possible to the questions you have asked me, especially in regard to this pure, auspicious narration about the Maruts. Now you may inquire further, and I shall explain more.

SB 6.19: Performing the Puṁsavana Ritualistic Ceremony

This chapter explains how Diti, Kaśyapa Muni's wife, executed Kaśyapa Muni's instructions on devotional service. During the first day of the bright fortnight of the moon in the month of Agrahāyaṇa (November-December), every woman, following in the footsteps of Diti and

following the instructions of her own husband, should begin this *pūṁsavana-vrata*. In the morning, after washing her teeth, bathing and thus becoming purified, she should hear about the birth mystery of the Maruts. Then, covering her body with a white dress and being properly ornamented, before breakfast she should worship Lord Viṣṇu and mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, Lord Viṣṇu's wife, by glorifying Lord Viṣṇu for His mercy, patience, prowess, ability, greatness and other glories and for how He can bestow all mystic benedictions. While offering the Lord all paraphernalia for worship, such as ornaments, a sacred thread, scents, nice flowers, incense and water for bathing and washing His feet, hands and mouth, one should invite the Lord with this *mantra: om namo bhagavate mahā-puruṣāya mahānubhāvāya mahāvibhūtipataye saha mahā-vibhūtibhir balim upaharāmi*. Then one should offer twelve oblations in the fire while chanting this *mantra: om namo bhagavate mahā-puruṣāya mahāvibhūti-pataye svāhā*. One should offer obeisances while chanting this *mantra* ten times. Then one should chant the Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa *mantra*.

If either a pregnant woman or her husband regularly discharges this devotional service, both of them will receive the result. After continuing this process for one full year, the chaste wife should fast on the *pūṁimā*, the full-moon day, of Kārttika. On the following day, the husband should worship the Lord as before and then observe a festival by cooking nice food and distributing *prasāda* to the *brāhmaṇas*. Then, with the permission of the *brāhmaṇas*, the husband and wife should take *prasāda*. This chapter ends by glorifying the results of the *pūṁsavana* function.

1Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: My dear lord, you have already spoken about the *pūṁsavana* vow. Now I want to hear about it in detail, for I understand that by observing this vow one can please the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu.

2-3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: On the first day of the bright fortnight of the month of Agrahāyana [November-December], following the instructions of her husband, a woman should begin this regulative devotional service with a vow of penance, for it can fulfill all one's desires. Before beginning the worship of Lord Viṣṇu, the woman should hear the story of how the Maruts were born. Under the instructions of qualified *brāhmaṇas*, in the morning she should wash her teeth, bathe, and dress herself with white cloth and ornaments, and before taking breakfast she should worship Lord Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī.

4[She should then pray to the Lord as follows.] My dear Lord, You are full in all opulences, but I do not beg You for opulence. I simply offer my respectful obeisances unto You. You are the husband and master of Lakṣmīdevī, the goddess of fortune, who has all opulences. Therefore You are the master of all mystic yoga. I simply offer my obeisances unto You.

5O my Lord, because You are endowed with causeless mercy, all opulences, all prowess and all glories, strength and transcendental qualities, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of everyone.

6[After profusely offering obeisances unto Lord Viṣṇu, the devotee should offer respectful obeisances unto mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, and pray as follows.] O wife of Lord Viṣṇu, O internal energy of Lord Viṣṇu, you are as good as Lord Viṣṇu Himself, for you have all of His qualities and opulences. O goddess of fortune, please be kind to me. O mother of the entire world, I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

7“My Lord Viṣṇu, full in six opulences, You are the best of all enjoyers and the most powerful. O husband of mother Lakṣmī, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are accompanied by many associates, such as Viśvaksena. I offer all the paraphernalia for

worshiping You.” One should chant this mantra every day with great attention while worshiping Lord Viṣṇu with all paraphernalia, such as water for washing His feet, hands and mouth and water for His bath. One must offer Him various presentations for His worship, such as garments, a sacred thread, ornaments, scents, flowers, incense and lamps.

8Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After worshiping the Lord with all the paraphernalia mentioned above, one should chant the following mantra while offering twelve oblations of ghee on the sacred fire: om̐ namo bhagavate mahā-puruṣāya mahāvibhūti-pataye svāhā.

9If one desires all opulences, his duty is to daily worship Lord Viṣṇu with His wife, Lakṣmī. With great devotion one should worship Him according to the above-mentioned process. Lord Viṣṇu and the goddess of fortune are an immensely powerful combination. They are the bestowers of all benedictions and the sources of all good fortune. Therefore the duty of everyone is to worship Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.

10One should offer obeisances unto the Lord with a mind humbled through devotion. While offering daṇḍavats by falling on the ground like a rod, one should chant the above mantra ten times. Then one should chant the following prayer.

11My Lord Viṣṇu and mother Lakṣmī, goddess of fortune, you are the proprietors of the entire creation. Indeed, you are the cause of the creation. Mother Lakṣmī is extremely difficult to understand because she is so powerful that the jurisdiction of her power is difficult to overcome. Mother Lakṣmī is represented in the material world as the external energy, but actually she is always the internal energy of the Lord.

12My Lord, You are the master of energy, and therefore You are the Supreme Person. You are sacrifice [yajña] personified. Lakṣmī, the embodiment of spiritual activities, is the original form of worship offered unto You, whereas You are the enjoyer of all sacrifices.

13Mother Lakṣmī, who is here, is the reservoir of all spiritual qualities, whereas You manifest and enjoy all these qualities. Indeed, You are actually the enjoyer of everything. You live as the Supersoul of all living entities, and the goddess of fortune is the form of their bodies, senses and minds. She also has a holy name and form, whereas You are the support of all such names and forms and the cause for their manifestation.

14You are both the supreme rulers and benedictors of the three worlds. Therefore, my Lord, Uttamaśloka, may my ambitions be fulfilled by Your grace.

15ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus one should worship Lord Viṣṇu, who is known as Śrīnivāsa, along with mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, by offering prayers according to the process mentioned above. After removing all the paraphernalia of worship, one should offer them water to wash their hands and mouths, and then one should worship them again.

16Thereafter, with devotion and humility, one should offer prayers to the Lord and mother Lakṣmī. Then one should smell the remnants of the food offered and then again worship the Lord and Lakṣmījī.

17Accepting her husband as the representative of the Supreme Person, a wife should worship him with unalloyed devotion by offering him prasāda. The husband, being very pleased with his wife, should engage himself in the affairs of his family.

18Between the husband and wife, one person is sufficient to execute this devotional service. Because of their good relationship, both of them will enjoy the result. Therefore if the wife is unable to execute this process, the husband should carefully do so, and the faithful wife will

share the result.

19-20 One should accept this viṣṇu-vrata, which is a vow in devotional service, and should not deviate from its execution to engage in anything else. By offering the remnants of prasāda, flower garlands, sandalwood pulp and ornaments, one should daily worship the brāhmaṇas and worship women who peacefully live with their husbands and children. Every day the wife must continue following the regulative principles to worship Lord Viṣṇu with great devotion. Thereafter, Lord Viṣṇu should be laid in His bed, and then one should take prasāda. In this way, husband and wife will be purified and will have all their desires fulfilled.

21 The chaste wife must perform such devotional service continuously for one year. After one year passes, she should fast on the full-moon day in the month of Kārttika [October-November].

22 On the morning of the next day, one should wash oneself, and after worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa as before, one should cook as one cooks for festivals as stated in the Gṛhya-sūtras. Sweetrice should be cooked with ghee, and with this preparation the husband should offer oblations to the fire twelve times.

23 Thereafter, he should satisfy the brāhmaṇas. When the satisfied brāhmaṇas bestow their blessings, he should devotedly offer them respectful obeisances with his head, and with their permission he should take prasāda.

24 Before taking his meal, the husband must first seat the ācārya comfortably, and, along with his relatives and friends, should control his speech and offer prasāda to the guru. Then the wife should eat the remnants of the oblation of sweetrice cooked with ghee. Eating the remnants insures a learned, devoted son and all good fortune.

25 If this vow or ritualistic ceremony is observed according to the description of śāstra, even in this life a man will be able to achieve all the benedictions he desires from the Lord. A wife who performs this ritualistic ceremony will surely receive good fortune, opulence, sons, a long-living husband, a good reputation and a good home.

26-28 If an unmarried girl observes this vrata, she will be able to get a very good husband. If a woman who is avīrā who has no husband or son executes this ritualistic ceremony, she can be promoted to the spiritual world. A woman whose children have died after birth can get a child with a long duration of life and also become very fortunate in possessing wealth. If a woman is unfortunate she will become fortunate, and if ugly she will become beautiful. By observing this vrata, a diseased man can gain relief from his disease and have an able body with which to work. If one recites this narration while offering oblations to the pitās and demigods, especially during the śrāddha ceremony, the demigods and inhabitants of Pitṛloka will be extremely pleased with him and bestow upon him the fulfillment of all desires. After one performs this ritualistic ceremony, Lord Viṣṇu and His wife, mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, are very pleased with him. O King Parīkṣit, now I have completely described how Diti performed this ceremony and had good children the Maruts and a happy life. I have tried to explain this to you as elaborately as possible.

Canto 7: The Science of God

SB 7.1: The Supreme Lord Is Equal to Everyone

In this chapter, in response to a question by Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī gives his conclusions concerning how the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although the Supersoul, friend and protector of everyone, killed the Daityas, the demons, for the sake of Indra, the King

of heaven. In his statements, he totally refutes the arguments of people in general who accuse the Supreme Lord of partiality. Śukadeva Gosvāmī proves that because the body of the conditioned soul is infected by the three qualities of nature, dualities arise such as enmity and friendship, attachment and detachment. For the Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, there are no such dualities. Even eternal time cannot control the activities of the Lord. Eternal time is created by the Lord, and it acts under His control. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, therefore, is always transcendental to the influence of the modes of nature, *māyā*, the Lord's external energy, which acts in creation and annihilation. Thus all the demons killed by the Supreme Lord attain salvation immediately.

The second question raised by Parīkṣit Mahārāja concerns how Śiśupāla, although inimical toward Kṛṣṇa from his very childhood and always blaspheming Kṛṣṇa, attained salvation in oneness when Kṛṣṇa killed him. Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains that because of their offenses at the feet of devotees, two attendants of the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha named Jaya and Vijaya became Hiranyakaśipu and Hiranyākṣa in Satya-yuga, Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna in the next *yuga*, Tretā-yuga, and Śiśupāla and Dantavakra at the end of Dvāpara-yuga. Because of their fruitive acts, Jaya and Vijaya agreed to become the Lord's enemies, and when killed in that mentality, they attained salvation in oneness. Thus even if one thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in envy, he attains salvation. What then is to be said of devotees who always engage in the Lord's service with love and faith?

1King Parīkṣit inquired: My dear brāhmaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, being everyone's well-wisher, is equal and extremely dear to everyone. How, then, did He become partial like a common man for the sake of Indra and thus kill Indra's enemies? How can a person equal to everyone be partial to some and inimical toward others?

2Lord Viṣṇu Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the reservoir of all pleasure. Therefore, what benefit would He derive from siding with the demigods? What interest would He fulfill in this way? Since the Lord is transcendental, why should He fear the asuras, and how could He be envious of them?

3O greatly fortunate and learned brāhmaṇa, whether Nārāyaṇa is partial or impartial has become a subject of great doubt. Kindly dispel my doubt with positive evidence that Nārāyaṇa is always neutral and equal to everyone.

4-5The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, you have put before me an excellent question. Discourses concerning the activities of the Lord, in which the glories of His devotees are also found, are extremely pleasing to devotees. Such wonderful topics always counteract the miseries of the materialistic way of life. Therefore great sages like Nārada always speak upon Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam because it gives one the facility to hear and chant about the wonderful activities of the Lord. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Śrīla Vyāsadeva and then begin describing topics concerning the activities of Lord Hari.

6The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is always transcendental to material qualities, and therefore He is called nirguṇa, or without qualities. Because He is unborn, He does not have a material body to be subjected to attachment and hatred. Although the Lord is always above material existence, through His spiritual potency He appeared and acted like an ordinary human being, accepting duties and obligations, apparently like a conditioned soul.

7My dear King Parīkṣit, the material qualities *sattva-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa* and *tamo-guṇa* all belong to the material world and do not even touch the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These three *guṇas* cannot act by increasing or decreasing simultaneously.

8When the quality of goodness is prominent, the sages and demigods flourish with the help of that quality, with which they are infused and surcharged by the Supreme Lord. Similarly, when the mode of passion is prominent the demons flourish, and when ignorance is prominent the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas flourish. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present in everyone's heart, fostering the reactions of sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa.

9The all-pervading Personality of Godhead exists within the heart of every living being, and an expert thinker can perceive how He is present there to a large or small extent. Just as one can understand the supply of fire in wood, the water in a waterpot, or the sky within a pot, one can understand whether a living entity is a demon or a demigod by understanding that living entity's devotional performances. A thoughtful man can understand how much a person is favored by the Supreme Lord by seeing his actions.

10When the Supreme Personality of Godhead creates different types of bodies, offering a particular body to each living entity according to his character and fruitive actions, the Lord revives all the qualities of material nature—sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa. Then, as the Supersoul, He enters each body and influences the qualities of creation, maintenance and annihilation, using sattva-guṇa for maintenance, rajo-guṇa for creation and tamo-guṇa for annihilation.

11O great King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of the material and spiritual energies, who is certainly the creator of the entire cosmos, creates the time factor to allow the material energy and the living entity to act within the limits of time. Thus the Supreme Personality is never under the time factor nor under the material energy.

12O King, this time factor enhances the sattva-guṇa. Thus although the Supreme Lord is the controller, He favors the demigods, who are mostly situated in sattva-guṇa. Then the demons, who are influenced by tamo-guṇa, are annihilated. The Supreme Lord induces the time factor to act in different ways, but He is never partial. Rather, His activities are glorious, and therefore He is called Uruśravā.

13Formerly, O King, when Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was performing the Rājasūya sacrifice, the great sage Nārada, responding to his inquiry, recited historical facts showing how the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always impartial, even when killing demons. In this regard he gave a vivid example.

14-15O King, at the Rājasūya sacrifice, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Mahārāja Pāṇḍu, personally saw Śiśupāla merge into the body of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, struck with wonder, he inquired about the reason for this from the great sage Nārada, who was seated there. While he inquired, all the sages present also heard him ask his question.

16Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira inquired: It is very wonderful that the demon Śiśupāla merged into the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead even though extremely envious. This sāyujya-mukti is impossible to attain even for great transcendentalists. How then did the enemy of the Lord attain it?

17O great sage, we are all eager to know the cause for this mercy of the Lord. I have heard that formerly a king named Vena blasphemed the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that all the brāhmaṇas consequently obliged him to go to hell. Śiśupāla should also have been sent to hell. How then did he merge into the Lord's existence?

18From the very beginning of his childhood, when he could not even speak properly, Śiśupāla, the most sinful son of Damaghoṣa, began blaspheming the Lord, and he continued to be

envious of Śrī Kṛṣṇa until death. Similarly, his brother Dantavakra continued the same habits.

19Although these two men Śiśupāla and Dantavakra repeatedly blasphemed the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu [Kṛṣṇa], the Supreme Brahman, they were quite healthy. Indeed, their tongues were not attacked by white leprosy, nor did they enter the darkest region of hellish life. We are certainly most surprised by this.

20How was it possible for Śiśupāla and Dantavakra, in the presence of many exalted persons, to enter very easily into the body of Kṛṣṇa, whose nature is difficult to attain?

21This matter is undoubtedly very wonderful. Indeed, my intelligence has become disturbed, just as the flame of a candle is disturbed by a blowing wind. O Nārada Muni, you know everything. Kindly let me know the cause of this wonderful event.

22Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing the request of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, Nārada Muni, the most powerful spiritual master, who knew everything, was very pleased. Thus he replied in the presence of everyone taking part in the yajña.

23The great sage Śrī Nāradaḥ said: O King, blasphemy and praise, chastisement and respect, are experienced because of ignorance. The body of the conditioned soul is planned by the Lord for suffering in the material world through the agency of the external energy.

24My dear King, the conditioned soul, being in the bodily conception of life, considers his body to be his self and considers everything in relationship with the body to be his. Because he has this wrong conception of life, he is subjected to dualities like praise and chastisement.

25Because of the bodily conception of life, the conditioned soul thinks that when the body is annihilated the living being is annihilated. Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the supreme controller, the Supersoul of all living entities. Because He has no material body, He has no false conception of "I and mine." It is therefore incorrect to think that He feels pleasure or pain when blasphemed or offered prayers. This is impossible for Him. Thus He has no enemy and no friend. When He chastises the demons it is for their good, and when He accepts the prayers of the devotees it is for their good. He is affected neither by prayers nor by blasphemy.

26Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire by all of these or any one of them if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord, because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship.

27Nārada Muni continued: By devotional service one cannot achieve such intense absorption in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as one can through enmity toward Him. That is my opinion.

28-29A grassworm confined in a hole of a wall by a bee always thinks of the bee in fear and enmity and later becomes a bee simply because of such remembrance. Similarly, if the conditioned souls somehow or other think of Kṛṣṇa, who is sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha, they will become free from their sins. Whether thinking of Him as their worshipable Lord or an enemy, because of constantly thinking of Him they will regain their spiritual bodies.

30Many, many persons have attained liberation simply by thinking of Kṛṣṇa with great attention and giving up sinful activities. This great attention may be due to lusty desires, inimical feelings, fear, affection or devotional service. I shall now explain how one receives Kṛṣṇa's mercy simply by concentrating one's mind upon Him.

31My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the gopīs by their lusty desires, Kamsa by his fear, Śiśupāla and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you Pāṇḍavas by your great affection for Kṛṣṇa, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

32Somehow or other, one must consider the form of Kṛṣṇa very seriously. Then, by one of the five different processes mentioned above, one can return home, back to Godhead. Atheists like King Vena, however, being unable to think of Kṛṣṇa’s form in any of these five ways, cannot attain salvation. Therefore, one must somehow think of Kṛṣṇa, whether in a friendly way or inimically.

33Nārada Muni continued: O best of the Pāṇḍavas, your two cousins Śiśupāla and Dantavakra, the sons of your maternal aunt, were formerly associates of Lord Viṣṇu, but because they were cursed by brāhmaṇas, they fell from Vaikuṅṭha to this material world.

34Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira inquired: What kind of great curse could affect even liberated viṣṇu-bhaktas, and what sort of person could curse even the Lord’s associates? For unflinching devotees of the Lord to fall again to this material world is impossible. I cannot believe this.

35The bodies of the inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha are completely spiritual, having nothing to do with the material body, senses or life air. Therefore, kindly explain how associates of the Personality of Godhead were cursed to descend in material bodies like ordinary persons.

36The great saint Nārada said: Once upon a time when the four sons of Lord Brahmā named Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra were wandering throughout the three worlds, they came by chance to Viṣṇuloka.

37Although these four great sages were older than Brahmā’s other sons like Marīci, they appeared like small naked children only five or six years old. When Jaya and Vijaya saw them trying to enter Vaikuṅṭhaloka, these two gatekeepers, thinking them ordinary children, forbade them to enter.

38Thus checked by the doorkeepers Jaya and Vijaya, Sanandana and the other great sages very angrily cursed them. “You two foolish doorkeepers,” they said. “Being agitated by the material qualities of passion and ignorance, you are unfit to live at the shelter of Madhudviṣa’s lotus feet, which are free from such modes. It would be better for you to go immediately to the material world and take your birth in a family of most sinful asuras.”

39While Jaya and Vijaya, thus cursed by the sages, were falling to the material world, they were addressed as follows by the same sages, who were very kind to them. “O doorkeepers, after three births you will be able to return to your positions in Vaikuṅṭha, for then the duration of the curse will have ended.”

40These two associates of the Lord Jaya and Vijaya later descended to the material world, taking birth as the two sons of Diti, Hiranyakaśipu being the elder and Hiranyākṣa the younger. They were very much respected by the Daityas and Dānavas [demoniac species].

41Appearing as Nṛsimhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, killed Hiranyakaśipu. When the Lord delivered the planet earth, which had fallen in the Garbhodaka Ocean, Hiranyākṣa tried to hinder Him, and then the Lord, as Varāha, killed Hiranyākṣa.

42Desiring to kill his son Prahlāda, who was a great devotee of Lord Viṣṇu, Hiranyakaśipu tortured him in many ways.

43The Lord, the Supersoul of all living entities, is sober, peaceful and equal to everyone. Since the great devotee Prahlāda was protected by the Lord's potency, Hiranyakaśipu was unable to kill him, in spite of endeavoring to do so in various ways.

44Thereafter the same Jaya and Vijaya, the two doorkeepers of Lord Viṣṇu, took birth as Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna, begotten by Viśravā in the womb of Keśinī. They were extremely troublesome to all the people of the universe.

45Nārada Muni continued: My dear King, just to relieve Jaya and Vijaya of the brāhmaṇas' curse, Lord Rāmacandra appeared in order to kill Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna. It will be better for you to hear narrations about Lord Rāmacandra's activities from Mārkaṇḍeya.

46In their third birth, the same Jaya and Vijaya appeared in a family of kṣatriyas as your cousins, the sons of your aunt. Because Lord Kṛṣṇa has struck them with His disc, all their sinful reactions have been destroyed, and now they are free from the curse.

47These two associates of Lord Viṣṇu Jaya and Vijaya maintained a feeling of enmity for a very long time. Because of always thinking of Kṛṣṇa in this way, they regained the shelter of the Lord, having returned home, back to Godhead.

48Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira inquired: O my lord, Nārada Muni, why was there such enmity between Hiranyakaśipu and his beloved son Prahlāda Mahārāja? How did Prahlāda Mahārāja become such a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa? Kindly explain this to me.

SB 7.2: Hiranyakaśipu, King of the Demons

As described in this chapter, after the annihilation of Hiranyākṣa, Hiranyākṣa's sons and his brother Hiranyakaśipu were very much aggrieved. Hiranyakaśipu reacted very sinfully by trying to diminish the religious activities of people in general. However, he instructed his nephews about a history just to diminish their aggrievement.

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as the boar and killed Hiranyakaśipu's brother Hiranyākṣa, Hiranyakaśipu was very much aggrieved. In anger, he accused the Supreme Personality of Godhead of being partial to His devotees and derided the Lord's appearance as Varāha to kill his brother. He began to agitate all the demons and Rākṣasas and disturb the ritualistic ceremonies of the peaceful sages and other inhabitants of earth. For want of the performance of *yajña*, sacrifice, the demigods began wandering unseen on earth.

After finishing the ritualistic funeral ceremonies of his brother, Hiranyakaśipu began speaking to his nephews, quoting from the *śāstras* about the truth of life. To pacify them, he spoke as follows: "My dear nephews, for heroes to die before the enemy is glorious. According to their different fruitive activities, living entities come together within this material world and are again separated by the laws of nature. We should always know, however, that the spirit soul, which is different from the body, is eternal, inadjustable, pure, all-pervading and aware of everything. When bound by the material energy, the soul takes birth in higher or lower species of life according to varying association and in this way receives various types of bodies in which to suffer or enjoy. One's affliction by the conditions of material existence is the cause of happiness and distress; there are no other causes, and one should not be aggrieved upon seeing the superficial actions of *karma*."

Hiranyakaśipu then related a historical incident concerning a King Suyajsa who resided in the country named Uśīnara. When the King was killed, his queens, overwhelmed with grief, received instructions, which Hiranyakaśipu quoted to his nephews. Hiranyakaśipu related an

account of a *kulīṅga* bird pierced by the arrow of a hunter while lamenting for his wife, who had also been shot by the same hunter. By narrating these stories, Hiraṇyakaśipu pacified his nephews and other relatives and relieved them of lamentation. Thus having been pacified, Diti and Ruṣābhānu, Hiraṇyakaśipu's mother and sister-in-law, engaged their minds in spiritual understanding.

1Śrī Nārada Muni said: My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, when Lord Viṣṇu, in the form of Varāha, the boar, killed Hiraṇyākṣa, Hiraṇyākṣa's brother Hiraṇyakaśipu was extremely angry and began to lament.

2Filled with rage and biting his lips, Hiraṇyakaśipu gazed at the sky with eyes that blazed in anger, making the whole sky smoky. Thus he began to speak.

3Exhibiting his terrible teeth, fierce glance and frowning eyebrows, terrible to see, he took up his weapon, a trident, and thus began speaking to his associates, the assembled demons.

4-5O Dānavas and Daityas! O Dvimūrdha, Tryakṣa, Śambara and Śatabāhu! O Hayagrīva, Namuci, Pāka and Ilvala! O Vipracitti, Puloman, Śakuna and other demons! All of you, kindly hear me attentively and then act according to my words without delay.

6My insignificant enemies the demigods have combined to kill my very dear and obedient well-wisher, my brother Hiraṇyākṣa. Although the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, is always equal to both of us namely, the demigods and the demonsthis time, being devoutly worshiped by the demigods, He has taken their side and helped them kill Hiraṇyākṣa.

7-8The Supreme Personality of Godhead has given up His natural tendency of equality toward the demons and demigods. Although He is the Supreme Person, now, influenced by māyā, He has assumed the form of a boar to please His devotees, the demigods, just as a restless child leans toward someone. I shall therefore sever Lord Viṣṇu's head from His trunk by my trident, and with the profuse blood from His body I shall please my brother Hiraṇyākṣa, who was so fond of sucking blood. Thus shall I too be peaceful.

9When the root of a tree is cut and the tree falls down, its branches and twigs automatically dry up. Similarly, when I have killed this diplomatic Viṣṇu, the demigods, for whom Lord Viṣṇu is the life and soul, will lose the source of their life and wither away.

10While I am engaged in the business of killing Lord Viṣṇu, go down to the planet earth, which is flourishing due to brahminical culture and a kṣatriya government. These people engage in austerity, sacrifice, Vedic study, regulative vows, and charity. Destroy all the people thus engaged!

11The basic principle of brahminical culture is to satisfy Lord Viṣṇu, the personification of sacrificial and ritualistic ceremonies. Lord Viṣṇu is the personified reservoir of all religious principles, and He is the shelter of all the demigods, the great pitās, and the people in general. When the brāhmaṇas are killed, no one will exist to encourage the kṣatriyas to perform yajṣas, and thus the demigods, not being appeased by yajṣa, will automatically die.

12Immediately go wherever there is good protection for the cows and brāhmaṇas and wherever the Vedas are studied in terms of the varṇāśrama principles. Set fire to those places and cut from the roots the trees there, which are the source of life.

13Thus the demons, being fond of disastrous activities, took Hiraṇyakaśipu's instructions on their heads with great respect and offered him obeisances. According to his directions, they engaged in envious activities directed against all living beings.

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14The demons set fire to the cities, villages, pasturing grounds, cowpens, gardens, agricultural fields and natural forests. They burned the hermitages of the saintly persons, the important mines that produced valuable metals, the residential quarters of the agriculturalists, the mountain villages, and the villages of the cow protectors, the cowherd men. They also burned the government capitals.

15Some of the demons took digging instruments and broke down the bridges, the protective walls and the gates [gopuras] of the cities. Some took axes and began cutting the important trees that produced mango, jackfruit and other sources of food. Some of the demons took firebrands and set fire to the residential quarters of the citizens.

16Thus disturbed again and again by the unnatural occurrences caused by the followers of Hiranyakaśipu, all the people had to cease the activities of Vedic culture. Not receiving the results of yajña, the demigods also became disturbed. They left their residential quarters in the heavenly planets and, unobserved by the demons, began wandering on the planet earth to see the disasters.

17After performing the ritualistic observances for the death of his brother, Hiranyakaśipu, being extremely unhappy, tried to pacify his nephews.

18-19O King, Hiranyakaśipu was extremely angry, but since he was a great politician, he knew how to act according to the time and situation. With sweet words he began pacifying his nephews, whose names were Śakuni, Śambara, Dhṛṣṭi, Bhūtasantāpana, Vṛka, Kālanābha, Mahānābha, Hariśmaśru and Utkaca. He also consoled their mother, his sister-in-law, Ruṣābhānu, as well as his own mother, Diti. He spoke to them all as follows.

20Hiranyakaśipu said: My dear mother, sister-in-law and nephews, you should not lament for the death of the great hero, for a hero's death in front of his enemy is glorious and desirable.

21My dear mother, in a restaurant or place for drinking cold water, many travelers are brought together, and after drinking water they continue to their respective destinations. Similarly, living entities join together in a family, and later, as a result of their own actions, they are led apart to their destinations.

22The spirit soul, the living entity, has no death, for he is eternal and inexhaustible. Being free from material contamination, he can go anywhere in the material or spiritual worlds. He is fully aware and completely different from the material body, but because of being misled by misuse of his slight independence, he is obliged to accept subtle and gross bodies created by the material energy and thus be subjected to so-called material happiness and distress. Therefore, no one should lament for the passing of the spirit soul from the body.

23Because of the movements of the water, the trees on the bank of a river, when reflected on the water, seem to move. Similarly, when the eyes move because of some mental derangement, the land appears to move also.

24In the same way, O my gentle mother, when the mind is agitated by the movements of the modes of material nature, the living entity, although freed from all the different phases of the subtle and gross bodies, thinks that he has changed from one condition to another.

25-26In his bewildered state, the living entity, accepting the body and mind to be the self, considers some people to be his kinsmen and others to be outsiders. Because of this misconception, he suffers. Indeed, the accumulation of such concocted material ideas is the cause of suffering and so-called happiness in the material world. The conditioned soul thus situated must take birth in different species and work in various types of consciousness, thus

creating new bodies. This continued material life is called *samsāra*. Birth, death, lamentation, foolishness and anxiety are due to such material considerations. Thus we sometimes come to a proper understanding and sometimes fall again to a wrong conception of life.

27In this regard, an example is given from an old history. This involves a discourse between Yamarāja and the friends of a dead person. Please hear it attentively.

28In the state known as Uśīnara there was a celebrated king named Suyajsa. When the King was killed in battle by his enemies, his kinsmen sat down around the dead body and began to lament the death of their friend.

29-31His golden, bejeweled armor smashed, his ornaments and garlands fallen from their places, his hair scattered and his eyes lusterless, the slain King lay on the battlefield, his entire body smeared with blood, his heart pierced by the arrows of the enemy. When he died he had wanted to show his prowess, and thus he had bitten his lips, and his teeth remained in that position. His beautiful lotuslike face was now black and covered with dust from the battlefield. His arms, with his sword and other weapons, were cut and broken. When the queens of the King of Uśīnara saw their husband lying in that position, they began crying, “O lord, now that you have been killed, we also have been killed.” Repeating these words again and again, they fell down, pounding their breasts, at the feet of the dead King.

32As the queens loudly cried, their tears glided down their breasts, becoming reddened by *kuṅkuma* powder, and fell upon the lotus feet of their husband. Their hair became disarrayed, their ornaments fell, and in a way that evoked sympathy from the hearts of others, the queens began lamenting their husband’s death.

33O lord, you have now been removed by cruel providence to a state beyond our sight. You had previously sustained the livelihood of the inhabitants of Uśīnara, and thus they were happy, but your condition now is the cause of their unhappiness.

34O King, O hero, you were a very grateful husband and the most sincere friend of all of us. How shall we exist without you? O hero, wherever you are going, please direct us there so that we may follow in your footsteps and engage again in your service. Let us go along with you!

35The time was appropriate for the body to be burned, but the queens, not allowing it to be taken away, continued lamenting for the dead body, which they kept on their laps. In the meantime, the sun completed its movements for setting in the west.

36While the queens were lamenting for the dead body of the King, their loud cries were heard even from the abode of Yamarāja. Assuming the body of a boy, Yamarāja personally approached the relatives of the dead body and advised them as follows.

37Śrī Yamarāja said: Alas, how amazing it is! These persons, who are older than me, have full experience that hundreds and thousands of living entities have taken birth and died. Thus they should understand that they also are apt to die, yet still they are bewildered. The conditioned soul comes from an unknown place and returns after death to that same unknown place. There is no exception to this rule, which is conducted by material nature. Knowing this, why do they uselessly lament?

38It is wonderful that these elderly women do not have a higher sense of life than we do. Indeed, we are most fortunate, for although we are children and have been left to struggle in material life, unprotected by father and mother, and although we are very weak, we have not been vanquished or eaten by ferocious animals. Thus we have a firm belief that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has given us protection even in the womb of the mother, will

protect us everywhere.

39The boy addressed the women: O weak women! Only by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never diminished, is the entire world created, maintained and again annihilated. This is the verdict of the Vedic knowledge. This material creation, consisting of the moving and nonmoving, is exactly like His plaything. Being the Supreme Lord, He is completely competent to destroy and protect.

40Sometimes one loses his money on a public street, where everyone can see it, and yet his money is protected by destiny and not seen by others. Thus the man who lost it gets it back. On the other hand, if the Lord does not give protection, even money maintained very securely at home is lost. If the Supreme Lord gives one protection, even though one has no protector and is in the jungle, one remains alive, whereas a person well protected at home by relatives and others sometimes dies, no one being able to protect him.

41Every conditioned soul receives a different type of body according to his work, and when the engagement is finished the body is finished. Although the spirit soul is situated in subtle and gross material bodies in different forms of life, he is not bound by them, for he is always understood to be completely different from the manifested body.

42Just as a householder, although different from the identity of his house, thinks his house to be identical with him, so the conditioned soul, due to ignorance, accepts the body to be himself, although the body is actually different from the soul. This body is obtained through a combination of portions of earth, water and fire, and when the earth, water and fire are transformed in the course of time, the body is vanquished. The soul has nothing to do with this creation and dissolution of the body.

43As fire, although situated in wood, is perceived to be different from the wood, as air, although situated within the mouth and nostrils, is perceived to be separate, and as the sky, although all-pervading, never mixes with anything, so the living entity, although now engaged within the material body, of which it is the source, is separate from it.

44Yamarāja continued: O lamenters, you are all fools! The person named Suyajsa, for whom you lament, is still lying before you and has not gone anywhere. Then what is the cause for your lamentation? Previously he heard you and replied to you, but now, not finding him, you are lamenting. This is contradictory behavior, for you have never actually seen the person within the body who heard you and replied. There is no need for your lamentation, for the body you have always seen is lying here.

45In the body the most important substance is the life air, but that also is neither the listener nor the speaker. Beyond even the life air, the soul also can do nothing, for the Supersoul is actually the director, in cooperation with the individual soul. The Supersoul conducting the activities of the body is different from the body and living force.

46The five material elements, the ten senses and the mind all combine to form the various parts of the gross and subtle bodies. The living entity comes in contact with his material bodies, whether high or low, and later gives them up by his personal prowess. This strength can be perceived in a living entity's personal power to possess different types of bodies.

47As long as the spirit soul is covered by the subtle body, consisting of the mind, intelligence and false ego, he is bound to the results of his fruitive activities. Because of this covering, the spirit soul is connected with the material energy and must accordingly suffer material conditions and reversals, continually, life after life.

48It is fruitless to see and talk of the material modes of nature and their resultant so-called happiness and distress as if they were factual. When the mind wanders during the day and a man begins to think himself extremely important, or when he dreams at night and sees a beautiful woman enjoying with him, these are merely false dreams. Similarly, the happiness and distress caused by the material senses should be understood to be meaningless.

49Those who have full knowledge of self-realization, who know very well that the spirit soul is eternal whereas the body is perishable, are not overwhelmed by lamentation. But persons who lack knowledge of self-realization certainly lament. Therefore it is difficult to educate a person in illusion.

50There was once a hunter who lured birds with food and captured them after spreading a net. He lived as if appointed by death personified as the killer of the birds.

51While wandering in the forest, the hunter saw a pair of kuliṅga birds. Of the two, the female was captivated by the hunter's lure.

52O queens of Suyajṣa, the male kuliṅga bird, seeing his wife put into the greatest danger in the grip of Providence, became very unhappy. Because of affection, the poor bird, being unable to release her, began to lament for his wife.

53Alas, how merciless is Providence! My wife, unable to be helped by anyone, is in such an awkward position and lamenting for me. What will Providence gain by taking away this poor bird? What will be the profit?

54If unkind Providence takes away my wife, who is half my body, why should He not take me also? What is the use of my living with half of my body, bereaved by loss of my wife? What shall I gain in this way?

55The unfortunate baby birds, bereft of their mother, are waiting in the nest for her to feed them. They are still very small and have not yet grown their wings. How shall I be able to maintain them?

56Because of the loss of his wife, the kuliṅga bird lamented with tears in his eyes. Meanwhile, following the dictations of mature time, the hunter, who was very carefully hidden in the distance, released his arrow, which pierced the body of the kuliṅga bird and killed him.

57Thus Yamarāja, in the guise of a small boy, told all the queens: You are all so foolish that you lament but do not see your own death. Afflicted by a poor fund of knowledge, you do not know that even if you lament for your dead husband for hundreds of years, you will never get him back alive, and in the meantime your lives will be finished.

58Hiraṇyakaśipu said: While Yamarāja, in the form of a small boy, was instructing all the relatives surrounding the dead body of Suyajṣa, everyone was struck with wonder by his philosophical words. They could understand that everything material is temporary, not continuing to exist.

59After instructing all the foolish relatives of Suyajṣa, Yamarāja, in the form of a boy, disappeared from their vision. Then the relatives of King Suyajṣa performed the ritualistic funeral ceremonies.

60Therefore none of you should be aggrieved for the loss of the bodywhether your own or those of others. Only in ignorance does one make bodily distinctions, thinking "Who am I? Who are the others? What is mine? What is for others?"

61Śrī Nārada Muni continued: Diti, the mother of Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa, heard the instructions of Hiraṇyakaśipu along with her daughter-in-law, Ruśābhānu, Hiraṇyākṣa's wife. She then forgot her grief over her son's death and thus engaged her mind and attention in understanding the real philosophy of life.

SB 7.3: Hiraṇyakaśipu's Plan to Become Immortal

This chapter describes how Hiraṇyakaśipu performed a severe type of austerity for material benefit, thus causing great distress throughout the universe. Even Lord Brahmā, the chief personality within this universe, became somewhat disturbed and personally went to see why Hiraṇyakaśipu was engaged in such a severe austerity.

Hiraṇyakaśipu wanted to become immortal. He wanted not to be conquered by anyone, not to be attacked by old age and disease, and not to be harassed by any opponent. Thus he wanted to become the absolute ruler of the entire universe. With this desire, he entered the valley of Mandara Mountain and began practicing a severe type of austerity and meditation. Seeing Hiraṇyakaśipu engaged in this austerity, the demigods returned to their respective homes, but while Hiraṇyakaśipu was thus engaged, a kind of fire began blazing from his head, disturbing the entire universe and its inhabitants, including the birds, beasts and demigods. When all the higher and lower planets became too hot to live on, the demigods, being disturbed, left their abodes in the higher planets and went to see Lord Brahmā, praying to him that he curtail this unnecessary heat. The demigods disclosed to Lord Brahmā Hiraṇyakaśipu's ambition to become immortal, overcoming his short duration of life, and to be the master of all the planetary systems, even Dhruvaloka.

Upon hearing about the purpose of Hiraṇyakaśipu's austere meditation, Lord Brahmā, accompanied by the great sage Bhṛgu and great personalities like Dakṣa, went to see Hiraṇyakaśipu. He then sprinkled water from his *kamaṇḍalu*, a type of waterpot, upon Hiraṇyakaśipu's head.

Hiraṇyakaśipu, the King of the Daityas, bowed down before Lord Brahmā, the creator of this universe, offering respectful obeisances again and again and offering prayers. When Lord Brahmā agreed to give him benedictions, he prayed not be killed by any living entity, not to be killed in any place, covered or uncovered, not to die in the daytime or at night, not to be killed by any weapon, on land or in the air, and not to be killed by any human being, animal, demigod or any other entity, living or nonliving. He further prayed for supremacy over the entire universe and requested the eight yogic perfections, such as *aṇimā* and *laghimā*.

1Nārada Muni said to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira: The demoniac king Hiraṇyakaśipu wanted to be unconquerable and free from old age and dwindling of the body. He wanted to gain all the yogic perfections like *aṇimā* and *laghimā*, to be deathless, and to be the only king of the entire universe, including Brahmhaloka.

2In the valley of Mandara Hill, Hiraṇyakaśipu began performing his austerities by standing with his toes on the ground, keeping his arms upward and looking toward the sky. This position was extremely difficult, but he accepted it as a means to attain perfection.

3From the hair on Hiraṇyakaśipu's head there emanated an effulgent light as brilliant and intolerable as the rays of the sun at the time of dissolution. Seeing the performance of such austere penances, the demigods, who had been wandering throughout the planets, now returned to their respective homes.

4Because of Hiraṇyakaśipu's severe austerities, fire came from his head, and this fire and its

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smoke spread throughout the sky, encompassing the upper and lower planets, which all became extremely hot.

5Because of the power of his severe austerities, all the rivers and oceans were agitated, the surface of the globe, with its mountains and islands, began trembling, and the stars and planets fell. All directions were ablaze.

6Scorched and extremely disturbed because of Hiraṇyakaśipu's severe penances, all the demigods left the planets where they reside and went to the planet of Lord Brahmā, where they informed the creator as follows: O lord of the demigods, O master of the universe, because of the fire emanating from Hiraṇyakaśipu's head as a result of his severe austerities, we have become so disturbed that we could not stay in our planets but have come to you.

7O great person, chief of the universe, if you think it proper, kindly stop these disturbances, meant to destroy everything, before all your obedient subjects are annihilated.

8Hiraṇyakaśipu has undertaken a most severe type of austerity. Although his plan is not unknown to you, kindly listen as we submit his intentions.

9-10“The supreme person within this universe, Lord Brahmā, has gotten his exalted post by dint of severe austerities, mystic power and trance. Consequently, after creating the universe, he has become the most worshipable demigod within it. Since I am eternal and time is eternal, I shall endeavor for such austerity, mystic power and trance for many, many births, and thus I shall occupy the same post occupied by Lord Brahmā.

11“By dint of my severe austerities, I shall reverse the results of pious and impious activities. I shall overturn all the established practices within this world. Even Dhruvaloka will be vanquished at the end of the millennium. Therefore, what is the use of it? I shall prefer to remain in the position of Brahmā.”

12O lord, we have heard from reliable sources that in order to obtain your post, Hiraṇyakaśipu is now engaged in severe austerity. You are the master of the three worlds. Please, without delay, take whatever steps you deem appropriate.

13O Lord Brahmā, your position within this universe is certainly most auspicious for everyone, especially the cows and brāhmaṇas. Brahminical culture and the protection of cows can be increasingly glorified, and thus all kinds of material happiness, opulence and good fortune will automatically increase. But unfortunately, if Hiraṇyakaśipu occupies your seat, everything will be lost.

14O King, being thus informed by the demigods, the most powerful Lord Brahmā, accompanied by Bhṛgu, Dakṣa and other great sages, immediately started for the place where Hiraṇyakaśipu was performing his penances and austerities.

15-16Lord Brahmā, who is carried by a swan airplane, at first could not see where Hiraṇyakaśipu was, for Hiraṇyakaśipu's body was covered by an anthill and by grass and bamboo sticks. Because Hiraṇyakaśipu had been there for a long time, the ants had devoured his skin, fat, flesh and blood. Then Lord Brahmā and the demigods spotted him, resembling a cloud-covered sun, heating all the world by his austerity. Struck with wonder, Lord Brahmā began to smile and then addressed him as follows.

17Lord Brahmā said: O son of Kaśyapa Muni, please get up, please get up. All good fortune unto you. You are now perfect in the performance of your austerities, and therefore I may give you a benediction. You may now ask from me whatever you desire, and I shall try to fulfill

your wish.

18I have been very much astonished to see your endurance. In spite of being eaten and bitten by all kinds of worms and ants, you are keeping your life air circulating within your bones. Certainly this is wonderful.

19Even saintly persons like Bhṛgu, born previously, could not perform such severe austerities, nor will anyone in the future be able to do so. Who within these three worlds can sustain his life without even drinking water for one hundred celestial years?

20My dear son of Diti, with your great determination and austerity you have done what was impossible even for great saintly persons, and thus I have certainly been conquered by you.

21O best of the asuras, for this reason I am now prepared to give you all benedictions, according to your desire. I belong to the celestial world of demigods, who do not die like human beings. Therefore, although you are subject to death, your audience with me will not go in vain.

22Śrī Nārada Muni continued: After speaking these words to Hiranyakaśipu, Lord Brahmā, the original being of this universe, who is extremely powerful, sprinkled transcendental, infallible, spiritual water from his kamaṇḍalu upon Hiranyakaśipu's body, which had been eaten away by ants and moths. Thus he enlivened Hiranyakaśipu.

23As soon as he was sprinkled with the water from Lord Brahmā's waterpot, Hiranyakaśipu arose, endowed with a full body with limbs so strong that they could bear the striking of a thunderbolt. With physical strength and a bodily luster resembling molten gold, he emerged from the anthill a completely young man, just as fire springs from fuel wood.

24Seeing Lord Brahmā present before him in the sky, carried by his swan airplane, Hiranyakaśipu was extremely pleased. He immediately fell flat with his head on the ground and began to express his obligation to the lord.

25Then, getting up from the ground and seeing Lord Brahmā before him, the head of the Daityas was overwhelmed by jubilation. With tears in his eyes, his whole body shivering, he began praying in a humble mood, with folded hands and a faltering voice, to satisfy Lord Brahmā.

26-27Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the supreme lord within this universe. At the end of each day of his life, the universe is fully covered with dense darkness by the influence of time, and then again, during his next day, that self-effulgent lord, by his own effulgence, manifests, maintains and destroys the entire cosmic manifestation through the material energy, which is invested with the three modes of material nature. He, Lord Brahmā, is the shelter of those modes of nature: sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa.

28I offer my obeisances to the original personality within this universe, Lord Brahmā, who is cognizant and who can apply his mind and realized intelligence in creating this cosmic manifestation. It is because of his activities that everything within the universe is visible. He is therefore the cause of all manifestations.

29Your Lordship, being the origin of the life of this material world, is the master and controller of the living entities, both moving and stationary, and you inspire their consciousness. You maintain the mind and the acting and knowledge-acquiring senses, and therefore you are the great controller of all the material elements and their qualities, and you are the controller of all desires.

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30 My dear lord, by your form as the Vedas personified and through knowledge relating to the activities of all the yajñic brāhmaṇas, you spread the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies of the seven kinds of sacrifices, headed by agniṣṭoma. Indeed, you inspire the yajñic brāhmaṇas to perform the rituals mentioned in the three Vedas. Being the Supreme Soul, the Supersoul of all living entities, you are beginningless, endless and omniscient, beyond the limits of time and space.

31 O my lord, Your Lordship is eternally awake, seeing everything that happens. As eternal time, you reduce the duration of life for all living entities through your different parts, such as moments, seconds, minutes and hours. Nonetheless, you are unchanged, resting in one place as the Supersoul, witness and Supreme Lord, the birthless, all-pervading controller who is the cause of life for all living entities.

32 There is nothing separate from you, whether it be better or lower, stationary or moving. The knowledge derived from the Vedic literatures like the Upaniṣads, and from all the sub-limbs of the original Vedic knowledge, form your external body. You are Hiraṇyagarbha, the reservoir of the universe, but nonetheless, being situated as the supreme controller, you are transcendental to the material world, which consists of the three modes of material nature.

33 O my lord, being changelessly situated in your own abode, you expand your universal form within this cosmic manifestation, thus appearing to taste the material world. You are Brahman, the Supersoul, the oldest, the Personality of Godhead.

34 Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme, who in his unlimited, unmanifested form has expanded the cosmic manifestation, the form of the totality of the universe. He possesses external and internal energies and the mixed energy called the marginal potency, which consists of all the living entities.

35 O my lord, O best of the givers of benediction, if you will kindly grant me the benediction I desire, please let me not meet death from any of the living entities created by you.

36 Grant me that I not die within any residence or outside any residence, during the daytime or at night, nor on the ground or in the sky. Grant me that my death not be brought by any being other than those created by you, nor by any weapon, nor by any human being or animal.

37-38 Grant me that I not meet death from any entity, living or nonliving. Grant me, further, that I not be killed by any demigod or demon or by any great snake from the lower planets. Since no one can kill you in the battlefield, you have no competitor. Therefore, grant me the benediction that I too may have no rival. Give me sole lordship over all the living entities and presiding deities, and give me all the glories obtained by that position. Furthermore, give me all the mystic powers attained by long austerities and the practice of yoga, for these cannot be lost at any time.

SB 7.4: Hiraṇyakaśipu Terrorizes the Universe

This chapter fully describes how Hiraṇyakaśipu obtained power from Lord Brahmā and misused it by harassing all the living entities within this universe.

By severe austerities, Hiraṇyakaśipu satisfied Lord Brahmā and obtained the benedictions he desired. After he received these benedictions, his body, which had been almost entirely consumed, was revived with full beauty and a luster like gold. Nonetheless, he continued to be envious of Lord Viṣṇu, unable to forget Lord Viṣṇu's having killed his brother. Hiraṇyakaśipu conquered everyone in the ten directions and the three worlds and brought all living entities, both demigods and *asuras*, under his control. Becoming the master of all places, including the residence of Indra, whom he had driven out, he began enjoying life in great luxury and thus

became mad. All the demigods but Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva came under his control and began serving him, but despite all his material power he was dissatisfied because he was always puffed up, proud of transgressing the Vedic regulations. All the *brāhmaṇas* were dissatisfied with him, and they cursed him with determination. Eventually, all the living entities within the universe, represented by the demigods and sages, prayed to the Supreme Lord for relief from Hiraṇyakaśipu's rule.

Lord Viṣṇu informed the demigods that they and the other living entities would be saved from the fearful conditions created by Hiraṇyakaśipu. Since Hiraṇyakaśipu was the oppressor of all the demigods, the followers of the *Vedas*, the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and the religious, saintly persons, and since he was envious of the Supreme Lord, he would naturally be killed very soon. Hiraṇyakaśipu's last exploit would be to torment his own son Prahlāda, who was a *mahā-bhāgavata*, an exalted Vaiṣṇava. Then his life would end. When the demigods were thus reassured by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, everyone was satisfied, knowing that the miseries inflicted upon them by Hiraṇyakaśipu would come to an end.

Finally, Nārada Muni describes the characteristics of Prahlāda Mahārāja, the son of Hiraṇyakaśipu, and describes how his father envied his own qualified son. In this way the chapter ends.

1Nārada Muni continued: Lord Brahmā was very much satisfied by Hiraṇyakaśipu's austerities, which were difficult to perform. Therefore, when solicited for benedictions, he indeed granted them, although they were rarely to be achieved.

2Lord Brahmā said: O Hiraṇyakaśipu, these benedictions for which you have asked are difficult to obtain for most men. Nonetheless, O my son, I shall grant you them although they are generally not available.

3Then Lord Brahmā, who awards infallible benedictions, departed, being worshiped by the best of the demons, Hiraṇyakaśipu, and being praised by great sages and saintly persons.

4The demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, having thus been blessed by Lord Brahmā and having acquired a lustrous golden body, continued to remember the death of his brother and therefore be envious of Lord Viṣṇu.

5-7Hiraṇyakaśipu became the conqueror of the entire universe. Indeed, that great demon conquered all the planets in the three worldsupper, middle and lowerincluding the planets of the human beings, the Gandharvas, the Garuḍas, the great serpents, the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Vidyādharas, the great saints, Yamarāja, the Manus, the Yakṣas, the Rākṣasas, the Piśācas and their masters, and the masters of the ghosts and Bhūtas. He defeated the rulers of all the other planets where there are living entities and brought them under his control. Conquering the abodes of all, he seized their power and influence.

8Hiraṇyakaśipu, who possessed all opulence, began residing in heaven, with its famous Nandana garden, which is enjoyed by the demigods. In fact, he resided in the most opulent palace of Indra, the King of heaven. The palace had been directly constructed by the demigod architect Viśvakarmā and was as beautifully made as if the goddess of fortune of the entire universe resided there.

9-12The steps of King Indra's residence were made of coral, the floor was bedecked with invaluable emeralds, the walls were of crystal, and the columns of vaidūrya stone. The wonderful canopies were beautifully decorated, the seats were bedecked with rubies, and the silk bedding, as white as foam, was decorated with pearls. The ladies of the palace, who were

blessed with beautiful teeth and the most wonderfully beautiful faces, walked here and there in the palace, their ankle bells tinkling melodiously, and saw their own beautiful reflections in the gems. The demigods, however, being very much oppressed, had to bow down and offer obeisances at the feet of Hiranyakaśipu, who chastised the demigods very severely and for no reason. Thus Hiranyakaśipu lived in the palace and severely ruled everyone.

13O my dear King, Hiranyakaśipu was always drunk on strong-smelling wines and liquors, and therefore his coppery eyes were always rolling. Nonetheless, because he had powerfully executed great austerities in mystic yoga, although he was abominable, all but the three principal demigods—Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu—personally worshiped him to please him by bringing him various presentations with their own hands.

14O Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, descendant of Pāṇḍu, by dint of his personal power, Hiranyakaśipu, being situated on the throne of King Indra, controlled the inhabitants of all the other planets. The two Gandharvas Viśvāvasu and Tumburu, I myself and the Vidyādharas, Apsarās and sages all offered prayers to him again and again just to glorify him.

15Being worshiped by sacrifices offered with great gifts by those who strictly followed the principles of varṇa and āśrama, Hiranyakaśipu, instead of offering shares of the oblations to the demigods, accepted them himself.

16As if in fear of Hiranyakaśipu, the planet earth, which consists of seven islands, delivered food grains without being plowed. Thus it resembled cows like the surabhi of the spiritual world or the kāma-dughā of heaven. The earth yielded sufficient food grains, the cows supplied abundant milk, and outer space was beautifully decorated with wonderful phenomena.

17By the flowing of their waves, the various oceans of the universe, along with their tributaries, the rivers, which are compared to their wives, supplied various kinds of gems and jewels for Hiranyakaśipu's use. These oceans were the oceans of salt water, sugarcane juice, wine, clarified butter, milk, yogurt, and sweet water.

18The valleys between the mountains became fields of pleasure for Hiranyakaśipu, by whose influence all the trees and plants produced fruits and flowers profusely in all seasons. The qualities of pouring water, drying and burning, which are all qualities of the three departmental heads of the universe—namely Indra, Vāyu and Agni—were all directed by Hiranyakaśipu alone, without assistance from the demigods.

19In spite of achieving the power to control in all directions and in spite of enjoying all types of dear sense gratification as much as possible, Hiranyakaśipu was dissatisfied because instead of controlling his senses he remained their servant.

20Hiranyakaśipu thus passed a long time being very much proud of his opulences and transgressing the laws and regulations mentioned in the authoritative śāstras. He was therefore subjected to a curse by the four Kumāras, who were great brāhmaṇas.

21Everyone, including the rulers of the various planets, was extremely distressed because of the severe punishment inflicted upon them by Hiranyakaśipu. Fearful and disturbed, unable to find any other shelter, they at last surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu.

22-23“Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto that direction where the Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated, where those purified souls in the renounced order of life, the great saintly persons, go, and from which, having gone, they never return.” Without sleep, fully controlling their minds, and living on only their breath, the predominating deities of the

various planets began worshiping Hṛṣṭkeṣa with this meditation.

24Then there appeared before them a transcendental sound vibration, emanating from a personality not visible to material eyes. The voice was as grave as the sound of a cloud, and it was very encouraging, driving away all fear.

25-26The voice of the Lord vibrated as follows: O best of learned persons, do not fear! I wish all good fortune to you. Become My devotees by hearing and chanting about Me and offering Me prayers, for these are certainly meant to award benedictions to all living entities. I know all about the activities of Hiranyakaṣipu and shall surely stop them very soon. Please wait patiently until that time.

27When one is envious of the demigods, who represent the Supreme Personality of Godhead, of the Vedas, which give all knowledge, of the cows, brāhmaṇas, Vaiṣṇavas and religious principles, and ultimately of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he and his civilization will be vanquished without delay.

28When Hiranyakaṣipu teases the great devotee Prahlāda, his own son, who is peaceful and sober and who has no enemy, I shall kill Hiranyakaṣipu immediately, despite the benedictions of Brahmā.

29The great saint Nārada Muni continued: When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the spiritual master of everyone, thus reassured all the demigods living in the heavenly planets, they offered their respectful obeisances unto Him and returned, confident that the demon Hiranyakaṣipu was now practically dead.

30Hiranyakaṣipu had four wonderful, well-qualified sons, of whom the one named Prahlāda was the best. Indeed, Prahlāda was a reservoir of all transcendental qualities because he was an unalloyed devotee of the Personality of Godhead.

31-32[The qualities of Mahārāja Prahlāda, the son of Hiranyakaṣipu, are described herewith.] He was completely cultured as a qualified brāhmaṇa, having very good character and being determined to understand the Absolute Truth. He had full control of his senses and mind. Like the Supersoul, he was kind to every living entity and was the best friend of everyone. To respectable persons he acted exactly like a menial servant, to the poor he was like a father, to his equals he was attached like a sympathetic brother, and he considered his teachers, spiritual masters and older Godbrothers to be as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He was completely free from unnatural pride that might have arisen from his good education, riches, beauty, aristocracy and so on.

33Although Prahlāda Mahārāja was born in a family of asuras, he himself was not an asura but a great devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. Unlike the other asuras, he was never envious of Vaiṣṇavas. He was not agitated when put into danger, and he was neither directly nor indirectly interested in the fruitive activities described in the Vedas. Indeed, he considered everything material to be useless, and therefore he was completely devoid of material desires. He always controlled his senses and life air, and being of steady intelligence and determination, he subdued all lusty desires.

34O King, Prahlāda Mahārāja's good qualities are still glorified by learned saints and Vaiṣṇavas. As all good qualities are always found existing in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they also exist forever in His devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja.

35In any assembly where there are discourses about saints and devotees, O King Yudhiṣṭhira, even the enemies of the demons, namely the demigods, what to speak of you, would cite

Prahlāda Mahārāja as an example of a great devotee.

36Who could list the innumerable transcendental qualities of Prahlāda Mahārāja? He had unflinching faith in Vāsudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa [the son of Vasudeva], and unalloyed devotion to Him. His attachment to Lord Kṛṣṇa was natural because of his previous devotional service. Although his good qualities cannot be enumerated, they prove that he was a great soul [mahātmā].

37From the very beginning of his childhood, Prahlāda Mahārāja was uninterested in childish playthings. Indeed, he gave them up altogether and remained silent and dull, being fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Since his mind was always affected by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he could not understand how the world goes on being fully absorbed in the activities of sense gratification.

38Prahlāda Mahārāja was always absorbed in thought of Kṛṣṇa. Thus, being always embraced by the Lord, he did not know how his bodily necessities, such as sitting, walking, eating, lying down, drinking and talking, were being automatically performed.

39Because of advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he sometimes cried, sometimes laughed, sometimes expressed jubilation and sometimes sang loudly.

40Sometimes, upon seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Prahlāda Mahārāja would loudly call in full anxiety. He sometimes lost his shyness in jubilation and began dancing in ecstasy, and sometimes, being fully absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, he felt oneness and imitated the pastimes of the Lord.

41Sometimes, feeling the touch of the Lord's lotus hands, he became spiritually jubilant and remained silent, his hairs standing on end and tears gliding down from his half-closed eyes because of his love for the Lord.

42Because of his association with perfect, unalloyed devotees who had nothing to do with anything material, Prahlāda Mahārāja constantly engaged in the service of the Lord's lotus feet. By seeing his bodily features when he was in perfect ecstasy, persons very poor in spiritual understanding became purified. In other words, Prahlāda Mahārāja bestowed upon them transcendental bliss.

43My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu tormented this exalted, fortunate devotee, although Prahlāda was his own son.

44Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: O best of the saints among the demigods, O best of spiritual leaders, how did Hiraṇyakaśipu give so much trouble to Prahlāda Mahārāja, the pure and exalted saint, although Prahlāda was his own son? I wish to know about this subject from you.

45A father and mother are always affectionate to their children. When the children are disobedient the parents chastise them, not due to enmity but only for the child's instruction and welfare. How did Hiraṇyakaśipu, the father of Prahlāda Mahārāja, chastise such a noble son? This is what I am eager to know.

46Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira further inquired: How was it possible for a father to be so violent toward an exalted son who was obedient, well-behaved and respectful to his father? O brāhmaṇa, O master, I have never heard of such a contradiction as an affectionate father's punishing his noble son with the intention of killing him. Kindly dissipate our doubts in this regard.

SB 7.5: Prahlaḍa Mahārāja, the Saintly Son of Hiraṇyakaśipu

Prahlaḍa Mahārāja did not carry out the orders of his teachers, for he was always engaged in worshipping Lord Viṣṇu. As described in this chapter, Hiraṇyakaśipu tried to kill Prahlaḍa Mahārāja, even by having a snake bite him and by putting him under the feet of elephants, yet he was unsuccessful.

Hiraṇyakaśipu's spiritual master, Śukrācārya, had two sons named Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, to whom Prahlaḍa Mahārāja was entrusted for education. Although the teachers tried to educate the boy Prahlaḍa in politics, economics and other material activities, he did not care for their instructions. Instead, he continued to be a pure devotee. Prahlaḍa Mahārāja never liked the idea of discriminating between one's friends and enemies. Because he was spiritually inclined, he was equal toward everyone.

Once upon a time, Hiraṇyakaśipu inquired from his son what the best thing was that he had learned from his teachers. Prahlaḍa Mahārāja replied that a man engrossed in the material consciousness of duality, thinking, "This is mine, and that belongs to my enemy," should give up his householder life and go to the forest to worship the Supreme Lord.

When Hiraṇyakaśipu heard from his son about devotional service, he decided that this small boy had been polluted by some friend in school. Thus he advised the teachers to take care of the boy so that he would not become a Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee. However, when the teachers inquired from Prahlaḍa Mahārāja why he was going against their teachings, Prahlaḍa Mahārāja taught the teachers that the mentality of ownership is false and that he was therefore trying to become an unalloyed devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. The teachers, being very angry at this answer, chastised and threatened the boy with many fearful conditions. They taught him to the best of their ability and then brought him before his father.

Hiraṇyakaśipu affectionately took his son Prahlaḍa on his lap and then inquired from him what the best thing was that he had learned from his teachers. As usual, Prahlaḍa Mahārāja began praising the nine processes of devotional service, such as *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*. Thus the King of the demons, Hiraṇyakaśipu, being extremely angry, chastised the teachers, Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, for having wrongly trained Prahlaḍa Mahārāja. The so-called teachers informed the King that Prahlaḍa Mahārāja was automatically a devotee and did not listen to their instructions. When they proved themselves innocent, Hiraṇyakaśipu inquired from Prahlaḍa where he had learned *viṣṇu-bhakti*. Prahlaḍa Mahārāja replied that those who are attached to family life do not develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness, either personally or collectively. Instead, they suffer repeated birth and death in this material world and continue simply chewing the chewed. Prahlaḍa explained that the duty of every man is to take shelter of a pure devotee and thus become eligible to understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Enraged at this answer, Hiraṇyakaśipu threw Prahlaḍa Mahārāja from his lap. Since Prahlaḍa was so treacherous that he had become a devotee of Viṣṇu, who had killed his uncle Hiraṇyākṣa, Hiraṇyakaśipu asked his assistants to kill him. The assistants of Hiraṇyakaśipu struck Prahlaḍa with sharp weapons, threw him under the feet of elephants, subjected him to hellish conditions, threw him from the peak of a mountain and tried to kill him in thousands of other ways, but they were unsuccessful. Hiraṇyakaśipu therefore became increasingly afraid of his son Prahlaḍa Mahārāja and arrested him. The sons of Hiraṇyakaśipu's spiritual master, Śukrācārya, began teaching Prahlaḍa in their own way, but Prahlaḍa Mahārāja did not accept their instructions. While the teachers were absent from the classroom, Prahlaḍa Mahārāja began to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the school, and by his instructions all his class friends, the sons of the demons, became devotees like him.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

1The great saint Nārada Muni said: The demons, headed by Hiraṇyakaśipu, accepted Śukrācārya as their priest for ritualistic ceremonies. Śukrācārya's two sons, Śaṇḍa and Amarka, lived near Hiraṇyakaśipu's palace.

2Prahlāda Mahārāja was already educated in devotional life, but when his father sent him to those two sons of Śukrācārya to be educated, they accepted him at their school along with the other sons of the asuras.

3Prahlāda certainly heard and recited the topics of politics and economics taught by the teachers, but he understood that political philosophy involves considering someone a friend and someone else an enemy, and thus he did not like it.

4My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, once upon a time the King of the demons, Hiraṇyakaśipu, took his son Prahlāda on his lap and very affectionately inquired: My dear son, please let me know what you think is the best of all the subjects you have studied from your teachers.

5Prahlāda Mahārāja replied: O best of the asuras, King of the demons, as far as I have learned from my spiritual master, any person who has accepted a temporary body and temporary household life is certainly embarrassed by anxiety because of having fallen in a dark well where there is no water but only suffering. One should give up this position and go to the forest [vana]. More clearly, one should go to Vṛndāvana, where only Kṛṣṇa consciousness is prevalent, and should thus take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

6Nārada Muni continued: When Prahlāda Mahārāja spoke about the path of self-realization in devotional service, thus being faithful to the camp of his father's enemies, Hiraṇyakaśipu, the King of the demons, heard Prahlāda's words and he laughingly said, "Thus is the intelligence of children spoiled by the words of the enemy."

7Hiraṇyakaśipu advised his assistants: My dear demons, give complete protection to this boy at the gurukula where he is instructed, so that his intelligence will not be further influenced by Vaiṣṇavas who may go there in disguise.

8When Hiraṇyakaśipu's servants brought the boy Prahlāda back to the gurukula [the place where the brāhmaṇas taught the boys], the priests of the demons, Śaṇḍa and Amarka, pacified him. With very mild voices and affectionate words, they inquired from him as follows.

9Dear son Prahlāda, all peace and good fortune unto you. Kindly do not speak lies; just reply with the truth. These boys you see are not like you, for they do not speak in a deviant way. How have you learned these instructions? How has your intelligence been spoiled in this way?

10O best of your family, has this pollution of your intelligence been brought about by you or by the enemies? We are all your teachers and are very eager to hear about this. Please tell us the truth.

11Prahlāda Mahārāja replied: Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose external energy has created the distinctions of "my friend" and "my enemy" by deluding the intelligence of men. Indeed, I am now actually experiencing this, although I have previously heard of it from authoritative sources.

12When the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased with the living entity because of his devotional service, one becomes a paṇḍita and does not make distinctions between enemies, friends and himself. Intelligently, he then thinks, "Every one of us is an eternal servant of God, and therefore we are not different from one another."

13Persons who always think in terms of “enemy” and “friend” are unable to ascertain the Supersoul within themselves. Not to speak of them, even such exalted persons as Lord Brahmā, who are fully conversant with the Vedic literature, are sometimes bewildered in following the principles of devotional service. The same Supreme Personality of Godhead who has created this situation has certainly given me the intelligence to take the side of your so-called enemy.

14O brāhmaṇas [teachers], as iron attracted by a magnetic stone moves automatically toward the magnet, my consciousness, having been changed by His will, is attracted by Lord Viṣṇu, who carries a disc in His hand. Thus I have no independence.

15The great saint Nārada Muni continued: The great soul Prahlāda Mahārāja became silent after saying this to his teachers, Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the seminal sons of Śukrācārya. These so-called brāhmaṇas then became angry at him. Because they were servants of Hiraṇyakaśipu, they were very sorry, and to chastise Prahlāda Mahārāja they spoke as follows.

16Oh, please bring me a stick! This Prahlāda is damaging our name and fame. Because of his bad intelligence, he has become like a cinder in the dynasty of the demons. Now he needs to be treated by the fourth of the four kinds of political diplomacy.

17This rascal Prahlāda has appeared like a thorn tree in a forest of sandalwood. To cut down sandalwood trees, an axe is needed, and the wood of the thorn tree is very suitable for the handle of such an axe. Lord Viṣṇu is the axe for cutting down the sandalwood forest of the family of demons, and this Prahlāda is the handle for that axe.

18Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the teachers of Prahlāda Mahārāja, chastised and threatened their disciple in various ways and began teaching him about the paths of religion, economic development and sense gratification. This is the way they educated him.

19After some time, the teachers Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka thought that Prahlāda Mahārāja was sufficiently educated in the diplomatic affairs of pacifying public leaders, appeasing them by giving them lucrative posts, dividing and ruling over them, and punishing them in cases of disobedience. Then, one day, after Prahlāda’s mother had personally washed the boy and dressed him nicely with sufficient ornaments, they presented him before his father.

20When Hiraṇyakaśipu saw that his child had fallen at his feet and was offering obeisances, as an affectionate father he immediately began showering blessings upon the child and embraced him with both arms. A father naturally feels happy to embrace his son, and Hiraṇyakaśipu became very happy in this way.

21Nārada Muni continued: My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, Hiraṇyakaśipu seated Prahlāda Mahārāja on his lap and began smelling his head. With affectionate tears gliding down from his eyes and moistening the child’s smiling face, he spoke to his son as follows.

22Hiraṇyakaśipu said: My dear Prahlāda, my dear son, O long-lived one, for so much time you have heard many things from your teachers. Now please repeat to me whatever you think is the best of that knowledge.

23-24Prahlāda Mahārāja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one’s best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words)these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated

his life to the service of Kṛṣṇa through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge.

25After hearing these words of devotional service from the mouth of his son Prahlāda, Hiranyakaśipu was extremely angry. His lips trembling, he spoke as follows to Śaṅḍa, the son of his guru, Śukrācārya.

26O unqualified, most heinous son of a brāhmaṇa, you have disobeyed my order and taken shelter of the party of my enemies. You have taught this poor boy about devotional service! What is this nonsense?

27In due course of time, various types of diseases are manifest in those who are sinful. Similarly, in this world there are many deceptive friends in false garbs, but eventually, because of their false behavior, their actual enmity becomes manifest.

28The son of Śukrācārya, Hiranyakaśipu's spiritual master, said: O enemy of King Indra, O King! Whatever your son Prahlāda has said was not taught to him by me or anyone else. His spontaneous devotional service has naturally developed in him. Therefore, please give up your anger and do not unnecessarily accuse us. It is not good to insult a brāhmaṇa in this way.

29Śrī Nārada Muni continued: When Hiranyakaśipu received this reply from the teacher, he again addressed his son Prahlāda. Hiranyakaśipu said: You rascal, most fallen of our family, if you have not received this education from your teachers, where have you gotten it?

30Prahlāda Mahārāja replied: Because of their uncontrolled senses, persons too addicted to materialistic life make progress toward hellish conditions and repeatedly chew that which has already been chewed. Their inclinations toward Kṛṣṇa are never aroused, either by the instructions of others, by their own efforts, or by a combination of both.

31Persons who are strongly entrapped by the consciousness of enjoying material life, and who have therefore accepted as their leader or guru a similar blind man attached to external sense objects, cannot understand that the goal of life is to return home, back to Godhead, and engage in the service of Lord Viṣṇu. As blind men guided by another blind man miss the right path and fall into a ditch, materially attached men led by another materially attached man are bound by the ropes of fruitive labor, which are made of very strong cords, and they continue again and again in materialistic life, suffering the threefold miseries.

32Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.

33After Prahlāda Mahārāja had spoken in this way and become silent, Hiranyakaśipu, blinded by anger, threw him off his lap and onto the ground.

34Indignant and angry, his reddish eyes like molten copper, Hiranyakaśipu said to his servants: O demons, take this boy away from me! He deserves to be killed. Kill him as soon as possible!

35This boy Prahlāda is the killer of my brother, for he has given up his family to engage in the devotional service of the enemy, Lord Viṣṇu, like a menial servant.

36Although Prahlāda is only five years old, even at this young age he has given up his affectionate relationship with his father and mother. Therefore, he is certainly untrustworthy.

Indeed, it is not at all believable that he will behave well toward Viṣṇu.

37Although a medicinal herb, being born in the forest, does not belong to the same category as a man, if beneficial it is kept very carefully. Similarly, if someone outside one's family is favorable, he should be given protection like a son. On the other hand, if a limb of one's body is poisoned by disease, it must be amputated so that the rest of the body may live happily. Similarly, even one's own son, if unfavorable, must be rejected, although born of one's own body.

38Just as uncontrolled senses are the enemies of all yogīs engaged in advancing in spiritual life, this Prahlāda, who appears to be a friend, is an enemy because I cannot control him. Therefore this enemy, whether eating, sitting or sleeping, must be killed by all means.

39-40The demons [Rākṣasas], the servants of Hiranyaśipu, thus began striking the tender parts of Prahlāda Mahārāja's body with their tridents. The demons all had fearful faces, sharp teeth and reddish, coppery beards and hair, and they appeared extremely threatening. Making a tumultuous sound, shouting, "Chop him up! Pierce him!" they began striking Prahlāda Mahārāja, who sat silently, meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

41Even though a person who has no assets in pious activities performs some good deed, it will have no result. Thus the weapons of the demons had no tangible effects upon Prahlāda Mahārāja because he was a devotee undisturbed by material conditions and fully engaged in meditating upon and serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unchangeable, who cannot be realized by the material senses, and who is the soul of the entire universe.

42My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, when all the attempts of the demons to kill Prahlāda Mahārāja were futile, the King of the demons, Hiranyaśipu, being most fearful, began contriving other means to kill him.

43-44Hiranyaśipu could not kill his son by throwing him beneath the feet of big elephants, throwing him among huge, fearful snakes, employing destructive spells, hurling him from the top of a hill, conjuring up illusory tricks, administering poison, starving him, exposing him to severe cold, winds, fire and water, or throwing heavy stones to crush him. When Hiranyaśipu found that he could not in any way harm Prahlāda, who was completely sinless, he was in great anxiety about what to do next.

45Hiranyaśipu thought: I have used many ill names in chastising this boy Prahlāda and have devised many means of killing him, but despite all my endeavors, he could not be killed. Indeed, he saved himself by his own powers, without being affected in the least by these treacheries and abominable actions.

46Although he is very near to me and is merely a child, he is situated in complete fearlessness. He resembles a dog's curved tail, which can never be straightened, because he never forgets my miSbehavior and his connection with his master, Lord Viṣṇu.

47I can see that this boy's strength is unlimited, for he has not feared any of my punishments. He appears immortal. Therefore, because of my enmity toward him, I shall die. Or maybe this will not take place.

48Thinking in this way, the King of the Daityas, morose and bereft of bodily luster, remained silent with his face downward. Then Śaṇḍa and Amarka, the two sons of Śukrācārya, spoke to him in secret.

49O lord, we know that when you simply move your eyebrows, all the commanders of the

various planets are most afraid. Without the help of any assistant, you have conquered all the three worlds. Therefore, we do not find any reason for you to be morose and full of anxiety. As for Prahlāda, he is nothing but a child and cannot be a cause of anxiety. After all, his bad or good qualities have no value.

50 Until the return of our spiritual master, Śukrācārya, arrest this child with the ropes of Varuṇa so that he will not flee in fear. In any case, by the time he is somewhat grown up and has assimilated our instructions or served our spiritual master, he will change in his intelligence. Thus there need be no cause for anxiety.

51 After hearing these instructions of Śaṅḍa and Amarka, the sons of his spiritual master, Hiraṇyakaśipu agreed and requested them to instruct Prahlāda in that system of occupational duty which is followed by royal householder families.

52 Thereafter, Śaṅḍa and Amarka systematically and unceasingly taught Prahlāda Mahārāja, who was very submissive and humble, about mundane religion, economic development and sense gratification.

53 The teachers Śaṅḍa and Amarka instructed Prahlāda Mahārāja in the three kinds of material advancement called religion, economic development and sense gratification. Prahlāda, however, being situated above such instructions, did not like them, for such instructions are based on the duality of worldly affairs, which involve one in a materialistic way of life marked by birth, death, old age and disease.

54 When the teachers went home to attend to their household affairs, the students of the same age as Prahlāda Mahārāja would call him to take the opportunity of leisure hours for play.

55 Prahlāda Mahārāja, who was truly the supreme learned person, then addressed his class friends in very sweet language. Smiling, he began to teach them about the uselessness of the materialistic way of life. Being very kind to them, he instructed them as follows.

56-57 My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, all the children were very much affectionate and respectful to Prahlāda Mahārāja, and because of their tender age they were not so polluted by the instructions and actions of their teachers, who were attached to condemned duality and bodily comfort. Thus the boys surrounded Prahlāda Mahārāja, giving up their playthings, and sat down to hear him. Their hearts and eyes being fixed upon him, they looked at him with great earnestness. Prahlāda Mahārāja, although born in a demon family, was an exalted devotee, and he desired their welfare. Thus he began instructing them about the futility of materialistic life.

SB 7.6: Prahlāda Instructs His Demonic Schoolmates

This chapter describes Prahlāda Mahārāja's instructions to his class friends. In speaking to his friends, who were all sons of demons, Prahlāda Mahārāja stressed that every living entity, especially in human society, must be interested in spiritual realization from the very beginning of life. When human beings are children, they should be taught that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the worshipable Deity for everyone. One should not be very much interested in material enjoyment; instead, one should be satisfied with whatever material profits are easily obtainable, and because the duration of one's life is very short, one should utilize every moment for spiritual advancement. One may wrongly think, "In the beginning of our lives let us enjoy material facilities, and in old age we may become Kṛṣṇa conscious." Such materialistic thoughts are always useless because in old age one cannot be trained in the spiritual way of life. Therefore, from the very beginning of life, one should engage in devotional service (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*). This is the duty of all living entities. Material education is infected

by the three modes of nature, but spiritual education, for which there is a great need in human society, is transcendental. Prahlāda Mahārāja disclosed the secret of how he had received instructions from Nārada Muni. By accepting the lotus feet of Prahlāda Mahārāja, who is in the *paramparā* succession, one will be able to understand the mode of spiritual life. In accepting this mode of activity, there is no need for material qualifications.

After Prahlāda Mahārāja's class friends had listened to Prahlāda Mahārāja, they inquired how he had become so learned and advanced. In this way the chapter ends.

1Prahlāda Mahārāja said: One who is sufficiently intelligent should use the human form of body from the very beginning of life in other words, from the tender age of childhood to practice the activities of devotional service, giving up all other engagements. The human body is most rarely achieved, and although temporary like other bodies, it is meaningful because in human life one can perform devotional service. Even a slight amount of sincere devotional service can give one complete perfection.

2The human form of life affords one a chance to return home, back to Godhead. Therefore every living entity, especially in the human form of life, must engage in devotional service to the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu. This devotional service is natural because Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the most beloved, the master of the soul, and the well-wisher of all other living beings.

3Prahlāda Mahārāja continued: My dear friends born of demoniac families, the happiness perceived with reference to the sense objects by contact with the body can be obtained in any form of life, according to one's past fruitive activities. Such happiness is automatically obtained without endeavor, just as we obtain distress.

4Endeavors merely for sense gratification or material happiness through economic development are not to be performed, for they result only in a loss of time and energy, with no actual profit. If one's endeavors are directed toward Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can surely attain the spiritual platform of self-realization. There is no such benefit from engaging oneself in economic development.

5Therefore, while in material existence [bhavam āśritaḥ], a person fully competent to distinguish wrong from right must endeavor to achieve the highest goal of life as long as the body is stout and strong and is not embarrassed by dwindling.

6Every human being has a maximum duration of life of one hundred years, but for one who cannot control his senses, half of those years are completely lost because at night he sleeps twelve hours, being covered by ignorance. Therefore such a person has a lifetime of only fifty years.

7In the tender age of childhood, when everyone is bewildered, one passes ten years. Similarly, in boyhood, engaged in sporting and playing, one passes another ten years. In this way, twenty years are wasted. Similarly, in old age, when one is an invalid, unable to perform even material activities, one passes another twenty years wastefully.

8One whose mind and senses are uncontrolled becomes increasingly attached to family life because of insatiable lusty desires and very strong illusion. In such a madman's life, the remaining years are also wasted because even during those years he cannot engage himself in devotional service.

9What person too attached to household life due to being unable to control his senses can liberate himself? An attached householder is bound very strongly by ropes of affection for his

family [wife, children and other relatives].

10Money is so dear that one conceives of money as being sweeter than honey. Therefore, who can give up the desire to accumulate money, especially in household life? Thieves, professional servants [soldiers] and merchants try to acquire money even by risking their very dear lives.

11-13How can a person who is most affectionate to his family, the core of his heart being always filled with their pictures, give up their association? Specifically, a wife is always very kind and sympathetic and always pleases her husband in a solitary place. Who could give up the association of such a dear and affectionate wife? Small children talk in broken language, very pleasing to hear, and their affectionate father always thinks of their sweet words. How could he give up their association? One's elderly parents and one's sons and daughters are also very dear. A daughter is especially dear to her father, and while living at her husband's house she is always in his mind. Who could give up that association? Aside from this, in household affairs there are many decorated items of household furniture, and there are also animals and servants. Who could give up such comforts? The attached householder is like a silkworm, which weaves a cocoon in which it becomes imprisoned, unable to get out. Simply for the satisfaction of two important senses—the genitals and the tongue—one is bound by material conditions. How can one escape?

14One who is too attached cannot understand that he is wasting his valuable life for the maintenance of his family. He also fails to understand that the purpose of human life, a life suitable for realization of the Absolute Truth, is being imperceptibly spoiled. However, he is very cleverly attentive to seeing that not a single farthing is lost by mismanagement. Thus although an attached person in material existence always suffers from threefold miseries, he does not develop a distaste for the way of material existence.

15If a person too attached to the duties of family maintenance is unable to control his senses, the core of his heart is immersed in how to accumulate money. Although he knows that one who takes the wealth of others will be punished by the law of the government, and by the laws of Yamarāja after death, he continues cheating others to acquire money.

16O my friends, sons of demons! In this material world, even those who are apparently advanced in education have the propensity to consider, "This is mine, and that is for others." Thus they are always engaged in providing the necessities of life to their families in a limited conception of family life, just like uneducated cats and dogs. They are unable to take to spiritual knowledge; instead, they are bewildered and overcome by ignorance.

17-18My dear friends, O sons of the demons, it is certain that no one bereft of knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead has been able to liberate himself from material bondage at any time or in any country. Rather, those bereft of knowledge of the Lord are bound by the material laws. They are factually addicted to sense gratification, and their target is woman. Indeed, they are actually playthings in the hands of attractive women. Victimized by such a conception of life, they become surrounded by children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and thus they are shackled to material bondage. Those who are very much addicted to this conception of life are called demons. Therefore, although you are sons of demons, keep aloof from such persons and take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, the origin of all the demigods, because the ultimate goal for the devotees of Nārāyaṇa is liberation from the bondage of material existence.

19My dear sons of demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, is the original Supersoul, the father of all living entities. Consequently there are no impediments to pleasing Him or worshipping Him under any conditions, whether one be a child or an old man. The

relationship between the living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always a fact, and therefore there is no difficulty in pleasing the Lord.

20-23The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, who is infallible and indefatigable, is present in different forms of life, from the inert living beings [sthāvara], such as the plants, to Brahmā, the foremost created living being. He is also present in the varieties of material creations and in the material elements, the total material energy and the modes of material nature [sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa], as well as the unmanifested material nature and the false ego. Although He is one, He is present everywhere, and He is also the transcendental Supersoul, the cause of all causes, who is present as the observer in the cores of the hearts of all living entities. He is indicated as that which is pervaded and as the all-pervading Supersoul, but actually He cannot be indicated. He is changeless and undivided. He is simply perceived as the supreme sac-cid-ānanda [eternity, knowledge and bliss]. Being covered by the curtain of the external energy, to the atheist He appears nonexistent.

24Therefore, my dear young friends born of demons, please act in such a way that the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the conception of material knowledge, will be satisfied. Give up your demoniac nature and act without enmity or duality. Show mercy to all living entities by enlightening them in devotional service, thus becoming their well-wishers.

25Nothing is unobtainable for devotees who have satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the cause of all causes, the original source of everything. The Lord is the reservoir of unlimited spiritual qualities. For devotees, therefore, who are transcendental to the modes of material nature, what is the use of following the principles of religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation, which are all automatically obtainable under the influence of the modes of nature? We devotees always glorify the lotus feet of the Lord, and therefore we need not ask for anything in terms of dharma, kāma, artha and mokṣa.

26Religion, economic development and sense gratificationthese are described in the Vedas as tri-varga, or three ways to salvation. Within these three categories are education and self-realization; ritualistic ceremonies performed according to Vedic injunction; logic; the science of law and order; and the various means of earning one's livelihood. These are the external subject matters of study in the Vedas, and therefore I consider them material. However, I consider surrender to the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu to be transcendental.

27Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the well-wisher and friend of all living entities, formerly explained this transcendental knowledge to the great saint Nārada. Such knowledge is extremely difficult to understand without the mercy of a saintly person like Nārada, but everyone who has taken shelter of Nārada's disciplic succession can understand this confidential knowledge.

28Prahāda Mahārāja continued: I received this knowledge from the great saint Nārada Muni, who is always engaged in devotional service. This knowledge, which is called bhāgavata-dharma, is fully scientific. It is based on logic and philosophy and is free from all material contamination.

29-30The sons of the demons replied: Dear Prahāda, neither you nor we know any teacher or spiritual master other than Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the sons of Śukrācārya. After all, we are children and they our controllers. For you especially, who always remain within the palace, it is very difficult to associate with a great personality. Dear friend, most gentle one, would you kindly explain how it was possible for you to hear Nārada? Kindly dispel our doubts in this regard.

SB 7.7: What Prahlāda Learned in the Womb

In this chapter, to dissipate the doubts of his class friends, the sons of the demons, Prahlāda Mahārāja states how, within the womb of his mother, he had heard from the mouth of Nārada Muni, who had instructed him in *bhāgavata-dharma*.

When Hiranyakaśipu left his kingdom and went to the mountain known as Mandarācala to execute severe austerities, all the demons scattered. Hiranyakaśipu's wife, Kayādhu, was pregnant at that time, and the demigods, mistakenly thinking that she carried another demon in her womb, arrested her. Their plan was that as soon as the child took birth they would kill him. While they were taking Kayādhu to the heavenly planets, they met Nārada Muni, who stopped them from taking her away and took her to his *āśrama* until Hiranyakaśipu's return. In Nārada Muni's *āśrama*, Kayādhu prayed for the protection of the baby in her womb, and Nārada Muni reassured her and gave her instructions on spiritual knowledge. Taking advantage of those instructions, Prahlāda Mahārāja, although a small baby within the womb, listened very carefully. The spirit soul is always apart from the material body. There is no change in the spiritual form of the living entity. Any person above the bodily conception of life is pure and can receive transcendental knowledge. This transcendental knowledge is devotional service, and Prahlāda Mahārāja, while living in the womb of his mother, received instructions in devotional service from Nārada Muni. Any person engaged in the service of the Lord through the instructions of a bona fide spiritual master is immediately liberated, and being free from the clutches of *māyā*, he is relieved of all ignorance and material desires. The duty of everyone is to take shelter of the Supreme Lord and thus become free from all material desires. Regardless of the material condition in which one is situated, one can achieve this perfection. Devotional service is not dependent on the material activities of austerity, penance, mystic *yoga* or piety. Even without such assets, one can achieve devotional service through the mercy of a pure devotee.

1Nārada Muni said: Although Prahlāda Mahārāja was born in a family of asuras, he was the greatest of all devotees. Having thus been questioned by his class friends, the sons of the asuras, he remembered the words spoken to him by me and replied to his friends as follows.

2Prahlāda Mahārāja said: When our father, Hiranyakaśipu, went to Mandarācala Mountain to execute severe austerities, in his absence the demigods, headed by King Indra, made a severe attempt to subdue all the demons in warfare.

3“Alas, as a serpent is eaten by small ants, so the troublesome Hiranyakaśipu, who always inflicted miseries upon all types of people, has now been defeated by the reactions of his own sinful activities.” Saying this, the demigods, headed by King Indra, arranged to fight the demons.

4-5When the great leaders of the demons, who were being killed one after another, saw the unprecedented exertion of the demigods in fighting, they began to flee, scattering themselves in all directions. Simply to protect their lives, they hastily fled from their homes, wives, children, animals and household paraphernalia. Paying no heed to all these, the demons simply fled.

6The victorious demigods plundered the palace of Hiranyakaśipu, the King of the demons, and destroyed everything within it. Then Indra, King of heaven, arrested my mother, the Queen.

7As she was being led away, crying in fear like a kurarī captured by a vulture, the great sage Nārada, who at that time had no engagement, appeared on the scene and saw her in that condition.

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8Nārada Muni said: O Indra, King of the demigods, this woman is certainly sinless. You should not drag her off in this merciless way. O greatly fortunate one, this chaste woman is the wife of another. You must immediately release her.

9King Indra said: In the womb of this woman, the wife of the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, is the seed of that great demon. Therefore, let her remain in our custody until her child is delivered, and then we shall release her.

10Nārada Muni replied: The child within this woman's womb is faultless and sinless. Indeed, he is a great devotee, a powerful servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you will not be able to kill him.

11When the great saint Nārada Muni had thus spoken, King Indra, being respectful to Nārada's words, immediately released my mother. Because of my being a devotee of the Lord, all the demigods circumambulated her. Then they returned to their celestial kingdom.

12Prahlaḍa Mahārāja continued: The great saint Nārada Muni brought my mother to his āśrama and assured her of all protection, saying, "My dear child, please remain at my āśrama until the arrival of your husband."

13After accepting the instructions of Devarṣi Nārada, my mother stayed in his care, without fear from any direction, as long as my father, the King of the Daityas, had not become free from his severe austerities.

14My mother, being pregnant, desired the safety of her embryo and desired to give birth after her husband's arrival. Thus she stayed at Nārada Muni's āśrama, where she rendered service unto Nārada Muni with great devotion.

15Nārada Muni delivered his instructions both to me, who was within the womb, and to my mother, who was engaged in rendering him service. Because he is naturally extremely kind to the fallen souls, being in a transcendental position, he gave instructions on religion and transcendental knowledge. These instructions were free from all material contamination.

16Because of the long duration of time that has passed and because of her being a woman and therefore less intelligent, my mother has forgotten all those instructions; but the great sage Nārada blessed me, and therefore I could not forget them.

17Prahlaḍa Mahārāja continued: My dear friends, if you can place your faith in my words, simply by that faith you can also understand transcendental knowledge, just like me, although you are small children. Similarly, a woman can also understand transcendental knowledge and know what is spirit and what is matter.

18Just as the fruits and flowers of a tree in due course of time undergo six changes—birth, existence, growth, transformation, dwindling and then death—the material body, which is obtained by the spirit soul under different circumstances, undergoes similar changes. However, there are no such changes for the spirit soul.

19-20"Ātmā" refers to the Supreme Lord or the living entities. Both of them are spiritual, free from birth and death, free from deterioration and free from material contamination. They are individual, they are the knowers of the external body, and they are the foundation or shelter of everything. They are free from material change, they are self-illuminated, they are the cause of all causes, and they are all-pervading. They have nothing to do with the material body, and therefore they are always uncovered. With these transcendental qualities, one who is actually learned must give up the illusory conception of life, in which one thinks, "I am this material

body, and everything in relationship with this body is mine.”

21An expert geologist can understand where there is gold and by various processes can extract it from the gold ore. Similarly, a spiritually advanced person can understand how the spiritual particle exists within the body, and thus by cultivating spiritual knowledge he can attain perfection in spiritual life. However, as one who is not expert cannot understand where there is gold, a foolish person who has not cultivated spiritual knowledge cannot understand how the spirit exists within the body.

22The Lord’s eight separated material energies, the three modes of material nature and the sixteen transformations [the eleven senses and the five gross material elements like earth and water]within all these, the one spiritual soul exists as the observer. Therefore all the great ācāryas have concluded that the individual soul is conditioned by these material elements.

23There are two kinds of bodies for every individual soul a gross body made of five gross elements and a subtle body made of three subtle elements. Within these bodies, however, is the spirit soul. One must find the soul by analysis, saying, “This is not it. This is not it.” Thus one must separate spirit from matter.

24Sober and expert persons should search for the spirit soul with minds purified through analytical study in terms of the soul’s connection with and distinction from all things that undergo creation, maintenance and destruction.

25Intelligence can be perceived in three states of activitywakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep. The person who perceives these three is to be considered the original master, the ruler, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

26As one can understand the presence of the air by the aromas it carries, so, under the guidance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can understand the living soul by these three divisions of intelligence. These three divisions, however, are not the soul; they are constituted of the three modes and are born of activities.

27Through polluted intelligence one is subjected to the modes of nature, and thus one is conditioned by material existence. Like a dreaming state in which one falsely suffers, material existence, which is due to ignorance, must be considered unwanted and temporary.

28Therefore, my dear friends, O sons of the demons, your duty is to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which can burn the seed of fruitive activities artificially created by the modes of material nature and stop the flow of the intelligence in wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep. In other words, when one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his ignorance is immediately dissipated.

29Of the different processes recommended for disentanglement from material life, the one personally explained and accepted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be considered all-perfect. That process is the performance of duties by which love for the Supreme Lord develops.

30-31One must accept the bona fide spiritual master and render service unto him with great devotion and faith. Whatever one has in one’s possession should be offered to the spiritual master, and in the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship the Lord, hear the glories of the Lord with faith, glorify the transcendental qualities and activities of the Lord, always meditate on the Lord’s lotus feet, and worship the Deity of the Lord strictly according to the injunctions of the śāstra and guru.

32One should always remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His localized

representation as the Paramātmā, who is situated in the core of every living entity's heart. Thus one should offer respect to every living entity according to that living entity's position or manifestation.

33By these activities [as mentioned above] one is able to cut down the influence of the enemies, namely lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness and jealousy, and when thus situated, one can render service to the Lord. In this way one surely attains the platform of loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

34One who is situated in devotional service is certainly the controller of his senses, and thus he is a liberated person. When such a liberated person, the pure devotee, hears of the transcendental qualities and activities of the Lord's incarnations for the performance of various pastimes, his hair stands on end on his body, tears fall from his eyes, and in his spiritual realization his voice falters. Sometimes he very openly dances, sometimes he sings loudly, and sometimes he cries. Thus he expresses his transcendental jubilation.

35When a devotee becomes like a person haunted by a ghost, he laughs and very loudly chants about the qualities of the Lord. Sometimes he sits to perform meditation, and he offers respects to every living entity, considering him a devotee of the Lord. Constantly breathing very heavily, he becomes careless of social etiquette and loudly chants like a madman, "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa! O my Lord, O master of the universe!"

36The devotee is then freed from all material contamination because he constantly thinks of the Lord's pastimes and because his mind and body have been converted to spiritual qualities. Because of his intense devotional service, his ignorance, material consciousness and all kinds of material desires are completely burnt to ashes. This is the stage at which one can achieve the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet.

37The real problem of life is the repetition of birth and death, which is like a wheel rolling repeatedly up and down. This wheel, however, completely stops when one is in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, by the transcendental bliss realized from constant engagement in devotional service, one is completely liberated from material existence. All learned men know this. Therefore, my dear friends, O sons of the asuras, immediately begin meditating upon and worshiping the Supersoul within everyone's heart.

38O my friends, sons of the asuras, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His Supersoul feature always exists within the cores of the hearts of all living entities. Indeed, He is the well-wisher and friend of all living entities, and there is no difficulty in worshiping the Lord. Why, then, should people not engage in His devotional service? Why are they so addicted to unnecessarily producing artificial paraphernalia for sense gratification?

39One's riches, beautiful wife and female friends, one's sons and daughters, one's residence, one's domestic animals like cows, elephants and horses, one's treasury, economic development and sense gratification indeed, even the lifetime in which one can enjoy all these material opulences are certainly temporary and flickering. Since the opportunity of human life is temporary, what benefit can these material opulences give to a sensible man who has understood himself to be eternal?

40It is learned from Vedic literature that by performing great sacrifices one may elevate himself to the heavenly planets. However, although life on the heavenly planets is hundreds and thousands of times more comfortable than life on earth, the heavenly planets are not pure [nirmalam], or free from the taint of material existence. The heavenly planets are also temporary, and therefore they are not the goal of life. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, has never been seen or heard to possess inebriety. Consequently, for your own

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benefit and self-realization, you must worship the Lord with great devotion, as described in the revealed scriptures.

41A materialistic person, thinking himself very advanced in intelligence, continually acts for economic development. But again and again, as enunciated in the Vedas, he is frustrated by material activities, either in this life or in the next. Indeed, the results one obtains are inevitably the opposite of those one desires.

42In this material world, every materialist desires to achieve happiness and diminish his distress, and therefore he acts accordingly. Actually, however, one is happy as long as one does not endeavor for happiness; as soon as one begins his activities for happiness, his conditions of distress begin.

43A living entity desires comfort for his body and makes many plans for this purpose, but actually the body is the property of others. Indeed, the perishable body embraces the living entity and then leaves him aside.

44Since the body itself is ultimately meant to become stool or earth, what is the meaning of the paraphernalia related to the body, such as wives, residences, wealth, children, relatives, servants, friends, kingdoms, treasuries, animals and ministers? They are also temporary. What more can be said about this?

45All this paraphernalia is very near and dear as long as the body exists, but as soon as the body is destroyed, all things related to the body are also finished. Therefore, actually one has nothing to do with them, but because of ignorance one accepts them as valuable. Compared to the ocean of eternal happiness, they are most insignificant. What is the use of such insignificant relationships for the eternal living being?

46My dear friends, O sons of the asuras, the living entity receives different types of bodies according to his previous fruitive activities. Thus he is seen to suffer with reference to his particular body in all conditions of life, beginning with his infusion into the womb. Please tell me, therefore, after full consideration, what is the living entity's actual interest in fruitive activities, which result in hardship and misery?

47The living entity, who has received his present body because of his past fruitive activity, may end the results of his actions in this life, but this does not mean that he is liberated from bondage to material bodies. The living entity receives one type of body, and by performing actions with that body he creates another. Thus he transmigrates from one body to another, through repeated birth and death, because of his gross ignorance.

48The four principles of advancement in spiritual life—dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa—all depend on the disposition of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, my dear friends, follow in the footsteps of devotees. Without desire, fully depend upon the disposition of the Supreme Lord, worship Him, the Supersoul, in devotional service.

49The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is the soul and the Supersoul of all living entities. Every living entity is a manifestation of His energy in terms of the living soul and the material body. Therefore the Lord is the most dear, and He is the supreme controller.

50If a demigod, demon, human being, Yakṣa, Gandharva or anyone within this universe renders service to the lotus feet of Mukunda, who can deliver liberation, he is actually situated in the most auspicious condition of life, exactly like us [the mahājanas, headed by Prahāda Mahārāja].

51-52My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of

Godhead by becoming perfect brāhmaṇas, demigods or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show.

53My dear friends, O sons of the demons, in the same favorable way that one sees himself and takes care of himself, take to devotional service to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present everywhere as the Supersoul of all living entities.

54O my friends, O sons of demons, everyone, including you (the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas), the unintelligent women, śūdras and cowherd men, the birds, the lower animals and the sinful living entities, can revive his original, eternal spiritual life and exist forever simply by accepting the principles of bhakti-yoga.

55In this material world, to render service to the lotus feet of Govinda, the cause of all causes, and to see Him everywhere, is the only goal of life. This much alone is the ultimate goal of human life, as explained by all the revealed scriptures.

SB 7.8: Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva Slays the King of the Demons

As described in this chapter, Hiranyakaśipu was ready to kill his own son Prahlāda Mahārāja, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in front of the demon as Śrī Nṛkeśarī, half lion and half man, and killed him.

Following the instructions of Prahlāda Mahārāja, all the sons of the demons became attached to Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When this attachment became pronounced, their teachers, Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, were very much afraid that the boys would become more and more devoted to the Lord. In a helpless condition, they approached Hiranyakaśipu and described in detail the effect of Prahlāda's preaching. After hearing of this, Hiranyakaśipu decided to kill his son Prahlāda. Hiranyakaśipu was so angry that Prahlāda Mahārāja fell down at his feet and said many things just to pacify him, but he was unsuccessful in satisfying his demoniac father. Hiranyakaśipu, as a typical demon, began to advertise himself as being greater than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but Prahlāda Mahārāja challenged him, saying that Hiranyakaśipu was not God, and began to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead, declaring that the Lord is all-pervading, that everything is under Him, and that no one is equal to or greater than Him. Thus he requested his father to be submissive to the omnipotent Supreme Lord.

The more Prahlāda Mahārāja glorified the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the more angry and agitated the demon became. Hiranyakaśipu asked his Vaiṣṇava son whether his God existed within the columns of the palace, and Prahlāda Mahārāja immediately accepted that since the Lord is present everywhere, He was also present within the columns. When Hiranyakaśipu heard this philosophy from his young son, he derided the boy's statement as just the talk of a child and forcefully struck the pillar with his fist.

As soon as Hiranyakaśipu struck the column, there issued forth a tumultuous sound. At first Hiranyakaśipu, the King of the demons, could not see anything but the pillar, but to substantiate Prahlāda's statements, the Lord came out of the pillar in His wonderful incarnation as Narasiṃha, half lion and half man. Hiranyakaśipu could immediately understand that the extraordinarily wonderful form of the Lord was surely meant for his death, and thus he prepared to fight with the form of half lion and half man. The Lord performed His pastimes by fighting with the demon for some time, and in the evening, on the border between day and

night, the Lord captured the demon, threw him on His lap, and killed him by piercing his abdomen with His nails. The Lord not only killed Hiranyakaśipu, the King of the demons, but also killed many of his followers. When there was no one else to fight, the Lord, roaring with anger, sat down on Hiranyakaśipu's throne.

The entire universe was thus relieved of the rule of Hiranyakaśipu, and everyone was jubilant in transcendental bliss. Then all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, approached the Lord. These included the great saintly persons, the Pitās, the Siddhas, the Vidyādhara, the Nāgas, the Manus, the *prajāpatis*, the Gandharvas, the Cāraṇas, the Yakṣas, the Kimpuruṣas, the Vaitālikas, the Kinnaras and also many other varieties of beings in human form. All of them stood not far from the Supreme Personality of Godhead and began offering their prayers unto the Lord, whose spiritual effulgence was brilliant as He sat on the throne.

1Nārada Muni continued: All the sons of the demons appreciated the transcendental instructions of Prahlaḍa Mahārāja and took them very seriously. They rejected the materialistic instructions given by their teachers, Śaṇḍa and Amarka.

2When Śaṇḍa and Amarka, the sons of Śukrācārya, observed that all the students, the sons of the demons, were becoming advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness because of the association of Prahlaḍa Mahārāja, they were afraid. They approached the King of the demons and described the situation as it was.

3-4When Hiranyakaśipu understood the entire situation, he was extremely angry, so much so that his body trembled. Thus he finally decided to kill his son Prahlaḍa. Hiranyakaśipu was by nature very cruel, and feeling insulted, he began hissing like a snake trampled upon by someone's foot. His son Prahlaḍa was peaceful, mild and gentle, his senses were under control, and he stood before Hiranyakaśipu with folded hands. According to Prahlaḍa's age and behavior, he was not to be chastised. Yet with staring, crooked eyes, Hiranyakaśipu rebuked him with the following harsh words.

5Hiranyakaśipu said: O most impudent, most unintelligent disruptor of the family, O lowest of mankind, you have violated my power to rule you, and therefore you are an obstinate fool. Today I shall send you to the place of Yamarāja.

6My son Prahlaḍa, you rascal, you know that when I am angry all the planets of the three worlds tremble, along with their chief rulers. By whose power has a rascal like you become so impudent that you appear fearless and overstep my power to rule you?

7Prahlaḍa Mahārāja said: My dear King, the source of my strength, of which you are asking, is also the source of yours. Indeed, the original source of all kinds of strength is one. He is not only your strength or mine, but the only strength for everyone. Without Him, no one can get any strength. Whether moving or not moving, superior or inferior, everyone, including Lord Brahmā, is controlled by the strength of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

8The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme controller and time factor, is the power of the senses, the power of the mind, the power of the body, and the vital force of the senses. His influence is unlimited. He is the best of all living entities, the controller of the three modes of material nature. By His own power, He creates this cosmic manifestation, maintains it and annihilates it also.

9Prahlaḍa Mahārāja continued: My dear father, please give up your demoniac mentality. Do not discriminate in your heart between enemies and friends; make your mind equipoised toward everyone. Except for the uncontrolled and misguided mind, there is no enemy within this

world. When one sees everyone on the platform of equality, one then comes to the position of worshipping the Lord perfectly.

10In former times there were many fools like you who did not conquer the six enemies that steal away the wealth of the body. These fools were very proud, thinking, “I have conquered all enemies in all the ten directions.” But if a person is victorious over the six enemies and is equipoised toward all living entities, for him there are no enemies. Enemies are merely imagined by one in ignorance.

11Hiraṇyakaśipu replied: You rascal, you are trying to minimize my value, as if you were better than me at controlling the senses. This is over-intelligent. I can therefore understand that you desire to die at my hands, for this kind of nonsensical talk is indulged in by those about to die.

12O most unfortunate Prahlāda, you have always described a supreme being other than me, a supreme being who is above everything, who is the controller of everyone, and who is all-pervading. But where is He? If He is everywhere, then why is He not present before me in this pillar?

13Because you are speaking so much nonsense, I shall now sever your head from your body. Now let me see your most worshipable God come to protect you. I want to see it.

14Being obsessed with anger, Hiraṇyakaśipu, who was very great in bodily strength, thus chastised his exalted devotee-son Prahlāda with harsh words. Cursing him again and again, Hiraṇyakaśipu took up his sword, got up from his royal throne, and with great anger struck his fist against the column.

15Then from within the pillar came a fearful sound, which appeared to crack the covering of the universe. O my dear Yudhiṣṭhira, this sound reached even the abodes of the demigods like Lord Brahmā, and when the demigods heard it, they thought, “Oh, now our planets are being destroyed!”

16While showing his extraordinary prowess, Hiraṇyakaśipu, who desired to kill his own son, heard that wonderful, tumultuous sound, which had never before been heard. Upon hearing the sound, the other leaders of the demons were afraid. None of them could find the origin of that sound in the assembly.

17To prove that the statement of His servant Prahlāda Mahārāja was substantial in other words, to prove that the Supreme Lord is present everywhere, even within the pillar of an assembly hall the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, exhibited a wonderful form never before seen. The form was neither that of a man nor that of a lion. Thus the Lord appeared in His wonderful form in the assembly hall.

18While Hiraṇyakaśipu looked all around to find the source of the sound, that wonderful form of the Lord, which could not be ascertained to be either a man or a lion, emerged from the pillar. In amazement, Hiraṇyakaśipu wondered, “What is this creature that is half man and half lion?”

19-22Hiraṇyakaśipu studied the form of the Lord, trying to decide who the form of Nṛsiṃhadeva standing before him was. The Lord’s form was extremely fearsome because of His angry eyes, which resembled molten gold; His shining mane, which expanded the dimensions of His fearful face; His deadly teeth; and His razor-sharp tongue, which moved about like a dueling sword. His ears were erect and motionless, and His nostrils and gaping mouth appeared like caves of a mountain. His jaws parted fearfully, and His entire body touched the sky. His neck was very short and thick, His chest broad, His waist thin, and the hairs on His

body as white as the rays of the moon. His arms, which resembled flanks of soldiers, spread in all directions as He killed the demons, rogues and atheists with His conchshell, disc, club, lotus and other natural weapons.

23Hiraṇyakaśipu murmured to himself, “Lord Viṣṇu, who possesses great mystic power, has made this plan to kill me, but what is the use of such an attempt? Who can fight with me?” Thinking like this and taking up his club, Hiraṇyakaśipu attacked the Lord like an elephant.

24Just as a small insect falls forcefully into a fire and the insignificant creature becomes invisible, when Hiraṇyakaśipu attacked the Lord, who was full of effulgence, Hiraṇyakaśipu became invisible. This is not at all astonishing, for the Lord is always situated in pure goodness. Formerly, during creation, He entered the dark universe and illuminated it by His spiritual effulgence.

25Thereafter, the great demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, who was extremely angry, swiftly attacked Nṛsiṃhadeva with his club and began to beat Him. Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, however, captured the great demon, along with his club, just as Garuḍa might capture a great snake.

26O Yudhiṣṭhira, O great son of Bharata, when Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva gave Hiraṇyakaśipu a chance to slip from His hand, just as Garuḍa sometimes plays with a snake and lets it slip from his mouth, the demigods, who had lost their abodes and who were hiding behind the clouds for fear of the demon, did not consider that incident very good. Indeed, they were perturbed.

27When Hiraṇyakaśipu was freed from the hands of Nṛsiṃhadeva, he falsely thought that the Lord was afraid of his prowess. Therefore, after taking a little rest from the fight, he took up his sword and shield and again attacked the Lord with great force.

28Making a loud, shrill sound of laughter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, who is extremely strong and powerful, captured Hiraṇyakaśipu, who was protecting himself with his sword and shield, leaving no gaps open. With the speed of a hawk, Hiraṇyakaśipu moved sometimes in the sky and sometimes on the earth, his eyes closed because of fear of Nṛsiṃhadeva’s laughter.

29As a snake captures a mouse or Garuḍa captures a very venomous snake, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva captured Hiraṇyakaśipu, who could not be pierced even by the thunderbolt of King Indra. As Hiraṇyakaśipu moved his limbs here, there and all around, very much afflicted at being captured, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva placed the demon on His lap, supporting him with His thighs, and in the doorway of the assembly hall the Lord very easily tore the demon to pieces with the nails of His hand.

30Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva’s mouth and mane were sprinkled with drops of blood, and His fierce eyes, full of anger, were impossible to look at. Licking the edge of His mouth with His tongue, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nṛsiṃhadeva, decorated with a garland of intestines taken from Hiraṇyakaśipu’s abdomen, resembled a lion that has just killed an elephant.

31The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had many, many arms, first uprooted Hiraṇyakaśipu’s heart and then threw him aside and turned toward the demon’s soldiers. These soldiers had come in thousands to fight with Him with raised weapons and were very faithful followers of Hiraṇyakaśipu, but Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva killed all of them merely with the ends of His nails.

32The hair on Nṛsiṃhadeva’s head shook the clouds and scattered them here and there, His glaring eyes stole the effulgence of the luminaries in the sky, and His breathing agitated the

seas and oceans. Because of His roaring, all the elephants in the world began to cry in fear.

33Airplanes were thrown into outer space and the upper planetary system by the hair on Nṛsimhadeva's head. Because of the pressure of the Lord's lotus feet, the earth appeared to slip from its position, and all the hills and mountains sprang up due to His intolerable force. Because of the Lord's bodily effulgence, both the sky and all directions diminished in their natural illumination.

34Manifesting a full effulgence and a fearsome countenance, Lord Nṛsimha, being very angry and finding no contestant to face His power and opulence, then sat down in the assembly hall on the excellent throne of the king. Because of fear and obedience, no one could come forward to serve the Lord directly.

35Hiraṇyakaśipu had been exactly like a fever of meningitis in the head of the three worlds. Thus when the wives of the demigods in the heavenly planets saw that the great demon had been killed by the personal hands of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, their faces blossomed in great joy. The wives of the demigods again and again showered flowers from heaven upon Lord Nṛsimhadeva like rain.

36At that time, the airplanes of the demigods, who desired to see the activities of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, crowded the sky. The demigods began beating drums and kettledrums, and upon hearing them the angelic women began to dance, while the chiefs of the Gandharvas sang sweetly.

37-39My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the demigods then approached the Lord. They were headed by Lord Brahmā, King Indra and Lord Śiva and included great saintly persons and the residents of Pitrloka, Siddhaloka, Vidyādhara-loka and the planet of the snakes. The Manus approached, and so did the chiefs of various other planets. The angelic dancers approached, as did the Gandharvas, the Cāraṇas, the Yakṣas, the inhabitants of Kinnaraloka, the Vetālas, the inhabitants of Kimpuruṣa-loka, and the personal servants of Viṣṇu like Sunanda and Kumuda. All of them came near the Lord, who glowed with intense light. They individually offered their obeisances and prayers, their hands folded at their heads.

40Lord Brahmā prayed: My Lord, You are unlimited, and You possess unending potencies. No one can estimate or calculate Your prowess and wonderful influence, for Your actions are never polluted by the material energy. Through the material qualities, You very easily create the universe, maintain it and again annihilate it, yet You remain the same, without deterioration. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

41Lord Śiva said: The end of the millennium is the time for Your anger. Now that this insignificant demon Hiraṇyakaśipu has been killed, O my Lord, who are naturally affectionate to Your devotee, kindly protect his son Prahlāda Mahārāja, who is standing nearby as Your fully surrendered devotee.

42King Indra said: O Supreme Lord, You are our deliverer and protector. Our shares of sacrifices, which are actually Yours, have been recovered from the demon by You. Because the demoniac king Hiraṇyakaśipu was most fearsome, our hearts, which are Your permanent abode, were all overtaken by him. Now, by Your presence, the gloom and darkness in our hearts have been dissipated. O Lord, for those who always engage in Your service, which is more exalted than liberation, all material opulence is insignificant. They do not even care for liberation, not to speak of the benefits of kāma, artha and dharma.

43All the saintly persons present offered their prayers in this way: O Lord, O supreme

maintainer of those sheltered at Your lotus feet, O original Personality of Godhead, the process of austerity and penance, in which You instructed us before, is the spiritual power of Your very self. It is by austerity that You create the material world, which lies dormant within You. This austerity was almost stopped by the activities of this demon, but now, by Yourself appearing in the form of Nṛsimhadeva, which is meant just to give us protection, and by killing this demon, You have again approved the process of austerity.

44The inhabitants of Pitṛloka prayed: Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Lord Nṛsimhadeva, the maintainer of the religious principles of the universe. He has killed Hiranyakaśipu, the demon who by force enjoyed all the offerings of the śrāddha ceremonies performed by our sons and grandsons on the anniversaries of our death and who drank the water with sesame seeds offered in holy places of pilgrimage. By killing this demon, O Lord, You have taken back all this stolen property from his abdomen by piercing it with Your nails. We therefore wish to offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

45The inhabitants of Siddhaloka prayed: O Lord Nṛsimhadeva, because we belong to Siddhaloka, we automatically achieve perfection in all eight kinds of mystic power. Yet Hiranyakaśipu was so dishonest that by the strength of his power and austerity, he took away our powers. Thus he became very proud of his mystic strength. Now, because this rogue has been killed by Your nails, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

46The inhabitants of Vidyādhara-loka prayed: Our acquired power to appear and disappear in various ways according to varieties of meditation was banned by that foolish Hiranyakaśipu because of his pride in his superior bodily strength and his ability to conquer others. Now the Supreme Personality of Godhead has killed him just as if the demon were an animal. Unto that supreme pastime form of Lord Nṛsimhadeva, we eternally offer our respectful obeisances.

47The inhabitants of Nāgaloka said: The most sinful Hiranyakaśipu took away all the jewels on our hoods and all our beautiful wives. Now, since his chest has been pierced by Your nails, You are the source of all pleasure to our wives. Thus we together offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

48All the Manus offered their prayers as follows: As Your order carriers, O Lord, we, the Manus, are the law-givers for human society, but because of the temporary supremacy of this great demon, Hiranyakaśipu, our laws for maintaining varṇāśrama-dharma were destroyed. O Lord, now that You have killed this great demon, we are in our normal condition. Kindly order us, Your eternal servants, what to do now.

49The prajāpatis offered their prayers as follows: O Supreme Lord, Lord of even Brahmā and Śiva, we, the prajāpatis, were created by You to execute Your orders, but we were forbidden by Hiranyakaśipu to create any more good progeny. Now the demon is lying dead before us, his chest pierced by You. Let us therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto You, whose incarnation in this form of pure goodness is meant for the welfare of the entire universe.

50The inhabitants of Gandharvaloka prayed: Your Lordship, we ever engage in Your service by dancing and singing in dramatic performances, but this Hiranyakaśipu, by the influence of his bodily strength and valor, brought us under his subjugation. Now he has been brought to this low condition by Your Lordship. What benefit can result from the activities of such an upstart as Hiranyakaśipu?

51The inhabitants of the Cāraṇa planet said: O Lord, because You have destroyed the demon Hiranyakaśipu, who was always a stake in the hearts of all honest men, we are now relieved, and we eternally take shelter of Your lotus feet, which award the conditioned soul liberation

from materialistic contamination.

52The inhabitants of Yakṣaloka prayed: O controller of the twenty-four elements, we are considered the best servants of Your Lordship because of rendering services pleasing to You, yet we engaged as palanquin carriers by the order of Hiraṇyakaśipu, the son of Diti. O Lord in the form of Nṛsiṃhadeva, You know how this demon gave trouble to everyone, but now You have killed him, and his body is mixing with the five material elements.

53The inhabitants of Kimpuruṣa-loka said: We are insignificant living entities, and You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller. Therefore how can we offer suitable prayers unto You? When this demon was condemned by devotees because they were disgusted with him, he was then killed by You.

54The inhabitants of Vaitālika-loka said: Dear Lord, because of chanting Your spotless glories in great assemblies and arenas of sacrifice, we were accustomed to great respect from everyone. This demon, however, usurped that position. Now, to our great fortune, You have killed this great demon, exactly as one cures a chronic disease.

55The Kinnaras said: O supreme controller, we are ever-existing servants of Your Lordship, but instead of rendering service to You, we were engaged by this demon in his service, constantly and without remuneration. This sinful man has now been killed by You. Therefore, O Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, our master, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You. Please continue to be our patron.

56The associates of Lord Viṣṇu in Vaikuṅṭha offered this prayer: O Lord, our supreme giver of shelter, today we have seen Your wonderful form as Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, meant for the good fortune of all the world. O Lord, we can understand that Hiraṇyakaśipu was the same Jaya who engaged in Your service but was cursed by brāhmaṇas and who thus received the body of a demon. We understand that his having now been killed is Your special mercy upon him.

SB 7.9: Prahlāda Pacifies Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva with Prayers

As related in this chapter, Prahlāda Mahārāja, following the order of Lord Brahmā, pacified the Lord when the Lord was extremely angry after having killed Hiraṇyakaśipu.

After Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed, the Lord continued to be very angry, and the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, could not pacify Him. Even mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, the constant companion of Nārāyaṇa, could not dare come before Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva. Then Lord Brahmā asked Prahlāda Mahārāja to go forward and pacify the Lord's anger. Prahlāda Mahārāja, being confident of the affection of his master, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, was not afraid at all. He very gravely appeared before the Lord's lotus feet and offered Him respectful obeisances. Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, being very much affectionate toward Prahlāda Mahārāja, put His hand on Prahlāda's head, and because of being personally touched by the Lord, Prahlāda Mahārāja immediately achieved *brahma-jnana*, spiritual knowledge. Thus he offered his prayers to the Lord in full spiritual knowledge and full devotional ecstasy. The instructions given by Prahlāda Mahārāja in the form of his prayers are as follows.

Prahlāda said, "I am not proud of being able to offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I simply take shelter of the mercy of the Lord, for without devotion one cannot appease Him. One cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead simply by dint of high parentage or great opulence, learning, austerity, penance or mystic power. Indeed, these are never pleasing to the Supreme Lord, for nothing can please Him but pure devotional service. Even if a nondevotee is a *brāhmaṇa* qualified with the twelve brahminical symptoms, he

cannot be very dear to the Lord, whereas if a person born in a family of dog-eaters is a devotee, the Lord can accept his prayers. The Lord does not need anyone's prayers, but if a devotee offers his prayers to the Lord, the devotee benefits greatly. Ignorant persons born in low families, therefore, can sincerely offer heartfelt prayers to the Lord, and the Lord will accept them. As soon as one offers his prayers to the Lord, he is immediately situated on the Brahman platform."

Lord Nṛsimhadeva appeared for the benefit of all human society, not only for Prahāda's personal benefit. The fierce form of Lord Nṛsimhadeva may appear most awful to a nondevotee, but to the devotee the Lord is always affectionate as He is in other forms. Conditioned life in the material world is actually extremely fearful; indeed, a devotee is not afraid of anything else. Fear of material existence is due to false ego. Therefore the ultimate goal of life for every living entity is to attain the position of being servant of the servant of the Lord. The miserable condition of the living entities in the material world can be remedied only by the mercy of the Lord. Although there are so-called material protectors like Lord Brahmā and the other demigods, or even one's own father, they are unable to do anything if one is neglected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, one who has fully taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet can be saved from the onslaught of material nature. Therefore every living entity should be unattracted by material so-called happiness and should take shelter of the Lord by all means. That is the mission of human life. To be attracted by sense gratification is simply foolish. Whether one is a devotee of the Lord or is a nondevotee does not depend upon one's birth in a high or low family. Even Lord Brahmā and the goddess of fortune cannot achieve the full favor of the Lord, whereas a devotee can very easily attain such devotional service. The Lord's mercy is bestowed equally upon everyone, regardless of whether one is high or low. Because Prahāda Mahārāja was blessed by Nārada Muni, Prahāda became a great devotee. The Lord always saves the devotee from impersonalists and voidists. The Lord is present in everyone's heart as the Supersoul to give the living being protection and all benefits. Thus the Lord acts sometimes as the killer and sometimes as the protector. One should not accuse the Lord for any discrepancies. It is His plan that we see varieties of life within this material world. All of them are ultimately His mercy.

Although the entire cosmic manifestation is nondifferent, the material world is nonetheless different from the spiritual world. Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord can one understand how the wonderful material nature acts. For example, although Lord Brahmā appeared from the lotus seat that had grown from the abdomen of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, he could not understand what to do after his appearance. He was attacked by two demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who took away Vedic knowledge, but the Lord killed them and entrusted to Lord Brahmā the Vedic knowledge. Thus the Lord appears in every millennium in the societies of demigods, human beings, animals, saints and aquatics. All such incarnations are meant to protect the devotees and kill the demons, but this killing and protecting does not reflect any sense of partiality on the part of the Supreme Lord. The conditioned soul is always attracted by the external energy. Therefore he is subjected to lust and greed, and he suffers under the conditions of material nature. The Lord's causeless mercy toward His devotee is the only means by which to get out of material existence. Anyone engaged in glorifying the Lord's activities is always unafraid of this material world, whereas one who cannot glorify the Lord in that way is subjected to all lamentation.

Those interested in silently worshiping the Lord in solitary places may be eligible for liberation themselves, but a pure devotee is always aggrieved to see others suffering. Therefore, not caring for his own liberation, he always engages in preaching by glorifying the Lord. Prahāda Mahārāja, therefore, had tried to deliver his class friends by preaching and had never remained silent. Although being silent, observing austerities and penances, learning the Vedic literature,

undergoing ritualistic ceremonies, living in a solitary place and performing *japa* and transcendental meditation are approved means of liberation, they are meant for nondevotees or for cheaters who want to live at the expense of others. A pure devotee, however, being freed from all such deceptive activities, is able to see the Lord face to face.

The atomic theory of the composition of the cosmic manifestation is not factual. The Lord is the cause of everything, and therefore He is the cause of this creation. One should therefore always engage in devotional service by offering respectful obeisances to the Lord, offering prayers, working for the Lord, worshiping the Lord in the temple, always remembering the Lord and always hearing about His transcendental activities. Without these six kinds of activity, one cannot attain to devotional service.

Prahlāda Mahārāja thus offered his prayers to the Supreme Lord, begging His mercy at every step. Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva was pacified by Prahlāda Mahārāja's prayers and wanted to give him benedictions by which Prahlāda could procure all kinds of material facilities. Prahlāda Mahārāja, however, was not misled by material facilities. Rather, he wanted to remain always a servant of the servant of the Lord.

1The great saint Nārada Muni continued: The demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and other great demigods, dared not come forward before the Lord, who at that time was extremely angry.

2The goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, was requested to go before the Lord by all the demigods present, who because of fear could not do so. But even she had never seen such a wonderful and extraordinary form of the Lord, and thus she could not approach Him.

3Thereafter Lord Brahmā requested Prahlāda Mahārāja, who was standing very near him: My dear son, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva is extremely angry at your demoniac father. Please go forward and appease the Lord.

4Nārada Muni continued: O King, although the exalted devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja was only a little boy, he accepted Lord Brahmā's words. He gradually proceeded toward Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva and fell down to offer his respectful obeisances with folded hands.

5When Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva saw the small boy Prahlāda Mahārāja prostrated at the soles of His lotus feet, He became most ecstatic in affection toward His devotee. Raising Prahlāda, the Lord placed His lotus hand upon the boy's head because His hand is always ready to create fearlessness in all of His devotees.

6By the touch of Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva's hand on Prahlāda Mahārāja's head, Prahlāda was completely freed of all material contaminations and desires, as if he had been thoroughly cleansed. Therefore he at once became transcendently situated, and all the symptoms of ecstasy became manifest in his body. His heart filled with love, and his eyes with tears, and thus he was able to completely capture the lotus feet of the Lord within the core of his heart.

7Prahlāda Mahārāja fixed his mind and sight upon Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva with full attention in complete trance. With a fixed mind, he began to offer prayers in love with a faltering voice.

8Prahlāda Mahārāja prayed: How is it possible for me, who have been born in a family of asuras, to offer suitable prayers to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Even until now, all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, and all the saintly persons, could not satisfy the Lord by streams of excellent words, although such persons are very qualified, being in the mode of goodness. Then what is to be said of me? I am not at all qualified.

9Prahlaḍa Mahārāja continued: One may possess wealth, an aristocratic family, beauty, austerity, education, sensory expertise, luster, influence, physical strength, diligence, intelligence and mystic yogic power, but I think that even by all these qualifications one cannot satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, one can satisfy the Lord simply by devotional service. Gajendra did this, and thus the Lord was satisfied with him.

10If a brāhmaṇa has all twelve of the brahminical qualifications [as they are stated in the book called Sanat-sujāta] but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog-eater but who has dedicated everything—mind, words, activities, wealth and life—to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a brāhmaṇa because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called brāhmaṇa in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself.

11The Supreme Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is always fully satisfied in Himself. Therefore when something is offered to Him, the offering, by the Lord's mercy, is for the benefit of the devotee, for the Lord does not need service from anyone. To give an example, if one's face is decorated, the reflection of one's face in a mirror is also seen to be decorated.

12Therefore, although I was born in a demoniac family, I may without a doubt offer prayers to the Lord with full endeavor, as far as my intelligence allows. Anyone who has been forced by ignorance to enter the material world may be purified of material life if he offers prayers to the Lord and hears the Lord's glories.

13O my Lord, all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, are sincere servants of Your Lordship, who are situated in a transcendental position. Therefore they are not like us [Prahlaḍa and his father, the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu]. Your appearance in this fearsome form is Your pastime for Your own pleasure. Such an incarnation is always meant for the protection and improvement of the universe.

14My Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, please, therefore, cease Your anger now that my father, the great demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, has been killed. Since even saintly persons take pleasure in the killing of a scorpion or a snake, all the worlds have achieved great satisfaction because of the death of this demon. Now they are confident of their happiness, and they will always remember Your auspicious incarnation in order to be free from fear.

15My Lord, who are never conquered by anyone, I am certainly not afraid of Your ferocious mouth and tongue, Your eyes bright like the sun or Your frowning eyebrows. I do not fear Your sharp, pinching teeth, Your garland of intestines, Your mane soaked with blood, or Your high, wedge-like ears. Nor do I fear Your tumultuous roaring, which makes elephants flee to distant places, or Your nails, which are meant to kill Your enemies.

16O most powerful, insurmountable Lord, who are kind to the fallen souls, I have been put into the association of demons as a result of my activities, and therefore I am very much afraid of my condition of life within this material world. When will that moment come when You will call me to the shelter of Your lotus feet, which are the ultimate goal for liberation from conditional life?

17O great one, O Supreme Lord, because of combination with pleasing and displeasing circumstances and because of separation from them, one is placed in a most regrettable position, within heavenly or hellish planets, as if burning in a fire of lamentation. Although there are many remedies by which to get out of miserable life, any such remedies in the material world are more miserable than the miseries themselves. Therefore I think that the only remedy is to engage in Your service. Kindly instruct me in such service.

18O my Lord Nṛsimhadeva, by engaging in Your transcendental loving service in the association of devotees who are liberated souls [hamsas], I shall become completely uncontaminated by the association of the three modes of material nature and be able to chant the glories of Your Lordship, who are so dear to me. I shall chant Your glories, following exactly in the footsteps of Lord Brahmā and his disciplic succession. In this way I shall undoubtedly be able to cross the ocean of nescience.

19My Lord Nṛsimhadeva, O Supreme, because of a bodily conception of life, embodied souls neglected and not cared for by You cannot do anything for their betterment. Whatever remedies they accept, although perhaps temporarily beneficial, are certainly impermanent. For example, a father and mother cannot protect their child, a physician and medicine cannot relieve a suffering patient, and a boat on the ocean cannot protect a drowning man.

20My dear Lord, everyone in this material world is under the modes of material nature, being influenced by goodness, passion and ignorance. Everyone from the greatest personality, Lord Brahmā, down to the small antworks under the influence of these modes. Therefore everyone in this material world is influenced by Your energy. The cause for which they work, the place where they work, the time when they work, the matter due to which they work, the goal of life they have considered final, and the process for obtaining this goal all are nothing but manifestations of Your energy. Indeed, since the energy and energetic are identical, all of them are but manifestations of You.

21O Lord, O supreme eternal, by expanding Your plenary portion You have created the subtle bodies of the living entities through the agency of Your external energy, which is agitated by time. Thus the mind entraps the living entity in unlimited varieties of desires to be fulfilled by the Vedic directions of karma-kāṇḍa [fruitive activity] and the sixteen elements. Who can get free from this entanglement unless he takes shelter at Your lotus feet?

22My dear Lord, O supreme great, You have created this material world of sixteen constituents, but You are transcendental to their material qualities. In other words, these material qualities are under Your full control, and You are never conquered by them. Therefore the time element is Your representation. My Lord, O Supreme, no one can conquer You. As for me, however, I am being crushed by the wheel of time, and therefore I surrender fully unto You. Now kindly take me under the protection of Your lotus feet.

23My dear Lord, people in general want to be elevated to the higher planetary systems for a long duration of life, opulence and enjoyment, but I have seen all of these through the activities of my father. When my father was angry and he laughed sarcastically at the demigods, they were immediately vanquished simply by seeing the movements of his eyebrows. Yet my father, who was so powerful, has now been vanquished by You within a moment.

24My dear Lord, now I have complete experience concerning the worldly opulence, mystic power, longevity and other material pleasures enjoyed by all living entities, from Lord Brahmā down to the ant. As powerful time, You destroy them all. Therefore, because of my experience, I do not wish to possess them. My dear Lord, I request You to place me in touch with Your pure devotee and let me serve him as a sincere servant.

25In this material world, every living entity desires some future happiness, which is exactly like a mirage in the desert. Where is water in the desert, or, in other words, where is happiness in this material world? As for this body, what is its value? It is merely a source of various diseases. The so-called philosophers, scientists and politicians know this very well, but nonetheless they aspire for temporary happiness. Happiness is very difficult to obtain, but because they are unable to control their senses, they run after the so-called happiness of the material world and

never come to the right conclusion.

26O my Lord, O Supreme, because I was born in a family full of the hellish material qualities of passion and ignorance, what is my position? And what is to be said of Your causeless mercy, which was never offered even to Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva or the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī? You never put Your lotus hand upon their heads, but You have put it upon mine.

27Unlike an ordinary living entity, my Lord, You do not discriminate between friends and enemies, the favorable and the unfavorable, because for You there is no conception of higher and lower. Nonetheless, You offer Your benedictions according to the level of one's service, exactly as a desire tree delivers fruits according to one's desires and makes no distinction between the lower and the higher.

28My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?

29My Lord, O unlimited reservoir of transcendental qualities, You have killed my father, Hiranyakaśipu, and saved me from his sword. He had said very angrily, "If there is any supreme controller other than me, let Him save you. I shall now sever your head from your body." Therefore I think that both in saving me and in killing him, You have acted just to prove true the words of Your devotee. There is no other cause.

30My dear Lord, You alone manifest Yourself as the entire cosmic manifestation, for You existed before the creation, You exist after the annihilation, and You are the maintainer between the beginning and the end. All this is done by Your external energy through actions and reactions of the three modes of material nature. Therefore whatever existsexternally and internallyis You alone.

31My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, the entire cosmic creation is caused by You, and the cosmic manifestation is an effect of Your energy. Although the entire cosmos is but You alone, You keep Yourself aloof from it. The conception of "mine and yours," is certainly a type of illusion [māyā] because everything is an emanation from You and is therefore not different from You. Indeed, the cosmic manifestation is nondifferent from You, and the annihilation is also caused by You. This relationship between Your Lordship and the cosmos is illustrated by the example of the seed and the tree, or the subtle cause and the gross manifestation.

32O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, after the annihilation the creative energy is kept in You, who appear to sleep with half-closed eyes. Actually, however, You do not sleep like an ordinary human being, for You are always in a transcendental stage, beyond the creation of the material world, and You always feel transcendental bliss. As Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, You thus remain in Your transcendental status, not touching material objects. Although You appear to sleep, this sleeping is distinct from sleeping in ignorance.

33This cosmic manifestation, the material world, is also Your body. This total lump of matter is agitated by Your potent energy known as kāla-śakti, and thus the three modes of material nature are manifested. You awaken from the bed of Śeṣa, Ananta, and from Your navel a small transcendental seed is generated. It is from this seed that the lotus flower of the gigantic universe is manifested, exactly as a banyan tree grows from a small seed.

34From that great lotus flower, Brahmā was generated, but Brahmā certainly could see nothing

but the lotus. Therefore, thinking You to be outside, Lord Brahmā dove into the water and attempted to find the source of the lotus for one hundred years. He could find no trace of You, however, for when a seed fructifies, the original seed cannot be seen.

35 Lord Brahmā, who is celebrated as ātma-yoni, having been born without a mother, was struck with wonder. Thus he took shelter of the lotus flower, and when he had been purified after undergoing severe austerities for many hundreds of years, he could see that the cause of all causes, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was spread throughout his own body and senses, just as aroma, although very subtle, is perceived in the earth.

36 Lord Brahmā could then see You possessing thousands and thousands of faces, feet, heads, hands, thighs, noses, ears and eyes. You were very nicely dressed, being decorated and bedecked with varieties of ornaments and weapons. Seeing You in the form of Lord Viṣṇu, Your symptoms and form being transcendental, Your legs extending from the lower planets, Lord Brahmā achieved transcendental bliss.

37 My dear Lord, when You appeared as Hayagrīva, with the head of a horse, You killed two demons known as Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who were full of the modes of passion and ignorance. Then You delivered the Vedic knowledge to Lord Brahmā. For this reason, all the great saints accept Your forms as transcendental, untinged by material qualities.

38 In this way, my Lord, You appear in various incarnations as a human being, an animal, a great saint, a demigod, a fish or a tortoise, thus maintaining the entire creation in different planetary systems and killing the demoniac principles. According to the age, O my Lord, You protect the principles of religion. In the Age of Kali, however, You do not assert Yourself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore You are known as Triyuga, or the Lord who appears in three yugas.

39 My dear Lord of the Vaikuṅṭha planets, where there is no anxiety, my mind is extremely sinful and lusty, being sometimes so-called happy and sometimes so-called distressed. My mind is full of lamentation and fear, and it always seeks more and more money. Thus it has become most polluted and is never satisfied in topics concerning You. I am therefore most fallen and poor. In such a status of life, how shall I be able to discuss Your activities?

40 My dear Lord, O infallible one, my position is like that of a person who has many wives, all trying to attract him in their own way. For example, the tongue is attracted to palatable dishes, the genitals to sex with an attractive woman, and the sense of touch to contact with soft things. The belly, although filled, still wants to eat more, and the ear, not attempting to hear about You, is generally attracted to cinema songs. The sense of smell is attracted to yet another side, the restless eyes are attracted to scenes of sense gratification, and the active senses are attracted elsewhere. In this way I am certainly embarrassed.

41 My dear Lord, You are always transcendently situated on the other side of the river of death, but because of the reactions of our own activities, we are suffering on this side. Indeed, we have fallen into this river and are repeatedly suffering the pains of birth and death and eating horrible things. Now kindly look upon us not only upon me but also upon all others who are suffering and by Your causeless mercy and compassion, deliver us and maintain us.

42 O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, original spiritual master of the entire world, what is the difficulty for You, who manage the affairs of the universe, in delivering the fallen souls engaged in Your devotional service? You are the friend of all suffering humanity, and for great personalities it is necessary to show mercy to the foolish. Therefore I think that You will show Your causeless mercy to persons like us, who engage in Your service.

43O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them.

44My dear Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, I see that there are many saintly persons indeed, but they are interested only in their own deliverance. Not caring for the big cities and towns, they go to the Himālayas or the forest to meditate with vows of silence [mauna-vrata]. They are not interested in delivering others. As for me, however, I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. Therefore I wish to bring them back to shelter at Your lotus feet.

45Sex life is compared to the rubbing of two hands to relieve an itch. Gṛhamedhis, so-called gṛhasthas who have no spiritual knowledge, think that this itching is the greatest platform of happiness, although actually it is a source of distress. The kṛpaṇas, the fools who are just the opposite of brāhmaṇas, are not satisfied by repeated sensuous enjoyment. Those who are dhīra, however, who are sober and who tolerate this itching, are not subjected to the sufferings of fools and rascals.

46O Supreme Personality of Godhead, there are ten prescribed methods on the path to liberation to remain silent, not to speak to anyone, to observe vows, to amass all kinds of Vedic knowledge, to undergo austerities, to study the Vedas and other Vedic literatures, to execute the duties of varṇāśrama-dharma, to explain the śāstras, to stay in a solitary place, to chant mantras silently, and to be absorbed in trance. These different methods for liberation are generally only a professional practice and means of livelihood for those who have not conquered their senses. Because such persons are falsely proud, these procedures may not be successful.

47By authorized Vedic knowledge one can see that the forms of cause and effect in the cosmic manifestation belong to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for the cosmic manifestation is His energy. Both cause and effect are nothing but energies of the Lord. Therefore, O my Lord, just as a wise man, by considering cause and effect, can see how fire pervades wood, those engaged in devotional service understand how You are both the cause and effect.

48O Supreme Lord, You are actually the air, the earth, fire, sky and water. You are the objects of sense perception, the life airs, the five senses, the mind, consciousness and false ego. Indeed, You are everything, subtle and gross. The material elements and anything expressed, either by the words or by the mind, are nothing but You.

49Neither the three modes of material nature [sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa], nor the predominating deities controlling these three modes, nor the five gross elements, nor the mind, nor the demigods nor the human beings can understand Your Lordship, for they are all subjected to birth and annihilation. Considering this, the spiritually advanced have taken to devotional service. Such wise men hardly bother with Vedic study. Instead, they engage themselves in practical devotional service.

50Therefore, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all persons to whom prayers are offered, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because without rendering six kinds of devotional service unto You offering prayers, dedicating all the results of activities, worshipping You, working on Your behalf, always remembering Your lotus feet and hearing about Your glories who can achieve that which is meant for the paramahāṁsas?

51The great saint Nārada said: Thus Lord Nṛsimhadeva was pacified by the devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja with prayers offered from the transcendental platform. The Lord gave up His anger, and being very kind to Prahlāda, who was offering prostrated obeisances, He spoke as follows.

52The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Prahlāda, most gentle one, best of the family of the asuras, all good fortune unto you. I am very much pleased with you. It is My pastime to fulfill the desires of all living beings, and therefore you may ask from Me any benediction that you desire to be fulfilled.

53My dear Prahlāda, may you live a long time. One cannot appreciate or understand Me without pleasing Me, but one who has seen or pleased Me has nothing more for which to lament for his own satisfaction.

54My dear Prahlāda, you are very fortunate. Please know from Me that those who are very wise and highly elevated try to please Me in all different modes of mellows, for I am the only person who can fulfill all the desires of everyone.

55Nārada Muni said: Prahlāda Mahārāja was the best person in the family of asuras, who always aspire for material happiness. Nonetheless, although allured by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who offered him all benedictions for material happiness, because of his unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness he did not want to take any material benefit for sense gratification.

SB 7.10: Prahlāda, the Best Among Exalted Devotees

This chapter describes how the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nṛsimhadeva disappeared, after pleasing Prahlāda Mahārāja. It also describes a benediction given by Lord Śiva.

Lord Nṛsimhadeva wanted to bestow benedictions upon Prahlāda Mahārāja, one after another, but Prahlāda Mahārāja, thinking them impediments on the path of spiritual progress, did not accept any of them. Instead, he fully surrendered at the Lord's lotus feet. He said: "If anyone engaged in the devotional service of the Lord prays for personal sense gratification, he cannot be called a pure devotee or even a devotee. He may be called only a merchant engaged in the business of give and take. Similarly, a master who wants to please his servant after taking service from him is also not a real master." Prahlāda Mahārāja, therefore, did not ask anything from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Rather, he said that if the Lord wanted to give him a benediction, he wanted the Lord to assure him that he would never be induced to take any benedictions for the sake of material desires. Exchanges of devotional service for lusty desires are always very prominent. As soon as lusty desires awaken, one's senses, mind, life, soul, religious principles, patience, intelligence, shyness, beauty, strength, memory and truthfulness are all vanquished. One can render unalloyed devotional service only when there are no material desires in one's mind.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead was greatly pleased with Prahlāda Mahārāja for his unalloyed devotion, yet the Lord provided him one material benediction that he would be perfectly happy in this world and live his next life in Vaikuṅṭha. The Lord gave him the benediction that he would be the king of this material world until the end of the *manvantara* millennium and that although in this material world, he would have the facility to hear the glories of the Lord and depend fully on the Lord, performing service to Him in uncontaminated *bhakti-yoga*. The Lord advised Prahlāda to perform sacrifices through *bhakti-yoga*, for this is the duty of a king.

Prahlāda Mahārāja accepted whatever the Lord had offered him, and he prayed for the Lord to deliver his father. In response to this prayer, the Lord assured him that in the family of such a

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pure devotee as he, not only the devotee's father but his forefathers for twenty-one generations are liberated. The Lord also asked Prahlāda to perform the ritualistic ceremonies appropriate after his father's death.

Then Lord Brahmā, who was also present, offered many prayers to the Lord, expressing his obligation to the Lord for having offered benedictions to Prahlāda Mahārāja. The Lord advised Lord Brahmā not to offer benedictions to *asuras* as he had to Hiranyakaśipu, for such benedictions indulge them. Then Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva disappeared. On that day, Prahlāda Mahārāja was installed on the throne of the world by Lord Brahmā and Śukrācārya.

Thus Nārada Muni described the character of Prahlāda Mahārāja for Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, and he further described the killing of Rāvaṇa by Lord Rāmacandra and the killing of Śiśupāla and Dantavakra in Dvāpara-yuga. Śiśupāla, of course, had merged into the existence of the Lord and thus achieved *sāyujya-mukti*. Nārada Muni praised Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja because the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, was the greatest well-wisher and friend of the Pāṇḍavas and almost always stayed in their house. Thus the fortune of the Pāṇḍavas was greater than that of Prahlāda Mahārāja.

Later, Nārada Muni described how the demon Maya Dānava constructed Tripura for the demons, who became very powerful and defeated the demigods. Because of this defeat, Lord Rudra, Śiva, dismantled Tripura; thus he became famous as Tripurāri. For this, Rudra is very much appreciated and worshiped by the demigods. This narration occurs at the end of the chapter.

1The saint Nārada Muni continued: Although Prahlāda Mahārāja was only a boy, when he heard the benedictions offered by Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva he considered them impediments on the path of devotional service. Thus he smiled very mildly and spoke as follows.

2Prahlāda Mahārāja said: My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because I was born in an atheistic family I am naturally attached to material enjoyment. Therefore, kindly do not tempt me with these illusions. I am very much afraid of material conditions, and I desire to be liberated from materialistic life. It is for this reason that I have taken shelter of Your lotus feet.

3O my worshipable Lord, because the seed of lusty desires, which is the root cause of material existence, is within the core of everyone's heart, You have sent me to this material world to exhibit the symptoms of a pure devotee.

4Otherwise, O my Lord, O supreme instructor of the entire world, You are so kind to Your devotee that You could not induce him to do something unbeneficial for him. On the other hand, one who desires some material benefit in exchange for devotional service cannot be Your pure devotee. Indeed, he is no better than a merchant who wants profit in exchange for service.

5A servant who desires material profits from his master is certainly not a qualified servant or pure devotee. Similarly, a master who bestows benedictions upon his servant because of a desire to maintain a prestigious position as master is also not a pure master.

6O my Lord, I am Your unmotivated servant, and You are my eternal master. There is no need of our being anything other than master and servant. You are naturally my master, and I am naturally Your servant. We have no other relationship.

7O my Lord, best of the givers of benediction, if You at all want to bestow a desirable benediction upon me, then I pray from Your Lordship that within the core of my heart there be

no material desires.

8O my Lord, because of lusty desires from the very beginning of one's birth, the functions of one's senses, mind, life, body, religion, patience, intelligence, shyness, opulence, strength, memory and truthfulness are vanquished.

9O my Lord, when a human being is able to give up all the material desires in his mind, he becomes eligible to possess wealth and opulence like Yours.

10O my Lord, full of six opulences, O Supreme Person! O Supreme Soul, killer of all miseries! O Supreme Person in the form of a wonderful lion and man, let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

11The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Prahlaḍa, a devotee like you never desires any kind of material opulences, either in this life or in the next. Nonetheless, I order you to enjoy the opulences of the demons in this material world, acting as their king until the end of the duration of time occupied by Manu.

12It does not matter that you are in the material world. You should always, continuously, hear the instructions and messages given by Me and always be absorbed in thought of Me, for I am the Supersoul existing in the core of everyone's heart. Therefore, give up fruitive activities and worship Me.

13My dear Prahlaḍa, while you are in this material world you will exhaust all the reactions of pious activity by feeling happiness, and by acting piously you will neutralize impious activity. Because of the powerful time factor, you will give up your body, but the glories of your activities will be sung in the upper planetary systems, and being fully freed from all bondage, you will return home, back to Godhead.

14One who always remembers your activities and My activities also, and who chants the prayers you have offered, becomes free, in due course of time, from the reactions of material activities.

15-17Prahlaḍa Mahārāja said: O Supreme Lord, because You are so merciful to the fallen souls, I ask You for only one benediction. I know that my father, at the time of his death, had already been purified by Your glance upon him, but because of his ignorance of Your beautiful power and supremacy, he was unnecessarily angry at You, falsely thinking that You were the killer of his brother. Thus he directly blasphemed Your Lordship, the spiritual master of all living beings, and committed heavily sinful activities directed against me, Your devotee. I wish that he be excused for these sinful activities.

18The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Prahlaḍa, O most pure, O great saintly person, your father has been purified, along with twenty-one forefathers in your family. Because you were born in this family, the entire dynasty has been purified.

19Whenever and wherever there are peaceful, equipoised devotees who are well-behaved and decorated with all good qualities, that place and the dynasties there, even if condemned, are purified.

20My dear Prahlaḍa, King of the Daityas, because of being attached to devotional service to Me, My devotee does not distinguish between lower and higher living entities. In all respects, he is never jealous of anyone.

21Those who follow your example will naturally become My pure devotees. You are the best example of My devotee, and others should follow in your footsteps.

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22My dear child, your father has already been purified just by the touch of My body at the time of his death. Nonetheless, the duty of a son is to perform the śrāddha ritualistic ceremony after his father's death so that his father may be promoted to a planetary system where he may become a good citizen and devotee.

23After performing the ritualistic ceremonies, take charge of your father's kingdom. Sit upon the throne and do not be disturbed by materialistic activities. Please keep your mind fixed upon Me. Without transgressing the injunctions of the Vedas, as a matter of formality you may perform your particular duties.

24Śrī Nārada Muni continued: Thus, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead ordered, Prahāda Mahārāja performed the ritualistic ceremonies for his father. O King Yudhiṣṭhira, he was then enthroned in the kingdom of Hiraṇyakaśipu, as directed by the brāhmaṇas.

25Lord Brahmā, surrounded by the other demigods, was bright-faced because the Lord was pleased. Thus he offered prayers to the Lord with transcendental words.

26Lord Brahmā said: O Supreme Lord of all lords, proprietor of the entire universe, O benedictor of all living entities, O original person [ādi-puruṣa], because of our good fortune You have now killed this sinful demon, who was giving trouble to the entire universe.

27This demon, Hiraṇyakaśipu, received from me the benediction that he would not be killed by any living being within my creation. With this assurance and with strength derived from austerities and mystic power, he became excessively proud and transgressed all the Vedic injunctions.

28By great fortune, Hiraṇyakaśipu's son Prahāda Mahārāja has now been released from death, for although he is a child, he is an exalted devotee. Now he is fully under the protection of Your lotus feet.

29My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are the Supreme Soul. If one meditates upon Your transcendental body, You naturally protect him from all sources of fear, even the imminent danger of death.

30The Personality of Godhead replied: My dear Lord Brahmā, O great lord born from the lotus flower, just as it is dangerous to feed milk to a snake, so it is dangerous to give benedictions to demons, who are by nature ferocious and jealous. I warn you not to give such benedictions to any demon again.

31Nārada Muni continued: O King Yudhiṣṭhira, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is not visible to an ordinary human being, spoke in this way, instructing Lord Brahmā. Then, being worshiped by Brahmā, the Lord disappeared from that place.

32Prahāda Mahārāja then worshiped and offered prayers to all the demigods, such as Brahmā, Śiva and the prajāpatīs, who are all parts of the Lord.

33Thereafter, along with Śukrācārya and other great saints, Lord Brahmā, whose seat is on the lotus flower, made Prahāda the king of all the demons and giants in the universe.

34O King Yudhiṣṭhira, after all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, were properly worshiped by Prahāda Mahārāja, they offered Prahāda their utmost benedictions and then returned to their respective abodes.

35Thus the two associates of Lord Viṣṇu who had become Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu, the

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sons of Diti, were both killed. By illusion they had thought that the Supreme Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart, was their enemy.

36Being cursed by the brāhmaṇas, the same two associates took birth again as Kumbhakarna and the ten-headed Rāvaṇa. These two Rākṣasas were killed by Lord Rāmacandra's extraordinary power.

37Pierced by the arrows of Lord Rāmacandra, both Kumbhakarna and Rāvaṇa lay on the ground and left their bodies, fully absorbed in thought of the Lord, just as they had in their previous births as Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu.

38They both took birth again in human society as Śiśupāla and Dantavakra and continued in the same enmity toward the Lord. It is they who merged into the body of the Lord in your presence.

39Not only Śiśupāla and Dantavakra but also many, many other kings who acted as enemies of Kṛṣṇa attained salvation at the time of death. Because they thought of the Lord, they received spiritual bodies and forms the same as His, just as worms captured by a black drone obtain the same type of body as the drone.

40By devotional service, pure devotees who incessantly think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead receive bodies similar to His. This is known as sārūpya-mukti. Although Śiśupāla, Dantavakra and other kings thought of Kṛṣṇa as an enemy, they also achieved the same result.

41Everything you asked me about how Śiśupāla and others attained salvation although they were inimical has now been explained to you by me.

42In this narration about Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, various expansions or incarnations of the Lord have been described, and the killing of the two demons Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu has also been described.

43-44This narration describes the characteristics of the great and exalted devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja, his staunch devotional service, his perfect knowledge, and his perfect detachment from material contamination. It also describes the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the cause of creation, maintenance and annihilation. Prahlāda Mahārāja, in his prayers, has described the transcendental qualities of the Lord and has also described how the various abodes of the demigods and demons, regardless of how materially opulent, are destroyed by the mere direction of the Lord.

45The principles of religion by which one can actually understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are called bhāgavata-dharma. In this narration, therefore, which deals with these principles, actual transcendence is properly described.

46One who hears and chants this narration about the omnipotence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is certainly liberated from material bondage without fail.

47Prahlāda Mahārāja was the best among exalted devotees. Anyone who with great attention hears this narration concerning the activities of Prahlāda Mahārāja, the killing of Hiraṇyakaśipu, and the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nṛsiṃhadeva, surely reaches the spiritual world, where there is no anxiety.

48Nārada Muni continued: My dear Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, all of you [the Pāṇḍavas] are extremely fortunate, for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, lives in your palace just like a human being. Great saintly persons know this very well, and therefore they constantly

visit this house.

49The impersonal Brahman is Kṛṣṇa Himself because Kṛṣṇa is the source of the impersonal Brahman. He is the origin of the transcendental bliss sought by great saintly persons, yet He, the Supreme Person, is your most dear friend and constant well-wisher and is intimately related to you as the son of your maternal uncle. Indeed, He is always like your body and soul. He is worshipable, yet He acts as your servant and sometimes as your spiritual master.

50Exalted persons like Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā could not properly describe the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. May the Lord, who is always worshiped as the protector of all devotees by great saints who observe vows of silence, meditation, devotional service and renunciation, be pleased with us.

51My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, long, long ago in history, a demon known as Maya Dānava, who was very expert in technical knowledge, reduced the reputation of Lord Śiva. In that situation, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, saved Lord Śiva.

52Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: For what reason did the demon Maya Dānava vanquish Lord Śiva's reputation? How did Lord Kṛṣṇa save Lord Śiva and expand his reputation again? Kindly describe these incidents.

53Nārada Muni said: When the demigods, who are always powerful by the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, fought with the asuras, the asuras were defeated, and therefore they took shelter of Maya Dānava, the greatest of the demons.

54-55Maya Dānava, the great leader of the demons, prepared three invisible residences and gave them to the demons. These dwellings resembled airplanes made of gold, silver and iron, and they contained uncommon paraphernalia. My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, because of these three dwellings the commanders of the demons remained invisible to the demigods. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the demons, remembering their former enmity, began to vanquish the three worlds—the upper, middle and lower planetary systems.

56Thereafter, when the demons had begun to destroy the higher planetary systems, the rulers of those planets went to Lord Śiva, fully surrendered unto him and said: Dear Lord, we demigods living in the three worlds are about to be vanquished. We are your followers. Kindly save us.

57The most powerful and able Lord Śiva reassured them and said, “Do not be afraid.” He then fixed his arrows to his bow and released them toward the three residences occupied by the demons.

58The arrows released by Lord Śiva appeared like fiery beams emanating from the sun globe and covered the three residential airplanes, which could then no longer be seen.

59Attacked by Lord Śiva's golden arrows, all the demoniac inhabitants of those three dwellings lost their lives and fell down. Then the great mystic Maya Dānava dropped the demons into a nectarean well that he had created.

60When the dead bodies of the demons came in touch with the nectar, their bodies became invincible to thunderbolts. Endowed with great strength, they got up like lightning penetrating clouds.

61Seeing Lord Śiva very much aggrieved and disappointed, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, considered how to stop this nuisance created by Maya Dānava.

62Then Lord Brahmā became a calf and Lord Viṣṇu a cow, and at noon they entered the residences and drank all the nectar in the well.

63The demons could see the calf and cow, but because of the illusion created by the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demons could not forbid them. The great mystic Maya Dānava became aware that the calf and cow were drinking the nectar, and he could understand this to be the unseen power of providence. Thus he spoke to the demons, who were grievously lamenting.

64Maya Dānava said: What has been destined by the Supreme Lord for oneself, for others, or for both oneself and others cannot be undone anywhere or by anyone, whether one be a demigod, a demon, a human being or anyone else.

65-66Nārada Muni continued: Thereafter, Lord Kṛṣṇa, by His own personal potency, consisting of religion, knowledge, renunciation, opulence, austerity, education and activities, equipped Lord Śiva with all the necessary paraphernalia, such as a chariot, a charioteer, a flag, horses, elephants, a bow, a shield and arrows. When Lord Śiva was fully equipped in this way, he sat down on the chariot with his arrows and bow to fight with the demons.

67My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the most powerful Lord Śiva joined the arrows to his bow, and at noon he set fire to all three residences of the demons and thus destroyed them.

68Seated in their airplanes in the sky, the inhabitants of the higher planetary systems beat many kettledrums. The demigods, saints, Pitās, Siddhas and various great personalities showered flowers on the head of Lord Śiva, wishing him all victory, and the Apsarās began to chant and dance with great pleasure.

69O King Yudhiṣṭhira, thus Lord Śiva is known as Tripurāri, the annihilator of the three dwellings of the demons, because he burnt these dwellings to ashes. Being worshiped by the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva returned to his own abode.

70The Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, appeared as a human being, yet He performed many uncommon and wonderful pastimes by His own potency. How can I say more about His activities than what has already been said by great saintly persons? Everyone can be purified by His activities, simply by hearing about them from the right source.

SB 7.11: The Perfect Society: Four Social Classes

This chapter describes the general principles by following which a human being, and specifically one who is interested in advancing in spiritual life, can become perfect.

By hearing about the characteristics of Prahlāda Mahārāja, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira became extremely pleased. Now he inquired from Nārada Muni about the actual religion of a human being and about special characteristics of *vaṁāśrama-dharma*, which marks the highest status of human civilization. When Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira asked Nārada Muni about these matters, Nārada Muni stopped giving his own statements and quoted statements by Lord Nārāyaṇa, for He is the supreme authority for giving religious codes (*dharmam tu sāṅśād bhagavat-praṇītam*). Every human being is expected to acquire thirty qualities, such as truthfulness, mercy and austerity. The process of following the principles of religion is known as *sanātana-dharma*, the eternal religious system.

The *vaṁāśrama* system delineates the divisions of *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *sūdra*. It also sets forth the system of *saṁskāras*. The *garbhādhāna saṁskāra*, the ceremony for begetting a child, must be observed by the higher section of people, namely the *dvijas*. One

who follows the *garbhādhāna saṁskāra* system is actually twice-born, but those who do not, who deviate from the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, are called *dvija-bandhus*. The principal occupations for a *brāhmaṇa* are worshiping the Deity, teaching others how to worship the Deity, studying the Vedic literatures, teaching the Vedic literatures, accepting charity from others and again giving charity to others. A *brāhmaṇa* should make his livelihood from these six occupational duties. The duty of a *kṣatriya* is to give protection to the citizens and levy taxes upon them, but he is forbidden to tax the *brāhmaṇas*. The members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should therefore be exempt from government taxation. *Kṣatriyas* may tax everyone but the *brāhmaṇas*. *Vaiśyas* should cultivate the land, produce food grains and protect the cows, whereas the *sūdras*, who by quality never become *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* or *vaiśyas*, should serve the three higher classes and be satisfied. Other means of livelihood are also prescribed for the *brāhmaṇas*, and these are four—*sāṭīna*, *yāyāvara*, *śīla*, and *uśchana*. Each of these occupational duties is successively better.

One who is in a lower grade of social life cannot accept the profession of a higher class unless necessary. In times of emergency, all the classes but the *kṣatriyas* may accept professional duties of others. The means of livelihood known as *ṛta* (*śīlośchana*), *amṛta* (*ayācita*), *nṛta* (*yācṣā*), *pramṛta* (*karṣaṇa*), and *satyānṛta* (*vāñijya*) may be accepted by everyone but the *kṣatriyas*. For a *brāhmaṇa* or a *kṣatriya*, engaging in the service of the *vaiśyas* or *sūdras* is considered the profession of dogs.

Nārada Muni also described that the symptom of a *brāhmaṇa* is controlled senses, the symptoms of a *kṣatriya* are power and fame, the symptom of a *vaiśya* is service to the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas*, and the symptom of a *sūdra* is service to the three higher classes. The qualification for a woman is to be a very faithful and chaste wife. In this way, Nārada Muni described the characteristics of higher and lower grades of people and recommended that one follow the principles of his caste or his hereditary occupation. One cannot suddenly give up a profession to which he is accustomed, and therefore it is recommended that one gradually be awakened. The symptoms of *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *sūdras* are very important, and therefore one should be designated only by these symptoms, and not by birth. Designation by birth is strictly forbidden by Nārada Muni and all great personalities.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After hearing about the activities and character of Prahlāda Mahārāja, which are adored and discussed among great personalities like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, the most respectful king among exalted personalities, again inquired from the great saint Nārada Muni in a mood of great pleasure.

2Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira said: My dear lord, I wish to hear from you about the principles of religion by which one can attain the ultimate goal of lifedevotional service. I wish to hear about the general occupational duties of human society and the system of social and spiritual advancement known as *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

3O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, you are directly the son of Prajāpati [Lord Brahmā]. Because of your austerities, mystic yoga and trance, you are considered the best of all of Lord Brahmā's sons.

4No one is superior to you in peaceful life and mercy, and no one knows better than you how to execute devotional service or how to become the best of the *brāhmaṇas*. Therefore, you know all the principles of confidential religious life, and no one knows them better than you.

5Śrī Nārada Muni said: After first offering my obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, the protector of the religious principles of all living entities, let me explain the principles of the eternal religious system, of which I have heard from the mouth of Nārāyaṇa.

6Lord Nārāyaṇa, along with His partial manifestation Nara, appeared in this world through the daughter of Dakṣa Mahārāja known as Mūrti. He was begotten by Dharma Mahārāja for the benefit of all living entities. Even now, He is still engaged in executing great austerities near the place known as Badarikāśrama.

7The Supreme Being, the Personality of Godhead, is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, the root of all religious principles, and the memory of great authorities. O King Yudhiṣṭhira, this principle of religion is to be understood as evidence. On the basis of this religious principle, everything is satisfied, including one's mind, soul and even one's body.

8-12These are the general principles to be followed by all human beings: truthfulness, mercy, austerity (observing fasts on certain days of the month), bathing twice a day, tolerance, discrimination between right and wrong, control of the mind, control of the senses, nonviolence, celibacy, charity, reading of scripture, simplicity, satisfaction, rendering service to saintly persons, gradually taking leave of unnecessary engagements, observing the futility of the unnecessary activities of human society, remaining silent and grave and avoiding unnecessary talk, considering whether one is the body or the soul, distributing food equally to all living entities (both men and animals), seeing every soul (especially in the human form) as a part of the Supreme Lord, hearing about the activities and instructions given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (who is the shelter of the saintly persons), chanting about these activities and instructions, always remembering these activities and instructions, trying to render service, performing worship, offering obeisances, becoming a servant, becoming a friend, and surrendering one's whole self. O King Yudhiṣṭhira, these thirty qualifications must be acquired in the human form of life. Simply by acquiring these qualifications, one can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

13Those who have been reformed by the garbhādhāna ceremony and other prescribed reformatory methods, performed with Vedic mantras and without interruption, and who have been approved by Lord Brahmā, are dvijas, or twice-born. Such brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, purified by their family traditions and by their behavior, should worship the Lord, study the Vedas and give charity. In this system, they should follow the principles of the four āśramas [brahmacarya, gr̥hastha, vānaprastha and sannyāsa].

14For a brāhmaṇa there are six occupational duties. A kṣatriya should not accept charity, but he may perform the other five of these duties. A king or kṣatriya is not allowed to levy taxes on brāhmaṇas, but he may make his livelihood by levying minimal taxes, customs duties, and penalty fines upon his other subjects.

15The mercantile community should always follow the directions of the brāhmaṇas and engage in such occupational duties as agriculture, trade, and protection of cows. For the śūdras the only duty is to accept a master from a higher social order and engage in his service.

16As an alternative, a brāhmaṇa may also take to the vaiśya's occupational duty of agriculture, cow protection, or trade. He may depend on that which he has received without begging, he may beg in the paddy field every day, he may collect paddy left in a field by its proprietor, or he may collect food grains left here and there in the shops of grain dealers. These are four means of livelihood that may also be adopted by brāhmaṇas. Among these four, each of them in succession is better than the one preceding it.

17Except in a time of emergency, lower persons should not accept the occupational duties of those who are higher. When there is such an emergency, of course, everyone but the kṣatriya may accept the means of livelihood of others.

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18-20 In time of emergency, one may accept any of the various types of professions known as ṛta, amṛta, mṛta, pramṛta and satyāṅṛta, but one should not at any time accept the profession of a dog. The profession of uṣchaśila, collecting grains from the field, is called ṛta. Collecting without begging is called amṛta, begging grains is called mṛta, tilling the ground is called pramṛta, and trade is called satyāṅṛta. Engaging in the service of low-grade persons, however, is called śva-vṛtti, the profession of the dogs. Specifically, brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas should not engage in the low and abominable service of śūdras. Brāhmaṇas should be well acquainted with all the Vedic knowledge, and kṣatriyas should be well acquainted with the worship of demigods.

21 The symptoms of a brāhmaṇa are control of the mind, control of the senses, austerity and penance, cleanliness, satisfaction, forgiveness, simplicity, knowledge, mercy, truthfulness, and complete surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 To be influential in battle, unconquerable, patient, challenging and charitable, to control the bodily necessities, to be forgiving, to be attached to the brahminical nature and to be always jolly and truthful these are the symptoms of the kṣatriya.

23 Being always devoted to the demigods, the spiritual master and the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu; endeavoring for advancement in religious principles, economic development and sense gratification [dharma, artha and kāma]; believing in the words of the spiritual master and scripture; and always endeavoring with expertise in earning money these are the symptoms of the vaiśya.

24 Offering obeisances to the higher sections of society [the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas], being always very clean, being free from duplicity, serving one's master, performing sacrifices without uttering mantras, not stealing, always speaking the truth and giving all protection to the cows and brāhmaṇas these are the symptoms of the śūdra.

25 To render service to the husband, to be always favorably disposed toward the husband, to be equally well disposed toward the husband's relatives and friends, and to follow the vows of the husband these are the four principles to be followed by women described as chaste.

26-27 A chaste woman must dress nicely and decorate herself with golden ornaments for the pleasure of her husband. Always wearing clean and attractive garments, she should sweep and clean the household with water and other liquids so that the entire house is always pure and clean. She should collect the household paraphernalia and keep the house always aromatic with incense and flowers and must be ready to execute the desires of her husband. Being modest and truthful, controlling her senses, and speaking in sweet words, a chaste woman should engage in the service of her husband with love, according to time and circumstances.

28 A chaste woman should not be greedy, but satisfied in all circumstances. She must be very expert in handling household affairs and should be fully conversant with religious principles. She should speak pleasingly and truthfully and should be very careful and always clean and pure. Thus a chaste woman should engage with affection in the service of a husband who is not fallen.

29 The woman who engages in the service of her husband, following strictly in the footsteps of the goddess of fortune, surely returns home, back to Godhead, with her devotee husband, and lives very happily in the Vaikuṅṭha planets.

30 Among the mixed classes known as saṅkara, those who are not thieves are known as antevaśyī or caṇḍālas [dog-eaters], and they also have their hereditary customs.

31My dear King, brāhmaṇas well conversant in Vedic knowledge have given their verdict that in every age [yuga] the conduct of different sections of people according to their material modes of nature is auspicious both in this life and after death.

32If one acts in his profession according to his position in the modes of nature and gradually gives up these activities, he attains the niṣkāma stage.

33-34My dear King, if an agricultural field is cultivated again and again, the power of its production decreases, and whatever seeds are sown there are lost. Just as drops of ghee on a fire never extinguish the fire but a flood of ghee will, similarly, overindulgence in lusty desires mitigates such desires entirely.

35If one shows the symptoms of being a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.

SB 7.12: The Perfect Society: Four Spiritual Classes

This chapter particularly describes the *brahmacārī* and the person in the *vānaprastha* stage, and it also gives a general description of the four *āśramas* *brahmacarya*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. In the previous chapter, the great saint Nārada Muni has described the *varṇa* institution of society, and now, in this chapter, he will describe the stages of spiritual advancement in the four *āśramas*, which are known as *brahmacarya*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*.

The *brahmacārī* should live under the care of the true spiritual master, giving him sincere respect and obeisances, acting as his menial servant, and always carrying out his order. The *brahmacārī* should engage himself in spiritual activities and study the Vedic literature under the direction of the spiritual master. According to the *brahmacarya* system, he should dress with a belt, deerskin, and matted hair and should bear a *daṇḍa*, waterpot and sacred thread. He should collect alms daily in the morning, and in the evening whatever alms he has collected he should offer to the spiritual master. A *brahmacārī* should accept *prasāda* upon the order of the spiritual master, and if the spiritual master sometimes forgets to order the disciple to eat, the disciple should not take *prasāda* on his own initiative; rather, he should fast. The *brahmacārī* should be trained to be satisfied with eating what is absolutely necessary, he should be very expert in executing responsibilities, he should be faithful, and he should control his senses and try to avoid the association of women as far as possible. A *brahmacārī* should very strictly abstain from living with women and should not meet with *grhasthas* and those too addicted to women. Nor should a *brahmacārī* speak in a lonely place with a woman.

After completing one's education as a *brahmacārī* in this way, one should give *dakṣiṇā*, an offering of gratitude, to one's *guru*, and then one may leave for home and accept the next *āśrama* the *grhastha-āśrama* or else one may continue in the *brahmacarya-āśrama* without adulteration. The duties for the *grhastha-āśrama* and *brahmacarya-āśrama*, as well as the duties for *sannyāsis*, are prescribed in the *śāstras*. A *grhastha* is not meant to enjoy sex life without restriction. Indeed, the whole purpose of Vedic life is to become free from sexual indulgence. All the *āśramas* are recognized for spiritual progress, and therefore although the *grhastha-āśrama* gives a kind of license for sex life for a certain time, it does not allow unrestricted sex life. Therefore, in *grhastha* life also, there is no illicit sex. A *grhastha* should not accept a woman for sexual enjoyment. Wasting semen is also illicit sex.

After the *grhastha-āśrama* is another *āśrama*, known as *vānaprastha*, which is midway between *grhastha* and *sannyāsa*. A person in the *vānaprastha* order is restricted in eating food

grains and forbidden to eat fruits that have not ripened on the tree. Nor should he cook food with fire, although he is allowed to eat *caru*, grains that have been offered in a sacrificial fire. He may also eat fruits and grains that have grown naturally. Living in a thatched cottage, the *vānaprastha* should endure all kinds of heat and cold. He should not cut his nails or hair, and he should give up cleaning his body and teeth. He should wear tree bark, accept a *daṇḍa*, and practice life in the forest, taking a vow to live there for twelve years, eight years, four years, two years or at least one year. At last, when because of old age he can no longer perform the activities of a *vānaprastha*, he should gradually stop everything and in this way give up his body.

1Nārada Muni said: A student should practice completely controlling his senses. He should be submissive and should have an attitude of firm friendship for the spiritual master. With a great vow, the brahmacārī should live at the gurukula, only for the benefit of the guru.

2At both junctions of day and night, namely, in the early morning and in the evening, he should be fully absorbed in thoughts of the spiritual master, fire, the sun-god and Lord Viṣṇu and by chanting the Gāyatrī mantra he should worship them.

3Being called by the spiritual master, the student should study the Vedic mantras regularly. Every day, before beginning his studies and at the end of his studies, the disciple should respectfully offer obeisances unto the spiritual master.

4Carrying pure kuśa grass in his hand, the brahmacārī should dress regularly with a belt of straw and with deerskin garments. He should wear matted hair, carry a rod and waterpot and be decorated with a sacred thread, as recommended in the śāstras.

5The brahmacārī should go out morning and evening to collect alms, and he should offer all that he collects to the spiritual master. He should eat only if ordered to take food by the spiritual master; otherwise, if the spiritual master does not give this order, he may sometimes have to fast.

6A brahmacārī should be quite well-behaved and gentle and should not eat or collect more than necessary. He must always be active and expert, fully believing in the instructions of the spiritual master and the śāstra. Fully controlling his senses, he should associate only as much as necessary with women or those controlled by women.

7A brahmacārī, or one who has not accepted the gṛhastha-āśrama [family life], must rigidly avoid talking with women or about women, for the senses are so powerful that they may agitate even the mind of a sannyāsī, a member of the renounced order of life.

8If the wife of the spiritual master is young, a young brahmacārī should not allow her to care for his hair, massage his body with oil, or bathe him with affection like a mother.

9Woman is compared to fire, and man is compared to a butter pot. Therefore a man should avoid associating even with his own daughter in a secluded place. Similarly, he should also avoid association with other women. One should associate with women only for important business and not otherwise.

10As long as a living entity is not completely self-realizedas long as he is not independent of the misconception of identifying with his body, which is nothing but a reflection of the original body and senseshe cannot be relieved of the conception of duality, which is epitomized by the duality between man and woman. Thus there is every chance that he will fall down because his intelligence is bewildered.

11 All the rules and regulations apply equally to the householder and the sannyāsī, the member of the renounced order of life. The gr̥hastha, however, is given permission by the spiritual master to indulge in sex during the period favorable for procreation.

12 Brahmācārīs or gr̥hasthas who have taken the vow of celibacy as described above should not indulge in the following: applying powder or ointment to the eyes, massaging the head with oil, massaging the body with the hands, seeing a woman or painting a woman's picture, eating meat, drinking wine, decorating the body with flower garlands, smearing scented ointment on the body, or decorating the body with ornaments. These they should give up.

13-14 According to the rules and regulations mentioned above, one who is twice-born, namely a br̥hmana, kṣatriya or vaiśya, should reside in the gurukula under the care of the spiritual master. There he should study and learn all the Vedic literatures along with their supplements and the Upaniṣads, according to his ability and power to study. If possible, the student or disciple should reward the spiritual master with the remuneration the spiritual master requests, and then, following the master's order, the disciple should leave and accept one of the other āśramas, namely the gr̥hastha-āśrama, vānaprastha-āśrama or sannyāsa-āśrama, as he desires.

15 One should realize that in the fire, in the spiritual master, in one's self and in all living entities in all circumstances and conditions the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, has simultaneously entered and not entered. He is situated externally and internally as the full controller of everything.

16 By practicing in this way, whether one be in the brahmācārī-āśrama, gr̥hastha-āśrama, vānaprastha-āśrama or sannyāsa-āśrama, one must always realize the all-pervading presence of the Supreme Lord, for in this way it is possible to understand the Absolute Truth.

17 O King, I shall now describe the qualifications for a vānaprastha, one who has retired from family life. By rigidly following the rules and regulations for the vānaprastha, one can easily be elevated to the upper planetary system known as Maharloka.

18 A person in vānaprastha life should not eat grains grown by tilling of the fields. He should also not eat grains that have grown without tilling of the field but are not fully ripe. Nor should a vānaprastha eat grains cooked in fire. Indeed, he should eat only fruit ripened by the sunshine.

19 A vānaprastha should prepare cakes to be offered in sacrifice from fruits and grains grown naturally in the forest. When he obtains some new grains, he should give up his old stock of grains.

20 A vānaprastha should prepare a thatched cottage or take shelter of a cave in a mountain only to keep the sacred fire, but he should personally practice enduring snowfall, wind, fire, rain and the shining of the sun.

21 The vānaprastha should wear matted locks of hair on his head and let his body hair, nails and moustache grow. He should not cleanse his body of dirt. He should keep a waterpot, deerskin and rod, wear the bark of a tree as a covering, and use garments colored like fire.

22 Being very thoughtful, a vānaprastha should remain in the forest for twelve years, eight years, four years, two years or at least one year. He should behave in such a way that he will not be disturbed or troubled by too much austerity.

23 When because of disease or old age one is unable to perform his prescribed duties for advancement in spiritual consciousness or study of the Vedas, he should practice fasting, not

taking any food.

24He should properly place the fire element in his own self and in this way give up bodily affinity, by which one thinks the body to be one's self or one's own. One should gradually merge the material body into the five elements [earth, water, fire, air and sky].

25A sober, self-realized person who has full knowledge should merge the various parts of the body in their original sources. The holes in the body are caused by the sky, the process of breathing is caused by the air, the heat of the body is caused by fire, and semen, blood and mucus are caused by water. The hard substances, like skin, muscle and bone, are caused by earth. In this way all the constituents of the body are caused by various elements, and they should be merged again into those elements.

26-28Thereafter, the object of speech, along with the sense of speech [the tongue], should be bestowed upon fire. Craftsmanship and the two hands should be given to the demigod Indra. The power of movement and the legs should be given to Lord Viṣṇu. Sensual pleasure, along with the genitals, should be bestowed upon Prajāpati. The rectum, with the power of evacuation, should be bestowed, in its proper place, unto Mṛtyu. The aural instrument, along with sound vibration, should be given to the deities presiding over the directions. The instrument of touch, along with the sense objects of touch, should be given to Vāyu. Form, with the power of sight, should be bestowed upon the sun. The tongue, along with the demigod Varuṇa, should be bestowed upon water, and the power of smell, along with the two Aśvinī-kumāra demigods, should be bestowed upon the earth.

29-30The mind, along with all material desires, should be merged in the moon demigod. All the subject matters of intelligence, along with the intelligence itself, should be placed in Lord Brahmā. False ego, which is under the influence of the material modes of nature and which induces one to think, "I am this body, and everything connected with this body is mine," should be merged, along with material activities, in Rudra, the predominating deity of false ego. Material consciousness, along with the goal of thought, should be merged in the individual living being, and the demigods acting under the modes of material nature should be merged, along with the perverted living being, into the Supreme Being. The earth should be merged in water, water in the brightness of the sun, this brightness into the air, the air into the sky, the sky into the false ego, the false ego into the total material energy, the total material energy into the unmanifested ingredients [the pradhāna feature of the material energy], and at last the ingredient feature of material manifestation into the Supersoul.

31When all the material designations have thus merged into their respective material elements, the living beings, who are all ultimately completely spiritual, being one in quality with the Supreme Being, should cease from material existence, as flames cease when the wood in which they are burning is consumed. When the material body is returned to its various material elements, only the spiritual being remains. This spiritual being is Brahman and is equal in quality with Parabrahman.

SB 7.13: The Behavior of a Perfect Person

This Thirteenth Chapter describes the regulative principles for *sannyāsīs* and also describes the history of an *avadhūta*. It concludes with a description of perfection for the student in spiritual advancement.

Śrī Nārada Muni has been describing the symptoms of various *āśramas* and *vaṃsas*. Now, in this chapter, he specifically describes the regulative principles to be followed by *sannyāsīs*. After retiring from family life, one should accept the status of *vānaprastha*, in which he must

formally accept the body as his means of existence but gradually forget the bodily necessities of life. After *vānaprastha* life, having left home, one should travel to different places as a *sannyāsī*. Without bodily comforts and free from dependence on anyone with respect to bodily necessities, one should travel everywhere, wearing almost nothing or actually walking naked. Without association with ordinary human society, one should beg alms and always be satisfied in himself. One should be a friend to every living entity and be very peaceful in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A *sannyāsī* should travel alone in this way, not caring for life or death, waiting for the time when he will leave his material body. He should not indulge in unnecessary books or adopt professions like astrology, nor should he try to become a great orator. He should also give up the path of unnecessary argument and should not depend on anyone under any circumstances. He should not try to allure people into becoming his disciples just so that the number of his disciples may increase. He should give up the habit of reading many books as a means of livelihood, and he should not attempt to increase the number of temples and *mathas*, or monasteries. When a *sannyāsī* thus becomes completely independent, peaceful and equipoised, he can select the destination he desires after death and follow the principles by which to reach that destination. Although fully learned, he should always remain silent, like a dumb person, and travel like a restless child.

In this regard, Nārada Muni described a meeting between Prahlāda and a saintly person who had adopted the mode of life of a python. In this way he described the symptoms of a *paramahansa*. A person who has attained the *paramahansa* stage knows very well the distinction between matter and spirit. He is not at all interested in gratifying the material senses, for he is always deriving pleasure from devotional service to the Lord. He is not very anxious to protect his material body. Being satisfied with whatever he attains by the grace of the Lord, he is completely independent of material happiness and distress, and thus he is transcendental to all regulative principles. Sometimes he accepts severe austerities, and sometimes he accepts material opulence. His only concern is to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, and for that purpose he can do anything and everything, without reference to the regulative principles. He is never to be equated with materialistic men, nor is he subject to the judgments of such men.

1Śrī Nārada Muni said: A person able to cultivate spiritual knowledge should renounce all material connections, and merely keeping the body inhabitable, he should travel from one place to another, passing only one night in each village. In this way, without dependence in regard to the needs of the body, the *sannyāsī* should travel all over the world.

2A person in the renounced order of life may try to avoid even a dress to cover himself. If he wears anything at all, it should be only a loincloth, and when there is no necessity, a *sannyāsī* should not even accept a *daṇḍa*. A *sannyāsī* should avoid carrying anything but a *daṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu*.

3The *sannyāsī*, completely satisfied in the self, should live on alms begged from door to door. Not being dependent on any person or any place, he should always be a friendly well-wisher to all living beings and be a peaceful, unalloyed devotee of Nārāyaṇa. In this way he should move from one place to another.

4The *sannyāsī* should always try to see the Supreme pervading everything and see everything, including this universe, resting on the Supreme.

5During unconsciousness and consciousness, and between the two, he should try to understand the self and be fully situated in the self. In this way, he should realize that the conditional and liberated stages of life are only illusory and not actually factual. With such a higher understanding, he should see only the Absolute Truth pervading everything.

6 Since the material body is sure to be vanquished and the duration of one's life is not fixed, neither death nor life is to be praised. Rather, one should observe the eternal time factor, in which the living entity manifests himself and disappears.

7 Literature that is a useless waste of time in other words, literature without spiritual benefit should be rejected. One should not become a professional teacher as a means of earning one's livelihood, nor should one indulge in arguments and counterarguments. Nor should one take shelter of any cause or faction.

8 A sannyāsī must not present allurements of material benefits to gather many disciples, nor should he unnecessarily read many books or give discourses as a means of livelihood. He must never attempt to increase material opulences unnecessarily.

9 A peaceful, equipoised person who is factually advanced in spiritual consciousness does not need to accept the symbols of a sannyāsī, such as the tridaṇḍa and kamaṇḍalu. According to necessity, he may sometimes accept those symbols and sometimes reject them.

10 Although a saintly person may not expose himself to the vision of human society, by his behavior his purpose is disclosed. To human society he should present himself like a restless child, and although he is the greatest thoughtful orator, he should present himself like a dumb man.

11 As a historical example of this, learned sages recite the story of an ancient discussion between Prahlāda Mahārāja and a great saintly person who was feeding himself like a python.

12-13 Prahlāda Mahārāja, the most dear servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, once went out touring the universe with some of his confidential associates just to study the nature of saintly persons. Thus he arrived at the bank of the Kāverī, where there was a mountain known as Sahya. There he found a great saintly person who was lying on the ground, covered with dirt and dust, but who was deeply spiritually advanced.

14 Neither by that saintly person's activities, by his bodily features, by his words nor by the symptoms of his varṇāśrama status could people understand whether he was the same person they had known.

15 The advanced devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja duly worshiped and offered obeisances to the saintly person who had adopted a python's means of livelihood. After thus worshiping the saintly person and touching his own head to the saint's lotus feet, Prahlāda Mahārāja, in order to understand him, inquired very submissively as follows.

16-17 Seeing the saintly person to be quite fat, Prahlāda Mahārāja said: My dear sir, you undergo no endeavor to earn your livelihood, but you have a stout body, exactly like that of a materialistic enjoyer. I know that if one is very rich and has nothing to do, he becomes extremely fat by eating and sleeping and performing no work.

18 O brāhmaṇa, fully in knowledge of transcendence, you have nothing to do, and therefore you are lying down. It is also understood that you have no money for sense enjoyment. How then has your body become so fat? Under the circumstances, if you do not consider my question impudent, kindly explain how this has happened.

19 Your Honor appears learned, expert and intelligent in every way. You can speak very well, saying things that are pleasing to the heart. You see that people in general are engaged in fruitive activities, yet you are lying here inactive.

20Nārada Muni continued: When the saintly person was thus questioned by Prahāda Mahārāja, the King of the Daityas, he was captivated by this shower of nectarean words, and he replied to the inquisitiveness of Prahāda Mahārāja with a smiling face.

21The saintly brāhmaṇa said: O best of the asuras, Prahāda Mahārāja, who are recognized by advanced and civilized men, you are aware of the different stages of life because of your inherent transcendental eyes, with which you can see a man's character and thus know clearly the results of acceptance and rejection of things as they are.

22Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is full of all opulences, is predominant within the core of your heart because of your being a pure devotee. He always drives away all the darkness of ignorance, as the sun drives away the darkness of the universe.

23My dear King, although you know everything, you have posed some questions, which I shall try to answer according to what I have learned by hearing from authorities. I cannot remain silent in this regard, for a personality like you is just fit to be spoken to by one who desires self-purification.

24Because of insatiable material desires, I was being carried away by the waves of material nature's laws, and thus I was engaging in different activities, struggling for existence in various forms of life.

25In the course of the evolutionary process, which is caused by fruitive activities due to undesirable material sense gratification, I have received this human form of life, which can lead to the heavenly planets, to liberation, to the lower species, or to rebirth among human beings.

26In this human form of life, men and women unite for the sensual pleasure of sex, but by actual experience we have observed that none of them are happy. Therefore, seeing the contrary results, I have stopped taking part in materialistic activities.

27The actual form of life for the living entities is one of spiritual happiness, which is real happiness. This happiness can be achieved only when one stops all materialistic activities. Material sense enjoyment is simply an imagination. Therefore, considering this subject matter, I have ceased from all material activities and am lying down here.

28In this way the conditioned soul living within the body forgets his self-interest because he identifies himself with the body. Because the body is material, his natural tendency is to be attracted by the varieties of the material world. Thus the living entity suffers the miseries of material existence.

29Just as a deer, because of ignorance, cannot see the water within a well covered by grass, but runs after water elsewhere, the living entity covered by the material body does not see the happiness within himself, but runs after happiness in the material world.

30The living entity tries to achieve happiness and rid himself of the causes of distress, but because the various bodies of the living entities are under the full control of material nature, all his plans in different bodies, one after another, are ultimately baffled.

31Materialistic activities are always mixed with three kinds of miserable conditions *sadyātṁika*, *adhidaivika* and *adhibautika*. Therefore, even if one achieves some success by performing such activities, what is the benefit of this success? One is still subjected to birth, death, old age, disease and the reactions of his fruitive activities.

32The brāhmaṇa continued: I am actually seeing how a rich man, who is a victim of his senses, is very greedy to accumulate wealth, and therefore suffers from insomnia due to fear from all

sides, despite his wealth and opulence.

33Those who are considered materially powerful and rich are always full of anxieties because of governmental laws, thieves and rogues, enemies, family members, animals, birds, persons seeking charity, the inevitable time factor and even their own selves. Thus they are invariably afraid.

34Those in human society who are intelligent should give up the original cause of lamentation, illusion, fear, anger, attachment, poverty and unnecessary labor. The original cause of all of these is the desire for unnecessary prestige and money.

35The bee and the python are two excellent spiritual masters who give us exemplary instructions regarding how to be satisfied by collecting only a little and how to stay in one place and not move.

36From the bumblebee I have learned to be unattached to accumulating money, for although money is as good as honey, anyone can kill its owner and take it away.

37I do not endeavor to get anything, but am satisfied with whatever is achieved in its own way. If I do not get anything, I am patient and unagitated like a python and lie down in this way for many days.

38Sometimes I eat a very small quantity and sometimes a great quantity. Sometimes the food is very palatable, and sometimes it is stale. Sometimes prasāda is offered with great respect, and sometimes food is given neglectfully. Sometimes I eat during the day and sometimes at night. Thus I eat what is easily available.

39To cover my body I use whatever is available, whether it be linen, silk, cotton, bark or deerskin, according to my destiny, and I am fully satisfied and unagitated.

40Sometimes I lie on the surface of the earth, sometimes on leaves, grass or stone, sometimes on a pile of ashes, or sometimes, by the will of others, in a palace on a first-class bed with pillows.

41O my lord, sometimes I bathe myself very nicely, smear sandalwood pulp all over my body, put on a flower garland, and dress in fine garments and ornaments. Then I travel like a king on the back of an elephant or on a chariot or horse. Sometimes, however, I travel naked, like a person haunted by a ghost.

42Different people are of different mentalities. Therefore it is not my business either to praise them or to blaspheme them. I only desire their welfare, hoping that they will agree to become one with the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

43The mental concoction of discrimination between good and bad should be accepted as one unit and then invested in the mind, which should then be invested in the false ego. The false ego should be invested in the total material energy. This is the process of fighting false discrimination.

44A learned, thoughtful person must realize that material existence is illusion. This is possible only by self-realization. A self-realized person, who has actually seen the truth, should retire from all material activities, being situated in self-realization.

45Prahāda Mahārāja, you are certainly a self-realized soul and a devotee of the Supreme Lord. You do not care for public opinion or so-called scriptures. For this reason I have described to you without hesitation the history of my self-realization.

46Nārada Muni continued: After Prahlāda Mahārāja, the King of the demons, heard these instructions from the saint, he understood the occupational duties of a perfect person [paramahansa]. Thus he duly worshiped the saint, took his permission and then left for his own home.

SB 7.14: Ideal Family Life

This chapter describes the occupational duties of the householder according to the time, the country and the performer. When Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja became very much inquisitive about the occupational duties for the householder, Nārada Muni advised him that a *grhastha*'s first duty is to be fully dependent on Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, and to try to satisfy Him in all respects by executing one's prescribed devotional service. This devotional service will depend on the instructions of authorities and the association of devotees who are actually engaged in devotional service. The beginning of devotional service is *śravaṇam*, or hearing. One must hear from the mouths of realized souls. In this way the *grhastha*'s attraction to his wife and children will gradually be reduced.

As for the maintenance of his family, a *grhastha*, while earning what he requires for his living, must be very conscientious and must not undergo extraordinary endeavor simply to accumulate money and unnecessarily increase in material comforts. Although a *grhastha* should externally be very active in earning his livelihood, he should internally be situated as a fully self-realized person, without attachment for material gains. His dealings with family members or friends should be performed simply to fulfill their purpose; one should not be extravagantly engaged in this way. Instructions from family members and society should be accepted superficially, but in essence the *grhastha* should be engaged in occupational duties advised by the spiritual master and *śāstra*. Specifically a *grhastha* should engage in agricultural activities to earn money. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.44), *kṛṣi-go-rakṣya-vāṇijyam* agriculture, cow protection and trade are special duties of *grhasthas*. If by chance or by the grace of the Lord more money comes, it should be properly engaged for the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. One should not be eager to earn more money simply for sensual pleasure. A *grhastha* should always remember that one who is endeavoring to accumulate more money than necessary is to be considered a thief and is punishable by the laws of nature.

A *grhastha* should be very much affectionate toward lower animals, birds and bees, treating them exactly like his own children. A *grhastha* should not indulge in killing animals or birds for sense gratification. He should provide the necessities of life even to the dogs and the lowest creatures and should not exploit others for sense gratification. Factually, according to the instructions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, every *grhastha* is a great communist who provides the means of living for everyone. Whatever a *grhastha* may possess he should equally distribute to all living entities, without discrimination. The best process is to distribute *prasāda*.

A *grhastha* should not be very much attached to his wife; he should engage even his own wife in serving a guest with all attention. Whatever money a *grhastha* accumulates by the grace of God he should spend in five activities, namely worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, receiving Vaiṣṇavas and saintly persons, distributing *prasāda* to the general public and to all living entities, offering *prasāda* to his forefathers, and also offering *prasāda* to his own self. *Grhasthas* should always be ready to worship everyone as mentioned above. The *grhastha* should not eat anything not offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As it is said in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.13), *yaṁśa-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ*: "The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food that is offered first for sacrifice." The *grhastha* should also visit the holy places of pilgrimage mentioned in the *Purāṇas*. In this way he should fully engage in worshiping the Supreme Personality of

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Godhead for the benefit of his family, his society, his country, and humanity at large.

1Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira inquired from Nārada Muni: O my lord, O great sage, kindly explain how we who are staying at home without knowledge of the goal of life may also easily attain liberation, according to the instructions of the Vedas.

2Nārada Muni replied: My dear King, those who stay at home as householders must act to earn their livelihood, and instead of trying to enjoy the results of their work themselves, they should offer these results to Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva. How to satisfy Vāsudeva in this life can be perfectly understood through the association of great devotees of the Lord.

3-4A gṛhastha must associate again and again with saintly persons, and with great respect he must hear the nectar of the activities of the Supreme Lord and His incarnations as these activities are described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and other Purāṇas. Thus one should gradually become detached from affection for his wife and children, exactly like a man awakening from a dream.

5While working to earn his livelihood as much as necessary to maintain body and soul together, one who is actually learned should live in human society unattached to family affairs, although externally appearing very much attached.

6An intelligent man in human society should make his own program of activities very simple. If there are suggestions from his friends, children, parents, brothers or anyone else, he should externally agree, saying, “Yes, that is all right,” but internally he should be determined not to create a cumbersome life in which the purpose of life will not be fulfilled.

7The natural products created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be utilized to maintain the bodies and souls of all living entities. The necessities of life are of three types: those produced from the sky [from rainfall], from the earth [from the mines, the seas or the fields], and from the atmosphere [that which is obtained suddenly and unexpectedly].

8One may claim proprietorship to as much wealth as required to maintain body and soul together, but one who desires proprietorship over more than that must be considered a thief, and he deserves to be punished by the laws of nature.

9One should treat animals such as deer, camels, asses, monkeys, mice, snakes, birds and flies exactly like one’s own son. How little difference there actually is between children and these innocent animals.

10Even if one is a householder rather than a brahmacārī, a sannyāsī or a vānaprastha, one should not endeavor very hard for religiosity, economic development or satisfaction of the senses. Even in householder life, one should be satisfied to maintain body and soul together with whatever is available with minimum endeavor, according to place and time, by the grace of the Lord. One should not engage oneself in ugra-karma.

11Dogs, fallen persons and untouchables, including caṇḍālas [dog-eaters], should all be maintained with their proper necessities, which should be contributed by the householders. Even one’s wife at home, with whom one is most intimately attached, should be offered for the reception of guests and people in general.

12One so seriously considers one’s wife to be his own that he sometimes kills himself for her or kills others, including even his parents or his spiritual master or teacher. Therefore if one can give up his attachment to such a wife, he conquers the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never conquered by anyone.

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13Through proper deliberation, one should give up attraction to his wife's body because that body will ultimately be transformed into small insects, stool or ashes. What is the value of this insignificant body? How much greater is the Supreme Being, who is all-pervading like the sky?

14An intelligent person should be satisfied with eating prasāda [food offered to the Lord] or with performing the five different kinds of yajsa [paśca-sūnā]. By such activities, one can give up attachment for the body and so-called proprietorship with reference to the body. When one is able to do this, he is firmly fixed in the position of a mahātmā.

15Every day, one should worship the Supreme Being who is situated in everyone's heart, and on this basis one should separately worship the demigods, the saintly persons, ordinary human beings and living entities, one's forefathers and one's self. In this way one is able to worship the Supreme Being in the core of everyone's heart.

16When one is enriched with wealth and knowledge which are under his full control and by means of which he can perform yajsa or please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one must perform sacrifices, offering oblations to the fire according to the directions of the śāstras. In this way one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

17The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the enjoyer of sacrificial offerings. Yet although His Lordship eats the oblations offered in the fire, my dear King, He is still more satisfied when nice food made of grains and ghee is offered to Him through the mouths of qualified brāhmaṇas.

18Therefore, my dear King, first offer prasāda unto the brāhmaṇas and the demigods, and after sumptuously feeding them you may distribute prasāda to other living entities according to your ability. In this way you will be able to worship all living entities or, in other words, the supreme living entity within every living entity.

19A brāhmaṇa who is sufficiently rich must offer oblations to the forefathers during the dark-moon fortnight in the latter part of the month of Bhādra. Similarly, he should offer oblations to the relatives of the forefathers during the mahālayā ceremonies in the month of Āśvina.*

20-23One should perform the śrāddha ceremony on the Makara-saṅkrānti [the day when the sun begins to move north] or on the Karkāṭa-saṅkrānti [the day when the sun begins to move south]. One should also perform this ceremony on the Meṣa-saṅkrānti day and the Tulā-saṅkrānti day, in the yoga named Vyaṭpāta, on that day in which three lunar tithis are conjoined, during an eclipse of either the moon or the sun, on the twelfth lunar day, and in the Śravaṇa-nakṣatra. One should perform this ceremony on the Akṣaya-tṛtīyā day, on the ninth lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kārtika, on the four aṣṭakās in the winter season and cool season, on the seventh lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha, during the conjunction of Maghā-nakṣatra and the full-moon day, and on the days when the moon is completely full, or not quite completely full, when these days are conjoined with the nakṣatras from which the names of certain months are derived. One should also perform the śrāddha ceremony on the twelfth lunar day when it is in conjunction with any of the nakṣatras named Anurādhā, Śravaṇa, Uttara-phalgunī, Uttarāṣāḍhā or Uttara-bhādrapadā. Again, one should perform this ceremony when the eleventh lunar day is in conjunction with either Uttara-phalgunī, Uttarāṣāḍhā or Uttara-bhādrapadā. Finally, one should perform this ceremony on days conjoined with one's own birth star [janma-nakṣatra] or with Śravaṇa-nakṣatra.

24All of these seasonal times are considered extremely auspicious for humanity. At such times, one should perform all auspicious activities, for by such activities a human being attains

success in his short duration of life.

25 During these periods of seasonal change, if one bathes in the Ganges, in the Yamunā or in another sacred place, if one chants, offers fire sacrifices or executes vows, or if one worships the Supreme Lord, the brāhmaṇas, the forefathers, the demigods and the living entities in general, whatever he gives in charity yields a permanently beneficial result.

26 O King Yudhiṣṭhira, at the time prescribed for reformatory ritualistic ceremonies for one's self, one's wife or one's children, or during funeral ceremonies and annual death ceremonies, one must perform the auspicious ceremonies mentioned above in order to flourish in fruitive activities.

27-28 Nārada Muni continued: Now I shall describe the places where religious performances may be well executed. Any place where a Vaiṣṇava is available is an excellent place for all auspicious activities. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the support of this entire cosmic manifestation, with all its moving and nonmoving living entities, and the temple where the Deity of the Lord is installed is a most sacred place. Furthermore, places where learned brāhmaṇas observe Vedic principles by means of austerity, education and mercy are also most auspicious and sacred.

29 Auspicious indeed are the places where there is a temple of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, in which He is duly worshiped, and also the places where there flow the celebrated sacred rivers mentioned in the Purāṇas, the supplementary Vedic literatures. Anything spiritual done there is certainly very effective.

30-33 The sacred lakes like Puṣkara and places where saintly persons live, like Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Prayāga, Pulahāśrama, Naimiṣāraṇya, the banks of the Phālgū River, Setubandha, Prabhāsa, Dvārakā, Vārāṇasī, Mathurā, Pampā, Bindu-sarovara, Badarikāśrama [Nārāyaṇāśrama], the places where the Nandā River flows, the places where Lord Rāmacandra and mother Sītā took shelter, such as Citrakūṭa, and also the hilly tracts of land known as Mahendra and Malaya—all of these are to be considered most pious and sacred. Similarly, places outside India where there are centers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and where Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities are worshiped must all be visited and worshiped by those who want to be spiritually advanced. One who intends to advance in spiritual life may visit all these places and perform ritualistic ceremonies to get results a thousand times better than the results of the same activities performed in any other place.

34 O King of the earth, it has been decided by expert, learned scholars that only the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, in whom all that is moving or nonmoving within this universe is resting and from whom everything is coming, is the best person to whom everything must be given.

35 O King Yudhiṣṭhira, the demigods, many great sages and saints including even the four sons of Lord Brahmā, and I myself were present at your Rājasūya sacrificial ceremony, but when there was a question of who should be the first person worshiped, everyone decided upon Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person.

36 The entire universe, which is full of living entities, is like a tree whose root is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Acyuta [Kṛṣṇa]. Therefore simply by worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa one can worship all living entities.

37 The Supreme Personality of Godhead has created many residential places like the bodies of human beings, animals, birds, saints and demigods. In all of these innumerable bodily forms,

the Lord resides with the living being as Paramātmā. Thus He is known as the puruṣāvatāra.

38O King Yudhiṣṭhira, the Supersoul in every body gives intelligence to the individual soul according to his capacity for understanding. Therefore the Supersoul is the chief within the body. The Supersoul is manifested to the individual soul according to the individual's comparative development of knowledge, austerity, penance and so on.

39My dear King, when great sages and saintly persons saw mutually disrespectful dealings at the beginning of Tretā-yuga, Deity worship in the temple was introduced with all paraphernalia.

40Sometimes a neophyte devotee offers all the paraphernalia for worshipping the Lord, and he factually worships the Lord as the Deity, but because he is envious of the authorized devotees of Lord Viṣṇu, the Lord is never satisfied with his devotional service.

41My dear King, of all persons a qualified brāhmaṇa must be accepted as the best within this material world because such a brāhmaṇa, by practicing austerity, Vedic studies and satisfaction, becomes the counterpart body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

42My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the brāhmaṇas, especially those engaged in preaching the glories of the Lord throughout the entire world, are recognized and worshiped by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the heart and soul of all creation. The brāhmaṇas, by their preaching, sanctify the three worlds with the dust of their lotus feet, and thus they are worshipable even for Kṛṣṇa.

SB 7.15: Instructions for Civilized Human Beings

The summary of the Fifteenth Chapter is as follows. In the previous chapter, Śrī Nārada Muni proved the importance of the *brāhmaṇa* in society. Now, in this chapter, he will show the differences between different grades of *brāhmaṇas*. Among the *brāhmaṇas*, some are householders and are mostly attached to fruitive activities or the betterment of social conditions. Above them, however, are *brāhmaṇas* who are very much attracted by austerities and penances and who retire from family life. They are known as *vānaprasthas*. Other *brāhmaṇas* are very much interested in studying the *Vedas* and explaining the purport of the *Vedas* to others. Such *brāhmaṇas* are called *brahmacārīs*. And still other *brāhmaṇas* are interested in different types of *yoga*, especially *bhakti-yoga* and *Jnana-yoga*. Such *brāhmaṇas* are mostly *sannyāsīs*, members of the renounced order of life.

As far as householders are concerned, they engage in different types of scriptural activities, especially in offering oblations to their forefathers and giving as charity to other *brāhmaṇas* the paraphernalia engaged in such sacrifices. Generally the charity is given to *sannyāsīs*, *brāhmaṇas* in the renounced order of life. If such a *sannyāsī* is not available, the charity is given to *brāhmaṇa* householders engaged in fruitive activities.

One should not make very elaborate arrangements to perform the *śrāddha* ceremony of offering oblations to one's forefathers. The best process for the *śrāddha* ceremony is to distribute *bhāgavata-prasāda* (remnants of food that has first been offered to Kṛṣṇa) to all of one's forefathers and relatives. This makes a first-class *śrāddha* ceremony. In the *śrāddha* ceremony there is no need to offer meat or eat meat. Unnecessary killing of animals must be avoided. Those who are in the lower grades of society prefer to perform sacrifices by killing animals, but one who is advanced in knowledge must avoid such unnecessary violence.

Brāhmaṇas should execute their regulative duties in worshipping Lord Viṣṇu. Those who are

advanced in knowledge of religious principles must avoid five kinds of irreligion, known as *vidharma*, *para-dharma*, *dharmābhāsa*, *upadharmā* and *chala-dharma*. One must act according to the religious principles that suit his constitutional position; it is not that everyone must adhere to the same type of religion. A general principle is that a poor man should not unnecessarily endeavor for economic development. One who refrains from such endeavors but who engages in devotional service is most auspicious.

One who is not satisfied with the mind must fall to degradation. One must conquer lusty desires, anger, greed, fear, lamentation, illusion, fright, unnecessary talks on material subjects, violence, the four miseries of material existence, and the three material qualities. That is the objective of human life. One who has no faith in the spiritual master, who is identical with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, cannot get any benefit from reading *śāstra*. One should never consider the spiritual master an ordinary human being, even though the members of the spiritual master's family may think of him as such. Meditation and other processes of austerity are useful only if they help in advancement toward Kṛṣṇa consciousness; otherwise, they are simply a waste of time and labor. For those who are not devotees, such meditation and austerity cause falldown.

Every householder should be very careful because even though a householder may try to conquer the senses, he becomes a victim to the association of relatives and falls down. Thus a *grhastha* must become a *vānaprastha* or *sannyāsī*, live in a secluded place, and be satisfied with food gotten by begging from door to door. He must chant the *omkāra mantra* or Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and in this way he will perceive transcendental bliss within himself. After taking *sannyāsa*, however, if one returns to *grhastha* life, he is called a *vāntāsī*, which means "one who eats his own vomit." Such a person is shameless. A householder should not give up the ritualistic ceremonies, and a *sannyāsī* should not live in society. If a *sannyāsī* is agitated by the senses, he is a cheater influenced by the modes of passion and ignorance. When one assumes a role in goodness by starting philanthropic and altruistic activities, such activities become impediments on the path of devotional service.

The best process for advancing in devotional service is to abide by the orders of the spiritual master, for only by his direction can one conquer the senses. Unless one is completely Kṛṣṇa conscious, there is a chance of falling down. Of course, in performing ritualistic ceremonies and other fruitive activities there are also many dangers at every moment. Fruitive activities have been divided into twelve portions. Because of performing fruitive activities, which are called the path of *dharma*, one has to accept the cycle of birth and death, but when one takes the path of *mokṣa*, or liberation, which is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as *arcanā-mārga*, one can get relief from the cycle of birth and death. The *Vedas* describe these two paths as *pitṛ-yāna* and *deva-yāna*. Those who follow the paths of *pitṛ-yāna* and *deva-yāna* are never bewildered, even while in the material body. A monistic philosopher who gradually develops control of the senses understands that the objective of all the different *āśramas*, the statuses of life, is salvation. One must live and act according to *śāstras*.

If one who is performing the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies becomes a devotee, even if he is a *grhastha*, he can receive the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa. The objective of a devotee is to return home, back to Godhead. Such a devotee, even though not performing ritualistic ceremonies, advances in spiritual consciousness by the supreme will of the Personality of Godhead. One may actually become successful in spiritual consciousness by the mercy of devotees, or one may fall from spiritual consciousness by being disrespectful to devotees. In this regard, Nārada Muni narrated the history of how he had fallen from the Gandharva kingdom, how he was born in a *śūdra* family, and how by serving exalted *brāhmaṇas* he became the son of Lord Brahmā and was reinstated in his transcendental position. After narrating all these stories, Nārada Muni praised the mercy received from the Lord by the Pāṇḍavas. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira,

after hearing from Nārada, became ecstatic in love of Kṛṣṇa, and then Nārada Muni left that place and returned to his own place. Thus Śukadeva Gosvāmī, having described various descendants of the daughters of Dakṣa, ends the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

1Nārada Muni continued: My dear King, some brāhmaṇas are very much attached to fruitive activities, some are attached to austerities and penances, and still others study the Vedic literature, whereas some, although very few, cultivate knowledge and practice different yogas, especially bhakti-yoga.

2A person desiring liberation for his forefathers or himself should give charity to a brāhmaṇa who adheres to impersonal monism [Jnana-niṣṭhā]. In the absence of such an advanced brāhmaṇa, charity may be given to a brāhmaṇa addicted to fruitive activities [karma-kāṇḍa].

3During the period for offering oblations to the demigods, one should invite only two brāhmaṇas, and while offering oblations to the forefathers, one may invite three brāhmaṇas. Or, in either case, only one brāhmaṇa will suffice. Even though one is very opulent, he should not endeavor to invite more brāhmaṇas or make various expensive arrangements on those occasions.

4If one arranges to feed many brāhmaṇas or relatives during the śrāddha ceremony, there will be discrepancies in the time, place, respectability and ingredients, the person to be worshiped, and the method of offering worship.

5When one gets the opportunity of a suitable auspicious time and place, one should, with love, offer food prepared with ghee to the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and then offer the prasāda to a suitable persona Vaiṣṇava or brāhmaṇa. This will be the cause of everlasting prosperity.

6One should offer prasāda to the demigods, the saintly persons, one's forefathers, the people in general, one's family members, one's relatives and one's friends, seeing them all as devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

7A person fully aware of religious principles should never offer anything like meat, eggs or fish in the śrāddha ceremony, and even if one is a kṣatriya, he himself should not eat such things. When suitable food prepared with ghee is offered to saintly persons, the function is pleasing to the forefathers and the Supreme Lord, who are never pleased when animals are killed in the name of sacrifice.

8Persons who want to advance in superior religion are advised to give up all envy of other living entities, whether in relationship to the body, words or mind. There is no religion superior to this.

9Because of an awakening of spiritual knowledge, those who are intelligent in regard to sacrifice, who are actually aware of religious principles and who are free from material desires, control the self in the fire of spiritual knowledge, or knowledge of the Absolute Truth. They may give up the process of ritualistic ceremonies.

10Upon seeing the person engaged in performing the sacrifice, animals meant to be sacrificed are extremely afraid, thinking, "This merciless performer of sacrifices, being ignorant of the purpose of sacrifice and being most satisfied by killing others, will surely kill us."

11Therefore, day by day, one who is actually aware of religious principles and is not heinously envious of poor animals should happily perform daily sacrifices and those for certain occasions with whatever food is available easily by the grace of the Lord.

12There are five branches of irreligion, appropriately known as irreligion [vidharma], religious principles for which one is unfit [para-dharma], pretentious religion [ābhāsa], analogical religion [upadharna] and cheating religion [chala-dharma]. One who is aware of real religious life must abandon these five as irreligious.

13Religious principles that obstruct one from following his own religion are called vidharma. Religious principles introduced by others are called para-dharma. A new type of religion created by one who is falsely proud and who opposes the principles of the Vedas is called upadharna. And interpretation by one's jugglery of words is called chala-dharma.

14A pretentious religious system manufactured by one who willfully neglects the prescribed duties of his order of life is called ābhāsa [a dim reflection or false similarity]. But if one performs the prescribed duties for his particular āsrama or varṇa, why are they not sufficient to mitigate all material distresses?

15Even if a man is poor, he should not endeavor to improve his economic condition just to maintain his body and soul together or to become a famous religionist. Just as a great python, although lying in one place, not endeavoring for its livelihood, gets the food it needs to maintain body and soul, one who is desireless also obtains his livelihood without endeavor.

16One who is content and satisfied and who links his activities with the Supreme Personality of Godhead residing in everyone's heart enjoys transcendental happiness without endeavoring for his livelihood. Where is such happiness for a materialistic man who is impelled by lust and greed and who therefore wanders in all directions with a desire to accumulate wealth?

17For a person who has suitable shoes on his feet, there is no danger even when he walks on pebbles and thorns. For him, everything is auspicious. Similarly, for one who is always self-satisfied there is no distress; indeed, he feels happiness everywhere.

18My dear King, a self-satisfied person can be happy even with only drinking water. However, one who is driven by the senses, especially by the tongue and genitals, must accept the position of a household dog to satisfy his senses.

19Because of greed for the sake of the senses, the spiritual strength, education, austerity and reputation of a devotee or brāhmaṇa who is not self-satisfied dwindle, and his knowledge gradually vanishes.

20The strong bodily desires and needs of a person disturbed by hunger and thirst are certainly satisfied when he eats. Similarly, if one becomes very angry, that anger is satisfied by chastisement and its reaction. But as for greed, even if a greedy person has conquered all the directions of the world or has enjoyed everything in the world, still he will not be satisfied.

21O King Yudhiṣṭhira, many persons with varied experience, many legal advisers, many learned scholars and many persons eligible to become presidents of learned assemblies fall down into hellish life because of not being satisfied with their positions.

22By making plans with determination, one should give up lusty desires for sense gratification. Similarly, by giving up envy one should conquer anger, by discussing the disadvantages of accumulating wealth one should give up greed, and by discussing the truth one should give up fear.

23By discussing spiritual knowledge one can conquer lamentation and illusion, by serving a great devotee one can become prideless, by keeping silent one can avoid obstacles on the path of mystic yoga, and simply by stopping sense gratification one can conquer envy.

24By good behavior and freedom from envy one should counteract sufferings due to other living entities, by meditation in trance one should counteract sufferings due to providence, and by practicing haṭha-yoga, prāṇāyāma and so forth one should counteract sufferings due to the body and mind. Similarly, by developing the mode of goodness, especially in regard to eating, one should conquer sleep.

25One must conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by developing the mode of goodness, and then one must become detached from the mode of goodness by promoting oneself to the platform of śuddha-sattva. All this can be automatically done if one engages in the service of the spiritual master with faith and devotion. In this way one can conquer the influence of the modes of nature.

26The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, for one who maintains the material conception that the spiritual master is an ordinary human being, everything is frustrated. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant.

27The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the master of all other living entities and of the material nature. His lotus feet are sought and worshiped by great saintly persons like Vyāsa. Nonetheless, there are fools who consider Lord Kṛṣṇa an ordinary human being.

28Ritualistic ceremonies, regulative principles, austerities and the practice of yoga are all meant to control the senses and mind, but even after one is able to control the senses and mind, if he does not come to the point of meditation upon the Supreme Lord, all such activities are simply labor in frustration.

29As professional activities or business profits cannot help one in spiritual advancement but are a source of material entanglement, the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies cannot help anyone who is not a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

30One who desires to conquer the mind must leave the company of his family and live in a solitary place, free from contaminated association. To maintain the body and soul together, he should beg as much as he needs for the bare necessities of life.

31My dear King, in a sacred and holy place of pilgrimage one should select a place in which to perform yoga. The place must be level and not too high or low. There one should sit very comfortably, being steady and equipoised, keeping his body straight, and thus begin chanting the Vedic praṇava.

32-33While continuously staring at the tip of the nose, a learned yogī practices the breathing exercises through the technical means known as pūraka, kumbhaka and recakacontrolling inhalation and exhalation and then stopping them both. In this way the yogī restricts his mind from material attachments and gives up all mental desires. As soon as the mind, being defeated by lusty desires, drifts toward feelings of sense gratification, the yogīshould immediately bring it back and arrest it within the core of his heart.

34When the yogī regularly practices in this way, in a short time his heart becomes fixed and free from disturbance, like a fire without flames or smoke.

35When one's consciousness is uncontaminated by material lusty desires, it becomes calm and peaceful in all activities, for one is situated in eternal blissful life. Once situated on that platform, one does not return to materialistic activities.

36One who accepts the sannyāsa order gives up the three principles of materialistic activities in which one indulges in the field of household lifenamely religion, economic development and sense gratification. One who first accepts sannyāsa but then returns to such materialistic activities is to be called a vāntāśī, or one who eats his own vomit. He is indeed a shameless person.

37Sannyāsīs who first consider that the body is subject to death, when it will be transformed into stool, worms or ashes, but who again give importance to the body and glorify it as the self, are to be considered the greatest rascals.

38-39It is abominable for a person living in the grhastha-āśrama to give up the regulative principles, for a brahmacārī not to follow the brahmacārī vows while living under the care of the guru, for a vānaprastha to live in the village and engage in so-called social activities, or for a sannyāsī to be addicted to sense gratification. One who acts in this way is to be considered the lowest renegade. Such a pretender is bewildered by the external energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and one should either reject him from any position, or taking compassion upon him, teach him, if possible, to resume his original position.

40The human form of body is meant for understanding the self and the Supreme Self, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, both of whom are transcendently situated. If both of them can be understood when one is purified by advanced knowledge, for what reason and for whom does a foolish, greedy person maintain the body for sense gratification?

41Transcendentalists who are advanced in knowledge compare the body, which is made by the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to a chariot. The senses are like the horses; the mind, the master of the senses, is like the reins; the objects of the senses are the destinations; intelligence is the chariot driver; and consciousness, which spreads throughout the body, is the cause of bondage in this material world.

42The ten kinds of air acting within the body are compared to the spokes of the chariot's wheels, and the top and bottom of the wheel itself are called religion and irreligion. The living entity in the bodily concept of life is the owner of the chariot. The Vedic mantra praṇava is the bow, the pure living entity himself is the arrow, and the target is the Supreme Being.

43-44In the conditioned stage, one's conceptions of life are sometimes polluted by passion and ignorance, which are exhibited by attachment, hostility, greed, lamentation, illusion, fear, madness, false prestige, insults, fault-finding, deception, envy, intolerance, passion, bewilderment, hunger and sleep. All of these are enemies. Sometimes one's conceptions are also polluted by goodness.

45As long as one has to accept a material body, with its different parts and paraphernalia, which are not fully under one's control, one must have the lotus feet of his superiors, namely his spiritual master and the spiritual master's predecessors. By their mercy, one can sharpen the sword of knowledge, and with the power of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's mercy one must then conquer the enemies mentioned above. In this way, the devotee should be able to merge into his own transcendental bliss, and then he may give up his body and resume his spiritual identity.

46Otherwise, if one does not take shelter of Acyuta and Baladeva, then the senses, acting as the horses, and the intelligence, acting as the driver, both being prone to material contamination, inattentively bring the body, which acts as the chariot, to the path of sense gratification. When one is thus attracted again by the rogues of viṣayaeating, sleeping and matingthe horses and chariot driver are thrown into the blinding dark well of material

existence, and one is again put into a dangerous and extremely fearful situation of repeated birth and death.

47According to the Vedas, there are two kinds of activitiespravṛtti and nivṛtti. Pravṛtti activities involve raising oneself from a lower to a higher condition of materialistic life, whereas nivṛtti means the cessation of material desire. Through pravṛtti activities one suffers from material entanglement, but by nivṛtti activities one is purified and becomes fit to enjoy eternal, blissful life.

48-49The ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices known as agni-hotra-yajña, darśa-yajña, pūrnamāsa-yajña, cāturmāsya-yajña, paśu-yajña and soma-yajña are all symptomized by the killing of animals and the burning of many valuables, especially food grains, all for the fulfillment of material desires and the creation of anxiety. Performing such sacrifices, worshiping Vaiśvadeva, and performing the ceremony of Baliharāṇa, which all supposedly constitute the goal of life, as well as constructing temples for demigods, building resting houses and gardens, digging wells for the distribution of water, establishing booths for the distribution of food, and performing activities for public welfarethese are all symptomized by attachment to material desires.

50-51My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, when oblations of ghee and food grains like barley and sesame are offered in sacrifice, they turn into celestial smoke, which carries one to successively higher planetary systems like the kingdoms of Dhumā, Rātri, Kṛṣṇapakṣa, Dakṣiṇam and ultimately the moon. Then, however, the performers of sacrifice descend again to earth to become herbs, creepers, vegetables and food grains. These are eaten by different living entities and turned to semen, which is injected into female bodies. Thus one takes birth again and again.

52A twice-born brāhmaṇa [dvija] gains his life by the grace of his parents through the process of purification known as garbhādhāna. There are also other processes of purification, until the end of life, when the funeral ceremony [antyeṣṭi-kriyā] is performed. Thus in due course a qualified brāhmaṇa becomes uninterested in materialistic activities and sacrifices, but he offers the sensual sacrifices, in full knowledge, into the working senses, which are illuminated by the fire of knowledge.

53The mind is always agitated by waves of acceptance and rejection. Therefore all the activities of the senses should be offered into the mind, which should be offered into one's words. Then one's words should be offered into the aggregate of all alphabets, which should be offered into the concise form omkāra. Omkāra should be offered into the point bindu, bindu into the vibration of sound, and that vibration into the life air. Then the living entity, who is all that remains, should be placed in Brahman, the Supreme. This is the process of sacrifice.

54On his path of ascent, the progressive living entity enters the different worlds of fire, the sun, the day, the end of the day, the bright fortnight, the full moon, and the passing of the sun in the north, along with their presiding demigods. When he enters Brahmaloḥa, he enjoys life for many millions of years, and finally his material designation comes to an end. He then comes to a subtle designation, from which he attains the causal designation, witnessing all previous states. Upon the annihilation of this causal state, he attains his pure state, in which he identifies with the Supersoul. In this way the living entity becomes transcendental.

55This gradual process of elevation for self-realization is meant for those who are truly aware of the Absolute Truth. After repeated birth on this path, which is known as deva-yāna, one attains these consecutive stages. One who is completely free from all material desires, being situated in the self, need not traverse the path of repeated birth and death.

56Even though situated in a material body, one who is fully aware of the paths known as pitṛ-yāna and deva-yāna, and who thus opens his eyes in terms of Vedic knowledge, is never bewildered in this material world.

57He who exists internally and externally, at the beginning and end of everything and of all living beings, as that which is enjoyable and as the enjoyer of everything, superior and inferior, is the Supreme Truth. He always exists as knowledge and the object of knowledge, as expression and the object of understanding, as darkness and as light. Thus He, the Supreme Lord, is everything.

58Although one may consider the reflection of the sun from a mirror to be false, it has its factual existence. Accordingly, to prove by speculative knowledge that there is no reality would be extremely difficult.

59In this world there are five elementsnamely earth, water, fire, air and etherbut the body is not a reflection of them, nor a combination or transformation of them. Because the body and its ingredients are neither distinct nor amalgamated, all such theories are insubstantial.

60Because the body is formed of the five elements, it cannot exist without the subtle sense objects. Therefore, since the body is false, the sense objects are also naturally false or temporary.

61When a substance and its parts are separated, the acceptance of similarity between one and the other is called illusion. While dreaming, one creates a separation between the existences called wakefulness and sleep. It is in such a state of mind that the regulative principles of the scriptures, consisting of injunctions and prohibitions, are recommended.

62After considering the oneness of existence, activity and paraphernalia and after realizing the self to be different from all actions and reactions, the mental speculator [muni], according to his own realization, gives up the three states of wakefulness, dreaming and sleep.

63When one understands that result and cause are one and that duality is ultimately unreal, like the idea that the threads of a cloth are different from the cloth itself, one reaches the conception of oneness called bhāvādvaita.

64My dear Yudhiṣṭhira [Pārtha], when all the activities one performs with his mind, words and body are dedicated directly to the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one reaches oneness of activities, called kriyādvaita.

65When the ultimate goal and interest of one's self, one's wife, one's children, one's relatives and all other embodied living beings is one, this is called dravyādvaita, or oneness of interest.

66In normal conditions, in the absence of danger, O King Yudhiṣṭhira, a man should perform his prescribed activities according to his status of life with the things, endeavors, process and living place that are not forbidden for him, and not by any other means.

67O King, one should perform his occupational duties according to these instructions, as well as other instructions given in the Vedic literature, just to remain a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus, even while at home, one will be able to reach the destination.

68O King Yudhiṣṭhira, because of your service to the Supreme Lord, all of you Pāṇḍavas defeated the greatest dangers posed by numerous kings and demigods. By serving the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, you conquered great enemies, who were like elephants, and thus you collected ingredients for sacrifice. By His grace, may you be delivered from material involvement.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

69Long, long ago, in another mahā-kalpa [millennium of Brahmā], I existed as the Gandharva known as Upabarhaṇa. I was very respected by the other Gandharvas.

70I had a beautiful face and a pleasing, attractive bodily structure. Decorated with flower garlands and sandalwood pulp, I was most pleasing to the women of my city. Thus I was bewildered, always feeling lusty desires.

71Once there was a saṅkīrtana festival to glorify the Supreme Lord in an assembly of the demigods, and the Gandharvas and Apsarās were invited by the prajāpatis to take part in it.

72Nārada Muni continued: Being invited to that festival, I also joined, and, surrounded by women, I began musically singing the glories of the demigods. Because of this, the prajāpatis, the great demigods in charge of the affairs of the universe, forcefully cursed me with these words: “Because you have committed an offense, may you immediately become a śūdra, devoid of beauty.”

73Although I took birth as a śūdra from the womb of a maidservant, I engaged in the service of Vaiṣṇavas who were well-versed in Vedic knowledge. Consequently, in this life I got the opportunity to take birth as the son of Lord Brahmā.

74The process of chanting the holy name of the Lord is so powerful that by this chanting even householders [gṛhasthas] can very easily gain the ultimate result achieved by persons in the renounced order. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, I have now explained to you that process of religion.

75My dear Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, you Pāṇḍavas are so very fortunate in this world that many, many great saints, who can purify all the planets of the universe, come to your house just like ordinary visitors. Furthermore, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is living confidentially with you in your house, just like your brother.

76How wonderful it is that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Parabrahman, Kṛṣṇa, who is sought by great, great sages for the sake of liberation and transcendental bliss, is acting as your best well-wisher, your friend, your cousin, your heart and soul, your worshipable director, and your spiritual master.

77Present here now is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead whose true form cannot be understood even by such great personalities as Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. He is realized by devotees because of their unflinching surrender. May that same Personality of Godhead, who is the maintainer of His devotees and who is worshiped by silence, by devotional service and by cessation of material activities, be pleased with us.

78ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the best member of the Bharata dynasty, thus learned everything from the descriptions of Nārada Muni. After hearing these instructions, he felt great pleasure from within his heart, and in great ecstasy, love and affection, he worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa.

79Nārada Muni, being worshiped by Kṛṣṇa and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, bade them farewell and went away. Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, having heard that Kṛṣṇa, his cousin, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was struck with wonder.

80On all the planets within this universe, the varieties of living entities, moving and nonmoving, including the demigods, demons and human beings, were all generated from the daughters of Mahārāja Dakṣa. I have now described them and their different dynasties.

Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creations

SB 8.1: The Manus, Administrators of the Universe

First of all, let me offer my humble, respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, His Divine Grace ŚrīŚrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. Sometime in the year 1935 when His Divine Grace was staying at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, I went to see him from Bombay. At that time, he gave me many important instructions in regard to constructing temples and publishing books. He personally told me that publishing books is more important than constructing temples. Of course, those same instructions remained within my mind for many years. In 1944 I began publishing my *Back to Godhead*, and when I retired from family life in 1958 I began publishing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in Delhi. When three parts of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* had been published in India, I then started for the United States of America on the thirteenth of August, 1965.

I am continuously trying to publish books, as suggested by my spiritual master. Now, in this year, 1976, I have completed the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and a summary of the Tenth Canto has already been published as *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*. Still, the Eighth Canto, Ninth Canto, Tenth Canto, Eleventh Canto and Twelfth Canto are yet to be published. On this occasion, therefore, I am praying to my spiritual master to give me strength to finish this work. I am neither a great scholar nor a great devotee; I am simply a humble servant of my spiritual master, and to the best of my ability I am trying to please him by publishing these books, with the cooperation of my disciples in America. Fortunately, scholars all over the world are appreciating these publications. Let us cooperatively publish more and more volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* just to please His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura.

This First Chapter of the Eighth Canto may be summarized as a description of four Manus, namely Svāyambhuva, Svārociṣa, Uttama and Tāmasa. After hearing descriptions of the dynasty of Svāyambhuva Manu until the end of the Seventh Canto, Mahārāja Parīkṣit desired to know about other Manus. He desired to understand how the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends not only in the past but at the present and in the future and how He acts in various pastimes as Manu. Since Parīkṣit Mahārāja was eager to know all this, Śukadeva Gosvāmī gradually described all the Manus, beginning with the six Manus who had appeared in the past.

The first Manu was Svāyambhuva Manu. His two daughters, namely Ākūti and Devahūti, gave birth to two sons, named Yajña and Kapila respectively. Because Śukadeva Gosvāmī had already described the activities of Kapila in the Third Canto, he now described the activities of Yajña. The original Manu, along with his wife, Śatarūpā, went into the forest to practice austerities on the bank of the river Sunandā. They practiced austerities for a hundred years, and then Manu, in a trance, formed prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Rākṣasas and *asuras* then attempted to devour him, but Yajña, accompanied by his sons the Yāmas and the demigods, killed them. Then Yajña personally took the post of Indra, the King of the heavenly planets.

The second Manu, whose name was Svārociṣa, was the son of Agni, and his sons were headed by Dyumat, Suṣeṇa and Rociṣmat. In the age of this Manu, Rocana became Indra, the ruler of the heavenly planets, and there were many demigods, headed by Tuṣita. There were also many saintly persons, such as Ūrja and Stambha. Among them was Vedaśirā, whose wife, Tuṣitā, gave birth to Vibhu. Vibhu instructed eighty-eight thousand *dr̥ḍha-vratas*, or saintly persons, on self-control and austerity.

Uttama, the son of Priyavrata, was the third Manu. Among his sons were Pavana, Sṛṣṭaya and Yajñahotra. During the reign of this Manu, the sons of Vasiṣṭha, headed by Pramada, became

the seven saintly persons. The Satyas, Devaśrutas and Bhadras became the demigods, and Satyajit became Indra. From the womb of Sunṛtā, the wife of Dharma, the Lord appeared as Satyasena, and He killed all the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas who were fighting with Satyajit.

Tāmasa, the brother of the third Manu, was the fourth Manu, and he had ten sons, including Pṛthu, Khyāti, Nara and Ketu. During his reign, the Satyakas, Haris, Vīras and others were demigods, the seven great saints were headed by Jyotirdhāma, and Triśikha became Indra. Harimedhā begot a son named Hari in the womb of his wife Hariṇī. This Hari, an incarnation of God, saved the devotee Gajendra. This incident is described as *gajendra-mokṣaṇa*. At the end of this chapter, Parīkṣit Mahārāja particularly asks about this incident.

1King Parīkṣit said: O my lord, my spiritual master, now I have fully heard from Your Grace about the dynasty of Svāyambhuva Manu. But there are also other Manus, and I want to hear about their dynasties. Kindly describe them to us.

2O learned brāhmaṇa, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the great learned persons who are completely intelligent describe the activities and appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead during the various manvantaras. We are very eager to hear about these narrations. Kindly describe them.

3O learned brāhmaṇa, kindly describe to us whatever activities the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who created this cosmic manifestation, has performed in the past manvantaras, is performing at present, and will perform in the future manvantaras.

4Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In the present kalpa there have already been six Manus. I have described to you Svāyambhuva Manu and the appearance of many demigods. In this kalpa of Brahmā, Svāyambhuva is the first Manu.

5Svāyambhuva Manu had two daughters, named Ākūti and Devahūti. From their wombs, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as two sons named Yaṅsamūrti and Kapila respectively. These sons were entrusted with preaching about religion and knowledge.

6O best of the Kurus, I have already described [in the Third Canto] the activities of Kapila, the son of Devahūti. Now I shall describe the activities of Yaṅsapati, the son of Ākūti.

7Svāyambhuva Manu, the husband of Śatarūpā, was by nature not at all attached to enjoyment of the senses. Thus he gave up his kingdom of sense enjoyment and entered the forest with his wife to practice austerities.

8O scion of Bharata, after Svāyambhuva Manu had thus entered the forest with his wife, he stood on one leg on the bank of the river Sunandā, and in this way, with only one leg touching the earth, he performed great austerities for one hundred years. While performing these austerities, he spoke as follows.

9Lord Manu said: The supreme living being has created this material world of animation; it is not that He was created by this material world. When everything is silent, the Supreme Being stays awake as a witness. The living entity does not know Him, but He knows everything.

10Within this universe, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His Supersoul feature is present everywhere, wherever there are animate or inanimate beings. Therefore, one should accept only that which is allotted to him; one should not desire to infringe upon the property of others.

11Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead constantly watches the activities of the world,

no one sees Him. However, one should not think that because no one sees Him, He does not see, for His power to see is never diminished. Therefore, everyone should worship the Supersoul, who always stays with the individual soul as a friend.

12The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no beginning, no end and no middle. Nor does He belong to a particular person or nation. He has no inside or outside. The dualities found within this material world, such as beginning and end, mine and theirs, are all absent from the personality of the Supreme Lord. The universe, which emanates from Him, is another feature of the Lord. Therefore the Supreme Lord is the ultimate truth, and He is complete in greatness.

13The entire cosmic manifestation is the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, who has millions of names and unlimited potencies. He is self-effulgent, unborn and changeless. He is the beginning of everything, but He has no beginning. Because He has created this cosmic manifestation by His external energy, the universe appears to be created, maintained and annihilated by Him. Nonetheless, He remains inactive in His spiritual energy and is untouched by the activities of the material energy.

14Therefore, to enable people to reach the stage of activities that are not tinged by fruitive results, great saints first engage people in fruitive activities, for unless one begins by performing activities as recommended in the śāstras, one cannot reach the stage of liberation, or activities that produce no reactions.

15The Supreme Personality of Godhead is full in opulence by His own gain, yet He acts as the creator, maintainer and annihilator of this material world. In spite of acting in that way, He is never entangled. Hence devotees who follow in His footsteps are also never entangled.

16The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, works just like an ordinary human being, yet He does not desire to enjoy the fruits of work. He is full in knowledge, free from material desires and diversions, and completely independent. As the supreme teacher of human society, He teaches His own way of activities, and thus He inaugurates the real path of religion. I request everyone to follow Him.

17Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Svāyambhuva Manu was thus in a trance, chanting the mantras of Vedic instruction known as the Upaniṣads. Upon seeing him, the Rākṣasas and asuras, being very hungry, wanted to devour him. Therefore they ran after him with great speed.

18The Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, who sits in everyone's heart, appearing as Yaśapati, observed that the Rākṣasas and demons were going to devour Svāyambhuva Manu. Thus the Lord, accompanied by His sons named the Yāmas and by all the other demigods, killed the demons and Rākṣasas. He then took the post of Indra and began to rule the heavenly kingdom.

19The son of Agni named Svārociṣa became the second Manu. His several sons were headed by Dyumat, Suṣeṇa and Rociṣmat.

20During the reign of Svārociṣa, the post of Indra was assumed by Rocana, the son of Yajña. Tuṣita and others became the principal demigods, and Ūrja, Stambha and others became the seven saints. All of them were faithful devotees of the Lord.

21Vedaśirā was a very celebrated ṛṣi. From the womb of his wife, whose name was Tuṣitā, came the avatāra named Vibhu.

22Vibhu remained a brahmācāri and never married throughout his life. From him, eighty-eight thousand other saintly persons took lessons on self-control, austerity and similar behavior.

23O King, the third Manu, Uttama, was the son of King Priyavrata. Among the sons of this Manu were Pavana, Sṛṣṭjaya and Yajṣahotra.

24During the reign of the third Manu, Pramada and other sons of Vasiṣṭha became the seven sages. The Satyas, Vedaśrutas and Bhadras became demigods, and Satyajit was selected to be Indra, the King of heaven.

25In this manvantara, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared from the womb of Sūnṛtā, who was the wife of Dharma, the demigod in charge of religion. The Lord was celebrated as Satyasena, and He appeared with other demigods, known as the Satyavratas.

26Satyasena, along with His friend Satyajit, who was the King of heaven, Indra, killed all the untruthful, impious and miSBehaved Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and ghostly living entities, who gave pains to other living beings.

27The brother of the third Manu, Uttama, was celebrated by the name Tāmasa, and he became the fourth Manu. Tāmasa had ten sons, headed by Pṛthu, Khyāti, Nara and Ketu.

28During the reign of Tāmasa Manu, among the demigods were the Satyakas, Haris and Vīras. The heavenly King, Indra, was Triśikha. The sages in saptarṣi-dhāma were headed by Jyotirdhāma.

29O King, in the Tāmasa manvantara the sons of Vidhṛti, who were known as the Vaidhṛtis, also became demigods. Since in course of time the Vedic authority was lost, these demigods, by their own powers, protected the Vedic authority.

30Also in this manvantara, the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, took birth from the womb of Hariṇī, the wife of Harimedhā, and He was known as Hari. Hari saved His devotee Gajendra, the King of the elephants, from the mouth of a crocodile.

31King Parīkṣit said: My lord, Bādarāyaṇi, we wish to hear from you in detail how the King of the elephants, when attacked by a crocodile, was delivered by Hari.

32Any literature or narration in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Uttamaśloka, is described and glorified is certainly great, pure, glorious, auspicious and all good.

33Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: O brāhmaṇas, when Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who was awaiting impending death, thus requested Śukadeva Gosvāmī to speak, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, encouraged by the King's words, offered respect to the King and spoke with great pleasure in the assembly of sages, who desired to hear him.

SB 8.2: The Elephant Gajendra's Crisis

The Second, Third and Fourth chapters of this Canto describe how the Lord, during the reign of the fourth Manu, gave protection to the king of the elephants. As described in this Second Chapter, when the King of the elephants, along with his female elephants, was enjoying in the water, a crocodile suddenly attacked him, and the elephant surrendered to the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead for protection.

In the midst of the Ocean of Milk, there is a very high and beautiful mountain that has an altitude of ten thousand *yojanas*, or eighty thousand miles. This mountain is known as Trikūṭa. In a valley of Trikūṭa there is a nice garden named Ṛtumat, which was constructed by Varuṇa, and in that area there is a very nice lake. Once the chief of the elephants, along with female elephants, went to enjoy bathing in that lake, and they disturbed the inhabitants of the water.

Because of this, the chief crocodile in that water, who was very powerful, immediately attacked the elephant's leg. Thus there ensued a great fight between the elephant and the crocodile. This fight continued for one thousand years. Neither the elephant nor the crocodile died, but since they were in the water, the elephant gradually became weak whereas the power of the crocodile increased more and more. Thus the crocodile became more and more encouraged. Then the elephant, being helpless and seeing that there was no other way for his protection, sought shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, there is a very large mountain called Trikūṭa. It is ten thousand yojanas [eighty thousand miles] high. Being surrounded by the Ocean of Milk, it is very beautifully situated.

2-3The length and breadth of the mountain are of the same measurement [eighty thousand miles]. Its three principal peaks, which are made of iron, silver and gold, beautify all directions and the sky. The mountain also has other peaks, which are full of jewels and minerals and are decorated with nice trees, creepers and shrubs. The sounds of the waterfalls on the mountain create a pleasing vibration. In this way the mountain stands, increasing the beauty of all directions.

4The ground at the foot of the mountain is always washed by waves of milk that produce emeralds all around in the eight directions [north, south, east, west and the directions midway between them].

5The inhabitants of the higher planets—the Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, serpents, Kinnaras and Apsarās—go to that mountain to sport. Thus all the caves of the mountain are full of these denizens of the heavenly planets.

6Because of the resounding vibrations of the denizens of heaven singing in the caves, the lions there, being very proud of their strength, roar with unbearable envy, thinking that another lion is roaring in that way.

7The valleys beneath Trikūṭa Mountain are beautifully decorated by many varieties of jungle animals, and in the trees, which are maintained in gardens by the demigods, varieties of birds chirp with sweet voices.

8Trikūṭa Mountain has many lakes and rivers, with beaches covered by small gems resembling grains of sand. The water is as clear as crystal, and when the demigod damsels bathe in it, their bodies lend fragrance to the water and the breeze, thus enriching the atmosphere.

9-13In a valley of Trikūṭa Mountain there was a garden called Ṛtumat. This garden belonged to the great devotee Varuṇa and was a sporting place for the damsels of the demigods. Flowers and fruits grew there in all seasons. Among them were mandāras, pārijātas, pāṭalas, aśokas, campakas, cūtas, piyālas, panasas, mangoes, āmrātakas, kramukas, coconut trees, date trees and pomegranates. There were madhukas, palm trees, tamālas, asanas, arjunas, ariṣṭas, uḍumbaras, plakṣas, banyan trees, kiṁśukas and sandalwood trees. There were also picumardas, kovidāras, saralas, sura-dārus, grapes, sugarcane, bananas, jambu, badarīs, akṣas, abhayas and āmalakīs.

14-19In that garden there was a very large lake filled with shining golden lotus flowers and the flowers known as kumuda, kahlāra, utpala and śatapatra, which added excellent beauty to the mountain. There were also bilva, kapittha, jambīra and bhallātaka trees. Intoxicated bumblebees drank honey and hummed with the chirping of the birds, whose songs were very melodious. The lake was crowded with swans, kāraṇḍavas, cakrāvakas, cranes, and flocks of

water chickens, dātyūhas, koyaṣṭis and other murmuring birds. Because of the agitating movements of the fish and tortoises, the water was decorated with pollen that had fallen from the lotus flowers. The lake was surrounded by kadamba flowers, vetasa flowers, nalas, nīpas, vaṣṭulakas, kundas, kurubakas, aśokas, śirīṣas, kūtajas, iṅgudas, kubjakas, svarṇa-yūthīs, nāgas, punnāgas, jāṭīs, mallikās, śatapatras, jālakās and mādhavī-latās. The banks were also abundantly adorned with varieties of trees that yielded flowers and fruits in all seasons. Thus the entire mountain stood gloriously decorated.

20The leader of the elephants who lived in the forest of the mountain Trikūṭa once wandered toward the lake with his female elephants. He broke many plants, creepers, thickets and trees, not caring for their piercing thorns.

21Simply by catching scent of that elephant, all the other elephants, the tigers and the other ferocious animals, such as lions, rhinoceroses, great serpents and black and white sarabhas, fled in fear. The camarī deer also fled.

22By the mercy of this elephant, animals like the foxes, wolves, buffalos, bears, boars, gopucchas, porcupines, monkeys, rabbits, the other deer and many other small animals loitered elsewhere in the forest. They were not afraid of him.

23-24Surrounded by the herd's other elephants, including females, and followed by the young ones, Gajapati, the leader of the elephants, made Trikūṭa Mountain tremble all around because of the weight of his body. He was perspiring, liquor dripped from his mouth, and his vision was overwhelmed by intoxication. He was being served by bumblebees who drank honey, and from a distance he could smell the dust of the lotus flowers, which was carried from the lake by the breeze. Thus surrounded by his associates, who were afflicted by thirst, he soon arrived at the bank of the lake.

25The King of the elephants entered the lake, bathed thoroughly and was relieved of his fatigue. Then, with the aid of his trunk, he drank the cold, clear, nectarean water, which was mixed with the dust of lotus flowers and water lilies, until he was fully satisfied.

26Like a human being who lacks spiritual knowledge and is too attached to the members of his family, the elephant, being illusioned by the external energy of Kṛṣṇa, had his wives and children bathe and drink the water. Indeed, he raised water from the lake with his trunk and sprayed it over them. He did not mind the hard labor involved in this endeavor.

27By the arrangement of providence, O King, a strong crocodile was angry at the elephant and attacked the elephant's leg in the water. The elephant was certainly strong, and he tried his best to get free from this danger sent by providence.

28Thereafter, seeing Gajendra in that grave condition, his wives felt very, very sorry and began to cry. The other elephants wanted to help Gajendra, but because of the crocodile's great strength, they could not rescue him by grasping him from behind.

29O King, the elephant and the crocodile fought in this way, pulling one another in and out of the water, for one thousand years. Upon seeing the fight, the demigods were very surprised.

30Thereafter, because of being pulled into the water and fighting for many long years, the elephant became diminished in his mental, physical and sensual strength. The crocodile, on the contrary, being an animal of the water, increased in enthusiasm, physical strength and sensual power.

31When the King of the elephants saw that he was under the clutches of the crocodile by the

will of providence and, being embodied and circumstantially helpless, could not save himself from danger, he was extremely afraid of being killed. He consequently thought for a long time and finally reached the following decision.

32The other elephants, who are my friends and relatives, could not rescue me from this danger. What then to speak of my wives? They cannot do anything. It is by the will of providence that I have been attacked by this crocodile, and therefore I shall seek shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always the shelter of everyone, even of great personalities.

33The Supreme Personality of Godhead is certainly not known to everyone, but He is very powerful and influential. Therefore, although the serpent of eternal time, which is fearful in force, endlessly chases everyone, ready to swallow him, if one who fears this serpent seeks shelter of the Lord, the Lord gives him protection, for even death runs away in fear of the Lord. I therefore surrender unto Him, the great and powerful supreme authority who is the actual shelter of everyone.

SB 8.3: Gajendra's Prayers of Surrender

In this chapter, the prayers by Gajendra, the King of the elephants, are described. It appears that the King of the elephants was formerly a human being known as Indradyumna and that he learned a prayer to the Supreme Lord. Fortunately he remembered that prayer and began to chant it to himself. First he offered his respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and because of his awkward position in having been attacked by the crocodile, he expressed his inability to recite prayers nicely. Nonetheless, he tried to chant the *mantra* and expressed himself in appropriate words as follows.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of all causes, the original person from whom everything has emanated. He is the root cause of this cosmic manifestation, and the entire cosmos rests in Him, yet He is transcendental, for He does everything in relation to the material world through His external energy. He is eternally situated in the spiritual world in Vaikuṅṭha or Goloka Vṛndāvanawhere He engages in His eternal pastimes. The material world is a product of His external energy, or material nature, which works under His direction. It is thus that creation, maintenance and annihilation take place. The Lord exists at all times. This is extremely difficult for a nondevotee to understand. Although the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead is perceivable by everyone, only the pure devotees perceive His presence and activities. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is completely free from material birth, death, old age and disease. Indeed, if anyone in this material world takes shelter of Him, he also becomes situated in that transcendental position. For the satisfaction of the devotee (*paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām*), the Lord appears and exhibits His activities. His appearance, disappearance and other pastimes are not at all material. One who knows this secret can enter the kingdom of God. In the Lord, all opposing elements are adjusted. The Lord is situated in everyone's heart. He is the controller of everything, He is the witness of all activities, and He is the original source of all living entities. Indeed, all living entities are parts of Him, for He is the origin of Mahā-Viṣṇu, who is the source of the living entities within this material world. The Lord can observe the activities of our senses, which can work and achieve material results because of His mercy. Although He is the original source of everything, He is untouched by any of His by-products. In this way He is like a gold mine, which is the source of gold in ornaments and yet is different from the ornaments themselves. The Lord is worshiped by the method prescribed in the *Paścaraṅtras*. He is the source of our knowledge, and He can give us liberation. Therefore it is our duty to understand Him according to the instructions of devotees, in particular the spiritual master. Although for us the mode of goodness is covered, by following the instructions of saintly persons and the spiritual master we can be freed from

material clutches.

“The self-effulgent material form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is adored by nondevotees, His impersonal form is adored by those advanced in spiritual knowledge, and His feature as the localized Supersoul is appreciated by *yogīs*. But His original form as a person is understood only by devotees. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is competent to dissipate the darkness of the conditioned soul through His instructions in *Bhagavad-gītā*. He is the ocean of transcendental qualities and can be understood only by liberated persons freed from the bodily concept of life. By His causeless mercy, the Lord can rescue the conditioned soul from the material clutches and enable him to return home, back to Godhead, to become His personal associate. Nonetheless, a pure devotee does not aspire to go back to Godhead; he is simply satisfied with executing his service in this material world. A pure devotee does not ask anything from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His only prayer is to be freed from the material conception of life and to be engaged in the Lord’s transcendental loving service.”

In this way the King of the elephants, Gajendra, offered prayers directly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without mistaking Him for one of the demigods. None of the demigods came to see him, not even Brahmā or Śiva. Rather, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, seated on Garuḍa, personally appeared before him. Gajendra, by lifting his trunk, offered obeisances to the Lord, and the Lord immediately pulled him from the water along with the crocodile who had captured his leg. Then the Lord killed the crocodile and thus rescued Gajendra.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, the King of the elephants, Gajendra, fixed his mind in his heart with perfect intelligence and chanted a mantra which he had learned in his previous birth as Indradyumna and which he remembered by the grace of Kṛṣṇa.

2The King of the elephants, Gajendra, said: I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Person, Vāsudeva [om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya]. Because of Him this material body acts due to the presence of spirit, and He is therefore the root cause of everyone. He is worshipable for such exalted persons as Brahmā and Śiva, and He has entered the heart of every living being. Let me meditate upon Him.

3The Supreme Godhead is the supreme platform on which everything rests, the ingredient by which everything has been produced, and the person who has created and is the only cause of this cosmic manifestation. Nonetheless, He is different from the cause and the result. I surrender unto Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is self-sufficient in everything.

4The Supreme Personality of Godhead, by expanding His own energy, keeps this cosmic manifestation visible and again sometimes renders it invisible. He is both the supreme cause and the supreme result, the observer and the witness, in all circumstances. Thus He is transcendental to everything. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead give me protection.

5In due course of time, when all the causative and effective manifestations of the universe, including the planets and their directors and maintainers, are annihilated, there is a situation of dense darkness. Above this darkness, however, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I take shelter of His lotus feet.

6An artist onstage, being covered by attractive dresses and dancing with different movements, is not understood by his audience; similarly, the activities and features of the supreme artist cannot be understood even by the demigods or great sages, and certainly not by those who are unintelligent like animals. Neither the demigods and sages nor the unintelligent can understand the features of the Lord, nor can they express in words His actual position. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead give me protection.

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7Renunciants and great sages who see all living beings equally, who are friendly to everyone and who flawlessly practice in the forest the vows of brahmacarya, vānaprastha and sannyāsa desire to see the all-auspicious lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. May that same Supreme Personality of Godhead be my destination.

8-9The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no material birth, activities, name, form, qualities or faults. To fulfill the purpose for which this material world is created and destroyed, He comes in the form of a human being like Lord Rāma or Lord Kṛṣṇa by His original internal potency. He has immense potency, and in various forms, all free from material contamination, He acts wonderfully. He is therefore the Supreme Brahman. I offer my respects to Him.

10I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the self-effulgent Supersoul, who is the witness in everyone's heart, who enlightens the individual soul and who cannot be reached by exercises of the mind, words or consciousness.

11The Supreme Personality of Godhead is realized by pure devotees who act in the transcendental existence of bhakti-yoga. He is the bestower of uncontaminated happiness and is the master of the transcendental world. Therefore I offer my respect unto Him.

12I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Vāsudeva, who is all-pervading, to the Lord's fierce form as Lord Nṛsimhadeva, to the Lord's form as an animal [Lord Varāhadeva], to Lord Dattātreya, who preached impersonalism, to Lord Buddha, and to all the other incarnations. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who has no material qualities but who accepts the three qualities goodness, passion and ignorance within this material world. I also offer my respectful obeisances unto the impersonal Brahman effulgence.

13I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are the Supersoul, the superintendent of everything, and the witness of all that occurs. You are the Supreme Person, the origin of material nature and of the total material energy. You are also the owner of the material body. Therefore, You are the supreme complete. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

14My Lord, You are the observer of all the objectives of the senses. Without Your mercy, there is no possibility of solving the problem of doubts. The material world is just like a shadow resembling You. Indeed, one accepts this material world as real because it gives a glimpse of Your existence.

15My Lord, You are the cause of all causes, but You Yourself have no cause. Therefore You are the wonderful cause of everything. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are the shelter of the Vedic knowledge contained in the śāstras like the Paścārātras and Vedānta-sūtra, which are Your representations, and who are the source of the paramparā system. Because it is You who can give liberation, You are the only shelter for all transcendentalists. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

16My Lord, as the fire in araṇi wood is covered, You and Your unlimited knowledge are covered by the material modes of nature. Your mind, however, is not attentive to the activities of the modes of nature. Those who are advanced in spiritual knowledge are not subject to the regulative principles directed in the Vedic literatures. Because such advanced souls are transcendental, You personally appear in their pure minds. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

17Since an animal such as me has surrendered unto You, who are supremely liberated, certainly You will release me from this dangerous position. Indeed, being extremely merciful, You incessantly try to deliver me. By your partial feature as Paramātmā, You are situated in the hearts of all embodied beings. You are celebrated as direct transcendental knowledge, and

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You are unlimited. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

18My Lord, those who are completely freed from material contamination always meditate upon You within the cores of their hearts. You are extremely difficult to attain for those like me who are too attached to mental concoction, home, relatives, friends, money, servants and assistants. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, uncontaminated by the modes of nature. You are the reservoir of all enlightenment, the supreme controller. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

19After worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, those who are interested in the four principles of religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation obtain from Him what they desire. What then is to be said of other benedictions? Indeed, sometimes the Lord gives a spiritual body to such ambitious worshipers. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unlimitedly merciful, bestow upon me the benediction of liberation from this present danger and from the materialistic way of life.

20-21Unalloyed devotees, who have no desire other than to serve the Lord, worship Him in full surrender and always hear and chant about His activities, which are most wonderful and auspicious. Thus they always merge in an ocean of transcendental bliss. Such devotees never ask the Lord for any benediction. I, however, am in danger. Thus I pray to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternally existing, who is invisible, who is the Lord of all great personalities, such as Brahmā, and who is available only by transcendental bhakti-yoga. Being extremely subtle, He is beyond the reach of my senses and transcendental to all external realization. He is unlimited, He is the original cause, and He is completely full in everything. I offer my obeisances unto Him.

22-24The Supreme Personality of Godhead creates His minor parts and parcels, the jīva-tattva, beginning with Lord Brahmā, the demigods and the expansions of Vedic knowledge [Sāma, Ṛg, Yajur and Atharva] and including all other living entities, moving and nonmoving, with their different names and characteristics. As the sparks of a fire or the shining rays of the sun emanate from their source and merge into it again and again, the mind, the intelligence, the senses, the gross and subtle material bodies, and the continuous transformations of the different modes of nature all emanate from the Lord and again merge into Him. He is neither demigod nor demon, neither human nor bird or beast. He is not woman, man, or neuter, nor is He an animal. He is not a material quality, a fruitive activity, a manifestation or nonmanifestation. He is the last word in the discrimination of “not this, not this,” and He is unlimited. All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead!

25I do not wish to live anymore after I am released from the attack of the crocodile. What is the use of an elephant’s body covered externally and internally by ignorance? I simply desire eternal liberation from the covering of ignorance. That covering is not destroyed by the influence of time.

26Now, fully desiring release from material life, I offer my respectful obeisances unto that Supreme Person who is the creator of the universe, who is Himself the form of the universe and who is nonetheless transcendental to this cosmic manifestation. He is the supreme knower of everything in this world, the Supersoul of the universe. He is the unborn, supremely situated Lord. I offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

27I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme, the Supersoul, the master of all mystic yoga, who is seen in the core of the heart by perfect mystics when they are completely purified and freed from the reactions of fruitive activity by practicing bhakti-yoga.

28My Lord, You are the controller of formidable strength in three kinds of energy. You appear as the reservoir of all sense pleasure and the protector of the surrendered souls. You possess unlimited energy, but You are unapproachable by those who are unable to control their senses. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You again and again.

29I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose illusory energy the *jīva*, who is part and parcel of God, forgets his real identity because of the bodily concept of life. I take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose glories are difficult to understand.

30ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the King of the elephants was describing the supreme authority, without mentioning any particular person, he did not invoke the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Indra and Candra. Thus none of them approached him. However, because Lord Hari is the Supersoul, Puruṣottama, the Personality of Godhead, He appeared before Gajendra.

31After understanding the awkward condition of Gajendra, who had offered his prayers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who lives everywhere, appeared with the demigods, who were offering prayers to Him. Carrying His disc and other weapons, He appeared there on the back of His carrier, Garuḍa, with great speed, according to His desire. Thus He appeared before Gajendra.

32Gajendra had been forcefully captured by the crocodile in the water and was feeling acute pain, but when he saw that Nārāyaṇa, wielding His disc, was coming in the sky on the back of Garuḍa, he immediately took a lotus flower in his trunk, and with great difficulty due to his painful condition, he uttered the following words: “O my Lord, Nārāyaṇa, master of the universe, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.”

33Thereafter, seeing Gajendra in such an aggrieved position, the unborn Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, immediately got down from the back of Garuḍa by His causeless mercy and pulled the King of the elephants, along with the crocodile, out of the water. Then, in the presence of all the demigods, who were looking on, the Lord severed the crocodile’s mouth from its body with His disc. In this way He saved Gajendra, the King of the elephants.

SB 8.4: Gajendra Returns to the Spiritual World

This Fourth Chapter describes the previous birth of Gajendra and the crocodile. It tells how the crocodile became a Gandharva and how Gajendra became an associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

There was a king on the Gandharva planet whose name was Hūhū. Once this King Hūhū was enjoying with women in the water, and while enjoying he pulled the leg of Devala Ṛṣi, who was also taking a bath in the water. Upon this, the sage became very angry and immediately cursed him to become a crocodile. King Hūhū was very sorry when cursed in that way, and he begged pardon from the sage, who in compassion gave him the benediction that he would be freed when Gajendra was delivered by the Personality of Godhead. Thus the crocodile was delivered when killed by Nārāyaṇa.

When Gajendra, by the mercy of the Lord, became one of the Lord’s associates in Vaikuṅṭha, he got four hands. This achievement is called *sānīpya-mukti*, or the liberation of receiving a spiritual body exactly like that of Nārāyaṇa. Gajendra, in his previous birth, had been a great devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. His name was Indradyumna, and he was the King of the Tāmila country. Following the Vedic principles, this King retired from family life and constructed a small

cottage in the Malayācala Hills, where he always worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead in silence. Agastya Ṛṣi, along with many disciples, once approached King Indradyumna's *āśrama*, but because the King was meditating on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he could not receive Agastya Ṛṣi properly. Thus the *ṛṣi* became very angry and cursed the King to become a dull elephant. In accordance with this curse, the King was born as an elephant, and he forgot all about his previous activities in devotional service. Nonetheless, in his birth as an elephant, when he was dangerously attacked by the crocodile, he remembered his past life in devotional service and remembered a prayer he had learned in that life. Because of this prayer, he again received the mercy of the Lord. Thus he was immediately delivered, and he became one of the Lord's four-handed associates.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī ends this chapter by describing the good fortune of the elephant. Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that by hearing the narration of Gajendra's deliverance, one can also get the opportunity to be delivered. Śukadeva Gosvāmī vividly describes this, and thus the chapter ends.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the Lord delivered Gajendra, King of the elephants, all the demigods, sages and Gandharvas, headed by Brahmā and Śiva, praised this activity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and showered flowers upon both the Lord and Gajendra.

2There was a beating of kettledrums in the heavenly planets, the inhabitants of Gandharvaloka began to dance and sing, while great sages and the inhabitants of Cāraṇaloka and Siddhaloka offered prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Puruṣottama.

3-4The best of the Gandharvas, King Hūhū, having been cursed by Devala Muni, had become a crocodile. Now, having been delivered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he assumed a very beautiful form as a Gandharva. Understanding by whose mercy this had happened, he immediately offered his respectful obeisances with his head and began chanting prayers just suitable for the transcendental Lord, the supreme eternal, who is worshiped by the choicest verses.

5Having been favored by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and having regained his original form, King Hūhū circumambulated the Lord and offered his obeisances. Then, in the presence of all the demigods, headed by Brahmā, he returned to Gandharvaloka. He had been freed of all sinful reactions.

6Because Gajendra, King of the elephants, had been touched directly by the hands of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he was immediately freed of all material ignorance and bondage. Thus he received the salvation of *sārūpya-mukti*, in which he achieved the same bodily features as the Lord, being dressed in yellow garments and possessing four hands.

7This Gajendra had formerly been a Vaiṣṇava and the king of the country known as Pāṇḍya, which is in the province of Draviḍa [South India]. In his previous life, he was known as Indradyumna Mahārāja.

8Indradyumna Mahārāja retired from family life and went to the Malaya Hills, where he had a small cottage for his *āśrama*. He wore matted locks on his head and always engaged in austerities. Once, while observing a vow of silence, he was fully engaged in the worship of the Lord and absorbed in the ecstasy of love of Godhead.

9While Indradyumna Mahārāja was engaged in ecstatic meditation, worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the great sage Agastya Muni arrived there, surrounded by his disciples. When the Muni saw that Mahārāja Indradyumna, who was sitting in a secluded place, remained

silent and did not follow the etiquette of offering him a reception, he was very angry.

10Agastya Muni then spoke this curse against the King: This King Indradyumna is not at all gentle. Being low and uneducated, he has insulted a brāhmaṇa. May he therefore enter the region of darkness and receive the dull, dumb body of an elephant.

11-12Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, after Agastya Muni had thus cursed King Indradyumna, the Muni left that place along with his disciples. Since the King was a devotee, he accepted Agastya Muni's curse as welcome because it was the desire of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, although in his next life he got the body of an elephant, because of devotional service he remembered how to worship and offer prayers to the Lord.

13Upon delivering the King of the elephants from the clutches of the crocodile, and from material existence, which resembles a crocodile, the Lord awarded him the status of sārūpya-mukti. In the presence of the Gandharvas, the Siddhas and the other demigods, who were praising the Lord for His wonderful transcendental activities, the Lord, sitting on the back of His carrier, Garuḍa, returned to His all-wonderful abode and took Gajendra with Him.

14My dear King Parīkṣit, I have now described the wonderful power of Kṛṣṇa, as displayed when the Lord delivered the King of the elephants. O best of the Kuru dynasty, those who hear this narration become fit to be promoted to the higher planetary systems. Simply because of hearing this narration, they gain a reputation as devotees, they are unaffected by the contamination of Kali-yuga, and they never see bad dreams.

15Therefore, after getting up from bed in the morning, those who desire their own welfareespecially the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and in particular the brāhmaṇa Vaiṣṇavasshould chant this narration as it is, without deviation, to counteract the troubles of bad dreams.

16O best of the Kuru dynasty, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul of everyone, being thus pleased, addressed Gajendra in the presence of everyone there. He spoke the following blessings.

17-24The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Freed from all sinful reactions are those who rise from bed at the end of night, early in the morning, and fully concentrate their minds with great attention upon My form; your form; this lake; this mountain; the caves; the gardens; the cane plants; the bamboo plants; the celestial trees; the residential quarters of Me, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva; the three peaks of Trikūṭa Mountain, made of gold, silver and iron; My very pleasing abode [the Ocean of Milk]; the white island, Śvetadvīpa, which is always brilliant with spiritual rays; My mark of Śrīvatsa; the Kaustubha gem; My Vaijayantī garland; My club, Kaumodakī; My Sudarśana disc and Pāṣcajanya conchshell; My bearer, Garuḍa, the king of the birds; My bed, Śeṣa Nāga; My expansion of energy the goddess of fortune; Lord Brahmā; Nārada Muni; Lord Śiva; Prahlāda; My incarnations like Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha; My unlimited all-auspicious activities, which yield piety to he who hears them; the sun; the moon; fire; the mantra omkāra; the Absolute Truth; the total material energy; the cows and brāhmaṇas; devotional service; the wives of Soma and Kaśyapa, who are all daughters of King Dakṣa; the rivers Ganges, Sarasvatī, Nandā and Yamunā [Kālindī]; the elephant Airāvata; Dhruva Mahārāja; the seven ṛṣis; and the pious human beings.

25My dear devotee, unto those who rise from bed at the end of night and offer Me the prayers offered by you, I give an eternal residence in the spiritual world at the end of their lives.

26ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After giving this instruction, the Lord, who is known as

Hṛṣīkeśa, bugled with His Pāṣcajanya conchshell, in this way pleasing all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā. Then He mounted the back of His carrier, Garuḍa.

SB 8.5: The Demigods Appeal to the Lord for Protection

This chapter describes the fifth and sixth Manus, and it also describes the prayers of the demigods and the curse of Durvāsā Muni.

The brother of Tāmasa, the fourth Manu, who has previously been described, was the fifth Manu, Raivata. The sons of Raivata included Arjuna, Bali and Vindhya. During the reign of this Manu, Indra, the King of heaven, was known as Vibhu. Among the demigods were the Bhūtarayas, and among the seven *ṛṣi*s were Hiraṇyāromā, Vedaśirā and Ūrdhvabāhu. The *ṛṣi* known as Śubhra, by his wife, Vikuṅṭhā, gave birth to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vaikuṅṭha. This Supreme Personality of Godhead manifested a Vaikuṅṭha planet at the request of Ramādevī. His power and activities are mentioned in the Third Canto.

The sixth Manu was Cākṣuṣa, the son of Cakṣu Manu. Among the sons of the sixth Manu were Pūru, Pūruṣa and Sudyumna. During the reign of this Manu, Mantradruma was Indra, the King of the heavenly planets. Among the demigods were the Āpyas, and among the seven *ṛṣi*s were Haviṣmān and Vīraka. The wife of Vairāja, whose name was Devasambhūti, gave birth to Ajita, an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This Ajita, taking the shape of a tortoise and holding the mountain known as Mandara on His back, churned the ocean and produced nectar for the demigods.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit was very eager to hear about the churning of the ocean, and therefore Śukadeva Gosvāmī began to explain to him how the demigods, having been cursed by Durvāsā Muni, were defeated in battle by the *asuras*. When the demigods were deprived of their heavenly kingdom, they went to the assembly house of Lord Brahmā and informed Lord Brahmā of what had happened. Then Brahmā, along with all the demigods, went to the shore of the Ocean of Milk and offered prayers to Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, I have described to you the pastime of Gajendra-mokṣaṇa, which is most pious to hear. By hearing of such activities of the Lord, one can be freed from all sinful reactions. Now please listen as I describe Raivata Manu.

2The brother of Tāmasa Manu was the fifth Manu, named Raivata. His sons were headed by Arjuna, Bali and Vindhya.

3O King, in the millennium of Raivata Manu the King of heaven was known as Vibhu, among the demigods were the Bhūtarayas, and among the seven brāhmaṇas who occupied the seven planets were Hiraṇyāromā, Vedaśirā and Ūrdhvabāhu.

4From the combination of Śubhra and his wife, Vikuṅṭhā, there appeared the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vaikuṅṭha, along with demigods who were His personal plenary expansions.

5Just to please the goddess of fortune, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vaikuṅṭha, at her request, created another Vaikuṅṭha planet, which is worshiped by everyone.

6Although the great activities and transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's various incarnations are wonderfully described, sometimes we are unable to understand them. Yet everything is possible for Lord Viṣṇu. If one could count the atoms of the universe, then he could count the qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But no one

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can count the atoms of the universe, nor can anyone count the transcendental qualities of the Lord.

7The son of Cakṣu known as Cākṣuṣa was the sixth Manu. He had many sons, headed by Pūru, Pūruṣa and Sudyumna.

8During the reign of Cākṣuṣa Manu, the King of heaven was known as Mantradruma. Among the demigods were the Āpyas, and among the great sages were Haviṣmān and Vīraka.

9In this sixth manvantara millennium, Lord Viṣṇu, the master of the universe, appeared in His partial expansion. He was begotten by Vairāja in the womb of his wife, Devasambhūti, and His name was Ajita.

10By churning the Ocean of Milk, Ajita produced nectar for the demigods. In the form of a tortoise, He moved here and there, carrying on His back the great mountain known as Mandara.

11-12King Parīkṣit inquired: O great brāhmaṇa, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, why and how did Lord Viṣṇu churn the Ocean of Milk? For what reason did He stay in the water as a tortoise and hold up Mandara Mountain? How did the demigods obtain the nectar, and what other things were produced from the churning of the ocean? Kindly describe all these wonderful activities of the Lord.

13My heart, which is disturbed by the three miserable conditions of material life, is not yet sated with hearing you describe the glorious activities of the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of the devotees.

14Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: O learned brāhmaṇas assembled here at Naimiṣāraṇya, when Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Dvaipāyana, was thus questioned by the King, he congratulated the King and then endeavored to describe further the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

15-16Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the asuras, with their serpent weapons, severely attacked the demigods in a fight, many of the demigods fell and lost their lives. Indeed, they could not be revived. At that time, O King, the demigods had been cursed by Durvāsā Muni, the three worlds were poverty-stricken, and therefore ritualistic ceremonies could not be performed. The effects of this were very serious.

17-18Lord Indra, Varuṇa and the other demigods, seeing their lives in such a state, consulted among themselves, but they could not find any solution. Then all the demigods assembled and went together to the peak of Sumeru Mountain. There, in the assembly of Lord Brahmā, they fell down to offer Lord Brahmā their obeisances, and then they informed him of all the incidents that had taken place.

19-20Upon seeing that the demigods were bereft of all influence and strength and that the three worlds were consequently devoid of auspiciousness, and upon seeing that the demigods were in an awkward position whereas all the demons were flourishing, Lord Brahmā, who is above all the demigods and who is most powerful, concentrated his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus being encouraged, he became bright-faced and spoke to the demigods as follows.

21Lord Brahmā said: I, Lord Śiva, all of you demigods, the demons, the living entities born of perspiration, the living beings born of eggs, the trees and plants sprouting from the earth, and the living entities born from embryos all come from the Supreme Lord, from His incarnation of

rajo-guṇa [Lord Brahmā, the guṇa-avatāra] and from the great sages [ṛṣis] who are part of me. Let us therefore go to the Supreme Lord and take shelter of His lotus feet.

22For the Supreme Personality of Godhead there is no one to be killed, no one to be protected, no one to be neglected and no one to be worshiped. Nonetheless, for the sake of creation, maintenance and annihilation according to time, He accepts different forms as incarnations either in the mode of goodness, the mode of passion or the mode of ignorance.

23Now is the time to invoke the mode of goodness of the living entities who have accepted material bodies. The mode of goodness is meant to establish the Supreme Lord's rule, which will maintain the existence of the creation. Therefore, this is the opportune moment to take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because He is naturally very kind and dear to the demigods, He will certainly bestow good fortune upon us.

24O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, subduer of all enemies, after Lord Brahmā finished speaking to the demigods, he took them with him to the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which is beyond this material world. The Lord's abode is on an island called Śvetadvīpa, which is situated in the Ocean of Milk.

25There [at Śvetadvīpa], Lord Brahmā offered prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, even though he had never seen the Supreme Lord. Simply because Lord Brahmā had heard about the Supreme Personality of Godhead from Vedic literature, with a fixed mind he offered the Lord prayers as written or approved by Vedic literature.

26Lord Brahmā said: O Supreme Lord, O changeless, unlimited supreme truth. You are the origin of everything. Being all-pervading, You are in everyone's heart and also in the atom. You have no material qualities. Indeed, You are inconceivable. The mind cannot catch You by speculation, and words fail to describe You. You are the supreme master of everyone, and therefore You are worshipable for everyone. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

27The Supreme Personality of Godhead directly and indirectly knows how everything, including the living force, mind and intelligence, is working under His control. He is the illuminator of everything and has no ignorance. He does not have a material body subject to the reactions of previous activities, and He is free from the ignorance of partiality and materialistic education. I therefore take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, who is eternal, all-pervading and as great as the sky and who appears with six opulences in three yugas [Satya, Tretā and Dvāpara].

28In the cycle of material activities, the material body resembles the wheel of a mental chariot. The ten senses [five for working and five for gathering knowledge] and the five life airs within the body form the fifteen spokes of the chariot's wheel. The three modes of nature [goodness, passion and ignorance] are its center of activities, and the eight ingredients of nature [earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intelligence and false ego] comprise the rim of the wheel. The external, material energy moves this wheel like electrical energy. Thus the wheel revolves very quickly around its hub or central support, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul and the ultimate truth. We offer our respectful obeisances unto Him.

29The Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated in pure goodness [śuddha-sattva], and therefore He is eka-varṇathe omkāra [praṇava]. Because the Lord is beyond the cosmic manifestation, which is considered to be darkness, He is not visible to material eyes. Nonetheless, He is not separated from us by time or space, but is present everywhere. Seated on His carrier, Garuḍa, He is worshiped by means of mystical yogic power by those who have achieved freedom from agitation. Let us all offer our respectful obeisances unto Him.

30No one can overcome the Supreme Personality of Godhead's illusory energy [māyā], which is so strong that it bewilders everyone, making one lose the sense to understand the aim of life. That same māyā, however, is subdued by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who rules everyone and who is equally disposed toward all living entities. Let us offer our obeisances unto Him.

31Since our bodies are made of sattva-guṇa, we, the demigods, are internally and externally situated in goodness. All the great saints are also situated in that way. Therefore, if even we cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, what is to be said of those who are most insignificant in their bodily constitutions, being situated in the modes of passion and ignorance? How can they understand the Lord? Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Him.

32On this earth there are four kinds of living entities, who are all created by Him. The material creation rests on His lotus feet. He is the great Supreme Person, full of opulence and power. May He be pleased with us.

33The entire cosmic manifestation has emerged from water, and it is because of water that all living entities endure, live and develop. This water is nothing but the semen of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, may the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has such great potency, be pleased with us.

34Soma, the moon, is the source of food grains, strength and longevity for all the demigods. He is also the master of all vegetation and the source of generation for all living entities. As stated by learned scholars, the moon is the mind of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead, the source of all opulences, be pleased with us.

35Fire, which is born for the sake of accepting oblations in ritualistic ceremonies, is the mouth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Fire exists within the depths of the ocean to produce wealth, and fire is also present in the abdomen to digest food and produce various secretions for the maintenance of the body. May that supremely powerful Personality of Godhead be pleased with us.

36The sun-god marks the path of liberation, which is called arcirādi-vartma. He is the chief source for understanding of the Vedas, he is the abode where the Absolute Truth can be worshiped, he is the gateway to liberation, and he is the source of eternal life as well as the cause of death. The sun-god is the eye of the Lord. May that Supreme Lord, who is supremely opulent, be pleased with us.

37All living entities, moving and nonmoving, receive their vital force, their bodily strength and their very lives from the air. All of us follow the air for our vital force, exactly as servants follow an emperor. The vital force of air is generated from the original vital force of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. May that Supreme Lord be pleased with us.

38May the supremely powerful Personality of Godhead be pleased with us. The different directions are generated from His ears, the holes of the body come from His heart, and the vital force, the senses, the mind, the air within the body, and the ether, which is the shelter of the body, come from His navel.

39Mahendra, the King of Heaven, was generated from the prowess of the Lord, the demigods were generated from the mercy of the Lord, Lord Śiva was generated from the anger of the Lord, and Lord Brahmā from His sober intelligence. The Vedic mantras were generated from the bodily holes of the Lord, and the great saints and prajāpatis were generated from His genitals. May that supremely powerful Lord be pleased with us.

40The goddess of fortune was generated from His chest, the inhabitants of Pitṛloka from His shadow, religion from His bosom, and irreligion [the opposite of religion] from His back. The heavenly planets were generated from the top of His head, and the Apsarās from His sense enjoyment. May that supremely powerful Personality of Godhead be pleased with us.

41The brāhmaṇas and Vedic knowledge come from the mouth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the kṣatriyas and bodily strength come from His arms, the vaiśyas and their expert knowledge in productivity and wealth come from His thighs, and the śūdras, who are outside of Vedic knowledge, come from His feet. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is full in prowess, be pleased with us.

42Greed is generated from His lower lip, affection from His upper lip, bodily luster from His nose, animalistic lusty desires from His sense of touch, Yamarāja from His eyebrows, and eternal time from His eyelashes. May that Supreme Lord be pleased with us.

43All learned men say that the five elements, eternal time, fruitive activity, the three modes of material nature, and the varieties produced by these modes are all creations of yoga-māyā. This material world is therefore extremely difficult to understand, but those who are highly learned have rejected it. May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the controller of everything, be pleased with us.

44Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is completely silent, free from endeavor, and completely satisfied by His own achievements. He is not attached to the activities of the material world through His senses. Indeed, in performing His pastimes in this material world, He is just like the unattached air.

45O Supreme Personality of Godhead, we are surrendered unto You, yet we wish to see You. Please make Your original form and smiling lotus face visible to our eyes and appreciable to our other senses.

46O Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, by Your sweet will You appear in various incarnations, millennium after millennium, and act wonderfully, performing uncommon activities that would be impossible for us.

47Karmīs are always anxious to accumulate wealth for their sense gratification, but for that purpose they must work very hard. Yet even though they work hard, the results are not satisfying. Indeed, sometimes their work results only in frustration. But devotees who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord can achieve substantial results without working very hard. These results exceed the devotee's expectations.

48Activities dedicated to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, even if performed in small measure, never go in vain. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being the supreme father, is naturally very dear and always ready to act for the good of the living entities.

49When one pours water on the root of a tree, the trunk and branches of the tree are automatically pleased. Similarly, when one becomes a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu, everyone is served, for the Lord is the Supersoul of everyone.

50My Lord, all obeisances unto You, who are eternal, beyond time's limits of past, present and future. You are inconceivable in Your activities, You are the master of the three modes of material nature, and, being transcendental to all material qualities, You are free from material contamination. You are the controller of all three of the modes of nature, but at the present You are in favor of the quality of goodness. Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

SB 8.6: The Demigods and Demons Declare a Truce

This chapter describes how the Lord appeared before the demigods when they offered Him their prayers. Following the advice of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demigods executed a truce with the demons for the purpose of churning nectar from the sea.

Because of the prayers offered by the demigods in the previous chapter, Lord Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu was pleased with the demigods, and thus He appeared before them. The demigods were almost blinded by His transcendental bodily effulgence. At first, therefore, they could not even see any part of His body. After some time, however, when Brahmā could see the Lord, he, along with Lord Śiva, began to offer the Lord prayers.

Lord Brahmā said: “The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being beyond birth and death, is eternal. He has no material qualities. Yet He is the ocean of unlimited auspicious qualities. He is subtler than the most subtle, He is invisible, and His form is inconceivable. He is worshipable for all the demigods. Innumerable universes exist within His form, and therefore He is never separated from these universes by time, space or circumstances. He is the chief and the *pradhāna*. Although He is the beginning, the middle and the end of the material creation, the idea of pantheism conceived by Māyāvādī philosophers has no validity. The Supreme Personality of Godhead controls the entire material manifestation through His subordinate agent, the external energy. Because of His inconceivable transcendental position, He is always the master of the material energy. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His various forms, is always present even within this material world, but the material qualities cannot touch Him. One can understand His position only by His instructions, as given in *Bhagavad-gītā*.” As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10), *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ tam. Buddhi-yoga* means *bhakti-yoga*. Only through the process of *bhakti-yoga* can one understand the Supreme Lord.

When offered prayers by Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was pleased. Thus He gave appropriate instructions to all the demigods. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Ajita, unconquerable, advised the demigods to make a peace proposal to the demons, so that after formulating a truce, the demigods and demons could churn the Ocean of Milk. The rope would be the biggest serpent, known as Vāsuki, and the churning rod would be Mandara Mountain. Poison would also be produced from the churning, but it would be taken by Lord Śiva, and so there would be no need to fear it. Many other attractive things would be generated by the churning, but the Lord warned the demigods not to be captivated by such things. Nor should the demigods be angry if there were some disturbances. After advising the demigods in this way, the Lord disappeared from the scene.

Following the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demigods established a peace with Mahārāja Bali, the King of the demons. Then both the demons and the demigods started for the ocean, taking Mandara Mountain with them. Because of the great heaviness of the mountain, the demigods and demons became fatigued, and some of them actually died. Then the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, appeared there on the back of His carrier, Garuḍa, and by His mercy He brought these demigods and demons back to life. The Lord then lifted the mountain with one of His hands and placed it on the back of Garuḍa. The Lord sat on the mountain and was carried to the spot of the churning by Garuḍa, who placed the mountain near the sea. Then the Lord asked Garuḍa to leave that place because as long as Garuḍa was present, Vāsuki could not come there.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, being thus worshiped with prayers by the demigods and Lord Brahmā, appeared before them. His bodily effulgence resembled the simultaneous rising of thousands of suns.

2The vision of all the demigods was blocked by the Lord's effulgence. Thus they could see neither the sky, the directions, the land, nor even themselves, what to speak of seeing the Lord, who was present before them.

3-7Lord Brahmā, along with Lord Śiva, saw the crystal-clear personal beauty of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose blackish body resembles a marakata gem, whose eyes are reddish like the depths of a lotus, who is dressed with garments that are yellow like molten gold, and whose entire body is attractively decorated. They saw His beautiful, smiling, lotuslike face, crowned by a helmet bedecked with valuable jewels. The Lord has attractive eyebrows, and His cheeks are adorned with earrings. Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva saw the belt on the Lord's waist, the bangles on His arms, the necklace on His chest, and the ankle bells on His legs. The Lord is bedecked with flower garlands, His neck is decorated with the Kaustubha gem, and He carries with Him the goddess of fortune and His personal weapons, like His disc and club. When Lord Brahmā, along with Lord Śiva and the other demigods, thus saw the form of the Lord, they all immediately fell to the ground, offering their obeisances.

8Lord Brahmā said: Although You are never born, Your appearance and disappearance as an incarnation never cease. You are always free from the material qualities, and You are the shelter of transcendental bliss resembling an ocean. Eternally existing in Your transcendental form, You are the supreme subtle of the most extremely subtle. We therefore offer our respectful obeisances unto You, the Supreme, whose existence is inconceivable.

9O best of persons, O supreme director, those who actually aspire for supreme good fortune worship this form of Your Lordship according to the Vedic Tantras. My Lord, we can see all the three worlds in You.

10My dear Lord, who are always fully independent, this entire cosmic manifestation arises from You, rests upon You and ends in You. Your Lordship is the beginning, sustenance and end of everything, like the earth, which is the cause of an earthen pot, which supports the pot, and to which the pot, when broken, finally returns.

11O Supreme, You are independent in Your self and do not take help from others. Through Your own potency, You create this cosmic manifestation and enter into it. Those who are advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who are fully in knowledge of the authoritative śāstra, and who, through the practice of bhakti-yoga, are cleansed of all material contamination, can see with clear minds that although You exist within the transformations of the material qualities, Your presence is untouched by these qualities.

12As one can derive fire from wood, milk from the milk bag of the cow, food grains and water from the land, and prosperity in one's livelihood from industrial enterprises, so, by the practice of bhakti-yoga, even within this material world, one can achieve Your favor or intelligently approach You. Those who are pious all affirm this.

13Elephants afflicted by a forest fire become very happy when they get water from the Ganges. Similarly, O my Lord, from whose navel grows a lotus flower, since You have now appeared before us, we have become transcendently happy. By seeing Your Lordship, whom we have desired to see for a very long time, we have achieved our ultimate goal in life.

14My Lord, we, the various demigods, the directors of this universe, have come to Your lotus feet. Please fulfill the purpose for which we have come. You are the witness of everything, from within and without. Nothing is unknown to You, and therefore it is unnecessary to inform You again of anything.

15I [Lord Brahmā], Lord Śiva and all the demigods, accompanied by the prajāpatis like Dakṣa,

are nothing but sparks illuminated by You, who are the original fire. Since we are particles of You, what can we understand about our welfare? O Supreme Lord, please give us the means of deliverance that is suitable for the brāhmaṇas and demigods.

16Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the Lord was thus offered prayers by the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, He understood the purpose for which they had approached Him. Therefore, in a deep voice that resembled the rumbling of clouds, the Lord replied to the demigods, who all stood there attentively with folded hands.

17Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the demigods, was capable of performing the activities of the demigods by Himself, He wanted to enjoy pastimes in churning the ocean. Therefore He spoke as follows.

18The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and other demigods, please hear Me with great attention, for what I say will bring good fortune for all of you.

19As long as you are not flourishing, you should make a truce with the demons and asuras, who are now being favored by time.

20O demigods, fulfilling one's own interests is so important that one may even have to make a truce with one's enemies. For the sake of one's self-interest, one has to act according to the logic of the snake and the mouse.

21Immediately endeavor to produce nectar, which a person who is about to die may drink to become immortal.

22-23O demigods, cast into the Ocean of Milk all kinds of vegetables, grass, creepers and drugs. Then, with My help, making Mandara Mountain the churning rod and Vāsuki the rope for churning, churn the Ocean of Milk with undiverted attention. Thus the demons will be engaged in labor, but you, the demigods, will gain the actual result, the nectar produced from the ocean.

24My dear demigods, with patience and peace everything can be done, but if one is agitated by anger, the goal is not achieved. Therefore, whatever the demons ask, agree to their proposal.

25A poison known as kālakūṭa will be generated from the Ocean of Milk, but you should not fear it. And when various products are churned from the ocean, you should not be greedy for them or anxious to obtain them, nor should you be angry.

26Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, after advising the demigods in this way, the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all living entities, disappeared from their presence.

27Then Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, after offering their respectful obeisances to the Lord, returned to their abodes. All the demigods then approached Mahārāja Bali.

28Mahārāja Bali, a most celebrated king of the demons, knew very well when to make peace and when to fight. Thus although his commanders and captains were agitated and were about to kill the demigods, Mahārāja Bali, seeing that the demigods were coming to him without a militant attitude, forbade his commanders to kill them.

29The demigods approached Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana, and sat down near him. Bali Mahārāja was protected by the commanders of the demons and was most opulent, having conquered the entire universe.

30After pleasing Bali Mahārāja with mild words, Lord Indra, the King of the demigods, who was most intelligent, very politely submitted all the proposals he had learned from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu.

31The proposals submitted by King Indra were immediately accepted by Bali Mahārāja and his assistants, headed by Śambara and Ariṣṭanemi, and by all the other residents of Tripura.

32O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, chastiser of enemies, the demigods and the demons thereafter made an armistice between them. Then, with great enterprise, they arranged to produce nectar, as proposed by Lord Indra.

33Thereafter, with great strength, the demons and demigods, who were all very powerful and who had long, stout arms, uprooted Mandara Mountain. Crying very loudly, they brought it toward the Ocean of Milk.

34Because of conveying the great mountain for a long distance, King Indra, Mahārāja Bali and the other demigods and demons became fatigued. Being unable to carry the mountain, they left it on the way.

35The mountain known as Mandara, which was extremely heavy, being made of gold, fell and smashed many demigods and demons.

36The demigods and demons were frustrated and disheartened, and their arms, thighs and shoulders were broken. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who knows everything, appeared there on the back of His carrier, Garuḍa.

37Observing that most of the demons and the demigods had been crushed by the falling of the mountain, the Lord glanced over them and brought them back to life. Thus they became free from grief, and they even had no bruises on their bodies.

38The Lord very easily lifted the mountain with one hand and placed it on the back of Garuḍa. Then, He too got on the back of Garuḍa and went to the Ocean of Milk, surrounded by the demigods and demons.

39Thereafter, Garuḍa, the chief of birds, unloaded Mandara Mountain from his shoulder and brought it near the water. Then he was asked by the Lord to leave that place, and he left.

SB 8.7: Lord Śiva Saves the Universe by Drinking Poison

The summary of the Seventh Chapter is as follows. As described in this chapter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing in His incarnation as a tortoise, dove deep into the ocean to carry Mandara Mountain on His back. At first the churning of the ocean produced *kālakūṭa* poison. Everyone feared this poison, but Lord Śiva satisfied them by drinking it.

With the understanding that when the nectar was generated from the churning they would share it equally, the demigods and the demons brought Vāsuki to be used as the rope for the churning rod. By the expert arrangement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demons held the snake near the mouth, whereas the demigods held the tail of the great snake. Then, with great endeavor, they began pulling the snake in both directions. Because the churning rod, Mandara Mountain, was very heavy and was not held by any support in the water, it sank into the ocean, and in this way the prowess of both the demons and the demigods was vanquished. The Supreme Personality of Godhead then appeared in the form of a tortoise and supported Mandara Mountain on His back. Then the churning resumed with great force. As a result of the churning, a huge amount of poison was produced. The *prajāpatīs*, seeing no one

else to save them, approached Lord Śiva and offered him prayers full of truth. Lord Śiva is called Āśutoṣa because he is very pleased if one is a devotee. Therefore he easily agreed to drink all the poison generated by the churning. The goddess Durgā, Bhavānī, the wife of Lord Śiva, was not at all disturbed when Lord Śiva agreed to drink the poison, for she knew Lord Śiva's prowess. Indeed, she expressed her pleasure at this agreement. Then Lord Śiva gathered the devastating poison, which was everywhere. He took it in his hand and drank it. After he drank the poison, his neck became bluish. A small quantity of the poison dropped from his hands to the ground, and it is because of this poison that there are poisonous snakes, scorpions, toxic plants and other poisonous things in this world.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O best of the Kurus, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the demigods and demons summoned Vāsuki, king of the serpents, requesting him to come and promising to give him a share of the nectar. They coiled Vāsuki around Mandara Mountain as a churning rope, and with great pleasure they endeavored to produce nectar by churning the Ocean of Milk.

2 The Personality of Godhead, Ajita, grasped the front portion of the snake, and then the demigods followed.

3 The leaders of the demons thought it unwise to hold the tail, the inauspicious portion of the snake. Instead, they wanted to hold the front, which had been taken by the Personality of Godhead and the demigods, because that portion was auspicious and glorious. Thus the demons, on the plea that they were all highly advanced students of Vedic knowledge and were all famous for their birth and activities, protested that they wanted to hold the front of the snake.

4 Thus the demons remained silent, opposing the desire of the demigods. Seeing the demons and understanding their motive, the Personality of Godhead smiled. Without discussion, He immediately accepted their proposal by grasping the tail of the snake, and the demigods followed Him.

5 After thus adjusting how the snake was to be held, the sons of Kaśyapa, both demigods and demons, began their activities, desiring to get nectar by churning the Ocean of Milk.

6 O son of the Pāṇḍu dynasty, when Mandara Mountain was thus being used as a churning rod in the Ocean of Milk, it had no support, and therefore although held by the strong hands of the demigods and demons, it sank into the water.

7 Because the mountain had been sunk by the strength of providence, the demigods and demons were disappointed, and their faces seemed to shrivel.

8 Seeing the situation that had been created by the will of the Supreme, the unlimitedly powerful Lord, whose determination is infallible, took the wonderful shape of a tortoise, entered the water, and lifted the great Mandara Mountain.

9 When the demigods and demons saw that Mandara Mountain had been lifted, they were enlivened and encouraged to begin churning again. The mountain rested on the back of the great tortoise, which extended for eight hundred thousand miles like a large island.

10 O King, when the demigods and demons, by the strength of their arms, rotated Mandara Mountain on the back of the extraordinary tortoise, the tortoise accepted the rolling of the mountain as a means of scratching His body, and thus He felt a pleasing sensation.

11 Thereafter, Lord Viṣṇu entered the demons as the quality of passion, the demigods as the quality of goodness, and Vāsuki as the quality of ignorance to encourage them and increase

their various types of strength and energy.

12Manifesting Himself with thousands of hands, the Lord then appeared on the summit of Mandara Mountain, like another great mountain, and held Mandara Mountain with one hand. In the upper planetary systems, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, along with Indra, King of heaven, and other demigods, offered prayers to the Lord and showered flowers upon Him.

13The demigods and demons worked almost madly for the nectar, encouraged by the Lord, who was above and below the mountain and who had entered the demigods, the demons, Vāsuki and the mountain itself. Because of the strength of the demigods and demons, the Ocean of Milk was so powerfully agitated that all the alligators in the water were very much perturbed. Nonetheless the churning of the ocean continued in this way.

14Vāsuki had thousands of eyes and mouths. From his mouths he breathed smoke and blazing fire, which affected the demons, headed by Pauloma, Kāleya, Bali and Ilvala. Thus the demons, who appeared like sarala trees burned by a forest fire, gradually became powerless.

15Because the demigods were also affected by the blazing breath of Vāsuki, their bodily lusters diminished, and their garments, garlands, weapons and faces were blackened by smoke. However, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, clouds appeared on the sea, pouring torrents of rain, and breezes blew, carrying particles of water from the sea waves, to give the demigods relief.

16When nectar did not come from the Ocean of Milk, despite so much endeavor by the best of the demigods and demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Ajita, personally began to churn the ocean.

17The Lord appeared like a blackish cloud. He was dressed with yellow garments, His earrings shone on His ears like lightning, and His hair spread over His shoulders. He wore a garland of flowers, and His eyes were pinkish. With His strong, glorious arms, which award fearlessness throughout the universe, He took hold of Vāsuki and began churning the ocean, using Mandara Mountain as a churning rod. When engaged in this way, the Lord appeared like a beautifully situated mountain named Indranīla.

18The fish, sharks, tortoises and snakes were most agitated and perturbed. The entire ocean became turbulent, and even the large aquatic animals like whales, water elephants, crocodiles and timingila fish [large whales that can swallow small whales] came to the surface. While the ocean was being churned in this way, it first produced a fiercely dangerous poison called hālahala.

19O King, when that uncontrollable poison was forcefully spreading up and down in all directions, all the demigods, along with the Lord Himself, approached Lord Śiva [Sadāśiva]. Feeling unsheltered and very much afraid, they sought shelter of him.

20The demigods observed Lord Śiva sitting on the summit of Kailāsa Hill with his wife, Bhavānī, for the auspicious development of the three worlds. He was being worshiped by great saintly persons desiring liberation. The demigods offered him their obeisances and prayers with great respect.

21The prajāpatis said: O greatest of all demigods, Mahādeva, Supersoul of all living entities and cause of their happiness and prosperity, we have come to the shelter of your lotus feet. Now please save us from this fiery poison, which is spreading all over the three worlds.

22O lord, you are the cause of bondage and liberation of the entire universe because you are

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its ruler. Those who are advanced in spiritual consciousness surrender unto you, and therefore you are the cause of mitigating their distresses, and you are also the cause of their liberation. We therefore worship Your Lordship.

23O lord, you are self-effulgent and supreme. You create this material world by your personal energy, and you assume the names Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara when you act in creation, maintenance and annihilation.

24You are the cause of all causes, the self-effulgent, inconceivable, impersonal Brahman, which is originally Parabrahman. You manifest various potencies in this cosmic manifestation.

25O lord, you are the original source of Vedic literature. You are the original cause of material creation, the life force, the senses, the five elements, the three modes and the mahat-tattva. You are eternal time, determination and the two religious systems called truth [satya] and truthfulness [ṛta]. You are the shelter of the syllable om, which consists of three letters a-u-m.

26O father of all planets, learned scholars know that fire is your mouth, the surface of the globe is your lotus feet, eternal time is your movement, all the directions are your ears, and Varuṇa, master of the waters, is your tongue.

27O lord, the sky is your navel, the air is your breathing, the sun is your eyes, and the water is your semen. You are the shelter of all kinds of living entities, high and low. The god of the moon is your mind, and the upper planetary system is your head.

28O lord, you are the three Vedas personified. The seven seas are your abdomen, and the mountains are your bones. All drugs, creepers and vegetables are the hairs on your body, the Vedic mantras like Gāyatrī are the seven layers of your body, and the Vedic religious system is the core of your heart.

29O lord, the five important Vedic mantras are represented by your five faces, from which the thirty-eight most celebrated Vedic mantras have been generated. Your Lordship, being celebrated as Lord Śiva, is self-illuminated. You are directly situated as the supreme truth, known as Paramātmā.

30O lord, your shadow is seen in irreligion, which brings about varieties of irreligious creations. The three modes of nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—are your three eyes. All the Vedic literatures, which are full of verses, are emanations from you because their compilers wrote the various scriptures after receiving your glance.

31O Lord Girīśa, since the impersonal Brahman effulgence is transcendental to the material modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, the various directors of this material world certainly cannot appreciate it or even know where it is. It is not understandable even to Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu or the King of heaven, Mahendra.

32When annihilation is performed by the flames and sparks emanating from your eyes, the entire creation is burned to ashes. Nonetheless, you do not know how this happens. What then is to be said of your destroying the Dakṣa-yaṅga, Tripurāsura and the kālakūṭa poison? Such activities cannot be subject matters for prayers offered to you.

33Exalted, self-satisfied persons who preach to the entire world think of your lotus feet constantly within their hearts. However, when persons who do not know your austerity see you moving with Umā, they misunderstand you to be lusty, or when they see you wandering in the crematorium they mistakenly think that you are ferocious and envious. Certainly they are shameless. They cannot understand your activities.

34Even personalities like Lord Brahmā and other demigods cannot understand your position, for you are beyond the moving and nonmoving creation. Since no one can understand you in truth, how can one offer you prayers? It is impossible. As far as we are concerned, we are creatures of Lord Brahmā's creation. Under the circumstances, therefore, we cannot offer you adequate prayers, but as far as our ability allows, we have expressed our feelings.

35O greatest of all rulers, your actual identity is impossible for us to understand. As far as we can see, your presence brings flourishing happiness to everyone. Beyond this, no one can appreciate your activities. We can see this much, and nothing more.

36Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Lord Śiva is always benevolent toward all living entities. When he saw that the living entities were very much disturbed by the poison, which was spreading everywhere, he was very compassionate. Thus he spoke to his eternal consort, Satī, as follows.

37Lord Śiva said: My dear Bhavānī, just see how all these living entities have been placed in danger because of the poison produced from the churning of the Ocean of Milk.

38It is my duty to give protection and safety to all living entities struggling for existence. Certainly it is the duty of the master to protect his suffering dependents.

39People in general, being bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are always engaged in animosity toward one another. But devotees, even at the risk of their own temporary lives, try to save them.

40My dear gentle wife Bhavānī, when one performs benevolent activities for others, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is very pleased. And when the Lord is pleased, I am also pleased, along with all other living creatures. Therefore, let me drink this poison, for all the living entities may thus become happy because of me.

41Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After informing Bhavānī in this way, Lord Śiva began to drink the poison, and Bhavānī, who knew perfectly well the capabilities of Lord Śiva, gave him her permission to do so.

42Thereafter, Lord Śiva, who is dedicated to auspicious, benevolent work for humanity, compassionately took the whole quantity of poison in his palm and drank it.

43As if in defamation, the poison born from the Ocean of Milk manifested its potency by marking Lord Śiva's neck with a bluish line. That line, however, is now accepted as an ornament of the Lord.

44It is said that great personalities almost always accept voluntary suffering because of the suffering of people in general. This is considered the highest method of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present in everyone's heart.

45Upon hearing of this act, everyone, including Bhavānī [the daughter of Mahārāja Dakṣa], Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu, and the people in general, very highly praised this deed performed by Lord Śiva, who is worshiped by the demigods and who bestows benedictions upon the people.

46Scorpions, cobras, poisonous drugs and other animals whose bites are poisonous took the opportunity to drink whatever little poison had fallen and scattered from Lord Śiva's hand while he was drinking.

This chapter describes how the goddess of fortune appeared during the churning of the Ocean of Milk and how she accepted Lord Viṣṇu as her husband. As described later in the chapter, when Dhanvantari appeared with a pot of nectar the demons immediately snatched it from him, but Lord Viṣṇu appeared as the incarnation Mohinī, the most beautiful woman in the world, just to captivate the demons and save the nectar for the demigods.

After Lord Śiva drank all the poison, both the demigods and demons took courage and resumed their activities of churning. Because of this churning, first a *surabhi* cow was produced. Great saintly persons accepted this cow to derive clarified butter from its milk and offer this clarified butter in oblations for great sacrifices. Thereafter, a horse named Uccaiḥśravā was generated. This horse was taken by Bali Mahārāja. Then there appeared Airāvata and other elephants that could go anywhere in any direction, and she-elephants also appeared. The gem known as Kaustubha was also generated, and Lord Viṣṇu took that gem and placed it on His chest. Thereafter, a *pārijāta* flower and the Apsarās, the most beautiful women in the universe, were generated. Then the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, appeared. The demigods, great sages, Gandharvas and others offered her their respectful worship. The goddess of fortune could not find anyone to accept as her husband. At last she selected Lord Viṣṇu to be her master. Lord Viṣṇu gave her a place to stay everlastingly at His chest. Because of this combination of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa, all who were present, including the demigods and people in general, were very pleased. The demons, however, being neglected by the goddess of fortune, were very depressed. Then Vāruṇī, the goddess of drinking, was generated, and by the order of Lord Viṣṇu the demons accepted her. Then the demons and demigods, with renewed energy, began to churn again. This time a partial incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu called Dhanvantari appeared. He was very beautiful, and he carried a jug containing nectar. The demons immediately snatched the jug from Dhanvantari's hand and began to run away, and the demigods, being very morose, took shelter of Viṣṇu. After the demons snatched the jug from Dhanvantari, they began to fight among themselves. Lord Viṣṇu solaced the demigods, who therefore did not fight, but remained silent. While the fighting was going on among the demons, the Lord Himself appeared as the incarnation Mohinī, the most beautiful woman in the universe.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Upon Lord Śiva's drinking the poison, both the demigods and the demons, being very pleased, began to churn the ocean with renewed vigor. As a result of this, there appeared a cow known as surabhi.

2O King Parīkṣit, great sages who were completely aware of the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies took charge of that surabhi cow, which produced all the yogurt, milk and ghee absolutely necessary for offering oblations into the fire. They did this just for the sake of pure ghee, which they wanted for the performance of sacrifices to elevate themselves to the higher planetary systems, up to Brahmaloaka.

3Thereafter, a horse named Uccaiḥśravā, which was as white as the moon, was generated. Bali Mahārāja desired to possess this horse, and Indra, the King of heaven, did not protest, for he had previously been so advised by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

4As the next result of the churning, the king of elephants, named Airāvata, was generated. This elephant was white, and with its four tusks it defied the glories of Kailāsa Mountain, the glorious abode of Lord Śiva.

5Thereafter, O King, eight great elephants, which could go in any direction, were generated. They were headed by Airāvata. Eight she-elephants, headed by Abhramu, were also generated.

6Generated thereafter from the great ocean were the celebrated gems Kaustubha-maṇi and

Padmarāga-maṇi. Lord Viṣṇu, to decorate His chest, desired to possess them. Generated next was the pārijāta flower, which decorates the celestial planets. O King, as you fulfill the desires of everyone on this planet by fulfilling all ambitions, the pārijāta fulfills the desires of everyone.

7Next there appeared the Apsarās [who are used as prostitutes on the heavenly planets]. They were fully decorated with golden ornaments and lockets and were dressed in fine and attractive clothing. The Apsarās move very slowly in an attractive style that bewilders the inhabitants of the heavenly planets.

8Then there appeared the goddess of fortune, Ramā, who is absolutely dedicated to being enjoyed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. She appeared like electricity, surpassing the lightning that might illuminate a marble mountain.

9Because of her exquisite beauty, her bodily features, her youth, her complexion and her glories, everyone, including the demigods, the demons and the human beings, desired her. They were attracted because she is the source of all opulences.

10The King of heaven, Indra, brought a suitable sitting place for the goddess of fortune. All the rivers of sacred water, such as the Ganges and Yamunā, personified themselves, and each of them brought pure water in golden waterpots for mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune.

11The land became a person and collected all the drugs and herbs needed for installing the Deity. The cows delivered five products, namely milk, yogurt, ghee, urine and cow dung, and spring personified collected everything produced in spring, during the months of Caitra and Vaiśākha [April and May].

12The great sages performed the bathing ceremony of the goddess of fortune as directed in the authorized scriptures, the Gandharvas chanted all-auspicious Vedic mantras, and the professional women dancers very nicely danced and sang authorized songs prescribed in the Vedas.

13The clouds in personified form beat various types of drums, known as mṛdaṅgas, paṇavas, murajas and ānakas. They also blew conchshells and bugles known as gomukhas and played flutes and stringed instruments. The combined sound of these instruments was tumultuous.

14Thereafter, the great elephants from all the directions carried big water jugs full of Ganges water and bathed the goddess of fortune, to the accompaniment of Vedic mantras chanted by learned brāhmaṇas. While thus being bathed, the goddess of fortune maintained her original style, with a lotus flower in her hand, and she appeared very beautiful. The goddess of fortune is the most chaste, for she does not know anyone but the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

15The ocean, which is the source of all valuable jewels, supplied the upper and lower portions of a yellow silken garment. The predominating deity of the water, Varuṇa, presented flower garlands surrounded by six-legged bumblebees, drunken with honey.

16Viśvakarmā, one of the prajāpatis, supplied varieties of decorated ornaments. The goddess of learning, Sarasvatī, supplied a necklace, Lord Brahmā supplied a lotus flower, and the inhabitants of Nāgaloka supplied earrings.

17Thereafter, mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, having been properly celebrated with an auspicious ritualistic ceremony, began moving about, holding in her hand a garland of lotus flowers, which were surrounded by humming bumblebees. Smiling with shyness, her cheeks decorated by her earrings, she looked extremely beautiful.

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18 Her two breasts, which were symmetrical and nicely situated, were covered with sandalwood pulp and kuṅkuma powder, and her waist was very thin. As she walked here and there, her ankle bells jingling softly, she appeared like a creeper of gold.

19 While walking among the Gandharvas, Yakṣas, asuras, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and denizens of heaven, Lakṣmīdevī, the goddess of fortune, was scrutinizingly examining them, but she could not find anyone naturally endowed with all good qualities. None of them was devoid of faults, and therefore she could not take shelter of any of them.

20 The goddess of fortune, examining the assembly, thought in this way: Someone who has undergone great austerity has not yet conquered anger. Someone possesses knowledge, but he has not conquered material desires. Someone is a very great personality, but he cannot conquer lusty desires. Even a great personality depends on something else. How, then, can he be the supreme controller?

21 Someone may possess full knowledge of religion but still not be kind to all living entities. In someone, whether human or demigod, there may be renunciation, but that is not the cause of liberation. Someone may possess great power and yet be unable to check the power of eternal time. Someone else may have renounced attachment to the material world, yet he cannot compare to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, no one is completely freed from the influence of the material modes of nature.

22 Someone may have longevity but not have auspiciousness or good behavior. Someone may have both auspiciousness and good behavior, but the duration of his life is not fixed. Although such demigods as Lord Śiva have eternal life, they have inauspicious habits like living in crematoriums. And even if others are well qualified in all respects, they are not devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

23 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: In this way, after full deliberation, the goddess of fortune accepted Mukunda as her husband because although He is independent and not in want of her, He possesses all transcendental qualities and mystic powers and is therefore the most desirable.

24 Approaching the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the goddess of fortune placed upon His shoulders the garland of newly grown lotus flowers, which was surrounded by humming bumblebees searching for honey. Then, expecting to get a place on the bosom of the Lord, she remained standing by His side, her face smiling in shyness.

25 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the father of the three worlds, and His bosom is the residence of mother Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, the proprietor of all opulences. The goddess of fortune, by her favorable and merciful glance, can increase the opulence of the three worlds, along with their inhabitants and their directors, the demigods.

26 The inhabitants of Gandharvaloka and Cāraṇaloka then took the opportunity to play their musical instruments, such as conchshells, bugles and drums. They began dancing and singing along with their wives.

27 Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, the great sage Aṅgirā, and similar directors of universal management showered flowers and chanted mantras indicating the transcendental glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

28 All the demigods, along with the prajāpatis and their descendants, being blessed by Lakṣmī's glance upon them, were immediately enriched with good behavior and transcendental qualities. Thus they were very much satisfied.

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29O King, because of being neglected by the goddess of fortune, the demons and Rākṣasas were depressed, bewildered and frustrated, and thus they became shameless.

30Next appeared Vāruṇī, the lotus-eyed goddess who controls drunkards. With the permission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the demons, headed by Bali Mahārāja, took possession of this young girl.

31O King, thereafter, while the sons of Kaśyapa, both demons and demigods, were engaged in churning the Ocean of Milk, a very wonderful male person appeared.

32He was strongly built; his arms were long, stout and strong; his neck, which was marked with three lines, resembled a conchshell; his eyes were reddish; and his complexion was blackish. He was very young, he was garlanded with flowers, and his entire body was fully decorated with various ornaments.

33He was dressed in yellow garments and wore brightly polished earrings made of pearls. The tips of his hair were anointed with oil, and his chest was very broad. His body had all good features, he was stout and strong like a lion, and he was decorated with bangles. In his hand he carried a jug filled to the top with nectar.

34This person was Dhanvantari, a plenary portion of a plenary portion of Lord Viṣṇu. He was very conversant with the science of medicine, and as one of the demigods he was permitted to take a share in sacrifices.

35Upon seeing Dhanvantari carrying the jug of nectar, the demons, desiring the jug and its contents, immediately snatched it away by force.

36When the jug of nectar was carried off by the demons, the demigods were morose. Thus they sought shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari.

37When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always desires to fulfill the ambitions of His devotees, saw that the demigods were morose, He said to them, “Do not be aggrieved. By My own energy I shall bewilder the demons by creating a quarrel among them. In this way I shall fulfill your desire to have the nectar.”

38O King, a quarrel then arose among the demons over who would get the nectar first. Each of them said, “You cannot drink it first. I must drink it first. Me first, not you!”

39-40Some of the demons said, “All the demigods have taken part in churning the Ocean of Milk. Now, as everyone has an equal right to partake in any public sacrifice, according to the eternal religious system it is befitting that the demigods now have a share of the nectar.” O King, in this way the weaker demons forbade the stronger demons to take the nectar.

41-46The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who can counteract any unfavorable situation, then assumed the form of an extremely beautiful woman. This incarnation as a woman, Mohinī-mūrti, was most pleasing to the mind. Her complexion resembled in color a newly grown blackish lotus, and every part of Her body was beautifully situated. Her ears were equally decorated with earrings, Her cheeks were very beautiful, Her nose was raised and Her face full of youthful luster. Her large breasts made Her waist seem very thin. Attracted by the aroma of Her face and body, bumblebees hummed around Her, and thus Her eyes were restless. Her hair, which was extremely beautiful, was garlanded with mallikā flowers. Her attractively constructed neck was decorated with a necklace and other ornaments, Her arms were decorated with bangles, Her body was covered with a clean sari, and Her breasts seemed like islands in an ocean of beauty. Her legs were decorated with ankle bells. Because of the

movements of Her eyebrows as She smiled with shyness and glanced over the demons, all the demons were saturated with lusty desires, and every one of them desired to possess Her.

SB 8.9: The Lord Incarnates as Mohinī-Mūrti

This chapter describes how the demons, being enchanted by the beauty of the Mohinī form, agreed to hand over the container of nectar to Mohinīdevī, who tactfully delivered it to the demigods.

When the demons got possession of the container of nectar, an extraordinarily beautiful young woman appeared before them. All the demons became captivated by the young woman's beauty and became attached to Her. Now, because the demons were fighting among themselves to possess the nectar, they selected this beautiful woman as a mediator to settle their quarrel. Taking advantage of their weakness in this regard, Mohinī, the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, got the demons to promise that whatever decision She might give, they would not refuse to accept it. When the demons made this promise, the beautiful woman, Mohinī-mūrti, had the demigods and demons sit in different lines so that She could distribute the nectar. She knew that the demons were quite unfit to drink the nectar. Therefore, by cheating them She distributed all the nectar to the demigods. When the demons saw this cheating of Mohinī-mūrti, they remained silent. But one demon, named Rāhu, dressed himself like a demigod and sat down in the line of the demigods. He sat beside the sun and the moon. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead understood how Rāhu was cheating, He immediately cut off the demon's head. Rāhu, however, had already tasted the nectar, and therefore although his head was severed, he remained alive. After the demigods finished drinking the nectar, the Supreme Personality of Godhead assumed His own form. Śukadeva Gosvāmī ends this chapter by describing how powerful is the chanting of the holy names, pastimes and paraphernalia of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thereafter, the demons became inimical toward one another. Throwing and snatching the container of nectar, they gave up their friendly relationship. Meanwhile, they saw a very beautiful young woman coming forward toward them.

2Upon seeing the beautiful woman, the demons said, "Alas, how wonderful is Her beauty, how wonderful the luster of Her body, and how wonderful the beauty of Her youthful age!" Speaking in this way, they quickly approached Her, full of lusty desires to enjoy Her, and began to inquire from Her in many ways.

3O wonderfully beautiful girl, You have such nice eyes, resembling the petals of a lotus flower. Who are You? Where do You come from? What is Your purpose in coming here, and to whom do You belong? O You whose thighs are extraordinarily beautiful, our minds are becoming agitated simply because of seeing You.

4What to speak of human beings, even the demigods, demons, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Cāraṇas and the various directors of the universe, the Prajāpatīs, have never touched You before. It is not that we are unable to understand Your identity.

5O beautiful girl with beautiful eyebrows, certainly Providence, by His causeless mercy, has sent You to please the senses and minds of all of us. Is this not a fact?

6We are now all engaged in enmity among ourselves because of this one subject matter the container of nectar. Although we have been born in the same family, we are becoming increasingly inimical. O thin-waisted woman, who are so beautiful in Your prestigious position, we therefore request You to favor us by settling our dispute.

7All of us, both demons and demigods, have been born of the same father, Kaśyapa, and thus we are related as brothers. But now we are exhibiting our personal prowess in dissension. Therefore we request You to settle our dispute and divide the nectar equally among us.

8Having thus been requested by the demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of a beautiful woman, began to smile. Looking at them with attractive feminine gestures, She spoke as follows.

9The Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the form of Mohinī, told the demons: O sons of Kaśyapa Muni, I am only a prostitute. How is it that you have so much faith in Me? A learned person never puts his faith in a woman.

10Demons, as monkeys, jackals and dogs are unsteady in their sexual relationships and want newer and newer friends every day, women who live independently seek new friends daily. Friendship with such a woman is never permanent. This is the opinion of learned scholars.

11ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After the demons heard the words of Mohinī-mūrti, who had spoken as if jokingly, they were all very confident. They laughed with gravity, and ultimately they delivered the container of nectar into Her hands.

12Thereafter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, having taken possession of the container of nectar, smiled slightly and spoke in attractive words. She said: My dear demons, if you accept whatever I may do, whether honest or dishonest, then I can take responsibility for dividing the nectar among you.

13The chiefs of the demons were not very expert in deciding things. Upon hearing the sweet words of Mohinī-mūrti, they immediately assented. “Yes,” they answered. “What You have said is all right.” Thus the demons agreed to accept Her decision.

14-15The demigods and demons then observed a fast. After bathing, they offered clarified butter and oblations into the fire and gave charity to the cows and to the brāhmaṇas and members of the other orders of society, namely the kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, who were all rewarded as they deserved. Thereafter, the demigods and demons performed ritualistic ceremonies under the directions of the brāhmaṇas. Then they dressed themselves with new garments according to their own choice, decorated their bodies with ornaments, and sat facing east on seats made of kuśa grass.

16-17O King, as the demigods and demons sat facing east in an arena fully decorated with flower garlands and lamps and fragrant with the smoke of incense, that woman, dressed in a most beautiful sari, Her ankle bells tinkling, entered the arena, walking very slowly because of Her big, low hips. Her eyes were restless due to youthful pride, Her breasts were like water jugs, Her thighs resembled the trunks of elephants, and She carried a waterpot in Her hand.

18Her attractive nose and cheeks and Her ears, adorned with golden earrings, made Her face very beautiful. As She moved, Her sari’s border on Her breasts moved slightly aside. When the demigods and demons saw these beautiful features of Mohinī-mūrti, who was glancing at them and slightly smiling, they were all completely enchanted.

19Demons are by nature crooked like snakes. Therefore, to distribute a share of the nectar to them was not at all feasible, since this would be as dangerous as supplying milk to a snake. Considering this, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who never falls down, did not deliver a share of nectar to the demons.

20The Supreme Personality of Godhead as Mohinī-mūrti, the master of the universe, arranged

separate lines of sitting places and seated the demigods and demons according to their positions.

21 Taking the container of nectar in Her hands, She first approached the demons, satisfied them with sweet words and thus cheated them of their share of the nectar. Then She administered the nectar to the demigods, who were sitting at a distant place, to make them free from invalidity, old age and death.

22 O King, since the demons had promised to accept whatever the woman did, whether just or unjust, now, to keep this promise, to show their equilibrium and to save themselves from fighting with a woman, they remained silent.

23 The demons had developed affection for Mohinī-mūrti and a kind of faith in Her, and they were afraid of disturbing their relationship. Therefore they showed respect and honor to Her words and did not say anything that might disturb their friendship with Her.

24 Rāhu, the demon who causes eclipses of the sun and moon, covered himself with the dress of a demigod and thus entered the assembly of the demigods and drank nectar without being detected by anyone, even by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The moon and the sun, however, because of permanent animosity toward Rāhu, understood the situation. Thus Rāhu was detected.

25 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, using His disc, which was sharp like a razor, at once cut off Rāhu's head. When Rāhu's head was severed from his body, the body, being untouched by the nectar, could not survive.

26 Rāhu's head, however, having been touched by the nectar, became immortal. Thus Lord Brahmā accepted Rāhu's head as one of the planets. Since Rāhu is an eternal enemy of the moon and the sun, he always tries to attack them on the nights of the full moon and the dark moon.

27 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the best friend and well-wisher of the three worlds. Thus when the demigods had almost finished drinking the nectar, the Lord, in the presence of all the demons, disclosed His original form.

28 The place, the time, the cause, the purpose, the activity and the ambition were all the same for both the demigods and the demons, but the demigods achieved one result and the demons another. Because the demigods are always under the shelter of the dust of the Lord's lotus feet, they could very easily drink the nectar and get its result. The demons, however, not having sought shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord, were unable to achieve the result they desired.

29 In human society there are various activities performed for the protection of one's wealth and life by one's words, one's mind and one's actions, but they are all performed for one's personal or extended sense gratification with reference to the body. All these activities are baffled because of being separate from devotional service. But when the same activities are performed for the satisfaction of the Lord, the beneficial results are distributed to everyone, just as water poured on the root of a tree is distributed throughout the entire tree.

SB 8.10: The Battle Between the Demigods and the Demons

The summary of Chapter Ten is as follows. Because of envy, the fight between the demons and the demigods continued. When the demigods were almost defeated by demoniac maneuvers and became morose, Lord Viṣṇu appeared among them.

Both the demigods and the demons are expert in activities involving the material energy, but

the demigods are devotees of the Lord, whereas the demons are just the opposite. The demigods and demons churned the Ocean of Milk to get nectar from it, but the demons, not being devotees of the Lord, could derive no profit. After feeding nectar to the demigods, Lord Viṣṇu returned to His abode on the back of Garuḍa, but the demons, being most aggrieved, again declared war against the demigods. Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana, became the commander in chief of the demons. In the beginning of the battle, the demigods prepared to defeat the demons. Indra, King of heaven, fought with Bali, and other demigods, like Vāyu, Agni and Varuṇa, fought against other leaders of the demons. In this fight the demons were defeated, and to save themselves from death they began to manifest many illusions through material maneuvers, killing many soldiers on the side of the demigods. The demigods, finding no other recourse, surrendered again to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who then appeared and counteracted all the illusions presented by the jugglery of the demons. Heroes among the demons such as Kālanemi, Mālī, Sumālī and Mālyavān fought the Supreme Personality of Godhead and were all killed by the Lord. The demigods were thus freed from all dangers.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, the demons and Daityas all engaged with full attention and effort in churning the ocean, but because they were not devotees of Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, they were not able to drink the nectar.

2O King, after the Supreme Personality of Godhead had brought to completion the affairs of churning the ocean and feeding the nectar to the demigods, who are His dear devotees, He left the presence of them all and was carried by Garuḍa to His own abode.

3Seeing the victory of the demigods, the demons became intolerant of their superior opulence. Thus they began to march toward the demigods with raised weapons.

4Thereafter, being enlivened because of drinking the nectar, the demigods, who are always at the shelter of the lotus feet of Nārāyaṇa, used their various weapons to counterattack the demons in a fighting spirit.

5O King, a fierce battle on the beach of the Ocean of Milk ensued between the demigods and the demons. The fighting was so terrible that simply hearing about it would make the hair on one's body stand on end.

6Both parties in that fight were extremely angry at heart, and in enmity they beat one another with swords, arrows and varieties of other weapons.

7The sounds of the conchshells, bugles, drums, bherīs and ḍamarīs [kettledrums], as well as the sounds made by the elephants, horses and soldiers, who were both on chariots and on foot, were tumultuous.

8On that battlefield, the charioteers fought with the opposing charioteers, the infantry soldiers with the opposing infantry, the soldiers on horseback with the opposing soldiers on horseback, and the soldiers on the backs of elephants with the enemy soldiers on elephants. In this way, the fighting took place between equals.

9Some soldiers fought on the backs of camels, some on the backs of elephants, some on asses, some on white-faced and red-faced monkeys, some on tigers and some on lions. In this way, they all engaged in fighting.

10-12O King, some soldiers fought on the backs of vultures, eagles, ducks, hawks and bhāsa birds. Some fought on the backs of timiṅgilas, which can devour huge whales, some on the backs of śarabhas, and some on buffalo, rhinoceroses, cows, bulls, jungle cows and aruṇas.

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Others fought on the backs of jackals, rats, lizards, rabbits, human beings, goats, black deer, swans and boars. In this way, mounted on animals of the water, land and sky, including animals with deformed bodies, both armies faced each other and went forward.

13-15 O King, O descendant of Mahārāja Pāṇḍu, the soldiers of both the demigods and demons were decorated by canopies, colorful flags, and umbrellas with handles made of valuable jewels and pearls. They were further decorated by fans made of peacock feathers and by other fans also. The soldiers, their upper and lower garments waving in the breeze, naturally looked very beautiful, and in the light of the glittering sunshine their shields, ornaments and sharp, clean weapons appeared dazzling. Thus the ranks of soldiers seemed like two oceans with bands of aquatics.

16-18 For that battle the most celebrated commander in chief, Mahārāja Bali, son of Virocana, was seated on a wonderful airplane named Vaihāyasa. O King, this beautifully decorated airplane had been manufactured by the demon Maya and was equipped with weapons for all types of combat. It was inconceivable and indescribable. Indeed, it was sometimes visible and sometimes not. Seated in this airplane under a beautiful protective umbrella and being fanned by the best of cāmaras, Mahārāja Bali, surrounded by his captains and commanders, appeared just like the moon rising in the evening, illuminating all directions.

19-24 Surrounding Mahārāja Bali on all sides were the commanders and captains of the demons, sitting on their respective chariots. Among them were the following demons: Namuci, Śambara, Bāṇa, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Dvimūrdhā, Kālanābha, Praheti, Heti, Ilvala, Śakuni, Bhūtasantāpa, Vajradamṣṭra, Virocana, Hayagrīva, Śaṅkuśirā, Kapila, Meghadundubhi, Tāraka, Cakradṛk, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Jambha, Utkala, Ariṣṭa, Ariṣṭanemi, Tripurādhīpa, Maya, the sons of Puloma, the Kāleyas and Nivātakavaca. All of these demons had been deprived of their share of the nectar and had shared merely in the labor of churning the ocean. Now, they fought against the demigods, and to encourage their armies, they made a tumultuous sound like the roaring of lions and blew loudly on conchshells. Balabhit, Lord Indra, upon seeing this situation of his ferocious rivals, became extremely angry.

25 Sitting on Airāvata, an elephant who can go anywhere and who holds water and wine in reserve for showering, Lord Indra looked just like the sun rising from Udayagiri, where there are reservoirs of water.

26 Surrounding Lord Indra, King of heaven, were the demigods, seated on various types of vehicles and decorated with flags and weapons. Present among them were Vāyu, Agni, Varuṇa and other rulers of various planets, along with their associates.

27 The demigods and demons came before each other and reproached one another with words piercing to the heart. Then they drew near and began fighting face to face in pairs.

28 O King, Mahārāja Bali fought with Indra, Kārttikeya with Tāraka, Varuṇa with Heti, and Mitra with Praheti.

29 Yamarāja fought with Kālanābha, Viśvakarmā with Maya Dānava, Tvaṣṭā with Śambara, and the sun-god with Virocana.

30-31 The demigod Aparājita fought with Namuci, and the two Aśvinī-kumāra brothers fought with Vṛṣaparvā. The sun-god fought with the one hundred sons of Mahārāja Bali, headed by Bāṇa, and the moon-god fought with Rāhu. The demigod controlling air fought with Puloma, and Śumbha and Niśumbha fought the supremely powerful material energy, Durgādevī, who is called Bhadra Kālī.

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32-34O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, suppressor of enemies [Arindama], Lord Śiva fought with Jambha, and Vibhāvasu fought with Mahiṣāsura. Ilvala, along with his brother Vātāpi, fought the sons of Lord Brahmā. Durmarṣa fought with Cupid, the demon Utkala with the Mātrkā demigoddesses, Bṛhaspati with Śukrācārya, and Śanaīścara [Saturn] with Narakāsura. The Maruts fought Nivātakavaca, the Vasus fought the Kālakeya demons, the Viśvedeva demigods fought the Pauloma demons, and the Rudras fought the Krodhavaśa demons, who were victims of anger.

35All of these demigods and demons assembled on the battlefield with a fighting spirit and attacked one another with great strength. All of them desiring victory, they fought in pairs, hitting one another severely with sharpened arrows, swords and lances.

36They severed one another's heads, using weapons like bhuṣuṅḍis, cakras, clubs, ṛṣtis, paṭṭiśas, śaktis, ulmukas, prāsas, paraśvadhās, nistriṃśas, lances, parighas, mudgaras and bhindipālas.

37The elephants, horses, chariots, charioteers, infantry soldiers and various kinds of carriers, along with their riders, were slashed to pieces. The arms, thighs, necks and legs of the soldiers were severed, and their flags, bows, armor and ornaments were torn apart.

38Because of the impact on the ground of the legs of the demons and demigods and the wheels of the chariots, particles of dust flew violently into the sky and made a dust cloud that covered all directions of outer space, as far as the sun. But when the particles of dust were followed by drops of blood being sprinkled all over space, the dust cloud could no longer float in the sky.

39In the course of the battle, the warfield became strewn with the severed heads of heroes, their eyes still staring and their teeth still pressed against their lips in anger. Helmets and earrings were scattered from these severed heads. Similarly, many arms, decorated with ornaments and clutching various weapons, were strewn here and there, as were many legs and thighs, which resembled the trunks of elephants.

40Many headless trunks were generated on that battlefield. With weapons in their arms, those ghostly trunks, which could see with the eyes in the fallen heads, attacked the enemy soldiers.

41Mahārāja Bali then attacked Indra with ten arrows and attacked Airāvata, Indra's carrier elephant, with three arrows. With four arrows he attacked the four horsemen guarding Airāvata's legs, and with one arrow he attacked the driver of the elephant.

42Before Bali Mahārāja's arrows could reach him, Indra, King of heaven, who is expert in dealing with arrows, smiled and counteracted the arrows with arrows of another type, known as bhalla, which were extremely sharp.

43When Bali Mahārāja saw the expert military activities of Indra, he could not restrain his anger. Thus he took up another weapon, known as śakti, which blazed like a great firebrand. But Indra cut that weapon to pieces while it was still in Bali's hand.

44Thereafter, one by one, Bali Mahārāja used a lance, prāsa, tomara, ṛṣtis and other weapons, but whatever weapons he took up, Indra immediately cut them to pieces.

45My dear King, Bali Mahārāja then disappeared and resorted to demoniac illusions. A giant mountain, generated from illusion, then appeared above the heads of the demigod soldiers.

46From that mountain fell trees blazing in a forest fire. Chips of stone, with sharp edges like picks, also fell and smashed the heads of the demigod soldiers.

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47Scorpions, large snakes and many other poisonous animals, as well as lions, tigers, boars and great elephants, all began falling upon the demigod soldiers, crushing everything.

48O my King, many hundreds of male and female carnivorous demons, completely naked and carrying tridents in their hands, then appeared, crying the slogans “Cut them to pieces! Pierce them!”

49Fierce clouds, harassed by strong winds, then appeared in the sky. Rumbling very gravely with the sound of thunder, they began to shower live coals.

50A great devastating fire created by Bali Mahārāja began burning all the soldiers of the demigods. This fire, accompanied by blasting winds, seemed as terrible as the Sāmvartaka fire, which appears at the time of dissolution.

51Thereafter, whirlpools and sea waves, agitated by fierce blasts of wind, appeared everywhere, before everyone’s vision, in a furious flood.

52While this magical atmosphere in the fight was being created by the invisible demons, who were expert in such illusions, the soldiers of the demigods became morose.

53O King, when the demigods could find no way to counteract the activities of the demons, they wholeheartedly meditated upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the universe, who then immediately appeared.

54The Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose eyes resemble the petals of a newly blossomed lotus, sat on the back of Garuḍa, spreading His lotus feet over Garuḍa’s shoulders. Dressed in yellow, decorated by the Kaustubha gem and the goddess of fortune, and wearing an invaluable helmet and earrings, the Supreme Lord, holding various weapons in His eight hands, became visible to the demigods.

55As the dangers of a dream cease when the dreamer awakens, the illusions created by the jugglery of the demons were vanquished by the transcendental prowess of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as soon as He entered the battlefield. Indeed, simply by remembrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one becomes free from all dangers.

56O King, when the demon Kālanemi, who was carried by a lion, saw that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, carried by Garuḍa, was on the battlefield, the demon immediately took his trident, whirled it and discharged it at Garuḍa’s head. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the master of the three worlds, immediately caught the trident, and with the very same weapon he killed the enemy Kālanemi, along with his carrier, the lion.

57Thereafter, two very powerful demons named Mālī and Sumālī were killed by the Supreme Lord, who severed their heads with His disc. Then Mālyavān, another demon, attacked the Lord. With his sharp club, the demon, who was roaring like a lion, attacked Garuḍa, the lord of the birds, who are born from eggs. But the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original person, used His disc to cut off the head of that enemy also.

SB 8.11: King Indra Annihilates the Demons

As described in this chapter, the great saint Nārada Muni, being very compassionate to the demons who had been killed by the demigods, forbade the demigods to continue killing. Then Śukrācārya, by his mystic power, renewed the lives of all the demons.

Having been graced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demigods began fighting the demons again, with renewed energy. King Indra released his thunderbolt against Bali, and

when Bali fell, his friend Jambhāsura attacked Indra, who then cut off Jambhāsura’s head with his thunderbolt. When Nārada Muni learned that Jambhāsura had been killed, he informed Jambhāsura’s relatives Namuci, Bala and Pāka, who then went to the battlefield and attacked the demigods. Indra, King of heaven, severed the heads of Bala and Pāka and released the weapon known as *kulīśa*, the thunderbolt, against Namuci’s shoulder. The thunderbolt, however, returned unsuccessful, and thus Indra became morose. At that time, an unseen voice came from the sky. The voice declared, “A dry or wet weapon cannot kill Namuci.” Hearing this voice, Indra began to think of how Namuci could be killed. He then thought of foam, which is neither moist nor dry. Using a weapon of foam, he was able to kill Namuci. Thus Indra and the other demigods killed many demons. Then, at the request of Lord Brahmā, Nārada went to the demigods and forbade them to kill the demons any longer. All the demigods then returned to their abodes. Following the instructions of Nārada, whatever demons remained alive on the battlefield took Bali Mahārāja to Asta Mountain. There, by the touch of Śukrācārya’s hand, Bali Mahārāja regained his senses and consciousness, and those demons whose heads and bodies had not been completely lost were brought back to life by the mystic power of Śukrācārya.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thereafter, by the supreme grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, all the demigods, headed by Indra and Vāyu, were brought back to life. Being enlivened, the demigods began severely beating the very same demons who had defeated them before.

2When the most powerful Indra became angry and took his thunderbolt in hand to kill Mahārāja Bali, the demons began lamenting, “Alas, alas!”

3Sober and tolerant and well equipped with paraphernalia for fighting, Bali Mahārāja moved before Indra on the great battlefield. King Indra, who always carries the thunderbolt in his hand, rebuked Bali Mahārāja as follows.

4Indra said: O rascal, as a cheater sometimes binds the eyes of a child and takes away his possessions, you are trying to defeat us by displaying some mystic power, although you know that we are the masters of all such mystic powers.

5Those fools and rascals who want to ascend to the upper planetary system by mystic power or mechanical means, or who endeavor to cross even the upper planets and achieve the spiritual world or liberation, I cause to be sent to the lowest region of the universe.

6Today, with my thunderbolt, which has hundreds of sharp edges, I, the same powerful person, shall sever your head from your body. Although you can produce so much jugglery through illusion, you are endowed with a poor fund of knowledge. Now, try to exist on this battlefield with your relatives and friends.

7Bali Mahārāja replied: All those present on this battlefield are certainly under the influence of eternal time, and according to their prescribed activities, they are destined to receive fame, victory, defeat and death, one after another.

8Seeing the movements of time, those who are cognizant of the real truth neither rejoice nor lament for different circumstances. Therefore, because you are jubilant due to your victory, you should be considered not very learned.

9You demigods think that your own selves are the cause of your attaining fame and victory. Because of your ignorance, saintly persons feel sorry for you. Therefore, although your words afflict the heart, we do not accept them.

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10Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After thus rebuking Indra, King of heaven, with sharp words, Bali Mahārāja, who could subdue any other hero, drew back to his ear the arrows known as nārācas and attacked Indra with these arrows. Then he again chastised Indra with strong words.

11Since Mahārāja Bali's rebukes were truthful, King Indra did not at all become sorry, just as an elephant beaten by its driver's rod does not become agitated.

12When Indra, the defeater of enemies, released his infallible thunderbolt scepter at Bali Mahārāja with a desire to kill him, Bali Mahārāja indeed fell to the ground with his airplane, like a mountain with its wings cut off.

13When the demon Jambhāsura saw that his friend Bali had fallen, he appeared before Indra, the enemy, just to serve Bali Mahārāja with friendly behavior.

14The greatly powerful Jambhāsura, carried by a lion, approached Indra and forcefully struck him on the shoulder with his club. He also struck Indra's elephant.

15Being beaten by Jambhāsura's club, Indra's elephant was confused and aggrieved. Thus it touched its knees to the ground and fell unconscious.

16Thereafter, Mātali, Indra's chariot driver, brought Indra's chariot, which was drawn by one thousand horses. Indra then left his elephant and got onto the chariot.

17Appreciating Mātali's service, Jambhāsura, the best of the demons, smiled. Nonetheless, he struck Mātali in the battle with a trident of blazing fire.

18Although the pain was extremely severe, Mātali tolerated it with great patience. Indra, however, became extremely angry at Jambhāsura. He struck Jambhāsura with his thunderbolt and thus severed his head from his body.

19When Nārada Ṛṣi informed Jambhāsura's friends and relatives that Jambhāsura had been killed, the three demons named Namuci, Bala and Pāka arrived on the battlefield in great haste.

20Rebuking Indra with harsh, cruel words that were piercing to the heart, these demons showered him with arrows, just as torrents of rain wash a great mountain.

21Quickly handling the situation on the battlefield, the demon Bala put all of Indra's one thousand horses into tribulation by simultaneously piercing them all with an equal number of arrows.

22Pāka, another demon, attacked both the chariot, with all its paraphernalia, and the chariot driver, Mātali, by fitting two hundred arrows to his bow and releasing them all simultaneously. This was indeed a wonderful act on the battlefield.

23Then Namuci, another demon, attacked Indra and injured him with fifteen very powerful golden-feathered arrows, which roared like a cloud full of water.

24Other demons covered Indra, along with his chariot and chariot driver, with incessant showers of arrows, just as clouds cover the sun in the rainy season.

25The demigods, being severely oppressed by their enemies and being unable to see Indra on the battlefield, were very anxious. Having no captain or leader, they began lamenting like traders in a wrecked vessel in the midst of the ocean.

26Thereafter, Indra released himself from the cage of the network of arrows. Appearing with

his chariot, flag, horses and chariot driver and thus pleasing the sky, the earth and all directions, he shone effulgently like the sun at the end of night. Indra was bright and beautiful in the vision of everyone.

27When Indra, who is known as Vajra-dhara, the carrier of the thunderbolt, saw his own soldiers so oppressed by the enemies on the battlefield, he became very angry. Thus he took up his thunderbolt to kill the enemies.

28O King Parīkṣit, King Indra used his thunderbolt to cut off the heads of both Bala and Pāka in the presence of all their relatives and followers. In this way he created a very fearful atmosphere on the battlefield.

29O King, when Namuci, another demon, saw the killing of both Bala and Pāka, he was full of grief and lamentation. Thus he angrily made a great attempt to kill Indra.

30Being angry and roaring like a lion, the demon Namuci took up a steel spear, which was bound with bells and decorated with ornaments of gold. He loudly cried, "Now you are killed!" Thus coming before Indra to kill him, Namuci released his weapon.

31O King, when Indra, King of heaven, saw this very powerful spear falling toward the ground like a blazing meteor, he immediately cut it to pieces with his arrows. Then, being very angry, he struck Namuci's shoulder with his thunderbolt to cut off Namuci's head.

32Although King Indra hurled his thunderbolt at Namuci with great force, it could not even pierce his skin. It is very wonderful that the famed thunderbolt that had pierced the body of Vṛtrāsura could not even slightly injure the skin of Namuci's neck.

33When Indra saw the thunderbolt return from the enemy, he was very much afraid. He began to wonder whether this had happened because of some miraculous superior power.

34Indra thought: Formerly, when many mountains flying in the sky with wings would fall to the ground and kill people, I cut their wings with this same thunderbolt.

35Vṛtrāsura was the essence of the austerities undergone by Tvaṣṭā, yet the thunderbolt killed him. Indeed, not only he but also many other stalwart heroes, whose very skin could not be injured even by all kinds of weapons, were killed by the same thunderbolt.

36But now, although the same thunderbolt has been released against a less important demon, it has been ineffectual. Therefore, although it was as good as a brahmāstra, it has now become useless like an ordinary rod. I shall therefore hold it no longer.

37Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: While the morose Indra was lamenting in this way, an ominous, unembodied voice said from the sky, "This demon Namuci is not to be annihilated by anything dry or moist."

38The voice also said, "O Indra, because I have given this demon the benediction that he will never be killed by any weapon that is dry or moist, you have to think of another way to kill him."

39After hearing the ominous voice, Indra, with great attention, began to meditate on how to kill the demon. He then saw that foam would be the means, for it is neither moist nor dry.

40Thus Indra, King of heaven, severed Namuci's head with a weapon of foam, which was neither dry nor moist. Then all the sages satisfied Indra, the exalted personality, by showering flowers and garlands upon him, almost covering him.

41Viśvāvasu and Parāvasu, the two chiefs of the Gandharvas, sang in great happiness. The kettledrums of the demigods sounded, and the Apsarās danced in jubilation.

42Vāyu, Agni, Varuṇa and other demigods began killing the demons who opposed them, just as lions kill deer in a forest.

43O King, when Lord Brahmā saw the imminent total annihilation of the demons, he sent a message with Nārada, who went before the demigods to make them stop fighting.

44The great sage Nārada said: All of you demigods are protected by the arms of Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by His grace you have gotten the nectar. By the grace of the goddess of fortune, you are glorious in every way. Therefore, please stop this fighting.

45ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Accepting the words of Nārada, the demigods gave up their anger and stopped fighting. Being praised by their followers, they returned to their heavenly planets.

46Following the order of Nārada Muni, whatever demons remained on the battlefield took Bali Mahārāja, who was in a precarious condition, to the hill known as Astagiri.

47There, on that hill, Śukrācārya brought to life all the dead demoniac soldiers who had not lost their heads, trunks and limbs. He achieved this by his own mantra, known as Saṁjīvanī.

48Bali Mahārāja was very experienced in universal affairs. When he regained his senses and memory by the grace of Śukrācārya, he could understand everything that had happened. Therefore, although he had been defeated, he did not lament.

SB 8.12: The Mohinī-mūrti Incarnation Bewilders Lord Śiva

This chapter describes how Lord Śiva was bewildered upon seeing the beautiful Mohinī-mūrti incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and how he later came to his senses. When Lord Śiva heard about the pastimes performed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, in the form of an attractive woman, he mounted his bull and went to see the Lord. Accompanied by his wife, Umā, and his servants, the *bhūta-gaṇa*, or ghosts, he approached the lotus feet of the Lord. Lord Śiva offered obeisances to the Supreme Lord as the all-pervading Lord, the universal form, the supreme controller of creation, the Supersoul, the resting place for everyone, and the completely independent cause of all causes. Thus he offered prayers giving truthful descriptions of the Lord. Then he expressed his desire. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is very kind to His devotees. Therefore, to fulfill the desire of His devotee Lord Śiva, He expanded His energy and manifested Himself in the form of a very beautiful and attractive woman. Upon seeing this form, even Lord Śiva was captivated. Later, by the grace of the Lord, he controlled himself. This demonstrates that by the power of the Lord's external energy, everyone is captivated by the form of woman in this material world. Again, however, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can overcome the influence of *māyā*. This was evinced by Lord Śiva, the topmost devotee of the Lord. First he was captivated, but later, by the grace of the Lord, he restrained himself. It is declared in this connection that only a pure devotee can restrain himself from the attractive feature of *māyā*. Otherwise, once a living entity is trapped by the external feature of *māyā*, he cannot overcome it. After Lord Śiva was graced by the Supreme Lord, he circumambulated the Lord along with his wife, Bhavānī, and his companions, the ghosts. Then he left for his own abode. Śukadeva Gosvāmī concludes this chapter by describing the transcendental qualities of Uttamaśloka, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by declaring that one can glorify the Lord by nine kinds of devotional service, beginning with *śravaṇam kīrtanam*.

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1-2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, in the form of a woman, captivated the demons and enabled the demigods to drink the nectar. After hearing of these pastimes, Lord Śiva, who is carried by a bull, went to the place where Madhusūdana, the Lord, resides. Accompanied by his wife, Umā, and surrounded by his companions, the ghosts, Lord Śiva went there to see the Lord's form as a woman.

3The Supreme Personality of Godhead welcomed Lord Śiva and Umā with great respect, and after being seated comfortably, Lord Śiva duly worshiped the Lord and smilingly spoke as follows.

4Lord Mahādeva said: O chief demigod among the demigods, O all-pervading Lord, master of the universe, by Your energy You are transformed into the creation. You are the root and efficient cause of everything. You are not material. Indeed, You are the Supersoul or supreme living force of everything. Therefore, You are Parameśvara, the supreme controller of all controllers.

5The manifest, the unmanifest, false ego and the beginning, maintenance and annihilation of this cosmic manifestation all come from You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But because You are the Absolute Truth, the supreme absolute spirit soul, the Supreme Brahman, such changes as birth, death and sustenance do not exist in You.

6Pure devotees or great saintly persons who desire to achieve the highest goal in life and who are completely free from all material desires for sense gratification engage constantly in the transcendental service of Your lotus feet.

7My Lord, You are the Supreme Brahman, complete in everything. Being completely spiritual, You are eternal, free from the material modes of nature, and full of transcendental bliss. Indeed, for You there is no question of lamentation. Since You are the supreme cause, the cause of all causes, nothing can exist without You. Yet we are different from You in a relationship of cause and effect, for in one sense the cause and effect are different. You are the original cause of creation, manifestation and annihilation, and You bestow benedictions upon all living entities. Everyone depends upon You for the results of his activities, but You are always independent.

8My dear Lord, Your Lordship alone is the cause and the effect. Therefore, although You appear to be two, You are the absolute one. As there is no difference between the gold of a golden ornament and the gold in a mine, there is no difference between cause and effect; both of them are the same. Only because of ignorance do people concoct differences and dualities. You are free from material contamination, and since the entire cosmos is caused by You and cannot exist without You, it is an effect of Your transcendental qualities. Thus the conception that Brahman is true and the world false cannot be maintained.

9Those who are known as the impersonalist Vedāntists regard You as the impersonal Brahman. Others, known as the Mīmāṃsaka philosophers, regard You as religion. The Sāṅkhya philosophers regard You as the transcendental person who is beyond prakṛti and puruṣa and who is the controller of even the demigods. The followers of the codes of devotional service known as the Paścaraṅtras regard You as being endowed with nine different potencies. And the Patañjala philosophers, the followers of Patañjali Muni, regard You as the supreme independent Personality of Godhead, who has no equal or superior.

10O my Lord, I, who am considered to be the best of the demigods, and Lord Brahmā and the great ṛṣis, headed by Maṛīci, are born of the mode of goodness. Nonetheless, we are bewildered by Your illusory energy and cannot understand what this creation is. Aside from us,

what is to be said of others, like the demons and human beings, who are in the base modes of material nature [rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa]? How will they know You?

11My Lord, You are the supreme knowledge personified. You know everything about this creation and its beginning, maintenance and annihilation, and You know all the endeavors made by the living entities, by which they are either implicated in this material world or liberated from it. As the air enters the vast sky and also enters the bodies of all moving and nonmoving entities, You are present everywhere, and therefore You are the knower of all.

12My Lord, I have seen all kinds of incarnations You have exhibited by Your transcendental qualities, and now that You have appeared as a beautiful young woman, I wish to see that form of Your Lordship.

13My Lord, we have come here desiring to see that form of Your Lordship which You showed to the demons to captivate them completely and in this way enable the demigods to drink nectar. I am very eager to see that form.

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Lord Viṣṇu was thus requested by Lord Śiva, who carries a trident in his hand, He smiled with gravity and replied to Lord Śiva as follows.

15The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: When the demons took away the jug of nectar, I assumed the form of a beautiful woman to bewilder them by directly cheating them and thus to act in the interest of the demigods.

16O best of the demigods, I shall now show you My form that is very much appreciated by those who are lusty. Since you want to see that form, I shall reveal it in your presence.

17Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After speaking in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, immediately disappeared, and Lord Śiva remained there with Umā, looking for Him all around with moving eyes.

18Thereafter, in a nice forest nearby, full of trees with reddish-pink leaves and varieties of flowers, Lord Śiva saw a beautiful woman playing with a ball. Her hips were covered with a shining sari and ornamented with a belt.

19Because the ball was falling down and bouncing up, as She played with it Her breasts trembled, and because of the weight of those breasts and Her heavy flower garlands, Her waist appeared to be all but breaking at every step, as Her two soft feet, which were reddish like coral, moved here and there.

20The woman's face was decorated by broad, beautiful, restless eyes, which moved as the ball bounced here and there from Her hand. The two brilliant earrings on Her ears decorated Her shining cheeks like bluish reflections, and the hair scattered on Her face made Her even more beautiful to see.

21As She played with the ball, the sari covering Her body became loose, and Her hair scattered. She tried to bind Her hair with Her beautiful left hand, and at the same time She played with the ball by striking it with Her right hand. This was so attractive that the Supreme Lord, by His internal potency, in this way captivated everyone.

22While Lord Śiva observed the beautiful woman playing with the ball, She sometimes glanced at him and slightly smiled in bashfulness. As he looked at the beautiful woman and She watched him, he forgot both himself and Umā, his most beautiful wife, as well as his associates nearby.

23When the ball leaped from Her hand and fell at a distance, the woman began to follow it, but as Lord Śiva observed these activities, a breeze suddenly blew away the fine dress and belt that covered her.

24Thus Lord Śiva saw the woman, every part of whose body was beautifully formed, and the beautiful woman also looked at him. Therefore, thinking that She was attracted to him, Lord Śiva became very much attracted to Her.

25Lord Śiva, his good sense taken away by the woman because of lusty desires to enjoy with Her, became so mad for Her that even in the presence of Bhavānī he did not hesitate to approach Her.

26The beautiful woman was already naked, and when She saw Lord Śiva coming toward Her, She became extremely bashful. Thus She kept smiling, but She hid Herself among the trees and did not stand in one place.

27His senses being agitated, Lord Śiva, victimized by lusty desires, began to follow Her, just as a lusty elephant follows a she-elephant.

28After following Her with great speed, Lord Śiva caught Her by the braid of Her hair and dragged Her near him. Although She was unwilling, he embraced Her with his arms.

29-30Being embraced by Lord Śiva like a female elephant embraced by a male, the woman, whose hair was scattered, swirled like a snake. O King, this woman, who had large, high hips, was a woman of yoga-māyā presented by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. She released Herself somehow or other from the fond embrace of Lord Śiva's arms and ran away.

31As if harassed by an enemy in the form of lusty desires, Lord Śiva followed the path of Lord Viṣṇu, who acts very wonderfully and who had taken the form of Mohinī.

32Just as a maddened bull elephant follows a female elephant who is able to conceive pregnancy, Lord Śiva followed the beautiful woman and discharged semen, even though his discharge of semen never goes in vain.

33O King, wheresoever on the surface of the globe fell the semen of the great personality of Lord Śiva, mines of gold and silver later appeared.

34Following Mohinī, Lord Śiva went everywhere near the shores of the rivers and lakes, near the mountains, near the forests, near the gardens, and wherever there lived great sages.

35O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of kings, when Lord Śiva had fully discharged semen, he could see how he himself had been victimized by the illusion created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus he restrained himself from any further māyā.

36Thus Lord Śiva could understand his position and that of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has unlimited potencies. Having reached this understanding, he was not at all surprised by the wonderful way Lord Viṣṇu had acted upon him.

37Seeing Lord Śiva unagitated and unashamed, Lord Viṣṇu [Madhusūdana] was very pleased. Thus He resumed His original form and spoke as follows.

38The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best of the demigods, although you have been amply harassed because of My potency in assuming the form of a woman, you are established in your position. Therefore, may all good fortune be upon you.

39My dear Lord Śambhu, who within this material world but you can surpass My illusory energy? People are generally attached to sense enjoyment and conquered by its influence. Indeed, the influence of material nature is very difficult for them to surmount.

40The material, external energy [māyā], who cooperates with Me in creation and who is manifested in the three modes of nature, will not be able to bewilder you any longer.

41Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, having thus been praised by the Supreme Personality, who bears the mark of Śrīvatsa on His chest, Lord Śiva circumambulated Him. Then, after taking permission from Him, Lord Śiva returned to his abode, Kailāsa, along with his associates.

42O descendant of Bharata Mahārāja, Lord Śiva, in jubilation, then addressed his wife, Bhavānī, who is accepted by all authorities as the potency of Lord Viṣṇu.

43Lord Śiva said: O Goddess, you have now seen the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the unborn master of everyone. Although I am one of the principal expansions of His Lordship, even I was illusioned by His energy. What then is to be said of others, who are fully dependent on māyā?

44When I finished performing mystic yoga for one thousand years, you asked me upon whom I was meditating. Now, here is that Supreme Person to whom time has no entrance and who the Vedas cannot understand.

45Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, the person who bore the great mountain on His back for the churning of the Ocean of Milk is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Śārṅga-dhanvā. I have now described to you His prowess.

46The endeavor of one who constantly hears or describes this narration of the churning of the Ocean of Milk will never be fruitless. Indeed, chanting the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only means to annihilate all sufferings in this material world.

47Assuming the form of a young woman and thus bewildering the demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead distributed to His devotees, the demigods, the nectar produced from the churning of the Ocean of Milk. Unto that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always fulfills the desires of His devotees, I offer my respectful obeisances.

SB 8.13: Description of Future Manus

Of the fourteen Manus, six Manus have already been described. Now, this chapter will consecutively describe each Manu from the seventh to the fourteenth.

The seventh Manu, who is the son of Vivasvān, is known as Śrāddhadeva. He has ten sons, named Ikṣvāku, Nabhaga, Dhṛṣṭa, Śaryāti, Nariṣyanta, Nābhāga, Diṣṭa, Tarūṣa, Pṛṣadhra and Vasumān. In this *manvantara*, or reign of Manu, among the demigods are the Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Viśvedevas, Maruts, Aśvinī-kumāras and Ṛbhus. The king of heaven, Indra, is known as Purandara, and the seven sages are known as Kaśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadvāja. During this period of Manu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu appears from the womb of Aditi in His incarnation as the son of Kaśyapa.

In the period of the eighth Manu, the Manu is Sāvarnī. His sons are headed by Nirmoka, and among the demigods are the Sutapās. Bali, the son of Virocana, is Indra, and Gālava and Paraśurāma are among the seven sages. In this age of Manu, the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears as Sārvabhauma, the son of Devaguhya and Sarasvatī.

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In the period of the ninth Manu, the Manu is Dakṣa-sāvṛṇi. His sons are headed by Bhūtaketu, and among the demigods are the Marīcigarbhas. Adbhuta is Indra, and among the seven sages is Dyutimān. In this period of Manu, the incarnation Ṛṣabha is born of Āyusmān and Ambudhārā.

In the period of the tenth Manu, the Manu is Brahma-sāvṛṇi. Among his sons is Bhūriṣeṇa, and the seven sages are Haviṣmān and others. Among the demigods are the Suvāsanas, and Śambhu is Indra. The incarnation in this period of Manu is Viṣvaksena, who is a friend of Śambhu and who is born from the womb of Viṣūcī in the house of a *brāhmaṇa* named Viśvasraṣṭā.

In the period of the eleventh Manu, the Manu is Dharma-sāvṛṇi, who has ten sons, headed by Satyadharmā. Among the demigods are the Vihaṅgamas, Indra is known as Vaidhṛta, and the seven sages are Aruṇa and others. In this *manvantara*, the incarnation is Dharmasetu, who is born of Vaidhṛtā and Āryaka.

In the period of the twelfth Manu, the Manu is Rudra-sāvṛṇi, whose sons are headed by Devavān. The demigods are the Haritas and others, Indra is Ṛtadhāmā, and the seven sages are Tapomūrti and others. The incarnation in this *manvantara* is Sudhāmā, or Svadhāmā, who is born from the womb of Sunṛtā. His father's name is Satyasahā.

In the period of the thirteenth Manu, the Manu is Deva-sāvṛṇi. Among his sons is Citrasena, the demigods are the Sukarmās and others, Indra is Divaspati, and Nirmoka is among the sages. The *manvantara-avatāra* is Yogeśvara, who is born of Devahotra and Bṛhatī.

In the period of the fourteenth Manu, the Manu is Indra-sāvṛṇi. Among his sons are Uru and Gambhīra, the demigods are the Pavitras and others, Indra is Śuci, and among the sages are Agni and Bāhu. The incarnation of this *manvantara* is known as Bṛhadbhānu. He is born of Satrāyaṇa from the womb of Vitānā.

The total duration of the periods ruled by these Manus is calculated to be one thousand *catur-yugas*, or 4,300,000 times 1,000 years.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The present Manu, who is named Śrāddhadeva, is the son of Vivasvān, the predominating deity on the sun planet. Śrāddhadeva is the seventh Manu. Now please hear from me as I describe his sons.

2-3O King Parīkṣit, among the ten sons of Manu are Ikṣvāku, Nabhaga, Dhṛṣṭa, Śaryāti, Nariṣyanta and Nābhāga. The seventh son is known as Diṣṭa. Then come Tarūṣa and Pṛṣadhra, and the tenth son is known as Vasumān.

4In this manvantara, O King, the Ādityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Viśvedevas, the Maruts, the two Aśvinī-kumāra brothers and the Ṛbhus are the demigods. Their head king [Indra] is Purandara.

5Kaśyapa, Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadvāja are known as the seven sages.

6In this manvantara, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as the youngest of all the Ādityas, known as Vāmana, the dwarf. His father was Kaśyapa and His mother Aditi.

7I have briefly explained to you the position of the seven Manus. Now I shall describe the future Manus, along with the incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

8O King, I have previously described [in the Sixth Canto] the two daughters of Viśvakarmā, named Saṁjṣā and Chāyā, who were the first two wives of Vivasvān.

9It is said that the sun-god had a third wife, named Vaḍavā. Of the three wives, the wife named Saṁjṣā had three children Yama, Yamī and Śrāddhadeva. Now let me describe the children of Chāyā.

10Chāyā had a son named Sāvarni and a daughter named Tapatī, who later became the wife of King Saṁvaraṇa. Chāyā's third child is known as Śanaiścara [Saturn]. Vaḍavā gave birth to two sons, namely the Aśvinī brothers.

11O King, when the period of the eighth Manu arrives, Sāvarni will become the Manu. Nirmoka and Virajaska will be among his sons.

12In the period of the eighth Manu, among the demigods will be the Sutapās, the Virajas and the Amṛtaprabhas. The king of the demigods, Indra, will be Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana.

13Bali Mahārāja gave a gift of three paces of land to Lord Viṣṇu, and because of this charity he lost all the three worlds. Later, however, when Lord Viṣṇu is pleased because of Bali's giving everything to Him, Bali Mahārāja will achieve the perfection of life.

14With great affection, the Personality of Godhead bound Bali and then installed him in the kingdom of Sutala, which is more opulent than the heavenly planets. Mahārāja Bali now resides on that planet and is more comfortably situated than Indra.

15-16O King, during the eighth manvantara, the great personalities Gālava, Dīptimān, Paraśurāma, Aśvatthāmā, Kṛpācārya, Rṣyaśṅga and our father, Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Nārāyaṇa, will be the seven sages. For the present, they are all residing in their respective āśramas.

17In the eighth manvantara, the greatly powerful Personality of Godhead Sārvabhauma will take birth. His father will be Devaguhya, and His mother will be Sarasvatī. He will take the kingdom away from Purandara [Lord Indra] and give it to Bali Mahārāja.

18O King, the ninth Manu will be Dakṣa-sāvarni, who is born of Varuṇa. Among his sons will be Bhūtaketu, and Dīptaketu.

19In this ninth manvantara, the Pāras and Marīcigarbhas will be among the demigods. The king of heaven, Indra, will be named Adbhuta, and Dyutimān will be among the seven sages.

20Rṣabhadeva, a partial incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will take birth from his father, Āyusmān, and his mother, Ambudhārā. He will enable the Indra named Adbhuta to enjoy the opulence of the three worlds.

21The son of Upaśloka known as Brahma-sāvarni will be the tenth Manu. Bhūriṣeṇa will be among his sons, and the brāhmaṇas headed by Haviṣmān will be the seven sages.

22Haviṣmān, Sukṛta, Satya, Jaya, Mūrti and others will be the seven sages, the Suvāsanas and Viruddhas will be among the demigods, and Śambhu will be their king, Indra.

23In the home of Viśvasraṣṭā, a plenary portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear from the womb of Viṣūcī as the incarnation known as Viṣvaksena. He will make friends with Śambhu.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

24In the eleventh manvantara, the Manu will be Dharma-sāvṛṇi, who will be extremely learned in spiritual knowledge. From him there will come ten sons, headed by Satyadharmā.

25The Vihaṅgamas, Kāmagamas, Nirvāṇarucis and others will be the demigods. The king of the demigods, Indra, will be Vaidhṛta, and the seven sages will be headed by Aruṇa.

26The son of Āryaka known as Dharmasetu, a partial incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will appear from the womb of Vaidhṛtā, the wife of Āryaka, and will rule the three worlds.

27O King, the twelfth Manu will be named Rudra-sāvṛṇi. Devavān, Upadeva and Devaśreṣṭha will be among his sons.

28In this manvantara, the name of Indra will be Ṛtadhāmā, and the demigods will be headed by the Haritas. Among the sages will be Tapomūrti, Tapasvī and Āgnīdhṛaka.

29From the mother named Sunṛtā and the father named Satyasahā will come Svadhāmā, a partial incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He will rule that manvantara.

30The thirteenth Manu will be named Deva-sāvṛṇi, and he will be very advanced in spiritual knowledge. Among his sons will be Citrasena and Vicitra.

31In the thirteenth manvantara, the Sukarmās and Sutrāmas will be among the demigods, Divaspati will be the king of heaven, and Nirmoka and Tattvadarśa will be among the seven sages.

32The son of Devahotra known as Yogeśvara will appear as a partial incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His mother's name will be Bṛhatī. He will perform activities for the welfare of Divaspati.

33The name of the fourteenth Manu will be Indra-sāvṛṇi. He will have sons like Uru, Gambhīra and Budha.

34The Pavitras and Cākṣuṣas will be among the demigods, and Śuci will be Indra, the king of heaven. Agni, Bāhu, Śuci, Śuddha, Māgadha and others of great austerity will be the seven sages.

35O King Parīkṣit, in the fourteenth manvantara the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear from the womb of Vitānā, and His father's name will be Satrāyaṇa. This incarnation will be celebrated as Bṛhadbhānu, and He will administer spiritual activities.

36O King, I have now described to you the fourteen Manus appearing in the past, present and future. The total duration of time ruled by these Manus is one thousand yuga cycles. This is called a kalpa, or one day of Lord Brahmā.

SB 8.14: The System of Universal Management

This chapter describes the duties allotted to Manu by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All the Manus, as well as their sons, the sages, the demigods and the Indras, act under the orders of various incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At the end of every *catur-yuga*, consisting of Satya-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, Tretā-yuga and Kali-yuga, the sages, acting under the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, distribute the Vedic knowledge and thus reinstate eternal religious principles. Manu's duty is to reestablish the system of religion. Manu's sons execute Manu's orders, and thus the entire universe is maintained by Manu and

his descendants. The Indras are various rulers of the heavenly planets. Assisted by the demigods, they rule the three worlds. The Supreme Personality of Godhead also appears as incarnations in different *yugas*. He appears as Sanaka, Sanātana, Yājšavalkya, Dattātreya and others, and thus He gives instructions in spiritual knowledge, prescribed duties, principles of mystic *yoga*, and so on. As Marīci and others, He creates progeny; as the king, He punishes the miscreants; and in the form of time, He annihilates the creation. One may argue, “If the all-powerful Supreme Personality of Godhead can do anything simply by His will, why has He arranged for so many personalities to manage?” How and why He does this cannot be understood by those who are under the clutches of *māyā*.

1Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired: O most opulent Śukadeva Gosvāmī, please explain to me how Manu and the others in each manvantara are engaged in their respective duties, and by whose order they are so engaged.

2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Manus, the sons of Manu, the great sages, the Indras and all the demigods, O King, are appointed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His various incarnations such as Yajña.

3O King, I have already described to you various incarnations of the Lord, such as Yajña. The Manus and others are chosen by these incarnations, under whose direction they conduct the universal affairs.

4At the end of every four yugas, the great saintly persons, upon seeing that the eternal occupational duties of mankind have been misused, reestablish the principles of religion.

5Thereafter, O King, the Manus, being fully engaged according to the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, directly reestablish the principles of occupational duty in its full four parts.

6To enjoy the results of sacrifices [yajñas], the rulers of the world, namely the sons and grandsons of Manu, discharge the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead until the end of Manu’s reign. The demigods also share the results of these sacrifices.

7Indra, King of heaven, receiving benedictions from the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus enjoying highly developed opulences, maintains the living entities all over the three worlds by pouring sufficient rain on all the planets.

8In every yuga, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, assumes the form of Siddhas such as Sanaka to preach transcendental knowledge, He assumes the form of great saintly persons such as Yājšavalkya to teach the way of karma, and He assumes the form of great yogīs such as Dattātreya to teach the system of mystic yoga.

9In the form of Prajāpati Marīci, the Supreme Personality of Godhead creates progeny; becoming the king, He kills the thieves and rogues; and in the form of time, He annihilates everything. All the different qualities of material existence should be understood to be qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

10People in general are bewildered by the illusory energy, and therefore they try to find the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, through various types of research and philosophical speculation. Nonetheless, they are unable to see the Supreme Lord.

11In one kalpa, or one day of Brahmā, there take place the many changes called vikalpas. O King, all of these have been previously described to you by me. Learned scholars who know the past, present and future have ascertained that in one day of Brahmā there are fourteen

Manus.

SB 8.15: Bali Mahārāja Conquers the Heavenly Planets

This chapter describes how Bali, after performing the Viśvajit-yajña, received the benediction of a chariot and various kinds of paraphernalia for war, with which he attacked the King of heaven. All the demigods, being afraid of him, left the heavenly planets and went away, following the instructions of their *guru*.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit wanted to understand how Lord Vāmanadeva, on the plea of taking three paces of land from Bali Mahārāja, took everything away from him and arrested him. Śukadeva Gosvāmī responded to this inquiry with the following explanation. In the fight between the demons and the demigods, as described in the Eleventh Chapter of this Canto, Bali was defeated, and he died in the fight, but by the grace of Śukrācārya he regained his life. Thus he engaged himself in the service of Śukrācārya, his spiritual master. The descendants of Bhṛgu, being pleased with him, engaged him in the Viśvajit-yajña. When this *yajña* was performed, from the fire of *yajña* came a chariot, horses, a flag, a bow, armor and two quivers of arrows. Mahārāja Prahlāda, Bali Mahārāja's grandfather, gave Bali an eternal garland of flowers, and Śukrācārya gave him a conchshell. Bali Mahārāja, after offering obeisances to Prahlāda, the *brāhmaṇas* and his spiritual master, Śukrācārya, equipped himself to fight with Indra and went to Indrapurī with his soldiers. Blowing his conchshell, he attacked the outskirts of Indra's kingdom. When Indra saw Bali Mahārāja's prowess, he went to his own spiritual master, Bṛhaspati, told him about Bali's strength, and inquired about his duty. Bṛhaspati informed the demigods that because Bali had been endowed with extraordinary power by the *brāhmaṇas*, the demigods could not fight with him. Their only hope was to gain the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, there was no alternative. Under the circumstances, Bṛhaspati advised the demigods to leave the heavenly planets and keep themselves somewhere invisible. The demigods followed his orders, and Bali Mahārāja, along with his associates, gained the entire kingdom of Indra. The descendants of Bhṛgu Muni, being very affectionate to their disciple Bali Mahārāja, engaged him in performing one hundred *aśvamedha-yajñas*. In this way, Bali enjoyed the opulences of the heavenly planets.

1-2Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the proprietor of everything. Why did He beg three paces of land from Bali Mahārāja like a poor man, and when He got the gift for which He had begged, why did He nonetheless arrest Bali Mahārāja? I am very much anxious to know the mystery of these contradictions.

3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, when Bali Mahārāja lost all his opulence and died in the fight, Śukrācārya, a descendant of Bhṛgu Muni, brought him back to life. Because of this, the great soul Bali Mahārāja became a disciple of Śukrācārya and began to serve him with great faith, offering everything he had.

4The *brāhmaṇa* descendants of Bhṛgu Muni were very pleased with Bali Mahārāja, who desired to conquer the kingdom of Indra. Therefore, after purifying him and properly bathing him according to regulative principles, they engaged him in performing the *yajña* known as Viśvajit.

5When ghee [clarified butter] was offered in the fire of sacrifice, there appeared from the fire a celestial chariot covered with gold and silk. There also appeared yellow horses like those of Indra, and a flag marked with a lion.

6A gilded bow, two quivers of infallible arrows, and celestial armor also appeared. Bali Mahārāja's grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja offered Bali a garland of flowers that would never

fade, and Śukrācārya gave him a conchshell.

7When Mahārāja Bali had thus performed the special ritualistic ceremony advised by the brāhmaṇas and had received, by their grace, the equipment for fighting, he circumambulated the brāhmaṇas and offered them obeisances. He also saluted Prahlāda Mahārāja and offered obeisances to him.

8-9Then, after getting on the chariot given by Śukrācārya, Bali Mahārāja, decorated with a nice garland, put protective armor on his body, equipped himself with a bow, and took up a sword and a quiver of arrows. When he sat down on the seat of the chariot, his arms decorated with golden bangles and his ears with sapphire earrings, he shone like a worshipable fire.

10-11When he assembled with his own soldiers and the demon chiefs, who were equal to him in strength, opulence and beauty, they appeared as if they would swallow the sky and burn all directions with their vision. After thus gathering the demoniac soldiers, Bali Mahārāja departed for the opulent capital of Indra. Indeed, he seemed to make the entire surface of the world tremble.

12King Indra's city was full of pleasing orchards and gardens, such as the Nandana garden. Because of the weight of the flowers, leaves and fruit, the branches of the eternally existing trees were bending down. The gardens were visited by pairs of chirping birds and singing bees. The entire atmosphere was celestial.

13Beautiful women protected by the demigods sported in the gardens, which had lotus ponds full of swans, cranes, cakravākas and ducks.

14The city was surrounded by trenches full of Ganges water, known as Ākāśa-gaṅgā, and by a high wall, which was the color of fire. Upon this wall were parapets for fighting.

15The doors were made of solid gold plates, and the gates were of excellent marble. These were linked by various public roads. The entire city had been constructed by Viśvakarmā.

16The city was full of courtyards, wide roads, assembly houses, and not less than one hundred million airplanes. The crossroads were made of pearl, and there were sitting places made of diamond and coral.

17Everlastingly beautiful and youthful women, who were dressed with clean garments, glittered in the city like fires with flames. They all possessed the quality of śyāmā.

18The breezes blowing in the streets of the city bore the fragrance of the flowers falling from the hair of the women of the demigods.

19Apsarās passed on the streets, which were covered with the white, fragrant smoke of aguru incense emanating from windows with golden filigree.

20The city was shaded by canopies decorated with pearls, and the domes of the palaces had flags of pearl and gold. The city always resounded with the vibrations of peacocks, pigeons and bees, and above the city flew airplanes full of beautiful women who constantly chanted auspicious songs that were very pleasing to the ear.

21The city was filled with the sounds of mṛdaṅgas, conchshells, kettledrums, flutes and well-tuned stringed instruments all playing in concert. There was constant dancing and the Gandharvas sang. The combined beauty of Indrapurī defeated beauty personified.

22No one who was sinful, envious, violent toward other living entities, cunning, falsely proud,

lusty or greedy could enter that city. The people who lived there were all devoid of these faults.

23Bali Mahārāja, who was the commander of numberless soldiers, gathered his soldiers outside this abode of Indra and attacked it from all directions. He sounded the conchshell given him by his spiritual master, Śukrācārya, thus creating a fearful situation for the women protected by Indra.

24Seeing Bali Mahārāja's indefatigable endeavor and understanding his motive, King Indra, along with the other demigods, approached his spiritual master, Bṛhaspati, and spoke as follows.

25My lord, our old enemy Bali Mahārāja now has new enthusiasm, and he has obtained such astonishing power that we think that perhaps we cannot resist his prowess.

26No one anywhere can counteract this military arrangement of Bali's. It now appears that Bali is trying to drink up the entire universe with his mouth, lick up the ten directions with his tongue, and raise fire in every direction with his eyes. Indeed, he has arisen like the annihilating fire known as saṁvartaka.

27Kindly inform me. What is the cause for Bali Mahārāja's strength, endeavor, influence and victory? How has he become so enthusiastic?

28Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods, said: O Indra, I know the cause for your enemy's becoming so powerful. The brāhmaṇa descendants of Bhṛgu Muni, being pleased by Bali Mahārāja, their disciple, endowed him with such extraordinary power.

29Neither you nor your men can conquer the most powerful Bali. Indeed, no one but the Supreme Personality of Godhead can conquer him, for he is now equipped with the supreme spiritual power [brahma-tejas]. As no one can stand before Yamarāja, no one can now stand before Bali Mahārāja.

30Therefore, waiting until the situation of your enemies is reversed, you should all leave this heavenly planet and go elsewhere, where you will not be seen.

31Bali Mahārāja has now become extremely powerful because of the benedictions given him by the brāhmaṇas, but when he later insults the brāhmaṇas, he will be vanquished, along with his friends and assistants.

32Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The demigods, being thus advised by Bṛhaspati for their benefit, immediately accepted his words. Assuming forms according to their desire, they left the heavenly kingdom and scattered, without being observed by the demons.

33When the demigods had disappeared, Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana, entered the heavenly kingdom, and from there he brought the three worlds under his control.

34The brāhmaṇa descendants of Bhṛgu, being very pleased with their disciple, who had conquered the entire universe, now engaged him in performing one hundred aśvamedha sacrifices.

35When Bali Mahārāja performed these sacrifices, he gained a great reputation in all directions, throughout the three worlds. Thus he shone in his position, like the brilliant moon in the sky.

36Because of the favor of the brāhmaṇas, the great soul Bali Mahārāja, thinking himself very

satisfied, became very opulent and prosperous and began to enjoy the kingdom.

SB 8.16: Executing the Payo-vrata Process of Worship

As described in this chapter, because Aditi, the mother of the demigods, was very afflicted, her husband, Kaśyapa Muni, told her how to observe vows in austerities for the benefit of her sons.

Since the demigods were not visible in the heavenly kingdom, their mother, Aditi, because of separation from them, was very much aggrieved. One day after many, many years, the great sage Kaśyapa emerged from a trance of meditation and returned to his *āśrama*. He saw that the *āśrama* was no longer beautiful and that his wife was very morose. Everywhere in the *āśrama*, he saw signs of lamentation. The great sage therefore inquired from his wife about the well-being of the *āśrama* and asked her why she looked so morose. After Aditi informed Kaśyapa Muni about the *āśrama*'s well-being, she told him that she was lamenting for the absence of her sons. She then requested him to tell her how her sons could return and reoccupy their positions. She wanted all good fortune for her sons. Moved by Aditi's request, Kaśyapa Muni instructed her in the philosophy of self-realization, the difference between matter and spirit, and how to be unaffected by material loss. But when he saw that Aditi was not satisfied even after he had given these instructions, he advised her to worship Vāsudeva, Janārdana. He assured her that only Lord Vāsudeva could satisfy her and fulfill all her desires. When Aditi then expressed her desire to worship Lord Vāsudeva, Prajāpati Kaśyapa told her about a process of worship known as *payo-vrata*, which is executed in twelve days. Lord Brahmā had instructed him how to satisfy Lord Kṛṣṇa by this process, and thus he advised his wife to observe this vow and its regulative principles.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, when Aditi's sons, the demigods, had thus disappeared from heaven and the demons had occupied their places, Aditi began lamenting, as if she had no protector.

2After many, many days, the great powerful sage Kaśyapa Muni arose from a trance of meditation and returned home to see the *āśrama* of Aditi neither jubilant nor festive.

3O best of the Kurus, when Kaśyapa Muni had been properly received and welcomed, he took his seat and then spoke as follows to his wife, Aditi, who was very morose.

4O most gentle one, I wonder whether anything inauspicious has now taken place in regard to religious principles, the *brāhmaṇas* or the people in general, who are subject to the whims of death.

5O my wife, who are very much attached to household life, if the principles of religion, economic development and satisfaction of the senses are properly followed in household life, one's activities are as good as those of a transcendentalist. I wonder whether there have been any discrepancies in following these principles.

6I wonder whether because of being too attached to the members of your family, you failed to properly receive uninvited guests, who therefore were not welcomed and went away.

7Homes from which guests go away without having been received even with an offering of a little water are like those holes in the field which are the homes of jackals.

8O chaste and auspicious woman, when I left home for other places, were you in so much anxiety that you did not offer oblations of ghee into the fire?

9By worshiping the fire and the *brāhmaṇas*, a householder can achieve the desired goal of

residing in the higher planets, for the sacrificial fire and the brāhmaṇas are to be considered the mouth of Lord Viṣṇu, who is the Supersoul of all the demigods.

10O great-minded lady, are all your sons faring well? Seeing your withered face, I can perceive that your mind is not tranquil. How is this so?

11Aditi said: O my respected brāhmaṇa husband, all is well with the brāhmaṇas, the cows, religion and the welfare of other people. O master of the house, the three principles of dharma, artha and kāma flourish in household life, which is consequently full of good fortune.

12O beloved husband, the fires, guests, servants and beggars are all being properly cared for by me. Because I always think of you, there is no possibility that any of the religious principles will be neglected.

13O my lord, since you are a Prajāpati and are personally my instructor in the principles of religion, where is the possibility that all my desires will not be fulfilled?

14O son of Marīci, because you are a great personality you are equal toward all the demons and demigods, who are born either from your body or from your mind and who possess one or another of the three qualities sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa or tamo-guṇa. But although the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, is equal toward all living entities, He is especially favorable to the devotees.

15Therefore, most gentle lord, kindly favor your maidservant. We have now been deprived of our opulence and residence by our competitors, the demons. Kindly give us protection.

16The demons, our formidably powerful enemies, have taken away our opulence, our beauty, our fame and even our residence. Indeed, we have now been exiled, and we are drowning in an ocean of trouble.

17O best of sages, best of all those who grant auspicious benedictions, please consider our situation and bestow upon my sons the benedictions by which they can regain what they have lost.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When Kaśyapa Muni was thus requested by Aditi, he slightly smiled. “Alas,” he said, “how powerful is the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, by which the entire world is bound by affection for children!”

19Kaśyapa Muni continued: What is this material body, made of five elements? It is different from the spirit soul. Indeed, the spirit soul is completely different from the material elements from which the body is made. But because of bodily attachment, one is regarded as a husband or son. These illusory relationships are caused by misunderstanding.

20My dear Aditi, engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of everything, who can subdue everyone’s enemies, and who sits within everyone’s heart. Only that Supreme Person Kṛṣṇa, or Vāsudeva can bestow all auspicious benedictions upon everyone, for He is the spiritual master of the universe.

21The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is very merciful to the poor, will fulfill all of your desires, for devotional service unto Him is infallible. Any method other than devotional service is useless. That is my opinion.

22Śrīmatī Aditi said: O brāhmaṇa, tell me the regulative principles by which I may worship the supreme master of the world so that He will be pleased with me and fulfill all my desires.

23O best of the brāhmaṇas, kindly instruct me in the perfect method of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in devotional service, by which the Lord may very soon be pleased with me and save me, along with my sons, from this most dangerous condition.

24Śrī Kaśyapa Muni said: When I desired offspring, I placed inquiries before Lord Brahmā, who is born from a lotus flower. Now I shall explain to you the same process Lord Brahmā instructed me, by which Keśava, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is satisfied.

25In the bright fortnight of the month of Phālguna [February and March], for twelve days ending with Dvādaśī, one should observe the vow of subsisting only on milk and should worship the lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead with all devotion.

26If dirt dug up by a boar is available, on the day of the dark moon one should smear this dirt on his body and then bathe in a flowing river. While bathing, one should chant the following mantra.

27O mother earth, you were raised by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of a boar because of your desiring to have a place to stay. I pray that you kindly vanquish all the reactions of my sinful life. I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

28Thereafter, one should perform his daily spiritual duties and then, with great attention, offer worship to the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and also to the altar, the sun, water, fire and the spiritual master.

29O Supreme Personality of Godhead, greatest of all, who lives in everyone's heart and in whom everyone lives, O witness of everything, O Vāsudeva, supreme and all-pervading person, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

30I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, the Supreme Person. Being very subtle, You are never visible to material eyes. You are the knower of the twenty-four elements, and You are the inaugurator of the sāṅkhya-yoga system.

31I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have two heads [prāyaṇīya and udāyanīya], three legs [savana-traya], four horns [the four Vedas] and seven hands [the seven chandas, such as Gāyatrī]. I offer my obeisances unto You, whose heart and soul are the three Vedic rituals [karma-kāṇḍa, Jnana-kāṇḍa and upāsanā-kāṇḍa] and who expand these rituals in the form of sacrifice.

32I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, Lord Śiva, or Rudra, who are the reservoir of all potencies, the reservoir of all knowledge, and the master of everyone.

33I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are situated as Hiraṇyagarbha, the source of life, the Supersoul of every living entity. Your body is the source of the opulence of all mystic power. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

34I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are the original Personality of Godhead, the witness in everyone's heart, and the incarnation of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi in the form of a human being. O Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

35My Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, who are dressed in yellow garments, whose bodily hue resembles the marakata gem, and who have full control over the goddess of fortune. O my Lord Keśava, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

36O most exalted and worshipable Lord, best of those who bestow benediction, You can fulfill

the desires of everyone, and therefore those who are sober, for their own welfare, worship the dust of Your lotus feet.

37All the demigods, as well as the goddess of fortune, engage in the service of His lotus feet. Indeed, they respect the fragrance of those lotus feet. May the Supreme Personality of Godhead be pleased with me.

38Kaśyapa Muni continued: By chanting all these mantras, welcoming the Supreme Personality of Godhead with faith and devotion, and offering Him items of worship [such as pādyā and arghya], one should worship Keśava, Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

39In the beginning, the devotee should chant the dvādaśākṣara-mantra and offer flower garlands, incense and so on. After worshiping the Lord in this way, one should bathe the Lord with milk and dress Him with proper garments, a sacred thread, and ornaments. After offering water to wash the Lord's feet, one should again worship the Lord with fragrant flowers, incense and other paraphernalia.

40If one can afford to, one should offer the Deity fine rice boiled in milk with clarified butter and molasses. While chanting the same original mantra, one should offer all this to the fire.

41One should offer all the prasāda to a Vaiṣṇava or offer him some of the prasāda and then take some oneself. After this, one should offer the Deity ācamana and then betel nut and then again worship the Lord.

42Thereafter, one should silently murmur the mantra 108 times and offer prayers to the Lord for His glorification. Then one should circumambulate the Lord and finally, with great delight and satisfaction, offer obeisances, falling straight like a rod [daṇḍavat].

43After touching to one's head all the flowers and water offered to the Deity, one should throw them into a sacred place. Then one should feed at least two brāhmaṇas with sweet rice.

44-45One should perfectly honor the respectable brāhmaṇas one has fed, and then, after taking their permission, one should take prasāda with his friends and relatives. For that night, one should observe strict celibacy, and the next morning, after bathing again, with purity and attention one should bathe the Deity of Viṣṇu with milk and worship Him according to the methods formerly stated in detail.

46Worshiping Lord Viṣṇu with great faith and devotion and living only by drinking milk, one should follow this vow. One should also offer oblations to the fire and feed the brāhmaṇas as mentioned before.

47In this way, until twelve days have passed, one should observe this payo-vrata, worshiping the Lord every day, executing the routine duties, performing sacrifices and feeding the brāhmaṇas.

48From pratipat until the thirteenth day of the next bright moon [śukla-trayodaśī], one should observe complete celibacy, sleep on the floor, bathe three times a day and thus execute the vow.

49During this period, one should not unnecessarily talk of material subjects or topics of sense gratification, one should be completely free from envy of all living entities, and one should be a pure and simple devotee of Lord Vāsudeva.

50Thereafter, following the directions of the śāstra with help from brāhmaṇas who know the

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śāstra, on the thirteenth day of the moon one should bathe Lord Viṣṇu with five substances [milk, yogurt, ghee, sugar and honey].

51-52 Giving up the miserly habit of not spending money, one should arrange for the gorgeous worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who is situated in the heart of every living entity. With great attention, one must prepare an oblation of grains boiled in ghee and milk and must chant the Puruṣa-sūkta mantra. The offerings of food should be of varieties of tastes. In this way, one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

53 One should satisfy the spiritual master [ācārya], who is very learned in Vedic literature, and should satisfy his assistant priests [known as hotā, udgātā, adhvaryu and brahma]. One should please them by offering them clothing, ornaments and cows. This is the ceremony called viṣṇu-ārādhana, or worship of Lord Viṣṇu.

54 O most auspicious lady, one should perform all the ceremonies under the direction of learned ācāryas and should satisfy them and their priests. By distributing prasāda, one should also satisfy the brāhmaṇas and others who have assembled.

55 One should satisfy the spiritual master and assistant priests by giving them cloth, ornaments, cows and also some monetary contribution. And by distributing prasāda one should satisfy everyone assembled, including even the lowest of men, the caṇḍālas [eaters of dog flesh].

56 One should distribute viṣṇu-prasāda to everyone, including the poor man, the blind man, the nondevotee and the non-brāhmaṇa. Knowing that Lord Viṣṇu is very pleased when everyone is sumptuously fed with viṣṇu-prasāda, the performer of yajña should then take prasāda with his friends and relatives.

57 Every day from pratipat to trayodaśī, one should continue the ceremony, to the accompaniment of dancing, singing, the beating of a drum, the chanting of prayers and all-auspicious mantras, and recitation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. In this way, one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

58 This is the religious ritualistic ceremony known as payo-vrata, by which one may worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I received this information from Brahmā, my grandfather, and now I have described it to you in all details.

59 O most fortunate lady, establishing your mind in a good spirit, execute this process of payo-vrata and thus worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Keśava, who is inexhaustible.

60 This payo-vrata is also known as sarva-yajña. In other words, by performing this sacrifice one can perform all other sacrifices automatically. This is also acknowledged to be the best of all ritualistic ceremonies. O gentle lady, it is the essence of all austerities, and it is the process of giving charity and pleasing the supreme controller.

61 This is the best process for pleasing the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Adhokṣaja. It is the best of all regulative principles, the best austerity, the best process of giving charity, and the best process of sacrifice.

62 Therefore, my dear gentle lady, follow this ritualistic vow, strictly observing the regulative principles. By this process, the Supreme Person will very soon be pleased with you and will satisfy all your desires.

SB 8.17: The Supreme Lord Agrees to Become Aditi's Son

As explained in this chapter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, being very pleased by the *payo-vrata* ceremony performed by Aditi, appeared before her in full opulence. At her request, the Lord agreed to become her son.

After Aditi performed the *payo-vrata* ceremony for twelve continuous days, the Lord, who was certainly very pleased with her, appeared before her with four hands and dressed in yellow garments. As soon as Aditi saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead present before her, she immediately got up, and with great ecstatic love for the Lord she fell to the ground to offer respectful obeisances. Aditi's throat was choked because of ecstatic feelings, and her entire body trembled with devotion. Although she wanted to offer suitable prayers to the Lord, she could not do anything, and thus she remained silent for some time. Then, feeling solace, observing the beauty of the Lord, she offered her prayers. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul of all living entities, was very pleased with her, and He agreed to become her son by incarnating as a plenary expansion. He was already pleased by Kaśyapa Muni's austerities, and thus He agreed to become their son and maintain the demigods. After giving His word of honor to this effect, the Lord disappeared. Following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Aditi engaged in the service of Kaśyapa Muni, who could see by *samādhi* that the Lord was within him and who thus placed his semen in the womb of Aditi. Lord Brahmā, who is known as Hiraṇyagarbha, understood that the Supreme Personality of Godhead had entered Aditi's womb. Thus he offered prayers to the Lord.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, after Aditi was thus advised by her husband, Kaśyapa Muni, she strictly followed his instructions without laziness and in this way performed the *payo-vrata* ritualistic ceremony.

2-3With full, undiverted attention, Aditi thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and in this way brought under full control her mind and senses, which resembled forceful horses. She concentrated her mind upon the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva. Thus she performed the ritualistic ceremony known as *payo-vrata*.

4My dear King, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, dressed in yellow garments and bearing a conchshell, disc, club and lotus in His four hands, then appeared before Aditi.

5When the Supreme Personality of Godhead became visible to Aditi's eyes, Aditi was so overwhelmed by transcendental bliss that she at once stood up and then fell to the ground like a rod to offer the Lord her respectful obeisances.

6Aditi stood silently with folded hands, unable to offer prayers to the Lord. Because of transcendental bliss, tears filled her eyes, and the hairs on her body stood on end. Because she could see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face, she felt ecstasy, and her body trembled.

7O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the demigoddess Aditi then began offering her prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in a faltering voice and with great love. She appeared as though drinking through her eyes the Supreme Lord, who is the husband of the goddess of fortune, the enjoyer of all sacrificial ceremonies, and the master and Lord of the entire universe.

8The goddess Aditi said: O master and enjoyer of all sacrificial ceremonies, O infallible and most famous person, whose name, when chanted, spreads all good fortune! O original Supreme Personality of Godhead, supreme controller, shelter of all holy places, You are the shelter of all poor, suffering living entities, and You have appeared to diminish their suffering. Please be kind to us and spread our good fortune.

9My Lord, You are the all-pervading universal form, the fully independent creator, maintainer

and destroyer of this universe. Although You engage Your energy in matter, You are always situated in Your original form and never fall from that position, for Your knowledge is infallible and always suitable to any situation. You are never bewildered by illusion. O my Lord, let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

10O unlimited one, if Your Lordship is satisfied, one can very easily obtain a lifetime as long as that of Lord Brahmā, a body either in the upper, lower or middle planetary systems, unlimited material opulence, religion, economic development and satisfaction of the senses, full transcendental knowledge, and the eight yogic perfections, what to speak of such petty achievements as conquering one's rivals.

11Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, best of the Bharata dynasty, when the lotus-eyed Lord, the Supersoul of all living entities, was thus worshiped by Aditi, He replied as follows.

12The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O mother of the demigods, I have already understood your long-cherished desires for the welfare of your sons, who have been deprived of all opulences and driven from their residence by their enemies.

13O Devī, O goddess, I can understand that you want to regain your sons and be together with them to worship Me, after defeating the enemies in battle and retrieving your abode and opulences.

14You want to see the wives of the demons lamenting for the death of their husbands when those demons, the enemies of your sons, are killed in battle by the demigods, of whom Indra is the chief.

15You want your sons to regain their lost reputation and opulence and live again on their heavenly planet as usual.

16O mother of the demigods, in My opinion almost all the chiefs of the demons are now unconquerable, for they are being protected by brāhmaṇas, whom the Supreme Lord always favors. Thus the use of power against them now will not at all be a source of happiness.

17Yet because I have been satisfied by the activities of your vow, O goddess Aditi, I must find some means to favor you, for worship of Me never goes in vain but certainly gives the desired result according to what one deserves.

18You have prayed to Me and properly worshiped Me by performing the great payo-vrata ceremony for the sake of protecting your sons. Because of Kaśyapa Muni's austerities, I shall agree to become your son and thus protect your other sons.

19Always thinking of Me as being situated within the body of your husband, Kaśyapa, go worship your husband, who has been purified by his austerity.

20O lady, even if someone inquires, you should not disclose this fact to anyone. That which is very confidential is successful if kept secret.

21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After speaking in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead disappeared from that very spot. Aditi, having received the extremely valuable benediction that the Lord would appear as her son, considered herself very successful, and with great devotion she approached her husband.

22Being situated in a meditational trance, Kaśyapa Muni, whose vision is never mistaken, could see that a plenary portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead had entered within him.

23O King, as the wind promotes friction between two pieces of wood and thus gives rise to fire, Kaśyapa Muni, whose transcendental position was fully absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, transferred his potency into the womb of Aditi.

24When Lord Brahmā understood that the Supreme Personality of Godhead was now within the womb of Aditi, he began to offer prayers to the Lord by reciting transcendental names.

25Lord Brahmā said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all glories unto You, who are glorified by all and whose activities are all uncommon. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, O Lord of the transcendentalists, controller of the three modes of nature. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You again and again.

26I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, the all-pervading Lord Viṣṇu, who have entered the cores of the hearts of all living entities. All the three worlds reside within Your navel, yet You are above the three worlds. Formerly You appeared as the son of Pṛṣṇi. To You, the supreme creator, who are understood only through Vedic knowledge, I offer my respectful obeisances.

27O my Lord, You are the beginning, the manifestation and the ultimate dissolution of the three worlds, and You are celebrated in the Vedas as the reservoir of unlimited potencies, the Supreme Person. O my Lord, as waves attract branches and leaves that have fallen into deep water, You, the supreme eternal time factor, attract everything in this universe.

28My Lord, You are the original generator of all living entities, stationary or moving, and You are also the generator of the Prajāpatīs. O my Lord, as a boat is the only hope for a person drowning in the water, You are the only shelter for the demigods, who are now bereft of their heavenly position.

SB 8.18: Lord Vāmanadeva, the Dwarf Incarnation

This chapter describes how Lord Vāmanadeva appeared and how He went to the sacrificial arena of Mahārāja Bali, who received Him well and fulfilled His desire by offering Him benedictions.

Lord Vāmanadeva appeared in this world from the womb of Aditi completely equipped with conchshell, disc, club and lotus. His bodily hue was blackish, and He was dressed in yellow garments. Lord Viṣṇu appeared at an auspicious moment on Śravaṇa-dvādaśī when the Abhijit star had arisen. At that time, in all the three worlds (including the higher planetary system, outer space and this earth), all the demigods, the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and even the seasons were happy because of God's appearance. Therefore this auspicious day is called Vijayā. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has a *sac-cid-ānanda* body, appeared as the son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, both of His parents were very astonished. After His appearance, the Lord assumed the form of a dwarf (Vāmana). All the great sages expressed their jubilation, and with Kaśyapa Muni before them they performed the birthday ceremony of Lord Vāmana. At the time of Lord Vāmanadeva's sacred thread ceremony, He was honored by the sun-god, Bṛhaspati, the goddess presiding over the planet earth, the deity of the heavenly planets, His mother, Lord Brahmā, Kuvera, the seven *ṛṣīs* and others. Lord Vāmanadeva then visited the sacrificial arena on the northern side of the Narmadā River, at the field known as Bhṛgukaccha, where *brāhmaṇas* of the Bhṛgu dynasty were performing *yajñas*. Wearing a belt made of *muṣja* straw, an upper garment of deerskin and a sacred thread and carrying in His hands a *daṇḍa*, an umbrella and a waterpot (*kamaṇḍalu*), Lord Vāmanadeva appeared in the sacrificial arena of Mahārāja Bali. Because of His transcendently effulgent presence, all the priests were diminished in their prowess, and thus they all stood from their seats and offered prayers to

Lord Vāmanadeva. Even Lord Śiva accepts on his head the Ganges water generated from the toe of Lord Vāmanadeva. Therefore, after washing the Lord's feet, Bali Mahārāja immediately accepted the water from the Lord's feet on his head and felt that he and his predecessors had certainly been glorified. Then Bali Mahārāja inquired of Lord Vāmanadeva's welfare and requested the Lord to ask him for money, jewels or anything He might desire.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After Lord Brahmā had thus spoken, glorifying the Supreme Lord's activities and prowess, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never subject to death like an ordinary living being, appeared from the womb of Aditi. His four hands were decorated with a conchshell, club, lotus and disc, He was dressed in yellow garments, and His eyes appeared like the petals of a blooming lotus.

2The body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, blackish in complexion, was free from all inebrieties. His lotus face, decorated with earrings resembling sharks, appeared very beautiful, and on His bosom was the mark of Śrīvatsa. He wore bangles on His wrists, armlets on His arms, a helmet on His head, a belt on His waist, a sacred thread across His chest, and ankle bells decorating His lotus feet.

3An uncommonly beautiful garland of flowers decorated His bosom, and because the flowers were extremely fragrant, a large group of bees, making their natural humming sounds, invaded them for honey. When the Lord appeared, wearing the Kaustubha gem on His neck, His effulgence vanquished the darkness in the home of the Prajāpati Kaśyapa.

4At that time, there was happiness in all directions, in the reservoirs of water like the rivers and oceans, and in the core of everyone's heart. The various seasons displayed their respective qualities, and all living entities in the upper planetary system, in outer space and on the surface of the earth were jubilant. The demigods, the cows, the brāhmaṇas and the hills and mountains were all filled with joy.

5On the day of Śravaṇa-dvādaśī [the twelfth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Bhādra], when the moon came into the lunar mansion Śravaṇa, at the auspicious moment of Abhijit, the Lord appeared in this universe. Considering the Lord's appearance very auspicious, all the stars and planets, from the sun to Saturn, were munificently charitable.

6O King, when the Lord appeared on dvādaśī, the twelfth day of the moon the sun was at the meridian, as every learned scholar knows. This dvādaśī is called Vijayā.

7Conchshells, kettledrums, drums, paṇavas and ānakas vibrated in concert. The sound of these and various other instruments was tumultuous.

8Being very pleased, the celestial dancing girls [Apsarās] danced in jubilation, the best of the Gandharvas sang songs, and the great sages, demigods, Manus, Pitās and fire-gods offered prayers to satisfy the Lord.

9-10The Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Kimpuruṣas, Kinnaras, Cāraṇas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Suparṇas, the best of serpents, and the followers of the demigods all showered flowers on Aditi's residence, covering the entire house, while glorifying and praising the Lord and dancing.

11When Aditi saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had appeared from her own womb, having accepted a transcendental body by His own spiritual potency, she was struck with wonder and was very happy. Upon seeing the child, Prajāpati Kaśyapa exclaimed, "Jaya! Jaya!" in great happiness and wonder.

12The Lord appeared in His original form, with ornaments and weapons in His hands.

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Although this ever-existing form is not visible in the material world, He nonetheless appeared in this form. Then, in the presence of His father and mother, He assumed the form of Vāmana, a brāhmaṇa-dwarf, a brahmacārī, just like a theatrical actor.

13When the great sages saw the Lord as the brahmacārī-dwarf Vāmana, they were certainly very pleased. Thus they placed before them Kaśyapa Muni, the Prajāpati, and performed all the ritualistic ceremonies, such as the birthday ceremony.

14At the sacred thread ceremony of Vāmanadeva, the sun-god personally uttered the Gāyatī mantra, Bṛhaspati offered the sacred thread, and Kaśyapa Muni offered a straw belt.

15Mother earth gave Him a deerskin, and the demigod of the moon, who is the king of the forest, gave Him a brahma-daṇḍa [the rod of a brahmacārī]. His mother, Aditi, gave Him cloth for underwear, and the deity presiding over the heavenly kingdom offered Him an umbrella.

16O King, Lord Brahmā offered a waterpot to the inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead, the seven sages offered Him kuśa grass, and mother Sarasvatī gave Him a string of Rudrākṣa beads.

17When Vāmanadeva had thus been given the sacred thread, Kuvera, King of the Yakṣas, gave Him a pot for begging alms, and mother Bhagavatī, the wife of Lord Śiva and most chaste mother of the entire universe, gave Him His first alms.

18Having thus been welcomed by everyone, Lord Vāmanadeva, the best of the brahmacārīs, exhibited His Brahman effulgence. Thus He surpassed in beauty that entire assembly, which was filled with great saintly brāhmaṇas.

19After Lord Śrī Vāmanadeva set a sacrificial fire, He offered worship and performed a fire sacrifice on the sacrificial field.

20When the Lord heard that Bali Mahārāja was performing aśvamedha sacrifices under the patronage of brāhmaṇas belonging to the Bṛghu dynasty, the Supreme Lord, who is full in every respect, proceeded there to show His mercy to Bali Mahārāja. By His weight, He pushed down the earth with every step.

21While engaged in performing the sacrifice in the field known as Bṛgukaccha, on the northern bank of the Narmadā River, the brahminical priests, the descendants of Bṛghu, saw Vāmanadeva to be like the sun rising nearby.

22O King, because of Vāmanadeva's bright effulgence, the priests, along with Bali Mahārāja and all the members of the assembly, were robbed of their splendor. Thus they began to ask one another whether the sun-god himself, Sanat-kumāra or the fire-god had personally come to see the sacrificial ceremony.

23While the priests of the Bṛghu dynasty and their disciples talked and argued in various ways, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāmanadeva, holding in His hands the rod, the umbrella and a waterpot full of water, entered the arena of the aśvamedha sacrifice.

24-25Appearing as a brāhmaṇa boy, wearing a belt of straw, a sacred thread, an upper garment of deerskin, and matted locks of hair, Lord Vāmanadeva entered the arena of sacrifice. His brilliant effulgence diminished the brilliance of all the priests and their disciples, who thus stood from their seats and welcomed the Lord properly by offering obeisances.

26Bali Mahārāja, jubilant at seeing Lord Vāmanadeva, whose beautiful limbs contributed

equally to the beauty of His entire body, offered Him a seat with great satisfaction.

27Thus offering a proper reception to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always beautiful to the liberated souls, Bali Mahārāja worshiped Him by washing His lotus feet.

28Lord Śiva, the best of demigods, who carries on his forehead the emblem of the moon, receives on his head with great devotion the Ganges water emanating from the toe of Viṣṇu. Being aware of religious principles, Bali Mahārāja knew this. Consequently, following in the footsteps of Lord Śiva, he also placed on his head the water that had washed the Lord's lotus feet.

29Bali Mahārāja then said to Lord Vāmanadeva: O brāhmaṇa, I offer You my hearty welcome and my respectful obeisances. Please let us know what we may do for You. We think of You as the personified austerity of the great brāhmaṇa-sages.

30O my Lord, because You have kindly arrived at our home, all my forefathers are satisfied, our family and entire dynasty have been sanctified, and the sacrifice we are performing is now complete because of Your presence.

31O son of a brāhmaṇa, today the fire of sacrifice is ablaze according to the injunction of the śāstra, and I have been freed from all the sinful reactions of my life by the water that has washed Your lotus feet. O my Lord, by the touch of Your small lotus feet the entire surface of the world has been sanctified.

32O son of a brāhmaṇa, it appears that You have come here to ask me for something. Therefore, whatever You want You may take from me. O best of those who are worshipable. You may take from me a cow, gold, a furnished house, palatable food and drink, the daughter of a brāhmaṇa for Your wife, prosperous villages, horses, elephants, chariots or whatever You desire.

SB 8.19: Lord Vāmanadeva Begg Charity from Bali Mahārāja

This Nineteenth Chapter describes how Lord Vāmanadeva asked for three paces of land in charity, how Bali Mahārāja agreed to His proposal, and how Śukrācārya forbade Bali Mahārāja to fulfill Lord Vāmanadeva's request.

When Bali Mahārāja, thinking Vāmanadeva to be the son of a *brāhmaṇa*, told Him to ask for anything He liked, Lord Vāmanadeva praised Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa for their heroic activities, and after thus praising the family in which Bali Mahārāja had been born, He begged the King for three paces of land. Bali Mahārāja agreed to give this land in charity, since this was very insignificant, but Śukrācārya, who could understand that Vāmanadeva was Viṣṇu, the friend of the demigods, forbade Bali Mahārāja to give this land. Śukrācārya advised Bali Mahārāja to withdraw his promise. He explained that in subduing others, in joking, in responding to danger, in acting for the welfare of others, and so on, one could refuse to fulfill one's promise, and there would be no fault. By this philosophy, Śukrācārya tried to dissuade Bali Mahārāja from giving land to Lord Vāmanadeva.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāmanadeva, heard Bali Mahārāja speaking in this pleasing way, He was very satisfied, for Bali Mahārāja had spoken in terms of religious principles. Thus the Lord began to praise him.

2The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O King, you are indeed exalted because your present advisors are the brāhmaṇas who are descendants of Bhṛgu and because your instructor

for your future life is your grandfather, the peaceful and venerable Prahlāda Mahārāja. Your statements are very true, and they completely agree with religious etiquette. They are in keeping with the behavior of your family, and they enhance your reputation.

3I know that even until now, no one taking birth in your family has been poor-minded or miserly. No one has refused to give charity to brāhmaṇas, nor after promising to give charity has anyone failed to fulfill his promise.

4O King Bali, never in your dynasty has the low-minded king been born who upon being requested has refused charity to brāhmaṇas in holy places or a fight to kṣatriyas on a battlefield. And your dynasty is even more glorious due to the presence of Prahlāda Mahārāja, who is like the beautiful moon in the sky.

5It was in your dynasty that Hirāṇyākṣa was born. Carrying only his own club, he wandered the globe alone, without assistance, to conquer all directions, and no hero he met could rival him.

6When delivering the earth from the Garbhodaka Sea, Lord Viṣṇu, in His incarnation as a boar, killed Hirāṇyākṣa, who had appeared before Him. The fight was severe, and the Lord killed Hirāṇyākṣa with great difficulty. Later, as the Lord thought about the uncommon prowess of Hirāṇyākṣa, He felt Himself victorious indeed.

7When Hirāṇyakaśipu heard the news of his brother's being killed, with great anger he went to the residence of Viṣṇu, the killer of his brother, wanting to kill Lord Viṣṇu.

8Seeing Hirāṇyakaśipu coming forward bearing a trident in his hand like personified death, Lord Viṣṇu, the best of all mystics and the knower of the progress of time, thought as follows.

9Wheresoever I go, Hirāṇyakaśipu will follow Me, as death follows all living entities. Therefore it is better for Me to enter the core of his heart, for then, because of his power to see only externally, he will not see Me.

10Lord Vāmanadeva continued: O King of the demons, after Lord Viṣṇu made this decision, He entered the body of His enemy Hirāṇyakaśipu, who was running after Him with great force. In a subtle body inconceivable to Hirāṇyakaśipu, Lord Viṣṇu, who was in great anxiety, entered Hirāṇyakaśipu's nostril along with his breath.

11Upon seeing that the residence of Lord Viṣṇu was vacant, Hirāṇyakaśipu began searching for Lord Viṣṇu everywhere. Angry at not seeing Him, Hirāṇyakaśipu screamed loudly and searched the entire universe, including the surface of the earth, the higher planetary systems, all directions and all the caves and oceans. But Hirāṇyakaśipu, the greatest hero, did not see Viṣṇu anywhere.

12Unable to see Him, Hirāṇyakaśipu said, "I have searched the entire universe, but I could not find Viṣṇu, who has killed my brother. Therefore, He must certainly have gone to that place from which no one returns. [In other words, He must now be dead.]"

13Hirāṇyakaśipu's anger against Lord Viṣṇu persisted until his death. Other people in the bodily concept of life maintain anger only because of false ego and the great influence of ignorance.

14Your father, Virocana, the son of Mahārāja Prahlāda, was very affectionate toward brāhmaṇas. Although he knew very well that it was the demigods who had come to him in the dress of brāhmaṇas, at their request he delivered to them the duration of his life.

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15 You also have observed the principles followed by great personalities who are householder brāhmaṇas, by your forefathers and by great heroes who are extremely famous for their exalted activities.

16 O King of the Daityas, from Your Majesty, who come from such a noble family and who are able to give charity munificently, I ask only three paces of land, to the measurement of My steps.

17 O King, controller of the entire universe, although you are very munificent and are able to give Me as much land as I want, I do not want anything from you that is unnecessary. If a learned brāhmaṇa takes charity from others only according to his needs, he does not become entangled in sinful activities.

18 Bali Mahārāja said: O son of a brāhmaṇa, Your instructions are as good as those of learned and elderly persons. Nonetheless, You are a boy, and Your intelligence is insufficient. Thus You are not very prudent in regard to Your self-interest.

19 I am able to give You an entire island because I am the proprietor of the three divisions of the universe. You have come to take something from me and have pleased me by Your sweet words, but You are asking only three paces of land. Therefore You are not very intelligent.

20 O small boy, one who approaches me to beg something should not have to ask anything more, anywhere. Therefore, if You wish, You may ask from me as much land as will suffice to maintain You according to Your needs.

21 The Personality of Godhead said: O my dear King, even the entirety of whatever there may be within the three worlds to satisfy one's senses cannot satisfy a person whose senses are uncontrolled.

22 If I were not satisfied with three paces of land, then surely I would not be satisfied even with possessing one of the seven islands, consisting of nine varṣas. Even if I possessed one island, I would hope to get others.

23 We have heard that although powerful kings like Mahārāja Pṛthu and Mahārāja Gaya achieved proprietorship over the seven dvīpas, they could not achieve satisfaction or find the end of their ambitions.

24 One should be satisfied with whatever he achieves by his previous destiny, for discontent can never bring happiness. A person who is not self-controlled will not be happy even with possessing the three worlds.

25 Material existence causes discontent in regard to fulfilling one's lusty desires and achieving more and more money. This is the cause for the continuation of material life, which is full of repeated birth and death. But one who is satisfied by that which is obtained by destiny is fit for liberation from this material existence.

26 A brāhmaṇa who is satisfied with whatever is providentially obtained is increasingly enlightened with spiritual power, but the spiritual potency of a dissatisfied brāhmaṇa decreases, as fire diminishes in potency when water is sprinkled upon it.

27 Therefore, O King, from you, the best of those who give charity, I ask only three paces of land. By such a gift I shall be very pleased, for the way of happiness is to be fully satisfied to receive that which is absolutely needed.

28 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the Supreme Personality of Godhead had thus spoken

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to Bali Mahārāja, Bali smiled and told Him, “All right. Take whatever You like.” To confirm his promise to give Vāmanadeva the desired land, he then took up his waterpot.

29Understanding Lord Viṣṇu’s purpose, Śukrācārya, the best of the learned, immediately spoke as follows to his disciple, who was about to offer everything to Lord Vāmanadeva.

30Śukrācārya said: O son of Virocana, this brahmacārī in the form of a dwarf is directly the imperishable Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Accepting Kaśyapa Muni as His father and Aditi as His mother, He has now appeared in order to fulfill the interests of the demigods.

31You do not know what a dangerous position you have accepted by promising to give Him land. I do not think that this promise is good for you. It will bring great harm to the demons.

32This person falsely appearing as a brahmacārī is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who has come in this form to take away all your land, wealth, beauty, power, fame and education. After taking everything from you, He will deliver it to Indra, your enemy.

33You have promised to give Him three steps of land in charity, but when you give it He will occupy the three worlds. You are a rascal! You do not know what a great mistake you have made. After giving everything to Lord Viṣṇu, you will have no means of livelihood. How then shall you live?

34Vāmanadeva will first occupy the three worlds with one step, then He will take His second step and occupy everything in outer space, and then He will expand His universal body to occupy everything. Where will you offer Him the third step?

35You will certainly be unable to fulfill your promise, and I think that because of this inability your eternal residence will be in hell.

36Learned scholars do not praise that charity which endangers one’s own livelihood. Charity, sacrifice, austerity and fruitive activities are possible for one who is competent to earn his livelihood properly. [They are not possible for one who cannot maintain himself.]

37Therefore one who is in full knowledge should divide his accumulated wealth in five parts for religion, for reputation, for opulence, for sense gratification and for the maintenance of his family members. Such a person is happy in this world and in the next.

38One might argue that since you have already promised, how can you refuse? O best of the demons, just take from me the evidence of the Bahvr̥ca-śruti, which says that a promise is truthful preceded by the word om and untruthful if not.

39The Vedas enjoin that the factual result of the tree of the body is the good fruits and flowers derived from it. But if the bodily tree does not exist, there is no possibility of factual fruits and flowers. Even if the body is based on untruth, there cannot be factual fruits and flowers without the help of the bodily tree.

40When a tree is uprooted it immediately falls down and begins to dry up. Similarly, if one doesn’t take care of the body, which is supposed to be untruth in other words, if the untruth is uprooted the body undoubtedly becomes dry.

41The utterance of the word om signifies separation from one’s monetary assets. In other words, by uttering this word one becomes free from attachment to money because his money is taken away from him. To be without money is not very satisfactory, for in that position one cannot fulfill one’s desires. In other words, by using the word om one becomes poverty-stricken. Especially when one gives charity to a poor man or beggar, one remains unfulfilled in

self-realization and in sense gratification.

42Therefore, the safe course is to say no. Although it is a falsehood, it protects one completely, it draws the compassion of others toward oneself, and it gives one full facility to collect money from others for oneself. Nonetheless, if one always pleads that he has nothing, he is condemned, for he is a dead body while living, or while still breathing he should be killed.

43In flattering a woman to bring her under control, in joking, in a marriage ceremony, in earning one's livelihood, when one's life is in danger, in protecting cows and brahminical culture, or in protecting a person from an enemy's hand, falsity is never condemned.

SB 8.20: Bali Mahārāja Surrenders the Universe

The summary of this Twentieth Chapter is as follows. Despite his knowledge that Lord Vāmanadeva was cheating him, Bali Mahārāja gave everything to the Lord in charity, and thus the Lord extended His body and assumed a gigantic form as Lord Viṣṇu.

After hearing the instructive advice of Śukrācārya, Bali Mahārāja became contemplative. Because it is the duty of a householder to maintain the principles of religion, economic development and sense gratification, Bali Mahārāja thought it improper to withdraw his promise to the *brahmacārī*. To lie or fail to honor a promise given to a *brahmacārī* is never proper, for lying is the most sinful activity. Everyone should be afraid of the sinful reactions to lying, for mother earth cannot even bear the weight of a sinful liar. The spreading of a kingdom or empire is temporary; if there is no benefit for the general public, such expansion has no value. Previously, all the great kings and emperors expanded their kingdoms with a regard for the welfare of the people in general. Indeed, while engaged in such activities for the benefit of the general public, eminent men sometimes even sacrificed their lives. It is said that one who is glorious in his activities is always living and never dies. Therefore, fame should be the aim of life, and even if one becomes poverty-stricken for the sake of a good reputation, that is not a loss. Bali Mahārāja thought that even if this *brahmacārī*, Vāmanadeva, were Lord Viṣṇu, if the Lord accepted his charity and then again arrested him, Bali Mahārāja would not envy Him. Considering all these points, Bali Mahārāja finally gave in charity everything he possessed.

Lord Vāmanadeva then immediately extended Himself into a universal body. By the mercy of Lord Vāmanadeva, Bali Mahārāja could see that the Lord is all-pervading and that everything rests in His body. Bali Mahārāja could see Lord Vāmanadeva as the Supreme Viṣṇu, wearing a helmet, yellow garments, the mark of Śrīvatsa, the Kaustubha jewel, a flower garland, and ornaments decorating His entire body. The Lord gradually covered the entire surface of the world, and by extending His body He covered the entire sky. With His hands He covered all directions, and with His second footstep He covered the entire upper planetary system. Therefore there was no vacant place where He could take His third footstep.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, when Bali Mahārāja was thus advised by his spiritual master, Śukrācārya, his family priest, he remained silent for some time, and then, after full deliberation, he replied to his spiritual master as follows.

2Bali Mahārāja said: As you have already stated, the principle of religion that does not hinder one's economic development, sense gratification, fame and means of livelihood is the real occupational duty of the householder. I also think that this religious principle is correct.

3I am the grandson of Mahārāja Prahlāda. How can I withdraw my promise because of greed for money when I have already said that I shall give this land? How can I behave like an ordinary cheater, especially toward a brāhmaṇa?

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4There is nothing more sinful than untruthfulness. Because of this, mother earth once said, “I can bear any heavy thing except a person who is a liar.”

5I do not fear hell, poverty, an ocean of distress, fall down from my position or even death itself as much as I fear cheating a brāhmaṇa.

6My lord, you can also see that all the material opulences of this world are certainly separated from their possessor at death. Therefore, if the brāhmaṇa Vāmanadeva is not satisfied by whatever gifts one has given, why not please Him with the riches one is destined to lose at death?

7Dadhīci, Śibi and many other great personalities were willing to sacrifice even their lives for the benefit of the people in general. This is the evidence of history. So why not give up this insignificant land? What is the serious consideration against it?

8O best of the brāhmaṇas, certainly the great demoniac kings who were never reluctant to fight enjoyed this world, but in due course of time everything they had was taken away, except their reputation, by which they continue to exist. In other words, one should try to achieve a good reputation instead of anything else.

9O best of the brāhmaṇas, many men have laid down their lives on the battlefield, being unafraid of fighting, but rarely has one gotten the chance to give his accumulated wealth faithfully to a saintly person who creates holy places.

10By giving charity, a benevolent and merciful person undoubtedly becomes even more auspicious, especially when he gives charity to a person like your good self. Under the circumstances, I must give this little brahmacārī whatever charity He wants from me.

11O great sage, great saintly persons like you, being completely aware of the Vedic principles for performing ritualistic ceremonies and yajñas, worship Lord Viṣṇu in all circumstances. Therefore, whether that same Lord Viṣṇu has come here to give me all benedictions or to punish me as an enemy, I must carry out His order and give Him the requested tract of land without hesitation.

12Although He is Viṣṇu Himself, out of fear He has covered Himself in the form of a brāhmaṇa to come to me begging. Under the circumstances, because He has assumed the form of a brāhmaṇa, even if He irreligiously arrests me or even kills me, I shall not retaliate, although He is my enemy.

13If this brāhmaṇa really is Lord Viṣṇu, who is worshiped by Vedic hymns, He would never give up His widespread reputation; either He would lie down having been killed by me, or He would kill me in a fight.

14ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, the spiritual master, Śukrācārya, being inspired by the Supreme Lord, cursed his exalted disciple Bali Mahārāja, who was so magnanimous and fixed in truthfulness that instead of respecting his spiritual master’s instructions, he wanted to disobey his order.

15Although you have no knowledge, you have become a so-called learned person, and therefore you dare be so impudent as to disobey my order. Because of disobeying me, you shall very soon be bereft of all your opulence.

16Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Even after being cursed in this way by his own spiritual master, Bali Mahārāja, being a great personality, never deviated from his determination.

Therefore, according to custom, he first offered water to Vāmanadeva and then offered Him the gift of land he had promised.

17Bali Mahārāja's wife, known as Vindhyāvali, who was decorated with a necklace of pearls, immediately came and had a large golden waterpot brought there, full of water with which to worship the Lord by washing His feet.

18Bali Mahārāja, the worshiper of Lord Vāmanadeva, jubilantly washed the Lord's lotus feet and then took the water on his head, for that water delivers the entire universe.

19At that time, the residents of the higher planetary system, namely the demigods, the Gandharvas, the Vidyādharas, the Siddhas and the Cāraṇas, all being very pleased by Bali Mahārāja's simple, nonduplicitous act, praised his qualities and showered upon him millions of flowers.

20The Gandharvas, the Kimpuruṣas and the Kinnaras sounded thousands and thousands of kettledrums and trumpets again and again, and they sang in great jubilation, declaring, "How exalted a person is Bali Mahārāja, and what a difficult task he has performed! Even though he knew that Lord Viṣṇu was on the side of his enemies, he nonetheless gave the Lord the entire three worlds in charity."

21The unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of Vāmana, then began increasing in size, acting in terms of the material energy, until everything in the universe was within His body, including the earth, the planetary systems, the sky, the directions, the various holes in the universe, the seas, the oceans, the birds, beasts, human beings, the demigods and the great saintly persons.

22Bali Mahārāja, along with all the priests, ācāryas and members of the assembly, observed the Supreme Personality of Godhead's universal body, which was full of six opulences. That body contained everything within the universe, including all the gross material elements, the senses, the sense objects, the mind, intelligence and false ego, the various kinds of living entities, and the actions and reactions of the three modes of material nature.

23Thereafter, Bali Mahārāja, who was occupying the seat of King Indra, could see the lower planetary systems, such as Rasātala, on the soles of the feet of the Lord's universal form. He saw on the Lord's feet the surface of the globe, on the surface of His calves all the mountains, on His knees the various birds, and on His thighs the varieties of air.

24Bali Mahārāja saw beneath the garments of the Lord, who acts wonderfully, the evening twilight. In the Lord's private parts he saw the Prajāpatis, and in the round portion of the waist he saw himself with his confidential associates. In the Lord's navel he saw the sky, on the Lord's waist he saw the seven oceans, and on the Lord's bosom he saw all the clusters of stars.

25-29My dear King, on the heart of Lord Murāri he saw religion; on the chest, both pleasing words and truthfulness; in the mind, the moon; on the bosom, the goddess of fortune, with a lotus flower in her hand; on the neck, all the Vedas and all sound vibrations; on the arms, all the demigods, headed by King Indra; in both ears, all the directions; on the head, the upper planetary systems; on the hair, the clouds; in the nostrils, the wind; on the eyes, the sun; and in the mouth, fire. From His words came all the Vedic mantras, on His tongue was the demigod of water, Varuṇadeva, on His eyebrows were the regulative principles, and on His eyelids were day and night. [When His eyes were open it was daytime, and when they were closed it was night.] On His forehead was anger, and on His lips was greed. O King, in His touch were lusty desires, in His semen were all the waters, on His back was irreligion, and in His wonderful

activities or steps was the fire of sacrifice. On His shadow was death, in His smile was the illusory energy, and on the hairs of His body were all the drugs and herbs. In His veins were all the rivers, on His nails were all the stones, in His intelligence were Lord Brahmā, the demigods and the great saintly persons, and throughout His entire body and senses were all living entities, moving and stationary. Bali Mahārāja thus saw everything in the gigantic body of the Lord.

300 King, when all the demons, the followers of Mahārāja Bali, saw the universal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who held everything within His body, when they saw in the Lord's hand His disc, known as the Sudarśana cakra, which generates intolerable heat, and when they heard the tumultuous sound of His bow, all of these caused lamentation within their hearts.

31The Lord's conchshell, named Pāṣcajanya, which made sounds like that of a cloud; the very forceful club named Kaumodakī; the sword named Vidyādhara, with a shield decorated with hundreds of moonlike spots; and also Akṣayasāyaka, the best of quivers—all of these appeared together to offer prayers to the Lord.

32-33These associates, headed by Sunanda and other chief associates and accompanied by all the predominating deities of the various planets, offered prayers to the Lord, who wore a brilliant helmet, bracelets, and glittering earrings that resembled fish. On the Lord's bosom were the lock of hair called Śrīvatsa and the transcendental jewel named Kaustubha. He wore a yellow garment, covered by a belt, and He was decorated by a flower garland, surrounded by bees. Manifesting Himself in this way, O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose activities are wonderful, covered the entire surface of the earth with one footstep, the sky with His body, and all directions with His arms.

34As the Lord took His second step, He covered the heavenly planets. And not even a spot remained for the third step, for the Lord's foot extended higher and higher, beyond Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapaloka and even Satyaloka.

SB 8.21: Bali Mahārāja Arrested by the Lord

This chapter describes how Lord Viṣṇu, desiring to advertise the glories of Bali Mahārāja, arrested him for not fulfilling his promise in regard to the Lord's third step.

With the second step the Supreme Personality of Godhead reached the topmost planet of the universe, Brahmāloka, which He diminished in beauty by the effulgence of His toenails. Thus Lord Brahmā, accompanied by great sages like Marīci and the predominating deities of all the higher planets, offered humble prayers and worship to the Lord. They washed the Lord's feet and worshiped Him with all paraphernalia. Rkṣarāja, Jāmbavān, played his bugle to vibrate the glories of the Lord. When Bali Mahārāja was deprived of all his possessions, the demons were very angry. Although Bali Mahārāja warned them not to do so, they took up weapons against Lord Viṣṇu. All of them were defeated, however, by Lord Viṣṇu's eternal associates, and, in accordance with Bali Mahārāja's order, they all entered the lower planets of the universe. Understanding Lord Viṣṇu's purpose, Garuḍa, the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu, immediately arrested Bali Mahārāja with the ropes of Varuṇa. When Bali Mahārāja was thus reduced to a helpless position, Lord Viṣṇu asked him for the third step of land. Because Lord Viṣṇu appreciated Bali Mahārāja's determination and integrity, when Bali Mahārāja was unable to fulfill his promise, Lord Viṣṇu ascertained that the place for him would be the planet Sutala, which is better than the planets of heaven.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When Lord Brahmā, who was born of a lotus flower, saw that

the effulgence of his residence, Brahmāloka, had been reduced by the glaring effulgence from the toenails of Lord Vāmanadeva, he approached the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Brahmā was accompanied by all the great sages, headed by Marīci, and by yogīs like Sanandana, but in the presence of that glaring effulgence, O King, even Lord Brahmā and his associates seemed insignificant.

2-3 Among the great personalities who came to worship the lotus feet of the Lord were those who had attained perfection in self-control and regulative principles, as well as experts in logic, history, general education and the Vedic literature known as kalpe [dealing with old historical incidents]. Others were experts in the Vedic corollaries like Brahma-saṁhitā, all the other knowledge of the Vedas [Sāma, Yajur, Ṛg and Atharva], and also the supplementary Vedic knowledge [Āyurveda, Dhanurveda, etc.]. Others were those who had been freed of the reactions to fruitive activities by transcendental knowledge awakened by practice of yoga. And still others were those who had attained residence in Brahmāloka not by ordinary karma but by advanced Vedic knowledge. After devotedly worshiping the upraised lotus feet of the Supreme Lord with oblations of water, Lord Brahmā, who was born of the lotus emanating from Lord Viṣṇu's navel, offered prayers to the Lord.

4 O King, the water from Lord Brahmā's kamaṇḍalu washed the lotus feet of Lord Vāmanadeva, who is known as Urukrama, the wonderful actor. Thus that water became so pure that it was transformed into the water of the Ganges, which went flowing down from the sky, purifying the three worlds like the pure fame of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

5 Lord Brahmā and all the predominating deities of the various planetary systems began to worship Lord Vāmanadeva, their supreme master, who had reduced Himself from His all-pervading form to His original form. They collected all the ingredients and paraphernalia for this worship.

6-7 They worshiped the Lord by offering fragrant flowers, water, pādyā and arghya, sandalwood pulp and aguru pulp, incense, lamps, fused rice, unbroken grains, fruits, roots and sprouts. While so doing, they offered prayers indicating the glorious activities of the Lord and shouted "Jaya! Jaya!" They also danced, played instruments, sang, sounded conchshells and beat kettledrums, in this way worshiping the Lord.

8 Jāmbavān, king of the bears, also joined in the ceremony. Sounding his bugle in all directions, he declared a great festival for Lord Vāmanadeva's victory.

9 When the demoniac followers of Mahārāja Bali saw that their master, who had been determined in performing sacrifice, had lost all his possessions to Vāmanadeva, who had taken them away on the plea of begging three paces of land, they were very angry and spoke as follows.

10 "This Vāmana is certainly not a brāhmaṇa but the best of cheaters, Lord Viṣṇu. Assuming the form of a brāhmaṇa, He has covered His own form, and thus He is working for the interests of the demigods.

11 "Our lord, Bali Mahārāja, because of his position in performing the yaṅṅa, has given up the power to punish. Taking advantage of this, our eternal enemy, Viṣṇu, dressed in the form of a brahmacārī beggar, has taken away all his possessions.

12 "Our lord, Bali Mahārāja, is always fixed in truthfulness, and this is especially so at present, since he has been initiated into performing a sacrifice. He is always kind and merciful toward the brāhmaṇas, and he cannot at any time speak lies.

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13“Therefore it is our duty to kill this Vāmanadeva, Lord Viṣṇu. It is our religious principle and the way to serve our master.” After making this decision, the demoniac followers of Mahārāja Bali took up their various weapons with a view to killing Vāmanadeva.

14O King, the demons, aggravated by their usual anger, took their lances and tridents in hand, and against the will of Bali Mahārāja they pushed forward to kill Lord Vāmanadeva.

15O King, when the associates of Lord Viṣṇu saw the soldiers of the demons coming forward in violence, they smiled. Taking up their weapons, they forbade the demons to continue their attempt.

16-17Nanda, Sunanda, Jaya, Vijaya, Prabala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudākṣa, Viṣvaksena, Patatrirāt [Garuḍa], Jayanta, Śrutadeva, Puṣpadanta and Sātvata were all associates of Lord Viṣṇu. They were as powerful as ten thousand elephants, and now they began killing the soldiers of the demons.

18When Bali Mahārāja saw that his own soldiers were being killed by the associates of Lord Viṣṇu, he remembered the curse of Śukrācārya and forbade his soldiers to continue fighting.

19O Vipracitti, O Rāhu, O Nemi, please hear my words! Don't fight. Stop immediately, for the present time is not in our favor.

20O Daityas, by human efforts no one can supersede the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can bring happiness and distress to all living entities.

21The supreme time factor, which represents the Supreme Person, was previously in our favor and not in favor of the demigods, but now that same time factor is against us.

22No one can surpass the time representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by material power, by the counsel of ministers, by intelligence, by diplomacy, by fortresses, by mystic mantras, by drugs, by herbs or by any other means.

23Previously, being empowered by providence, you defeated a great number of such followers of Lord Viṣṇu. But today those same followers, having defeated us, are roaring in jubilation like lions.

24Unless providence is in our favor, we shall not be able to gain victory. Therefore we must wait for that favorable time when our defeating them will be possible.

25Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, in accordance with the order of their master, Bali Mahārāja, all the chiefs of the demons and the Daityas entered the lower regions of the universe, to which they were driven by the soldiers of Viṣṇu.

26Thereafter, on the day of soma-pāna, after the sacrifice was finished, Garuḍa, king of the birds, understanding the desire of his master, arrested Bali Mahārāja with the ropes of Varuṇa.

27When Bali Mahārāja was thus arrested by Lord Viṣṇu, who is the most powerful, there was a great roar of lamentation in all directions throughout the upper and lower planetary systems of the universe.

28O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāmanadeva, then spoke to Bali Mahārāja, the most liberal and celebrated personality whom He had arrested with the ropes of Varuṇa. Bali Mahārāja had lost all bodily luster, but he was nonetheless fixed in his determination.

29O King of the demons, you have promised to give Me three steps of land, but I have

occupied the entire universe with two steps. Now think about where I should put My third.

30As far as the sun and moon shine with the stars and as far as the clouds pour rain, all the land throughout the universe is in your possession.

31Of these possessions, with one step I have occupied Bhūrlōka, and with My body I have occupied the entire sky and all directions. And in your presence, with My second step, I have occupied the upper planetary system.

32Because you have been unable to give charity according to your promise, the rule is that you should go down to live in the hellish planets. Therefore, in accordance with the order of Śukrācārya, your spiritual master, now go down and live there.

33Far from being elevated to the heavenly planets or fulfilling one's desire, one who does not properly give a beggar what he has promised falls down to a hellish condition of life.

34Being falsely proud of your possessions, you promised to give Me land, but you could not fulfill your promise. Therefore, because your promise was false, you must live for a few years in hellish life.

SB 8.22: Bali Mahārāja Surrenders His Life

The summary of this Twenty-second Chapter is as follows. The Supreme Personality of Godhead was pleased by the behavior of Bali Mahārāja. Thus the Lord placed him on the planet Sutala, and there, after bestowing benedictions upon him, the Lord agreed to become his doorman.

Bali Mahārāja was extremely truthful. Being unable to keep his promise, he was very much afraid, for he knew that one who has deviated from truthfulness is insignificant in the eyes of society. An exalted person can suffer the consequences of hellish life, but he is very much afraid of being defamed for deviation from the truth. Bali Mahārāja agreed with great pleasure to accept the punishment awarded him by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Bali Mahārāja's dynasty there were many *asuras* who because of their enmity toward Viṣṇu had achieved a destination more exalted than that of many mystic *yogīs*. Bali Mahārāja specifically remembered the determination of Prahlāda Mahārāja in devotional service. Considering all these points, he decided to give his head in charity as the place for Viṣṇu's third step. Bali Mahārāja also considered how great personalities give up their family relationships and material possessions to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, they sometimes even sacrifice their lives for the satisfaction of the Lord, just to become His personal servants. Accordingly, by following in the footsteps of previous *ācāryas* and devotees, Bali Mahārāja perceived himself successful.

While Bali Mahārāja, having been arrested by the ropes of Varuṇa, was offering prayers to the Lord, his grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja appeared there and described how the Supreme Personality of Godhead had delivered Bali Mahārāja by taking his possessions in a tricky way. While Prahlāda Mahārāja was present, Lord Brahmā and Bali's wife, Vindhyāvali, described the supremacy of the Supreme Lord. Since Bali Mahārāja had given everything to the Lord, they prayed for his release. The Lord then described how a nondevotee's possession of wealth is a danger whereas a devotee's opulence is a benediction from the Lord. Then, being pleased with Bali Mahārāja, the Supreme Lord offered His disc to protect Bali Mahārāja and promised to remain with him.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, although the Supreme Personality of Godhead was

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superficially seen to have acted mischievously toward Bali Mahārāja, Bali Mahārāja was fixed in his determination. Considering himself not to have fulfilled his promise, he spoke as follows.

2Bali Mahārāja said: O best Personality of Godhead, most worshipable for all the demigods, if You think that my promise has become false, I shall certainly rectify matters to make it truthful. I cannot allow my promise to be false. Please, therefore, place Your third lotus footstep on my head.

3I do not fear being deprived of all my possessions, living in hellish life, being arrested for poverty by the ropes of Varuṇa or being punished by You as much as I fear defamation.

4Although a father, mother, brother or friend may sometimes punish one as a well-wisher, they never punish their subordinate like this. But because You are the most worshipable Lord, I regard the punishment You have given me as most exalted.

5Since Your Lordship is indirectly the greatest well-wisher of us demons, You act for our best welfare by posing as if our enemy. Because demons like us always aspire for a position of false prestige, by chastising us You give us the eyes by which to see the right path.

6-7Many demons who were continuously inimical toward You finally achieved the perfection of great mystic yogīs. Your Lordship can perform one work to serve many purposes, and consequently, although You have punished me in many ways, I do not feel ashamed of having been arrested by the ropes of Varuṇa, nor do I feel aggrieved.

8My grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja is famous, being recognized by all Your devotees. Although harassed in many ways by his father, Hiraṇyakaśipu, he still remained faithful, taking shelter at Your lotus feet.

9What is the use of the material body, which automatically leaves its owner at the end of life? And what is the use of all one's family members, who are actually plunderers taking away money that is useful for the service of the Lord in spiritual opulence? What is the use of a wife? She is only the source of increasing material conditions. And what is the use of family, home, country and community? Attachment for them merely wastes the valuable energy of one's lifetime.

10My grandfather, the best of all men, who achieved unlimited knowledge and was worshipable for everyone, was afraid of the common men in this world. Being fully convinced of the substantiality afforded by shelter at Your lotus feet, He took shelter of Your lotus feet, against the will of his father and demoniac friends, who were killed by Your own self.

11Only by providence have I been forcibly brought under Your lotus feet and deprived of all my opulence. Because of the illusion created by temporary opulence, people in general, who live under material conditions, facing accidental death at every moment, do not understand that this life is temporary. Only by providence have I been saved from that condition.

12Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O best of the Kurus, while Bali Mahārāja was describing his fortunate position in this way, the most dear devotee of the Lord, Prahlāda Mahārāja, appeared there, like the moon rising in the nighttime.

13Then Bali Mahārāja saw his grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja, the most fortunate personality, whose dark body resembled black ointment for the eyes. His tall, elegant figure was dressed in yellow garments, he had long arms, and his beautiful eyes were like the petals of a lotus. He was very dear and pleasing to everyone.

14Being bound by the ropes of Varuṇa, Bali Mahārāja could not offer befitting respect to Prahlāda Mahārāja as he had before. Rather, he simply offered respectful obeisances with his head, his eyes being inundated with tears and his face lowered in shame.

15When the great personality Prahlāda Mahārāja saw that the Supreme Lord was sitting there, surrounded and worshiped by His intimate associates like Sunanda, he was overwhelmed with tears of jubilation. Approaching the Lord and falling to the ground, he offered obeisances to the Lord with his head.

16Prahāda Mahārāja said: My Lord, it is Your Lordship who gave this Bali the very great opulence of the post of heavenly king, and now, today, it is You who have taken it all away. I think You have acted with equal beauty in both ways. Because his exalted position as King of heaven was putting him in the darkness of ignorance, You have done him a very merciful favor by taking away all his opulence.

17Material opulence is so bewildering that it makes even a learned, self-controlled man forget to search for the goal of self-realization. But the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of the universe, can see everything by His will. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, Lord Brahmā then began to speak to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, within the hearing of Prahlāda Mahārāja, who stood nearby with folded hands.

19But Bali Mahārāja's chaste wife, afraid and aggrieved at seeing her husband arrested, immediately offered obeisances to Lord Vāmanadeva [Upendra]. She folded her hands and spoke as follows.

20Śrīmatī Vindhyāvali said: O my Lord, You have created the entire universe for the enjoyment of Your personal pastimes, but foolish, unintelligent men have claimed proprietorship for material enjoyment. Certainly they are shameless agnostics. Falsely claiming proprietorship, they think they can give charity and enjoy. In such a condition, what good can they do for You, who are the independent creator, maintainer and annihilator of this universe?

21Lord Brahmā said: O well-wisher and master of all living entities, O worshipable Deity of all the demigods, O all-pervading Personality of Godhead, now this man has been sufficiently punished, for You have taken everything. Now You can release him. He does not deserve to be punished more.

22Bali Mahārāja had already offered everything to Your Lordship. Without hesitation, he has offered his land, the planets and whatever else he earned by his pious activities, including even his own body.

23By offering even water, newly grown grass, or flower buds at Your lotus feet, those who maintain no mental duplicity can achieve the most exalted position within the spiritual world. This Bali Mahārāja, without duplicity, has now offered everything in the three worlds. How then can he deserve to suffer from arrest?

24The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Lord Brahmā, because of material opulence a foolish person becomes dull-witted and mad. Thus he has no respect for anyone within the three worlds and defies even My authority. To such a person I show special favor by first taking away all his possessions.

25While rotating in the cycle of birth and death again and again in different species because of

his own fruitive activities, the dependent living entity, by good fortune, may happen to become a human being. This human birth is very rarely obtained.

26 If a human being is born in an aristocratic family or a higher status of life, if he performs wonderful activities, if he is youthful, if he has personal beauty, a good education and good wealth, and if he is nonetheless not proud of his opulences, it is to be understood that he is especially favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

27 Although aristocratic birth and other such opulences are impediments to advancement in devotional service because they are causes of false prestige and pride, these opulences never disturb a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

28 Bali Mahārāja has become the most famous among the demons and nonbelievers, for in spite of being bereft of all material opulences, he is fixed in his devotional service.

29-30 Although bereft of his riches, fallen from his original position, defeated and arrested by his enemies, rebuked and deserted by his relatives and friends, although suffering the pain of being bound and although rebuked and cursed by his spiritual master, Bali Mahārāja, being fixed in his vow, did not give up his truthfulness. It was certainly with pretension that I spoke about religious principles, but he did not give up religious principles, for he is true to his word.

31 The Lord continued: Because of his great tolerance, I have given him a place not obtainable even by the demigods. He will become King of the heavenly planets during the period of the Manu known as Sāvarni.

32 Until Bali Mahārāja achieves the position of King of heaven, he shall live on the planet Sutala, which was made by Viśvakarmā according to My order. Because it is especially protected by Me, it is free from mental and bodily miseries, fatigue, dizziness, defeat and all other disturbances. Bali Mahārāja, you may now go live there peacefully.

33 O Bali Mahārāja [Indrasena], now you may go to the planet Sutala, which is desired even by the demigods. Live there peacefully, surrounded by your friends and relatives. All good fortune unto you.

34 On the planet Sutala, not even the predominating deities of other planets, what to speak of ordinary people, will be able to conquer you. As far as the demons are concerned, if they transgress your rule, My disc will kill them.

35 O great hero, I shall always be with you and give you protection in all respects along with your associates and paraphernalia. Moreover, you will always be able to see Me there.

36 Because there you will see My supreme prowess, your materialistic ideas and anxieties that have arisen from your association with the demons and Dānavas will immediately be vanquished.

SB 8.23: The Demigods Regain the Heavenly Planets

This chapter describes how Bali Mahārāja, along with his grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja, entered the planet Sutala and how the Supreme Personality of Godhead allowed Indra to reenter the heavenly planet.

The great soul Bali Mahārāja experienced that the highest gain in life is to attain devotional service under the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet in full surrender. Being fixed in this conclusion, his heart full of ecstatic devotion and his eyes full of tears, he offered obeisances to the Personality of Godhead and then, with his associates, entered the planet known as Sutala.

Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead satisfied the desire of Aditi and reinstalled Lord Indra. Prahlaḍa Mahārāja, being aware of Bali's release from arrest, then described the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in this material world. Prahlaḍa Mahārāja praised the Supreme Lord for creating the material world, for being equal to everyone and for being extremely liberal to the devotees, just like a desire tree. Indeed, Prahlaḍa Mahārāja said that the Lord is kind not only to His devotees but also to the demons. In this way he described the unlimited causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then, with folded hands, he offered his respectful obeisances unto the Lord, and after circumambulating the Lord he also entered the planet Sutala in accordance with the Lord's order. The Lord then ordered Śukrācārya to describe Bali Mahārāja's faults and discrepancies in executing the sacrificial ceremony. Śukrācārya became free from fruitive actions by chanting the holy name of the Lord, and he explained how chanting can diminish all the faults of the conditioned soul. He then completed Bali Mahārāja's sacrificial ceremony. All the great saintly persons accepted Lord Vāmanadeva as the benefactor of Lord Indra because He had returned Indra to his heavenly planet. They accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the maintainer of all the affairs of the universe. Being very happy, Indra, along with his associates, placed Vāmanadeva before him and reentered the heavenly planet in their airplane. Having seen the wonderful activities of Lord Viṣṇu in the sacrificial arena of Bali Mahārāja, all the demigods, saintly persons, Pitās, Bhūtas and Siddhas glorified the Lord again and again. The chapter concludes by saying that the most auspicious function of the conditioned soul is to chant and hear about the glorious activities of Lord Viṣṇu.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the supreme, ancient, eternal Personality of Godhead had thus spoken to Bali Mahārāja, who is universally accepted as a pure devotee of the Lord and therefore a great soul, Bali Mahārāja, his eyes filled with tears, his hands folded and his voice faltering in devotional ecstasy, responded as follows.

2Bali Mahārāja said: What a wonderful effect there is in even attempting to offer respectful obeisances to You! I merely endeavored to offer You obeisances, but nonetheless the attempt was as successful as those of pure devotees. The causeless mercy You have shown to me, a fallen demon, was never achieved even by the demigods or the leaders of the various planets.

3Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After speaking in this way, Bali Mahārāja offered his obeisances first to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, and then to Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. Thus he was released from the bondage of the nāga-pāśa [the ropes of Varuṇa], and in full satisfaction he entered the planet known as Sutala.

4Thus having delivered the proprietorship of the heavenly planets to Indra and having fulfilled the desire of Aditi, mother of the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead ruled the affairs of the universe.

5When Prahlaḍa Mahārāja heard how Bali Mahārāja, his grandson and descendant, had been released from bondage and had achieved the benediction of the Lord, he spoke as follows in a tone of greatly ecstatic devotion.

6Prahlaḍa Mahārāja said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are universally worshiped; even Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva worship Your lotus feet. Yet although You are such a great personality, You have kindly promised to protect us, the demons. I think that such kindness has never been achieved even by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva or the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, what to speak of other demigods or common people.

7O supreme shelter of everyone, great personalities like Brahmā enjoy their perfection simply

by tasting the honey of rendering service at Your lotus feet. But as for us, who are all rogues and debauchees born of an envious family of demons, how have we received Your mercy? It has been possible only because Your mercy is causeless.

8O my Lord, Your pastimes are all wonderfully performed by Your inconceivable spiritual energy; and by her perverted reflection, the material energy, You have created all the universes. As the Supersoul of all living entities, You are aware of everything, and therefore You are certainly equal toward everyone. Nonetheless, You favor Your devotees. This is not partiality, however, for Your characteristic is just like that of a desire tree, which yields everything according to one's desire.

9The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear son Prahlāda, all good fortune unto you. For the time being, please go to the place known as Sutala and there enjoy happiness with your grandson and your other relatives and friends.

10The Supreme Personality of Godhead assured Prahlāda Mahārāja: You shall be able to see Me there in My usual feature with conchshell, disc, club and lotus in My hand. Because of your transcendental bliss due to always personally seeing Me, you will have no further bondage to fruitive activities.

11-12Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Accompanied by Bali Mahārāja, my dear King Parīkṣit, Prahlāda Mahārāja, the master of all the chiefs of the demons, took the Supreme Lord's order on his head with folded hands. After saying yes to the Lord, circumambulating Him and offering Him respectful obeisances, he entered the lower planetary system known as Sutala.

13Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, thereafter addressed Śukrācārya, who was sitting nearby in the midst of the assembly with the priests [brahma, hotā, udgātā and adhvaryu]. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, these priests were all brahma-vādīs, followers of the Vedic principles for performing sacrifices.

14O best of the brāhmaṇas, Śukrācārya, please describe the fault or discrepancy in your disciple Bali Mahārāja, who engaged in performing sacrifices. This fault will be nullified when judged in the presence of qualified brāhmaṇas.

15Śukrācārya said: My Lord, You are the enjoyer and lawgiver in all performances of sacrifice, and You are the yajña-puruṣa, the person to whom all sacrifices are offered. If one has fully satisfied You, where is the chance of discrepancies or faults in his performances of sacrifice?

16There may be discrepancies in pronouncing the mantras and observing the regulative principles, and, moreover, there may be discrepancies in regard to time, place, person and paraphernalia. But when Your Lordship's holy name is chanted, everything becomes faultless.

17Lord Viṣṇu, I must nonetheless act in obedience to Your order because obeying Your order is most auspicious and is the first duty of everyone.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: In this way, the most powerful Śukrācārya accepted the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead with full respect. Along with the best brāhmaṇas, he began to compensate for the discrepancies in the sacrifices performed by Bali Mahārāja.

19O King Parīkṣit, thus having taken all the land of Bali Mahārāja by begging, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vāmanadeva, delivered to His brother Indra all the land taken away by Indra's enemy.

20-21Lord Brahmā [the master of King Dakṣa and all other Prajāpatīs], accompanied by all the

demigods, the great saintly persons, the inhabitants of Pitṛloka, the Manus, the munis, and such leaders as Dakṣa, Bhṛgu and Aṅgirā, as well as Kārttikeya and Lord Śiva, accepted Lord Vāmanadeva as the protector of everyone. He did this for the pleasure of Kaśyapa Muni and his wife Aditi and for the welfare of all the inhabitants of the universe, including their various leaders.

22-23O King Parīkṣit, Indra was considered the King of all the universe, but the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, wanted Upendra, Lord Vāmanadeva, as the protector of the Vedas, the principles of religion, fame, opulence, auspiciousness, vows, elevation to the higher planetary system, and liberation. Thus they accepted Upendra, Lord Vāmanadeva, as the supreme master of everything. This decision made all living entities extremely happy.

24Thereafter, along with all the leaders of the heavenly planets, Indra, the King of heaven, placed Lord Vāmanadeva before him and, with the approval of Lord Brahmā, brought Him to the heavenly planet in a celestial airplane.

25Indra, King of heaven, being protected by the arms of Vāmanadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thus regained his rule of the three worlds and was reinstated in his own position, supremely opulent, fearless and fully satisfied.

26-27Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Kārttikeya, the great sage Bhṛgu, other saintly persons, the inhabitants of Pitṛloka and all other living entities present, including the inhabitants of Siddhaloka and living entities who travel in outer space by airplane, all glorified the uncommon activities of Lord Vāmanadeva. O King, while chanting about and glorifying the Lord, they returned to their respective heavenly planets. They also praised the position of Aditi.

28O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, pleasure of your dynasty, I have now described to you everything about the wonderful activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Vāmanadeva. Those who hear about this are certainly freed from all the results of sinful activities.

29One who is subject to death cannot measure the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Trivikrama, Lord Viṣṇu, any more than he can count the number of atoms on the entire planet earth. No one, whether born already or destined to take birth, is able to do this. This has been sung by the great sage Vasiṣṭha.

30If one hears about the uncommon activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His various incarnations, he is certainly elevated to the higher planetary system or even brought back home, back to Godhead.

31Whenever the activities of Vāmanadeva are described in the course of a ritualistic ceremony, whether the ceremony be performed to please the demigods, to please one's forefathers in Pitṛloka, or to celebrate a social event like a marriage, that ceremony should be understood to be extremely auspicious.

SB 8.24: Matsya, the Lord's Fish Incarnation

This chapter describes the Supreme Personality of Godhead's incarnation as a fish, and it also describes the saving of Mahārāja Satyavrata from an inundation.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead expands Himself by *svāmśa* (His personal expansions) and *vibhinnāmśa* (His expansions as the living entities). As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.8), *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām*: the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears on this planet for the protection of the *sādhus*, or devotees, and for the destruction of the miscreants, or nondevotees. He especially descends to give protection to the cows, the

brāhmaṇas, the demigods, the devotees and the Vedic system of religion. Thus He appears in various forms—sometimes as a fish, sometimes a boar, sometimes Nṛsiṃhadeva, sometimes Vāmanadeva and so on—but in any form or incarnation, although He comes within the atmosphere of the material modes of nature, He is unaffected. This is a sign of His supreme controlling power. Although He comes within the material atmosphere, *māyā* cannot touch Him. Therefore, no material qualities can be attributed to Him in any degree.

Once, at the end of the previous *kalpa*, a demon named Hayagrīva wanted to take the Vedic knowledge away from Lord Brahmā at the time of annihilation. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead took the incarnation of a fish at the beginning of the period of Svāyambhuva Manu and saved the *Vedas*. During the reign of Cākṣuṣa Manu there was a king named Satyavrata, who was a great pious ruler. To save him, the Lord appeared as the fish incarnation for a second time. King Satyavrata later became the son of the sun-god and was known as Śrāddhadeva. He was established as Manu by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

To receive the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, King Satyavrata engaged in the austerity of subsisting only by drinking water. Once, while performing this austerity on the bank of the Kṛtamālā River and offering oblations of water with the palm of his hand, he found a small fish. The fish appealed to the King for protection, asking the King to keep Him in a safe place. Although the King did not know that the small fish was the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, as a king he gave shelter to the fish and kept Him in a water jug. The fish, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, wanted to show His potency to King Satyavrata, and thus He immediately expanded His body in such a way that He could no longer be kept in the jug of water. The King then put the fish in a big well, but the well was also too small. Then the King put the fish in a lake, but the lake was also unsuitable. Finally the King put the fish in the sea, but even the sea could not accommodate Him. Thus the King understood that the fish was no one else but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he requested the Lord to describe His incarnation as a fish. The Personality of Godhead, being pleased with the King, informed him that within a week there would be an inundation throughout the universe and that the fish incarnation would protect the King, along with the *ṛṣis*, herbs, seeds and other living entities, in a boat, which would be attached to the fish's horn. After saying this, the Lord disappeared. King Satyavrata offered respectful obeisances to the Supreme Lord and continued to meditate upon Him. In due course of time, annihilation took place, and the King saw a boat coming near. After getting aboard with learned *brāhmaṇas* and saintly persons, he offered prayers to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, and thus he taught Mahārāja Satyavrata and the saintly persons about Vedic knowledge from the core of the heart. King Satyavrata took his next birth as Vaivasvata Manu, who is mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Vivasvān manave prāha*: the sun-god spoke the science of *Bhagavad-gītā* to his son Manu. Because of being the son of Vivasvān, this Manu is known as Vaivasvata Manu.

1Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is eternally situated in His transcendental position, yet He descends to this material world and manifests Himself in various incarnations. His first incarnation was that of a great fish. O most powerful Śukadeva Gosvāmī, I wish to hear from you the pastimes of that fish incarnation.

2-3What was the purpose for which the Supreme Personality of Godhead accepted the abominable form of a fish, exactly as an ordinary living being accepts different forms under the laws of karma? The form of a fish is certainly condemned and full of terrible pain. O my lord, what was the purpose of this incarnation? Kindly explain this to us, for hearing about the pastimes of the Lord is auspicious for everyone.

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4Sūta Gosvāmī said: When Parīkṣit Mahārāja thus inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī, that most powerful saintly person began describing the pastimes of the Lord's incarnation as a fish.

5ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, for the sake of protecting the cows, brāhmaṇas, demigods, devotees, the Vedic literature, religious principles, and principles to fulfill the purpose of life, the Supreme Personality of Godhead accepts the forms of incarnations.

6Like the air passing through different types of atmosphere, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although appearing sometimes as a human being and sometimes as a lower animal, is always transcendental. Because He is above the material modes of nature, He is unaffected by higher and lower forms.

7O King Parīkṣit, at the end of the past millennium, at the end of Brahmā's day, because Lord Brahmā sleeps during the night, annihilation took place, and the three worlds were covered by the water of the ocean.

8At the end of Brahmā's day, when Brahmā felt sleepy and desired to lie down, the Vedas were emanating from his mouth, and the great demon named Hayagrīva stole the Vedic knowledge.

9Understanding the acts of the great demon Hayagrīva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is full of all opulences, assumed the form of a fish and saved the Vedas by killing the demon.

10During the Cākṣuṣa-manvantara there was a great king named Satyavrata who was a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Satyavrata performed austerities by subsisting only on water.

11In this [the present] millennium King Satyavrata later became the son of Vivasvān, the king of the sun planet, and was known as Śrāddhadeva. By the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he was given the post of Manu.

12One day while King Satyavrata was performing austerities by offering water on the bank of the river Kṛtamālā, a small fish appeared in the water in his palms.

13Satyavrata, the King of Draviḍadeśa, threw the fish into the water of the river along with the water in his palm, O King Parīkṣit, descendant of Bharata.

14With an appealing voice, the poor small fish said to King Satyavrata, who was very merciful: My dear King, protector of the poor, why are you throwing Me in the water of the river, where there are other aquatics who can kill Me? I am very much afraid of them.

15To please himself, King Satyavrata, not knowing that the fish was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, decided with great pleasure to give the fish protection.

16The merciful King, being moved by the pitiable words of the fish, placed the fish in a water jug and brought Him to his own residence.

17But in one night that fish grew so much that He could not move His body comfortably in the water of the pot. He then spoke to the King as follows.

18O My dear King, I do not like living in this waterpot with such great difficulty. Therefore, please find some better reservoir of water where I can live comfortably.

19Then, taking the fish out of the waterpot, the King threw Him in a large well. But within a moment the fish developed to the length of three cubits.

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20The fish then said: My dear King, this reservoir of water is not fit for My happy residence. Please give Me a more extensive pool of water, for I have taken shelter of you.

21O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the King took the fish from the well and threw Him in a lake, but the fish then assumed a gigantic form exceeding the extent of the water.

22The fish then said: O King, I am a large aquatic, and this water is not at all suitable for Me. Now kindly find some way to save Me. It would be better to put Me in the water of a lake that will never reduce.

23When thus requested, King Satyavrata took the fish to the largest reservoir of water. But when that also proved insufficient, the King at last threw the gigantic fish into the ocean.

24While being thrown in the ocean, the fish said to King Satyavrata: O hero, in this water there are very powerful and dangerous sharks that will eat Me. Therefore you should not throw Me in this place.

25After hearing these sweet words from the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of a fish, the King, being bewildered, asked Him: Who are You, sir? You simply bewilder us.

26My Lord, in one day You have expanded Yourself for hundreds of miles, covering the water of the river and the ocean. Before this I had never seen or heard of such an aquatic animal.

27My Lord, You are certainly the inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Hari. It is to show Your mercy to the living entities that You have now assumed the form of an aquatic.

28O my Lord, master of creation, maintenance and annihilation, O best of enjoyers, Lord Viṣṇu, You are the leader and destination of surrendered devotees like us. Therefore let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

29All Your pastimes and incarnations certainly appear for the welfare of all living entities. Therefore, my Lord, I wish to know the purpose for which You have assumed this form of a fish.

30O my Lord, possessing eyes like the petals of a lotus, the worship of the demigods, who are in the bodily concept of life, is fruitless in all respects. But because You are the supreme friend and dearest Supersoul of everyone, worship of Your lotus feet is never useless. You have therefore manifested Your form as a fish.

31Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When King Satyavrata spoke in this way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who at the end of the yuga had assumed the form of a fish to benefit His devotee and enjoy His pastimes in the water of inundation, responded as follows.

32The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O King, who can subdue your enemies, on the seventh day from today the three worldsBhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥwill all merge into the water of inundation.

33When all the three worlds merge into the water, a large boat sent by Me will appear before you.

34-35Thereafter, O King, you shall collect all types of herbs and seeds and load them on that great boat. Then, accompanied by the seven ṛṣis and surrounded by all kinds of living entities, you shall get aboard that boat, and without moroseness you shall easily travel with your companions on the ocean of inundation, the only illumination being the effulgence of the great

ṛṣis.

36Then, as the boat is tossed about by the powerful winds, attach the vessel to My horn by means of the great serpent Vāsuki, for I shall be present by your side.

37Pulling the boat, with you and all the ṛṣis in it, O King, I shall travel in the water of devastation until the night of Lord Brahmā's slumber is over.

38You will be thoroughly advised and favored by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me.

39After thus instructing the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead immediately disappeared. Then King Satyavrata began to wait for that time of which the Lord had instructed.

40After spreading kuśa with its tips pointing east, the saintly King, himself facing the northeast, sat down on the grass and began to meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who had assumed the form of a fish.

41Thereafter, gigantic clouds pouring incessant water swelled the ocean more and more. Thus the ocean began to overflow onto the land and inundate the entire world.

42As Satyavrata remembered the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he saw a boat coming near him. Thus he collected herbs and creepers, and, accompanied by saintly brāhmaṇas, he got aboard the boat.

43The saintly brāhmaṇas, being pleased with the King, said to him: O King, please meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Keśava. He will save us from this impending danger and arrange for our well-being.

44Then, while the King constantly meditated upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a large golden fish appeared in the ocean of inundation. The fish had one horn and was eight million miles long.

45Following the instructions formerly given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the King anchored the boat to the fish's horn, using the serpent Vāsuki as a rope. Thus being satisfied, he began offering prayers to the Lord.

46The King said: By the grace of the Lord, those who have lost their self-knowledge since time immemorial, and who because of this ignorance are involved in a material, conditional life full of miseries, obtain the chance to meet the Lord's devotee. I accept that Supreme Personality of Godhead as the supreme spiritual master.

47In hopes of becoming happy in this material world, the foolish conditioned soul performs fruitive activities that result only in suffering. But by rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one becomes free from such false desires for happiness. May my supreme spiritual master cut the knot of false desires from the core of my heart.

48One who wants to be free of material entanglement should take to the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and give up the contamination of ignorance, involving pious and impious activities. Thus one regains his original identity, just as a block of gold or silver sheds all dirt and becomes purified when treated with fire. May that inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead become our spiritual master, for He is the original spiritual master of all other spiritual masters.

49Neither all the demigods, nor the so-called gurus nor all other people, either independently or together, can offer mercy that equals even one ten-thousandth of Yours. Therefore I wish to take shelter of Your lotus feet.

50As a blind man, being unable to see, accepts another blind man as his leader, people who do not know the goal of life accept someone as a guru who is a rascal and a fool. But we are interested in self-realization. Therefore we accept You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as our spiritual master, for You are able to see in all directions and are omniscient like the sun.

51A materialistic so-called guru instructs his materialistic disciples about economic development and sense gratification, and because of such instructions the foolish disciples continue in the materialistic existence of ignorance. But Your Lordship gives knowledge that is eternal, and the intelligent person receiving such knowledge is quickly situated in his original constitutional position.

52My Lord, You are the supreme well-wishing friend of everyone, the dearest friend, the controller, the Supersoul, the supreme instructor and the giver of supreme knowledge and the fulfillment of all desires. But although You are within the heart, the foolish, because of lusty desires in the heart, cannot understand You.

53O Supreme Lord, for self-realization I surrender unto You, who are worshiped by the demigods as the supreme controller of everything. By Your instructions, exposing life's purpose, kindly cut the knot from the core of my heart and let me know the destination of my life.

54Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When Satyavrata had thus prayed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of a fish, the Lord, while moving in the water of inundation, explained to him the Absolute Truth.

55The Supreme Personality of Godhead thus explained to King Satyavrata the spiritual science known as sāṅkhya-yoga, the science by which one distinguishes between matter and spirit [in other words, bhakti-yoga], along with the instructions contained in the Purāṇas [the old histories] and the saṁhitās. The Lord explained Himself in all these literatures.

56While sitting in the boat, King Satyavrata, accompanied by the great saintly persons, listened to the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in regard to self-realization. These instructions were all from the eternal Vedic literature [brahma]. Thus the King and sages had no doubt about the Absolute Truth.

57At the end of the last inundation [during the period of Svāyambhuva Manu] the Supreme Personality of Godhead killed the demon named Hayagrīva and delivered all the Vedic literatures to Lord Brahmā when Lord Brahmā awakened from sleeping.

58King Satyavrata was illuminated with all Vedic knowledge by the mercy of Lord Viṣṇu, and in this period he has now taken birth as Vaivasvata Manu, the son of the sun-god.

59This story concerning the great King Satyavrata and the fish incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, is a great transcendental narration. Anyone who hears it is delivered from the reactions of sinful life.

60One who narrates this description of the Matsya incarnation and King Satyavrata will certainly have all his ambitions fulfilled, and he will undoubtedly return home, back to Godhead.

61I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who pretended

to be a gigantic fish, who restored the Vedic literature to Lord Brahmā when Lord Brahmā awakened from sleep, and who explained the essence of Vedic literature to King Satyavrata and the great saintly persons.

Canto 9: Liberation

SB 9.1: King Sudyumna Becomes a Woman

This chapter describes how Sudyumna became a woman and how the dynasty of Vaivasvata Manu was amalgamated with the Soma-varṁśa, the dynasty coming from the moon.

By the desire of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī told about the dynasty of Vaivasvata Manu, who was formerly King Satyavrata, the ruler of Draviḍa. While describing this dynasty, he also described how the Supreme Personality of Godhead, while lying down in the waters of devastation, gave birth to Lord Brahmā from a lotus generated from His navel. From the mind of Lord Brahmā, Marīci was generated, and his son was Kaśyapa. From Kaśyapa, through Aditi, Vivasvān was generated, and from Vivasvān came Śrāddhadeva Manu, who was born from the womb of Samjṣā. Śrāddhadeva's wife, Śraddhā, gave birth to ten sons, such as Ikṣvāku and Nṛga.

Śrāddhadeva, or Vaivasvata Manu, the father of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, was sonless before Ikṣvāku's birth, but by the grace of the great sage Vasiṣṭha he performed a *yajña* to satisfy Mitra and Varuṇa. Then, although Vaivasvata Manu wanted a son, by the desire of his wife he got a daughter named Ilā. Manu, however, was not satisfied with the daughter. Consequently, for Manu's satisfaction, the great sage Vasiṣṭha prayed for Ilā to be transformed into a boy, and his prayer was fulfilled by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus Ilā became a beautiful young man named Sudyumna.

Once upon a time, Sudyumna went on tour with his ministers. At the foot of the mountain Sumeru there is a forest named Sukumāra, and as soon as they entered that forest, they were all transformed into women. When Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī about the reason for this transformation, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described how Sudyumna, being transformed into a woman, accepted Budha, the son of the moon, as her husband and had a son named Purūravā. By the grace of Lord Śiva, Sudyumna received the benediction that he would live one month as a woman and one month as a man. Thus he regained his kingdom and had three sons, named Utkala, Gaya and Vimala, who were all very religious. Thereafter, he entrusted his kingdom to Purūravā and took the order of *vānaprastha* life.

1King Parīkṣit said: My lord, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, you have elaborately described all the periods of the various Manus and, within those periods, the wonderful activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has unlimited potency. I am fortunate to have heard all of this from you.

2-3Satyavrata, the saintly king of Draviḍadeśa who received spiritual knowledge at the end of the last millennium by the grace of the Supreme, later became Vaivasvata Manu, the son of Vivasvān, in the next manvantara [period of Manu]. I have received this knowledge from you. I also understand that such kings as Ikṣvāku were his sons, as you have already explained.

4O greatly fortunate Śukadeva Gosvāmī, O great brāhmaṇa, kindly describe to us separately the dynasties and characteristics of all those kings, for we are always eager to hear such topics from you.

5Kindly tell us about the abilities of all the celebrated kings born in the dynasty of Vaivasvata

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Manu, including those who have already passed, those who may appear in the future, and those who exist at present.

6Sūta Gosvāmī said: When Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the greatest knower of religious principles, was thus requested by Mahārāja Parīkṣit in the assembly of all the scholars learned in Vedic knowledge, he then proceeded to speak.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, subduer of your enemies, now hear from me in great detail about the dynasty of Manu. I shall explain as much as possible, although one could not say everything about it, even in hundreds of years.

8The transcendental Supreme Person, the Supersoul of all living entities, who are in different statuses of life, high and low, existed at the end of the millennium, when neither this manifested cosmos nor anything else but Him existed.

9O King Parīkṣit, from the navel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead was generated a golden lotus, on which the four-faced Lord Brahmā took his birth.

10From the mind of Lord Brahmā, Marīci took birth, from the semen of Marīci, Kaśyapa appeared, and from Kaśyapa, by the womb of Dakṣa's daughter Aditi, Vivasvān took birth.

11-12O King, best of the Bhārata dynasty, from Vivasvān, by the womb of Samjṣā, Śrāddhadeva Manu was born. Śrāddhadeva Manu, having conquered his senses, begot ten sons in the womb of his wife, Śrāddhā. The names of these sons were Ikṣvāku, Nṛga, Śaryāti, Diṣṭa, Dhṛṣṭa, Karūṣaka, Nariṣyanta, Pṛṣadhra, Nabhaga and Kavi.

13Manu at first had no sons. Therefore, in order to get a son for him, the great saint Vasiṣṭha, who was very powerful in spiritual knowledge, performed a sacrifice to satisfy the demigods Mitra and Varuṇa.

14During that sacrifice, Śrāddhā, Manu's wife, who was observing the vow of subsisting only by drinking milk, approached the priest offering the sacrifice, offered obeisances to him and begged for a daughter.

15Told by the chief priest "Now offer oblations," the person in charge of oblations took clarified butter to offer. He then remembered the request of Manu's wife and performed the sacrifice while chanting the word "vaṣaṭ."

16Manu had begun that sacrifice for the sake of getting a son, but because the priest was diverted by the request of Manu's wife, a daughter named Ilā was born. Upon seeing the daughter, Manu was not very satisfied. Thus he spoke to his guru, Vasiṣṭha, as follows.

17My lord, all of you are expert in chanting the Vedic mantras. How then has the result been opposite to the one desired? This is a matter for lamentation. There should not have been such a reversal of the results of the Vedic mantras.

18You are all self-controlled, well balanced in mind, and aware of the Absolute Truth. And because of austerities and penances you are completely cleansed of all material contamination. Your words, like those of the demigods, are never baffled. Then how is it possible that your determination has failed?

19The most powerful great-grandfather Vasiṣṭha, after hearing these words of Manu, understood the discrepancy on the part of the priest. Thus he spoke as follows to the son of the sun-god.

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20 This discrepancy in the objective is due to your priest's deviation from the original purpose. However, by my own prowess I shall give you a good son.

21 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, after the most famous and powerful Vasiṣṭha made this decision, he offered prayers to the Supreme Person, Viṣṇu, to transform Ilā into a male.

22 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, being pleased with Vasiṣṭha, gave him the benediction he desired. Thus Ilā was transformed into a very fine male named Sudyumna.

23-24 O King Parīkṣit, that hero Sudyumna, accompanied by a few ministers and associates and riding on a horse brought from Sindhupradeśa, once went into the forest to hunt. He wore armor and was decorated with bows and arrows, and he was very beautiful. While following the animals and killing them, he reached the northern part of the forest.

25 There in the north, at the bottom of Mount Meru, is a forest known as Sukumāra where Lord Śiva always enjoys with Umā. Sudyumna entered that forest.

26 O King Parīkṣit, as soon as Sudyumna, who was expert in subduing enemies, entered the forest, he saw himself transformed into a female and his horse transformed into a mare.

27 When his followers also saw their identities transformed and their sex reversed, they were all very morose and just looked at one another.

28 Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O most powerful brāhmaṇa, why was this place so empowered, and who made it so powerful? Kindly answer this question, for I am very eager to hear about this.

29 Śukadeva Gosvāmī answered: Great saintly persons who strictly observed the spiritual rules and regulations and whose own effulgence dissipated all the darkness of all directions once came to see Lord Śiva in that forest.

30 When the goddess Ambikā saw the great saintly persons, she was very much ashamed because at that time she was naked. She immediately got up from the lap of her husband and tried to cover her breast.

31 Seeing Lord Śiva and Pārvatī engaged in sexual affairs, all the great saintly persons immediately desisted from going further and departed for the āśrama of Nara-Nārāyaṇa.

32 Thereupon, just to please his wife, Lord Śiva said, "Any male entering this place shall immediately become a female!"

33 Since that time, no male had entered that forest. But now King Sudyumna, having been transformed into a female, began to walk with his associates from one forest to another.

34 Sudyumna had been transformed into the best of beautiful women who excite sexual desire and was surrounded by other women. Upon seeing this beautiful woman loitering near his āśrama, Budha, the son of the moon, immediately desired to enjoy her.

35 The beautiful woman also desired to accept Budha, the son of the king of the moon, as her husband. Thus Budha begot in her womb a son named Purūravā.

36 I heard from reliable sources that King Sudyumna, the son of Manu, having thus achieved femininity, remembered his familial spiritual master, Vasiṣṭha.

37 Upon seeing Sudyumna's deplorable condition, Vasiṣṭha was very much aggrieved. Desiring

for Sudyumna to regain his maleness, Vasiṣṭha again began to worship Lord Śaṅkara [Śiva].

38-39O King Parīkṣit, Lord Śiva was pleased with Vasiṣṭha. Therefore, to satisfy him and to keep his own word to Pārvatī, Lord Śiva said to that saintly person, “Your disciple Sudyumna may remain a male for one month and a female for the next. In this way he may rule the world as he likes.”

40Thus being favored by the spiritual master, according to the words of Lord Śiva, Sudyumna regained his desired maleness every alternate month and in this way ruled the kingdom, although the citizens were not satisfied with this.

41O King, Sudyumna had three very pious sons, named Utkala, Gaya and Vimala, who became the kings of the Dakṣiṇā-patha.

42Thereafter, when the time was ripe, when Sudyumna, the king of the world, was sufficiently old, he delivered the entire kingdom to his son Purūravā and entered the forest.

SB 9.2: The Dynasties of the Sons of Manu

This Second Chapter describes the dynasties of the sons of Manu, headed by Karūṣa.

After Sudyumna accepted the order of *vānaprastha* and departed for the forest, Vaivasvata Manu, being desirous of sons, worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead and consequently begot ten sons like Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, all of whom were like their father. One of these sons, Pṛṣadhra, was engaged in the duty of protecting cows at night with a sword in his hand. Following the order of his spiritual master, he would stand in this way for the entire night. Once, in the darkness of night, a tiger seized a cow from the cowshed, and when Pṛṣadhra came to know this, he took a sword in his hand and followed the tiger. Unfortunately, when he finally approached the tiger, he could not distinguish between the cow and the tiger in the dark, and thus he killed the cow. Because of this, his spiritual master cursed him to take birth in a *śūdra* family, but Pṛṣadhra practiced mystic *yoga*, and in *bhakti-yoga* he worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then he voluntarily entered a blazing forest fire, thus relinquishing his material body and going back home, back to Godhead.

Kavi, the youngest son of Manu, was a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead from his very childhood. From Manu’s son known as Karūṣa, a sect of *kṣatriyas* known as Kārūṣas was generated. Manu also had a son known as Dhṛṣṭa, from whom another sect of *kṣatriyas* was generated, but although they were born of one who had the qualities of a *kṣatriya*, they became *brāhmaṇas*. From Nṛga, another son of Manu, came the sons and grandsons known as Sumati, Bhūtajyoti and Vasu. From Vasu, in succession, came Pratīka, and from him came Oghavān. Descending in order from the seminal dynasty of Nariṣyanta, another son of Manu, were Citrasena, Rkṣa, Mīdhvān, Pūrṇa, Indrasena, Vītihoṭra, Satyaśravā, Uruśravā, Devadatta and Agniveśya. From the *kṣatriya* known as Agniveśya came the celebrated *brāhmaṇa* dynasty known as Āgniveśyāyana. From the seminal dynasty of Diṣṭa, another son of Manu, came Nābhāga, and from him in succession came Bhalandana, Vatsaprīti, Prāmśu, Pramati, Khanitra, Cākṣuṣa, Vivimśati, Rambha, Khanīnetra, Karandhama, Avīkṣit, Marutta, Dama, Rājyavardhana, Sudhṛti, Nara, Kevala, Dhundhumān, Vegavān, Budha and Tṛṇabindu. In this way, many sons and grandsons were born in this dynasty. From Tṛṇabindu came a daughter named Ilavilā, from whom Kuvera took birth. Tṛṇabindu also had three sons, named Viśāla, Śūnyabandhu and Dhūmraketu. The son of Viśāla was Hemaçandra, his son was Dhūmrākṣa, and his son was Saṁyama. The sons of Saṁyama were Devaja and Kṛśāśva. Kṛśāśva’s son, Somadatta, performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice, and by worshiping the Supreme

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Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, he achieved the supreme perfection of going back home, back to Godhead.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thereafter, when his son Sudyumna had thus gone to the forest to accept the order of vānaprastha, Vaivasvata Manu [Śrāddhadeva], being desirous of getting more sons, performed severe austerities on the bank of the Yamunā for one hundred years.

2Then, because of this desire for sons, the Manu known as Śrāddhadeva worshiped the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, the Lord of the demigods. Thus he got ten sons exactly like himself. Among them all, Ikṣvāku was the eldest.

3Among these sons, Pṛṣadhra, following the order of his spiritual master, was engaged as a protector of cows. He would stand all night with a sword to give the cows protection.

4Once at night, while it was raining, a tiger entered the land of the cowshed. Upon seeing the tiger, all the cows, who were lying down, got up in fear and scattered here and there on the land.

5-6When the very strong tiger seized the cow, the cow screamed in distress and fear, and Pṛṣadhra, hearing the screaming, immediately followed the sound. He took up his sword, but because the stars were covered by clouds, he mistook the cow for the tiger and mistakenly cut off the cows' head with great force.

7Because the tiger's ear had been cut by the edge of the sword, the tiger was very afraid, and it fled from that place, while bleeding on the street.

8In the morning, when Pṛṣadhra, who was quite able to subdue his enemy, saw that he had killed the cow although at night he thought he had killed the tiger, he was very unhappy.

9Although Pṛṣadhra had committed the sin unknowingly, his family priest, Vasiṣṭha, cursed him, saying, "In your next life you shall not be able to become a kṣatriya. Instead, you shall take birth as a śūdra because of killing the cow."

10When the hero Pṛṣadhra was thus cursed by his spiritual master, he accepted the curse with folded hands. Then, having controlled his senses, he took the vow of brahmacarya, which is approved by all great sages.

11-13Thereafter, Pṛṣadhra gained relief from all responsibilities, became peaceful in mind, and established control over all his senses. Being unaffected by material conditions, being pleased with whatever was available by the grace of the Lord to maintain body and soul together, and being equal toward everyone, he gave full attention to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, who is the transcendental Supersoul, free from material contamination. Thus Pṛṣadhra, fully satisfied in pure knowledge, always keeping his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, achieved pure devotional service to the Lord and began traveling all over the world, without affection for material activities, as if he were deaf, dumb and blind.

14With this attitude, Pṛṣadhra became a great saint, and when he entered the forest and saw a blazing forest fire, he took this opportunity to burn his body in the fire. Thus he achieved the transcendental, spiritual world.

15Being reluctant to accept material enjoyment, Manu's youngest son, whose name was Kavi, gave up the kingdom before attaining full youth. Accompanied by his friends, he went to the forest, always thinking of the self-effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead within the core of his heart. Thus he attained perfection.

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16From Karūṣa, another son of Manu, came the Kārūṣa dynasty, a family of kṣatriyas. The Kārūṣa kṣatriyas were the kings of the northern direction. They were celebrated protectors of brahminical culture and were all firmly religious.

17From the son of Manu named Dhṛṣṭa came a kṣatriya caste called Dhārṣṭa, whose members achieved the position of brāhmaṇas in this world. Then, from the son of Manu named Nṛga came Sumati. From Sumati came Bhūtajyoti, and from Bhūtajyoti came Vasu.

18The son of Vasu was Pratīka, whose son was Oghavān. Oghavān's son was also known as Oghavān, and his daughter was Oghavatī. Sudarśana married that daughter.

19From Nariṣyanta came a son named Citrasena and from him a son named Ṛkṣa. From Ṛkṣa came Mīdhvān, from Mīdhvān came Pūrṇa, and from Pūrṇa came Indrasena.

20From Indrasena came Vītihoṭra, from Vītihoṭra came Satyaśravā, from Satyaśravā came the son named Uruśravā, and from Uruśravā came Devadatta.

21From Devadatta came a son known as Agniveśya, who was the fire-god Agni himself. This son, who was a celebrated saint, was well known as Kānīna and Jātūkarṇya.

22O King, from Agniveśya came a brahminical dynasty known as Āgniveśyāyana. Now that I have described the descendants of Nariṣyanta, let me describe the descendants of Diṣṭa. Please hear from me.

23-24Diṣṭa had a son by the name Nābhāga. This Nābhāga, who was different from the Nābhāga described later, became a vaiśya by occupational duty. The son of Nābhāga was known as Bhalandana, the son of Bhalandana was Vatsaprīti, and his son was Prāmśu. Prāmśu's son was Pramati, Pramati's son was Khanitra, Khanitra's son was Cākṣuṣa, and his son was Vivimśati.

25The son of Vivimśati was Rambha, whose son was the great and religious King Khanīnetra. O King, the son of Khanīnetra was King Karandhama.

26From Karandhama came a son named Avīkṣit, and from Avīkṣit a son named Marutta, who was the emperor. The great mystic Saṁvarta, the son of Aṅgirā, engaged Marutta in performing a sacrifice [yajña].

27The sacrificial paraphernalia of King Marutta was extremely beautiful, for everything was made of gold. Indeed, no other sacrifice could compare to his.

28In that sacrifice, King Indra became intoxicated by drinking a large quantity of soma-rasa. The brāhmaṇas received ample contributions, and therefore they were satisfied. For that sacrifice, the various demigods who control the winds offered foodstuffs, and the Viśvedevas were members of the assembly.

29Marutta's son was Dama, Dama's son was Rājyavardhana, Rājyavardhana's son was Sudhṛti, and his son was Nara.

30The son of Nara was Kevala, and his son was Dhundhumān, whose son was Vegavān. Vegavān's son was Budha, and Budha's son was Tṛṇabindu, who became the king of this earth.

31The best of the Apsarās, the highly qualified girl named Alambuṣā, accepted the similarly qualified Tṛṇabindu as her husband. She gave birth to a few sons and a daughter known as Ilavilā.

32After the great saint Viśravā, the master of mystic yoga, received absolute knowledge from his father, he begot in the womb of Ilavilā the greatly celebrated son known as Kuvera, the giver of money.

33Tṛṇabindu had three sons, named Viśāla, Śūnyabandhu and Dhūmraketu. Among these three, Viśāla created a dynasty and constructed a palace called Vaiśālī.

34The son of Viśāla was known as Hemaandra, his son was Dhūmrākṣa, and his son was Saṁyama, whose sons were Devaja and Kṛṣāśva.

35-36The son of Kṛṣāśva was Somadatta, who performed aśvamedha sacrifices and thus satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. By worshiping the Supreme Lord, he achieved the most exalted post, a residence on the planet to which great mystic yogīs are elevated. The son of Somadatta was Sumati, whose son was Janamejaya. All these kings appearing in the dynasty of Viśāla properly maintained the celebrated position of King Tṛṇabindu.

SB 9.3: The Marriage of Sukanyā and Cyavana Muni

This chapter describes the dynasty of Śaryāti, another son of Manu, and also tells about Sukanyā and Revatī.

Devajṣa Śaryāti gave instructions about what to do in the ritualistic ceremony observed on the second day of the *yajṣa* of the Aṅgirasas. One day, Śaryāti, along with his daughter, known as Sukanyā, went to the *āśrama* of Cyavana Muni. There Sukanyā saw two glowing substances within a hole of earthworms, and by chance she pierced those two glowing substances. As soon as she did this, blood began to ooze from that hole. Consequently, King Śaryāti and his companions suffered from constipation and inability to pass urine. When the King asked why circumstances had suddenly changed, he found that Sukanyā was the cause of this misfortune. Then they all offered prayers to Cyavana Muni just to satisfy him according to his own desire, and Devajṣa Śaryāti offered his daughter to Cyavana Muni, who was a very old man.

When the heavenly physicians the Aśvinī-kumāra brothers once visited Cyavana Muni, the *muni* requested them to give him back his youth. These two physicians took Cyavana Muni to a particular lake, in which they bathed and regained full youth. After this, Sukanyā could not distinguish her husband. She then surrendered unto the Aśvinī-kumāras, who were very satisfied with her chastity and who therefore introduced her again to her husband. Cyavana Muni then engaged King Śaryāti in performing the *soma-yajṣa* and gave the Aśvinī-kumāras the privilege to drink *soma-rasa*. The King of heaven, Lord Indra, became very angry at this, but he could do no harm to Śaryāti. Henceforward, the Aśvinī-kumāra physicians were able to share in the *soma-rasa*.

Śaryāti later had three sons, named Uttānabarhi, Ānarta and Bhūriṣeṇa. Ānarta had one son, whose name was Revata. Revata had one hundred sons, of whom the eldest was Kakudmī. Kakudmī was advised by Lord Brahmā to offer his beautiful daughter, Revatī, to Baladeva, who belongs to the *viṣṇu-tattva* category. After doing this, Kakudmī retired from family life and entered the forest of Badarikāśrama to execute austerities and penances.

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, Śaryāti, another son of Manu, was a ruler completely aware of Vedic knowledge. He gave instructions about the functions for the second day of the *yajṣa* to be performed by the descendants of Aṅgirā.

2Śaryāti had a beautiful lotus-eyed daughter named Sukanyā, with whom he went to the forest

to see the āśrama of Cyavana Muni.

3While that Sukanyā, surrounded by her friends, was collecting various types of fruits from the trees in the forest, she saw within the hole of an earthworm two things glowing like luminaries.

4As if induced by providence, the girl ignorantly pierced those two glowworms with a thorn, and when they were pierced, blood began to ooze out of them.

5Thereupon, all the soldiers of Śaryāti were immediately obstructed from passing urine and stool. Upon perceiving this, Śaryāti spoke to his associates in surprise.

6How strange it is that one of us has attempted to do something wrong to Cyavana Muni, the son of Bhṛgu. It certainly appears that someone among us has polluted this āśrama.

7Being very much afraid, the girl Sukanyā said to her father: I have done something wrong, for I have ignorantly pierced these two luminous substances with a thorn.

8After hearing this statement by his daughter, King Śaryāti was very much afraid. In various ways, he tried to appease Cyavana Muni, for it was he who sat within the hole of the earthworm.

9King Śaryāti, being very contemplative and thus understanding Cyavana Muni's purpose, gave his daughter in charity to the sage. Thus released from danger with great difficulty, he took permission from Cyavana Muni and returned home.

10Cyavana Muni was very irritable, but since Sukanyā had gotten him as her husband, she dealt with him carefully, according to his mood. Knowing his mind, she performed service to him without being bewildered.

11Thereafter, some time having passed, the Aśvinī-kumāra brothers, the heavenly physicians, happened to come to Cyavana Muni's āśrama. After offering them respectful obeisances, Cyavana Muni requested them to give him youthful life, for they were able to do so.

12Cyavana Muni said: Although you are ineligible to drink soma-rasa in sacrifices, I promise to give you a full pot of it. Kindly arrange beauty and youth for me, because they are attractive to young women.

13The great physicians, the Aśvinī-kumāras, very gladly accepted Cyavana Muni's proposal. Thus they told the brāhmaṇa, "Just dive into this lake of successful life." [One who bathes in this lake has his desires fulfilled.]

14After saying this, the Aśvinī-kumāras caught hold of Cyavana Muni, who was an old, diseased invalid with loose skin, white hair, and veins visible all over his body, and all three of them entered the lake.

15Thereafter, three men with very beautiful bodily features emerged from the lake. They were nicely dressed and decorated with earrings and garlands of lotuses. All of them were of the same standard of beauty.

16The chaste and very beautiful Sukanyā could not distinguish her husband from the two Aśvinī-kumāras, for they were equally beautiful. Not understanding who her real husband was, she took shelter of the Aśvinī-kumāras.

17The Aśvinī-kumāras were very pleased to see Sukanyā's chastity and faithfulness. Thus they showed her Cyavana Muni, her husband, and after taking permission from him, they returned

to the heavenly planets in their plane.

18Thereafter, King Śaryāti, desiring to perform a sacrifice, went to the residence of Cyavana Muni. There he saw by the side of his daughter a very beautiful young man, as bright as the sun.

19After receiving obeisances from his daughter, the King, instead of offering blessings to her, appeared very displeased and spoke as follows.

20O unchaste girl, what is this that you have desired to do? You have cheated the most respectable husband, who is honored by everyone, for I see that because he was old, diseased and therefore unattractive, you have left his company to accept as your husband this young man, who appears to be a beggar from the street.

21O my daughter, who were born in a respectable family, how have you degraded your consciousness in this way? How is it that you are shamelessly maintaining a paramour? You will thus degrade the dynasties of both your father and your husband to hellish life.

22Sukanyā, however, being very proud of her chastity, smiled upon hearing the rebukes of her father. She smilingly told him, “My dear father, this young man by my side is your actual son-in-law, the great sage Cyavana, who was born in the family of Bhṛgu.”

23Thus Sukanyā explained how her husband had received the beautiful body of a young man. When the King heard this he was very surprised, and in great pleasure he embraced his beloved daughter.

24Cyavana Muni, by his own prowess, enabled King Śaryāti to perform the soma-yajña. The muni offered a full pot of soma-rasa to the Aśvinī-kumāras, although they were unfit to drink it.

25King Indra, being perturbed and angry, wanted to kill Cyavana Muni, and therefore he impetuously took up his thunderbolt. But Cyavana Muni, by his powers, paralyzed Indra’s arm that held the thunderbolt.

26Although the Aśvinī-kumāras were only physicians and were therefore excluded from drinking soma-rasa in sacrifices, the demigods agreed to allow them henceforward to drink it.

27King Śaryāti begot three sons, named Uttānabarhi, Ānarta and Bhūriṣeṇa. From Ānarta came a son named Revata.

28O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, subduer of enemies, this Revata constructed a kingdom known as Kuśasthalī in the depths of the ocean. There he lived and ruled such tracts of land as Ānarta, etc. He had one hundred very nice sons, of whom the eldest was Kakudmī.

29Taking his own daughter, Revatī, Kakudmī went to Lord Brahmā in Brahmāloka, which is transcendental to the three modes of material nature, and inquired about a husband for her.

30When Kakudmī arrived there, Lord Brahmā was engaged in hearing musical performances by the Gandharvas and had not a moment to talk with him. Therefore Kakudmī waited, and at the end of the musical performances he offered his obeisances to Lord Brahmā and thus submitted his long-standing desire.

31After hearing his words, Lord Brahmā, who is most powerful, laughed loudly and said to Kakudmī: O King, all those whom you may have decided within the core of your heart to accept as your son-in-law have passed away in the course of time.

32Twenty-seven catur-yugas have already passed. Those upon whom you may have decided are now gone, and so are their sons, grandsons and other descendants. You cannot even hear about their names.

33O King, leave here and offer your daughter to Lord Baladeva, who is still present. He is most powerful. Indeed, He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose plenary portion is Lord Viṣṇu. Your daughter is fit to be given to Him in charity.

34Lord Baladeva is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who hears and chants about Him is purified. Because He is always the well-wisher of all living entities, He has descended with all His paraphernalia to purify the entire world and lessen its burden.

35Having received this order from Lord Brahmā, Kakudmī offered obeisances unto him and returned to his own residence. He then saw that his residence was vacant, having been abandoned by his brothers and other relatives, who were living in all directions because of fear of such higher living beings as the Yakṣas.

36Thereafter, the King gave his most beautiful daughter in charity to the supremely powerful Baladeva and then retired from worldly life and went to Badarikāśrama to please Nara-Nārāyaṇa

SB 9.4: Ambarīṣa Mahārāja Offended by Durvāsā Muni

This chapter describes the history of Mahārāja Nabhaga, of his son Nābhāga, and of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa.

The son of Manu was Nabhaga, and his son Nābhāga lived for many years in the *gurukula*. In Nābhāga's absence, his brothers did not consider his share of the kingdom, but instead divided the property among themselves. When Nābhāga returned home, his brothers bestowed upon him their father as his share, but when Nābhāga went to his father and told him about the dealings of the brothers, his father informed him that this was cheating and advised him that for his livelihood he should go to the sacrificial arena and describe two *mantras* to be chanted there. Nābhāga executed the order of his father, and thus Aṅgirā and other great saintly persons gave him all the money collected in that sacrifice. To test Nābhāga, Lord Śiva challenged his claim to the wealth, but when Lord Śiva was satisfied by Nābhāga's behavior, Lord Śiva offered him all the riches.

From Nābhāga was born Ambarīṣa, the most powerful and celebrated devotee. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was the emperor of the entire world, but he considered his opulence temporary. Indeed, knowing that such material opulence is the cause of downfall into conditional life, he was unattached to this opulence. He engaged his senses and mind in the service of the Lord. This process is called *yukta-vairāgya*, or feasible renunciation, which is quite suitable for worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, as the emperor, was immensely opulent, he performed devotional service with great opulence, and therefore, despite his wealth, he had no attachment to his wife, children or kingdom. He constantly engaged his senses and mind in the service of the Lord. Therefore, to say nothing of enjoying material opulence, he never desired even liberation.

Once Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in Vṛndāvana, observing the vow of Dvādaśī. On Dvādaśī, the day after Ekādaśī, when he was about to break his Ekādaśī fast, the great mystic *yogī* Durvāsā appeared in his house and became his guest. King Ambarīṣa respectfully received Durvāsā Muni, and Durvāsā Muni, after accepting his invitation to eat there, went to bathe in the Yamunā River at noontime. Because he was

absorbed in *samādhi*, he did not come back very soon. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, however, upon seeing that the time to break the fast was passing, drank a little water, in accordance with the advice of learned *brāhmaṇas*, just to observe the formality of breaking the fast. By mystic power, Durvāsā Muni could understand that this had happened, and he was very angry. When he returned he began to chastise Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, but he was not satisfied, and finally he created from his hair a demon appearing like the fire of death. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, is always the protector of His devotee, and to protect Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, He sent His disc, the Sudarśana *cakra*, which immediately vanquished the fiery demon and then pursued Durvāsā, who was so envious of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Durvāsā fled to Brahmaloḥa, Śivaloka and all the other higher planets, but he could not protect himself from the wrath of the Sudarśana *cakra*. Finally he went to the spiritual world and surrendered to Lord Nārāyaṇa, but Lord Nārāyaṇa could not excuse a person who had offended a Vaiṣṇava. To be excused from such an offense, one must submit to the Vaiṣṇava whom he has offended. There is no other way to be excused. Thus Lord Nārāyaṇa advised Durvāsā to return to Mahārāja Ambarīṣa and beg his pardon.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The son of Nabhaga named Nābhāga lived for a long time at the place of his spiritual master. Therefore, his brothers thought that he was not going to become a gṛhastha and would not return. Consequently, without providing a share for him, they divided the property of their father among themselves. When Nābhāga returned from the place of his spiritual master, they gave him their father as his share.

2Nābhāga inquired, “My dear brothers, what have you given to me as my share of our father’s property?” His elder brothers answered, “We have kept our father as your share.” But when Nābhāga went to his father and said, “My dear father, my elder brothers have given you as my share of property,” the father replied, “My dear son, do not rely upon their cheating words. I am not your property.”

3Nābhāga’s father said: All the descendants of Aṅgirā are now going to perform a great sacrifice, but although they are very intelligent, on every sixth day they will be bewildered in performing sacrifice and will make mistakes in their daily duties.

4-5Nābhāga’s father continued: “Go to those great souls and describe two Vedic hymns pertaining to Vaiśvadeva. When the great sages have completed the sacrifice and are going to the heavenly planets, they will give you the remnants of the money they have received from the sacrifice. Therefore, go there immediately.” Thus Nābhāga acted exactly according to the advice of his father, and the great sages of the Aṅgirā dynasty gave him all their wealth and then went to the heavenly planets.

6Thereafter, while Nābhāga was accepting the riches, a black-looking person from the north came to him and said, “All the wealth from this sacrificial arena belongs to me.”

7Nābhāga then said, “These riches belong to me. The great saintly persons have delivered them to me.” When Nābhāga said this, the black-looking person replied, “Let us go to your father and ask him to settle our disagreement.” In accordance with this, Nābhāga inquired from his father.

8The father of Nābhāga said: Whatever the great sages sacrificed in the arena of the Dakṣa-yajña, they offered to Lord Śiva as his share. Therefore, everything in the sacrificial arena certainly belongs to Lord Śiva.

9Thereupon, after offering obeisances to Lord Śiva, Nābhāga said: O worshipable lord,

everything in this arena of sacrifice is yours. This is the assertion of my father. Now, with great respect, I bow my head before you, begging your mercy.

10 Lord Śiva said: Whatever your father has said is the truth, and you also are speaking the same truth. Therefore, I, who know the Vedic mantras, shall explain transcendental knowledge to you.

11 Lord Śiva said, “Now you may take all the wealth remaining from the sacrifice, for I give it to you.” After saying this, Lord Śiva, who is most adherent to the religious principles, disappeared from that place.

12 If one hears and chants or remembers this narration in the morning and evening with great attention, he certainly becomes learned, experienced in understanding the Vedic hymns, and expert in self-realization.

13 From Nābhāga, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa took birth. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was an exalted devotee, celebrated for his great merits. Although he was cursed by an infallible brāhmaṇa, the curse could not touch him.

14 King Parīkṣit inquired: O great personality, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was certainly most exalted and meritorious in character. I wish to hear about him. How surprising it is that the curse of a brāhmaṇa, which is insurmountable, could not act upon him.

15-16 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, the most fortunate personality, achieved the rule of the entire world, consisting of seven islands, and achieved inexhaustible, unlimited opulence and prosperity on earth. Although such a position is rarely obtained, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa did not care for it at all, for he knew very well that all such opulence is material. Like that which is imagined in a dream, such opulence will ultimately be destroyed. The King knew that any nondevotee who attains such opulence merges increasingly into material nature's mode of darkness.

17 Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, and of the saintly persons who are the Lord's devotees. Because of this devotion, he thought of the entire universe as being as insignificant as a piece of stone.

18-20 Mahārāja Ambarīṣa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Kṛṣṇa or about Kṛṣṇa. He engaged his eyes in seeing the Deity of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's temples and Kṛṣṇa's places like Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees, he engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasī offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasāda. He engaged his legs in walking to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his head in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord, twenty-four hours a day. Indeed, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa never desired anything for his own sense gratification. He engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires.

21 In performing his prescribed duties as king, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa always offered the results of his royal activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, who is the enjoyer of everything and is beyond the perception of material senses. He certainly took advice from brāhmaṇas who were faithful devotees of the Lord, and thus he ruled the planet earth without difficulty.

22In desert countries where there flowed the river Sarasvatī, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa performed great sacrifices like the aśvamedha-yajña and thus satisfied the master of all yajñas, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such sacrifices were performed with great opulence and suitable paraphernalia and with contributions of dakṣiṇā to the brāhmaṇas, who were supervised by great personalities like Vasiṣṭha, Asita and Gautama, representing the king, the performer of the sacrifices.

23In the sacrifice arranged by Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, the members of the assembly and the priests [especially hotā, udgātā, brahmā and adhvaryu] were gorgeously dressed, and they all looked exactly like demigods. They eagerly saw to the proper performance of the yajña.

24The citizens of the state of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa were accustomed to chanting and hearing about the glorious activities of the Personality of Godhead. Thus they never aspired to be elevated to the heavenly planets, which are extremely dear even to the demigods.

25Those who are saturated with the transcendental happiness of rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead are uninterested even in the achievements of great mystics, for such achievements do not enhance the transcendental bliss felt by a devotee who always thinks of Kṛṣṇa within the core of his heart.

26The king of this planet, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, thus performed devotional service to the Lord and in this endeavor practiced severe austerity. Always satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead by his constitutional activities, he gradually gave up all material desires.

27Mahārāja Ambarīṣa gave up all attachment to household affairs, wives, children, friends and relatives, to the best of powerful elephants, to beautiful chariots, carts, horses and inexhaustible jewels, and to ornaments, garments and an inexhaustible treasury. He gave up attachment to all of them, regarding them as temporary and material.

28Being very pleased by the unalloyed devotion of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gave the King His disc, which is fearful to enemies and which always protects the devotee from enemies and adversities.

29To worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, along with his queen, who was equally qualified, observed the vow of Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī for one year.

30In the month of Kārtika, after observing that vow for one year, after observing a fast for three nights and after bathing in the Yamunā, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, in Madhuvana.

31-32Following the regulative principles of mahābhīṣeka, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa performed the bathing ceremony for the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa with all paraphernalia, and then he dressed the Deity with fine clothing, ornaments, fragrant flower garlands and other paraphernalia for worship of the Lord. With attention and devotion, he worshiped Kṛṣṇa and all the greatly fortunate brāhmaṇas who were free from material desires.

33-35Thereafter, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa satisfied all the guests who arrived at his house, especially the brāhmaṇas. He gave in charity sixty crores of cows whose horns were covered with gold plate and whose hooves were covered with silver plate. All the cows were well decorated with garments and had full milk bags. They were mild-natured, young and beautiful and were accompanied by their calves. After giving these cows, the King first sumptuously fed all the brāhmaṇas, and when they were fully satisfied, he was about to observe the end of Ekādaśī, with their permission, by breaking the fast. Exactly at that time, however, Durvāsā Muni, the

great and powerful mystic, appeared on the scene as an uninvited guest.

36After standing up to receive Durvāsā Muni, King Ambarīṣa offered him a seat and paraphernalia of worship. Then, sitting at his feet, the King requested the great sage to eat.

37Durvāsā Muni gladly accepted the request of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, but to perform the regulative ritualistic ceremonies he went to the river Yamunā. There he dipped into the water of the auspicious Yamunā and meditated upon the impersonal Brahman.

38In the meantime, only a muhūrta of the Dvādaśī day was left on which to break the fast. Consequently, it was imperative that the fast be broken immediately. In this dangerous situation, the King consulted learned brāhmaṇas.

39-40The King said: “To transgress the laws of respectful behavior toward the brāhmaṇas is certainly a great offense. On the other hand, if one does not observe the breaking of the fast within the time of Dvādaśī, there is a flaw in one’s observance of the vow. Therefore, O brāhmaṇas, if you think that it will be auspicious and not irreligious, I shall break the fast by drinking water.” In this way, after consulting with the brāhmaṇas, the King reached this decision, for according to brahminical opinion, drinking water may be accepted as eating and also as not eating.

41O best of the Kuru dynasty, after he drank some water, King Ambarīṣa, meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart, waited for the return of the great mystic Durvāsā Muni.

42After executing the ritualistic ceremonies to be performed at noon, Durvāsā returned from the bank of the Yamunā. The King received him well, offering all respects, but Durvāsā Muni, by his mystic power, could understand that King Ambarīṣa had drunk water without his permission.

43Still hungry, Durvāsā Muni, his body trembling, his face curved and his eyebrows crooked in a frown, angrily spoke as follows to King Ambarīṣa, who stood before him with folded hands.

44Alas, just see the behavior of this cruel man! He is not a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. Being proud of his material opulence and his position, he considers himself God. Just see how he has transgressed the laws of religion.

45Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, you have invited me to eat as a guest, but instead of feeding me, you yourself have eaten first. Because of your miSBehavior, I shall show you something to punish you.

46As Durvāsā Muni said this, his face became red with anger. Uprooting a bunch of hair from his head, he created a demon resembling the blazing fire of devastation to punish Mahārāja Ambarīṣa.

47Taking a trident in his hand and making the surface of the earth tremble with his footsteps, that blazing creature came before Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. But the King, upon seeing him, was not at all disturbed and did not move even slightly from his position.

48As fire in the forest immediately burns to ashes an angry snake, so, by the previous order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His disc, the Sudarśana cakra, immediately burnt to ashes the created demon to protect the Lord’s devotee.

49Upon seeing that his own attempt had failed and that the Sudarśana cakra was moving

toward him, Durvāsā Muni became very frightened and began to run in all directions to save his life.

50As the blazing flames of a forest fire pursue a snake, the disc of the Supreme Personality of Godhead began following Durvāsā Muni. Durvāsā Muni saw that the disc was almost touching his back, and thus he ran very swiftly, desiring to enter a cave of Sumeru Mountain.

51Just to protect himself, Durvāsā Muni fled everywhere, in all directions in the sky, on the surface of the earth, in caves, in the ocean, on different planets of the rulers of the three worlds, and even on the heavenly planets but wherever he went he immediately saw following him the unbearable fire of the Sudarśana cakra.

52With a fearful heart, Durvāsā Muni went here and there seeking shelter, but when he could find no shelter, he finally approached Lord Brahmā and said, “O my lord, O Lord Brahmā, kindly protect me from the blazing Sudarśana cakra sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

53-54Lord Brahmā said: At the end of the dvi-parārdha, when the pastimes of the Lord come to an end, Lord Viṣṇu, by a flick of His eyebrows, vanquishes the entire universe, including our places of residence. Such personalities as me and Lord Śiva, as well as Dakṣa, Bhṛgu and similar great saints of which they are the head, and also the rulers of the living entities, the rulers of human society and the rulers of the demigods all of us surrender to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, bowing our heads, to carry out His orders for the benefit of all living entities.

55When Durvāsā, who was greatly afflicted by the blazing fire of the Sudarśana cakra, was thus refused by Lord Brahmā, he tried to take shelter of Lord Śiva, who always resides on his planet, known as Kailāsa.

56Lord Śiva said: My dear son, I, Lord Brahmā and the other demigods, who rotate within this universe under the misconception of our greatness, cannot exhibit any power to compete with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for innumerable universes and their inhabitants come into existence and are annihilated by the simple direction of the Lord.

57-59Past, present and future are known to me [Lord Śiva], Sanat-kumāra, Nārada, the most revered Lord Brahmā, Kapila [the son of Devahūti], Apāntaratama [Lord Vyāsadeva], Devala, Yamarāja, Āsuri, Marīci and many saintly persons headed by him, as well as many others who have achieved perfection. Nonetheless, because we are covered by the illusory energy of the Lord, we cannot understand how expansive that illusory energy is. You should simply approach that Supreme Personality of Godhead to get relief, for this Sudarśana cakra is intolerable even to us. Go to Lord Viṣṇu. He will certainly be kind enough to bestow all good fortune upon you.

60Thereafter, being disappointed even in taking shelter of Lord Śiva, Durvāsā Muni went to Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma, where the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, resides with His consort, the goddess of fortune.

61Durvāsā Muni, the great mystic, scorched by the heat of the Sudarśana cakra, fell at the lotus feet of Nārāyaṇa. His body trembling, he spoke as follows: O infallible, unlimited Lord, protector of the entire universe, You are the only desirable objective for all devotees. I am a great offender, my Lord. Please give me protection.

62O my Lord, O supreme controller, without knowledge of Your unlimited prowess I have

offended Your most dear devotee. Very kindly save me from the reaction of this offense. You can do everything, for even if a person is fit for going to hell, You can deliver him simply by awakening within his heart the holy name of Your Lordship.

63The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the brāhmaṇa: I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me.

64O best of the brāhmaṇas, without saintly persons for whom I am the only destination, I do not desire to enjoy My transcendental bliss and My supreme opulences.

65Since pure devotees give up their homes, wives, children, relatives, riches and even their lives simply to serve Me, without any desire for material improvement in this life or in the next, how can I give up such devotees at any time?

66As chaste women bring their gentle husbands under control by service, the pure devotees, who are equal to everyone and completely attached to Me in the core of the heart, bring Me under their full control.

67My devotees, who are always satisfied to be engaged in My loving service, are not interested even in the four principles of liberation [sālokya, sārūpya, sāmīpya and sārṣṭi], although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems?

68The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them.

69O brāhmaṇa, let Me now advise you for your own protection. Please hear from Me. By offending Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, you have acted with self-envy. Therefore you should go to him immediately, without a moment's delay. One's so-called prowess, when employed against the devotee, certainly harms he who employs it. Thus it is the subject, not the object, who is harmed.

70For a brāhmaṇa, austerity and learning are certainly auspicious, but when acquired by a person who is not gentle, such austerity and learning are most dangerous.

71O best of the brāhmaṇas, you should therefore go immediately to King Ambarīṣa, the son of Mahārāja Nābhāga. I wish you all good fortune. If you can satisfy Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, then there will be peace for you.

SB 9.5: Durvāsā Muni's Life Spared

In this chapter we find Mahārāja Ambarīṣa offering prayers to the Sudarśana *cakra* and we find how the Sudarśana *cakra* became merciful to Durvāsā Muni.

By the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, Durvāsā Muni immediately went to Mahārāja Ambarīṣa and fell at his lotus feet. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, being naturally very humble and meek, felt shy and ashamed because Durvāsā Muni had fallen at his feet, and thus he began to offer prayers to the Sudarśana *cakra* just to save Durvāsā. What is this Sudarśana *cakra*? The Sudarśana *cakra* is the glance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by which He creates the entire material world. *Sa aikṣata, sa asṛjata*. This is the Vedic version. The Sudarśana *cakra*, which is the origin of creation and is most dear to the Lord, has thousands of

spokes. This Sudarśana *cakra* is the killer of the prowess of all other weapons, the killer of darkness, and the manifester of the prowess of devotional service; it is the means of establishing religious principles, and it is the killer of all irreligious activities. Without his mercy, the universe cannot be maintained, and therefore the Sudarśana *cakra* is employed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Mahārāja Ambarīṣa thus prayed that the Sudarśana *cakra* be merciful, the Sudarśana *cakra*, being appeased, refrained from killing Durvāsā Muni, who thus achieved the Sudarśana *cakra*'s mercy. Durvāsā Muni thus learned to give up the nasty idea of considering a Vaiṣṇava an ordinary person (*vaiṣṇave jāti-buddhi*). Mahārāja Ambarīṣa belonged to the *kṣatriya* group, and therefore Durvāsā Muni considered him lower than the *brāhmaṇas* and wanted to exercise brahminical power against him. By this incident, everyone should learn how to stop mischievous ideas of neglecting Vaiṣṇavas. After this incident, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa gave Durvāsā Muni sumptuous food to eat, and then the King, who had been standing in the same place for one year without eating anything, also took *prasāda*. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa later divided his property among his sons and went to the bank of the Mānasa-sarovara to execute devotional meditation.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When thus advised by Lord Viṣṇu, Durvāsā Muni, who was very much harassed by the Sudarśana *cakra*, immediately approached Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Being very much aggrieved, the muni fell down and clasped the King's lotus feet.

2 When Durvāsā touched his lotus feet, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was very much ashamed, and when he saw Durvāsā attempting to offer prayers, because of mercy he was aggrieved even more. Thus he immediately began offering prayers to the great weapon of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3 Mahārāja Ambarīṣa said: O Sudarśana *cakra*, you are fire, you are the most powerful sun, and you are the moon, the master of all luminaries. You are water, earth and sky, you are the air, you are the five sense objects [sound, touch, form, taste and smell], and you are the senses also.

4 O most favorite of Acyuta, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you have thousands of spokes. O master of the material world, destroyer of all weapons, original vision of the Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto you. Kindly give shelter and be auspicious to this brāhmaṇa.

5 O Sudarśana wheel, you are religion, you are truth, you are encouraging statements, you are sacrifice, and you are the enjoyer of the fruits of sacrifice. You are the maintainer of the entire universe, and you are the supreme transcendental prowess in the hands of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are the original vision of the Lord, and therefore you are known as Sudarśana. Everything has been created by your activities, and therefore you are all-pervading.

6 O Sudarśana, you have a very auspicious hub, and therefore you are the upholder of all religion. You are just like an inauspicious comet for the irreligious demons. Indeed, you are the maintainer of the three worlds, you are full of transcendental effulgence, you are as quick as the mind, and you are able to work wonders. I can simply utter the word "namaḥ," offering all obeisances unto you.

7 O master of speech, by your effulgence, full of religious principles, the darkness of the world is dissipated, and the knowledge of learned persons or great souls is manifested. Indeed, no one can surpass your effulgence, for all things, manifested and unmanifested, gross and subtle, superior and inferior, are but various forms of you that are manifested by your effulgence.

8 O indefatigable one, when you are sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to enter

among the soldiers of the Daityas and the Dānavas, you stay on the battlefield and unendingly separate their arms, bellies, thighs, legs and heads.

9O protector of the universe, you are engaged by the Supreme Personality of Godhead as His all-powerful weapon in killing the envious enemies. For the benefit of our entire dynasty, kindly favor this poor brāhmaṇa. This will certainly be a favor for all of us.

10If our family has given charity to the proper persons, if we have performed ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices, if we have properly carried out our occupational duties, and if we have been guided by learned brāhmaṇas, I wish, in exchange, that this brāhmaṇa be freed from the burning caused by the Sudarśana cakra.

11If the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is one without a second, who is the reservoir of all transcendental qualities, and who is the life and soul of all living entities, is pleased with us, we wish that this brāhmaṇa, Durvāsā Muni, be freed from the pain of being burned.

12Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: When the King offered prayers to the Sudarśana cakra and Lord Viṣṇu, because of his prayers the Sudarśana cakra became peaceful and stopped burning the brāhmaṇa known as Durvāsā Muni.

13Durvāsā Muni, the greatly powerful mystic, was indeed satisfied when freed from the fire of the Sudarśana cakra. Thus he praised the qualities of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa and offered him the highest benedictions.

14Durvāsā Muni said: My dear King, today I have experienced the greatness of devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for although I have committed an offense, you have prayed for my good fortune.

15For those who have achieved the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the pure devotees, what is impossible to do, and what is impossible to give up?

16What is impossible for the servants of the Lord? By the very hearing of His holy name one is purified.

17O King, overlooking my offenses, you have saved my life. Thus I am very much obliged to you because you are so merciful.

18Expecting the return of Durvāsā Muni, the King had not taken his food. Therefore, when the sage returned, the King fell at his lotus feet, pleasing him in all respects, and fed him sumptuously.

19Thus the King respectfully received Durvāsā Muni, who after eating varieties of palatable food was so satisfied that with great affection he requested the King to eat also, saying, "Please take your meal."

20Durvāsā Muni said: I am very pleased with you, my dear King. At first I thought of you as an ordinary human being and accepted your hospitality, but later I could understand, by my own intelligence, that you are the most exalted devotee of the Lord. Therefore, simply by seeing you, touching your feet and talking with you, I have been pleased and have become obliged to you.

21All the blessed women in the heavenly planets will continuously chant about your spotless character at every moment, and the people of this world will also chant your glories continuously.

22Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus being satisfied in all respects, the great mystic yogī Durvāsā took permission and left, continuously glorifying the King. Through the skyways, he went to Brahmaloḳa, which is devoid of agnostics and dry philosophical speculators.

23Durvāsā Muni had left the place of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, and as long as he had not returned for one complete year the King had fasted, maintaining himself simply by drinking water.

24After one year, when Durvāsā Muni had returned, King Ambarīṣa sumptuously fed him all varieties of pure food, and then he himself also ate. When the King saw that the brāhmaṇa Durvāsā had been released from the great danger of being burned, he could understand that by the grace of the Lord he himself was also powerful, but he did not take any credit, for everything had been done by the Lord.

25In this way, because of devotional service, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, who was endowed with varieties of transcendental qualities, was completely aware of Brahman, Paramātmā and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus he executed devotional service perfectly. Because of his devotion, he thought even the topmost planet of this material world no better than the hellish planets.

26Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, because of his advanced position in devotional life, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, who no longer desired to live with material things, retired from active family life. He divided his property among his sons, who were equally as qualified, and he himself took the order of vānaprastha and went to the forest to concentrate his mind fully upon Lord Vāsudeva.

27Anyone who chants this narration or even thinks of this narration about the activities of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa certainly becomes a pure devotee of the Lord.

28By the grace of the Lord, those who hear about the activities of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, the great devotee, certainly become liberated or become devotees without delay.

SB 9.6: The Downfall of Saubhari Muni

After describing the descendants of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described all the kings from Śāśāda to Māndhātā, and in this connection he also described how the great sage Saubhari married the daughters of Māndhātā.

Mahārāja Ambarīṣa had three sons, named Virūpa, Ketumān and Śambhu. The son of Virūpa was Pṛṣadaśva, and his son was Rathītara. Rathītara had no sons, but when he requested the favor of the great sage Aṅgirā, the sage begot several sons in the womb of Rathītara's wife. When the sons were born, they became the dynasty of AṅgirāṚṣi and of Rathītara.

The son of Manu was Ikṣvāku, who had one hundred sons, of whom Vikukṣi, Nimi and Daṇḍakā were the eldest. The sons of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku became kings of different parts of the world. Because of violating sacrificial rules and regulations, one of these sons, Vikukṣi, was banished from the kingdom. By the mercy of Vasiṣṭha and the power of mystic *yoga*, Mahārāja Ikṣvāku attained liberation after giving up his material body. When Mahārāja Ikṣvāku expired, his son Vikukṣi returned and took charge of the kingdom. He performed various types of sacrifices, and thus he pleased the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This Vikukṣi later became celebrated as Śāśāda.

Vikukṣi's son fought with the demons for the sake of the demigods, and because of his valuable service he became famous as Puraṣjaya, Indravāha and Kakutstha. The son of

Puraṣjaya was Anenā, the son of Anenā was Pṛthu, and the son of Pṛthu was Viśvagandhi. The son of Viśvagandhi was Candra, the son of Candra was Yuvanāśva, and his son was Śrāvasta, who constructed Śrāvastī Purī. The son of Śrāvasta was Bṛhadaśva. Bṛhadaśva's son Kuvalayāśva killed a demon named Dhundhu, and thus he became celebrated as Dhundhumāra, "the killer of Dhundhu." The sons of the killer of Dhundhu were Dṛḍhāśva, Kapilāśva and Bhadrāśva. He also had thousands of other sons, but they burned to ashes in the fire emanating from Dhundhu. The son of Dṛḍhāśva was Haryaśva, the son of Haryaśva was Nikumbha, the son of Nikumbha was Bahulāśva, and the son of Bahulāśva was Kṛśāśva. The son of Kṛśāśva was Senajit, and his son was Yuvanāśva.

Yuvanāśva married one hundred wives, but he had no sons, and therefore he entered the forest. In the forest, the sages performed a sacrifice known as Indra-yajṣa on his behalf. Once, however, the King became so thirsty in the forest that he drank the water kept for performing *yajṣa*. Consequently, after some time, a son came forth from the right side of his abdomen. The son, who was very beautiful, was crying to drink breast milk, and Indra gave the child his index finger to suck. Thus the son became known as Māndhātā. In due course of time, Yuvanāśva achieved perfection by performing austerities.

Thereafter, Māndhātā became the emperor and ruled the earth, which consists of seven islands. Thieves and rogues were very much afraid of this powerful king, and therefore the king was known as Trasaddasyu, meaning "one who is very fearful to rogues and thieves." Māndhātā begot sons in the womb of his wife, Bindumatī. These sons were Purukutsa, Ambarīṣa and Mucukunda. These three sons had fifty sisters, all of whom became wives of the great sage known as Saubhari.

In this connection, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described the history of Saubhari Muni, who, because of sensual agitation caused by fish, fell from his *yoga* and wanted to marry all the daughters of Māndhātā for sexual pleasure. Later, Saubhari Muni became very regretful. Thus he accepted the order of *vānaprastha*, performed very severe austerities, and thus attained perfection. In this regard, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described how Saubhari Muni's wives also became perfect.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Ambarīṣa had three sons, named Virūpa, Ketumān and Śambhu. From Virūpa came a son named Pṛṣadaśva, and from Pṛṣadaśva came a son named Rathītara.

2 Rathītara had no sons, and therefore he requested the great sage Aṅgirā to beget sons for him. Because of this request, Aṅgirā begot sons in the womb of Rathītara's wife. All these sons were born with brahminical prowess.

3 Having been born from the womb of Rathītara's wife, all these sons were known as the dynasty of Rathītara, but because they were born from the semen of Aṅgirā, they were also known as the dynasty of Aṅgirā. Among all the progeny of Rathītara, these sons were the most prominent because, owing to their birth, they were considered brāhmaṇas.

4 The son of Manu was Ikṣvāku. When Manu was sneezing, Ikṣvāku was born from Manu's nostrils. King Ikṣvāku had one hundred sons, of whom Vikukṣi, Nimi and Daṇḍakā were the most prominent.

5 Of the one hundred sons, twenty-five became kings in the western side of Āryāvarta, a place between the Himālaya and Vindhya mountains. Another twenty-five sons became kings in the east of Āryāvarta, and the three principal sons became kings in the middle. The other sons became kings in various other places.

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6During the months of January, February and March, oblations offered to the forefathers are called aṣṭakā-śrāddha. The śrāddha ceremony is held during the dark fortnight of the month. When Mahārāja Ikṣvāku was performing his oblations in this ceremony, he ordered his son Vikukṣi to go immediately to the forest to bring some pure flesh.

7Thereafter, Ikṣvāku's son Vikukṣi went to the forest and killed many animals suitable for being offered as oblations. But when fatigued and hungry he became forgetful and ate a rabbit he had killed.

8Vikukṣi offered the remnants of the flesh to King Ikṣvāku, who gave it to Vasiṣṭha for purification. But Vasiṣṭha could immediately understand that part of the flesh had already been taken by Vikukṣi, and therefore he said that it was unfit to be used in the śrāddha ceremony.

9When King Ikṣvāku, thus informed by Vasiṣṭha, understood what his son Vikukṣi had done, he was extremely angry. Thus he ordered Vikukṣi to leave the country because Vikukṣi had violated the regulative principles.

10Having been instructed by the great and learned brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, who discoursed about the Absolute Truth, Mahārāja Ikṣvāku became renounced. By following the principles for a yogī, he certainly achieved the supreme perfection after giving up his material body.

11After his father's disappearance, Vikukṣi returned to the country and thus became the king, ruling the planet earth and performing various sacrifices to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vikukṣi later became celebrated as Śaśāda.

12The son of Śaśāda was Puraṣjaya, who is also known as Indravāha and sometimes as Kakutstha. Please hear from me how he received different names for different activities.

13Formerly, there was a devastating war between the demigods and the demons. The demigods, having been defeated, accepted Puraṣjaya as their assistant and then conquered the demons. Therefore this hero is known as Puraṣjaya, "he who conquered the residence of the demons."

14Puraṣjaya agreed to kill all the demons, on the condition that Indra would be his carrier. Because of pride, Indra could not accept this proposal, but later, by the order of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, Indra did accept it and became a great bull carrier for Puraṣjaya.

15-16Well protected by armor and desiring to fight, Puraṣjaya took up a transcendental bow and very sharp arrows, and, while being highly praised by the demigods, he got up on the back of the bull [Indra] and sat on its hump. Thus he is known as Kakutstha. Being empowered by Lord Viṣṇu, who is the Supersoul and the Supreme Person, Puraṣjaya sat on the great bull and is therefore known as Indravāha. Surrounded by the demigods, he attacked the residence of the demons in the west.

17There was a fierce battle between the demons and Puraṣjaya. Indeed, it was so fierce that when one hears about it one's hairs stand on end. All the demons bold enough to come before Puraṣjaya were immediately sent to the residence of Yamarāja by his arrows.

18To save themselves from the blazing arrows of Indravāha, which resembled the flames of devastation at the end of the millennium, the demons who remained when the rest of their army was killed fled very quickly to their respective homes.

19After conquering the enemy, the saintly king Puraṣjaya gave everything, including the enemy's riches and wives, to Indra, who carries a thunderbolt. For this he is celebrated as

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Puraṣjaya. Thus Puraṣjaya is known by different names because of his different activities.

20The son of Puraṣjaya was known as Anenā, Anenā's son was Pṛthu, and Pṛthu's son was Viśvagandhi. Viśvagandhi's son was Candra, and Candra's son was Yuvanāśva.

21The son of Yuvanāśva was Śrāvasta, who constructed a township known as Śrāvastī Purī. The son of Śrāvasta was Bṛhadaśva, and his son was Kuvalayāśva. In this way the dynasty increased.

22To satisfy the sage Utaṅka, the greatly powerful Kuvalayāśva killed a demon named Dhundhu. He did this with the assistance of his twenty-one thousand sons.

23-24O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, for this reason Kuvalayāśva is celebrated as Dhundhumāra ["the killer of Dhundhu"]. All but three of his sons, however, were burned to ashes by the fire emanating from Dhundhu's mouth. The remaining sons were Dṛḍhāśva, Kapilāśva and Bhadrāśva. From Dṛḍhāśva came a son named Haryaśva, whose son is celebrated as Nikumbha.

25The son of Nikumbha was Bahulāśva, the son of Bahulāśva was Kṛśāśva, the son of Kṛśāśva was Senajit, and the son of Senajit was Yuvanāśva. Yuvanāśva had no sons, and thus he retired from family life and went to the forest.

26Although Yuvanāśva went into the forest with his one hundred wives, all of them were very morose. The sages in the forest, however, being very kind to the King, began very carefully and attentively performing an Indra-yajña so that the King might have a son.

27Being thirsty one night, the King entered the arena of sacrifice, and when he saw all the brāhmaṇas lying down, he personally drank the sanctified water meant to be drunk by his wife.

28When the brāhmaṇas got up from bed and saw the waterpot empty, they inquired who had done this work of drinking the water meant for begetting a child.

29When the brāhmaṇas came to understand that the King, inspired by the supreme controller, had drunk the water, they all exclaimed "Alas! The power of providence is real power. No one can counteract the power of the Supreme." In this way they offered their respectful obeisances unto the Lord.

30Thereafter, in due course of time, a son with all the good symptoms of a powerful king came forth from the lower right side of King Yuvanāśva's abdomen.

31The baby cried so much for breast milk that all the brāhmaṇas were very unhappy. "Who will take care of this baby?" they said. Then Indra, who was worshiped in that yajña, came and solaced the baby. "Do not cry," Indra said. Then Indra put his index finger in the baby's mouth and said, "You may drink me."

32Because Yuvanāśva, the father of the baby, was blessed by the brāhmaṇas, he did not fall a victim to death. After this incident, he performed severe austerities and achieved perfection in that very spot.

33-34Māndhātā, the son of Yuvanāśva, was the cause of fear for Rāvaṇa and other thieves and rogues who caused anxiety. O King Parīkṣit, because they feared him, the son of Yuvanāśva was known as Trasaddasyu. This name was given by King Indra. By the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Yuvanāśva was so powerful that when he became emperor he ruled the entire world, consisting of seven islands, without any second ruler.

35-36The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from the auspicious aspects of great sacrifices, such as the ingredients of the sacrifice, the chanting of Vedic hymns, the regulative principles, the performer, the priests, the result of the sacrifice, the arena of sacrifice, and the time of sacrifice. Knowing the principles of self-realization, Māndhātā worshiped that transcendently situated Supreme Soul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, who comprises all the demigods. He also gave immense charity to the brāhmaṇas, and thus he performed yajña to worship the Lord.

37All places, from where the sun rises on the horizon, shining brilliantly, to where the sun sets, are known as the possession of the celebrated Māndhātā, the son of Yuvanāśva.

38Māndhātā begot three sons in the womb of Bindumatī, the daughter of Śaśabindu. These sons were Purukutsa, Ambarīṣa, and Mucukunda, a great mystic yogī. These three brothers had fifty sisters, who all accepted the great sage Saubhari as their husband.

39-40Saubhari Ṛṣi was engaged in austerity, deep in the water of the river Yamunā, when he saw a pair of fish engaged in sexual affairs. Thus he perceived the pleasure of sex life, and induced by this desire he went to King Māndhātā and begged for one of the King's daughters. In response to this request, the King said, "O brāhmaṇa, any of my daughters may accept any husband according to her personal selection."

41-42Saubhari Muni thought: I am now feeble because of old age. My hair has become grey, my skin is slack, and my head always trembles. Besides, I am a yogī. Therefore women do not like me. Since the King has thus rejected me, I shall reform my body in such a way as to be desirable even to celestial women, what to speak of the daughters of worldly kings.

43Thereafter, when Saubhari Muni became quite a young and beautiful person, the messenger of the palace took him inside the residential quarters of the princesses, which were extremely opulent. All fifty princesses then accepted him as their husband, although he was only one man.

44Thereafter, the princesses, being attracted by Saubhari Muni, gave up their sisterly relationship and quarreled among themselves, each one of them contending, "This man is just suitable for me, and not for you." In this way there ensued a great disagreement.

45-46Because Saubhari Muni was expert in chanting mantras perfectly, his severe austerities resulted in an opulent home, with garments, ornaments, properly dressed and decorated maidservants and manservants, and varieties of parks with clear-water lakes and gardens. In the gardens, fragrant with varieties of flowers, birds chirped and bees hummed, surrounded by professional singers. Saubhari Muni's home was amply provided with valuable beds, seats, ornaments, and arrangements for bathing, and there were varieties of sandalwood creams, flower garlands, and palatable dishes. Thus surrounded by opulent paraphernalia, the muni engaged in family affairs with his numerous wives.

47Māndhātā, the King of the entire world, consisting of seven islands, was struck with wonder when he saw the household opulence of Saubhari Muni. Thus he gave up his false prestige in his position as emperor of the world.

48In this way, Saubhari Muni enjoyed sense gratification in the material world, but he was not at all satisfied, just as a fire never ceases blazing if constantly supplied with drops of fat.

49Thereafter, one day while Saubhari Muni, who was expert in chanting mantras, was sitting in a secluded place, he thought to himself about the cause of his fall, which was simply that he had associated himself with the sexual affairs of the fish.

50Alas! While practicing austerity, even within the depths of the water, and while observing all the rules and regulations practiced by saintly persons, I lost the results of my long austerities simply by association with the sexual affairs of fish. Everyone should observe this falldown and learn from it.

51A person desiring liberation from material bondage must give up the association of persons interested in sex life and should not employ his senses externally [in seeing, hearing, talking, walking and so on]. One should always stay in a secluded place, completely fixing his mind at the lotus feet of the unlimited Personality of Godhead, and if one wants any association at all, he should associate with persons similarly engaged.

52In the beginning I was alone and engaged in performing the austerities of mystic yoga, but later, because of the association of fish engaged in sex, I desired to marry. Then I became the husband of fifty wives, and in each of them I begot one hundred sons, and thus my family increased to five thousand members. By the influence of the modes of material nature, I became fallen and thought that I would be happy in material life. Thus there is no end to my material desires for enjoyment, in this life and the next.

53In this way he passed his life in household affairs for some time, but then he became detached from material enjoyment. To renounce material association, he accepted the vānaprastha order and went to the forest. His devoted wives followed him, for they had no shelter other than their husband.

54When Saubhari Muni, who was quite conversant with the self, went to the forest, he performed severe penances. In this way, in the fire at the time of death, he ultimately engaged himself in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

55O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, by observing their husband progressing in spiritual existence, Saubhari Muni's wives were also able to enter the spiritual world by his spiritual power, just as the flames of a fire cease when the fire is extinguished.

SB 9.7: The Descendants of King Māndhātā

In this chapter the descendants of King Māndhātā are described, and in this connection the histories of Purukutsa and Hariścandra are also given.

The most prominent son of Māndhātā was Ambarīṣa, his son was Yauvanāśva, and Yauvanāśva's son was Hārīta. These three personalities were the best in the dynasty of Māndhātā. Purukutsa, another son of Māndhātā, married the sister of the snakes (*sarpa-gaṇa*) named Narmadā. The son of Purukutsa was Trasaddasyu, whose son was Anaraṇya. Anaraṇya's son was Haryaśva, Haryaśva's son was Prāruṇa, Prāruṇa's son was Tribandhana, and Tribandhana's son was Satyavrata, also known as Triśaṅku. When Triśaṅku kidnapped the daughter of a *brāhmaṇa*, his father cursed him for this sinful act, and Triśaṅku became *acaṇḍāla*, worse than a *sūdra*. Later, by the influence of Viśvāmitra, he was brought to the heavenly planets, but by the influence of the demigods he fell back downward. He was stopped in his fall, however, by the influence of Viśvāmitra. The son of Triśaṅku was Hariścandra. Hariścandra once performed a Rājasūya-yajña, but Viśvāmitra cunningly took all of Hariścandra's possessions as a *dakṣiṇa* contribution and chastised Hariścandra in various ways. Because of this, a quarrel arose between Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha. Hariścandra had no sons, but on the advice of Nārada he worshiped Varuṇa and in this way got a son named Rohita. Hariścandra promised that Rohita would be used to perform a Varuṇa-yajña. Varuṇa reminded Hariścandra repeatedly about this *yajña*, but the King, because of affection for his son, gave various arguments to avoid sacrificing him. Thus time passed, and gradually the son grew up.

To safeguard his life, the boy then took bow and arrows in hand and went to the forest. Meanwhile, at home, Hariścandra suffered from dropsy because of an attack from Varuṇa. When Rohita received the news that his father was suffering, he wanted to return to the capital, but King Indra prevented him from doing so. Following the instructions of Indra, Rohita lived in the forest for six years and then returned home. Rohita purchased Śunaḥśepha, the second son of Ajīgarta, and gave him to his father, Hariścandra, as the sacrificial animal. In this way, the sacrifice was performed, Varuṇa and the other demigods were pacified, and Hariścandra was freed from disease. In this sacrifice, Viśvāmitra was the *hotā* priest, Jamadagni was the *adhvaryu*, Vasiṣṭha was the *brahmā*, and Ayāsyā was the *udgātā*. King Indra, being very satisfied by the sacrifice, gave Hariścandra a golden chariot, and Viśvāmitra gave him transcendental knowledge. Thus Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes how Hariścandra achieved perfection.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The most prominent among the sons of Māndhātā was he who is celebrated as Ambarīṣa. Ambarīṣa was accepted as son by his grandfather Yuvanāśva. Ambarīṣa's son was Yauvanāśva, and Yauvanāśva's son was Hārīta. In Māndhātā's dynasty, Ambarīṣa, Hārīta and Yauvanāśva were very prominent.

2The serpent brothers of Narmadā gave Narmadā to Purukutsa. Being sent by Vāsuki, she took Purukutsa to the lower region of the universe.

3There in Rasātala, the lower region of the universe, Purukutsa, being empowered by Lord Viṣṇu, was able to kill all the Gandharvas who deserved to be killed. Purukutsa received the benediction from the serpents that anyone who remembers this history of his being brought by Narmadā to the lower region of the universe will be assured of safety from the attack of snakes.

4The son of Purukutsa was Trasaddasyu, who was the father of Anaraṇya. Anaraṇya's son was Haryaśva, the father of Prāruṇa. Prāruṇa was the father of Tribandhana.

5-6The son of Tribandhana was Satyavrata, who is celebrated by the name Triśaṅku. Because he kidnapped the daughter of a brāhmaṇa when she was being married, his father cursed him to become a caṇḍāla, lower than a śūdra. Thereafter, by the influence of Viśvāmitra, he went to the higher planetary system, the heavenly planets, in his material body, but because of the prowess of the demigods he fell back downward. Nonetheless, by the power of Viśvāmitra, he did not fall all the way down; even today he can still be seen hanging in the sky, head downward.

7The son of Triśaṅku was Hariścandra. Because of Hariścandra there was a quarrel between Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha, who for many years fought one another, having been transformed into birds.

8Hariścandra had no son and was therefore extremely morose. Once, therefore, following the advice of Nārada, he took shelter of Varuṇa and said to him, "My lord, I have no son. Would you kindly give me one?"

9O King Parīkṣit, Hariścandra begged Varuṇa, "My lord, if a son is born to me, with that son I shall perform a sacrifice for your satisfaction." When Hariścandra said this, Varuṇa replied, "Let it be so." Because of Varuṇa's benediction, Hariścandra begot a son named Rohita.

10Thereafter, when the child was born, Varuṇa approached Hariścandra and said, "Now you have a son. With this son you can offer me a sacrifice." In answer to this, Hariścandra said, "After ten days have passed since an animal's birth, the animal becomes fit to be sacrificed."

11After ten days, Varuṇa came again and said to Hariścandra, “Now you can perform the sacrifice.” Hariścandra replied, “When an animal grows teeth, then it becomes pure enough to be sacrificed.”

12When the teeth grew, Varuṇa came and said to Hariścandra, “Now the animal has grown teeth, and you can perform the sacrifice.” Hariścandra replied, “When all its teeth have fallen out, then it will be fit for sacrifice.”

13When the teeth had fallen out, Varuṇa returned and said to Hariścandra, “Now the animal’s teeth have fallen out, and you can perform the sacrifice.” But Hariścandra replied, “When the animal’s teeth grow in again, then he will be pure enough to be sacrificed.”

14When the teeth grew in again, Varuṇa came and said to Hariścandra, “Now you can perform the sacrifice.” But Hariścandra then said, “O King, when the sacrificial animal becomes a kṣatriya and is able to shield himself to fight with the enemy, then he will be purified.”

15Hariścandra was certainly very much attached to his son. Because of this affection, he asked the demigod Varuṇa to wait. Thus Varuṇa waited and waited for the time to come.

16Rohita could understand that his father intended to offer him as the animal for sacrifice. Therefore, just to save himself from death, he equipped himself with bow and arrows and went to the forest.

17When Rohita heard that his father had been attacked by dropsy due to Varuṇa and that his abdomen had grown very large, he wanted to return to the capital, but King Indra forbade him to do so.

18King Indra advised Rohita to travel to different pilgrimage sites and holy places, for such activities are pious indeed. Following this instruction, Rohita went to the forest for one year.

19In this way, at the end of the second, third, fourth and fifth years, when Rohita wanted to return to his capital, the King of heaven, Indra, approached him as an old brāhmaṇa and forbade him to return, repeating the same words as in the previous year.

20Thereafter, in the sixth year, after wandering in the forest, Rohita returned to the capital of his father. He purchased from Ajīgarta his second son, named Śunaḥśepha. Then he offered Śunaḥśepha to his father, Hariścandra, to be used as the sacrificial animal and offered Hariścandra his respectful obeisances.

21Thereafter, the famous King Hariścandra, one of the exalted persons in history, performed grand sacrifices by sacrificing a man and pleased all the demigods. In this way his dropsy created by Varuṇa was cured.

22In that great human sacrifice, Viśvāmitra was the chief priest to offer oblations, the perfectly self-realized Jamadagni had the responsibility for chanting the mantras from the Yajur Veda, Vasiṣṭha was the chief brahminical priest, and the sage Ayāśya was the reciter of the hymns of the Sāma Veda.

23King Indra, being very pleased with Hariścandra, offered him a gift of a golden chariot. Śunaḥśepha’s glories will be presented along with the description of the son of Viśvāmitra.

24The great sage Viśvāmitra saw that Mahārāja Hariścandra, along with his wife, was truthful, forbearing and concerned with the essence. Thus he gave them imperishable knowledge for fulfillment of the human mission.

25-26 Mahārāja Hariścandra first purified his mind, which was full of material enjoyment, by amalgamating it with the earth. Then he amalgamated the earth with water, the water with fire, the fire with the air, and the air with the sky. Thereafter, he amalgamated the sky with the total material energy, and the total material energy with spiritual knowledge. This spiritual knowledge is realization of one's self as part of the Supreme Lord. When the self-realized spiritual soul is engaged in service to the Lord, he is eternally imperceptible and inconceivable. Thus established in spiritual knowledge, he is completely freed from material bondage.

SB 9.8: The Sons of Sagara Meet Lord Kapiladeva

In this Eighth Chapter the descendants of Rohita are described. In the dynasty of Rohita there was a king named Sagara, whose history is described in relation to Kapiladeva and the destruction of the sons of Sagara.

The son of Rohita was known as Harita, and the son of Harita was Campa, who constructed a township known as Campāpurī. The son of Campa was Sudeva, the son of Sudeva was Vijaya, the son of Vijaya was Bharuka, and the son of Bharuka was Vṛka. Bāhuka, the son of Vṛka, was greatly disturbed by his enemies, and therefore he left home with his wife and went to the forest. When he died there, his wife wanted to accept the principles of *sañi*, dying with her husband, but when she was about to die a sage named Aurva found that she was pregnant and forbade her to do so. The co-wives of this wife of Bāhuka gave her poison with her food, but still her son was born with the poison. The son was therefore named Sagara (*sa* means “with,” and *gara* means “poison”). Following the instructions of the great sage Aurva, King Sagara reformed many clans, including the Yavanas, Śakas, Haihayas and Barbaras. The king did not kill them, but reformed them. Then, again following the instructions of Aurva, King Sagara performed *aśvamedha* sacrifices, but the horse needed for such a sacrifice was stolen by Indra, the King of heaven. King Sagara had two wives, named Sumati and Keśinī. While searching for the horse, the sons of Sumati extensively dug up the surface of the earth and in this way dug a trench, which later became known as the Sāgara Ocean. In the course of this search, they came upon the great personality Kapiladeva and thought Him to have stolen the horse. With this offensive understanding, they attacked Him and were all burned to ashes. Keśinī, the second wife of King Sagara, had a son named Asamaṣṣa, whose son Amśumān later searched for the horse and delivered his uncles. Upon approaching Kapiladeva, Amśumān saw both the horse meant for sacrifice and a pile of ashes. Amśumān offered prayers to Kapiladeva, who was very pleased by his prayers and who returned the horse. After getting back the horse, however, Amśumān still stood before Kapiladeva, and Kapiladeva could understand that Amśumān was praying for the deliverance of his forefathers. Thus Kapiladeva offered the instruction that they could be delivered by water from the Ganges. Amśumān then offered respectful obeisances to Kapiladeva, circumambulated Him, and left that place with the horse for sacrifice. When King Sagara finished his *yajña*, he handed over the kingdom to Amśumān and, following the advice of Aurva, attained salvation.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The son of Rohita was Harita, and Harita's son was Campa, who constructed the town of Campāpurī. The son of Campa was Sudeva, and his son was Vijaya.

2 The son of Vijaya was Bharuka, Bharuka's son was Vṛka, and Vṛka's son was Bāhuka. The enemies of King Bāhuka took away all his possessions, and therefore the King entered the order of vānaprastha and went to the forest with his wife.

3 Bāhuka died when he was old, and one of his wives wanted to die with him, following the *sañi* rite. At that time, however, Aurva Muni, knowing her to be pregnant, forbade her to die.

4Knowing that she was pregnant, the co-wives of the wife of Bāhuka conspired to give her poison with her food, but it did not act. Instead, the son was born along with the poison. Therefore he became famous as Sagara [“one who is born with poison”]. Sagara later became the emperor. The place known as Gaṅgāsāgara was excavated by his sons.

5-6Sagara Mahārāja, following the order of his spiritual master, Aurva, did not kill the uncivilized men like the Tālajaṅghas, Yavanas, Śakas, Haihayas and Barbaras. Instead, some of them he made dress awkwardly, some of them he shaved clean but allowed to wear mustaches, some of them he left wearing loose hair, some he half shaved, some he left without underwear, and some without external garments. Thus these different clans were made to dress differently, but King Sagara did not kill them.

7Following the instructions of the great sage Aurva, Sagara Mahārāja performed aśvamedha sacrifices and thus satisfied the Supreme Lord, who is the supreme controller, the Supersoul of all learned scholars, and the knower of all Vedic knowledge, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But Indra, the King of heaven, stole the horse meant to be offered at the sacrifice.

8[King Sagara had two wives, Sumati and Keśinī.] The sons of Sumati, who were very proud of their prowess and influence, following the order of their father, searched for the lost horse. While doing so, they dug into the earth very extensively.

9-10Thereafter, in the northeastern direction, they saw the horse near the āśrama of Kapila Muni. “Here is the man who has stolen the horse,” they said. “He is staying there with closed eyes. Certainly he is very sinful. Kill him! Kill him!” Shouting like this, the sons of Sagara, sixty thousand all together, raised their weapons. When they approached the sage, the sage opened His eyes.

11By the influence of Indra, the King of heaven, the sons of Sagara had lost their intelligence and disrespected a great personality. Consequently, fire emanated from their own bodies, and they were immediately burned to ashes.

12It is sometimes argued that the sons of King Sagara were burned to ashes by the fire emanating from the eyes of Kapila Muni. This statement, however, is not approved by great learned persons, for Kapila Muni’s body is completely in the mode of goodness and therefore cannot manifest the mode of ignorance in the form of anger, just as the pure sky cannot be polluted by the dust of the earth.

13Kapila Muni enunciated in this material world the Sāṅkhya philosophy, which is a strong boat with which to cross over the ocean of nescience. Indeed, a person eager to cross the ocean of the material world may take shelter of this philosophy. In such a greatly learned person, situated on the elevated platform of transcendence, how can there be any distinction between enemy and friend?

14Among the sons of Sagara Mahārāja was one named Asamaṣjasa, who was born from the King’s second wife, Keśinī. The son of Asamaṣjasa was known as Amśumān, and he was always engaged in working for the good of Sagara Mahārāja, his grandfather.

15-16Formerly, in his previous birth, Asamaṣjasa had been a great mystic yogī, but by bad association he had fallen from his exalted position. Now, in this life, he was born in a royal family and was a jāti-smara; that is, he had the special advantage of being able to remember his past birth. Nonetheless, he wanted to display himself as a miscreant, and therefore he would do things that were abominable in the eyes of the public and unfavorable to his relatives. He would disturb the boys sporting in the river Sarayū by throwing them into the depths of the

water.

17Because Asamaṣjasa engaged in such abominable activities, his father gave up affection for him and had him exiled. Then Asamaṣjasa exhibited his mystic power by reviving the boys and showing them to the King and their parents. After this, Asamaṣjasa left Ayodhyā.

18O King Parīkṣit, when all the inhabitants of Ayodhyā saw that their boys had come back to life, they were astounded, and King Sagara greatly lamented the absence of his son.

19Thereafter, Amśumān, the grandson of Mahārāja Sagara, was ordered by the King to search for the horse. Following the same path traversed by his uncles, Amśumān gradually reached the stack of ashes and found the horse nearby.

20The great Amśumān saw the sage named Kapila, the saint who is an incarnation of Viṣṇu, sitting there by the horse. Amśumān offered Him respectful obeisances, folded his hands and offered Him prayers with great attention.

21Amśumān said: My Lord, even Lord Brahmā is to this very day unable to understand Your position, which is far beyond himself, either by meditation or by mental speculation. So what to speak of others like us, who have been created by Brahmā in various forms as demigods, animals, human beings, birds and beasts? We are completely in ignorance. Therefore, how can we know You, who are the Transcendence?

22My Lord, You are fully situated in everyone's heart, but the living entities, covered by the material body, cannot see You, for they are influenced by the external energy, conducted by the three modes of material nature. Their intelligence being covered by sattva-guṇa, rajo-guṇa and tamo-guṇa, they can see only the actions and reactions of these three modes of material nature. Because of the actions and reactions of the mode of ignorance, whether the living entities are awake or sleeping, they can see only the workings of material nature; they cannot see Your Lordship.

23O my Lord, sages freed from the influence of the three modes of material nature sages such as the four Kumāras [Sanat, Sanaka, Sanandana and Sanātana] are able to think of You, who are concentrated knowledge. But how can an ignorant person like me think of You?

24O completely peaceful Lord, although material nature, fruitive activities and their consequent material names and forms are Your creation, You are unaffected by them. Therefore, Your transcendental name is different from material names, and Your form is different from material forms. You assume a form resembling a material body just to give us instructions like those of Bhagavad-gītā, but actually You are the supreme original person. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

25O my Lord, those whose hearts are bewildered by the influence of lust, greed, envy and illusion are interested only in false hearth and home in this world created by Your māyā. Attached to home, wife and children, they wander in this material world perpetually.

26O Supersoul of all living entities, O Personality of Godhead, simply by seeing You I have now been freed from all lusty desires, which are the root cause of insurmountable illusion and bondage in the material world.

27O King Parīkṣit, when Amśumān had glorified the Lord in this way, the great sage Kapila, the powerful incarnation of Viṣṇu, being very merciful to him, explained to him the path of knowledge.

28The Personality of Godhead said: My dear Amśumān, here is the animal sought by your grandfather for sacrifice. Please take it. As for your forefathers, who have been burnt to ashes, they can be delivered only by Ganges water, and not by any other means.

29Thereafter, Amśumān circumambulated Kapila Muni and offered Him respectful obeisances, bowing his head. After fully satisfying Him in this way, Amśumān brought back the horse meant for sacrifice, and with this horse Mahārāja Sagara performed the remaining ritualistic ceremonies.

30After delivering charge of his kingdom to Amśumān and thus being freed from all material anxiety and bondage, Sagara Mahārāja, following the means instructed by Aurva Muni, achieved the supreme destination.

SB 9.9: The Dynasty of Amśumān

This chapter describes the history of the dynasty of Amśumān, up to Khaṭvāṅga, and it also describes how Bhagīratha brought the water of the Ganges to this earth.

The son of Mahārāja Amśumān was Dilīpa, who tried to bring the Ganges to this world but who died without success. Bhagīratha, the son of Dilīpa, was determined to bring the Ganges to the material world, and for this purpose he underwent severe austerities. Mother Ganges, being fully satisfied by his austerities, made herself visible to him, wanting to give him a benediction. Bhagīratha then asked her to deliver his forefathers. Although mother Ganges agreed to come down to earth, she made two conditions: first, she wanted some suitable male to be able to control her waves; second, although all sinful men would be freed from sinful reactions by bathing in the Ganges, mother Ganges did not want to keep all these sinful reactions. These two conditions were subject matters for consideration. Bhagīratha replied to mother Ganges, “The Personality of Godhead Lord Śiva will be completely able to control the waves of your water, and when pure devotees bathe in your water, the sinful reactions left by sinful men will be counteracted.” Bhagīratha then performed austerities to satisfy Lord Śiva, who is called Āśutoṣa because he is naturally satisfied very easily. Lord Śiva agreed to Bhagīratha’s proposal to check the force of the Ganges. In this way, simply by the touch of the Ganges, Bhagīratha’s forefathers were delivered and allowed to go to the heavenly planets.

The son of Bhagīratha was Śruta, the son of Śruta was Nābha, and Nābha’s son was Sindhudvīpa. The son of Sindhudvīpa was Ayutāyu, and the son of Ayutāyu was Ṛtūparṇa, who was a friend of Nala. Ṛtūparṇa gave Nala the art of gambling and learned from him the art of *aśva-vidyā*. The son of Ṛtūparṇa was known as Sarvakāma, the son of Sarvakāma was Saudāsa, and his son was Saudāsa. The wife of Saudāsa was named Damayantī or Madayantī, and Saudāsa was also known as Kalmāṣapāda. Because of some defect in his fruitive activities, Saudāsa was cursed by Vasiṣṭha to become a Rākṣasa. While walking through the forest, he saw a *brāhmaṇa* engaged in sex with his wife, and because he had become a Rākṣasa he wanted to devour the *brāhmaṇa*. Although the *brāhmaṇa*’s wife pleaded with him in many ways, Saudāsa devoured the *brāhmaṇa*, and the wife therefore cursed him, saying, “As soon as you engage in sex you will die.” After twelve years, therefore, even though Saudāsa was released from the curse of Vasiṣṭha Muni, he remained sonless. At that time, with Saudāsa’s permission, Vasiṣṭha impregnated Saudāsa’s wife, Madayantī. Because Madayantī bore the child for many years but still could not give birth, Vasiṣṭha struck her abdomen with a stone, and thus a son was born. The son was named Aśmaka.

The son of Aśmaka was known as Bālīka. He was protected from the curse of Paraśurāma because of being surrounded by many women, and therefore he is also known as Nārīkavaca.

When the entire world was devoid of *kṣatriyas*, he became the original father of more *kṣatriyas*. He is therefore sometimes called Mūlaka. From Bālika, Daśaratha was born, from Daśaratha came Aiḍaviḍi, and from Aiḍaviḍi came Viśvasaha. The son of Viśvasaha was Mahārāja Khatvāṅga. Mahārāja Khatvāṅga joined the demigods in fighting the demons and was victorious, and the demigods therefore wanted to give him a benediction. But when the King inquired how long he would live and understood that his life would last only a few seconds more, he immediately left the heavenly planets and returned to his own abode by airplane. He could understand that everything in this material world is insignificant, and thus he fully engaged in worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: King Amśumān, like his grandfather, performed austerities for a very long time. Nonetheless, he could not bring the Ganges to this material world, and thereafter, in due course of time, he died.

2Like Amśumān himself, Dilīpa, his son, was unable to bring the Ganges to this material world, and he also became a victim of death in due course of time. Then Dilīpa's son, Bhagīratha, performed very severe austerities to bring the Ganges to this material world.

3Thereafter, mother Ganges appeared before King Bhagīratha and said, "I am very much satisfied with your austerities and am now prepared to give you benedictions as you desire." Being thus addressed by Gaṅgādevī, mother Ganges, the King bowed his head before her and explained his desire.

4Mother Ganges replied: When I fall from the sky to the surface of the planet earth, the water will certainly be very forceful. Who will sustain that force? If I am not sustained, I shall pierce the surface of the earth and go down to Rasātala, the Pātāla area of the universe.

5O King, I do not wish to go down to the planet earth, for there the people in general will bathe in my water to cleanse themselves of the reactions of their sinful deeds. When all these sinful reactions accumulate in me, how shall I become free from them? You must consider this very carefully.

6Bhagīratha said: Those who are saintly because of devotional service and are therefore in the renounced order, free from material desires, and who are pure devotees, expert in following the regulative principles mentioned in the Vedas, are always glorious and pure in behavior and are able to deliver all fallen souls. When such pure devotees bathe in your water, the sinful reactions accumulated from other people will certainly be counteracted, for such devotees always keep in the core of their hearts the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can vanquish all sinful reactions.

7Like a cloth woven of threads extending for its length and breadth, this entire universe, in all its latitude and longitude, is situated under different potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Śiva is the incarnation of the Lord, and thus he represents the Supersoul in the embodied soul. He can sustain your forceful waves on his head.

8After saying this, Bhagīratha satisfied Lord Śiva by performing austerities. O King Parīkṣit, Lord Śiva was very quickly satisfied with Bhagīratha.

9When King Bhagīratha approached Lord Śiva and requested him to sustain the forceful waves of the Ganges, Lord Śiva accepted the proposal by saying, "Let it be so." Then, with great attention, he sustained the Ganges on his head, for the water of the Ganges is purifying, having emanated from the toes of Lord Viṣṇu.

10The great and saintly king Bhagīratha brought the Ganges, which can deliver all the fallen

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souls, to that place on earth where the bodies of his forefathers lay burnt to ashes.

11Bhagīratha mounted a swift chariot and drove before mother Ganges, who followed him, purifying many countries, until they reached the ashes of Bhagīratha's forefathers, the sons of Sagara, who were thus sprinkled with water from the Ganges.

12Because the sons of Sagara Mahārāja had offended a great personality, the heat of their bodies had increased, and they were burnt to ashes. But simply by being sprinkled with water from the Ganges, all of them became eligible to go to the heavenly planets. What then is to be said of those who use the water of mother Ganges to worship her?

13Simply by having water from the Ganges come in contact with the ashes of their burnt bodies, the sons of Sagara Mahārāja were elevated to the heavenly planets. Therefore, what is to be said of a devotee who worships mother Ganges faithfully with a determined vow? One can only imagine the benefit that accrues to such a devotee.

14Because mother Ganges emanates from the lotus toe of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Anantadeva, she is able to liberate one from material bondage. Therefore whatever is described herewith about her is not at all wonderful.

15Great sages, completely freed from material lusty desires, devote their minds fully to the service of the Lord. Such persons are liberated from material bondage without difficulty, and they become transcendently situated, acquiring the spiritual quality of the Lord. This is the glory of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

16-17Bhagīratha had a son named Śruta, whose son was Nābha. This son was different from the Nābha previously described. Nābha had a son named Sindhudvīpa, from Sindhudvīpa came Ayutāyu, and from Ayutāyu came Ṛtūparṇa, who became a friend of Nalarāja. Ṛtūparṇa taught Nalarāja the art of gambling, and Nalarāja gave Ṛtūparṇa lessons in controlling and maintaining horses. The son of Ṛtūparṇa was Sarvakāma.

18Sarvakāma had a son named Sudāsa, whose son, known as Saudāsa, was the husband of Damayantī. Saudāsa is sometimes known as Mitrasaha or Kalmāṣapāda. Because of his own misdeed, Mitrasaha was sonless and was cursed by Vasiṣṭha to become a man-eater [Rākṣasa].

19King Parīkṣit said: O Śukadeva Gosvāmī, why did Vasiṣṭha, the spiritual master of Saudāsa, curse that great soul? I wish to know of this. If it is not a confidential matter, please describe it to me.

20-21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Once Saudāsa went to live in the forest, where he killed a man-eater [Rākṣasa] but forgave and released the man-eater's brother. That brother, however, decided to take revenge. Thinking to harm the King, he became the cook at the King's house. One day, the King's spiritual master, Vasiṣṭha Muni, was invited for dinner, and the Rākṣasa cook served him human flesh.

22While examining the food given to him, Vasiṣṭha Muni, by his mystic power, could understand that it was unfit to eat, being the flesh of a human being. He was very angry at this and immediately cursed Saudāsa to become a man-eater.

23-24When Vasiṣṭha understood that the human flesh had been served by the Rākṣasa, not by the King, he undertook twelve years of austerity to cleanse himself for having cursed the faultless King. Meanwhile, King Saudāsa took water and chanted the śapa-mantra, preparing to curse Vasiṣṭha, but his wife, Madayantī, forbade him to do so. Then the King saw that the ten directions, the sky and the surface of the globe were full of living entities everywhere.

25Saudāsa thus acquired the propensity of a man-eater and received on his leg a black spot, for which he was known as Kalmāṣapāda. Once King Kalmāṣapāda saw a brāhmaṇa couple engaged in sexual intercourse in the forest.

26-27Being influenced by the propensity of a Rākṣasa and being very hungry, King Saudāsa seized the brāhmaṇa. Then the poor woman, the brāhmaṇa's wife, said to the King: O hero, you are not actually a man-eater; rather, you are among the descendants of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku. Indeed, you are a great fighter, the husband of Madayantī. You should not act irreligiously in this way. I desire to have a son. Please, therefore, return my husband, who has not yet impregnated me.

28O King, O hero, this human body is meant for universal benefits. If you kill this body untimely, you will kill all the benefits of human life.

29Here is a learned, highly qualified brāhmaṇa, engaged in performing austerity and eagerly desiring to worship the Supreme Lord, the Supersoul who lives within the core of the heart in all living entities.

30My lord, you are completely aware of the religious principles. As a son never deserves to be killed by his father, here is a brāhmaṇa who should be protected by the king, and never killed. How does he deserve to be killed by a rājarṣi like you?

31You are well known and worshiped in learned circles. How dare you kill this brāhmaṇa, who is a saintly, sinless person, well versed in Vedic knowledge? Killing him would be like destroying the embryo within the womb or killing a cow.

32Without my husband, I cannot live for a moment. If you want to eat my husband, it would be better to eat me first, for without my husband I am as good as a dead body.

33Being condemned by the curse of Vasiṣṭha, King Saudāsa devoured the brāhmaṇa, exactly as a tiger eats its prey. Even though the brāhmaṇa's wife spoke so pitifully, Saudāsa was unmoved by her lamentation.

34When the chaste wife of the brāhmaṇa saw that her husband, who was about to discharge semen, had been eaten by the man-eater, she was overwhelmed with grief and lamentation. Thus she angrily cursed the King.

35O foolish, sinful person, because you have eaten my husband when I was sexually inclined and desiring to have the seed of a child, I shall also see you die when you attempt to discharge semen in your wife. In other words, whenever you attempt to sexually unite with your wife, you shall die.

36Thus the wife of the brāhmaṇa cursed King Saudāsa, known as Mitrasaha. Then, being inclined to go with her husband, she set fire to her husband's bones, fell into the fire herself, and went with him to the same destination.

37After twelve years, when King Saudāsa was released from the curse by Vasiṣṭha, he wanted to have sexual intercourse with his wife. But the Queen reminded him about the curse by the brāhmaṇī, and thus he was checked from sexual intercourse.

38After being thus instructed, the King gave up the future happiness of sexual intercourse and by destiny remained sonless. Later, with the King's permission, the great saint Vasiṣṭha begot a child in the womb of Madayantī.

39Madayantī bore the child within the womb for seven years and did not give birth. Therefore Vasiṣṭha struck her abdomen with a stone, and then the child was born. Consequently, the child was known as Aśmaka [“the child born of a stone”].

40From Aśmaka, Bālika took birth. Because Bālika was surrounded by women and was therefore saved from the anger of Paraśurāma, he was known as Nārīkavaca [“one who is protected by women”]. When Paraśurāma vanquished all the kṣatriyas, Bālika became the progenitor of more kṣatriyas. Therefore he was known as Mūlaka, the root of the kṣatriya dynasty.

41From Bālika came a son named Daśaratha, from Daśaratha came a son named Aiḍaviḍi, and from Aiḍaviḍi came King Viśvasaha. The son of King Viśvasaha was the famous Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga.

42King Khaṭvāṅga was unconquerable in any fight. Requested by the demigods to join them in fighting the demons, he won victory, and the demigods, being very pleased, wanted to give him a benediction. The King inquired from them about the duration of his life and was informed that he had only one moment more. Thus he immediately left his palace and went to his own residence, where he engaged his mind fully on the lotus feet of the Lord.

43Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga thought: Not even my life is dearer to me than the brahminical culture and the brāhmaṇas, who are worshiped by my family. What then is to be said of my kingdom, land, wife, children and opulence? Nothing is dearer to me than the brāhmaṇas.

44I was never attracted, even in my childhood, by insignificant things or irreligious principles. I did not find anything more substantial than the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

45The demigods, the directors of the three worlds, wanted to give me whatever benediction I desired. I did not want their benedictions, however, because I am interested in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who created everything in this material world. I am more interested in the Supreme Personality of Godhead than in all material benedictions.

46Even though the demigods have the advantages of being situated in the higher planetary system, their minds, senses and intelligence are agitated by material conditions. Therefore, even such elevated persons fail to realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternally situated in the core of the heart. What then is to be said of others, such as human beings, who have fewer advantages?

47Therefore I should now give up my attachment for things created by the external energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I should engage in thought of the Lord and should thus surrender unto Him. This material creation, having been created by the external energy of the Lord, is like an imaginary town visualized on a hill or in a forest. Every conditioned soul has a natural attraction and attachment for material things, but one must simply give up this attachment and surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

48Thus Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga, by his advanced intelligence in rendering service to the Lord, gave up false identification with the body full of ignorance. In his original position of eternal servitorship, he engaged himself in rendering service to the Lord.

49The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, is extremely difficult to understand for unintelligent men who accept Him as impersonal or void, which He is not. The Lord is therefore understood and sung about by pure devotees.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

This Tenth Chapter describes how Lord Rāmacandra appeared in the dynasty of Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga. It also describes the Lord's activities, telling how He killed Rāvaṇa and returned to Ayodhyā, the capital of His kingdom.

The son of Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga was Dīrghabāhu, and his son was Raghu. The son of Raghu was Aja, the son of Aja was Daśaratha, and the son of Daśaratha was Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the Lord descended into this world in His full quadruple expansion as Lord Rāmacandra, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna great sages like Vālmīki who were actually in knowledge of the Absolute Truth described His transcendental pastimes. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes these pastimes in brief.

Lord Rāmacandra went with Viśvāmitra and killed Rākṣasas like Mārīca. After breaking the stout and strong bow known as Haradhanu, the Lord married mother Sītā and cut down the prestige of Paraśurāma. To obey the order of His father, He entered the forest, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. There He cut off the nose of Śūrpaṅkhā and killed the associates of Rāvaṇa, headed by Khara and Dūṣaṇa. Rāvaṇa's kidnapping of Sītādevī was the beginning of this demon's misfortune. When Mārīca assumed the form of a golden deer, Lord Rāmacandra went to bring the deer to please Sītādevī, but in the meantime Rāvaṇa took advantage of the Lord's absence to kidnap her. When Sītādevī was kidnapped, Lord Rāmacandra, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, searched for her throughout the forest. In the course of this search, They met Jaṭāyu. Then the Lord killed the demon Kabandha and the commander Vāli and established a friendly relationship with Sugrīva. After organizing the military strength of the monkeys and going with them to the shore of the sea, the Lord awaited the arrival of Samudra, the ocean personified, but when Samudra did not come, the Lord, the master of Samudra, became angry. Then Samudra came to the Lord with great haste and surrendered to Him, wanting to help Him in every way. The Lord then attempted to bridge the ocean, and, with the help of advice from Vibhīṣaṇa, He attacked Rāvaṇa's capital, Laṅkā. Previously, Hanumān, the eternal servant of the Lord, had set fire to Laṅkā, and now, with the help of Lakṣmaṇa, the forces of Lord Rāmacandra killed all the Rākṣasa soldiers. Then Lord Rāmacandra personally killed Rāvaṇa. Mandodarī and other wives lamented for Rāvaṇa, and in accordance with Lord Rāmacandra's order, Vibhīṣaṇa performed the funeral ceremonies for all the dead in the family. Lord Rāmacandra then gave Vibhīṣaṇa the right to rule Laṅkā and also granted him a long duration of life. The Lord delivered Sītādevī from the Aśoka forest and carried her in a flower airplane to His capital Ayodhyā, where He was received by His brother Bharata. When Lord Rāmacandra entered Ayodhyā, Bharata brought His wooden shoes, Vibhīṣaṇa and Sugrīva held a whisk and fan, Hanumān carried an umbrella, Śatrughna carried the Lord's bow and two quivers, and Sītādevī carried a waterpot containing water from holy places. Aṅgada carried a sword, and Jāmbavān (Rkṣarāja) carried a shield. After Lord Rāmacandra, accompanied by Lord Lakṣmaṇa and mother Sītādevī, met all His relatives, the great sage Vasiṣṭha enthroned Him as King. The chapter ends with a short description of Lord Rāmacandra's rule in Ayodhyā.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The son of Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga was Dīrghabāhu, and his son was the celebrated Mahārāja Raghu. From Mahārāja Raghu came Aja, and from Aja was born the great personality Mahārāja Daśaratha.

2Being prayed for by the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth Himself, directly appeared with His expansion and expansions of the expansion. Their holy names were Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna. These celebrated incarnations thus appeared in four forms as the sons of Mahārāja Daśaratha.

3O King Parīkṣit, the transcendental activities of Lord Rāmacandra have been described by

great saintly persons who have seen the truth. Because you have heard again and again about Lord Rāmacandra, the husband of mother Sītā, I shall describe these activities only in brief. Please listen.

4To keep the promise of His father intact, Lord Rāmacandra immediately gave up the position of king and, accompanied by His wife, mother Sītā, wandered from one forest to another on His lotus feet, which were so delicate that they were unable to bear even the touch of Sītā's palms. The Lord was also accompanied by Hanumān [or by another monkey, Sugrīva], king of the monkeys, and by His own younger brother Lord Lakṣmaṇa, both of whom gave Him relief from the fatigue of wandering in the forest. Having cut off the nose and ears of Śūrpaṅkhā, thus disfiguring her, the Lord was separated from mother Sītā. He therefore became angry, moving His eyebrows and thus frightening the ocean, who then allowed the Lord to construct a bridge to cross the ocean. Subsequently, the Lord entered the kingdom of Rāvaṇa to kill him, like a fire devouring a forest. May that Supreme Lord, Rāmacandra, give us all protection.

5In the arena of the sacrifice performed by Viśvāmitra, Lord Rāmacandra, the King of Ayodhyā, killed many demons, Rākṣasas and uncivilized men who wandered at night in the mode of darkness. May Lord Rāmacandra, who killed these demons in the presence of Lakṣmaṇa, be kind enough to give us protection.

6-7O King, the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra were wonderful, like those of a baby elephant. In the assembly where mother Sītā was to choose her husband, in the midst of the heroes of this world, He broke the bow belonging to Lord Śiva. This bow was so heavy that it was carried by three hundred men, but Lord Rāmacandra bent and strung it and broke it in the middle, just as a baby elephant breaks a stick of sugarcane. Thus the Lord achieved the hand of mother Sītā, who was equally as endowed with transcendental qualities of form, beauty, behavior, age and nature. Indeed, she was the goddess of fortune who constantly rests on the chest of the Lord. While returning from Sītā's home after gaining her at the assembly of competitors, Lord Rāmacandra met Paraśurāma. Although Paraśurāma was very proud, having rid the earth of the royal order twenty-one times, he was defeated by the Lord, who appeared to be a kṣatriya of the royal order.

8Carrying out the order of His father, who was bound by a promise to his wife, Lord Rāmacandra left behind His kingdom, opulence, friends, well-wishers, residence and everything else, just as a liberated soul gives up his life, and went to the forest with Sītā.

9While wandering in the forest, where He accepted a life of hardship, carrying His invincible bow and arrows in His hand, Lord Rāmacandra deformed Rāvaṇa's sister, who was polluted with lusty desires, by cutting off her nose and ears. He also killed her fourteen thousand Rākṣasa friends, headed by Khara, Triśira and Dūṣaṇa.

10O King Parīkṣit, when Rāvaṇa, who had ten heads on his shoulders, heard about the beautiful and attractive features of Sītā, his mind was agitated by lusty desires, and he went to kidnap her. To distract Lord Rāmacandra from His āśrama, Rāvaṇa sent Mārīca in the form of a golden deer, and when Lord Rāmacandra saw that wonderful deer, He left His residence and followed it and finally killed it with a sharp arrow, just as Lord Śiva killed Dakṣa.

11When Rāmacandra entered the forest and Lakṣmaṇa was also absent, the worst of the Rākṣasas, Rāvaṇa, kidnapped Sītādevī, the daughter of the King of Videha, just as a tiger seizes unprotected sheep when the shepherd is absent. Then Lord Rāmacandra wandered in the forest with His brother Lakṣmaṇa as if very much distressed due to separation from His wife. Thus He showed by His personal example the condition of a person attached to women.

12 Lord Rāmacandra, whose lotus feet are worshiped by Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, had assumed the form of a human being. Thus He performed the funeral ceremony of Jaṭāyu, who was killed by Rāvaṇa. The Lord then killed the demon named Kabandha, and after making friends with the monkey chiefs, killing Vāli and arranging for the deliverance of mother Sītā, He went to the beach of the ocean.

13 After reaching the beach, Lord Rāmacandra fasted for three days, awaiting the arrival of the ocean personified. When the ocean did not come, the Lord exhibited His pastimes of anger, and simply by His glancing over the ocean, all the living entities within it, including the crocodiles and sharks, were agitated by fear. Then the personified ocean fearfully approached Lord Rāmacandra, taking all paraphernalia to worship Him. Falling at the Lord's lotus feet, the personified ocean spoke as follows.

14 O all-pervading Supreme Person, we are dull-minded and did not understand who You are, but now we understand that You are the Supreme Person, the master of the entire universe, the unchanging and original Personality of Godhead. The demigods are infatuated with the mode of goodness, the Prajāpatis with the mode of passion, and the lord of ghosts with the mode of ignorance, but You are the master of all these qualities.

15 My Lord, You may use my water as You like. Indeed, You may cross it and go to the abode of Rāvaṇa, who is the great source of disturbance and crying for the three worlds. He is the son of Viśravā, but is condemned like urine. Please go kill him and thus regain Your wife, Sītādevī. O great hero, although my water presents no impediment to Your going to Laṅkā, please construct a bridge over it to spread Your transcendental fame. Upon seeing this wonderfully uncommon deed of Your Lordship, all the great heroes and kings in the future will glorify You.

16 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After constructing a bridge over the ocean by throwing into the water the peaks of mountains whose trees and other vegetation had been shaken by the hands of great monkeys, Lord Rāmacandra went to Laṅkā to release Sītādevī from the clutches of Rāvaṇa. With the direction and help of Vibhīṣaṇa, Rāvaṇa's brother, the Lord, along with the monkey soldiers, headed by Sugrīva, Nīla and Hanumān, entered Rāvaṇa's kingdom, Laṅkā, which had previously been burnt by Hanumān.

17 After entering Laṅkā, the monkey soldiers, led by chiefs like Sugrīva, Nīla and Hanumān, occupied all the sporting houses, granaries, treasuries, palace doorways, city gates, assembly houses, palace frontages and even the resting houses of the pigeons. When the city's crossroads, platforms, flags and golden waterpots on its domes were all destroyed, the entire city of Laṅkā appeared like a river disturbed by a herd of elephants.

18 When Rāvaṇa, the master of the Rākṣasas, saw the disturbances created by the monkey soldiers, he called for Nikumbha, Kumbha, Dhūmrākṣa, Durmukha, Surāntaka, Narāntaka and other Rākṣasas and also his son Indrajit. Thereafter he called for Prahasta, Atikāya, Vikampana and finally Kumbhakarna. Then he induced all his followers to fight against the enemies.

19 Lord Rāmacandra, surrounded by Lakṣmaṇa and monkey soldiers like Sugrīva, Hanumān, Gandhamāda, Nīla, Aṅgada, Jāmbavān and Panasa, attacked the soldiers of the Rākṣasas, who were fully equipped with various invincible weapons like swords, lances, bows, prāsas, ṛṣṭis, śakti arrows, khaḍgas and tomaras.

20 Aṅgada and the other commanders of the soldiers of Rāmacandra faced the elephants, infantry, horses and chariots of the enemy and hurled against them big trees, mountain peaks, clubs and arrows. Thus the soldiers of Lord Rāmacandra killed Rāvaṇa's soldiers, who had lost

all good fortune because Rāvaṇa had been condemned by the anger of mother Sītā.

21 Thereafter, when Rāvaṇa, the king of the Rākṣasas, observed that his soldiers had been lost, he was extremely angry. Thus he mounted his airplane, which was decorated with flowers, and proceeded toward Lord Rāmacandra, who sat on the effulgent chariot brought by Mātali, the chariot driver of Indra. Then Rāvaṇa struck Lord Rāmacandra with sharp arrows.

22 Lord Rāmacandra said to Rāvaṇa: You are the most abominable of the man-eaters. Indeed, you are like their stool. You resemble a dog, for as a dog steals eatables from the kitchen in the absence of the householder, in My absence you kidnapped My wife, Sītādevī. Therefore as Yamarāja punishes sinful men, I shall also punish you. You are most abominable, sinful and shameless. Today, therefore, I, whose attempt never fails, shall punish you.

23 After thus rebuking Rāvaṇa, Lord Rāmacandra fixed an arrow to His bow, aimed at Rāvaṇa, and released the arrow, which pierced Rāvaṇa's heart like a thunderbolt. Upon seeing this, Rāvaṇa's followers raised a tumultuous sound, crying, "Alas! Alas! What has happened? What has happened?" as Rāvaṇa, vomiting blood from his ten mouths, fell from his airplane, just as a pious man falls to earth from the heavenly planets when the results of his pious activities are exhausted.

24 Thereafter, all the women whose husbands had fallen in the battle, headed by Mandodarī, the wife of Rāvaṇa, came out of Laṅkā. Continuously crying, they approached the dead bodies of Rāvaṇa and the other Rākṣasas.

25 Striking their breasts in affliction because their husbands had been killed by the arrows of Lakṣmaṇa, the women embraced their respective husbands and cried piteously in voices appealing to everyone.

26 O my lord, O master! You epitomized trouble for others, and therefore you were called Rāvaṇa. But now that you have been defeated, we also are defeated, for without you the state of Laṅkā has been conquered by the enemy. To whom will it go for shelter?

27 O greatly fortunate one, you came under the influence of lusty desires, and therefore you could not understand the influence of mother Sītā. Now, because of her curse, you have been reduced to this state, having been killed by Lord Rāmacandra.

28 O pleasure of the Rākṣasa dynasty, because of you the state of Laṅkā and also we ourselves now have no protector. By your deeds you have made your body fit to be eaten by vultures and your soul fit to go to hell.

29 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Vibhīṣaṇa, the pious brother of Rāvaṇa and devotee of Lord Rāmacandra, received approval from Lord Rāmacandra, the King of Kosala. Then he performed the prescribed funeral ceremonies for his family members to save them from the path to hell.

30 Thereafter, Lord Rāmacandra found Sītādevī sitting in a small cottage beneath the tree named Simśapā in a forest of Aśoka trees. She was lean and thin, being aggrieved because of separation from Him.

31 Seeing His wife in that condition, Lord Rāmacandra was very compassionate. When Rāmacandra came before her, she was exceedingly happy to see her beloved, and her lotuslike mouth showed her joy.

32 After giving Vibhīṣaṇa the power to rule the Rākṣasa population of Laṅkā for the duration of one kalpa, Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead [Bhagavān], placed Sītādevī

on an airplane decorated with flowers and then got on the plane Himself. The period for His living in the forest having ended, the Lord returned to Ayodhyā, accompanied by Hanumān, Sugrīva and His brother Lakṣmaṇa.

33When Lord Rāmacandra returned to His capital, Ayodhyā, He was greeted on the road by the princely order, who showered His body with beautiful, fragrant flowers, while great personalities like Lord Brahmā and other demigods glorified the activities of the Lord in great jubilation.

34Upon reaching Ayodhyā, Lord Rāmacandra heard that in His absence His brother Bharata was eating barley cooked in the urine of a cow, covering His body with the bark of trees, wearing matted locks of hair, and lying on a mattress of kuśa. The most merciful Lord very much lamented this.

35-38When Lord Bharata understood that Lord Rāmacandra was returning to the capital, Ayodhyā, He immediately took upon His own head Lord Rāmacandra's wooden shoes and came out from His camp at Nandigrāma. Lord Bharata was accompanied by ministers, priests and other respectable citizens, by professional musicians vibrating pleasing musical sounds, and by learned brāhmaṇas loudly chanting Vedic hymns. Following in the procession were chariots drawn by beautiful horses with harnesses of golden rope. These chariots were decorated by flags with golden embroidery and by other flags of various sizes and patterns. There were soldiers bedecked with golden armor, servants bearing betel nut, and many well-known and beautiful prostitutes. Many servants followed on foot, bearing an umbrella, whisks, different grades of precious jewels, and other paraphernalia befitting a royal reception. Accompanied in this way, Lord Bharata, His heart softened in ecstasy and His eyes full of tears, approached Lord Rāmacandra and fell at His lotus feet with great ecstatic love.

39-40After offering the wooden shoes before Lord Rāmacandra, Lord Bharata stood with folded hands, His eyes full of tears, and Lord Rāmacandra bathed Bharata with tears while embracing Him with both arms for a long time. Accompanied by mother Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, Lord Rāmacandra then offered His respectful obeisances unto the learned brāhmaṇas and the elderly persons in the family, and all the citizens of Ayodhyā offered their respectful obeisances unto the Lord.

41The citizens of Ayodhyā, upon seeing their King return after a long absence, offered Him flower garlands, waved their upper cloths, and danced in great jubilation.

42-43O King, Lord Bharata carried Lord Rāmacandra's wooden shoes, Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa carried a whisk and an excellent fan, Hanumān carried a white umbrella, Śatrughna carried a bow and two quivers, and Sītādevī carried a waterpot filled with water from holy places. Aṅgada carried a sword, and Jāmbavān, King of the Rkṣas, carried a golden shield.

44O King Parīkṣit, as the Lord sat on His airplane of flowers, with women offering Him prayers and reciters chanting about His characteristics, He appeared like the moon with the stars and planets.

45-46Thereafter, having been welcomed by His brother Bharata, Lord Rāmacandra entered the city of Ayodhyā in the midst of a festival. When He entered the palace, He offered obeisances to all the mothers, including Kaikeyī and the other wives of Mahārāja Daśaratha, and especially His own mother, Kauśalyā. He also offered obeisances to the spiritual preceptors, such as Vasiṣṭha. Friends of His own age and younger friends worshiped Him, and He returned their respectful obeisances, as did Lakṣmaṇa and mother Sītā. In this way they all entered the palace.

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47Upon seeing their sons, the mothers of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna immediately arose, like unconscious bodies returning to consciousness. The mothers placed their sons on their laps and bathed Them with tears, thus relieving themselves of the grief of long separation.

48The family priest or spiritual master, Vasiṣṭha, had Lord Rāmacandra cleanly shaved, freeing Him from His matted locks of hair. Then, with the cooperation of the elderly members of the family, he performed the bathing ceremony [abhiṣeka] for Lord Rāmacandra with the water of the four seas and with other substances, just as it was performed for King Indra.

49Lord Rāmacandra, fully bathed and His head clean-shaven, dressed Himself very nicely and was decorated with a garland and ornaments. Thus He shone brightly, surrounded by His brothers and wife, who were similarly dressed and ornamented.

50Being pleased by the full surrender and submission of Lord Bharata, Lord Rāmacandra then accepted the throne of the state. He cared for the citizens exactly like a father, and the citizens, being fully engaged in their occupational duties of varṇa and āśrama, accepted Him as their father.

51Lord Rāmacandra became King during Tretā-yuga, but because of His good government, the age was like Satya-yuga. Everyone was religious and completely happy.

52O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Bharata dynasty, during the reign of Lord Rāmacandra the forests, the rivers, the hills and mountains, the states, the seven islands and the seven seas were all favorable in supplying the necessities of life for all living beings.

53When Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was the King of this world, all bodily and mental suffering, disease, old age, bereavement, lamentation, distress, fear and fatigue were completely absent. There was even no death for those who did not want it.

54Lord Rāmacandra took a vow to accept only one wife and have no connection with any other women. He was a saintly king, and everything in His character was good, untinged by qualities like anger. He taught good behavior for everyone, especially for householders, in terms of varṇāśrama-dharma. Thus He taught the general public by His personal activities.

55Mother Sītā was very submissive, faithful, shy and chaste, always understanding the attitude of her husband. Thus by her character and her love and service she completely attracted the mind of the Lord.

SB 9.11: Lord Rāmacandra Rules the World

This chapter describes how Lord Rāmacandra resided in Ayodhyā with His younger brothers and performed various sacrifices.

Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, performed various sacrifices by which to worship Himself, and at the end of these sacrifices He gave land to the *hotā*, *adhvaryu*, *udgātā* and *brahmā* priests. He gave them the eastern, western, northern and southern directions respectively, and the balance He gave to the *ācārya*. Lord Rāmacandra's faith in the *brāhmaṇas* and affection for His servants was observed by all the *brāhmaṇas*, who then offered their prayers to the Lord and returned whatever they had taken from Him. They regarded the enlightenment given to them by the Lord within the core of their hearts as a sufficient contribution. Lord Rāmacandra subsequently dressed Himself like an ordinary person and began wandering within the capital to understand what impression the citizens had of Him. By chance, one night He heard a man talking to his wife, who had gone to another man's house. In the course of rebuking his wife, the man spoke suspiciously of the character of

Sītādevī. The Lord immediately returned home, and, fearing such rumors, He superficially decided to give up Sītādevī's company. Thus He banished Sītādevī, who was pregnant, to the shelter of Vālmīki Muni, where she gave birth to twin sons, named Lava and Kuśa. In Ayodhyā, Lakṣmaṇa begot two sons named Aṅgada and Citraketu, Bharata begot two sons named Takṣa and Puṣkala, and Śatrughna begot two sons named Subāhu and Śrutasena. When Bharata went out to conquer various lands on behalf of the emperor, Lord Rāmacandra, He fought many millions of Gandharvas. By killing them in the fight, He acquired immense wealth, which He then brought home. Śatrughna killed a demon named Lavaṇa at Madhuvana and thus established the capital of Mathurā. Meanwhile, Sītādevī placed her two sons in the care of Vālmīki Muni and then entered into the earth. Upon hearing of this, Lord Rāmacandra was very much aggrieved, and thus He performed sacrifices for thirteen thousand years. After describing the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra's disappearance and establishing that the Lord appears for His pastimes only, Śukadeva Gosvāmī ends this chapter by describing the results of hearing about the activities of Lord Rāmacandra and by describing how the Lord protected His citizens and displayed affection for His brothers.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thereafter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Rāmacandra, accepted an ācārya and performed sacrifices [yajñas] with opulent paraphernalia. Thus He Himself worshiped Himself, for He is the Supreme Lord of all demigods.

2Lord Rāmacandra gave the entire east to the hotā priest, the entire south to the brahmā priest, the west to the adhvaryu priest, and the north to the udgātā priest, the reciter of the Sāma Veda. In this way, He donated His kingdom.

3Thereafter, thinking that because the brāhmaṇas have no material desires they should possess the entire world, Lord Rāmacandra delivered the land between the east, west, north and south to the ācārya.

4After thus giving everything in charity to the brāhmaṇas, Lord Rāmacandra retained only His personal garments and ornaments, and similarly the Queen, mother Sītā, was left with only her nose ring, and nothing else.

5All the brāhmaṇas who were engaged in the various activities of the sacrifice were very pleased with Lord Rāmacandra, who was greatly affectionate and favorable to the brāhmaṇas. Thus with melted hearts they returned all the property received from Him and spoke as follows.

6O Lord, You are the master of the entire universe. What have You not given to us? You have entered the core of our hearts and dissipated the darkness of our ignorance by Your effulgence. This is the supreme gift. We do not need a material donation.

7O Lord, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have accepted the brāhmaṇas as Your worshipable deity. Your knowledge and memory are never disturbed by anxiety. You are the chief of all famous persons within this world, and Your lotus feet are worshiped by sages who are beyond the jurisdiction of punishment. O Lord Rāmacandra, let us offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

8Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Once while Lord Rāmacandra was walking at night incognito, hiding Himself by a disguise to find out the people's opinion of Himself, He heard a man speaking unfavorably about His wife, Sītādevī.

9[Speaking to his unchaste wife, the man said] You go to another man's house, and therefore you are unchaste and polluted. I shall not maintain you any more. A henpecked husband like

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Lord Rāma may accept a wife like Sītā, who went to another man's house, but I am not henpecked like Him, and therefore I shall not accept you again.

10 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Men with a poor fund of knowledge and a heinous character speak nonsensically. Fearing such rascals, Lord Rāmacandra abandoned His wife, Sītādevī, although she was pregnant. Thus Sītādevī went to the āśrama of Vālmīki Muni.

11 When the time came, the pregnant mother Sītādevī gave birth to twin sons, later celebrated as Lava and Kuśa. The ritualistic ceremonies for their birth were performed by Vālmīki Muni.

12 O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Lord Lakṣmaṇa had two sons, named Aṅgada and Citraketu, and Lord Bharata also had two sons, named Takṣa and Puṣkala.

13-14 Śatrughna had two sons, named Subāhu and Śrutasena. When Lord Bharata went to conquer all directions, He had to kill many millions of Gandharvas, who are generally pretenders. Taking all their wealth, He offered it to Lord Rāmacandra. Śatrughna also killed a Rākṣasa named Lavaṇa, who was the son of Madhu Rākṣasa. Thus He established in the great forest known as Madhuvana the town known as Mathurā.

15 Being forsaken by her husband, Sītādevī entrusted her two sons to the care of Vālmīki Muni. Then, meditating upon the lotus feet of Lord Rāmacandra, she entered into the earth.

16 After hearing the news of mother Sītā's entering the earth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was certainly aggrieved. Although He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, upon remembering the exalted qualities of mother Sītā, He could not check His grief in transcendental love.

17 The attraction between man and woman, or male and female, always exists everywhere, making everyone always fearful. Such feelings are present even among the controllers like Brahmā and Lord Śiva and is the cause of fear for them, what to speak of others who are attached to household life in this material world.

18 After mother Sītā entered the earth, Lord Rāmacandra observed complete celibacy and performed an uninterrupted Agnihotra-yajña for thirteen thousand years.

19 After completing the sacrifice, Lord Rāmacandra, whose lotus feet were sometimes pierced by thorns when He lived in Daṇḍakāraṇya, placed those lotus feet in the hearts of those who always think of Him. Then He entered His own abode, the Vaikuṅṭha planet beyond the brahmajyoti.

20 Lord Rāmacandra's reputation for having killed Rāvaṇa with showers of arrows at the request of the demigods and for having built a bridge over the ocean does not constitute the factual glory of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Rāmacandra, whose spiritual body is always engaged in various pastimes. Lord Rāmacandra has no equal or superior, and therefore He had no need to take help from the monkeys to gain victory over Rāvaṇa.

21 Lord Rāmacandra's spotless name and fame, which vanquish all sinful reactions, are celebrated in all directions, like the ornamental cloth of the victorious elephant that conquers all directions. Great saintly persons like Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi still glorify His characteristics in the assemblies of great emperors like Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. Similarly, all the saintly kings and all the demigods, including Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā, worship the Lord by bowing down with their helmets. Let me offer my obeisances unto His lotus feet.

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22 Lord Rāmacandra returned to His abode, to which bhakti-yogīs are promoted. This is the place to which all the inhabitants of Ayodhyā went after they served the Lord in His manifest pastimes by offering Him obeisances, touching His lotus feet, fully observing Him as a fatherlike King, sitting or lying down with Him like equals, or even just accompanying Him.

23 O King Parīkṣit, anyone who aurally receives the narrations concerning the characteristics of Lord Rāmacandra's pastimes will ultimately be freed from the disease of envy and thus be liberated from the bondage of fruitive activities.

24 Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: How did the Lord conduct Himself, and how did He behave in relationship with His brothers, who were expansions of His own self? And how did His brothers and the inhabitants of Ayodhyā treat Him?

25 Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied: After accepting the throne of the government by the fervent request of His younger brother Bharata, Lord Rāmacandra ordered His younger brothers to go out and conquer the entire world, while He personally remained in the capital to give audience to all the citizens and residents of the palace and supervise the governmental affairs with His other assistants.

26 During the reign of Lord Rāmacandra, the streets of the capital, Ayodhyā, were sprinkled with perfumed water and drops of perfumed liquor, thrown about by elephants from their trunks. When the citizens saw the Lord personally supervising the affairs of the city in such opulence, they appreciated this opulence very much.

27 The palaces, the palace gates, the assembly houses, the platforms for meeting places, the temples and all such places were decorated with golden waterpots and bedecked with various types of flags.

28 Wherever Lord Rāmacandra visited, auspicious welcome gates were constructed, with banana trees and betel-nut trees, full of flowers and fruits. The gates were decorated with various flags made of colorful cloth and with tapestries, mirrors and garlands.

29 Wherever Lord Rāmacandra visited, the people approached Him with paraphernalia of worship and begged the Lord's blessings. "O Lord," they said, "as You rescued the earth from the bottom of the sea in Your incarnation as a boar, may You now maintain it. Thus we beg Your blessings."

30 Thereafter, not having seen the Lord for a long time, the citizens, both men and women, being very eager to see Him, left their homes and got up on the roofs of the palaces. Being incompletely satiated with seeing the face of the lotus-eyed Lord Rāmacandra, they showered flowers upon Him.

31-34 Thereafter, Lord Rāmacandra entered the palace of His forefathers. Within the palace were various treasures and valuable wardrobes. The sitting places on the two sides of the entrance door were made of coral, the yards were surrounded by pillars of vaidūrya-maṇi, the floor was made of highly polished marakata-maṇi, and the foundation was made of marble. The entire palace was decorated with flags and garlands and bedecked with valuable stones, shining with a celestial effulgence. The palace was fully decorated with pearls and surrounded by lamps and incense. The men and women within the palace all resembled demigods and were decorated with various ornaments, which seemed beautiful because of being placed on their bodies.

35 Lord Rāmacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, chief of the best learned scholars, resided in that palace with His pleasure potency, mother Sītā, and enjoyed complete peace.

36Without transgressing the religious principles, Lord Rāmacandra, whose lotus feet are worshiped by devotees in meditation, enjoyed with all the paraphernalia of transcendental pleasure for as long as needed.

SB 9.12: The Dynasty of Kuśa, the Son of Lord Rāmacandra

This chapter describes the dynasty of Kuśa, the son of Lord Rāmacandra. The members of this dynasty are descendants of Śaśāda, the son of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku.

Following in the genealogical table of Lord Rāmacandra's dynasty, Kuśa, the Lord's son, was followed consecutively by Atithi, Niṣadha, Nabha, Puṇḍarīka, Kṣemadhanvā, Devānīka, Anīha, Pāriyātra, Balasthala, Vajranābha, Sagaṇa and Vidhṛti. These personalities ruled the world. From Vidhṛti came Hiraṇyanābha, who later became the disciple of Jaimini and propounded the system of mystic *yoga* in which Yājñavalkya was initiated. Following in this dynasty were Puṣpa, Dhruvasandhi, Sudarśana, Agnivarṇa, Śīghra and Maru. Maru attained full perfection in the practice of *yoga*, and he still lives in the village of Kalāpa. At the end of this Age of Kali, he will revive the dynasty of the sun-god. Next in the dynasty were Prasuśruta, Sandhi, Amarśaṇa, Mahasvān, Viśvabāhu, Prasenajit, Takṣaka and Bṛhadbala, who was later killed by Abhimanyu. Śukadeva Gosvāmī said that these were all kings who had passed away. The future descendants of Bṛhadbala will be Bṛhadraṇa, Ūrukriya, Vatsavṛddha, Prativyoma, Bhānu, Divāka, Sahadeva, Bṛhadāśva, Bhānumān, Pratīkāśva, Supratīka, Marudeva, Sunakṣatra, Puṣkara, Antarikṣa, Sutapā, Amitrajit, Bṛhadrāja, Barhi, Kṛtaśjaya, Raṇaśjaya, Saśjaya, Śākya, Śuddhoda, Lāṅgala, Prasenajit, Kṣudraka, Raṇaka, Suratha and Sumitra. All of them will become kings one after another. Sumitra, coming in this Age of Kali, will be the last king in the Ikṣvāku dynasty; after him, the dynasty will be extinguished.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The son of Rāmacandra was Kuśa, the son of Kuśa was Atithi, the son of Atithi was Niṣadha, and the son of Niṣadha was Nabha. The son of Nabha was Puṇḍarīka, and from Puṇḍarīka came a son named Kṣemadhanvā.

2The son of Kṣemadhanvā was Devānīka, Devānīka's son was Anīha, Anīha's son was Pāriyātra, and Pāriyātra's son was Balasthala. The son of Balasthala was Vajranābha, who was said to have been born from the effulgence of the sun-god.

3-4The son of Vajranābha was Sagaṇa, and his son was Vidhṛti. The son of Vidhṛti was Hiraṇyanābha, who became a disciple of Jaimini and became a great ācārya of mystic yoga. It is from Hiraṇyanābha that the great saint Yājñavalkya learned the highly elevated system of mystic yoga known as ādhyātma-yoga, which can loosen the knots of material attachment in the heart.

5The son of Hiraṇyanābha was Puṣpa, and the son of Puṣpa was Dhruvasandhi. The son of Dhruvasandhi was Sudarśana, whose son was Agnivarṇa. The son of Agnivarṇa was named Śīghra, and his son was Maru.

6Having achieved perfection in the power of mystic yoga, Maru still lives in a place known as Kalāpa-grāma. At the end of Kali-yuga, he will revive the lost Sūrya dynasty by begetting a son.

7From Maru was born a son named Prasuśruta, from Prasuśruta came Sandhi, from Sandhi came Amarśaṇa, and from Amarśaṇa a son named Mahasvān. From Mahasvān, Viśvabāhu took his birth.

8From Viśvabāhu came a son named Prasenajit, from Prasenajit came Takṣaka, and from Takṣaka came Bṛhadbala, who was killed in a fight by your father.

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9All these kings in the dynasty of Ikṣvāku have passed away. Now please listen as I describe the kings who will be born in the future. From Bṛhadbala will come Bṛhadraṇa.

10The son of Bṛhadraṇa will be Ūrukriya, who will have a son named Vatsavṛddha. Vatsavṛddha will have a son named Prativyoma, and Prativyoma will have a son named Bhānu, from whom Divāka, a great commander of soldiers, will take birth.

11Thereafter, from Divāka will come a son named Sahadeva, and from Sahadeva a great hero named Bṛhadaśva. From Bṛhadaśva will come Bhānumān, and from Bhānumān will come Pratīkāśva. The son of Pratīkāśva will be Supratīka.

12Thereafter, from Supratīka will come Marudeva; from Marudeva, Sunakṣatra; from Sunakṣatra, Puṣkara; and from Puṣkara, Antarikṣa. The son of Antarikṣa will be Sutapā, and his son will be Amitrajit.

13From Amitrajit will come a son named Bṛhadrāja, from Bṛhadrāja will come Barhi, and from Barhi will come Kṛtaśjaya. The son of Kṛtaśjaya will be known as Raṇaśjaya, and from him will come a son named Saśjaya.

14From Saśjaya will come Śākya, from Śākya will come Śuddhoda, and from Śuddhoda will come Lāṅgala. From Lāṅgala will come Prasenajit, and from Prasenajit, Kṣudraka.

15From Kṣudraka will come Raṇaka, from Raṇaka will come Suratha, and from Suratha will come Sumitra, ending the dynasty. This is a description of the dynasty of Bṛhadbala.

16The last king in the dynasty of Ikṣvāku will be Sumitra; after Sumitra there will be no more sons in the dynasty of the sun-god, and thus the dynasty will end.

SB 9.13: The Dynasty of Mahārāja Nimi

This chapter describes the dynasty in which the great and learned scholar Janaka was born. This is the dynasty of Mahārāja Nimi, who is said to have been the son of Ikṣvāku.

When Mahārāja Nimi began performing great sacrifices, he appointed Vasiṣṭha to be chief priest, but Vasiṣṭha refused, for he had already agreed to be priest in performing a *yajña* for Lord Indra. Vasiṣṭha therefore requested Mahārāja Nimi to wait until Lord Indra's sacrifice was finished, but Mahārāja Nimi did not wait. He thought, "Life is very short, so there is no need to wait." He therefore appointed another priest to perform the *yajña*. Vasiṣṭha was very angry at King Nimi and cursed him, saying, "May your body fall down." Cursed in that way, Mahārāja Nimi also became very angry and retaliated by saying, "May your body also fall down." As a result of this cursing and countercursing, both of them died. After this incident, Vasiṣṭha took birth again, begotten by Mitra and Varuṇa, who were agitated by Urvaśī.

The priests who were engaged in the sacrifice for King Nimi preserved Nimi's body in fragrant chemicals. When the sacrifice was over, the priests prayed for Nimi's life to all the demigods who had come to the arena of *yajña*, but Mahārāja Nimi refused to take birth again in a material body because he considered the material body obnoxious. The great sages then churned Nimi's body, and as a result of this churning, Janaka was born.

The son of Janaka was Udāvasu, and the son of Udāvasu was Nandivardhana. The son of Nandivardhana was Suketu, and his descendants continued as follows: Devarāta, Bṛhadratha, Mahāvīrya, Sudhṛti, Dhṛṣṭaketu, Haryaśva, Maru, Pratīpaka, Kṛtaratha, Devamīdha, Viśruta, Mahādṛti, Kṛtirāta, Mahāromā, Svarṇaromā, Hrasvaromā and Śīradhvaja. All these sons

appeared in the dynasty one after another. From Śīradhvaja, mother Sītādevī was born. Śīradhvaja's son was Kuśadhvaja, and the son of Kuśadhvaja was Dharmadhvaja. The sons of Dharmadhvaja were Kṛtadhvaja and Mitadhvaja. The son of Kṛtadhvaja was Keśidhvaja, and the son of Mitadhvaja was Khāṇḍikya. Keśidhvaja was a self-realized soul, and his son was Bhānumān, whose descendants were as follows: Śatadyumna, Śuci, Sanadvāja, Ūrjaketu, Aja, Purujit, Ariṣṭanemi, Śrutāyu, Supārśvaka, Citraratha, Kṣemādhi, Samaratha, Satyaratha, Upaguru, Upagupta, Vasvananta, Yuyudha, Subhāṣaṇa, Śruta, Jaya, Vijaya, Rta, Śunaka, Vītahavya, Dhṛti, Bahulāśva, Kṛti and Mahāvaśī. All of these sons were great self-controlled personalities. This completes the list of the entire dynasty.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After beginning sacrifices, Mahārāja Nimi, the son of Ikṣvāku, requested the great sage Vasiṣṭha to take the post of chief priest. At that time, Vasiṣṭha replied, "My dear Mahārāja Nimi, I have already accepted the same post in a sacrifice begun by Lord Indra."

2"I shall return here after finishing the yajṣa for Indra. Kindly wait for me until then." Mahārāja Nimi remained silent, and Vasiṣṭha began to perform the sacrifice for Lord Indra.

3Mahārāja Nimi, being a self-realized soul, considered that this life is flickering. Therefore, instead of waiting long for Vasiṣṭha, he began performing the sacrifice with other priests.

4After completing the sacrificial performance for King Indra, the spiritual master Vasiṣṭha returned and found that his disciple Mahārāja Nimi had disobeyed his instructions. Thus Vasiṣṭha cursed him, saying, "May the material body of Nimi, who considers himself learned, immediately fall."

5For unnecessarily cursing him when he had committed no offense, Mahārāja Nimi countercursed his spiritual master. "For the sake of getting contributions from the King of heaven," he said, "you have lost your religious intelligence. Therefore I pronounce this curse: your body also will fall."

6After saying this, Mahārāja Nimi, who was expert in the science of spiritual knowledge, gave up his body. Vasiṣṭha, the great-grandfather, gave up his body also, but through the semen discharged by Mitra and Varuṇa when they saw Urvaśī, he was born again.

7During the performance of the yajṣa, the body relinquished by Mahārāja Nimi was preserved in fragrant substances, and at the end of the Satra-yāga the great saints and brāhmaṇas made the following request to all the demigods assembled there.

8"If you are satisfied with this sacrifice and if you are actually able to do so, kindly bring Mahārāja Nimi back to life in this body." The demigods said yes to this request by the sages, but Mahārāja Nimi said, "Please do not imprison me again in a material body."

9Mahārāja Nimi continued: Māyāvādīs generally want freedom from accepting a material body because they fear having to give it up again. But devotees whose intelligence is always filled with the service of the Lord are unafraid. Indeed, they take advantage of the body to render transcendental loving service.

10I do not wish to accept a material body, for such a body is the source of all distress, lamentation and fear, everywhere in the universe, just as it is for a fish in the water, which lives always in anxiety because of fear of death.

11The demigods said: Let Mahārāja Nimi live without a material body. Let him live in a spiritual

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body as a personal associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and, according to his desire, let him be manifest or unmanifest to common materially embodied people.

12Thereafter, to save the people from the danger of an unregulated government, the sages churned Mahārāja Nimi's material body, from which, as a result, a son was born.

13Because he was born in an unusual way, the son was called Janaka, and because he was born from the dead body of his father, he was known as Vaideha. Because he was born from the churning of his father's material body, he was known as Mithila, and because he constructed a city as King Mithila, the city was called Mithilā.

14O King Parīkṣit, from Mithila came a son named Udāvasu; from Udāvasu, Nandivardhana; from Nandivardhana, Suketu; and from Suketu, Devarāta.

15From Devarāta came a son named Bṛhadratha and from Bṛhadratha a son named Mahāvīrya, who became the father of Sudhṛti. The son of Sudhṛti was known as Dhṛṣṭaketu, and from Dhṛṣṭaketu came Haryaśva. From Haryaśva came a son named Maru.

16The son of Maru was Pratīpaka, and the son of Pratīpaka was Kṛtaratha. From Kṛtaratha came Devamīdha; from Devamīdha, Viśruta; and from Viśruta, Mahādṛti.

17From Mahādṛti was born a son named Kṛtirāta, from Kṛtirāta was born Mahāromā, from Mahāromā came a son named Svarṇaromā, and from Svarṇaromā came Hrasvaromā.

18From Hrasvaromā came a son named Śīradhvaja [also called Janaka]. When Śīradhvaja was plowing a field, from the front of his plow [śīra] appeared a daughter named Sītādevī, who later became the wife of Lord Rāmacandra. Thus he was known as Śīradhvaja.

19The son of Śīradhvaja was Kuśadhvaja, and the son of Kuśadhvaja was King Dharmadhvaja, who had two sons, namely Kṛtadhvaja and Mitadhvaja.

20-21O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the son of Kṛtadhvaja was Keśidhvaja, and the son of Mitadhvaja was Khāṇḍikya. The son of Kṛtadhvaja was expert in spiritual knowledge, and the son of Mitadhvaja was expert in Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Khāṇḍikya fled in fear of Keśidhvaja. The son of Keśidhvaja was Bhānumān, and the son of Bhānumān was Śatadyumna.

22The son of Śatadyumna was named Śuci. From Śuci, Sanadvāja was born, and from Sanadvāja came a son named Ūrjaketu. The son of Ūrjaketu was Aja, and the son of Aja was Purujit.

23The son of Purujit was Ariṣṭanemi, and his son was Śrutāyu. Śrutāyu begot a son named Supārśvaka, and Supārśvaka begot Citraratha. The son of Citraratha was Kṣemādhi, who became the king of Mithilā.

24The son of Kṣemādhi was Samaratha, and his son was Satyaratha. The son of Satyaratha was Upaguru, and the son of Upaguru was Upagupta, a partial expansion of the fire-god.

25The son of Upagupta was Vasvananta, the son of Vasvananta was Yuyudha, the son of Yuyudha was Subhāṣaṇa, and the son of Subhāṣaṇa was Śruta. The son of Śruta was Jaya, from whom there came Vijaya. The son of Vijaya was Rta.

26The son of Rta was Śunaka, the son of Śunaka was Vītahavya, the son of Vītahavya was Dhṛti, and the son of Dhṛti was Bahulāśva. The son of Bahulāśva was Kṛti, and his son was Mahāvaśī.

27Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King Parīkṣit, all the kings of the dynasty of Mithila were completely in knowledge of their spiritual identity. Therefore, even though staying at home, they were liberated from the duality of material existence.

SB 9.14: King Purūravā Enchanted by Urvaśī

The summary of this Fourteenth Chapter is given as follows. This chapter describes Soma and how he kidnapped the wife of Bṛhaspati and begot in her womb a son named Budha. Budha begot Purūravā, who begot six sons, headed by Āyu, in the womb of Urvaśī.

Lord Brahmā was born from the lotus that sprouted from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Brahmā had a son named Atri, and Atri's son was Soma, the king of all drugs and stars. Soma became the conqueror of the entire universe, and, being inflated with pride, he kidnapped Tārā, who was the wife of Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods. A great fight ensued between the demigods and the *asuras*, but Brahmā rescued Bṛhaspati's wife from the clutches of Soma and returned her to her husband, thus stopping the fighting. In the womb of Tārā, Soma begot a son named Budha, who later begot in the womb of Ilā a son named Aila, or Purūravā. Urvaśī was captivated by Purūravā's beauty, and therefore she lived with him for some time, but when she left his company he became almost like a madman. While traveling all over the world, he met Urvaśī again at Kurukṣetra, but she agreed to join with him for only one night in a year.

One year later, Purūravā saw Urvaśī at Kurukṣetra and was glad to be with her for one night, but when he thought of her leaving him again, he was overwhelmed by grief. Urvaśī then advised Purūravā to worship the Gandharvas. Being satisfied with Purūravā, the Gandharvas gave him a woman known as Agnithālī. Purūravā mistook Agnithālī for Urvaśī, but while he was wandering in the forest his misunderstanding was cleared, and he immediately gave up her company. After returning home and meditating upon Urvaśī all night, he wanted to perform a Vedic ritualistic ceremony to satisfy his desire. Thereafter he went to the same place where he had left Agnithālī, and there he saw that from the womb of a *śamī* tree had come an *aśvattha* tree. Purūravā made two sticks from this tree and thus produced a fire. By such a fire one can satisfy all lusty desires. The fire was considered the son of Purūravā. In Satya-yuga there was only one social division, called *hamsa*; there were no divisions of *vama* like *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*. The *Veda* was the *omkāra*. The various demigods were not worshiped, for only the Supreme Personality of Godhead was the worshipable Deity.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said to Mahārāja Parīkṣit: O King, thus far you have heard the description of the dynasty of the sun-god. Now hear the most glorious and purifying description of the dynasty of the moon-god. This description mentions kings like Aila [Purūravā] of whom it is glorious to hear.

2Lord Viṣṇu [Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu] is also known as Sahasra-śīrṣā Puruṣa. From the lake of His navel sprang a lotus, on which Lord Brahmā was generated. Atri, the son of Lord Brahmā, was as qualified as his father.

3From Atri's tears of jubilation was born a son named Soma, the moon, who was full of soothing rays. Lord Brahmā appointed him the director of the *brāhmaṇas*, drugs and luminaries.

4After conquering the three worlds [the upper, middle and lower planetary systems], Soma, the moon-god, performed a great sacrifice known as the Rājasūya-yajña. Because he was very much puffed up, he forcibly kidnapped Bṛhaspati's wife, whose name was Tārā.

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5Although requested again and again by Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods, Soma did not return Tārā. This was due to his false pride. Consequently, a fight ensued between the demigods and the demons.

6Because of enmity between Bṛhaspati and Śukra, Śukra took the side of the moon-god and was joined by the demons. But Lord Śiva, because of affection for the son of his spiritual master, joined the side of Bṛhaspati and was accompanied by all the ghosts and hobgoblins.

7King Indra, accompanied by all kinds of demigods, joined the side of Bṛhaspati. Thus there was a great fight, destroying both demons and demigods, only for the sake of Tārā, Bṛhaspati's wife.

8When Lord Brahmā was fully informed by Aṅgirā about the entire incident, he severely chastised the moon-god, Soma. Thus Lord Brahmā delivered Tārā to her husband, who could then understand that she was pregnant.

9Bṛhaspati said: You foolish woman, your womb, which was meant for me to impregnate, has been impregnated by someone other than me. Immediately deliver your child! Immediately deliver it! Be assured that after the child is delivered, I shall not burn you to ashes. I know that although you are unchaste, you wanted a son. Therefore I shall not punish you.

10Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: By Bṛhaspati's order, Tārā, who was very much ashamed, immediately gave birth to the child, who was very beautiful, with a golden bodily hue. Both Bṛhaspati and the moon-god, Soma, desired the beautiful child.

11Fighting again broke out between Bṛhaspati and the moon-god, both of whom claimed, "This is my child, not yours!" All the saints and demigods present asked Tārā whose child the newborn baby actually was, but because she was ashamed she could not immediately answer.

12The child then became very angry and demanded that his mother immediately tell the truth. "You unchaste woman," he said, "what is the use of your unnecessary shame? Why do you not admit your fault? Immediately tell me about your faulty behavior."

13Lord Brahmā then brought Tārā to a secluded place, and after pacifying her he asked to whom the child actually belonged. She replied very slowly, "This is the son of Soma, the moon-god." Then the moon-god immediately took charge of the child.

14O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, when Lord Brahmā saw that the child was deeply intelligent, he gave the child the name Budha. The moon-god, the ruler of the stars, enjoyed great jubilation because of this son.

15-16Thereafter, from Budha, through the womb of Ilā, a son was born named Purūravā, who was described in the beginning of the Ninth Canto. When his beauty, personal qualities, magnanimity, behavior, wealth and power were described by Nārada in the court of Lord Indra, the celestial woman Urvaśī was attracted to him. Pierced by the arrow of Cupid, she thus approached him.

17-18Having been cursed by Mitra and Varuṇa, the celestial woman Urvaśī had acquired the habits of a human being. Therefore, upon seeing Purūravā, the best of males, whose beauty resembled that of Cupid, she controlled herself and then approached him. When King Purūravā saw Urvaśī, his eyes became jubilant in the ecstasy of joy, and the hairs on his body stood on end. With mild, pleasing words, he spoke to her as follows.

19King Purūravā said: O most beautiful woman, you are welcome. Please sit here and tell me

what I can do for you. You may enjoy with me as long as you desire. Let us pass our life happily in a sexual relationship.

20Urvaśī replied: O most handsome man, who is the woman whose mind and sight would not be attracted by you? If a woman takes shelter of your chest, she cannot refuse to enjoy with you in a sexual relationship.

21My dear King Purūravā, please give protection to these two lambs, who have fallen down with me. Although I belong to the heavenly planets and you belong to earth, I shall certainly enjoy sexual union with you. I have no objection to accepting you as my husband, for you are superior in every respect.

22Urvaśī said: “My dear hero, only preparations made in ghee [clarified butter] will be my eatables, and I shall not want to see you naked at any time, except at the time of sexual intercourse.” The great-minded King Purūravā accepted these proposals.

23Purūravā replied: O beautiful one, your beauty is wonderful and your gestures are also wonderful. Indeed, you are attractive to all human society. Therefore, since you have come of your own accord from the heavenly planets, who on earth would not agree to serve a demigoddess such as you.

24Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The best of human beings, Purūravā, began freely enjoying the company of Urvaśī, who engaged in sexual activities with him in many celestial places, such as Caitraratha and Nandana-kānana, where the demigods enjoy.

25Urvaśī’s body was as fragrant as the saffron of a lotus. Being enlivened by the fragrance of her face and body, Purūravā enjoyed her company for many days with great jubilation.

26Not seeing Urvaśī in his assembly, the King of heaven, Lord Indra, said, “Without Urvaśī my assembly is no longer beautiful.” Considering this, he requested the Gandharvas to bring her back to his heavenly planet.

27Thus the Gandharvas came to earth, and at midnight, when everything was dark, they appeared in the house of Purūravā and stole the two lambs entrusted to the King by his wife, Urvaśī.

28Urvaśī treated the two lambs like her own sons. Therefore, when they were being taken by the Gandharvas and began crying, Urvaśī heard them and rebuked her husband. “Now I am being killed,” she said, “under the protection of an unworthy husband, who is a coward and a eunuch although he thinks himself a great hero.”

29“Because I depended on him, the plunderers have deprived me of my two sons the lambs, and therefore I am now lost. My husband lies down at night in fear, exactly like a woman, although he appears to be a man during the day.”

30Purūravā, stricken by the sharp words of Urvaśī like an elephant struck by its driver’s pointed rod, became very angry. Not even dressing himself properly, he took a sword in hand and went out naked into the night to follow the Gandharvas who had stolen the lambs.

31After giving up the two lambs, the Gandharvas shone brightly like lightning, thus illuminating the house of Purūravā. Urvaśī then saw her husband returning with the lambs in hand, but he was naked, and therefore she left.

32No longer seeing Urvaśī on his bed, Purūravā was most aggrieved. Because of his great

attraction for her, he was very much disturbed. Thus, lamenting, he began traveling about the earth like a madman.

33Once during his travels all over the world, Purūravā saw Urvaśī, accompanied by five companions, on the bank of the Sarasvatī at Kurukṣetra. With jubilation in his face, he then spoke to her in sweet words as follows.

34O my dear wife, O most cruel one, kindly stay, kindly stay. I know that I have never made you happy until now, but you should not give me up for that reason. This is not proper for you. Even if you have decided to give up my company, let us nonetheless talk for some time.

35O goddess, now that you have refused me, my beautiful body will fall down here, and because it is unsuitable for your pleasure, it will be eaten by foxes and vultures.

36Urvaśī said: My dear King, you are a man, a hero. Don't be impatient and give up your life. Be sober and don't allow the senses to overcome you like foxes. Don't let the foxes eat you. In other words, you should not be controlled by your senses. Rather, you should know that the heart of a woman is like that of a fox. There is no use making friendship with women.

37Women as a class are merciless and cunning. They cannot tolerate even a slight offense. For their own pleasure they can do anything irreligious, and therefore they do not fear killing even a faithful husband or brother.

38Women are very easily seduced by men. Therefore, polluted women give up the friendship of a man who is their well-wisher and establish false friendship among fools. Indeed, they seek newer and newer friends, one after another.

39O my dear King, you will be able to enjoy with me as my husband at the end of every year, for one night only. In this way you will have other children, one after another.

40Understanding that Urvaśī was pregnant, Purūravā returned to his palace. At the end of the year, there at Kurukṣetra, he again obtained the association of Urvaśī, who was then the mother of a heroic son.

41Having regained Urvaśī at the end of the year, King Purūravā was most jubilant, and he enjoyed her company in sex for one night. But then he was very sorry at the thought of separation from her, so Urvaśī spoke to him as follows.

42Urvaśī said: "My dear King, seek shelter of the Gandharvas, for they will be able to deliver me to you again." In accordance with these words, the King satisfied the Gandharvas by prayers, and the Gandharvas, being pleased with him, gave him an Agnīsthālī girl who looked exactly like Urvaśī. Thinking that the girl was Urvaśī, the King began walking with her in the forest, but later he could understand that she was not Urvaśī but Agnīsthālī.

43King Purūravā then left Agnīsthālī in the forest and returned home, where he meditated all night upon Urvaśī. In the course of his meditation, the Tretā millennium began, and therefore the principles of the three Vedas, including the process of performing yajña to fulfill fruitive activities, appeared within his heart.

44-45When the process of fruitive yajña became manifest within his heart, King Purūravā went to the same spot where he had left Agnīsthālī. There he saw that from the womb of a śamī tree, an aśvattha tree had grown. He then took a piece of wood from that tree and made it into two araṇis. Desiring to go to the planet where Urvaśī resided, he chanted mantras, meditating upon the lower araṇi as Urvaśī, the upper one as himself, and the piece of wood between them as his

son. In this way he began to ignite a fire.

46From Purūravā's rubbing of the araṇis came a fire. By such a fire one can achieve all success in material enjoyment and be purified in seminal birth, initiation and in the performance of sacrifice, which are invoked with the combined letters a-u-m. Thus the fire was considered the son of King Purūravā.

47By means of that fire, Purūravā, who desired to go to the planet where Urvaśī resided, performed a sacrifice, by which he satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the enjoyer of the results of sacrifice. Thus he worshiped the Lord, who is beyond the perception of the senses and is the reservoir of all the demigods.

48In the Satya-yuga, the first millennium, all the Vedic mantras were included in one mantrapraṇava, the root of all Vedic mantras. In other words, the Atharva Veda alone was the source of all Vedic knowledge. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa was the only worshipable Deity; there was no recommendation for worship of the demigods. Fire was one only, and the only order of life in human society was known as haṁsa.

49O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, at the beginning of Tretā-yuga, King Purūravā inaugurated a karma-kāṇḍa sacrifice. Thus Purūravā, who considered the yajñic fire his son, was able to go to Gandharvaloka as he desired.

SB 9.15: Paraśurāma, the Lord's Warrior Incarnation

This chapter describes the history of Gādhi in the dynasty of Aila.

From the womb of Urvaśī came six sons, named Āyu, Śrutāyu, Satyāyu, Raya, Jaya and Vijaya. The son of Śrutāyu was Vasumān, the son of Satyāyu was Śrutaśjaya, the son of Raya was Eka, the son of Jaya was Amita, and the son of Vijaya was Bhīma. Bhīma's son was named Kāścana, the son of Kāścana was Hotraka, and the son of Hotraka was Jahnu, who was celebrated for having drunk all the water of the Ganges in one sip. The descendants of Jahnu, one after another, were Puru, Balāka, Ajaka and Kuśa. The sons of Kuśa were Kuśāmbu, Tanaya, Vasu and Kuśanābha. From Kuśāmbu came Gādhi, who had a daughter named Satyavatī. Satyavatī married Ṛcīka Muni after the *muni* contributed a substantial dowry, and from the womb of Satyavatī by Ṛcīka Muni, Jamadagni was born. The son of Jamadagni was Rāma, or Paraśurāma. When a king named Kārtavīryārjuna stole Jamadagni's desire cow, Paraśurāma, who is ascertained by learned experts to be a *saktyāveśa* incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, killed Kārtavīryārjuna. Later, he annihilated the *kṣatriya* dynasty twenty-one times. After Paraśurāma killed Kārtavīryārjuna, Jamadagni told him that killing a king is sinful and that as a *brāhmaṇa* he should have tolerated the offense. Therefore Jamadagni advised Paraśurāma to atone for his sin by traveling to various holy places.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King Parīkṣit, from the womb of Urvaśī, six sons were generated by Purūravā. Their names were Āyu, Śrutāyu, Satyāyu, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya.

2-3The son of Śrutāyu was Vasumān; the son of Satyāyu, Śrutaśjaya; the son of Raya, Eka; the son of Jaya, Amita; and the son of Vijaya, Bhīma. The son of Bhīma was Kāścana; the son of Kāścana was Hotraka; and the son of Hotraka was Jahnu, who drank all the water of the Ganges in one sip.

4The son of Jahnu was Puru, the son of Puru was Balāka, the son of Balāka was Ajaka, and the son of Ajaka was Kuśa. Kuśa had four sons, named Kuśāmbu, Tanaya, Vasu and Kuśanābha. The son of Kuśāmbu was Gādhi.

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5-6 King Gādhī had a daughter named Satyavatī, whom a brāhmaṇa sage named Ṛcīka requested from the King to be his wife. King Gādhī, however, regarded Ṛcīka as an unfit husband for his daughter, and therefore he told the brāhmaṇa, “My dear sir, I belong to the dynasty of Kuśa. Because we are aristocratic kṣatriyas, you have to give some dowry for my daughter. Therefore, bring at least one thousand horses, each as brilliant as moonshine and each having one black ear, whether right or left.”

7 When King Gādhī made this demand, the great sage Ṛcīka could understand the King’s mind. Therefore he went to the demigod Varuṇa and brought from him the one thousand horses that Gādhī had demanded. After delivering these horses, the sage married the King’s beautiful daughter.

8 Thereafter, Ṛcīka Muni’s wife and mother-in-law, each desiring a son, requested the Muni to prepare an oblation. Thus Ṛcīka Muni prepared one oblation for his wife with a brāhmaṇa mantra and another for his mother-in-law with a kṣatriya mantra. Then he went out to bathe.

9 Meanwhile, because Satyavatī’s mother thought that the oblation prepared for her daughter, Ṛcīka’s wife, must be better, she asked her daughter for that oblation. Satyavatī therefore gave her own oblation to her mother and ate her mother’s oblation herself.

10 When the great sage Ṛcīka returned home after bathing and understood what had happened in his absence, he said to his wife, Satyavatī, “You have done a great wrong. Your son will be a fierce kṣatriya, able to punish everyone, and your brother will be a learned scholar in spiritual science.”

11 Satyavatī, however, pacified Ṛcīka Muni with peaceful words and requested that her son not be like a fierce kṣatriya. Ṛcīka Muni replied, “Then your grandson will be of a kṣatriya spirit.” Thus Jamadagni was born as the son of Satyavatī.

12-13 Satyavatī later became the sacred river Kauśikī to purify the entire world, and her son, Jamadagni, married Reṇukā, the daughter of Reṇu. By the semen of Jamadagni, many sons, headed by Vasumān, were born from the womb of Reṇukā. The youngest of them was named Rāma, or Paraśurāma.

14 Learned scholars accept this Paraśurāma as the celebrated incarnation of Vāsudeva who annihilated the dynasty of Kārtavīrya. Paraśurāma killed all the kṣatriyas on earth twenty-one times.

15 When the royal dynasty, being excessively proud because of the material modes of passion and ignorance, became irreligious and ceased to care for the laws enacted by the brāhmaṇas, Paraśurāma killed them. Although their offense was not very severe, he killed them to lessen the burden of the world.

16 King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: What was the offense that the kṣatriyas who could not control their senses committed before Lord Paraśurāma, the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for which the Lord annihilated the kṣatriya dynasty again and again?

17-19 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The best of the kṣatriyas, Kārtavīryārjuna, the King of the Haihayas, received one thousand arms by worshiping Dattātreya, the plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. He also became undefeatable by enemies and received unobstructed sensory power, beauty, influence, strength, fame and the mystic power by which to achieve all the perfections of yoga, such as aṇimā and laghimā. Thus having

become fully opulent, he roamed all over the universe without opposition, just like the wind.

20Once while enjoying in the water of the river Narmadā, the puffed-up Kārtavīryārjuna, surrounded by beautiful women and garlanded with a garland of victory, stopped the flow of the water with his arms.

21Because Kārtavīryārjuna made the water flow in the opposite direction, the camp of Rāvaṇa, which was set up on the bank of the Narmadā near the city of Māhiṣmatī, was inundated. This was unbearable to the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, who considered himself a great hero and could not tolerate Kārtavīryārjuna's power.

22When Rāvaṇa attempted to insult Kārtavīryārjuna in the presence of the women and thus offended him, Kārtavīryārjuna easily arrested Rāvaṇa and put him in custody in the city of Māhiṣmatī, just as one captures a monkey, and then released him neglectfully.

23Once while Kārtavīryārjuna was wandering unengaged in a solitary forest and hunting, he approached the residence of Jamadagni.

24The sage Jamadagni, who was engaged in great austerities in the forest, received the King very well, along with the King's soldiers, ministers and carriers. He supplied all the necessities to worship these guests, for he possessed a kāmadhenu cow that was able to supply everything.

25Kārtavīryārjuna thought that Jamadagni was more powerful and wealthy than himself because of possessing a jewel in the form of the kāmadhenu. Therefore he and his own men, the Haihayas, were not very much appreciative of Jamadagni's reception. On the contrary, they wanted to possess that kāmadhenu, which was useful for the execution of the agnihotra sacrifice.

26Being puffed up by material power, Kārtavīryārjuna encouraged his men to steal Jamadagni's kāmadhenu. Thus the men forcibly took away the crying kāmadhenu, along with her calf, to Māhiṣmatī, Kārtavīryārjuna's capital.

27Thereafter, Kārtavīryārjuna having left with the kāmadhenu, Paraśurāma returned to the āśrama. When Paraśurāma, the youngest son of Jamadagni, heard about Kārtavīryārjuna's nefarious deed, he became as angry as a trampled snake.

28Taking up his fierce chopper, his shield, his bow and a quiver of arrows, Lord Paraśurāma, exceedingly angry, chased Kārtavīryārjuna just as a lion chases an elephant.

29As King Kārtavīryārjuna entered his capital, Māhiṣmatī Purī, he saw Lord Paraśurāma, the best of the Bhṛgu dynasty, coming after him, holding a chopper, shield, bow and arrows. Lord Paraśurāma was covered with a black deerskin, and his matted locks of hair appeared like the sunshine.

30Upon seeing Paraśurāma, Kārtavīryārjuna immediately feared him and sent many elephants, chariots, horses and infantry soldiers equipped with clubs, swords, arrows, ṛṣṭis, śataghnis, śaktis, and many similar weapons to fight against him. Kārtavīryārjuna sent seventeen full akṣauhiṇīs of soldiers to check Paraśurāma. But Lord Paraśurāma alone killed all of them.

31Lord Paraśurāma, being expert in killing the military strength of the enemy, worked with the speed of the mind and the wind, slicing his enemies with his chopper [paraśu]. Wherever he went, the enemies fell, their legs, arms and shoulders being severed, their chariot drivers killed,

and their carriers, the elephants and horses, all annihilated.

32By manipulating his axe and arrows, Lord Paraśurāma cut to pieces the shields, flags, bows and bodies of Kārtavīryārjuna's soldiers, who fell on the battlefield, muddying the ground with their blood. Seeing these reverses, Kārtavīryārjuna, infuriated, rushed to the battlefield.

33Then Kārtavīryārjuna, with his one thousand arms, simultaneously fixed arrows on five hundred bows to kill Lord Paraśurāma. But Lord Paraśurāma, the best of fighters, released enough arrows with only one bow to cut to pieces immediately all the arrows and bows in the hands of Kārtavīryārjuna.

34When his arrows were cut to pieces, Kārtavīryārjuna uprooted many trees and hills with his own hands and again rushed strongly toward Lord Paraśurāma to kill him. But Paraśurāma then used his axe with great force to cut off Kārtavīryārjuna's arms, just as one might lop off the hoods of a serpent.

35-36Thereafter, Paraśurāma cut off like a mountain peak the head of Kārtavīryārjuna, who had already lost his arms. When Kārtavīryārjuna's ten thousand sons saw their father killed, they all fled in fear. Then Paraśurāma, having killed the enemy, released the kāmadhenu, which had undergone great suffering, and brought it back with its calf to his residence, where he gave it to his father, Jamadagni.

37Paraśurāma described to his father and brothers his activities in killing Kārtavīryārjuna. Upon hearing of these deeds, Jamadagni spoke to his son as follows.

38O great hero, my dear son Paraśurāma, you have unnecessarily killed the king, who is supposed to be the embodiment of all the demigods. Thus you have committed a sin.

39My dear son, we are all brāhmaṇas and have become worshipable for the people in general because of our quality of forgiveness. It is because of this quality that Lord Brahmā, the supreme spiritual master of this universe, has achieved his post.

40The duty of a brāhmaṇa is to culture the quality of forgiveness, which is illuminating like the sun. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is pleased with those who are forgiving.

41My dear son, killing a king who is an emperor is more severely sinful than killing a brāhmaṇa. But now, if you become Kṛṣṇa conscious and worship the holy places, you can atone for this great sin.

SB 9.16: Lord Paraśurāma Destroys the World's Ruling Class

When Jamadagni was killed by the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna, as described in this chapter, Paraśurāma rid the entire world of *kṣatriyas* twenty-one times. This chapter also describes the descendants of Viśvāmitra.

When Jamadagni's wife, Reṇukā, went to bring water from the Ganges and saw the King of the Gandharvas enjoying the company of Apsarās, she was captivated, and she slightly desired to associate with him. Because of this sinful desire, she was punished by her husband. Paraśurāma killed his mother and brothers, but later, by dint of the austerities of Jamadagni, they were revived. The sons of Kārtavīryārjuna, however, remembering the death of their father, wanted to take revenge against Lord Paraśurāma, and therefore when Paraśurāma was absent from the *āśrama*, they killed Jamadagni, who was meditating on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Paraśurāma returned to the *āśrama* and saw his father killed, he

was very sorry, and after asking his brothers to take care of the dead body, he went out with determination to kill all the *kṣatriyas* on the surface of the world. Taking up his axe, he went to Māhiṣmatī-pura, the capital of Kārtavīryārjuna, and killed all of Kārtavīryārjuna's sons, whose blood became a great river. Paraśurāma, however, was not satisfied with killing only the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna; later, when the *kṣatriyas* became disturbing, he killed them twenty-one times, so that there were no *kṣatriyas* on the surface of the earth. Thereafter, Paraśurāma joined the head of his father to the dead body and performed various sacrifices to please the Supreme Lord. Thus Jamadagni got life again in his body, and later he was promoted to the higher planetary system known as Saptarṣi-maṇḍala. Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni, still lives in Mahendra-parvata. In the next *manvantara*, he will become a preacher of Vedic knowledge.

In the dynasty of Gādhi, the most powerful Viśvāmitra took birth. By dint of his austerity and penance, he became a *brāhmaṇa*. He had 101 sons, who were celebrated as the Madhucchandās. In the sacrificial arena of Hariścandra, the son of Ajīgarta named Śunaḥśepha was meant to be sacrificed, but by the mercy of the Prajāpatis he was released. Thereafter, he became Devarāta in the dynasty of Gādhi. The fifty elder sons of Viśvāmitra, however, did not accept Śunaḥśepha as their elder brother, and therefore Viśvāmitra cursed them to become *mlecchas*, unfaithful to the Vedic civilization. Viśvāmitra's fifty-first son, along with his younger brothers, then accepted Śunaḥśepha as their eldest brother, and their father, Viśvāmitra, being satisfied, blessed them. Thus Devarāta was accepted in the dynasty of Kauśika, and consequently there are different divisions of that dynasty.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, son of the Kuru dynasty, when Lord Paraśurāma was given this order by his father, he immediately agreed, saying, "Let it be so." For one complete year he traveled to holy places. Then he returned to his father's residence.

2Once when Reṇukā, the wife of Jamadagni, went to the bank of the Ganges to get water, she saw the King of the Gandharvas, decorated with a garland of lotuses and sporting in the Ganges with celestial women [Apsarās].

3She had gone to bring water from the Ganges, but when she saw Citraratha, the King of the Gandharvas, sporting with the celestial girls, she was somewhat inclined toward him and failed to remember that the time for the fire sacrifice was passing.

4Later, understanding that the time for offering the sacrifice had passed, Reṇukā feared a curse from her husband. Therefore when she returned she simply put the waterpot before him and stood there with folded hands.

5The great sage Jamadagni understood the adultery in the mind of his wife. Therefore he was very angry and told his sons, "My dear sons, kill this sinful woman!" But the sons did not carry out his order.

6Jamadagni then ordered his youngest son, Paraśurāma, to kill his brothers, who had disobeyed this order, and his mother, who had mentally committed adultery. Lord Paraśurāma, knowing the power of his father, who was practiced in meditation and austerity, killed his mother and brothers immediately.

7Jamadagni, the son of Satyavatī, was very much pleased with Paraśurāma and asked him to take any benediction he liked. Lord Paraśurāma replied, "Let my mother and brothers live again and not remember having been killed by me. This is the benediction I ask."

8Thereafter, by the benediction of Jamadagni, Lord Paraśurāma's mother and brothers immediately came alive and were very happy, as if awakened from sound sleep. Lord

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Paraśurāma had killed his relatives in accordance with his father's order because he was fully aware of his father's power, austerity and learning.

9My dear King Parīkṣit, the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna, who were defeated by the superior strength of Paraśurāma, never achieved happiness, for they always remembered the killing of their father.

10Once when Paraśurāma left the āśrama for the forest with Vasumān and his other brothers, the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna took the opportunity to approach Jamadagni's residence to seek vengeance for their grudge.

11The sons of Kārtavīryārjuna were determined to commit sinful deeds. Therefore when they saw Jamadagni sitting by the side of the fire to perform yajña and meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is praised by the best of selected prayers, they took the opportunity to kill him.

12With pitiable prayers, Reṇukā, the mother of Paraśurāma and wife of Jamadagni, begged for the life of her husband. But the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna, being devoid of the qualities of kṣatriyas, were so cruel that despite her prayers they forcibly cut off his head and took it away.

13Lamenting in grief for the death of her husband, the most chaste Reṇukā struck her own body with her hands and cried very loudly, "O Rāma, my dear son Rāma!"

14Although the sons of Jamadagni, including Lord Paraśurāma, were a long distance from home, as soon as they heard Reṇukā loudly calling "O Rāma, O my son," they hastily returned to the āśrama, where they saw their father already killed.

15Virtually bewildered by grief, anger, indignation, affliction and lamentation, the sons of Jamadagni cried, "O father, most religious, saintly person, you have left us and gone to the heavenly planets!"

16Thus lamenting, Lord Paraśurāma entrusted his father's dead body to his brothers and personally took up his axe, having decided to put an end to all the kṣatriyas on the surface of the world.

17O King, Lord Paraśurāma then went to Māhiṣmatī, which was already doomed by the sinful killing of a brāhmaṇa. In the midst of that city he made a mountain of heads, severed from the bodies of the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna.

18-19With the blood of the bodies of these sons, Lord Paraśurāma created a ghastly river, which brought great fear to the kings who had no respect for brahminical culture. Because the kṣatriyas, the men of power in government, were performing sinful activities, Lord Paraśurāma, on the plea of retaliating for the murder of his father, rid all the kṣatriyas from the face of the earth twenty-one times. Indeed, in the place known as Samanta-paścaka he created nine lakes filled with their blood.

20Thereafter, Paraśurāma joined his father's head to the dead body and placed the whole body and head upon kuśa grass. By offering sacrifices, he began to worship Lord Vāsudeva, who is the all-pervading Supersoul of all the demigods and of every living entity.

21-22After completing the sacrifice, Lord Paraśurāma gave the eastern direction to the hotā as a gift, the south to the brahmā, the west to the adhvaryu, the north to the udgātā, and the four cornersnortheast, southeast, northwest and southwestto the other priests. He gave the middle to Kaśyapa and the place known as Āryāvarta to the upadraṣṭā. Whatever remained he

distributed among the sadasyas, the associate priests.

23 Thereafter, having completed the ritualistic sacrificial ceremonies, Lord Paraśurāma took the bath known as the avabhṛtha-snāna. Standing on the bank of the great river Sarasvatī, cleared of all sins, Lord Paraśurāma appeared like the sun in a clear, cloudless sky.

24 Thus Jamadagni, being worshiped by Lord Paraśurāma, was brought back to life with full remembrance, and he became one of the seven sages in the group of seven stars.

25 My dear King Parīkṣit, in the next manvantara the lotus-eyed Personality of Godhead Lord Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadagni, will be a great propounder of Vedic knowledge. In other words, he will be one of the seven sages.

26 Lord Paraśurāma still lives as an intelligent brāhmaṇa in the mountainous country known as Mahendra. Completely satisfied, having given up all the weapons of a kṣatriya, he is always worshiped, adored and offered prayers for his exalted character and activities by such celestial beings as the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas.

27 In this way the supreme soul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord and the supreme controller, descended as an incarnation in the Bhṛgu dynasty and released the universe from the burden of undesirable kings by killing them many times.

28 Viśvāmitra, the son of Mahārāja Gādhi, was as powerful as the flames of fire. From the position of a kṣatriya, he achieved the position of a powerful brāhmaṇa by undergoing penances and austerities.

29 O King Parīkṣit, Viśvāmitra had 101 sons, of whom the middle one was known as Madhucchandā. In relation to him, all the other sons were celebrated as the Madhucchandās.

30 Viśvāmitra accepted the son of Ajīgarta known as Śunaḥśepha, who was born in the Bhṛgu dynasty and was also known as Devarāta, as one of his own sons. Viśvāmitra ordered his other sons to accept Śunaḥśepha as their eldest brother.

31 Śunaḥśepha's father sold Śunaḥśepha to be sacrificed as a man-animal in the yajña of King Hariścandra. When Śunaḥśepha was brought into the sacrificial arena, he prayed to the demigods for release and was released by their mercy.

32 Although Śunaḥśepha was born in the Bhārgava dynasty, he was greatly advanced in spiritual life, and therefore the demigods involved in the sacrifice protected him. Consequently he was also celebrated as the descendant of Gādhi named Devarāta.

33 When requested by their father to accept Śunaḥśepha as the eldest son, the elder fifty of the Madhucchandās, the sons of Viśvāmitra, did not agree. Therefore Viśvāmitra, being angry, cursed them. "May all of you bad sons become mlecchas," he said, "being opposed to the principles of Vedic culture."

34 When the elder Madhucchandās were cursed, the younger fifty, along with Madhucchandā himself, approached their father and agreed to accept his proposal. "Dear father," they said, "we shall abide by whatever arrangement you like."

35 Thus the younger Madhucchandās accepted Śunaḥśepha as their eldest brother and told him, "We shall follow your orders." Viśvāmitra then said to his obedient sons, "Because you have accepted Śunaḥśepha as your eldest brother, I am very satisfied. By accepting my order, you have made me a father of worthy sons, and therefore I bless all of you to become the fathers of

sons also.”

36Viśvāmitra said, “O Kuśikas [descendants of Kauśika], this Devarāta is my son and is one of you. Please obey his orders.” O King Parīkṣit, Viśvāmitra had many other sons, such as Aṣṭaka, Hārīta, Jaya and Kratumān.

37Viśvāmitra cursed some of his sons and blessed the others, and he also adopted a son. Thus there were varieties in the Kauśika dynasty, but among all the sons, Devarāta was considered the eldest.

SB 9.17: The Dynasties of the Sons of Purūravā

Āyu, the eldest son of Purūravā, had five sons. This chapter describes the dynasties of four of them, beginning with Kṣatравṛddha.

Āyu, the son of Purūravā, had five sons Nahuṣa, Kṣatравṛddha, Rajī, Rābha and Anenā. The son of Kṣatравṛddha was Suhotra, who had three sons, named Kāśya, Kuśa and Gṛtsamada. The son of Gṛtsamada was Śunaka, and his son was Śaunaka. The son of Kāśya was Kāśi. From Kāśi came the sons and grandsons known as Rāṣṭra, Dīrghatama and then Dhanvantari, who was the inaugurator of medical science and was a *śaktyāveśa* incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. The descendants of Dhanvantari were Ketumān, Bhīmaratha, Divodāsa and Dyumān, who was also known as Pratardana, Śatrujit, Vatsa, Ṛtadhvaja and Kuvalayāśva. The son of Dyumān was Alarka, who reigned over the kingdom for many, many years. Following in the dynasty of Alarka were Santati, Sunītha, Niketana, Dharmaketu, Satyaketu, Dhr̥ṣṭaketu, Sukumāra, Vītihotra, Bharga and Bhārgabhūmi. All of them belonged to the dynasty of Kāśi, the descendant of Kṣatравṛddha.

The son of Rābha was Rabhasa, and his son was Gambhīra. Gambhīra’s son was Akriya, and from Akriya came Brahmavit. The son of Anenā was Śuddha, and his son was Śuci. The son of Śuci was Citrakṛt, whose son was Śāntaraja. Rajī had five hundred sons, all of extraordinary strength. Rajī was personally very powerful and was given the kingdom of heaven by Lord Indra. Later, after Rajī’s death, when the sons of Rajī refused to return the kingdom to Indra, by Bṛhaspati’s arrangement they became unintelligent, and Lord Indra conquered them.

The grandson of Kṣatравṛddha named Kuśa gave birth to a son named Prati. From Prati came Saṣjaya; from Saṣjaya, Jaya; from Jaya, Kṛta; and from Kṛta, Haryabala. The son of Haryabala was Sahadeva; the son of Sahadeva, Hīna; the son of Hīna, Jayasena; the son of Jayasena, Saṅkṛti; and the son of Saṅkṛti, Jaya.

1-3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: From Purūravā came a son named Āyu, whose very powerful sons were Nahuṣa, Kṣatравṛddha, Rajī, Rābha and Anenā. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, now hear about the dynasty of Kṣatравṛddha. Kṣatравṛddha’s son was Suhotra, who had three sons, named Kāśya, Kuśa and Gṛtsamada. From Gṛtsamada came Śunaka, and from him came Śaunaka, the great saint, the best of those conversant with the Ṛg Veda.

4The son of Kāśya was Kāśi, and his son was Rāṣṭra, the father of Dīrghatama. Dīrghatama had a son named Dhanvantari, who was the inaugurator of the medical science and an incarnation of Lord Vāsudeva, the enjoyer of the results of sacrifices. One who remembers the name of Dhanvantari can be released from all disease.

5The son of Dhanvantari was Ketumān, and his son was Bhīmaratha. The son of Bhīmaratha was Divodāsa, and the son of Divodāsa was Dyumān, also known as Pratardana.

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6Dyumān was also known as Śatrujit, Vatsa, Ṛtadhvaja and Kuvalayāśva. From him were born Alarka and other sons.

7Alarka, the son of Dyumān, reigned over the earth for sixty-six thousand years, my dear King Parīkṣit. No one other than him has reigned over the earth for so long as a young man.

8From Alarka came a son named Santati, and his son was Sunītha. The son of Sunītha was Niketana, the son of Niketana was Dharmaketu, and the son of Dharmaketu was Satyaketu.

9O King Parīkṣit, from Satyaketu came a son named Dhṛṣṭaketu, and from Dhṛṣṭaketu came Sukumāra, the emperor of the entire world. From Sukumāra came a son named Vītihotra; from Vītihotra, Bharga; and from Bharga, Bhārgabhūmi.

10Mahārāja Parīkṣit, all of these kings were descendants of Kāśi, and they could also be called descendants of Kṣatravṛddha. The son of Rābha was Rabhasa, from Rabhasa came Gambhīra, and from Gambhīra came a son named Akriya.

11The son of Akriya was known as Brahmavit, O King. Now hear about the descendants of Anenā. From Anenā came a son named Śuddha, and his son was Śuci. The son of Śuci was Dharmasārathi, also called Citrakṛt.

12From Citrakṛt was born a son named Śāntaraja, a self-realized soul who performed all kinds of Vedic ritualistic ceremonies and therefore did not beget any progeny. The sons of Rajī were five hundred, all very powerful.

13On the request of the demigods, Rajī killed the demons and thus returned the kingdom of heaven to Lord Indra. But Indra, fearing such demons as Prahlāda, returned the kingdom of heaven to Rajī and surrendered himself at Rajī's lotus feet.

14Upon Rajī's death, Indra begged Rajī's sons for the return of the heavenly planet. They did not return it, however, although they agreed to return Indra's shares in ritualistic ceremonies.

15Thereafter, Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods, offered oblations in the fire so that the sons of Rajī would fall from moral principles. When they fell, Lord Indra killed them easily because of their degradation. Not a single one of them remained alive.

16From Kuśa, the grandson of Kṣatravṛddha, was born a son named Prati. The son of Prati was Saṣjaya, and the son of Saṣjaya was Jaya. From Jaya, Kṛta was born, and from Kṛta, King Haryabala.

17From Haryabala came a son named Sahadeva, and from Sahadeva came Hīna. The son of Hīna was Jayasena, and the son of Jayasena was Saṅkṛti. The son of Saṅkṛti was the powerful and expert fighter named Jaya. These kings were the members of the Kṣatravṛddha dynasty. Now let me describe to you the dynasty of Nahuṣa.

SB 9.18: King Yayāti Regains His Youth

This chapter gives the history of King Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa. Among Yayāti's five sons, the youngest son, Pūru, accepted Yayāti's invalidity.

When Nahuṣa, who had six sons, was cursed to become a python, his eldest son, Yati, took *sannyāsa*, and therefore the next son, Yayāti, was enthroned as king. By providence, Yayāti married the daughter of Śukrācārya. Śukrācārya was a *brāhmaṇa* and Yayāti a *kṣatriya*, but Yayāti married her nonetheless. Śukrācārya's daughter, named Devayānī, had a girlfriend

named Śarmiṣṭhā, who was the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā. King Yayāti married Śarmiṣṭhā also. The history of this marriage is as follows. Once Śarmiṣṭhā was sporting in the water with thousands of her girlfriends, and Devayānī was also there. When the young girls saw Lord Śiva, seated on his bull with Umā, they immediately dressed themselves, but Śarmiṣṭhā mistakenly put on Devayānī's clothes. Devayānī, being very angry, rebuked Śarmiṣṭhā, who also became very angry and responded by rebuking Devayānī and throwing her into a well. By chance, King Yayāti came to that well to drink water, and he found Devayānī and rescued her. Thus Devayānī accepted Mahārāja Yayāti as her husband. Thereafter, Devayānī, crying loudly, told her father about Śarmiṣṭhā's behavior. Upon hearing of this incident, Śukrācārya was very angry and wanted to chastise Vṛṣaparvā, Śarmiṣṭhā's father. Vṛṣaparvā, however, satisfied Śukrācārya by offering Śarmiṣṭhā as Devayānī's maidservant. Thus Śarmiṣṭhā, as the maidservant of Devayānī, also went to the house of Devayānī's husband. When Śarmiṣṭhā found her friend Devayānī with a son she also desired to have a son. Therefore, at the proper time for conception, she also requested Mahārāja Yayāti for sex. When Śarmiṣṭhā became pregnant also, Devayānī was very envious. In great anger, she immediately left for her father's house and told her father everything. Śukrācārya again became angry and cursed Mahārāja Yayāti to become old, but when Yayāti begged Śukrācārya to be merciful to him, Śukrācārya gave him the benediction that he could transfer his old age and invalidity to some young man. Yayāti exchanged his old age for the youth of his youngest son, Pūru, and thus he was able to enjoy with young girls.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, as the embodied soul has six senses, King Nahuṣa had six sons, named Yati, Yayāti, Saṁyāti, Āyati, Viyati and Kṛti.

2When one enters the post of king or head of the government, one cannot understand the meaning of self-realization. Knowing this, Yati, the eldest son of Nahuṣa, did not accept the power to rule, although it was offered by his father.

3Because Nahuṣa, the father of Yayāti, molested Indra's wife, Śacī, who then complained to Agastya and other brāhmaṇas, these saintly brāhmaṇas cursed Nahuṣa to fall from the heavenly planets and be degraded to the status of a python. Consequently, Yayāti became the king.

4King Yayāti had four younger brothers, whom he allowed to rule the four directions. Yayāti himself married Devayānī, the daughter of Śukrācārya, and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvā, and ruled the entire earth.

5Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: Śukrācārya was a very powerful brāhmaṇa, and Mahārāja Yayāti was a kṣatriya. Therefore I am curious to know how there occurred this pratiloma marriage between a kṣatriya and a brāhmaṇa.

6-7Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: One day Vṛṣaparvā's daughter Śarmiṣṭhā, who was innocent but angry by nature, was walking with Devayānī, the daughter of Śukrācārya, and with thousands of friends, in the palace garden. The garden was full of lotuses and trees of flowers and fruits and was inhabited by sweetly singing birds and bumblebees.

8When the young, lotus-eyed girls came to the bank of a reservoir of water, they wanted to enjoy by bathing. Thus they left their clothing on the bank and began sporting, throwing water on one another.

9While sporting in the water, the girls suddenly saw Lord Śiva passing by, seated on the back of his bull with his wife, Pārvatī. Ashamed because they were naked, the girls quickly got out of the water and covered themselves with their garments.

10Śarmiṣṭhā unknowingly put Devayānī's dress on her own body, thus angering Devayānī, who then spoke as follows.

11Oh, just see the activities of this servant-maid Śarmiṣṭhā! Disregarding all etiquette, she has put on my dress, just like a dog snatching clarified butter meant for use in a sacrifice.

12-14We are among the qualified brāhmaṇas, who are accepted as the face of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The brāhmaṇas have created the entire universe by their austerity, and they always keep the Absolute Truth within the core of their hearts. They have directed the path of good fortune, the path of Vedic civilization, and because they are the only worshipable objects within this world, they are offered prayers and worshiped even by the great demigods, the directors of the various planets, and even by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, the supreme purifier, the husband of the goddess of fortune. And we are even more respectable because we are in the dynasty of Bṛghu. Yet although this woman's father, being among the demons, is our disciple, she has put on my dress, exactly like a śūdra taking charge of Vedic knowledge.

15Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When thus rebuked in cruel words, Śarmiṣṭhā was very angry. Breathing heavily like a serpent and biting her lower lip with her teeth, she spoke to the daughter of Śukrācārya as follows.

16You beggar, since you don't understand your position, why should you unnecessarily talk so much? Don't all of you wait at our house, depending on us for your livelihood like crows?

17Using such unkind words, Śarmiṣṭhā rebuked Devayānī, the daughter of Śukrācārya. In anger, she took away Devayānī's garments and threw Devayānī into a well.

18After throwing Devayānī into the well, Śarmiṣṭhā went home. Meanwhile, King Yayāti, while engaged in a hunting excursion, went to the well to drink water and by chance saw Devayānī.

19Seeing Devayānī naked in the well, King Yayāti immediately gave her his upper cloth. Being very kind to her, he caught her hand with his own and lifted her out.

20-21With words saturated with love and affection, Devayānī said to King Yayāti: O great hero, O King, conqueror of the cities of your enemies, by accepting my hand you have accepted me as your married wife. Let me not be touched by others, for our relationship as husband and wife has been made possible by providence, not by any human being.

22Because of falling in the well, I met you. Indeed, this has been arranged by providence. After I cursed Kaca, the son of the learned scholar Bṛhaspati, he cursed me by saying that I would not have a brāhmaṇa for a husband. Therefore, O mighty-armed one, there is no possibility of my becoming the wife of a brāhmaṇa.

23Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Because such a marriage is not sanctioned by regular scriptures, King Yayāti did not like it, but because it was arranged by providence and because he was attracted by Devayānī's beauty, he accepted her request.

24Thereafter, when the learned King returned to his palace, Devayānī returned home crying and told her father, Śukrācārya, about all that had happened because of Śarmiṣṭhā. She told how she had been thrown into the well but was saved by the King.

25As Śukrācārya listened to what had happened to Devayānī, his mind was very much aggrieved. Condemning the profession of priesthood and praising the profession of uṣcha-vṛtti [collecting grains from the fields], he left home with his daughter.

26King Vṛṣaparvā understood that Śukrācārya was coming to chastise or curse him. Consequently, before Śukrācārya came to his house, Vṛṣaparvā went out and fell down in the street at the feet of his guru and satisfied him, checking his wrath.

27The powerful Śukrācārya was angry for a few moments, but upon being satisfied he said to Vṛṣaparvā: My dear King, kindly fulfill the desire of Devayānī, for she is my daughter and in this world I cannot give her up or neglect her.

28After hearing Śukrācārya's request, Vṛṣaparvā agreed to fulfill Devayānī's desire, and he awaited her words. Devayānī then expressed her desire as follows: "Whenever I marry by the order of my father, my friend Śarmiṣṭhā must go with me as my maidservant, along with her friends."

29Vṛṣaparvā wisely thought that Śukrācārya's displeasure would bring danger and that his pleasure would bring material gain. Therefore he carried out Śukrācārya's order and served him like a slave. He gave his daughter Śarmiṣṭhā to Devayānī, and Śarmiṣṭhā served Devayānī like a slave, along with thousands of other women.

30When Śukrācārya gave Devayānī in marriage to Yayāti, he had Śarmiṣṭhā go with her, but he warned the King, "My dear King, never allow this girl Śarmiṣṭhā to lie with you in your bed."

31O King Parīkṣit, upon seeing Devayānī with a nice son, Śarmiṣṭhā once approached King Yayāti at the appropriate time for conception. In a secluded place, she requested the King, the husband of her friend Devayānī, to enable her to have a son also.

32When Princess Śarmiṣṭhā begged King Yayāti for a son, the King was certainly aware of the principles of religion, and therefore he agreed to fulfill her desire. Although he remembered the warning of Śukrācārya, he thought of this union as the desire of the Supreme, and thus he had sex with Śarmiṣṭhā.

33Devayānī gave birth to Yadu and Turvasu, and Śarmiṣṭhā gave birth to Druhyu, Anu and Pūru.

34When the proud Devayānī understood from outside sources that Śarmiṣṭhā was pregnant by her husband, she was frenzied with anger. Thus she departed for her father's house.

35King Yayāti, who was very lusty, followed his wife, caught her and tried to appease her by speaking pleasing words and massaging her feet, but he could not satisfy her by any means.

36Śukrācārya was extremely angry. "You untruthful fool, lusting after women! You have done a great wrong," he said. "I therefore curse you to be attacked and disfigured by old age and invalidity."

37King Yayāti said, "O learned, worshipable brāhmaṇa, I have not yet satisfied my lusty desires with your daughter." Śukrācārya then replied, "You may exchange your old age with someone who will agree to transfer his youth to you."

38When Yayāti received this benediction from Śukrācārya, he requested his eldest son: My dear son Yadu, please give me your youth in exchange for my old age and invalidity.

39My dear son, I am not yet satisfied in my sexual desires. But if you are kind to me, you can take the old age given by your maternal grandfather, and I may take your youth so that I may enjoy life for a few years more.

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40Yadu replied: My dear father, you have already achieved old age, although you also were a young man. But I do not welcome your old age and invalidity, for unless one enjoys material happiness, one cannot attain renunciation.

41O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Yayāti similarly requested his sons Turvasu, Druhyu and Anu to exchange their youth for his old age, but because they were unaware of religious principles, they thought that their flickering youth was eternal, and therefore they refused to carry out their father's order.

42King Yayāti then requested Pūru, who was younger than these three brothers but more qualified, "My dear son, do not be disobedient like your elder brothers, for that is not your duty."

43Pūru replied: O Your Majesty, who in this world can repay his debt to his father? By the mercy of one's father, one gets the human form of life, which can enable one to become an associate of the Supreme Lord.

44A son who acts by anticipating what his father wants him to do is first class, one who acts upon receiving his father's order is second class, and one who executes his father's order irreverently is third class. But a son who refuses his father's order is like his father's stool.

45Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In this way, O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the son named Pūru was very pleased to accept the old age of his father, Yayāti, who took the youth of his son and enjoyed this material world as he required.

46Thereafter, King Yayāti became the ruler of the entire world, consisting of seven islands, and ruled the citizens exactly like a father. Because he had taken the youth of his son, his senses were unimpaired, and he enjoyed as much material happiness as he desired.

47In secluded places, engaging her mind, words, body and various paraphernalia, Devayānī, the dear wife of Mahārāja Yayāti, always brought her husband the greatest possible transcendental bliss.

48King Yayāti performed various sacrifices, in which he offered abundant gifts to the brāhmaṇas to satisfy the Supreme Lord, Hari, who is the reservoir of all the demigods and the object of all Vedic knowledge.

49The Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, who created the cosmic manifestation, exhibits Himself as all-pervading, like the sky that holds clouds. And when the creation is annihilated, everything enters into the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, and varieties are no longer manifested.

50Without material desires, Mahārāja Yayāti worshiped the Supreme Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart as Nārāyaṇa and is invisible to material eyes, although existing everywhere.

51Although Mahārāja Yayāti was the king of the entire world and he engaged his mind and five senses in enjoying material possessions for one thousand years, he was unable to be satisfied.

SB 9.19: King Yayāti Achieves Liberation

This Nineteenth Chapter describes how Mahārāja Yayāti achieved liberation after he recounted the figurative story of the he-goat and she-goat.

After many, many years of sexual relationships and enjoyment in the material world, King Yayāti finally became disgusted with such materialistic happiness. When satiated with material enjoyment, he devised a story of a he-goat and she-goat, corresponding to his own life, and

narrated the story before his beloved Devayānī. The story is as follows. Once upon a time, while a goat was searching in a forest for different types of vegetables to eat, by chance he came to a well, in which he saw a she-goat. He became attracted to this she-goat and somehow or other delivered her from the well, and thus they were united. One day thereafter, when the she-goat saw the he-goat enjoying sex with another she-goat, she became angry, abandoned the he-goat, and returned to her *brāhmaṇa* owner, to whom she described her husband's behavior. The *brāhmaṇa* became very angry and cursed the he-goat to lose his sexual power. Thereupon, the he-goat begged the *brāhmaṇa*'s pardon and was given back the power for sex. Then the he-goat enjoyed sex with the she-goat for many years, but still he was not satisfied. If one is lusty and greedy, even the total stock of gold in this world cannot satisfy one's lusty desires. These desires are like a fire. One may pour clarified butter on a blazing fire, but one cannot expect the fire to be extinguished. To extinguish such a fire, one must adopt a different process. The *śāstra* therefore advises that by intelligence one renounce the life of enjoyment. Without great endeavor, those with a poor fund of knowledge cannot give up sense enjoyment, especially in relation to sex, because a beautiful woman bewilders even the most learned man. King Yayāti, however, renounced worldly life and divided his property among his sons. He personally adopted the life of a mendicant, or *sannyāsī*, giving up all attraction to material enjoyment, and engaged himself fully in devotional service to the Lord. Thus he attained perfection. Later, when his beloved wife, Devayānī, was freed from her mistaken way of life, she also engaged herself in the devotional service of the Lord.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Yayāti was very much attached to woman. In due course of time, however, when disgusted with sexual enjoyment and its bad effects, he renounced this way of life and narrated the following story to his beloved wife.

2My dearly beloved wife, daughter of Śukrācārya, in this world there was someone exactly like me. Please listen as I narrate the history of his life. By hearing about the life of such a householder, those who have retired from householder life always lament.

3While wandering in the forest, eating to satisfy his senses, a he-goat by chance approached a well, in which he saw a she-goat standing helplessly, having fallen into it by the influence of the results of fruitive activities.

4After planning how to get the she-goat out of the well, the lusty he-goat dug up the earth on the well's edge with the point of his horns in such a way that she was able to come out very easily.

5-6When the she-goat, who had very nice hips, got out of the well and saw the very handsome he-goat, she desired to accept him as her husband. When she did so, many other she-goats also desired him as their husband because he had a very beautiful bodily structure and a nice mustache and beard and was expert in discharging semen and in the art of sexual intercourse. Therefore, just as a person haunted by a ghost exhibits madness, the best of the he-goats, attracted by the many she-goats, engaged in erotic activities and naturally forgot his real business of self-realization.

7When the she-goat who had fallen into the well saw her beloved goat engaged in sexual affairs with another she-goat, she could not tolerate the goat's activities.

8Aggrieved by her husband's behavior with another, the she-goat thought that the he-goat was not actually her friend but was hardhearted and was her friend only for the time being. Therefore, because her husband was lusty, she left him and returned to her former maintainer.

9Being very sorry, the he-goat, who was subservient to his wife, followed the she-goat on the

road and tried his best to flatter her, but he could not pacify her.

10The she-goat went to the residence of a brāhmaṇa who was the maintainer of another she-goat, and that brāhmaṇa angrily cut off the he-goat's dangling testicles. But at the he-goat's request, the brāhmaṇa later rejoined them by the power of mystic yoga.

11My dear wife, when the he-goat had his testicles restored, he enjoyed the she-goat he had gotten from the well, but although he continued to enjoy for many, many years, even now he has not been fully satisfied.

12O my dear wife with beautiful eyebrows, I am exactly like that he-goat, for I am so poor in intelligence that I am captivated by your beauty and have forgotten the real task of self-realization.

13A person who is lusty cannot satisfy his mind even if he has enough of everything in this world, including rice, barley and other food grains, gold, animals and women. Nothing can satisfy him.

14As supplying butter to a fire does not diminish the fire but instead increases it more and more, the endeavor to stop lusty desires by continual enjoyment can never be successful. [In fact, one must voluntarily cease from material desires.]

15When a man is nonenvious and does not desire ill fortune for anyone, he is equipoised. For such a person, all directions appear happy.

16For those who are too attached to material enjoyment, sense gratification is very difficult to give up. Even when one is an invalid because of old age, one cannot give up such desires for sense gratification. Therefore, one who actually desires happiness must give up such unsatisfied desires, which are the cause of all tribulations.

17One should not allow oneself to sit on the same seat even with one's own mother, sister or daughter, for the senses are so strong that even though one is very advanced in knowledge, he may be attracted by sex.

18I have spent a full one thousand years enjoying sense gratification, yet my desire to enjoy such pleasure increases daily.

19Therefore, I shall now give up all these desires and meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Free from the dualities of mental concoction and free from false prestige, I shall wander in the forest with the animals.

20One who knows that material happiness, whether good or bad, in this life or in the next, on this planet or on the heavenly planets, is temporary and useless, and that an intelligent person should not try to enjoy or even think of such things, is the knower of the self. Such a self-realized person knows quite well that material happiness is the very cause of continued material existence and forgetfulness of one's own constitutional position.

21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After speaking in this way to his wife, Devayānī, King Yayāti, who was now free from all material desires, called his youngest son, Pūru, and returned Pūru's youth in exchange for his own old age.

22King Yayāti gave the southeast to his son Druhyu, the south to his son Yadu, the west to his son Turvasu, and the north to his son Anu. In this way he divided the kingdom.

23Yayāti enthroned his youngest son, Pūru, as the emperor of the entire world and the

proprietor of all its riches, and he placed all the other sons, who were older than Pūru, under Pūru's control.

24Having enjoyed sense gratification for many, many years, O King Parīkṣit, Yayāti was accustomed to it, but he gave it up entirely in a moment, just as a bird flies away from the nest as soon as its wings have grown.

25Because King Yayāti completely surrendered unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, he was freed from all contamination of the material modes of nature. Because of his self-realization, he was able to fix his mind upon the Transcendence [Parabrahman, Vāsudeva], and thus he ultimately achieved the position of an associate of the Lord.

26When Devayānī heard Mahārāja Yayāti's story of the he-goat and she-goat, she understood that this story, which was presented as if a funny joke for entertainment between husband and wife, was intended to awaken her to her constitutional position.

27-28Thereafter, Devayānī, the daughter of Śukrācārya, understood that the materialistic association of husband, friends and relatives is like the association in a hotel full of tourists. The relationships of society, friendship and love are created by the māyā of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, exactly as in a dream. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa, Devayānī gave up her imaginary position in the material world. Completely fixing her mind upon Kṛṣṇa, she achieved liberation from the gross and subtle bodies.

29O Lord Vāsudeva, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are the creator of the entire cosmic manifestation. You live as the Supersoul in everyone's heart and are smaller than the smallest, yet You are greater than the greatest and are all-pervading. You appear completely silent, having nothing to do, but this is due to Your all-pervading nature and Your fullness in all opulences. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

SB 9.20: The Dynasty of Pūru

This chapter describes the history of Pūru and his descendant Duṣmanta. The son of Pūru was Janamejaya, and his son was Pracinvān. The sons and grandsons in the line of Pracinvān, one after another, were Pravīra, Manusyu, Cārupada, Sudyu, Bahugava, Saṁyāti, Ahaṁyāti and Raudrāśva. Raudrāśva had ten sons: Rteyu, Kakṣeyu, Sthaṇḍileyu, Kṛteyuka, Jaleyu, Sannateyu, Dharmeyu, Satyeyu, Vrateyu and Vaneyu. The son of Rteyu was Rantināva, who had three sons: Sumati, Dhruva and Apratiratha. The son of Apratiratha was Kaṇva, and Kaṇva's son was Medhātithi. The sons of Medhātithi, headed by Praskanna, were all *brāhmaṇas*. The son of Rantināva named Sumati had a son named Rebhi, and his son was Duṣmanta.

While hunting in the forest, Duṣmanta once approached the *āśrama* of Mahārṣi Kaṇva, where he saw an extremely beautiful woman and became attracted to her. That woman was the daughter of Viśvāmitra, and her name was Śakuntalā. Her mother was Menakā, who had left her in the forest, where Kaṇva Muni found her. Kaṇva Muni brought her to his *āśrama*, where he raised and maintained her. When Śakuntalā accepted Mahārāja Duṣmanta as her husband, he married her according to the *gāndharva-vidhi*. Śakuntalā later became pregnant by her husband, who left her in the *āśrama* of Kaṇva Muni and returned to his kingdom.

In due course of time, Śakuntalā gave birth to a Vaiṣṇava son, but Duṣmanta, having returned to the capital, forgot what had taken place. Therefore, when Śakuntalā approached him with her newly born child, Mahārāja Duṣmanta refused to accept them as his wife and son. Later, however, after a mysterious omen, the King accepted them. After Mahārāja Duṣmanta's death, Bharata, the son of Śakuntalā, was enthroned. He performed many great sacrifices, in which he

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gave great riches in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. This chapter ends by describing the birth of Bharadvāja and how Mahārāja Bharata accepted Bharadvāja as his son.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, descendant of Mahārāja Bharata, I shall now describe the dynasty of Pūru, in which you were born, in which many saintly kings appeared, and from which many dynasties of *brāhmaṇas* began.

2King Janamejaya was born of this dynasty of Pūru. Janamejaya's son was Pracinvān, and his son was Pravīra. Thereafter, Pravīra's son was Manusyu, and from Manusyu came the son named Cārupada.

3The son of Cārupada was Sudyu, and the son of Sudyu was Bahugava. Bahugava's son was Saṁyāti. From Saṁyāti came a son named Ahaṁyāti, from whom Raudrāśva was born.

4-5Raudrāśva had ten sons, named Ṛteyu, Kakṣeyu, Sthaṇḍileyu, Kṛteyuka, Jaleyu, Sannateyu, Dharmeyu, Satyeyu, Vratelyu and Vaneyu. Of these ten sons, Vaneyu was the youngest. As the ten senses, which are products of the universal life, act under the control of life, these ten sons of Raudrāśva acted under Raudrāśva's full control. All of them were born of the Apsarā named Ghṛtācī.

6Ṛteyu had a son named Rantināva, who had three sons, named Sumati, Dhruva and Apratiratha. Apratiratha had only one son, whose name was Kaṇva.

7The son of Kaṇva was Medhātithi, whose sons, all *brāhmaṇas*, were headed by Praskanna. The son of Rantināva named Sumati had a son named Rebhi. Mahārāja Duṣmanta is well known as the son of Rebhi.

8-9Once when King Duṣmanta went to the forest to hunt and was very much fatigued, he approached the residence of Kaṇva Muni. There he saw a most beautiful woman who looked exactly like the goddess of fortune and who sat there illuminating the entire āśrama by her effulgence. The King was naturally attracted by her beauty, and therefore he approached her, accompanied by some of his soldiers, and spoke to her.

10Seeing the beautiful woman, the King was very much enlivened, and the fatigue of his hunting excursion was relieved. He was of course very much attracted because of lusty desires, and thus he inquired from her as follows, in a joking mood.

11O beautiful lotus-eyed woman, who are you? Whose daughter are you? What purpose do you have in this solitary forest? Why are you staying here?

12O most beautiful one, it appears to my mind that you must be the daughter of a kṣatriya. Because I belong to the Pūru dynasty, my mind never endeavors to enjoy anything irreligiously.

13Śakuntalā said: I am the daughter of Viśvāmitra. My mother, Menakā, left me in the forest. O hero, the most powerful saint Kaṇva Muni knows all about this. Now let me know, how may I serve you?

14O King with eyes like the petals of a lotus, kindly come sit down and accept whatever reception we can offer. We have a supply of nīvārā rice that you may kindly take. And if you so desire, stay here without hesitation.

15King Duṣmanta replied: O Śakuntalā, with beautiful eyebrows, you have taken your birth in the family of the great saint Viśvāmitra, and your reception is quite worthy of your family. Aside

from this, the daughters of a king generally select their own husbands.

16When Śakuntalā responded to Mahārāja Duṣmanta's proposal with silence, the agreement was complete. Then the King, who knew the laws of marriage, immediately married her by chanting the Vedic praṇava [omkāra], in accordance with the marriage ceremony as performed among the Gandharvas.

17King Duṣmanta, who never discharged semen without a result, placed his semen at night in the womb of his Queen, Śakuntalā, and in the morning he returned to his palace. Thereafter, in due course of time, Śakuntalā gave birth to a son.

18In the forest, Kaṇva Muni performed all the ritualistic ceremonies concerning the newborn child. Later, the boy became so powerful that he would capture a lion and play with it.

19Śakuntalā, the best of beautiful women, along with her son, whose strength was insurmountable and who was a partial expansion of the Supreme Godhead, approached her husband, Duṣmanta.

20When the King refused to accept his wife and son, who were both irreproachable, an unembodied voice spoke from the sky as an omen and was heard by everyone present.

21The voice said: O Mahārāja Duṣmanta, a son actually belongs to his father, whereas the mother is only a container, like the skin of a bellows. According to Vedic injunctions, the father is born as the son. Therefore, maintain your own son and do not insult Śakuntalā.

22O King Duṣmanta, he who discharges semen is the actual father, and his son saves him from the custody of Yamarāja. You are the actual procreator of this child. Indeed, Śakuntalā is speaking the truth.

23Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Mahārāja Duṣmanta passed away from this earth, his son became the emperor of the world, the proprietor of the seven islands. He is referred to as a partial representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in this world.

24-26Mahārāja Bharata, the son of Duṣmanta, had the mark of Lord Kṛṣṇa's disc on the palm of his right hand, and he had the mark of a lotus whorl on the soles of his feet. By worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead with a grand ritualistic ceremony, he became the emperor and master of the entire world. Then, under the priesthood of Māmateya, Bhṛgu Muni, he performed fifty-five horse sacrifices on the bank of the Ganges, beginning from its mouth and ending at its source, and seventy-eight horse sacrifices on the bank of the Yamunā, beginning from the confluence at Prayāga and ending at the source. He established the sacrificial fire on an excellent site, and he distributed great wealth to the brāhmaṇas. Indeed, he distributed so many cows that each of thousands of brāhmaṇas had one badva [13,084] as his share.

27Bharata, the son of Mahārāja Duṣmanta, bound thirty-three hundred horses for those sacrifices, and thus he astonished all other kings. He surpassed even the opulence of the demigods, for he achieved the supreme spiritual master, Hari.

28When Mahārāja Bharata performed the sacrifice known as Maṣṇāra [or a sacrifice in the place known as Maṣṇāra], he gave in charity fourteen lakhs of excellent elephants with white tusks and black bodies, completely covered with golden ornaments.

29As one cannot approach the heavenly planets simply by the strength of his arms (for who can touch the heavenly planets with his hands?), one cannot imitate the wonderful activities of Mahārāja Bharata. No one could perform such activities in the past, nor will anyone be able to

do so in the future.

30When Mahārāja Bharata was on tour, he defeated or killed all the Kirātas, Hūnas, Yavanas, Pauṇḍras, Kaṅkas, Khaśas, Śakas and the kings who were opposed to the Vedic principles of brahminical culture.

31Formerly, after conquering the demigods, all the demons had taken shelter in the lower planetary system known as Rasātala and had brought all the wives and daughters of the demigods there also. Mahārāja Bharata, however, rescued all those women, along with their associates, from the clutches of the demons, and he returned them to the demigods.

32Mahārāja Bharata provided all necessities for his subjects, both on this earth and in the heavenly planets, for twenty-seven thousand years. He circulated his orders and distributed his soldiers in all directions.

33As the ruler of the entire universe, Emperor Bharata had the opulences of a great kingdom and unconquerable soldiers. His sons and family had seemed to him to be his entire life. But finally he thought of all this as an impediment to spiritual advancement, and therefore he ceased from enjoying it.

34O King Parīkṣit, Mahārāja Bharata had three pleasing wives, who were daughters of the King of Vidarbha. When all three of them bore children who did not resemble the King, these wives thought that he would consider them unfaithful queens and reject them, and therefore they killed their own sons.

35The King, his attempt for progeny frustrated in this way, performed a sacrifice named marut-stoma to get a son. The demigods known as the Maruts, being fully satisfied with him, then presented him a son named Bharadvāja.

36When the demigod named Bṛhaspati was attracted by his brother's wife, Mamatā, who at that time was pregnant, he desired to have sexual relations with her. The son within her womb forbade this, but Bṛhaspati cursed him and forcibly discharged semen into the womb of Mamatā.

37Mamatā very much feared being forsaken by her husband for giving birth to an illegitimate son, and therefore she considered giving up the child. But then the demigods solved the problem by enunciating a name for the child.

38Bṛhaspati said to Mamatā, "You foolish woman, although this child was born from the wife of one man through the semen discharged by another, you should maintain him." Upon hearing this, Mamatā replied, "O Bṛhaspati, you maintain him!" After speaking in this way, Bṛhaspati and Mamatā both left. Thus the child was known as Bharadvāja.

39Although encouraged by the demigods to maintain the child, Mamatā considered him useless because of his illicit birth, and therefore she left him. Consequently, the demigods known as the Maruts maintained the child, and when Mahārāja Bharata was disappointed for want of a child, this child was given to him as his son.

SB 9.21: The Dynasty of Bharata

This Twenty-first Chapter describes the dynasty born from Mahārāja Bharata, the son of Mahārāja Duṣmanta, and it also describes the glories of Rantideva, Ajamīḍha and others.

The son of Bharadvāja was Manyu, and Manyu's sons were Bṛhatkṣatra, Jaya, Mahāvīrya, Nara

and Garga. Of these five, Nara had a son named Saṅkṛti, who had two sons, named Guru and Rantideva. As an exalted devotee, Rantideva saw every living entity in relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore he completely engaged his mind, his words and his very self in the service of the Supreme Lord and His devotees. Rantideva was so exalted that he would sometimes give away his own food in charity, and he and his family would fast. Once, after Rantideva spent forty-eight days fasting, not even drinking water, excellent food made with ghee was brought to him, but when he was about to eat it a *brāhmaṇa* guest appeared. Rantideva, therefore, did not eat the food, but instead immediately offered a portion of it to the *brāhmaṇa*. When the *brāhmaṇa* left and Rantideva was just about to eat the remnants of the food, a *śūdra* appeared. Rantideva therefore divided the remnants between the *śūdra* and himself. Again, when he was just about to eat the remnants of the food, another guest appeared. Rantideva therefore gave the rest of the food to the new guest and was about to content himself with drinking the water to quench his thirst, but this also was precluded, for a thirsty guest came and Rantideva gave him the water. This was all ordained by the Supreme Personality of Godhead just to glorify His devotee and show how tolerant a devotee is in rendering service to the Lord. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being extremely pleased with Rantideva, entrusted him with very confidential service. The special power to render the most confidential service is entrusted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to a pure devotee, not to ordinary devotees.

Garga, the son of Bharadvāja, had a son named Śini, and Śini's son was Gārgya. Although Gārgya was a *kṣatriya* by birth, his sons became *brāhmaṇas*. The son of Mahāvīrya was Duritakṣaya, whose sons were Trayyāruṇi, Kavi and Puṣkarāruṇi. Although these three sons were born of a *kṣatriya* king, they also achieved the position of *brāhmaṇas*. The son of Bṛhatkṣatra constructed the city of Hastināpura and was known as Hastī. His sons were Ajamīdha, Dvimīdha and Purumīdha.

From Ajamīdha came Priyamedha and other *brāhmaṇas* and also a son named Bṛhadiṣu. The sons, grandsons and further descendants of Bṛhadiṣu were Bṛhaddhanu, Bṛhatkāya, Jayadratha, Viśada and Syenajit. From Syenajit came four sons Rucirāśva, Dṛḍhahanu, Kāśya and Vatsa. From Rucirāśva came a son named Pāra, whose sons were Pṛthusena and Nīpa, and from Nīpa came one hundred sons. Another son of Nīpa was Brahmadata. From Brahmadata came Viṣvaksena; from Viṣvaksena, Udaksena; and from Udaksena, Bhallāṭa.

The son of Dvimīdha was Yavīnara, and from Yavīnara came many sons and grandsons, such as Kṛtimān, Satyadhṛti, Dṛḍhanemi, Supārśva, Sumati, Sannatimān, Kṛtī, Nīpa, Udgrāyudha, Kṣemya, Suvīra, Ripuṣjaya and Bahuratha. Purumīdha had no sons, but Ajamīdha, in addition to his other sons, had a son named Nīla, whose son was Śānti. The descendants of Śānti were Suśānti, Puruja, Arka and Bharmyāśva. Bharmyāśva had five sons, one of whom, Mudgala, begot a dynasty of *brāhmaṇas*. Mudgala had twins a son, Divodāsa, and a daughter, Ahalyā. From Ahalyā, by her husband, Gautama, Śātānanda was born. The son of Śātānanda was Satyadhṛti, and his son was Śaradvān. Śaradvān's son was known as Kṛpa, and Śaradvān's daughter, known as Kṛpī, became the wife of Droṇācārya.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Because Bharadvāja was delivered by the Marut demigods, he was known as Vitatha. The son of Vitatha was Manyu, and from Manyu came five sons Bṛhatkṣatra, Jaya, Mahāvīrya, Nara and Garga. Of these five, the one known as Nara had a son named Saṅkṛti.

20 Mahārāja Parīkṣit, descendant of Pāṇḍu, Saṅkṛti had two sons, named Guru and Rantideva. Rantideva is famous in both this world and the next, for he is glorified not only in human society but also in the society of the demigods.

3-5 Rantideva never endeavored to earn anything. He would enjoy whatever he got by the arrangement of providence, but when guests came he would give them everything. Thus he underwent considerable suffering, along with the members of his family. Indeed, he and his family members shivered for want of food and water, yet Rantideva always remained sober. Once, after fasting for forty-eight days, in the morning Rantideva received some water and some foodstuffs made with milk and ghee, but when he and his family were about to eat, a brāhmaṇa guest arrived.

6 Because Rantideva perceived the presence of the Supreme Godhead everywhere, and in every living entity, he received the guest with faith and respect and gave him a share of the food. The brāhmaṇa guest ate his share and then went away.

7 Thereafter, having divided the remaining food with his relatives, Rantideva was just about to eat his own share when a śūdra guest arrived. Seeing the śūdra in relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, King Rantideva gave him also a share of the food.

8 When the śūdra went away, another guest arrived, surrounded by dogs, and said, “O King, I and my company of dogs are very hungry. Please give us something to eat.”

9 With great respect, King Rantideva offered the balance of the food to the dogs and the master of the dogs, who had come as guests. The King offered them all respects and obeisances.

10 Thereafter, only the drinking water remained, and there was only enough to satisfy one person, but when the King was just about to drink it, a caṇḍāla appeared and said, “O King, although I am lowborn, kindly give me some drinking water.”

11 Aggrieved at hearing the pitiable words of the poor fatigued caṇḍāla, Mahārāja Rantideva spoke the following nectarean words.

12 I do not pray to the Supreme Personality of Godhead for the eight perfections of mystic yoga, nor for salvation from repeated birth and death. I want only to stay among all the living entities and suffer all distresses on their behalf, so that they may be freed from suffering.

13 By offering my water to maintain the life of this poor caṇḍāla, who is struggling to live, I have been freed from all hunger, thirst, fatigue, trembling of the body, moroseness, distress, lamentation and illusion.

14 Having spoken thus, King Rantideva, although on the verge of death because of thirst, gave his own portion of water to the caṇḍāla without hesitation, for the King was naturally very kind and sober.

15 Demigods like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, who can satisfy all materially ambitious men by giving them the rewards they desire, then manifested their own identities before King Rantideva, for it was they who had presented themselves as the brāhmaṇa, śūdra, caṇḍāla and so on.

16 King Rantideva had no ambition to enjoy material benefits from the demigods. He offered them obeisances, but because he was factually attached to Lord Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he fixed his mind at Lord Viṣṇu’s lotus feet.

17 O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, because King Rantideva was a pure devotee, always Kṛṣṇa conscious and free from all material desires, the Lord’s illusory energy, māyā, could not exhibit herself before him. On the contrary, for him māyā entirely vanished, exactly like a dream.

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18All those who followed the principles of King Rantideva were totally favored by his mercy and became pure devotees, attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. Thus they all became the best of yogīs.

19-20From Garga came a son named Śini, and his son was Gārgya. Although Gārgya was a kṣatriya, there came from him a generation of brahmaṇas. From Mahāvīrya came a son named Duritakṣaya, whose sons were Trayyāruṇi, Kavi and Puṣkarāruṇi. Although these sons of Duritakṣaya took birth in a dynasty of kṣatriyas, they too attained the position of brāhmaṇas. Bṛhatkṣatra had a son named Hastī, who established the city of Hastināpura [now New Delhi].

21From King Hastī came three sons, named Ajamīḍha, Dvimīḍha and Purumīḍha. The descendants of Ajamīḍha, headed by Priyamedha, all achieved the position of brāhmaṇas.

22From Ajamīḍha came a son named Bṛhadiṣu, from Bṛhadiṣu came a son named Bṛhaddhanu, from Bṛhaddhanu a son named Bṛhatkāya, and from Bṛhatkāya a son named Jayadratha.

23The son of Jayadratha was Viśada, and his son was Syenajit. The sons of Syenajit were Rucirāśva, Dṛḍhahanu, Kāśya and Vatsa.

24The son of Rucirāśva was Pāra, and the sons of Pāra were Pṛthusena and Nīpa. Nīpa had one hundred sons.

25King Nīpa begot a son named Brahmadata through the womb of his wife, Kṛtvī, who was the daughter of Śuka. And Brahmadata, who was a great yogī, begot a son named Viṣvaksena through the womb of his wife, Sarasvatī.

26Following the instructions of the great sage Jaigīṣavya, Viṣvaksena compiled an elaborate description of the mystic yoga system. From Viṣvaksena, Udaksena was born, and from Udaksena, Bhallāṭa. All these sons are known as descendants of Bṛhadiṣu.

27The son of Dvimīḍha was Yavīnara, whose son was Kṛtimān. The son of Kṛtimān was well known as Satyadhṛti. From Satyadhṛti came a son named Dṛḍhanemi, who became the father of Supārśva.

28-29From Supārśva came a son named Sumati, from Sumati came Sannatimān, and from Sannatimān came Kṛtī, who achieved mystic power from Brahmā and taught six saṁhitās of the Prācyaśāma verses of the Sāma Veda. The son of Kṛtī was Nīpa; the son of Nīpa, Udgrāyudha; the son of Udgrāyudha, Kṣemya; the son of Kṣemya, Suvīra; and the son of Suvīra, Ripuṣjaya.

30From Ripuṣjaya came a son named Bahuratha. Purumīḍha was sonless. Ajamīḍha had a son named Nīla by his wife known as Nalinī, and the son of Nīla was Śānti.

31-33The son of Śānti was Suśānti, the son of Suśānti was Puruja, and the son of Puruja was Arka. From Arka came Bharmyāśva, and from Bharmyāśva came five sonsMudgala, Yavīnara, Bṛhadviśva, Kāmpilla and Saṣjaya. Bharmyāśva prayed to his sons, “O my sons, please take charge of my five states, for you are quite competent to do so.” Thus his five sons were known as the Paścālas. From Mudgala came a dynasty of brāhmaṇas known as Maudgalya.

34Mudgala, the son of Bharmyāśva, had twin children, one male and the other female. The male child was named Divodāsa, and the female child was named Ahalyā. From the womb of Ahalyā by the semen of her husband, Gautama, came a son named Śātānanda.

35The son of Śātānanda was Satyadhṛti, who was expert in archery, and the son of Satyadhṛti

was Śaradvān. When Śaradvān met Urvaśī, he discharged semen, which fell on a clump of śara grass. From this semen were born two all-auspicious babies, one male and the other female.

36While Mahārāja Śāntanu was on a hunting excursion, he saw the male and female children lying in the forest, and out of compassion he took them home. Consequently, the male child was known as Kṛpa, and the female child was named Kṛpī. Kṛpī later became the wife of Droṇācārya.

SB 9.22: The Descendants of Ajamīḍha

This chapter describes the descendants of Divodāsa. It also describes Jarāsandha, who belonged to the Ṛkṣa dynasty, as well as Duryodhana, Arjuna and others.

The son of Divodāsa was Mitrāyu, who had four sons, one after another—Cyavana, Sudāsa, Sahadeva and Somaka. Somaka had one hundred sons, of whom the youngest was Pṛṣata, from whom Drupada was born. Drupada's daughter was Draupadī, and his sons were headed by Dhṛṣṭadyumna. Dhṛṣṭadyumna's son was Dhṛṣṭaketu.

Another son of Ajamīḍha was named Ṛkṣa. From Ṛkṣa came a son named Saṁvaraṇa, and from Saṁvaraṇa came Kuru, the king of Kurukṣetra. Kuru had four sons—Parīkṣi, Sudhanu, Jahnu and Niṣadha. Among the descendants in the dynasty from Sudhanu were Suhotra, Cyavana, Kṛtī and Uparicara Vasu. The sons of Uparicara Vasu, including Bṛhadratha, Kuśāmba, Matsya, Pratyagra and Cedipa, became kings of the Cedi state. In the dynasty from Bṛhadratha came Kuśāgra, Ṛṣabha, Satyahita, Puṣpavān and Jahu, and from Bṛhadratha through the womb of another wife came Jarāsandha, who was followed by Sahadeva, Somāpi and Śrutaśravā. Parīkṣi, the son of Kuru, had no sons. Among the descendants of Jahnu were Suratha, Vidūratha, Sārvabhauma, Jayasena, Rādhika, Ayutāyu, Akrodhana, Devātithi, Ṛkṣa, Dilīpa and Pratīpa.

The sons of Pratīpa were Devāpi, Śāntanu and Bāhlīka. When Devāpi retired to the forest, his younger brother Śāntanu became the king. Although Śāntanu, being younger, was not eligible to occupy the throne, he disregarded his elder brother. Consequently, there was no rainfall for twelve years. Following the advice of the *brāhmaṇas*, Śāntanu was ready to return the kingdom to Devāpi, but by the intrigue of Śāntanu's minister, Devāpi became unfit to be king. Therefore Śāntanu resumed charge of the kingdom, and rain fell properly during his regime. By mystic power, Devāpi still lives in the village known as Kalāpa-grāma. In this Kali-yuga, when the descendants of Soma known as the *candra-vamśa* (the lunar dynasty) die out, Devāpi, at the beginning of Satya-yuga, will reestablish the dynasty of the moon. The wife of Śāntanu named Gaṅgā gave birth to Bhīṣma, one of the twelve authorities. Two sons named Citrāṅgada and Vicitravīrya were also born from the womb of Satyavatī by the semen of Śāntanu, and Vyāsadeva was born from Satyavatī by the semen of Parāśara. Vyāsadeva instructed the history of the *Bhāgavatam* to his son Śukadeva. Through the womb of the two wives and the maidservant of Vicitravīrya, Vyāsadeva begot Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu and Vidura.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra had one hundred sons, headed by Duryodhana, and one daughter named Duḥśalā. Pāṇḍu had five sons, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira, and each of these five sons had one son from Draupadī. The names of these sons of Draupadī were Prativindhya, Śrutasena, Śrutakīrti, Śātānīka and Śrutakarmā. Besides these five sons, by other wives the Pāṇḍavas had many other sons, such as Devaka, Ghaṭotkaca, Sarvagata, Suhotra, Naramitra, Irāvān, Babhruvāhana and Abhimanyu. From Abhimanyu, Mahārāja Parīkṣit was born, and Mahārāja Parīkṣit had four sons—Janamejaya, Śrutasena, Bhīmasena and Ugrasena.

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Next Śukadeva Gosvāmī described the future sons of the Pāṇḍu family. From Janamejaya, he said, would come a son named Śatānīka, and following in the dynasty would be Sahasrānīka, Aśvamedhaja, Aśīmākṛṣṇa, Nemicakra, Citraratha, Śuciratha, Vṛṣṭimān, Suṣeṇa, Sunītha, Nṛcakṣu, Sukhīnala, Pariplava, Sunaya, Medhāvī, Nṛpaśjaya, Dūrva, Timi, Bṛhadratha, Sudāsa, Śatānīka, Durdamana, Mahīnara, Daṇḍapāṇi, Nimi and Kṣemaka.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī then predicted the kings of the *māgadha-vamśa*, or Māgadha dynasty. Sahadeva, the son of Jarāsandha, would beget Mārjāri, and from him would come Śrutaśravā. Subsequently taking birth in the dynasty will be Yutāyu, Niramitra, Sunakṣatra, Bṛhatsena, Karmajit, Sutaśjaya, Vipra, Śuci, Kṣema, Suvrata, Dharmasūtra, Sama, Dyumatsena, Sumati, Subala, Sunītha, Satyajit, Viśvajit and Ripuśjaya.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, the son of Divodāsa was Mitrāyu, and from Mitrāyu came four sons, named Cyavana, Sudāsa, Sahadeva and Somaka. Somaka was the father of Jantu.

2Somaka had one hundred sons, of whom the youngest was Pṛṣata. From Pṛṣata was born King Drupada, who was opulent in all supremacy.

3From Mahārāja Drupada, Draupadī was born. Mahārāja Drupada also had many sons, headed by Dhṛṣṭadyumna. From Dhṛṣṭadyumna came a son named Dhṛṣṭaketu. All these personalities are known as descendants of Bharmyāśva or as the dynasty of Pāścāla.

4-5Another son of Ajamīḍha was known as Ṛkṣa. From Ṛkṣa came a son named Saṁvaraṇa, and from Saṁvaraṇa through the womb of his wife, Tapatī, the daughter of the sun-god, came Kuru, the King of Kurukṣetra. Kuru had four sonsParīkṣi, Sudhanu, Jahnu and Niśadha. From Sudhanu, Suhotra was born, and from Suhotra, Cyavana. From Cyavana, Kṛtī was born.

6The son of Kṛtī was Uparicara Vasu, and among his sons, headed by Bṛhadratha, were Kuśāmba, Matsya, Pratyagra and Cedipa. All the sons of Uparicara Vasu became rulers of the Cedi state.

7From Bṛhadratha, Kuśāgra was born; from Kuśāgra, Ṛṣabha; and from Ṛṣabha, Satyahita. The son of Satyahita was Puṣpavān, and the son of Puṣpavān was Jahu.

8Through the womb of another wife, Bṛhadratha begot two halves of a son. When the mother saw those two halves she rejected them, but later a she-demon named Jarā playfully joined them and said, “Come to life, come to life!” Thus the son named Jarāsandha was born.

9From Jarāsandha came a son named Sahadeva; from Sahadeva, Somāpi; and from Somāpi, Śrutaśravā. The son of Kuru called Parīkṣi had no sons, but the son of Kuru called Jahnu had a son named Suratha.

10From Suratha came a son named Vidūratha, from whom Sārvabhauma was born. From Sārvabhauma came Jayasena; from Jayasena, Rādhika; and from Rādhika, Ayutāyu.

11From Ayutāyu came a son named Akrodhana, and his son was Devātithi. The son of Devātithi was Ṛkṣa, the son of Ṛkṣa was Dilīpa, and the son of Dilīpa was Pratīpa.

12-13The sons of Pratīpa were Devāpi, Śāntanu and Bāhlīka. Devāpi left the kingdom of his father and went to the forest, and therefore Śāntanu became the king. Śāntanu, who in his previous birth was known as Mahābhīṣa, had the ability to transform anyone from old age to youth simply by touching that person with his hands.

14-15 Because the King was able to make everyone happy for sense gratification, primarily by the touch of his hand, his name was Śāntanu. Once, when there was no rainfall in the kingdom for twelve years and the King consulted his learned brahminical advisors, they said, “You are faulty for enjoying the property of your elder brother. For the elevation of your kingdom and home, you should return the kingdom to him.”

16-17 When the brāhmaṇas said this, Mahārāja Śāntanu went to the forest and requested his elder brother Devāpi to take charge of the kingdom, for it is the duty of a king to maintain his subjects. Previously, however, Śāntanu’s minister Aśvavāra had instigated some brāhmaṇas to induce Devāpi to transgress the injunctions of the Vedas and thus make himself unfit for the post of ruler. The brāhmaṇas deviated Devāpi from the path of the Vedic principles, and therefore when asked by Śāntanu he did not agree to accept the post of ruler. On the contrary, he blasphemed the Vedic principles and therefore became fallen. Under the circumstances, Śāntanu again became the king, and Indra, being pleased, showered rains. Devāpi later took to the path of mystic yoga to control his mind and senses and went to the village named Kalāpagrāma, where he is still living.

18-19 After the dynasty of the moon-god comes to an end in this Age of Kali, Devāpi, in the beginning of the next Satya-yuga, will reestablish the Soma dynasty in this world. From Bāhlika [the brother of Śāntanu] came a son named Somadatta, who had three sons, named Bhūri, Bhūriśravā and Śala. From Śāntanu, through the womb of his wife named Gaṅgā, came Bhīṣma, the exalted, self-realized devotee and learned scholar.

20 Bhīṣmadeva was the foremost of all warriors. When he defeated Lord Paraśurāma in a fight, Lord Paraśurāma was very satisfied with him. By the semen of Śāntanu in the womb of Satyavatī, the daughter of a fisherman, Citrāṅgada took birth.

21-24 Citrāṅgada, of whom Vicitravīrya was the younger brother, was killed by a Gandharva who was also named Citrāṅgada. Satyavatī, before her marriage to Śāntanu, gave birth to the master authority of the Vedas, Vyāsadeva, known as Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana, who was begotten by Parāśara Muni. From Vyāsadeva, I [Śukadeva Gosvāmī] was born, and from him I studied this great work of literature, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The incarnation of Godhead Vedavyāsa, rejecting his disciples, headed by Paila, instructed Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to me because I was free from all material desires. After Ambikā and Ambālikā, the two daughters of Kāśīrāja, were taken away by force, Vicitravīrya married them, but because he was too attached to these two wives, he had a heart attack and died of tuberculosis.

25 Bādarāyaṇa, Śrī Vyāsadeva, following the order of his mother, Satyavatī, begot three sons, two by the womb of Ambikā and Ambālikā, the two wives of his brother Vicitravīrya, and the third by Vicitravīrya’s maidservant. These sons were Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu and Vidura.

26 Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s wife, Gāndhārī, gave birth to one hundred sons and one daughter, O King. The oldest of the sons was Duryodhana, and the daughter’s name was Duḥśalā.

27-28 Pāṇḍu was restrained from sexual life because of having been cursed by a sage, and therefore his three sons Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma and Arjuna were begotten through the womb of his wife, Kuntī, by Dharmarāja, by the demigod controlling the wind, and by the demigod controlling the rain. Pāṇḍu’s second wife, Mādrī, gave birth to Nakula and Sahadeva, who were begotten by the two Aśvinī-kumāras. The five brothers, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira, begot five sons through the womb of Draupadī. These five sons were your uncles.

29 From Yudhiṣṭhira came a son named Prativindhya, from Bhīma a son named Śrutasena, from

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Arjuna a son named Śrutakīrti, and from Nakula a son named Śatānīka.

30-31 O King, the son of Sahadeva was Śrutakarmā. Furthermore, Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers begot other sons in other wives. Yudhiṣṭhira begot a son named Devaka through the womb of Pauravī, and Bhīmasena begot a son named Ghaṭotkaca through his wife Hiḍimbā and a son named Sarvagata through his wife Kālī. Similarly, Sahadeva had a son named Suhotra through his wife named Vijayā, who was the daughter of the king of the mountains.

32 Nakula begot a son named Naramitra through his wife named Kareṇumatī. Similarly, Arjuna begot a son named Irāvān through his wife known as Ulupī, the daughter of the Nāgas, and a son named Babhruvāhana by the womb of the princess of Maṇipura. Babhruvāhana became the adopted son of the king of Maṇipura.

33 My dear King Parīkṣit, your father, Abhimanyu, was born from the womb of Subhadrā as the son of Arjuna. He was the conqueror of all atirathas [those who could fight with one thousand charioteers]. From him, by the womb of Uttarā, the daughter of Virāḍrāja, you were born.

34 After the Kuru dynasty was annihilated in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, you also were about to be destroyed by the brahmāstra atomic weapon released by the son of Droṇācārya, but by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, you were saved from death.

35 My dear King, your four sons Janamejaya, Śrutasena, Bhīmasena and Ugrasena are very powerful. Janamejaya is the eldest.

36 Because of your death by the Takṣaka snake, your son Janamejaya will be very angry and will perform a sacrifice to kill all the snakes in the world.

37 After conquering throughout the world and after accepting Tura, the son of Kalaṣa, as his priest, Janamejaya will perform aśvamedha-yajñas, for which he will be known as Turaga-medhaṣāt.

38 The son of Janamejaya known as Śatānīka will learn from Yājñavalkya the three Vedas and the art of performing ritualistic ceremonies. He will also learn the military art from Kṛpācārya and the transcendental science from the sage Śaunaka.

39 The son of Śatānīka will be Sahasrānīka, and from him will come the son named Aśvamedhaja. From Aśvamedhaja will come Aśimakṛṣṇa, and his son will be Nemicakra.

40 When the town of Hastināpura [New Delhi] is inundated by the river, Nemicakra will live in the place known as Kauśāmbī. His son will be celebrated as Citraratha, and the son of Citraratha will be Śuciratha.

41 From Śuciratha will come the son named Vṛṣṭimān, and his son, Suśeṇa, will be the emperor of the entire world. The son of Suśeṇa will be Sunītha, his son will be Nṛcakṣu, and from Nṛcakṣu will come a son named Sukhīnala.

42 The son of Sukhīnala will be Pariplava, and his son will be Sunaya. From Sunaya will come a son named Medhāvī; from Medhāvī, Nṛpaśjaya; from Nṛpaśjaya, Dūrva; and from Dūrva, Timi.

43 From Timi will come Bṛhadratha; from Bṛhadratha, Sudāsa; and from Sudāsa, Śatānīka. From Śatānīka will come Durdamana, and from him will come a son named Mahīnara.

44-45 The son of Mahīnara will be Daṇḍapāṇi, and his son will be Nimi, from whom King Kṣemaka will be born. I have now described to you the moon-god's dynasty, which is the

source of brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas and is worshiped by demigods and great saints. In this Kali-yuga, Kṣemaka will be the last monarch. Now I shall describe to you the future of the Māgadha dynasty. Please listen.

46-48 Sahadeva, the son of Jarāsandha, will have a son named Mārjāri. From Mārjāri will come Śrutaśravā; from Śrutaśravā, Yutāyu; and from Yutāyu, Niramitra. The son of Niramitra will be Sunakṣatra, from Sunakṣatra will come Bṛhatsena, and from Bṛhatsena, Karmajit. The son of Karmajit will be Sutaśjaya, the son of Sutaśjaya will be Vipra, and his son will be Śuci. The son of Śuci will be Kṣema, the son of Kṣema will be Suvrata, and the son of Suvrata will be Dharmasūtra. From Dharmasūtra will come Sama; from Sama, Dyumatsena; from Dyumatsena, Sumati; and from Sumati, Subala.

49 From Subala will come Sunītha; from Sunītha, Satyajit; from Satyajit, Viśvajit; and from Viśvajit, Ripuśjaya. All of these personalities will belong to the dynasty of Bṛhadratha, which will rule the world for one thousand years.

SB 9.23: The Dynasties of the Sons of Yayāti

In this Twenty-third Chapter the dynasties of Anu, Druhyu, Turvasu and Yadu, as well as the story of Jyāmagha, are described.

The sons of Yayāti's fourth son, Anu, were Sabhānara, Cakṣu and Pareṣṇu. Of these three, the sons and grandsons of Sabhānara were, in succession, Kālanara, Sṛṣjaya, Janamejaya, Mahāśāla and Mahāmanā. The sons of Mahāmanā were Uśīnara and Titikṣu. Uśīnara had four sons, namely Śibi, Vara, Kṛmi and Dakṣa. Śibi also had four sons Vṛṣādarbha, Sudhīra, Madra and Kekaya. The son of Titikṣu was Ruśadratha, who begot a son named Homa. From Homa came Sutapā and from Sutapā, Bali. In this way the dynasty continued. Begotten by Dīrghatamā in the womb of the wife of Bali were Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Suhma, Puṅdra and Oḍra, all of whom became kings.

From Aṅga came Khalapāna, whose dynasty included Diviratha, Dharmaratha and Citraratha, also called Romapāda, one after another. Mahārāja Daśaratha gave in charity one of his daughters, by the name Śāntā, to his friend Romapāda because Romapāda had no sons. Romapāda accepted Śāntā as his daughter, and the great sage Ṛṣyaśṛṅga married her. By the mercy of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, Romapāda had a son named Caturaṅga. The son of Caturaṅga was Pṛthulākṣa, who had three sons Bṛhadratha, Bṛhatkarmā and Bṛhadbhānu. From Bṛhadratha came a son named Bṛhadmanā, whose sons and grandsons in succession were Jayadratha, Vijaya, Dhṛti, Dhṛtavrata, Satkarmā and Adhiratha. Adhiratha accepted the son rejected by Kuntī, namely Karṇa, and Karṇa's son was Vṛṣasena.

The son of Yayāti's third son, Druhyu, was Babhru, whose son and grandsons were Setu, Ārabdha, Gāndhāra, Dharmā, Dhṛta, Durmada and Pracetā.

The son of Yayāti's second son, Turvasu, was Vahni, whose seminal dynasty included Bharga, Bhānumān, Tribhānu, Karandhama and Maruta. The childless Maruta accepted Duṣmanta, who belonged to the Pūru dynasty, as his adopted son. Mahārāja Duṣmanta was anxious to have his kingdom returned, and so he went back to the Pūru-vaṁśa.

Of the four sons of Yadu, Sahasrajit was the eldest. The son of Sahasrajit was named Śatajit. He had three sons, of whom one was Haihaya. The sons and grandsons in the dynasty of Haihaya were Dharmā, Netra, Kuntī, Sohaṣji, Mahiṣmān, Bhadrāsena, Dhanaka, Kṛtavīrya, Arjuna, Jayadhva, Tālajaṅgha and Vītihoṭra.

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The son of Vītihotra was Madhu, whose eldest son was Vṛṣṇi. Because of Yadu, Madhu and Vṛṣṇi, their dynasties are known as Yādava, Mādhava and Vṛṣṇi. Another son of Yadu was Kroṣṭā, and from him came Vṛjīnavān, Svāhita, Viṣadgu, Citraratha, Śaśabindu, Pṛthuśravā, Dharmā, Uśānā and Rucaka. Rucaka had five sons, one of whom was known as Jyāmagha. Jyāmagha was sonless, but by the mercy of the demigods his childless wife gave birth to a son named Vidarbha.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Anu, the fourth son of Yayāti, had three sons, named Sabhānara, Cakṣu and Pareṣṇu. O King, from Sabhānara came a son named Kālanara, and from Kālanara came a son named Sṛṣjaya.

2From Sṛṣjaya came a son named Janamejaya. From Janamejaya came Mahāśāla; from Mahāśāla, Mahāmanā; and from Mahāmanā two sons, named Uśīnara and Titikṣu.

3-4The four sons of Uśīnara were Śibi, Vara, Kṛmi and Dakṣa, and from Śibi again came four sons, named Vṛṣādarbha, Sudhīra, Madra and ātma-tattva-vit Kekaya. The son of Titikṣu was Ruṣadratha. From Ruṣadratha came Homa; from Homa, Sutapā; and from Sutapā, Bali.

5By the semen of Dīrghatamā in the wife of Bali, the emperor of the world, six sons took birth, namely Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Suhma, Puṇḍra and Oḍra.

6These six sons, headed by Aṅga, later became kings of six states in the eastern side of India. These states were known according to the names of their respective kings. From Aṅga came a son named Khalapāna, and from Khalapāna came Diviratha.

7-10From Diviratha came a son named Dharmaratha, and his son was Citraratha, who was celebrated as Romapāda. Romapāda, however, was without issue, and therefore his friend Mahārāja Daśaratha gave him his own daughter, named Śāntā. Romapāda accepted her as his daughter, and thereafter she married Rṣyaśṛṅga. When the demigods from the heavenly planets failed to shower rain, Rṣyaśṛṅga was appointed the priest for performing a sacrifice, after being brought from the forest by the allurements of prostitutes, who danced, staged theatrical performances accompanied by music, and embraced and worshiped him. After Rṣyaśṛṅga came, the rain fell. Thereafter, Rṣyaśṛṅga performed a son-giving sacrifice on behalf of Mahārāja Daśaratha, who had no issue, and then Mahārāja Daśaratha had sons. From Romapāda, by the mercy of Rṣyaśṛṅga, Caturaṅga was born, and from Caturaṅga came Pṛthulākṣa.

11The sons of Pṛthulākṣa were Bṛhadratha, Bṛhatkarmā and Bṛhadbhānu. From the eldest, Bṛhadratha, came a son named Bṛhanmanā, and from Bṛhanmanā came a son named Jayadratha.

12The son of Jayadratha, by the womb of his wife Sambhūti, was Vijaya, and from Vijaya, Dhṛti was born. From Dhṛti came Dhṛtavrata; from Dhṛtavrata, Satkarmā; and from Satkarmā, Adhiratha.

13While playing on the bank of the Ganges, Adhiratha found a baby wrapped up in a basket. The baby had been left by Kuntī because he was born before she was married. Because Adhiratha had no sons, he raised this baby as his own. [This son was later known as Karṇa.]

14O King, the only son of Karṇa was Vṛṣasena. Druhyu, the third son of Yayāti, had a son named Babhru, and the son of Babhru was known as Setu.

15The son of Setu was Ārabdha, Ārabdha's son was Gāndhāra, and Gāndhāra's son was

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Dharma. Dharma's son was Dhṛta, Dhṛta's son was Durmada, and Durmada's son was Pracetā, who had one hundred sons.

16The Pracetās [the sons of Pracetā] occupied the northern side of India, which was devoid of Vedic civilization, and became kings there. Yayāti's second son was Turvasu. The son of Turvasu was Vahni; the son of Vahni, Bharga; the son of Bharga, Bhānumān.

17The son of Bhānumān was Tribhānu, and his son was the magnanimous Karandhama. Karandhama's son was Maruta, who had no sons and who therefore adopted a son of the Pūru dynasty [Mahārāja Duṣmanta] as his own.

18-19Mahārāja Duṣmanta, desiring to occupy the throne, returned to his original dynasty [the Pūru dynasty], even though he had accepted Maruta as his father. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, let me now describe the dynasty of Yadu, the eldest son of Mahārāja Yayāti. This description is supremely pious, and it vanquishes the reactions of sinful activities in human society. Simply by hearing this description, one is freed from all sinful reactions.

20-21The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul in the hearts of all living entities, descended in His original form as a human being in the dynasty or family of Yadu. Yadu had four sons, named Sahasrajit, Kroṣṭā, Nala and Ripu. Of these four, the eldest, Sahasrajit, had a son named Śatajit, who had three sons, named Mahāhaya, Reṇuhaya and Haihaya.

22The son of Haihaya was Dharma, and the son of Dharma was Netra, the father of Kunti. From Kunti came a son named Sohaṣṭi, from Sohaṣṭi came Mahiṣmān, and from Mahiṣmān, Bhadrāsena.

23The sons of Bhadrāsena were known as Durmada and Dhanaka. Dhanaka was the father of Kṛtavīrya and also of Kṛtāgni, Kṛtavarmā and Kṛtauja.

24The son of Kṛtavīrya was Arjuna. He [Kārtavīryārjuna] became the emperor of the entire world, consisting of seven islands, and received mystic power from Dattātreya, the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus he obtained the mystic perfections known as aṣṭa-siddhi.

25No other king in this world could equal Kārtavīryārjuna in sacrifices, charity, austerity, mystic power, education, strength or mercy.

26For eighty-five thousand years, Kārtavīryārjuna continuously enjoyed material opulences with full bodily strength and unimpaired memory. In other words, he enjoyed inexhaustible material opulences with his six senses.

27Of the one thousand sons of Kārtavīryārjuna, only five remained alive after the fight with Paraśurāma. Their names were Jayadhva, Śūrasena, Vṛṣabha, Madhu and Ūrjita.

28Jayadhva had a son named Tālajaṅgha, who had one hundred sons. All the kṣatriyas in that dynasty, known as Tālajaṅgha, were annihilated by the great power received by Mahārāja Sagara from Aurva Ṛṣi.

29Of the sons of Tālajaṅgha, Vīthotra was the eldest. The son of Vīthotra named Madhu had a celebrated son named Vṛṣṇi. Madhu had one hundred sons, of whom Vṛṣṇi was the eldest. The dynasties known as Yādava, Mādhava and Vṛṣṇi had their origin from Yadu, Madhu and Vṛṣṇi.

30-31O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, because Yadu, Madhu and Vṛṣṇi each inaugurated a dynasty, their

dynasties are known as Yādava, Mādhava and Vṛṣṇi. The son of Yadu named Kroṣṭā had a son named Vṛjīnavān. The son of Vṛjīnavān was Svāhita; the son of Svāhita, Viṣadgu; the son of Viṣadgu, Citraratha; and the son of Citraratha, Śāśabindu. The greatly fortunate Śāśabindu, who was a great mystic, possessed fourteen opulences and was the owner of fourteen great jewels. Thus he became the emperor of the world.

32The famous Śāśabindu had ten thousand wives, and by each he begot a lakh of sons. Therefore the number of his sons was ten thousand lakhs.

33Among these many sons, six were the foremost, such as Pṛthuśravā and Pṛthukīrti. The son of Pṛthuśravā was known as Dharma, and his son was known as Uśanā. Uśanā was the performer of one hundred horse sacrifices.

34The son of Uśanā was Rucaka, who had five sonsPurujit, Rukma, Rukmeṣu, Pṛthu and Jyāmagha. Please hear of these sons from me.

35-36Jyāmagha had no sons, but because he was fearful of his wife, Śaibyā, he could not accept another wife. Jyāmagha once took from the house of some royal enemy a girl who was a prostitute, but upon seeing her Śaibyā was very angry and said to her husband, “My husband, you cheater, who is this girl sitting upon my seat on the chariot?” Jyāmagha then replied, “This girl will be your daughter-in-law.” Upon hearing these joking words, Śaibyā smilingly replied.

37Śaibyā said, “I am sterile and have no co-wife. How can this girl be my daughter-in-law? Please tell me.” Jyāmagha replied, “My dear Queen, I shall see that you indeed have a son and that this girl will be your daughter-in-law.”

38Long, long ago, Jyāmagha had satisfied the demigods and Pitās by worshiping them. Now, by their mercy, Jyāmagha’s words came true. Although Śaibyā was barren, by the grace of the demigods she became pregnant and in due course of time gave birth to a child named Vidarbha. Before the child’s birth, the girl had been accepted as a daughter-in-law, and therefore Vidarbha actually married her when he grew up.

SB 9.24: Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Vidarbha had three sons, named Kuśa, Kratha and Romapāda. Of these three, Romapāda expanded his dynasty by the sons and grandsons named Babhru, Kṛti, Uśika, Cedi and Caidya, all of whom later became kings. From the son of Vidarbha named Kratha came a son named Kunti, from whose dynasty came the descendants named Vṛṣṇi, Nirvṛti, Daśārha, Vyoma, Jīmūta, Vikṛti, Bhīmaratha, Navaratha, Daśaratha, Śakuni, Karambhi, Devarāta, Devakṣatra, Madhu, Kuruvaśa, Anu, Puruhotra, Ayu and Sātvata. Sātvata had seven sons. One of them was Devāvṛdha, whose son was Babhru. Another son of Sātvata was Mahābhoja, by whom the Bhoja dynasty was inaugurated. Another was Vṛṣṇi, who had a son named Yudhājit. From Yudhājit came Anamitra and Śini, and from Anamitra came Nighna and another Śini. The descendants in succession from Śini were Satyaka, Yuyudhāna, Jaya, Kuṇi and Yugandhara. Another son of Anamitra was Vṛṣṇi. From Vṛṣṇi came Śvaphalka, by whom Akrūra and twelve other sons were generated. From Akrūra came two sons, named Devavān and Upadeva. The son of Andhaka named Kukura was the origin of the descendants known as Vahni, Vilomā, Kapotarmā, Anu, Andhaka, Dundubhi, Avidyota, Punarvasu and Āhuka. Āhuka had two sons, named Devaka and Ugrasena. The four sons of Devaka were known as Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva and Devavardhana, and his seven daughters were Dhṛtadevā, Śāntidevā, Upadevā, Śrīdevā, Devarakṣitā, Sahadevā and Devakī. Vasudeva married all seven daughters of Devaka. Ugrasena had nine sons named Kaṁsa, Sunāmā, Nyagrodha, Kaṅka, Śaṅku, Suhū, Rāṣṭrapāla,

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Dhṛṣṭi and Tuṣṭimān, and he had five daughters named Kaṁsā, Kaṁsavatī, Kaṅkā, Śūrabhū and Rāṣṭrapālikā. The younger brothers of Vasudeva married all the daughters of Ugrasena.

Vidūratha, the son of Citraratha, had a son named Śūra, who had ten other sons, of whom Vasudeva was the chief. Śūra gave one of his five daughters, Pṛthā, to his friend Kunti, and therefore she was also named Kuntī. In her maiden state she gave birth to a child named Karṇa, and later she married Mahārāja Pāṇḍu.

Vṛddhaśarmā married the daughter of Śūra named Śrutadevā, from whose womb Dantavakra was born. Dhṛṣṭaketu married Śūra's daughter named Śrutakīrti, who had five sons. Jayasena married Śūra's daughter named Rājādhivē. The king of Cedi-deśa, Damaghoṣa, married the daughter of Śūra named Śrutaśravā, from whom Śiśupāla was born.

Devabhāga, through the womb of Kaṁsā, begot Citraketu and Bṛhadbala; and Devaśravā, through the womb of Kaṁsavatī, begot Suvīra and Iṣumān. From Kaṅkā, through the womb of Kaṅkā, came Baka, Satyajit and Purujit, and from Sṛṣṭaya, through the womb of Rāṣṭrapālikā, came Vṛṣa and Durmarṣaṇa. Śyāmaka, through the womb of Śūrabhūmi, begot Harikeśa and Hiranyākṣa. Vatsaka, through the womb of Mīśrakeśī, begot Vṛka, who begot the sons named Takṣa, Puṣkara and Śāla. From Samīka came Sumitra and Arjunapāla, and from Ānaka came Rtadhāmā and Jaya.

Vasudeva had many wives, of whom Devakī and Rohiṇī were the most important. From the womb of Rohiṇī, Baladeva was born, along with Gada, Sāraṇa, Durmada, Vipula, Dhruva, Kṛta and others. Vasudeva had many other sons by his other wives, and the eighth son to appear from the womb of Devakī was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who delivered the entire world from the burden of demons. This chapter ends by glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead Vāsudeva.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: By the womb of the girl brought by his father, Vidarbha begot three sons, named Kuśa, Kratha and Romapāda. Romapāda was the favorite in the dynasty of Vidarbha.

2The son of Romapāda was Babhru, from whom there came a son named Kṛti. The son of Kṛti was Uśika, and the son of Uśika was Cedi. From Cedi was born the king known as Caidya and others.

3-4The son of Kratha was Kunti; the son of Kunti, Vṛṣṇi; the son of Vṛṣṇi, Nirvṛti; and the son of Nirvṛti, Daśārha. From Daśārha came Vyoma; from Vyoma came Jīmūta; from Jīmūta, Vikṛti; from Vikṛti, Bhīmaratha; from Bhīmaratha, Navaratha; and from Navaratha, Daśaratha.

5From Daśaratha came a son named Śakuni and from Śakuni a son named Karambhi. The son of Karambhi was Devarāta, and his son was Devakṣatra. The son of Devakṣatra was Madhu, and his son was Kuruvaśa, from whom there came a son named Anu.

6-8The son of Anu was Puruhotra, the son of Puruhotra was Ayu, and the son of Ayu was Sātvata. O great Āryan King, Sātvata had seven sons, named Bhajamāna, Bhaji, Divya, Vṛṣṇi, Devāvṛdha, Andhaka and Mahābhoja. From Bhajamāna by one wife came three sons Nimloci, Kiṅkaṇa and Dhṛṣṭi. And from his other wife came three other sons Śatājit, Sahasrājit and Ayutājit.

9The son of Devāvṛdha was Babhru. Concerning Devāvṛdha and Babhru there are two famous songs of prayer, which were sung by our predecessors and which we have heard from a distance. Even now I hear the same prayers about their qualities [because that which was heard

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before is still sung continuously].

10-11“It has been decided that among human beings Babhru is the best and that Devāvṛdha is equal to the demigods. Because of the association of Babhru and Devāvṛdha, all of their descendants, numbering 14,065, achieved liberation.” In the dynasty of King Mahābhoja, who was exceedingly religious, there appeared the Bhoja kings.

12O King, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who can suppress your enemies, the sons of Vṛṣṇi were Sumitra and Yudhājit. From Yudhājit came Śini and Anamitra, and from Anamitra came a son named Nighna.

13The two sons of Nighna were Satrājita and Prasena. Another son of Anamitra was another Śini, and his son was Satyaka.

14The son of Satyaka was Yuyudhāna, whose son was Jaya. From Jaya came a son named Kuṇi and from Kuṇi a son named Yugandhara. Another son of Anamitra was Vṛṣṇi.

15From Vṛṣṇi came the sons named Śvaphalka and Citraratha. From Śvaphalka by his wife Gāndinī came Akrūra. Akrūra was the eldest, but there were twelve other sons, all of whom were most celebrated.

16-18The names of these twelve were Āsaṅga, Sārameya, Mṛdura, Mṛduvit, Giri, Dharmavṛdha, Sukarmā, Kṣetropekṣa, Arimardana, Śatrughna, Gandhamāda and Pratibāhu. These brothers also had a sister named Sucārā. From Akrūra came two sons, named Devavān and Upadeva. Citraratha had many sons, headed by Pṛthu and Vidūratha, all of whom were known as belonging to the dynasty of Vṛṣṇi.

19Kukura, Bhajamāna, Śuci and Kambalabarhiṣa were the four sons of Andhaka. The son of Kukura was Vahni, and his son was Vilomā.

20The son of Vilomā was Kapotāromā, and his son was Anu, whose friend was Tumburu. From Anu came Andhaka; from Andhaka, Dundubhi; and from Dundubhi, Avidyota. From Avidyota came a son named Punarvasu.

21-23Punarvasu had a son and a daughter, named Āhuka and Āhukī respectively, and Āhuka had two sons, named Devaka and Ugrasena. Devaka had four sons, named Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva and Devavardhana, and he also had seven daughters, named Śāntidevā, Upadevā, Śrīdevā, Devarakṣitā, Sahadevā, Devakī and Dhṛtadevā. Dhṛtadevā was the eldest. Vasudeva, the father of Kṛṣṇa, married all these sisters.

24Kāmsa, Sunāmā, Nyagrodha, Kaṅka, Śaṅku, Suhū, Rāṣṭrapāla, Dhṛṣṭi and Tuṣṭimān were the sons of Ugrasena.

25Kāmsā, Kāmsavatī, Kaṅkā, Śūrabhū and Rāṣṭrapālikā were the daughters of Ugrasena. They became the wives of Vasudeva’s younger brothers.

26The son of Citraratha was Vidūratha, the son of Vidūratha was Śūra, and his son was Bhajamāna. The son of Bhajamāna was Śini, the son of Śini was Bhoja, and the son of Bhoja was Hṛdika.

27The three sons of Hṛdika were Devamīdha, Śatadhanu and Kṛtavarmā. The son of Devamīdha was Śūra, whose wife was named Māriṣā.

28-31Through Māriṣā, King Śūra begot Vasudeva, Devabhāga, Devaśravā, Ānaka, Sṛṣṭaya,

Śyāmaka, Kañka, Śamīka, Vatsaka and Vṛka. These ten sons were spotlessly pious personalities. When Vasudeva was born, the demigods from the heavenly kingdom sounded kettledrums. Therefore Vasudeva, who provided the proper place for the appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, was also known as Ānakadundubhi. The five daughters of King Śūra, named Pṛthā, Śrutadevā, Śrutakīrti, Śrutaśravā and Rājādhidevī, were Vasudeva's sisters. Śūra gave Pṛthā to his friend Kuntī, who had no issue, and therefore another name of Pṛthā was Kuntī.

32Once when Durvāsā was a guest at the house of Pṛthā's father, Kuntī, Pṛthā satisfied Durvāsā by rendering service. Therefore she received a mystic power by which she could call any demigod. To examine the potency of this mystic power, the pious Kuntī immediately called for the sun-god.

33As soon as Kuntī called for the demigod of the sun, he immediately appeared before her, and she was very much surprised. She told the sun-god, "I was simply examining the effectiveness of this mystic power. I am sorry I have called you unnecessarily. Please return and excuse me."

34The sun-god said: O beautiful Pṛthā, your meeting with the demigods cannot be fruitless. Therefore, let me place my seed in your womb so that you may bear a son. I shall arrange to keep your virginity intact, since you are still an unmarried girl.

35After saying this, the sun-god discharged his semen into the womb of Pṛthā and then returned to the celestial kingdom. Immediately thereafter, from Kuntī a child was born, who was like a second sun-god.

36Because Kuntī feared people's criticisms, with great difficulty she had to give up her affection for her child. Unwillingly, she packed the child in a basket and let it float down the waters of the river. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, your great-grandfather the pious and chivalrous King Pāṇḍu later married Kuntī.

37Vṛddhaśarmā, the King of Karūṣa, married Kuntī's sister Śrutadevā, and from her womb Dantavakra was born. Having been cursed by the sages headed by Sanaka, Dantavakra had formerly been born as the son of Diti named Hiraṇyākṣa.

38King Dhṛṣṭaketu, the King of Kekaya, married Śrutakīrti, another sister of Kuntī's. Śrutakīrti had five sons, headed by Santardana.

39Through the womb of Rājādhidevī, another sister of Kuntī's, Jayasena begot two sons, named Vinda and Anuvinda. Similarly, the king of the Cedi state married Śrutaśravā. This king's name was Damaghoṣa.

40The son of Śrutaśravā was Śiśupāla, whose birth has already been described [in the Seventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam]. Vasudeva's brother named Devabhāga had two sons born of his wife, Kāṁsā. These two sons were Citraketu and Bṛhadbala.

41Vasudeva's brother named Devaśravā married Kāṁsavatī, by whom he begot two sons, named Suvīra and Iṣumān. Kañka, by his wife Kañkā, begot three sons, named Baka, Satyajit and Purujit.

42King Sṛṣjaya, by his wife, Rāṣṭrapālikā, begot sons headed by Vṛṣa and Durmarṣaṇa. King Śyāmaka, by his wife, Śūrabhūmi, begot two sons, named Harikeśa and Hiraṇyākṣa.

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43Thereafter, King Vatsaka, by the womb of his wife, Miśrakeśī, who was an Apsarā, begot sons headed by Vṛka. Vṛka, by his wife, Durvākṣī, begot Takṣa, Puṣkara, Śāla and so on.

44From Samīka, by the womb of his wife, Sudāmanī, came Sumitra, Arjunapāla and other sons. King Ānaka, by his wife, Karnikā, begot two sons, namely Ṛtadhāmā and Jaya.

45Devakī, Pauravī, Rohiṇī, Bhadrā, Madirā, Rocanā, Ilā and others were all wives of Ānakadundubhi [Vasudeva]. Among them all, Devakī was the chief.

46Vasudeva, by the womb of his wife Rohiṇī, begot sons such as Bala, Gada, Sāraṇa, Durmada, Vipula, Dhruva, Kṛta and others.

47-48From the womb of Pauravī came twelve sons, including Bhūta, Subhadra, Bhadrabāhu, Durmada and Bhadra. Nanda, Upananda, Kṛtaka, Śūra and others were born from the womb of Madirā. Bhadrā [Kauśalyā] gave birth to only one son, named Keśī.

49Vasudeva, by another of his wives, whose name was Rocanā, begot Hasta, Hemāṅgada and other sons. And by his wife named Ilā he begot sons headed by Uruvalka, all of whom were chief personalities in the dynasty of Yadu.

50From the womb of Dhṛtadevā, one of the wives of Ānakadundubhi [Vasudeva], came a son named Vipṛṣṭha. The sons of Śāntidevā, another wife of Vasudeva, were Praśama, Prasita and others.

51Vasudeva also had a wife named Upadevā, from whom came ten sons, headed by Rājanya, Kalpa and Varṣa. From Śrīdevā, another wife, came six sons, such as Vasu, Haṁsa and Suvamśa.

52By the semen of Vasudeva in the womb of Devarakṣitā, nine sons were born, headed by Gadā. Vasudeva, who was religion personified, also had a wife named Sahadevā, by whose womb he begot eight sons, headed by Śruta and Pravara.

53-55The eight sons born of Sahadevā such as Pravara and Śruta, were exact incarnations of the eight Vasus in the heavenly planets. Vasudeva also begot eight highly qualified sons through the womb of Devakī. These included Kīrtimān, Suṣeṇa, Bhadrāsena, Rju, Sammardana, Bhadra and Saṅkarṣaṇa, the controller and serpent incarnation. The eighth son was the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself Kṛṣṇa. The highly fortunate Subhadrā, the one daughter, was your grandmother.

56Whenever the principles of religion deteriorate and the principles of irreligion increase, the supreme controller, the Personality of Godhead Śrī Hari, appears by His own will.

57O King, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, but for the Lord's personal desire, there is no cause for His appearance, disappearance or activities. As the Supersoul, He knows everything. Consequently there is no cause that affects Him, not even the results of fruitive activities.

58The Supreme Personality of Godhead acts through His material energy in the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this cosmic manifestation just to deliver the living entity by His compassion and stop the living entity's birth, death and duration of materialistic life. Thus He enables the living being to return home, back to Godhead.

59Although the demons who take possession of the government are dressed like men of government, they do not know the duty of the government. Consequently, by the arrangement of God, such demons, who possess great military strength, fight with one another, and thus the

great burden of demons on the surface of the earth is reduced. The demons increase their military power by the will of the Supreme, so that their numbers will be diminished and the devotees will have a chance to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

60The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, with the cooperation of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Balarāma, performed activities beyond the mental comprehension of even such personalities as Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. [For instance, Kṛṣṇa arranged the Battle of Kurukṣetra to kill many demons for the relief of the entire world.]

61To show causeless mercy to the devotees who would take birth in the future in this Age of Kali, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, acted in such a way that simply by remembering Him one will be freed from all the lamentation and unhappiness of material existence. [In other words, He acted so that all future devotees, by accepting the instructions of Kṛṣṇa consciousness stated in Bhagavad-gītā, could be relieved from the pangs of material existence.]

62Simply by receiving the glories of the Lord through purified transcendental ears, the devotees of the Lord are immediately freed from strong material desires and engagement in fruitive activities.

63-64Assisted by the descendants of Bhoja, Vṛṣṇi, Andhaka, Madhu, Śūrasena, Daśārha, Kuru, Sṛṣṭaya and Pāṇḍu, Lord Kṛṣṇa performed various activities. By His pleasing smiles, His affectionate behavior, His instructions and His uncommon pastimes like raising Govardhana Hill, the Lord, appearing in His transcendental body, pleased all of human society.

65Kṛṣṇa's face is decorated with ornaments, such as earrings resembling sharks. His ears are beautiful, His cheeks brilliant, and His smiling attractive to everyone. Whoever sees Lord Kṛṣṇa sees a festival. His face and body are fully satisfying for everyone to see, but the devotees are angry at the creator for the disturbance caused by the momentary blinking of their eyes.

66The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as līlā-puruṣottama, appeared as the son of Vasudeva but immediately left His father's home and went to Vṛndāvana to expand His loving relationship with His confidential devotees. In Vṛndāvana the Lord killed many demons, and afterwards He returned to Dvārakā, where according to Vedic principles He married many wives who were the best of women, begot through them hundreds of sons, and performed sacrifices for His own worship to establish the principles of householder life.

67Thereafter, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa created a misunderstanding between family members just to diminish the burden of the world. Simply by His glance, He annihilated all the demoniac kings on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra and declared victory for Arjuna. Finally, He instructed Uddhava about transcendental life and devotion and then returned to His abode in His original form.

Canto 10: The Summum Bonum

SB 10.1: The Advent of Lord Kṛṣṇa: Introduction

The summary of the First Chapter is as follows. This chapter describes how Kāṁsa, frightened by hearing an omen about his being killed by the eighth son of Devakī, killed Devakī's sons one after another.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī finished describing the dynasty of Yadu, as well as the dynasties of the moon-god and sun-god, Mahārāja Parīkṣit requested him to describe Lord Kṛṣṇa, who appeared with Baladeva in the Yadu dynasty, and how Kṛṣṇa performed His activities within this world. Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, the King said, and therefore to understand His activities is

the occupation of liberated persons. Hearing of *kṛṣṇa-tīlā* is the boat by which to achieve the ultimate goal of life. Except for an animal killer or one who is following a policy of suicide, every intelligent person must strive to understand Kṛṣṇa and His activities.

Kṛṣṇa was the only worshipable Deity for the Pāṇḍavas. When Mahārāja Parīkṣit was in the womb of his mother, Uttarā, Kṛṣṇa saved him from the attack of the *brahma-śāstra*. Now Mahārāja Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī how His Lordship Baladeva, the son of Rohiṇī, could have appeared in the womb of Devakī. Why did Kṛṣṇa transfer Himself from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana, King Parīkṣit asked, and how did He live there with His family members? What did Kṛṣṇa do in Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, and why did He kill His maternal uncle Kāṁsa? For how many years did Kṛṣṇa reside in Dvārakā, and how many queens did He have? Mahārāja Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī all these questions. He also requested Śukadeva Gosvāmī to describe other activities of Kṛṣṇa about which he could not inquire.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī began to speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Mahārāja Parīkṣit forgot the fatigue brought about by his fasting. Enthusiastic to describe Kṛṣṇa, Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “Like the waters of the Ganges, descriptions of the activities of Kṛṣṇa can purify the entire universe. The speaker, the inquirer and the audience all become purified.”

Once when the entire world was overburdened by the increasing military power of demons in the form of kings, mother earth assumed the shape of a cow and approached Lord Brahmā for relief. Sympathetic to mother earth’s lamentation, Brahmā, accompanied by Lord Śiva and other demigods, took the cow-shaped mother earth to the shore of the Milk Ocean, where he offered prayers to please Lord Viṣṇu, who lay there on an island in transcendental ecstasy. Brahmā thereafter understood the advice of Mahā-Viṣṇu, who informed him that He would appear on the surface of the earth to mitigate the burden created by the demons. The demigods, along with their wives, should appear there as associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the family of Yadu to increase the sons and grandsons in that dynasty. By the will of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Anantadeva would appear first, as Balarāma, and Kṛṣṇa’s potency, Yoga-māyā, would also appear. Brahmā informed mother earth about all this, and then he returned to his own abode.

After marrying Devakī, Vasudeva was returning home with her on a chariot driven by Kāṁsa, her brother, when an ominous voice addressed Kāṁsa, warning him that Devakī’s eighth son would kill him. Upon hearing this omen, Kāṁsa was immediately ready to kill Devakī, but Vasudeva diplomatically began to instruct him. Vasudeva stressed that it would not be good for Kāṁsa to kill his younger sister, especially at the time of her marriage. Anyone who possesses a material body must die, Vasudeva advised him. Every living entity lives in a body for some time and then transmigrates to another body, but one is unfortunately misled into accepting the body as the soul. If a person under this mistaken conception wants to kill another body, he is condemned as hellish.

Because Kāṁsa was not satisfied by Vasudeva’s instructions, Vasudeva devised a plan. He offered to bring Kāṁsa all of Devakī’s children so that Kāṁsa could kill them. Why then should Kāṁsa kill Devakī now? Kāṁsa was satisfied by this proposal. In due course of time, when Devakī gave birth to a child, Vasudeva brought the newborn baby to Kāṁsa, who, upon seeing Vasudeva’s magnanimity, was struck with wonder. When Vasudeva gave Kāṁsa the child, Kāṁsa, showing some intelligence, said that since he was to be killed by the eighth child, why should he kill the first? Although Vasudeva did not trust him, Kāṁsa requested Vasudeva to take the child back. Later, however, after Nārada approached Kāṁsa and disclosed to him that the demigods were appearing in the Yadu and Vṛṣṇi dynasties and conspiring to kill him, Kāṁsa decided to kill all the children born in these families, and he also decided that any child

born from the womb of Devakī must be killed. Thus he arrested and imprisoned both Devakī and Vasudeva and killed six of their sons, one after another. Nārada had also informed Kaṁsa that in his previous birth Kaṁsa was Kālanemi, a demon killed by Viṣṇu. Consequently, Kaṁsa became a great enemy to all the descendants of the *yadu-vamśa*, the Yadu dynasty. He even arrested and imprisoned his own father, Ugrasena, for Kaṁsa wanted to enjoy the kingdom alone.

Kṛṣṇa has threefold pastimesthe Vraja-līlā, Māthura-līlā and Dvārakā-līlā. As already mentioned, in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there are ninety chapters, which describe all these *līlās*. The first four chapters describe Brahmā's prayers for the relief of the earth's burden, and they also describe the appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Chapters Five through Thirty-nine recount Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vṛndāvana. The Fortieth Chapter describes how Kṛṣṇa enjoyed in the water of the Yamunā and how Akrūra offered prayers. Chapters Forty-one through Fifty-one, eleven chapters, tell of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Māthura, and Chapters Fifty-two through Ninety, thirty-nine chapters, relate Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Dvārakā.

Chapters Twenty-nine through Thirty-three describe Kṛṣṇa's dancing with the *gopīs*, known as the *rāsa-līlā*. Therefore these five chapters are known as *rāsa-paścādhya*. The Forty-seventh Chapter of the Tenth Canto is a description known as the *bhramara-gītā*.

1King Parīkṣit said: My dear lord, you have elaborately described the dynasties of both the moon-god and the sun-god, with the exalted and wonderful character of their kings.

2O best of munis, you have also described the descendants of Yadu, who were very pious and strictly adherent to religious principles. Now, if you will, kindly describe the wonderful, glorious activities of Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in that Yadu dynasty with Baladeva, His plenary expansion.

3The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the cause of the cosmic manifestation, appeared in the dynasty of Yadu. Please tell me elaborately about His glorious activities and character, from the beginning to the end of His life.

4Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the paramparā system, that is, it is conveyed from the spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?

5-7Taking the boat of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, my grandfather Arjuna and others crossed the ocean of the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, in which such commanders as Bhīṣmadeva resembled great fish that could very easily have swallowed them. By the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, my grandfathers crossed this ocean, which was very difficult to cross, as easily as one steps over the hoofprint of a calf. Because my mother surrendered unto Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, the Lord, Sudarśana-cakra in hand, entered her womb and saved my body, the body of the last remaining descendant of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, which was almost destroyed by the fiery weapon of Aśvatthāmā. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, appearing within and outside of all materially embodied living beings by His own potency in the forms of eternal timethat is, as Paramātmā and as virāṭ-rūpagave liberation to everyone, either as cruel death or as life. Kindly enlighten me by describing His transcendental characteristics.

8My dear Śukadeva Gosvāmī, you have already explained that Saṅkarṣaṇa, who belongs to the

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second quadruple, appeared as the son of Rohiṇī named Balarāma. If Balarāma was not transferred from one body to another, how is it possible that He was first in the womb of Devakī and then in the womb of Rohiṇī? Kindly explain this to me.

9Why did Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, leave the house of His father, Vasudeva, and transfer Himself to the house of Nanda in Vṛndāvana? Where did the Lord, the master of the Yadu dynasty, live with His relatives in Vṛndāvana?

10Lord Kṛṣṇa lived both in Vṛndāvana and in Mathurā. What did He do there? Why did He kill Kāmsa, His mother's brother? Such killing is not at all sanctioned in the śāstras.

11Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, has no material body, yet He appears as a human being. For how many years did He live with the descendants of Vṛṣṇi? How many wives did He marry, and for how many years did He live in Dvārakā?

12O great sage, who know everything about Kṛṣṇa, please describe in detail all the activities of which I have inquired and also those of which I have not, for I have full faith and am very eager to hear of them.

13Because of my vow on the verge of death, I have given up even drinking water, yet because I am drinking the nectar of topics about Kṛṣṇa, which is flowing from the lotus mouth of your Lordship, my hunger and thirst, which are extremely difficult to bear, cannot hinder me.

14Sūta Gosvāmī said: O son of Bhṛgu, after Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the most respectable devotee, the son of Vyāsadeva, heard the pious questions of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, he thanked the King with great respect. Then he began to discourse on topics concerning Kṛṣṇa, which are the remedy for all sufferings in this Age of Kali.

15Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Your Majesty, best of all saintly kings, because you are greatly attracted to topics of Vāsudeva, it is certain that your intelligence is firmly fixed in spiritual understanding, which is the only true goal for humanity. Because that attraction is unceasing, it is certainly sublime.

16The Ganges, emanating from the toe of Lord Viṣṇu, purifies the three worlds, the upper, middle and lower planetary systems. Similarly, when one asks questions about the pastimes and characteristics of Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, three varieties of men are purified: the speaker or preacher, he who inquires, and the people in general who listen.

17Once when mother earth was overburdened by hundreds of thousands of military phalanxes of various conceited demons dressed like kings, she approached Lord Brahmā for relief.

18Mother earth assumed the form of a cow. Very much distressed, with tears in her eyes, she appeared before Lord Brahmā and told him about her misfortune.

19Thereafter, having heard of the distress of mother earth, Lord Brahmā, with mother earth, Lord Śiva and all the other demigods, approached the shore of the Ocean of Milk.

20After reaching the shore of the Ocean of Milk, the demigods worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the master of the whole universe, the supreme God of all gods, who provides for everyone and diminishes everyone's suffering. With great attention, they worshiped Lord Viṣṇu, who lies on the Ocean of Milk, by reciting the Vedic mantras known as the Puruṣa-sūkta.

21While in trance, Lord Brahmā heard the words of Lord Viṣṇu vibrating in the sky. Thus he

told the demigods: O demigods, hear from me the order of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the Supreme Person, and execute it attentively without delay.

22 Lord Brahmā informed the demigods: Before we submitted our petition to the Lord, He was already aware of the distress on earth. Consequently, for as long as the Lord moves on earth to diminish its burden by His own potency in the form of time, all of you demigods should appear through plenary portions as sons and grandsons in the family of the Yadus.

23 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has full potency, will personally appear as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore all the wives of the demigods should also appear in order to satisfy Him.

24 The foremost manifestation of Kṛṣṇa is Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is known as Ananta. He is the origin of all incarnations within this material world. Previous to the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, this original Saṅkarṣaṇa will appear as Baladeva, just to please the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa in His transcendental pastimes.

25 The potency of the Lord, known as viṣṇu-māyā, who is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will also appear with Lord Kṛṣṇa. This potency, acting in different capacities, captivates all the worlds, both material and spiritual. At the request of her master, she will appear with her different potencies in order to execute the work of the Lord.

26 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After thus advising the demigods and pacifying mother earth, the very powerful Lord Brahmā, who is the master of all other Prajāpatis and is therefore known as Prajāpati-pati, returned to his own abode, Brahmāloka.

27 Formerly, Śūrasena, the chief of the Yadu dynasty, had gone to live in the city of Mathurā. There he enjoyed the places known as Māthura and Śūrasena.

28 Since that time, the city of Mathurā had been the capital of all the kings of the Yadu dynasty. The city and district of Mathurā are very intimately connected with Kṛṣṇa, for Lord Kṛṣṇa lives there eternally.

29 Some time ago, Vasudeva, who belonged to the demigod family [or to the Śūra dynasty], married Devakī. After the marriage, he mounted his chariot to return home with his newly married wife.

30 Kaṁsa, the son of King Ugrasena, in order to please his sister Devakī on the occasion of her marriage, took charge of the reins of the horses and became the chariot driver. He was surrounded by hundreds of golden chariots.

31-32 Devakī's father, King Devaka, was very much affectionate to his daughter. Therefore, while she and her husband were leaving home, he gave her a dowry of four hundred elephants nicely decorated with golden garlands. He also gave ten thousand horses, eighteen hundred chariots, and two hundred very beautiful young maidservants, fully decorated with ornaments.

33 O beloved son, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, when the bride and bridegroom were ready to start, conchshells, bugles, drums and kettledrums all vibrated in concert for their auspicious departure.

34 While Kaṁsa, controlling the reins of the horses, was driving the chariot along the way, an unembodied voice addressed him, "You foolish rascal, the eighth child of the woman you are carrying will kill you!"

35Kāmsa was a condemned personality in the Bhoja dynasty because he was envious and sinful. Therefore, upon hearing this omen from the sky, he caught hold of his sister's hair with his left hand and took up his sword with his right hand to sever her head from her body.

36Wanting to pacify Kāmsa, who was so cruel and envious that he was shamelessly ready to kill his sister, the great soul Vasudeva, who was to be the father of Kṛṣṇa, spoke to him in the following words.

37Vasudeva said: My dear brother-in-law Kāmsa, you are the pride of your family, the Bhoja dynasty, and great heroes praise your qualities. How could such a qualified person as you kill a woman, your own sister, especially on the occasion of her marriage?

38O great hero, one who takes birth is sure to die, for death is born with the body. One may die today or after hundreds of years, but death is sure for every living entity.

39When the present body turns to dust and is again reduced to five elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—the proprietor of the body, the living being, automatically receives another body of material elements according to his fruitive activities. When the next body is obtained, he gives up the present body.

40Just as a person traveling on the road rests one foot on the ground and then lifts the other, or as a worm on a vegetable transfers itself to one leaf and then gives up the previous one, the conditioned soul takes shelter of another body and then gives up the one he had before.

41Having experienced a situation by seeing or hearing about it, one contemplates and speculates about that situation, and thus one surrenders to it, not considering his present body. Similarly, by mental adjustments one dreams at night of living under different circumstances, in different bodies, and forgets his actual position. Under this same process, one gives up his present body and accepts another [tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ].

42At the time of death, according to the thinking, feeling and willing of the mind, which is involved in fruitive activities, one receives a particular body. In other words, the body develops according to the activities of the mind. Changes of body are due to the flickering of the mind, for otherwise the soul could remain in its original, spiritual body.

43When the luminaries in the sky, such as the moon, the sun and the stars, are reflected in liquids like oil or water, they appear to be of different shapes—sometimes round, sometimes long, and so on—because of the movements of the wind. Similarly, when the living entity, the soul, is absorbed in materialistic thoughts, he accepts various manifestations as his own identity because of ignorance. In other words, one is bewildered by mental concoctions because of agitation from the material modes of nature.

44Therefore, since envious, impious activities cause a body in which one suffers in the next life, why should one act impiously? Considering one's welfare, one should not envy anyone, for an envious person must always fear harm from his enemies, either in this life or in the next.

45As your younger sister, this poor girl Devakī is like your own daughter and deserves to be affectionately maintained. You are merciful, and therefore you should not kill her. Indeed, she deserves your affection.

46Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O best of the Kuru dynasty, Kāmsa was fiercely cruel and was actually a follower of the Rākṣasas. Therefore he could be neither pacified nor terrified by the good instructions given by Vasudeva. He did not care about the results of sinful activities, either in this life or in the next.

47When Vasudeva saw that Kaṁsa was determined to kill his sister Devakī, he thought to himself very deeply. Considering the imminent danger of death, he thought of another plan to stop Kaṁsa.

48As long as he has intelligence and bodily strength, an intelligent person must try to avoid death. This is the duty of every embodied person. But if death cannot be avoided in spite of one's endeavors, a person facing death commits no offense.

49-50Vasudeva considered: By delivering all my sons to Kaṁsa, who is death personified, I shall save the life of Devakī. Perhaps Kaṁsa will die before my sons take birth, or, since he is already destined to die at the hands of my son, one of my sons may kill him. For the time being, let me promise to hand over my sons so that Kaṁsa will give up this immediate threat, and if in due course of time Kaṁsa dies, I shall have nothing to fear.

51When a fire, for some unseen reason, leaps over one piece of wood and sets fire to the next, the reason is destiny. Similarly, when a living being accepts one kind of body and leaves aside another, there is no other reason than unseen destiny.

52After thus considering the matter as far as his knowledge would allow, Vasudeva submitted his proposal to the sinful Kaṁsa with great respect.

53Vasudeva's mind was full of anxiety because his wife was facing danger, but in order to please the cruel, shameless and sinful Kaṁsa, he externally smiled and spoke to him as follows.

54Vasudeva said: O best of the sober, you have nothing to fear from your sister Devakī because of what you have heard from the unseen omen. The cause of death will be her sons. Therefore I promise that when she gives birth to the sons from whom your fear has arisen, I shall deliver them all unto your hands.

55Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Kaṁsa agreed to the logical arguments of Vasudeva, and, having full faith in Vasudeva's words, he refrained from killing his sister. Vasudeva, being pleased with Kaṁsa, pacified him further and entered his own house.

56Each year thereafter, in due course of time, Devakī, the mother of God and all the demigods, gave birth to a child. Thus she bore eight sons, one after another, and a daughter named Subhadrā.

57Vasudeva was very much disturbed by fear of becoming a liar by breaking his promise. Thus with great pain he delivered his first-born son, named Kīrtimān, into the hands of Kaṁsa.

58What is painful for saintly persons who strictly adhere to the truth? How could there not be independence for pure devotees who know the Supreme Lord as the substance? What deeds are forbidden for persons of the lowest character? And what cannot be given up for the sake of Lord Kṛṣṇa by those who have fully surrendered at His lotus feet?

59My dear King Parīkṣit, when Kaṁsa saw that Vasudeva, being situated in truthfulness, was completely equipoised in giving him the child, he was very happy. Therefore, with a smiling face, he spoke as follows.

60O Vasudeva, you may take back your child and go home. I have no fear of your first child. It is the eighth child of you and Devakī I am concerned with because that is the child by whom I am destined to be killed.

61Vasudeva agreed and took his child back home, but because Kaṁsa had no character and no self-control, Vasudeva knew that he could not rely on Kaṁsa's word.

62-63The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, headed by Nanda Mahārāja and including his associate cowherd men and their wives, were none but denizens of the heavenly planets, O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the descendants of Bharata, and so too were the descendants of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, headed by Vasudeva and Devakī and the other women of the dynasty of Yadu. The friends, relatives and well-wishers of both Nanda Mahārāja and Vasudeva and even those who externally appeared to be followers of Kaṁsa were all demigods.

64Once the great saint Nārada approached Kaṁsa and informed him of how the demoniac persons who were a great burden on the earth were going to be killed. Thus Kaṁsa was placed into great fear and doubt.

65-66After the departure of the great saint Nārada, Kaṁsa thought that all the members of the Yadu dynasty were demigods and that any of the children born from the womb of Devakī might be Viṣṇu. Fearing his death, Kaṁsa arrested Vasudeva and Devakī and chained them with iron shackles. Suspecting each of the children to be Viṣṇu, Kaṁsa killed them one after another because of the prophecy that Viṣṇu would kill him.

67Kings greedy for sense gratification on this earth almost always kill their enemies indiscriminately. To satisfy their own whims, they may kill anyone, even their mothers, fathers, brothers or friends.

68In his previous birth, Kaṁsa had been a great demon named Kālanemi and been killed by Viṣṇu. Upon learning this information from Nārada, Kaṁsa became envious of everyone connected with the Yadu dynasty.

69Kaṁsa, the most powerful son of Ugrasena, even imprisoned his own father, the King of the Yadu, Bhoja and Andhaka dynasties, and personally ruled the states known as Śūrasena.

SB 10.2: Prayers by the Demigods for Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Womb

As described in this chapter, when the Supreme Personality of Godhead entered the womb of Devakī to kill Kaṁsa, all the demigods understood that the Lord was living within Devakī's womb, and therefore in veneration they offered Him the *Garbha-stuti* prayers.

Kaṁsa, under the protection of his father-in-law, Jarāsandha, and with the help of his demoniac friends like Pralamba, Baka, Cāṇūra, Tṛṇāvarta, Aghāsura, Muṣṭika, Bāṇa and Bhaumāsura, began oppressing the members of the Yadu dynasty. Therefore, the members of the Yadu dynasty left their homes and sought shelter in such states as Kuru, Paṣcāla, Kekaya, Śālva and Vidarbha. Only some of them stayed with Kaṁsa, as nominal friends.

After Kaṁsa killed the *ṣaḍ-garbhas*, the six sons of Devakī, one after another, Anantadeva entered Devakī's womb and was transferred to the womb of Rohiṇī by the manipulation of Yoga-māyā, who was following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord Himself, who was soon to appear as the eighth son of Devakī, ordered Yoga-māyā to take birth from the womb of Yaśodādevī. Because Kṛṣṇa and His potency, Yoga-māyā, appeared simultaneously as brother and sister, the world is full of Vaiṣṇavas and *śāktas*, and there is certainly some rivalry between them. Vaiṣṇavas worship the Supreme Lord, whereas *śāktas*, according to their desires, worship Yoga-māyā in forms like Durgā, Bhadrakālī and Caṇḍikā. Following the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yoga-māyā transferred Baladeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, the seventh child of Devakī, from the womb of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī.

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Because Saṅkarṣaṇa appears in order to increase love of Kṛṣṇa, He is known as Baladeva. One may take auspicious strength from Him to become a devotee of the Lord, and therefore He is also known as Balabhadra.

After Yoga-māyā transferred the seventh child of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared within the heart of Vasudeva and transferred Himself into the heart of Devakī. Because the Lord was present in her heart, Devakī, as her pregnancy continued, appeared effulgent. Upon seeing this effulgence, Kāṁsa was full of anxiety, but he could not harm Devakī because of their family relationship. Thus he began indirectly thinking of Kṛṣṇa and became fully Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Meanwhile, because of the Lord's presence within the womb of Devakī, all the demigods came to offer the Lord their prayers. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, they said, is eternally the Absolute Truth. The spiritual soul is more important than the gross body, and the Supersoul, Paramātmā, is still more important than the soul. The Supreme Godhead is absolutely independent, and His incarnations are transcendental. The prayers of the demigods glorify and exalt devotees and explain the fate of persons who superficially consider themselves liberated from the conditions of material nature. A devotee is always safe. When a devotee fully surrenders at the lotus feet of the Lord, he is completely liberated from the fear of material existence. By explaining why the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends, the prayers of the demigods clearly confirm the Lord's statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7):

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānam 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.”

1-2 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Under the protection of Magadharāja, Jarāsandha, the powerful Kāṁsa began persecuting the kings of the Yadu dynasty. In this he had the cooperation of demons like Pralamba, Baka, Cāṇūra, Tṛṇāvarta, Aghāsura, Muṣṭika, Ariṣṭa, Dvivida, Pūtanā, Keśī, Dhenuka, Bāṇāsura, Narakāsura and many other demoniac kings on the surface of the earth.

3 Persecuted by the demoniac kings, the Yādavas left their own kingdom and entered various others, like those of the Kurus, Paścālas, Kekayas, Śālvas, Vidarbhas, Niṣadhas, Videhas and Kośālas.

4-5 Some of their relatives, however, began to follow Kāṁsa's principles and act in his service. After Kāṁsa, the son of Ugrasena, killed the six sons of Devakī, a plenary portion of Kṛṣṇa entered her womb as her seventh child, arousing her pleasure and her lamentation. That plenary portion is celebrated by great sages as Ananta, who belongs to Kṛṣṇa's second quadruple expansion.

6 To protect the Yadus, His personal devotees, from Kāṁsa's attack, the Personality of Godhead, Viśvātmā, the Supreme Soul of everyone, ordered Yoga-māyā as follows.

7 The Lord ordered Yoga-māyā: O My potency, who are worshipable for the entire world and whose nature is to bestow good fortune upon all living entities, go to Vraja, where there live many cowherd men and their wives. In that very beautiful land, where many cows reside, Rohiṇī, the wife of Vasudeva, is living at the home of Nanda Mahārāja. Other wives of

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Vasudeva are also living there incognito because of fear of Kāṁsa. Please go there.

8 Within the womb of Devakī is My partial plenary expansion known as Saṅkarṣaṇa or Śeṣa. Without difficulty, transfer Him into the womb of Rohiṇī.

9 O all-auspicious Yoga-māyā, I shall then appear with My full six opulences as the son of Devakī, and you will appear as the daughter of mother Yaśodā, the queen of Mahārāja Nanda.

10 By sacrifices of animals, ordinary human beings will worship you gorgeously, with various paraphernalia, because you are supreme in fulfilling the material desires of everyone.

11-12 Lord Kṛṣṇa blessed Māyādevī by saying: In different places on the surface of the earth, people will give you different names, such as Durgā, Bhadrakālī, Vijayā, Vaiṣṇavī, Kumudā, Caṇḍikā, Kṛṣṇā, Mādhavī, Kanyakā, Māyā, Nārāyaṇī, Īśānī, Śāradā and Ambikā.

13 The son of Rohiṇī will also be celebrated as Saṅkarṣaṇa because of being sent from the womb of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī. He will be called Rāma because of His ability to please all the inhabitants of Gokula, and He will be known as Balabhadra because of His extensive physical strength.

14 Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yoga-māyā immediately agreed. With the Vedic mantra om, she confirmed that she would do what He asked. Thus having accepted the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she circumambulated Him and started for the place on earth known as Nanda-gokula. There she did everything just as she had been told.

15 When the child of Devakī was attracted and transferred into the womb of Rohiṇī by Yoga-māyā, Devakī seemed to have a miscarriage. Thus all the inhabitants of the palace loudly lamented, “Alas, Devakī has lost her child!”

16 Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul of all living entities and who vanquishes all the fear of His devotees, entered the mind of Vasudeva in full opulence.

17 While carrying the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within the core of his heart, Vasudeva bore the Lord’s transcendently illuminating effulgence, and thus he became as bright as the sun. He was therefore very difficult to see or approach through sensory perception. Indeed, he was unapproachable and unperceivable even for such formidable men as Kāṁsa, and not only for Kāṁsa but for all living entities.

18 Thereafter, accompanied by plenary expansions, the fully opulent Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is all-auspicious for the entire universe, was transferred from the mind of Vasudeva to the mind of Devakī. Devakī, having thus been initiated by Vasudeva, became beautiful by carrying Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original consciousness for everyone, the cause of all causes, within the core of her heart, just as the east becomes beautiful by carrying the rising moon.

19 Devakī then kept within herself the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, the foundation of the entire cosmos, but because she was under arrest in the house of Kāṁsa, she was like the flames of a fire covered by the walls of a pot, or like a person who has knowledge but cannot distribute it to the world for the benefit of human society.

20 Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead was within her womb, Devakī illuminated the entire atmosphere in the place where she was confined. Seeing her jubilant, pure and smiling, Kāṁsa thought, “The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who is now within her, will kill

me. Devakī has never before looked so brilliant and jubilant.”

21Kāmsa thought: What is my duty now? The Supreme Lord, who knows His purpose will not give up His prowess. Devakī is a woman, she is my sister, and moreover she is now pregnant. If I kill her, my reputation, opulence and duration of life will certainly be vanquished.

22A person who is very cruel is regarded as dead even while living, for while he is living or after his death, everyone condemns him. And after the death of a person in the bodily concept of life, he is undoubtedly transferred to the hell known as Andhatama.

23Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Deliberating in this way, Kāmsa, although determined to continue in enmity toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead, refrained from the vicious killing of his sister. He decided to wait until the Lord was born and then do what was needed.

24While sitting on his throne or in his sitting room, while lying on his bed, or, indeed, while situated anywhere, and while eating, sleeping or walking, Kāmsa saw only his enemy, the Supreme Lord, Hṛṣīkeśa. In other words, by thinking of his all-pervading enemy, Kāmsa became unfavorably Kṛṣṇa conscious.

25Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, accompanied by great sages like Nārada, Devala and Vyāsa and by other demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa, invisibly approached the room of Devakī, where they all joined in offering their respectful obeisances and prayers to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can bestow blessings upon everyone.

26The 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.

27The 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 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.

28The 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.

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29O 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.

30O 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.

31O 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 [vāschā-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.

32[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.

33O 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.

34O 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.

35O 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.

36O 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.

37Even 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.

38O 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.

390 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.

400 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.

410 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.

420 After thus offering prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the Transcendence, all the demigods, with Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva before them, returned to their homes in the heavenly planets.

SB 10.3: The Birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa

As described in this chapter, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, Hari in His original form, appeared as Viṣṇu so that His father and mother could understand that their son was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because they were afraid of Kāṁsa, when the Lord appeared as an ordinary child they took Him to Gokula, the home of Nanda Mahārāja.

Mother Devakī, being fully transcendental, *sac-cid-ānanda*, does not belong to this material world. Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared with four hands, as if born from her womb. Upon seeing the Lord in that Viṣṇu form, Vasudeva was struck with wonder, and in transcendental happiness he and Devakī mentally gave ten thousand cows in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. Vasudeva then offered prayers to the Lord, addressing Him as the Supreme Person, Parabrahman, the Supersoul, who is beyond duality and who is internally and externally all-pervading. The Lord, the cause of all causes, is beyond material existence, although He is the creator of this material world. When He enters this world as Paramātmā, He is all-pervading (*aṅdāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-stham*), yet He is transcendently situated. For the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this material world, the Lord appears as the *guṇa-avatāras* Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. Thus Vasudeva offered prayers full of meaning to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Devakī followed her husband by offering prayers describing the transcendental nature of the Lord. Fearing Kāṁsa and desiring that the Lord not be understood by atheistic and materialistic nondevotees, she prayed that the Lord withdraw His transcendental four-armed form and appear like an ordinary child with two hands.

The Lord reminded Vasudeva and Devakī of two other incarnations in which He had appeared as their son. He had appeared as Pṛṣṇigarbha and Vāmanadeva, and now this was the third time He was appearing as the son of Devakī to fulfill their desire. The Lord then decided to

leave the residence of Vasudeva and Devakī, in the prison house of Kāṁsa, and at this very time, Yoga-māyā took birth as the daughter of Yaśodā. By the arrangement of Yoga-māyā, Vasudeva was able to leave the prison house and save the child from the hands of Kāṁsa. When Vasudeva brought Kṛṣṇa to the house of Nanda Mahārāja, he saw that by Yoga-māyā's arrangement, Yaśodā, as well as everyone else, was deeply asleep. Thus he exchanged the babies, taking Yoga-māyā from Yaśodā's lap and placing Kṛṣṇa there instead. Then Vasudeva returned to his own place, having taken Yoga-māyā as his daughter. He placed Yoga-māyā on Devakī's bed and prepared to be a prisoner as before. In Gokula, Yaśodā could not understand whether she had given birth to a male or a female child.

1-5 Thereafter, at the auspicious time for the appearance of the Lord, the entire universe was surcharged with all the qualities of goodness, beauty and peace. The constellation Rohiṇī appeared, as did stars like Aśvinī. The sun, the moon and the other stars and planets were very peaceful. All directions appeared extremely pleasing, and the beautiful stars twinkled in the cloudless sky. Decorated with towns, villages, mines and pasturing grounds, the earth seemed all-auspicious. The rivers flowed with clear water, and the lakes and vast reservoirs, full of lilies and lotuses, were extraordinarily beautiful. In the trees and green plants, full of flowers and leaves, pleasing to the eyes, birds like cuckoos and swarms of bees began chanting with sweet voices for the sake of the demigods. A pure breeze began to blow, pleasing the sense of touch and bearing the aroma of flowers, and when the brāhmaṇas engaging in ritualistic ceremonies ignited their fires according to Vedic principles, the fires burned steadily, undisturbed by the breeze. Thus when the birthless Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was about to appear, the saints and brāhmaṇas, who had always been disturbed by demons like Kāṁsa and his men, felt peace within the core of their hearts, and kettledrums simultaneously vibrated from the upper planetary system.

6 The Kinnaras and Gandharvas began to sing auspicious songs, the Siddhas and Cāraṇas offered auspicious prayers, and the Vidyādhārīs, along with the Apsarās, began to dance in jubilation.

7-8 The demigods and great saintly persons showered flowers in a joyous mood, and clouds gathered in the sky and very mildly thundered, making sounds like those of the ocean's waves. Then the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who is situated in the core of everyone's heart, appeared from the heart of Devakī in the dense darkness of night, like the full moon rising on the eastern horizon, because Devakī was of the same category as Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

9-10 Vasudeva then saw the newborn child, who had very wonderful lotuslike eyes and who bore in His four hands the four weapons śaṅkha, cakṛa, gadā and padma. On His chest was the mark of Śrīvatsa and on His neck the brilliant Kaustubha gem. Dressed in yellow, His body blackish like a dense cloud, His scattered hair fully grown, and His helmet and earrings sparkling uncommonly with the valuable gem Vaidūrya, the child, decorated with a brilliant belt, armlets, bangles and other ornaments, appeared very wonderful.

11 When Vasudeva saw his extraordinary son, his eyes were struck with wonder. In transcendental jubilation, he mentally collected ten thousand cows and distributed them among the brāhmaṇas as a transcendental festival.

12 O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, descendant of King Bharata, Vasudeva could understand that this child was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. Having concluded this without a doubt, he became fearless. Bowing down with folded hands and concentrating his attention, he began to offer prayers to the child, who illuminated His birthplace by His natural influence.

13Vasudeva said: My Lord, You are the Supreme Person, beyond material existence, and You are the Supersoul. Your form can be perceived by transcendental knowledge, by which You can be understood as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I now understand Your position perfectly.

14My Lord, You are the same person who in the beginning created this material world by His personal external energy. After the creation of this world of three guṇas [sattva, rajas and tamas], You appear to have entered it, although in fact You have not.

15-17The mahat-tattva, the total material energy, is undivided, but because of the material modes of nature, it appears to separate into earth, water, fire, air and ether. Because of the living energy [jīva-bhūta], these separated energies combine to make the cosmic manifestation visible, but in fact, before the creation of the cosmos, the total energy is already present. Therefore, the total material energy never actually enters the creation. Similarly, although You are perceived by our senses because of Your presence, You cannot be perceived by the senses, nor experienced by the mind or words [avāñ-mānasa-gocarā]. With our senses we can perceive some things, but not everything; for example, we can use our eyes to see, but not to taste. Consequently, You are beyond perception by the senses. Although in touch with the modes of material nature, You are unaffected by them. You are the prime factor in everything, the all-pervading, undivided Supersoul. For You, therefore, there is no external or internal. You never entered the womb of Devakī; rather, You existed there already.

18One who considers his visible body, which is a product of the three modes of nature, to be independent of the soul is unaware of the basis of existence, and therefore he is a rascal. Those who are learned have rejected this conclusion because one can understand through full discussion that with no basis in soul, the visible body and senses would be insubstantial. Nonetheless, although his conclusion has been rejected, a foolish person considers it a reality.

19O my Lord, learned Vedic scholars conclude that the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the entire cosmic manifestation are performed by You, who are free from endeavor, unaffected by the modes of material nature, and changeless in Your spiritual situation. There are no contradictions in You, who are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Parabrahman. Because the three modes of material nature—sattva, rajas and tamas—are under Your control, everything takes place automatically.

20My Lord, Your form is transcendental to the three material modes, yet for the maintenance of the three worlds, You assume the white color of Viṣṇu in goodness; for creation, which is surrounded by the quality of passion, You appear reddish; and at the end, when there is a need for annihilation, which is surrounded by ignorance, You appear blackish.

21O my Lord, proprietor of all creation, You have now appeared in my house, desiring to protect this world. I am sure that You will kill all the armies that are moving all over the world under the leadership of politicians who are dressed as kṣatriya rulers but who are factually demons. They must be killed by You for the protection of the innocent public.

22O my Lord, Lord of the demigods, after hearing the prophecy that You would take birth in our home and kill him, this uncivilized Kaṁsa killed so many of Your elder brothers. As soon as he hears from his lieutenants that You have appeared, he will immediately come with weapons to kill You.

23Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, having seen that her child had all the symptoms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Devakī, who was very much afraid of Kaṁsa and unusually astonished, began to offer prayers to the Lord.

24Śrī Devakī said: My dear Lord, there are different Vedas, some of which describe You as unperceivable through words and the mind. Yet You are the origin of the entire cosmic manifestation. You are Brahman, the greatest of everything, full of effulgence like the sun. You have no material cause, You are free from change and deviation, and You have no material desires. Thus the Vedas say that You are the substance. Therefore, my Lord, You are directly the origin of all Vedic statements, and by understanding You, one gradually understands everything. You are different from the light of Brahman and Paramātmā, yet You are not different from them. Everything emanates from You. Indeed, You are the cause of all causes, Lord Viṣṇu, the light of all transcendental knowledge.

25After millions of years, at the time of cosmic annihilation, when everything, manifested and unmanifested, is annihilated by the force of time, the five gross elements enter into the subtle conception, and the manifested categories enter into the unmanifested substance. At that time, You alone remain, and You are known as Ananta Śeṣa-nāga.

26O inaugurator of the material energy, this wonderful creation works under the control of powerful time, which is divided into seconds, minutes, hours and years. This element of time, which extends for many millions of years, is but another form of Lord Viṣṇu. For Your pastimes, You act as the controller of time, but You are the reservoir of all good fortune. Let me offer my full surrender unto Your Lordship.

27No one in this material world has become free from the four principles birth, death, old age and disease, even by fleeing to various planets. But now that You have appeared, My Lord, death is fleeing in fear of You, and the living entities, having obtained shelter at Your lotus feet by Your mercy, are sleeping in full mental peace.

28My Lord, because You dispel all the fear of Your devotees, I request You to save us and give us protection from the terrible fear of Kāṁsa. Your form as Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is appreciated by yogīs in meditation. Please make this form invisible to those who see with material eyes.

29O Madhusūdana, because of Your appearance, I am becoming more and more anxious in fear of Kāṁsa. Therefore, please arrange for that sinful Kāṁsa to be unable to understand that You have taken birth from my womb.

30O my Lord, You are the all-pervading Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Your transcendental four-armed form, holding conchshell, disc, club and lotus, is unnatural for this world. Please withdraw this form [and become just like a natural human child so that I may try to hide You somewhere].

31At the time of devastation, the entire cosmos, containing all created moving and nonmoving entities, enters Your transcendental body and is held there without difficulty. But now this transcendental form has taken birth from my womb. People will not be able to believe this, and I shall become an object of ridicule.

32The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied: My dear mother, best of the chaste, in your previous birth, in the Svāyambhuva millennium, you were known as Pṛṣṇi, and Vasudeva, who was the most pious Prajāpati, was named Sutapā.

33When both of you were ordered by Lord Brahmā to create progeny, you first underwent severe austerities by controlling your senses.

34-35My dear father and mother, you endured rain, wind, strong sun, scorching heat and severe cold, suffering all sorts of inconvenience according to different seasons. By practicing

prāṇāyāma to control the air within the body through yoga, and by eating only air and dry leaves fallen from the trees, you cleansed from your minds all dirty things. In this way, desiring a benediction from Me, you worshiped Me with peaceful minds.

36Thus you spent twelve thousand celestial years performing difficult activities of tapasya in consciousness of Me [Kṛṣṇa consciousness].

37-38O sinless mother Devakī, after the expiry of twelve thousand celestial years, in which you constantly contemplated Me within the core of your heart with great faith, devotion and austerity, I was very much satisfied with you. Since I am the best of all bestowers of benediction, I appeared in this same form as Kṛṣṇa to ask you to take from Me the benediction you desired. You then expressed your desire to have a son exactly like Me.

39Being husband and wife but always sonless, you were attracted by sexual desires, for by the influence of devamāyā, transcendental love, you wanted to have Me as your son. Therefore you never desired to be liberated from this material world.

40After you received that benediction and I disappeared, you engaged yourselves in sex to have a son like Me, and I fulfilled your desire.

41Since I found no one else as highly elevated as you in simplicity and other qualities of good character, I appeared in this world as Pṛṣṇigarbha, or one who is celebrated as having taken birth from Pṛṣṇi.

42In the next millennium, I again appeared from the two of you, who appeared as My mother, Aditi, and My father, Kaśyapa. I was known as Upendra, and because of being a dwarf, I was also known as Vāmana.

43O supremely chaste mother, I, the same personality, have now appeared of you both as your son for the third time. Take My words as the truth.

44I have shown you this form of Viṣṇu just to remind you of My previous births. Otherwise, if I appeared like an ordinary human child, you would not believe that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, has indeed appeared.

45Both of you, husband and wife, constantly think of Me as your son, but always know that I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By thus thinking of Me constantly with love and affection, you will achieve the highest perfection: returning home, back to Godhead.

46Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After thus instructing His father and mother, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, remained silent. In their presence, by His internal energy, He then transformed Himself into a small human child. [In other words, He transformed Himself into His original form: kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam.]

47Thereafter, exactly when Vasudeva, being inspired by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was about to take the newborn child from the delivery room, Yoga-māyā, the Lord's spiritual energy, took birth as the daughter of the wife of Mahārāja Nanda.

48-49By the influence of Yoga-māyā, all the doorkeepers fell fast asleep, their senses unable to work, and the other inhabitants of the house also fell deeply asleep. When the sun rises, the darkness automatically disappears; similarly, when Vasudeva appeared, the closed doors, which were strongly pinned with iron and locked with iron chains, opened automatically. Since the clouds in the sky were mildly thundering and showering, Ananta-nāga, an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, followed Vasudeva, beginning from the door, with

hoods expanded to protect Vasudeva and the transcendental child.

50Because of constant rain sent by the demigod Indra, the river Yamunā was filled with deep water, foaming about with fiercely whirling waves. But as the great Indian Ocean had formerly given way to Lord Rāmacandra by allowing Him to construct a bridge, the river Yamunā gave way to Vasudeva and allowed him to cross.

51When Vasudeva reached the house of Nanda Mahārāja, he saw that all the cowherd men were fast asleep. Thus he placed his own son on the bed of Yaśodā, picked up her daughter, an expansion of Yoga-māyā, and then returned to his residence, the prison house of Kaṁsa.

52Vasudeva placed the female child on the bed of Devakī, bound his legs with the iron shackles, and thus remained there as before.

53Exhausted by the labor of childbirth, Yaśodā was overwhelmed with sleep and unable to understand what kind of child had been born to her.

SB 10.4: The Atrocities of King Kaṁsa

This chapter describes how Kaṁsa, following the advice of his demoniac friends, considered the persecution of small children to be very diplomatic.

After Vasudeva bound himself with iron shackles as before, all the doors of the prison house closed by the influence of Yoga-māyā, who then began crying as a newborn child. This crying awakened the doorkeepers, who immediately informed Kaṁsa that a child had been born to Devakī. Upon hearing this news, Kaṁsa appeared with great force in the maternity room, and in spite of Devakī's pleas that the child be saved, the demon forcibly snatched the child from Devakī's hands and dashed the child against a rock. Unfortunately for Kaṁsa, however, the newborn child slipped away from his hands, rose above his head and appeared as the eight-armed form of Durgā. Durgā then told Kaṁsa, "The enemy you contemplate has taken birth somewhere else. Therefore your plan to persecute all the children will prove futile."

According to the prophecy, the eighth child of Devakī would kill Kaṁsa, and therefore when Kaṁsa saw that the eighth child was a female and heard that his so-called enemy had taken birth elsewhere, he was struck with wonder. He decided to release Devakī and Vasudeva, and he admitted before them the wrongness of his atrocities. Falling at the feet of Devakī and Vasudeva, he begged their pardon and tried to convince them that because the events that had taken place were destined to happen, they should not be unhappy for his having killed so many of their children. Devakī and Vasudeva, being naturally very pious, immediately excused Kaṁsa for his atrocities, and Kaṁsa, after seeing that his sister and brother-in-law were happy, returned to his home.

After the night passed, however, Kaṁsa called for his ministers and informed them of all that had happened. The ministers, who were all demons, advised Kaṁsa that because his enemy had already taken birth somewhere else, all the children born within the past ten days in the villages within Kaṁsa's kingdom should be killed. Although the demigods always feared Kaṁsa, they should not be treated leniently; since they were enemies, Kaṁsa should try his best to uproot their existence. The demoniac ministers further advised that Kaṁsa and the demons continue their enmity toward Viṣṇu because Viṣṇu is the original person among all the demigods. The *brāhmaṇas*, the cows, the *Vedas*, austerity, truthfulness, control of the senses and mind, faithfulness and mercy are among the different parts of the body of Viṣṇu, who is the origin of all the demigods, including Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. Therefore, the ministers advised, the demigods, the saintly persons, the cows and the *brāhmaṇas* should be

systematically persecuted. Strongly advised in this way by his friends, the demoniac ministers, Kaṁsa approved of their instructions and considered it beneficial to be envious of the *brāhmaṇas*. Following Kaṁsa's orders, therefore, the demons began committing their atrocities all over Vrajabhūmi.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King Parīkṣit, the doors inside and outside the house closed as before. Thereafter, the inhabitants of the house, especially the watchmen, heard the crying of the newborn child and thus awakened from their beds.

2 Thereafter, all the watchmen very quickly approached King Kaṁsa, the ruler of the Bhoja dynasty, and submitted the news of the birth of Devakī's child. Kaṁsa, who had awaited this news very anxiously, immediately took action.

3 Kaṁsa immediately got up from bed, thinking, "Here is Kāla, the supreme time factor, which has taken birth to kill me!" Thus overwhelmed, Kaṁsa, his hair scattered on his head, at once approached the place where the child had been born.

4 Devakī helplessly, piteously appealed to Kaṁsa: My dear brother, all good fortune unto you. Don't kill this girl. She will be your daughter-in-law. Indeed, it is unworthy of you to kill a woman.

5 My dear brother, by the influence of destiny you have already killed many babies, each of them as bright and beautiful as fire. But kindly spare this daughter. Give her to me as your gift.

6 My lord, my brother, I am very poor, being bereft of all my children, but still I am your younger sister, and therefore it would be worthy of you to give me this last child as a gift.

7 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Piteously embracing her daughter and crying, Devakī begged Kaṁsa for the child, but he was so cruel that he chastised her and forcibly snatched the child from her hands.

8 Having uprooted all relationships with his sister because of intense selfishness, Kaṁsa, who was sitting on his knees, grasped the newborn child by the legs and tried to dash her against the surface of a stone.

9 The child, Yoga-māyā-devī, the younger sister of Lord Viṣṇu, slipped upward from Kaṁsa's hands and appeared in the sky as Devī, the goddess Durgā, with eight arms, completely equipped with weapons.

10-11 The goddess Durgā was decorated with flower garlands, smeared with sandalwood pulp and dressed with excellent garments and ornaments made of valuable jewels. Holding in her hands a bow, a trident, arrows, a shield, a sword, a conchshell, a disc and a club, and being praised by celestial beings like Apsarās, Kinnaras, Uragas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas, who worshiped her with all kinds of presentations, she spoke as follows.

12 O Kaṁsa, you fool, what will be the use of killing me? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has been your enemy from the very beginning and who will certainly kill you, has already taken His birth somewhere else. Therefore, do not unnecessarily kill other children.

13 After speaking to Kaṁsa in this way, the goddess Durgā, Yoga-māyā, appeared in different places, such as Vārāṇasī, and became celebrated by different names, such as Annapūrṇā, Durgā, Kālī and Bhadrā.

14 After hearing the words of the goddess Durgā, Kaṁsa was struck with wonder. Thus he

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approached his sister Devakī and brother-in-law Vasudeva, released them immediately from their shackles, and very humbly spoke as follows.

15Alas, my sister! Alas, my brother-in-law! I am indeed so sinful that exactly like a man-eater [Rākṣasa] who eats his own child, I have killed so many sons born of you.

16Being merciless and cruel, I have forsaken all my relatives and friends. Therefore, like a person who has killed a brāhmaṇa, I do not know to which planet I shall go, either after death or while breathing.

17Alas, not only human beings but sometimes even providence lies. And I am so sinful that I believed the omen of providence and killed so many of my sister's children.

18O great souls, your children have suffered their own misfortune. Therefore, please do not lament for them. All living entities are under the control of the Supreme, and they cannot always live together.

19In this world, we can see that pots, dolls and other products of the earth appear, break and then disappear, mixing with the earth. Similarly, the bodies of all conditioned living entities are annihilated, but the living entities, like the earth itself, are unchanging and never annihilated [na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre].

20One who does not understand the constitutional position of the body and the soul [ātmā] becomes too attached to the bodily concept of life. Consequently, because of attachment to the body and its by-products, he feels affected by union with and separation from his family, society and nation. As long as this continues, one continues his material life. [Otherwise, one is liberated.]

21My dear sister Devakī, all good fortune unto you. Everyone suffers and enjoys the results of his own work under the control of providence. Therefore, although your sons have unfortunately been killed by me, please do not lament for them.

22In the bodily conception of life, one remains in darkness, without self-realization, thinking, "I am being killed" or "I have killed my enemies." As long as a foolish person thus considers the self to be the killer or the killed, he continues to be responsible for material obligations, and consequently he suffers the reactions of happiness and distress.

23Kāmsa begged, "My dear sister and brother-in-law, please be merciful to such a poor-hearted person as me, since both of you are saintly persons. Please excuse my atrocities." Having said this, Kāmsa fell at the feet of Vasudeva and Devakī, his eyes full of tears of regret.

24Fully believing in the words of the goddess Durgā, Kāmsa exhibited his familial affection for Devakī and Vasudeva by immediately releasing them from their iron shackles.

25When Devakī saw her brother actually repentant while explaining ordained events, she was relieved of all anger. Similarly, Vasudeva was also free from anger. Smiling, he spoke to Kāmsa as follows.

26O great personality Kāmsa, only by the influence of ignorance does one accept the material body and bodily ego. What you have said about this philosophy is correct. Persons in the bodily concept of life, lacking self-realization, differentiate in terms of "This is mine" and "This belongs to another."

27Persons with the vision of differentiation are imbued with the material qualities lamentation, jubilation, fear, envy, greed, illusion and madness. They are influenced by the immediate

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cause, which they are busy counteracting, because they have no knowledge of the remote, supreme cause, the Personality of Godhead.

28Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus having been addressed in purity by Devakī and Vasudeva, who were very much appeased, Kāṁsa felt pleased, and with their permission he entered his home.

29After that night passed, Kāṁsa summoned his ministers and informed them of all that had been spoken by Yoga-māyā [who had revealed that He who was to slay Kāṁsa had already been born somewhere else].

30After hearing their master's statement, the envious asuras, who were enemies of the demigods and were not very expert in their dealings, advised Kāṁsa as follows.

31If this is so, O King of the Bhoja dynasty, beginning today we shall kill all the children born in all the villages, towns and pasturing grounds within the past ten days or slightly more.

32The demigods always fear the sound of your bowstring. They are constantly in anxiety, afraid of fighting. Therefore, what can they do by their endeavors to harm you?

33While being pierced by your arrows, which you discharged on all sides, some of them, who were injured by the multitude of arrows but who desired to live, fled the battlefield, intent on escaping.

34Defeated and bereft of all weapons, some of the demigods gave up fighting and praised you with folded hands, and some of them, appearing before you with loosened garments and hair, said, "O lord, we are very much afraid of you."

35When the demigods are bereft of their chariots, when they forget how to use weapons, when they are fearful or attached to something other than fighting, or when their bows are broken and they have thus lost the ability to fight, Your Majesty does not kill them.

36The demigods boast uselessly while away from the battlefield. Only where there is no fighting can they show their prowess. Therefore, from such demigods we have nothing to fear. As for Lord Viṣṇu, He is in seclusion in the core of the hearts of the yogīs. As for Lord Śiva, he has gone to the forest. And as for Lord Brahmā, he is always engaged in austerities and meditation. The other demigods, headed by Indra, are devoid of prowess. Therefore you have nothing to fear.

37Nonetheless, because of their enmity, our opinion is that the demigods should not be neglected. Therefore, to uproot them completely, engage us in fighting with them, for we are ready to follow you.

38As a disease, if initially neglected, becomes acute and impossible to cure, or as the senses, if not controlled at first, are impossible to control later, an enemy, if neglected in the beginning, later becomes insurmountable.

39The foundation of all the demigods is Lord Viṣṇu, who lives and is worshiped wherever there are religious principles, traditional culture, the Vedas, cows, brāhmaṇas, austerities, and sacrifices with proper remuneration.

40O King, we, who are your adherents in all respects, shall therefore kill the Vedic brāhmaṇas, the persons engaged in offering sacrifices and austerities, and the cows that supply milk, from which clarified butter is obtained for the ingredients of sacrifice.

41The brāhmaṇas, the cows, Vedic knowledge, austerity, truthfulness, control of the mind and senses, faith, mercy, tolerance and sacrifice are the different parts of the body of Lord Viṣṇu, and they are the paraphernalia for a godly civilization.

42Lord Viṣṇu, the Supersoul within the core of everyone's heart, is the ultimate enemy of the asuras and is therefore known as asura-dviṭ. He is the leader of all the demigods because all the demigods, including Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā, exist under His protection. The great saintly persons, sages and Vaiṣṇavas also depend upon Him. To persecute the Vaiṣṇavas, therefore, is the only way to kill Viṣṇu.

43Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thus, having considered the instructions of his bad ministers, Kāṁsa, who was bound by the laws of Yamarāja and devoid of good intelligence because he was a demon, decided to persecute the saintly persons, the brāhmaṇas, as the only way to achieve his own good fortune.

44These demons, the followers of Kāṁsa, were expert at persecuting others, especially the Vaiṣṇavas, and could assume any form they desired. After giving these demons permission to go everywhere and persecute the saintly persons, Kāṁsa entered his palace.

45Surcharged with passion and ignorance and not knowing what was good or bad for them, the asuras, for whom impending death was waiting, began the persecution of the saintly persons.

46My dear King, when a man persecutes great souls, all his benedictions of longevity, beauty, fame, religion, blessings and promotion to higher planets will be destroyed.

SB 10.5: The Meeting of Nanda Mahārāja and Vasudeva

As described in this chapter, Nanda Mahārāja very gorgeously performed the birth ceremony for his newborn child. Then he went to Kāṁsa to pay taxes due and met his intimate friend Vasudeva.

There was great jubilation all over Vṛndāvana due to Kṛṣṇa's birth. Everyone was overwhelmed with joy. Therefore the King of Vraja, Mahārāja Nanda, wanted to perform the birth ceremony for his child, and this he did. During this great festival, Nanda Mahārāja gave in charity to all present whatever they desired. After the festival, Nanda Mahārāja put the cowherd men in charge of protecting Gokula, and then he went to Mathurā to pay official taxes to Kāṁsa. In Mathurā, Nanda Mahārāja met Vasudeva. Nanda Mahārāja and Vasudeva were brothers, and Vasudeva praised Nanda Mahārāja's good fortune because he knew that Kṛṣṇa had accepted Nanda Mahārāja as His father. When Vasudeva inquired from Nanda Mahārāja about the welfare of the child, Nanda Mahārāja informed him all about Vṛndāvana, and Vasudeva was very much satisfied by this, although he expressed his grief because Devakī's many children had been killed by Kāṁsa. Nanda Mahārāja consoled Vasudeva by saying that everything happens according to destiny and that one who knows this is not aggrieved. Expecting many disturbances in Gokula, Vasudeva then advised Nanda Mahārāja not to wait in Mathurā, but to return to Vṛndāvana as soon as possible. Thus Nanda Mahārāja took leave of Vasudeva and returned to Vṛndāvana with the other cowherd men on their bullock carts.

1-2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Nanda Mahārāja was naturally very magnanimous, and when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared as his son, he was overwhelmed by jubilation. Therefore, after bathing and purifying himself and dressing himself properly, he invited brāhmaṇas who knew how to recite Vedic mantras. After having these qualified brāhmaṇas recite auspicious Vedic hymns, he

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arranged to have the Vedic birth ceremony celebrated for his newborn child according to the rules and regulations, and he also arranged for worship of the demigods and forefathers.

3Nanda Mahārāja gave two million cows, completely decorated with cloth and jewels, in charity to the brāhmaṇas. He also gave them seven hills of grain, covered with jewels and with cloth decorated with golden embroidery.

4O King, by the passing of time, land and other material possessions are purified; by bathing, the body is purified; and by being cleansed, unclean things are purified. By purificatory ceremonies, birth is purified; by austerity, the senses are purified; and by worship and charity offered to the brāhmaṇas, material possessions are purified. By satisfaction, the mind is purified; and by self-realization, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the soul is purified.

5The brāhmaṇas recited auspicious Vedic hymns, which purified the environment by their vibration. The experts in reciting old histories like the Purāṇas, the experts in reciting the histories of royal families, and general reciters all chanted, while singers sang and many kinds of musical instruments, like bherīs and dundubhis, played in accompaniment.

6Vraja-pura, the residence of Nanda Mahārāja, was fully decorated with varieties of festoons and flags, and in different places, gates were made with varieties of flower garlands, pieces of cloth, and mango leaves. The courtyards, the gates near the roads, and everything within the rooms of the houses were perfectly swept and washed with water.

7The cows, the bulls and the calves were thoroughly smeared with a mixture of turmeric and oil, mixed with varieties of minerals. Their heads were bedecked with peacock feathers, and they were garlanded and covered with cloth and golden ornaments.

8O King Parīkṣit, the cowherd men dressed very opulently with valuable ornaments and garments such as coats and turbans. Decorated in this way and carrying various presentations in their hands, they approached the house of Nanda Mahārāja.

9The gopī wives of the cowherd men were very pleased to hear that mother Yaśodā had given birth to a son, and they began to decorate themselves very nicely with proper dresses, ornaments, black ointment for the eyes, and so on.

10Their lotuslike faces extraordinarily beautiful, being decorated with saffron and newly grown kuṅkuma, the wives of the cowherd men hurried to the house of mother Yaśodā with presentations in their hands. Because of natural beauty, the wives had full hips and full breasts, which moved as they hurried along.

11In the ears of the gopīs were brilliantly polished jeweled earrings, and from their necks hung metal lockets. Their hands were decorated with bangles, their dresses were of varied colors, and from their hair, flowers fell onto the street like showers. Thus while going to the house of Mahārāja Nanda, the gopīs, their earrings, breasts and garlands moving, were brilliantly beautiful.

12Offering blessings to the newborn child, Kṛṣṇa, the wives and daughters of the cowherd men said, “May You become the King of Vraja and long maintain all its inhabitants.” They sprinkled a mixture of turmeric powder, oil and water upon the birthless Supreme Lord and offered their prayers.

13Now that the all-pervading, unlimited Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of the cosmic manifestation, had arrived within the estate of Mahārāja Nanda, various types of musical instruments resounded to celebrate the great festival.

14In gladness, the cowherd men enjoyed the great festival by splashing one another's bodies with a mixture of curd, condensed milk, butter and water. They threw butter on one another and smeared it on one another's bodies.

15-16The great-minded Mahārāja Nanda gave clothing, ornaments and cows in charity to the cowherd men in order to please Lord Viṣṇu, and thus he improved the condition of his own son in all respects. He distributed charity to the sūtas, the māgadhas, the vandīs, and men of all other professions, according to their educational qualifications, and satisfied everyone's desires.

17The most fortunate Rohiṇī, the mother of Baladeva, was honored by Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, and thus she also dressed gorgeously and decorated herself with a necklace, a garland and other ornaments. She was busy wandering here and there to receive the women who were guests at the festival.

18O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the home of Nanda Mahārāja is eternally the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His transcendental qualities and is therefore always naturally endowed with the opulence of all wealth. Yet beginning from Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance there, it became the place for the pastimes of the goddess of fortune.

19Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Thereafter, my dear King Parīkṣit, O best protector of the Kuru dynasty, Nanda Mahārāja appointed the local cowherd men to protect Gokula and then went to Mathurā to pay the yearly taxes to King Kāṁsa.

20When Vasudeva heard that Nanda Mahārāja, his very dear friend and brother, had come to Mathurā and already paid the taxes to Kāṁsa, he went to Nanda Mahārāja's residence.

21When Nanda Mahārāja heard that Vasudeva had come, he was overwhelmed with love and affection, being as pleased as if his body had regained its life. Seeing Vasudeva suddenly present, he got up and embraced him with both arms.

22O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, having thus been received and welcomed by Nanda Mahārāja with honor, Vasudeva sat down very peacefully and inquired about his own two sons because of intense love for them.

23My dear brother Nanda Mahārāja, at an advanced age you had no son at all and were hopeless of having one. Therefore, that you now have a son is a sign of great fortune.

24It is also by good fortune that I am seeing you. Having obtained this opportunity, I feel as if I have taken birth again. Even though one is present in this world, to meet with intimate friends and dear relatives in this material world is extremely difficult.

25Many planks and sticks, unable to stay together, are carried away by the force of a river's waves. Similarly, although we are intimately related with friends and family members, we are unable to stay together because of our varied past deeds and the waves of time.

26My dear friend Nanda Mahārāja, in the place where you are living with your friends, is the forest favorable for the animals, the cows? I hope there is no disease or inconvenience. The place must be full of water, grass and other plants.

27My son Baladeva, being raised by you and your wife, Yaśodādevī, considers you His father and mother. Is He living very peacefully in your home with His real mother, Rohiṇī?

28When one's friends and relatives are properly situated, one's religion, economic

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development and sense gratification, as described in the Vedic literatures, are beneficial. Otherwise, if one's friends and relatives are in distress, these three cannot offer any happiness.

29Nanda Mahārāja said: Alas, King Kāṁsa killed so many of your children, born of Devakī. And your one daughter, the youngest child of all, entered the heavenly planets.

30Every man is certainly controlled by destiny, which determines the results of one's fruitive activities. In other words, one has a son or daughter because of unseen destiny, and when the son or daughter is no longer present, this also is due to unseen destiny. Destiny is the ultimate controller of everyone. One who knows this is never bewildered.

31Vasudeva said to Nanda Mahārāja: Now, my dear brother, since you have paid the annual taxes to Kāṁsa and have also seen me, do not stay in this place for many days. It is better to return to Gokula, since I know that there may be some disturbances there.

32Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After Vasudeva advised Nanda Mahārāja in this way, Nanda Mahārāja and his associates, the cowherd men, took permission from Vasudeva, yoked their bulls to the bullock carts, and started riding for Gokula.

SB 10.6: The Killing of the Demon Pūtanā

A summary of the Sixth Chapter is as follows: when Nanda Mahārāja, following the instructions of Vasudeva, was returning home, he saw a great demoniac woman lying on the road, and then he heard about her death.

While Nanda Mahārāja, the King of Vraja, was thinking about Vasudeva's words concerning disturbances in Gokula, he was a little afraid and sought shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Hari. Meanwhile, Kāṁsa sent to the village of Gokula a Rākṣasī named Pūtanā, who was wandering here and there killing small babies. Of course, wherever there is no Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is the danger of such Rākṣasīs, but since the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself was in Gokula, Pūtanā could expect nothing there but her own death.

One day, Pūtanā arrived from outer space in Gokula, the home of Nanda Mahārāja, and by displaying her mystic power, she assumed the disguise of a very beautiful woman. Taking courage, she immediately entered Kṛṣṇa's bedroom without anyone's permission; by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, no one forbade her to enter the house or the room, because that was Kṛṣṇa's desire. The baby Kṛṣṇa, who resembled a fire covered by ashes, looked upon Pūtanā and thought that He would have to kill this demon, the beautiful woman. Enchanted by the influence of Yoga-māyā and the Personality of Godhead, Pūtanā took Kṛṣṇa upon her lap, and neither Rohiṇī nor Yaśodā objected. The demon Pūtanā offered her breast for Kṛṣṇa to suck, but her breast was smeared with poison. The child Kṛṣṇa, therefore, squeezed Pūtanā's breast so severely that in unbearable pain she had to assume her original body and fell to the ground. Then Kṛṣṇa began playing on her breast just like a small child. When Kṛṣṇa was playing, the *gopīs* were pacified and took the child away to their own laps. After this incident, the *gopīs* took precautions because of the attack of the Rākṣasī. Mother Yaśodā gave the child her breast to suck and then laid Him in bed.

Meanwhile, Nanda and his associates the cowherd men returned from Mathurā, and when they saw the great dead body of Pūtanā, they were struck with wonder. Everyone was astonished that Vasudeva had foretold this mishap, and they praised Vasudeva for his power of foresight. The inhabitants of Vraja cut the gigantic body of Pūtanā into pieces, but because Kṛṣṇa had sucked her breast, she had been freed from all sins, and therefore when the cowherd men burned the pieces of her body in a fire, the smoke filled the air with a very pleasing fragrance.

Ultimately, although Pūtanā had desired to kill Kṛṣṇa, she attained the Lord's abode. From this incident we gain the instruction that if one is attached to Kṛṣṇa somehow or other, even as an enemy, one ultimately attains success. What then is to be said of devotees who are naturally attached to Kṛṣṇa in love? When the inhabitants of Vraja heard about the killing of Pūtanā and the welfare of the child, they were very much satisfied. Nanda Mahārāja took the baby Kṛṣṇa on his lap and was filled with satisfaction.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, while Nanda Mahārāja was on the way home, he considered that what Vasudeva had said could not be false or useless. There must have been some danger of disturbances in Gokula. As Nanda Mahārāja thought about the danger for his beautiful son, Kṛṣṇa, he was afraid, and he took shelter at the lotus feet of the supreme controller.

2While Nanda Mahārāja was returning to Gokula, the same fierce Pūtanā whom Kaṁsa had previously engaged to kill babies was wandering about in the towns, cities and villages, doing her nefarious duty.

3My dear King, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing [śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ], there cannot be any danger from bad elements. Therefore there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present.

4Once upon a time, Pūtanā Rākṣasī, who could move according to her desire and was wandering in outer space, converted herself by mystic power into a very beautiful woman and thus entered Gokula, the abode of Nanda Mahārāja.

5-6Her hips were full, her breasts were large and firm, seeming to overburden her slim waist, and she was dressed very nicely. Her hair, adorned with a garland of mallikāflowers, was scattered about her beautiful face. Her earrings were brilliant, and as she smiled very attractively, glancing upon everyone, her beauty drew the attention of all the inhabitants of Vraja, especially the men. When the gopīs saw her, they thought that the beautiful goddess of fortune, holding a lotus flower in her hand, had come to see her husband, Kṛṣṇa.

7While searching for small children, Pūtanā, whose business was to kill them, entered the house of Nanda Mahārāja unobstructed, having been sent by the superior potency of the Lord. Without asking anyone's permission, she entered Nanda Mahārāja's room, where she saw the child sleeping in bed, His unlimited power covered like a powerful fire covered by ashes. She could understand that this child was not ordinary, but was meant to kill all demons.

8Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-pervading Supersoul, lying on the bed, understood that Pūtanā, a witch who was expert in killing small children, had come to kill Him. Therefore, as if afraid of her, Kṛṣṇa closed His eyes. Thus Pūtanā took upon her lap Him who was to be her own annihilation, just as an unintelligent person places a sleeping snake on his lap, thinking the snake to be a rope.

9Pūtanā Rākṣasī's heart was fierce and cruel, but she looked like a very affectionate mother. Thus she resembled a sharp sword in a soft sheath. Although seeing her within the room, Yaśodā and Rohiṇī, overwhelmed by her beauty, did not stop her, but remained silent because she treated the child like a mother.

10On that very spot, the fiercely dangerous Rākṣasī took Kṛṣṇa on her lap and pushed her breast into His mouth. The nipple of her breast was smeared with a dangerous, immediately effective poison, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, becoming very angry at her,

took hold of her breast, squeezed it very hard with both hands, and sucked out both the poison and her life.

11Unbearably pressed in every vital point, the demon Pūtanā began to cry, “Please leave me, leave me! Suck my breast no longer!” Perspiring, her eyes wide open and her arms and legs flailing, she cried very loudly again and again.

12As Pūtanā screamed loudly and forcefully, the earth with its mountains, and outer space with its planets, trembled. The lower planets and all directions vibrated, and people fell down, fearing that thunderbolts were falling upon them.

13In this way the demon Pūtanā, very much aggrieved because her breast was being attacked by Kṛṣṇa, lost her life. O King Parīkṣit, opening her mouth wide and spreading her arms, legs and hair, she fell down in the pasturing ground in her original form as a Rākṣasī, as Vṛtrāsura had fallen when killed by the thunderbolt of Indra.

14O King Parīkṣit, when the gigantic body of Pūtanā fell to the ground, it smashed all the trees within a limit of twelve miles. Appearing in a gigantic body, she was certainly extraordinary.

15-17The Rākṣasī’s mouth was full of teeth, each resembling the front of a plow, her nostrils were deep like mountain caves, and her breasts resembled big slabs of stone fallen from a hill. Her scattered hair was the color of copper. The sockets of her eyes appeared like deep blind wells, her fearful thighs resembled the banks of a river, her arms, legs and feet seemed like big bridges, and her abdomen appeared like a dried-up lake. The hearts, ears and heads of the cowherd men and women were already shocked by the Rākṣasī’s screaming, and when they saw the fierce wonder of her body, they were even more frightened.

18Without fear, the child Kṛṣṇa was playing on the upper portion of Pūtanā Rākṣasī’s breast, and when the gopīs saw the child’s wonderful activities, they immediately came forward with great jubilation and picked Him up.

19Thereafter, mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇī, along with the other elderly gopīs, waved about the switch of a cow to give full protection to the child Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

20The child was thoroughly washed with cow urine and then smeared with the dust raised by the movements of the cows. Then different names of the Lord were applied with cow dung on twelve different parts of His body, beginning with the forehead, as done in applying tilaka. In this way, the child was given protection.

21The gopīs first executed the process of ācamana, drinking a sip of water from the right hand. They purified their bodies and hands with the nyāsa-mantra and then applied the same mantra upon the body of the child.

22-23[Śukadeva Gosvāmī informed Mahārāja Parīkṣit that the gopīs, following the proper system, protected Kṛṣṇa, their child, with this mantra.] May Aja protect Your legs, may Maṇimān protect Your knees, Yaḥṣa Your thighs, Acyuta the upper part of Your waist, and Hayagrīva Your abdomen. May Keśava protect Your heart, Īśa Your chest, the sun-god Your neck, Viṣṇu Your arms, Urukrama Your face, and Īśvara Your head. May Cakrī protect You from the front; may Śrī Hari, Gadādhārī, the carrier of the club, protect You from the back; and may the carrier of the bow, who is known as the enemy of Madhu, and Lord Ajana, the carrier of the sword, protect Your two sides. May Lord Urugāya, the carrier of the conchshell, protect You from all corners; may Upendra protect You from above; may Garuḍa protect You on the ground; and may Lord Haladhara, the Supreme Person, protect You on all sides.

24May Hṛṣīkeśa protect Your senses, and Nārāyaṇa Your life air. May the master of Śvetadvīpa protect the core of Your heart, and may Lord Yogeśvara protect Your mind.

25-26May Lord Pṛṣṇigarbha protect Your intelligence, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead Your soul. While You are playing, may Govinda protect You, and while You are sleeping may Mādhava protect You. May Lord Vaikuṅṭha protect You while You are walking, and may Lord Nārāyaṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, protect You while You are sitting. Similarly, may Lord Yajñabhuk, the fearful enemy of all evil planets, always protect You while You enjoy life.

27-29The evil witches known as Dākinīs, Yātudhānīs and Kuṣmāṇḍas are the greatest enemies of children, and the evil spirits like Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Vināyakas, as well as witches like Koṭarā, Revatī, Jyeṣṭhā, Pūtanā and Mātṛkā, are always ready to give trouble to the body, the life air and the senses, causing loss of memory, madness and bad dreams. Like the most experienced evil stars, they all create great disturbances, especially for children, but one can vanquish them simply by uttering Lord Viṣṇu's name, for when Lord Viṣṇu's name resounds, all of them become afraid and go away.

30Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: All the gopīs, headed by mother Yaśodā, were bound by maternal affection. After they thus chanted mantras to protect the child, mother Yaśodā gave the child the nipple of her breast to suck and then got Him to lie down on His bed.

31Meanwhile, all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, returned from Mathurā, and when they saw on the way the gigantic body of Pūtanā lying dead, they were struck with great wonder.

32Nanda Mahārāja and the other gopas exclaimed: My dear friends, you must know that Ānakadundubhi, Vasudeva, has become a great saint or a master of mystic power. Otherwise how could he have foreseen this calamity and predicted it to us?

33The inhabitants of Vraja cut the gigantic body of Pūtanā into pieces with the help of axes. Then they threw the pieces far away, covered them with wood and burned them to ashes.

34Because of Kṛṣṇa's having sucked the breast of the Rākṣasī Pūtanā, when Kṛṣṇa killed her she was immediately freed of all material contamination. Her sinful reactions automatically vanished, and therefore when her gigantic body was being burnt, the smoke emanating from her body was fragrant like aguru incense.

35-36Pūtanā was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Kṛṣṇa; but because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement. What then is to be said of those who had natural devotion and affection for Kṛṣṇa as mothers and who offered Him their breasts to suck or offered something very dear, as a mother offers something to a child?

37-38The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is always situated within the core of the heart of the pure devotee, and He is always offered prayers by such worshipable personalities as Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. Because Kṛṣṇa embraced Pūtanā's body with great pleasure and sucked her breast, although she was a great witch, she attained the position of a mother in the transcendental world and thus achieved the highest perfection. What then is to be said of the cows whose nipples Kṛṣṇa sucked with great pleasure and who offered their milk very jubilantly with affection exactly like that of a mother?

39-40The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the bestower of many benedictions,

including liberation [kaivalya], or oneness with the Brahman effulgence. For that Personality of Godhead, the gopīs always felt maternal love, and Kṛṣṇa sucked their breasts with full satisfaction. Therefore, because of their relationship as mother and son, although the gopīs were engaged in various family activities, one should never think that they returned to this material world after leaving their bodies.

41Upon smelling the fragrance of the smoke emanating from Pūtanā's burning body, many inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi in distant places were astonished. "Where is this fragrance coming from?" they asked. Thus they went to the spot where Pūtanā's body was being burnt.

42When the inhabitants of Vraja who had come from distant places heard the whole story of how Pūtanā had come and then been killed by Kṛṣṇa, they were certainly astonished, and they offered their blessings to the child for His wonderful deed of killing Pūtanā. Nanda Mahārāja, of course, was very much obliged to Vasudeva, who had foreseen the incident, and simply thanked him, thinking how wonderful Vasudeva was.

43O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Kurus, Nanda Mahārāja was very liberal and simple. He immediately took his son Kṛṣṇa on his lap as if Kṛṣṇa had returned from death, and by formally smelling his son's head, Nanda Mahārāja undoubtedly enjoyed transcendental bliss.

44Any person who hears with faith and devotion about how Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, killed Pūtanā, and who thus invests his hearing in such childhood pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, certainly attains attachment for Govinda, the supreme, original person.

SB 10.7: The Killing of the Demon Tṛṇāvarta

In this chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of breaking the cart (*śakaṭa-bhaṣjana*), killing the *asura* known as Tṛṇāvarta, and demonstrating the entire universe within His mouth are especially described.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī saw that Mahārāja Parīkṣit was eagerly waiting to hear about Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes as a child, he was very much pleased, and he continued to speak. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa was only three months old and was just trying to turn backside up, before He even attempted to crawl, mother Yaśodā wanted to observe a ritualistic ceremony with her friends for the good fortune of the child. Such a ritualistic ceremony is generally performed with ladies who also have small children. When mother Yaśodā saw that Kṛṣṇa was falling asleep, because of other engagements she put the child underneath a household cart, called *śakaṭa*, and while the child was sleeping, she engaged herself in other business pertaining to the auspicious ritualistic ceremony. Underneath the cart was a cradle, and mother Yaśodā placed the child in that cradle. The child was sleeping, but suddenly He awakened and, as usual for a child, began to kick His small legs. This kicking shook the cart, which collapsed with a great sound, breaking completely and spilling all its contents. Children who were playing nearby immediately informed mother Yaśodā that the cart had broken, and therefore she hastily arrived there in great anxiety with the other *gopīs*. Mother Yaśodā immediately took the child on her lap and allowed Him to suck her breast. Then various types of Vedic ritualistic ceremonies were performed with the help of the *brāhmaṇas*. Not knowing the real identity of the child, the *brāhmaṇas* showered the child with blessings.

Another day, when mother Yaśodā was sitting with her child on her lap, she suddenly observed that he had assumed the weight of the entire universe. She was so astonished that she had to put the child down, and in the meantime Tṛṇāvarta, one of the servants of Kaṁsa, appeared there as a whirlwind and took the child away. The whole tract of land known as

Gokula became surcharged with dust, no one could see where the child had been taken, and all the *gopīs* were overwhelmed because He had been taken away in the dust storm. But up in the sky, the *asura*, being overburdened by the child, could not carry the child far away, although he also could not drop the child because the child had caught him so tightly that it was difficult for him to separate the child from his body. Thus Tṛṇāvarta himself fell down from a very great height, the child grasping him tightly by the shoulder, and immediately died. The demon having fallen, the *gopīs* picked the child up and delivered Him to the lap of mother Yaśodā. Thus mother Yaśodā was struck with wonder, but because of Yoga-māyā's influence, no one could understand who Kṛṣṇa was and what had actually happened. Rather, everyone began to praise fortune for the child's having been saved from such a calamity. Nanda Mahārāja, of course, was thinking of the wonderful foretelling of Vasudeva and began to praise him as a great *yogī*. Later, when the child was on the lap of mother Yaśodā, the child yawned, and mother Yaśodā could see within His mouth the entire universal manifestation.

1-2King Parīkṣit said: My lord, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, all the various activities exhibited by the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are certainly pleasing to the ear and to the mind. Simply by one's hearing of these activities, the dirty things in one's mind immediately vanish. Generally we are reluctant to hear about the activities of the Lord, but Kṛṣṇa's childhood activities are so attractive that they are automatically pleasing to the mind and ear. Thus one's attachment for hearing about material things, which is the root cause of material existence, vanishes, and one gradually develops devotional service to the Supreme Lord, attachment for Him, and friendship with devotees who give us the contribution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you think it fit, kindly speak about those activities of the Lord.

3Please describe other pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality, who appeared on this planet earth, imitating a human child and performing wonderful activities like killing Pūtanā.

4Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When mother Yaśodā's baby was slanting His body to attempt to rise and turn around, this attempt was observed by a Vedic ceremony. In such a ceremony, called *utthāna*, which is performed when a child is due to leave the house for the first time, the child is properly bathed. Just after Kṛṣṇa turned three months old, mother Yaśodā celebrated this ceremony with other women of the neighborhood. On that day, there was a conjunction of the moon with the constellation Rohiṇī. As the brāhmaṇas joined by chanting Vedic hymns and professional musicians also took part, this great ceremony was observed by mother Yaśodā.

5After completing the bathing ceremony for the child, mother Yaśodā received the brāhmaṇas by worshiping them with proper respect and giving them ample food grains and other eatables, clothing, desirable cows, and garlands. The brāhmaṇas properly chanted Vedic hymns to observe the auspicious ceremony, and when they finished and mother Yaśodā saw that the child felt sleepy, she lay down on the bed with the child until He was peacefully asleep.

6The liberal mother Yaśodā, absorbed in celebrating the *utthāna* ceremony, was busy receiving guests, worshiping them with all respect and offering them clothing, cows, garlands and grains. Thus she could not hear the child crying for His mother. At that time, the child Kṛṣṇa, demanding to drink the milk of His mother's breast, angrily threw His legs upward.

7Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was lying down underneath the handcart in one corner of the courtyard, and although His little legs were as soft as leaves, when He struck the cart with His legs, it turned over violently and collapsed. The wheels separated from the axle, the hubs and spokes fell apart, and the pole of the handcart broke. On the cart there were many little utensils made of various metals, and all of them scattered hither and thither.

8When mother Yaśodā and the other ladies who had assembled for the uthāna festival, and all the men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, saw the wonderful situation, they began to wonder how the handcart had collapsed by itself. They began to wander here and there, trying to find the cause, but were unable to do so.

9The assembled cowherd men and ladies began to contemplate how this thing had happened. “Is it the work of some demon or evil planet?” they asked. At that time, the small children present asserted that the cart had been kicked apart by the baby Kṛṣṇa. As soon as the crying baby had kicked the cart’s wheel, the cart had collapsed. There was no doubt about it.

10The assembled gopīs and gopas, unaware that Kṛṣṇa is always unlimited, could not believe that baby Kṛṣṇa had such inconceivable power. They could not believe the statements of the children, and therefore they neglected these statements as being childish talk.

11Thinking that some bad planet had attacked Kṛṣṇa, mother Yaśodā picked up the crying child and allowed Him to suck her breast. Then she called for experienced brāhmaṇas to chant Vedic hymns and perform an auspicious ritualistic ceremony.

12After the strong, stout cowherd men assembled the pots and paraphernalia on the handcart and set it up as before, the brāhmaṇas performed a ritualistic ceremony with a fire sacrifice to appease the bad planet, and then, with rice grains, kuśa, water and curd, they worshiped the Supreme Lord.

13-15When brāhmaṇas are free from envy, untruthfulness, unnecessary pride, grudges, disturbance by the opulence of others, and false prestige, their blessings never go in vain. Considering this, Nanda Mahārāja soberly took Kṛṣṇa on his lap and invited such truthful brāhmaṇas to perform a ritualistic ceremony according to the holy hymns of the Sāma Veda, Ṛg Veda and Yajur Veda. Then, while the hymns were being chanted, he bathed the child with water mixed with pure herbs, and after performing a fire ceremony, he sumptuously fed all the brāhmaṇas with first-class grains and other food.

16Nanda Mahārāja, for the sake of the affluence of his own son Kṛṣṇa, gave the brāhmaṇas cows fully decorated with garments, flower garlands and gold necklaces. These cows, fully qualified to give ample milk, were given to the brāhmaṇas in charity, and the brāhmaṇas accepted them and bestowed blessings upon the whole family, and especially upon Kṛṣṇa.

17The brāhmaṇas, who were completely expert in chanting the Vedic hymns, were all yogīs fully equipped with mystic powers. Whatever blessings they spoke were certainly never fruitless.

18One day, a year after Kṛṣṇa’s appearance, mother Yaśodā was patting her son on her lap. But suddenly she felt the child to be heavier than a mountain peak, and she could no longer bear His weight.

19Feeling the child to be as heavy as the entire universe and therefore being anxious, thinking that perhaps the child was being attacked by some other ghost or demon, the astonished mother Yaśodā put the child down on the ground and began to think of Nārāyaṇa. Foreseeing disturbances, she called for the brāhmaṇas to counteract this heaviness, and then she engaged in her other household affairs. She had no alternative than to remember the lotus feet of Nārāyaṇa, for she could not understand that Kṛṣṇa was the original source of everything.

20While the child was sitting on the ground, a demon named Tṛṇāvarta, who was a servant of Kāṁsa’s, came there as a whirlwind, at Kāṁsa’s instigation, and very easily carried the child

away into the air.

21Covering the whole land of Gokula with particles of dust, that demon, acting as a strong whirlwind, covered everyone's vision and began vibrating everywhere with a greatly fearful sound.

22For a moment, the whole pasturing ground was overcast with dense darkness from the dust storm, and mother Yaśodā was unable to find her son where she had placed Him.

23Because of the bits of sand thrown about by Tṛṇāvarta, people could not see themselves or anyone else, and thus they were illusioned and disturbed.

24Because of the dust storm stirred up by the strong whirlwind, mother Yaśodā could find no trace of her son, nor could she understand why. Thus she fell down on the ground like a cow who has lost her calf and began to lament very pitifully.

25When the force of the dust storm and the winds subsided, Yaśodā's friends, the other gopīs, approached mother Yaśodā, hearing her pitiful crying. Not seeing Kṛṣṇa present, they too felt very much aggrieved and joined mother Yaśodā in crying, their eyes full of tears.

26Having assumed the form of a forceful whirlwind, the demon Tṛṇāvarta took Kṛṣṇa very high in the sky, but when Kṛṣṇa became heavier than the demon, the demon had to stop his force and could go no further.

27Because of Kṛṣṇa's weight, Tṛṇāvarta considered Him to be like a great mountain or a hunk of iron. But because Kṛṣṇa had caught the demon's neck, the demon was unable to throw Him off. He therefore thought of the child as wonderful, since he could neither bear the child nor cast aside the burden.

28With Kṛṣṇa grasping him by the throat, Tṛṇāvarta choked, unable to make even a sound or even to move his hands and legs. His eyes popping out, the demon lost his life and fell, along with the little boy, down to the ground of Vraja.

29While the gopīs who had gathered were crying for Kṛṣṇa, the demon fell from the sky onto a big slab of stone, his limbs dislocated, as if he had been pierced by the arrow of Lord Śiva like Tripurāsura.

30The gopīs immediately picked Kṛṣṇa up from the chest of the demon and delivered Him, free from all inauspiciousness, to mother Yaśodā. Because the child, although taken into the sky by the demon, was unhurt and now free from all danger and misfortune, the gopīs and cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, were extremely happy.

31It is most astonishing that although this innocent child was taken away by the Rākṣasa to be eaten, He has returned without having been killed or even injured. Because this demon was envious, cruel and sinful, he has been killed for his own sinful activities. This is the law of nature. An innocent devotee is always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and a sinful person is always vanquished for his sinful life.

32Nanda Mahārāja and the others said: We must previously have performed austerities for a very long time, worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, performed pious activities for public life, constructing public roads and wells, and also given charity, as a result of which this boy, although faced with death, has returned to give happiness to His relatives.

33Having seen all these incidents in Bṛhadvana, Nanda Mahārāja became more and more

astonished, and he remembered the words spoken to him by Vasudeva in Mathurā.

34One day mother Yaśodā, having taken Kṛṣṇa up and placed Him on her lap, was feeding Him milk from her breast with maternal affection. The milk was flowing from her breast, and the child was drinking it.

35-36O King Parīkṣit, when the child Kṛṣṇa was almost finished drinking His mother's milk and mother Yaśodā was touching Him and looking at His beautiful, brilliantly smiling face, the baby yawned, and mother Yaśodā saw in His mouth the whole sky, the higher planetary system and the earth, the luminaries in all directions, the sun, the moon, fire, air, the seas, islands, mountains, rivers, forests, and all kinds of living entities, moving and nonmoving.

37When mother Yaśodā saw the whole universe within the mouth of her child, her heart began to throb, and in astonishment she wanted to close her restless eyes.

SB 10.8: Lord Kṛṣṇa Shows the Universal Form Within His Mouth

The summary of the Eighth Chapter is as follows. This chapter describes the ceremony of giving a name to Kṛṣṇa. It also describes His crawling, His playing with the cows, and His eating earth and again showing the universal form to His mother.

One day, Vasudeva sent for Garga Muni, the family priest of the *yadu-vamśa*, and thus Garga Muni went to the house of Nanda Mahārāja, who received him very well and requested him to give names to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Garga Muni, of course, reminded Nanda Mahārāja that Kaṁsa was looking for the son of Devakī and said that if he performed the ceremony very gorgeously, the ceremony would come to the notice of Kaṁsa, who would then suspect that Kṛṣṇa was the son of Devakī. Nanda Mahārāja therefore requested Garga Muni to perform this ceremony without anyone's knowledge, and Garga Muni did so. Because Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, increases the transcendental bliss of others, His name is Rāma, and because of His extraordinary strength, He is called Baladeva. He attracts the Yadus to follow His instructions, and therefore His name is Saṅkarṣaṇa. Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā, previously appeared in many other colors, such as white, red and yellow, and He had now assumed the color black. Because He was sometimes the son of Vasudeva, His name is Vāsudeva. According to His various activities and qualities, He has many other names. After thus informing Nanda Mahārāja and completing the name-giving ceremony, Garga Muni advised Nanda Mahārāja to protect his son very carefully and then departed.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī next described how the two children crawled, walked on Their small legs, played with the cows and calves, stole butter and other milk products and broke the butter pots. In this way, he described many naughty activities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The most wonderful of these occurred when Kṛṣṇa's playmates complained to mother Yaśodā that Kṛṣṇa was eating earth. Mother Yaśodā wanted to open Kṛṣṇa's mouth to see the evidence so that she could chastise Him. Sometimes she assumed the position of a chastising mother, and at the next moment she was overwhelmed with maternal love. After describing all this to Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, at Mahārāja Parīkṣit's request, praised the fortune of mother Yaśodā and Nanda. Nanda and Yaśodā were formerly Droṇa and Dharā, and by the order of Brahmā they came to this earth and had the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their son.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the priest of the Yadu dynasty, namely Garga Muni, who was highly elevated in austerity and penance, was then inspired by Vasudeva to go see Nanda Mahārāja at his home.

2When Nanda Mahārāja saw Garga Muni present at his home, Nanda was so pleased that he

stood up to receive him with folded hands. Although seeing Garga Muni with his eyes, Nanda Mahārāja could appreciate that Garga Muni was adhokṣaja; that is, he was not an ordinary person seen by material senses.

3When Garga Muni had been properly received as a guest and was very comfortably seated, Nanda Mahārāja submitted with gentle and submissive words: Dear sir, because you are a devotee, you are full in everything. Yet my duty is to serve you. Kindly order me. What can I do for you?

4O my lord, O great devotee, persons like you move from one place to another not for their own interests but for the sake of poor-hearted gr̥hasthas [householders]. Otherwise they have no interest in going from one place to another.

5O great saintly person, you have compiled the astrological knowledge by which one can understand past and present unseen things. By the strength of this knowledge, any human being can understand what he has done in his past life and how it affects his present life. This is known to you.

6My lord, you are the best of the brāhmaṇas, especially because you are fully aware of the jyotiḥ-śāstra, the astrological science. Therefore you are naturally the spiritual master of every human being. This being so, since you have kindly come to my house, kindly execute the reformatory activities for my two sons.

7Garga Muni said: My dear Nanda Mahārāja, I am the priestly guide of the Yadu dynasty. This is known everywhere. Therefore, if I perform the purificatory process for your sons, Kaṁsa will consider Them the sons of Devakī.

8-9Kaṁsa is both a great diplomat and a very sinful man. Therefore, having heard from Yogamāyā, the daughter of Devakī, that the child who will kill him has already been born somewhere else, having heard that the eighth pregnancy of Devakī could not bring forth a female child, and having understood your friendship with Vasudeva, Kaṁsa, upon hearing that the purificatory process has been performed by me, the priest of the Yadu dynasty, may certainly consider all these points and suspect that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Devakī and Vasudeva. Then he might take steps to kill Kṛṣṇa. That would be a catastrophe.

10Nanda Mahārāja said: My dear great sage, if you think that your performing this process of purification will make Kaṁsa suspicious, then secretly chant the Vedic hymns and perform the purifying process of second birth here in the cow shed of my house, without the knowledge of anyone else, even my relatives, for this process of purification is essential.

11Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Having thus been especially requested by Nanda Mahārāja to do that which he already desired to do, Garga Muni performed the name-giving ceremony for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in a solitary place.

12Garga Muni said: This child, the son of Rohiṇī, will give all happiness to His relatives and friends by His transcendental qualities. Therefore He will be known as Rāma. And because He will manifest extraordinary bodily strength, He will also be known as Bala. Moreover, because He unites two familiesVasudeva's family and the family of Nanda MahārājaHe will be known as Saṅkarṣaṇa.

13Your son Kṛṣṇa appears as an incarnation in every millennium. In the past, He assumed three different colorswhite, red and yellowand now He has appeared in a blackish color. [In another Dvāpara-yuga, He appeared (as Lord Rāmacandra) in the color of śuka, a parrot. All

such incarnations have now assembled in Kṛṣṇa.]

14For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore, those who are learned sometimes call this child Vāsudeva.

15For this son of yours there are many forms and names according to His transcendental qualities and activities. These are known to me, but people in general do not understand them.

16To increase the transcendental bliss of the cowherd men of Gokula, this child will always act auspiciously for you. And by His grace only, you will surpass all difficulties.

17O Nanda Mahārāja, as recorded in history, when there was an irregular, incapable government, Indra having been dethroned, and people were being harassed and disturbed by thieves, this child appeared in order to protect the people and enable them to flourish, and He curbed the rogues and thieves.

18Demons [asuras] cannot harm the demigods, who always have Lord Viṣṇu on their side. Similarly, any person or group attached to Kṛṣṇa is extremely fortunate. Because such persons are very much affectionate toward Kṛṣṇa, they cannot be defeated by demons like the associates of Kaṁsa [or by the internal enemies, the senses].

19In conclusion, therefore, O Nanda Mahārāja, this child of yours is as good as Nārāyaṇa. In His transcendental qualities, opulence, name, fame and influence, He is exactly like Nārāyaṇa. You should all raise this child very carefully and cautiously.

20Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After Garga Muni, having instructed Nanda Mahārāja about Kṛṣṇa, departed for his own home, Nanda Mahārāja was very pleased and considered himself full of all good fortune.

21After a short time passed, both brothers, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, began to crawl on the ground of Vraja with the strength of Their hands and knees and thus enjoy Their childhood play.

22When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, with the strength of Their legs, crawled in the muddy places created in Vraja by cow dung and cow urine, Their crawling resembled the crawling of serpents, and the sound of Their ankle bells was very charming. Very much pleased by the sound of other people's ankle bells, They used to follow these people as if going to Their mothers, but when They saw that these were other people, They became afraid and returned to Their real mothers, Yaśodā and Rohiṇī.

23Dressed with muddy earth mixed with cow dung and cow urine, the babies looked very beautiful, and when They went to Their mothers, both Yaśodā and Rohiṇī picked Them up with great affection, embraced Them and allowed Them to suck the milk flowing from their breasts. While sucking the breast, the babies smiled, and Their small teeth were visible. Their mothers, upon seeing those beautiful teeth, enjoyed great transcendental bliss.

24Within the house of Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd ladies would enjoy seeing the pastimes of the babies Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The babies would catch the ends of the calves' tails, and the calves would drag Them here and there. When the ladies saw these pastimes, they certainly stopped their household activities and laughed and enjoyed the incidents.

25When mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇī were unable to protect the babies from calamities threatened by horned cows, by fire, by animals with claws and teeth such as monkeys, dogs and cats, and by thorns, swords and other weapons on the ground, they were always in anxiety, and their household engagements were disturbed. At that time, they were fully

equipoised in the transcendental ecstasy known as the distress of material affection, for this was aroused within their minds.

26O King Parīkṣit, within a very short time both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa began to walk very easily in Gokula on Their legs, by Their own strength, without the need to crawl.

27Thereafter, Lord Kṛṣṇa, along with Balarāma, began to play with the other children of the cowherd men, thus awakening the transcendental bliss of the cowherd women.

28Observing the very attractive childish restlessness of Kṛṣṇa, all the gopīs in the neighborhood, to hear about Kṛṣṇa's activities again and again, would approach mother Yaśodā and speak to her as follows.

29“Our dear friend Yaśodā, your son sometimes comes to our houses before the milking of the cows and releases the calves, and when the master of the house becomes angry, your son merely smiles. Sometimes He devises some process by which He steals palatable curd, butter and milk, which He then eats and drinks. When the monkeys assemble, He divides it with them, and when the monkeys have their bellies so full that they won't take more, He breaks the pots. Sometimes, if He gets no opportunity to steal butter or milk from a house, He will be angry at the householders, and for His revenge He will agitate the small children by pinching them. Then, when the children begin crying, Kṛṣṇa will go away.

30“When the milk and curd are kept high on a swing hanging from the ceiling and Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma cannot reach it, They arrange to reach it by piling up various planks and turning upside down the mortar for grinding spices. Being quite aware of the contents of a pot, They poke holes in it. While the elderly gopīs go about their household affairs, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma sometimes go into a dark room, brightening the place with the valuable jewels and ornaments on Their bodies and taking advantage of this light by stealing.

31“When Kṛṣṇa is caught in His naughty activities, the master of the house will say to Him, ‘Oh, You are a thief,’ and artificially express anger at Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa will then reply, ‘I am not a thief. You are a thief.’ Sometimes, being angry, Kṛṣṇa passes urine and stool in a neat, clean place in our houses. But now, our dear friend Yaśodā, this expert thief is sitting before you like a very good boy.” Sometimes all the gopīs would look at Kṛṣṇa sitting there, His eyes fearful so that His mother would not chastise Him, and when they saw Kṛṣṇa's beautiful face, instead of chastising Him they would simply look upon His face and enjoy transcendental bliss. Mother Yaśodā would mildly smile at all this fun, and she would not want to chastise her blessed transcendental child.

32One day while Kṛṣṇa was playing with His small playmates, including Balarāma and other sons of the gopas, all His friends came together and lodged a complaint to mother Yaśodā. “Mother,” they submitted, “Kṛṣṇa has eaten earth.”

33Upon hearing this from Kṛṣṇa's playmates, mother Yaśodā, who was always full of anxiety over Kṛṣṇa's welfare, picked Kṛṣṇa up with her hands to look into His mouth and chastise Him. Her eyes fearful, she spoke to her son as follows.

34Dear Kṛṣṇa, why are You so restless that You have eaten dirt in a solitary place? This complaint has been lodged against You by all Your playmates, including Your elder brother, Balarāma. How is this?

35Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: My dear mother, I have never eaten dirt. All My friends complaining against Me are liars. If you think they are being truthful, you can directly look into My mouth

and examine it.

36Mother Yaśodā challenged Kṛṣṇa, “If You have not eaten earth, then open Your mouth wide.” When challenged by His mother in this way, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, to exhibit pastimes like a human child, opened His mouth. Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, who is full of all opulences, did not disturb His mother’s parental affection, His opulence was automatically displayed, for Kṛṣṇa’s opulence is never lost at any stage, but is manifest at the proper time.

37-39When Kṛṣṇa opened His mouth wide by the order of mother Yaśodā, she saw within His mouth all moving and nonmoving entities, outer space, and all directions, along with mountains, islands, oceans, the surface of the earth, the blowing wind, fire, the moon and the stars. She saw the planetary systems, water, light, air, sky, and creation by transformation of ahaṅkāra. She also saw the senses, the mind, sense perception, and the three qualities, goodness, passion and ignorance. She saw the time allotted for the living entities, she saw natural instinct and the reactions of karma, and she saw desires and different varieties of bodies, moving and nonmoving. Seeing all these aspects of the cosmic manifestation, along with herself and Vṛndāvana-dhāma, she became doubtful and fearful of her son’s nature.

40[Mother Yaśodā began to argue within herself:] Is this a dream, or is it an illusory creation by the external energy? Has this been manifested by my own intelligence, or is it some mystic power of my child?

41Therefore let me surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offer my obeisances unto Him, who is beyond the conception of human speculation, the mind, activities, words and arguments, who is the original cause of this cosmic manifestation, by whom the entire cosmos is maintained, and by whom we can conceive of its existence. Let me simply offer my obeisances, for He is beyond my contemplation, speculation and meditation. He is beyond all of my material activities.

42It is by the influence of the Supreme Lord’s māyā that I am wrongly thinking that Nanda Mahārāja is my husband, that Kṛṣṇa is my son, and that because I am the queen of Nanda Mahārāja, all the wealth of cows and calves are my possessions and all the cowherd men and their wives are my subjects. Actually, I also am eternally subordinate to the Supreme Lord. He is my ultimate shelter.

43Mother Yaśodā, by the grace of the Lord, could understand the real truth. But then again, the supreme master, by the influence of the internal potency, Yoga-māyā, inspired her to become absorbed in intense maternal affection for her son.

44Immediately forgetting Yoga-māyā’s illusion that Kṛṣṇa had shown the universal form within His mouth, mother Yaśodā took her son on her lap as before, feeling increased affection in her heart for her transcendental child.

45The glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are studied through the three Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the literature of Sāṅkhya-yoga, and other Vaiṣṇava literature, yet mother Yaśodā considered that Supreme Person her ordinary child.

46Having heard of the great fortune of mother Yaśodā, Parīkṣit Mahārāja inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O learned brāhmaṇa, mother Yaśodā’s breast milk was sucked by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What past auspicious activities did she and Nanda Mahārāja perform to achieve such perfection in ecstatic love?

47Although Kṛṣṇa was so pleased with Vasudeva and Devakī that He descended as their son, they could not enjoy Kṛṣṇa's magnanimous childhood pastimes, which are so great that simply chanting about them vanquishes the contamination of the material world. Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, however, enjoyed these pastimes fully, and therefore their position is always better than that of Vasudeva and Devakī.

48Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: To follow the orders of Lord Brahmā, Droṇa, the best of the Vasus, along with his wife, Dharā, spoke to Lord Brahmā in this way.

49Droṇa and Dharā said: Please permit us to be born on the planet earth so that after our appearance, the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller and master of all planets, will also appear and spread devotional service, the ultimate goal of life, so that those born in this material world may very easily be delivered from the miserable condition of materialistic life by accepting this devotional service.

50When Brahmā said, "Yes, let it be so," the most fortune Droṇa, who was equal to Bhagavān, appeared in Vrajapura, Vṛndāvana, as the most famous Nanda Mahārāja, and his wife, Dharā, appeared as mother Yaśodā.

51Thereafter, O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, best of the Bhāratas, when the Supreme Personality of Godhead became the son of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, they maintained continuous, unswerving devotional love in parental affection. And in their association, all the other inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, the gopas and gopīs, developed the culture of kṛṣṇa-bhakti.

52Thus the Supreme Personality, Kṛṣṇa, along with Balarāma, lived in Vrajabhūmi, Vṛndāvana, just to substantiate the benediction of Brahmā. By exhibiting different pastimes in His childhood, He increased the transcendental pleasure of Nanda and the other inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.

SB 10.9: Mother Yaśodā Binds Lord Kṛṣṇa

While mother Yaśodā was allowing Kṛṣṇa to drink her breast milk, she was forced to stop because she saw the milk pan boiling over on the oven. The maidservants being engaged in other business, she stopped allowing Kṛṣṇa to drink from her breast and immediately attended to the overflowing milk pan. Kṛṣṇa became very angry because of His mother's behavior and devised a means of breaking the pots of yogurt. Because He created this disturbance, mother Yaśodā decided to bind Him. These incidents are described in this chapter.

One day, the maidservants being engaged in other work, mother Yaśodā was churning the yogurt into butter herself, and in the meantime Kṛṣṇa came and requested her to allow Him to suck her breast milk. Of course, mother Yaśodā immediately allowed Him to do so, but then she saw that the hot milk on the oven was boiling over, and therefore she immediately stopped allowing Kṛṣṇa to drink the milk of her breast and went to stop the milk on the oven from overflowing. Kṛṣṇa, however, having been interrupted in His business of sucking the breast, was very angry. He took a piece of stone, broke the churning pot and entered a room, where He began to eat the freshly churned butter. When mother Yaśodā, after attending to the overflowing milk, returned and saw the pot broken, she could understand that this was the work of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore she went to search for Him. When she entered the room, she saw Kṛṣṇa standing on the *ulūkhala*, a large mortar for grinding spices. Having turned the mortar upside down, He was stealing butter hanging from a swing and was distributing the butter to the monkeys. As soon as Kṛṣṇa saw that His mother had come, He immediately began to run away, and mother Yaśodā began to follow Him. After going some distance, mother Yaśodā was

able to catch Kṛṣṇa, who because of His offense was crying. Mother Yaśodā, of course, threatened to punish Kṛṣṇa if He acted that way again, and she decided to bind Him with rope. Unfortunately, when the time came to knot the rope, the rope with which she wanted to bind Him was short by a distance equal to the width of two fingers. When she made the rope longer by adding another rope, she again saw that it was short by two fingers. Again and again she tried, and again and again she found the rope too short by two fingers. Thus she became very tired, and Kṛṣṇa, seeing His affectionate mother so tired, allowed Himself to be bound. Now, being compassionate, He did not show her His unlimited potency. After mother Yaśodā bound Kṛṣṇa and became engaged in other household affairs, Kṛṣṇa observed two *yamala-arjuna* trees, which were actually Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, two sons of Kuvera who had been condemned by Nārada Muni to become trees. Kṛṣṇa, by His mercy, now began to proceed toward the trees to fulfill the desire of Nārada Muni.

1-ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: One day when mother Yaśodā saw that all the maidservants were engaged in other household affairs, she personally began to churn the yogurt. While churning, she remembered the childish activities of Kṛṣṇa, and in her own way she composed songs and enjoyed singing to herself about all those activities.

3Dressed in a saffron-yellow sari, with a belt tied about her full hips, mother Yaśodā pulled on the churning rope, laboring considerably, her bangles and earrings moving and vibrating and her whole body shaking. Because of her intense love for her child, her breasts were wet with milk. Her face, with its very beautiful eyebrows, was wet with perspiration, and mālatī flowers were falling from her hair.

4While mother Yaśodā was churning butter, Lord Kṛṣṇa, desiring to drink the milk of her breast, appeared before her, and in order to increase her transcendental pleasure, He caught hold of the churning rod and began to prevent her from churning.

5Mother Yaśodā then embraced Kṛṣṇa, allowed Him to sit down on her lap, and began to look upon the face of the Lord with great love and affection. Because of her intense affection, milk was flowing from her breast. But when she saw that the milk pan on the oven was boiling over, she immediately left her son to take care of the overflowing milk, although the child was not yet fully satisfied with drinking the milk of His mother's breast.

6Being very angry and biting His reddish lips with His teeth, Kṛṣṇa, with false tears in His eyes, broke the container of yogurt with a piece of stone. Then He entered a room and began to eat the freshly churned butter in a solitary place.

7Mother Yaśodā, after taking down the hot milk from the oven, returned to the churning spot, and when she saw that the container of yogurt was broken and that Kṛṣṇa was not present, she concluded that the breaking of the pot was the work of Kṛṣṇa.

8Kṛṣṇa, at that time, was sitting on an upside-down wooden mortar for grinding spices and was distributing milk preparations such as yogurt and butter to the monkeys as He liked. Because of having stolen, He was looking all around with great anxiety, suspecting that He might be chastised by His mother. Mother Yaśodā, upon seeing Him, very cautiously approached Him from behind.

9When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw His mother, stick in hand, He very quickly got down from the top of the mortar and began to flee as if very much afraid. Although yogīs try to capture Him as Paramātmā by meditation, desiring to enter into the effulgence of the Lord with great austerities and penances, they fail to reach Him. But mother Yaśodā, thinking that same Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, to be her son, began following Kṛṣṇa to catch Him.

10 While following Kṛṣṇa, mother Yaśodā, her thin waist overburdened by her heavy breasts, naturally had to reduce her speed. Because of following Kṛṣṇa very swiftly, her hair became loose, and the flowers in her hair were falling after her. Yet she did not fail to capture her son, Kṛṣṇa.

11 When caught by mother Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa became more and more afraid and admitted to being an offender. As she looked upon Him, she saw that He was crying, His tears mixing with the black ointment around His eyes, and as He rubbed His eyes with His hands, He smeared the ointment all over His face. Mother Yaśodā, catching her beautiful son by the hand, mildly began to chastise Him.

12 Mother Yaśodā was always overwhelmed by intense love for Kṛṣṇa, not knowing who Kṛṣṇa was or how powerful He was. Because of maternal affection for Kṛṣṇa, she never even cared to know who He was. Therefore, when she saw that her son had become excessively afraid, she threw the stick away and desired to bind Him so that He would not commit any further naughty activities.

13-14 The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no beginning and no end, no exterior and no interior, no front and no rear. In other words, He is all-pervading. Because He is not under the influence of the element of time, for Him there is no difference between past, present and future; He exists in His own transcendental form at all times. Being absolute, beyond relativity, He is free from distinctions between cause and effect, although He is the cause and effect of everything. That unmanifested person, who is beyond the perception of the senses, had now appeared as a human child, and mother Yaśodā, considering Him her own ordinary child, bound Him to the wooden mortar with a rope.

15 When mother Yaśodā was trying to bind the offending child, she saw that the binding rope was short by a distance the width of two fingers. Thus she brought another rope to join to it.

16 This new rope also was short by a measurement of two fingers, and when another rope was joined to it, it was still two fingers too short. As many ropes as she joined, all of them failed; their shortness could not be overcome.

17 Thus mother Yaśodā joined whatever ropes were available in the household, but still she failed in her attempt to bind Kṛṣṇa. Mother Yaśodā's friends, the elderly gopīs in the neighborhood, were smiling and enjoying the fun. Similarly, mother Yaśodā, although laboring in that way, was also smiling. All of them were struck with wonder.

18 Because of mother Yaśodā's hard labor, her whole body became covered with perspiration, and the flowers and comb were falling from her hair. When child Kṛṣṇa saw His mother thus fatigued, He became merciful to her and agreed to be bound.

19 O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, this entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yet the Supreme Lord has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees. This was now exhibited by Kṛṣṇa in this pastime.

20 Neither Lord Brahmā, nor Lord Śiva, nor even the goddess of fortune, who is always the better half of the Supreme Lord, can obtain from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the deliverer from this material world, such mercy as received by mother Yaśodā.

21 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of mother Yaśodā, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not as easily accessible to mental

speculators, to those striving for self-realization by severe austerities and penances, or to those who consider the body the same as the self.

22While mother Yaśodā was very busy with household affairs, the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, observed twin trees known as *yamala-arjuna*, which in a former millennium had been the demigod sons of Kuvera.

23In their former birth, these two sons, known as Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, were extremely opulent and fortunate. But because of pride and false prestige, they did not care about anyone, and thus Nārada Muni cursed them to become trees.

SB 10.10: The Deliverance of the Yamala-arjuna Trees

This chapter describes how Kṛṣṇa broke the twin *arjuna* trees, from which Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, the sons of Kuvera, then came out.

Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva were great devotees of Lord Śiva, but because of material opulence they became so extravagant and senseless that one day they were enjoying with naked girls in a lake and shamelessly walking here and there. Suddenly Nārada Muni passed by, but they were so maddened by their wealth and false prestige that even though they saw Nārada Muni present, they remained naked and were not even ashamed. In other words, because of opulence and false prestige, they lost their sense of common decency. Of course, it is the nature of the material qualities that when one becomes very much opulent in terms of wealth and a prestigious position, one loses one's sense of etiquette and does not care about anyone, even a sage like Nārada Muni. For such bewildered persons (*ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā*), who especially deride devotees, the proper punishment is to be again stricken with poverty. The Vedic rules and regulations prescribe how to control the false sense of prestige by the practice of *yama*, *niyama* and so on (*tapasā brahmacaryeṇa śamena ca damena ca*). A poor man can be convinced very easily that the prestige of an opulent position in this material world is temporary, but a rich man cannot. Therefore Nārada Muni set an example by cursing these two persons, Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, to become dull and unconscious like trees. This was a fit punishment. But because Kṛṣṇa is always merciful, even though they were punished they were fortunate enough to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. Therefore the punishment given by Vaiṣṇavas is not at all punishment; rather, it is another kind of mercy. By the curse of the *devaṁṣī*, Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva became twin *arjuna* trees and remained in the courtyard of mother Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāja, waiting for the opportunity to see Kṛṣṇa directly. Lord Kṛṣṇa, by the desire of His devotee, uprooted these *yamala-arjuna* trees, and when Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva were thus delivered by Kṛṣṇa after one hundred years of the *devas*, their old consciousness revived, and they offered Kṛṣṇa prayers suitable to be offered by demigods. Having thus gotten the opportunity to see Kṛṣṇa face to face, they understood how merciful Nārada Muni was, and therefore they expressed their indebtedness to him and thanked him. Then, after circumambulating the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, they departed for their respective abodes.

1King Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O great and powerful saint, what was the cause of Nalakūvara's and Maṇigrīva's having been cursed by Nārada Muni? What did they do that was so abominable that even Nārada, the great sage, became angry at them? Kindly describe this to me.

2-3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, because the two sons of Kuvera had been elevated to the association of Lord Śiva, of which they were very much proud, they were allowed to wander in a garden attached to Kailāsa Hill, on the bank of the Mandākinī River. Taking

advantage of this, they used to drink a kind of liquor called Vāruṇī. Accompanied by women singing after them, they would wander in that garden of flowers, their eyes always rolling in intoxication.

4Within the waters of the Mandākinī Ganges, which were crowded with gardens of lotus flowers, the two sons of Kuvera would enjoy young girls, just like two male elephants enjoying in the water with female elephants.

5O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, by some auspicious opportunity for the two boys, the great saint Devarṣi Nārada once appeared there by chance. Seeing them intoxicated, with rolling eyes, he could understand their situation.

6Upon seeing Nārada, the naked young girls of the demigods were very much ashamed. Afraid of being cursed, they covered their bodies with their garments. But the two sons of Kuvera did not do so; instead, not caring about Nārada, they remained naked.

7Seeing the two sons of the demigods naked and intoxicated by opulence and false prestige, Devarṣi Nārada, in order to show them special mercy, desired to give them a special curse. Thus he spoke as follows.

8Nārada Muni said: Among all the attractions of material enjoyment, the attraction of riches bewilders one's intelligence more than having beautiful bodily features, taking birth in an aristocratic family, and being learned. When one is uneducated but falsely puffed up by wealth, the result is that one engages his wealth in enjoying wine, women and gambling.

9Unable to control their senses, rascals who are falsely proud of their riches or their birth in aristocratic families are so cruel that to maintain their perishable bodies, which they think will never grow old or die, they kill poor animals without mercy. Sometimes they kill animals merely to enjoy an excursion.

10While living one may be proud of one's body, thinking oneself a very big man, minister, president or even demigod, but whatever one may be, after death this body will turn either into worms, into stool or into ashes. If one kills poor animals to satisfy the temporary whims of this body, one does not know that he will suffer in his next birth, for such a sinful miscreant must go to hell and suffer the results of his actions.

11While alive, does this body belong to its employer, to the self, to the father, the mother, or the mother's father? Does it belong to the person who takes it away by force, to the slave master who purchases it, or to the sons who burn it in the fire? Or, if the body is not burned, does it belong to the dogs that eat it? Among the many possible claimants, who is the rightful claimant? Not to ascertain this but instead to maintain the body by sinful activities is not good.

12This body, after all, is produced by the unmanifested nature and again annihilated and merged in the natural elements. Therefore, it is the common property of everyone. Under the circumstances, who but a rascal claims this property as his own and while maintaining it commits such sinful activities as killing animals just to satisfy his whims? Unless one is a rascal, one cannot commit such sinful activities.

13Atheistic fools and rascals who are very much proud of wealth fail to see things as they are. Therefore, returning them to poverty is the proper ointment for their eyes so they may see things as they are. At least a poverty-stricken man can realize how painful poverty is, and therefore he will not want others to be in a painful condition like his own.

14By seeing their faces, one whose body has been pricked by pins can understand the pain of

others who are pinpricked. Realizing that this pain is the same for everyone, he does not want others to suffer in this way. But one who has never been pricked by pins cannot understand this pain.

15A poverty-stricken man must automatically undergo austerities and penances because he does not have the wealth to possess anything. Thus his false prestige is vanquished. Always in need of food, shelter and clothing, he must be satisfied with what is obtained by the mercy of providence. Undergoing such compulsory austerities is good for him because this purifies him and completely frees him from false ego.

16Always hungry, longing for sufficient food, a poverty-stricken man gradually becomes weaker and weaker. Having no extra potency, his senses are automatically pacified. A poverty-stricken man, therefore, is unable to perform harmful, envious activities. In other words, such a man automatically gains the results of the austerities and penances adopted voluntarily by saintly persons.

17Saintly persons may freely associate with those who are poverty-stricken, but not with those who are rich. A poverty-stricken man, by association with saintly persons, very soon becomes uninterested in material desires, and the dirty things within the core of his heart are cleansed away.

18Saintly persons [sādhus] think of Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day. They have no other interest. Why should people neglect the association of such exalted spiritual personalities and try to associate with materialists, taking shelter of nondevotees, most of whom are proud and rich?

19Therefore, since these two persons, drunk with the liquor named Vāruṇī, or Mādhvī, and unable to control their senses, have been blinded by the pride of celestial opulence and have become attached to women, I shall relieve them of their false prestige.

20-22These two young men, Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, are by fortune the sons of the great demigod Kuvera, but because of false prestige and madness after drinking liquor, they are so fallen that they are naked but cannot understand that they are. Therefore, because they are living like trees (for trees are naked but are not conscious), these two young men should receive the bodies of trees. This will be proper punishment. Nonetheless, after they become trees and until they are released, by my mercy they will have remembrance of their past sinful activities. Moreover, by my special favor, after the expiry of one hundred years by the measurement of the demigods, they will be able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, face to face, and thus revive their real position as devotees.

23Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Having thus spoken, the great saint Devarṣi Nārada returned to his āśrama, known as Nārāyaṇa-āśrama, and Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva became twin arjuna trees.

24The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to fulfill the truthfulness of the words of the greatest devotee, Nārada, slowly went to that spot where the twin arjuna trees were standing.

25“Although these two young men are the sons of the very rich Kuvera and I have nothing to do with them, Devarṣi Nārada is My very dear and affectionate devotee, and therefore because he wanted Me to come face to face with them, I must do so for their deliverance.”

26Having thus spoken, Kṛṣṇa soon entered between the two arjuna trees, and thus the big mortar to which He was bound turned crosswise and stuck between them.

27By dragging behind Him with great force the wooden mortar tied to His belly, the boy Kṛṣṇa

uprooted the two trees. By the great strength of the Supreme Person, the two trees, with their trunks, leaves and branches, trembled severely and fell to the ground with a great crash.

28 Thereafter, in that very place where the two arjuna trees had fallen, two great, perfect personalities, who appeared like fire personified, came out of the two trees. The effulgence of their beauty illuminating all directions, with bowed heads they offered obeisances to Kṛṣṇa, and with hands folded they spoke the following words.

29 O Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa, Your opulent mysticism is inconceivable. You are the supreme, original person, the cause of all causes, immediate and remote, and You are beyond this material creation. Learned brāhmaṇas know [on the basis of the Vedic statement sarvaṁ khalv idam brahma] that You are everything and that this cosmic manifestation, in its gross and subtle aspects, is Your form.

30-31 You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of everything. The body, life, ego and senses of every living entity are Your own self. You are the Supreme Person, Viṣṇu, the imperishable controller. You are the time factor, the immediate cause, and You are material nature, consisting of the three modes passion, goodness and ignorance. You are the original cause of this material manifestation. You are the Supersoul, and therefore You know everything within the core of the heart of every living entity.

32 O Lord, You exist before the creation. Therefore, who, trapped by a body of material qualities in this material world, can understand You?

33 O Lord, whose glories are covered by Your own energy, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are Saṅkarṣaṇa, the origin of creation, and You are Vāsudeva, the origin of the caturvyūha. Because You are everything and are therefore the Supreme Brahman, we simply offer our respectful obeisances unto You.

34-35 Appearing in bodies like those of an ordinary fish, tortoise and hog, You exhibit activities impossible for such creatures to perform extraordinary, incomparable, transcendental activities of unlimited power and strength. These bodies of Yours, therefore, are not made of material elements, but are incarnations of Your Supreme Personality. You are the same Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have now appeared, with full potency, for the benefit of all living entities within this material world.

36 O supremely auspicious, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You, who are the supreme good. O most famous descendant and controller of the Yadu dynasty, O son of Vasudeva, O most peaceful, let us offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet.

37 O supreme form, we are always servants of Your servants, especially of Nārada Muni. Now give us permission to leave for our home. It is by the grace and mercy of Nārada Muni that we have been able to see You face to face.

38 Henceforward, may all our words describe Your pastimes, may our ears engage in aural reception of Your glories, may our hands, legs and other senses engage in actions pleasing to You, and may our minds always think of Your lotus feet. May our heads offer our obeisances to everything within this world, because all things are also Your different forms, and may our eyes see the forms of Vaiṣṇavas, who are nondifferent from You.

39 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: The two young demigods thus offered prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Godhead, is the master of all and was certainly Gokuleśvara, the master of Gokula, He was bound to the wooden mortar by the ropes of the gopīs, and therefore, smiling widely, He spoke to the sons of Kuvera the

following words.

40The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The great saint Nārada Muni is very merciful. By his curse, he showed the greatest favor to both of you, who were mad after material opulence and who had thus become blind. Although you fell from the higher planet Svargaloka and became trees, you were most favored by him. I knew of all these incidents from the very beginning.

41When one is face to face with the sun, there is no longer darkness for one's eyes. Similarly, when one is face to face with a sādhu, a devotee, who is fully determined and surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will no longer be subject to material bondage.

42O Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, now you may both return home. Since you desire to be always absorbed in My devotional service, your desire to develop love and affection for Me will be fulfilled, and now you will never fall from that platform.

43Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead having spoken to the two demigods in this way, they circumambulated the Lord, who was bound to the wooden mortar, and offered obeisances to Him. After taking the permission of Lord Kṛṣṇa, they returned to their respective homes.

SB 10.11: The Childhood Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa

This chapter describes how the inhabitants of Gokula left Gokula and went to Vṛndāvana and how Kṛṣṇa killed Vatsāsura and Bakāsura.

When the *yamala-arjuna* trees fell, they made a tremendous sound, like that of falling thunderbolts. Being surprised, Kṛṣṇa's father, Nanda, and the other elderly inhabitants of Gokula went to the spot, where they saw the fallen trees and Kṛṣṇa standing between them, bound to the *ulūkhala*, the wooden mortar. They could find no cause for the trees' having fallen and Kṛṣṇa's being there. They thought this might be the work of some other *asura* who had met Kṛṣṇa on this spot, and they inquired from the playmates of Kṛṣṇa about how the whole incident had taken place. The children properly described how everything had happened, but the elderly persons could not believe the story. Some of them, however, thought that it might be true, since they had already seen many wonderful incidents in connection with Kṛṣṇa. Anyway, Nanda Mahārāja immediately released Kṛṣṇa from the ropes.

In this way, Kṛṣṇa, at every day and every moment, displayed wonderful incidents to increase the parental affection of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, who thus felt both surprise and joy. The breaking of the *yamala-arjunas* was one of these wonderful pastimes.

One day a fruit vendor approached Nanda Mahārāja's house, and Kṛṣṇa gathered some food grains with His little palms and went to the vendor to exchange the grains for fruit. On the way, almost all the grains fell from His palms, only one or two grains remaining, but the fruit vendor, out of full affection, accepted these grains in exchange for as much fruit as Kṛṣṇa could take. As soon as she did this, her basket became filled with gold and jewels.

Thereafter, all the elderly *gopas* decided to leave Gokula because they saw that in Gokula there was always some disturbance. They decided to go to Vṛndāvana, Vraja-dhāma, and the next day they all departed. In Vṛndāvana, both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, after finishing Their childhood pastimes, began to take charge of the calves and send them to the pasturing grounds (*go-carana*). During this time, a demon named Vatsāsura entered among the calves and was killed, and another *asura*, in the shape of a big duck, was also killed. The playmates of Kṛṣṇa narrated

all these stories to their mothers. The mothers could not believe their children, Kṛṣṇa's playmates, but because of full affection they enjoyed these narrations of Kṛṣṇa's activities.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, when the yamala-arjuna trees fell, all the cowherd men in the neighborhood, hearing the fierce sound and fearing thunderbolts, went to the spot.

2 There they saw the fallen yamala-arjuna trees on the ground, but they were bewildered because even though they could directly perceive that the trees had fallen, they could not trace out the cause for their having done so.

3 Kṛṣṇa was bound by the rope to the ulūkhala, the mortar, which He was dragging. But how could He have pulled down the trees? Who had actually done it? Where was the source for this incident? Considering all these astounding things, the cowherd men were doubtful and bewildered.

4 Then all the cowherd boys said: It is Kṛṣṇa who has done this. When He was in between the two trees, the mortar fell crosswise. Kṛṣṇa dragged the mortar, and the two trees fell down. After that, two beautiful men came out of the trees. We have seen this with our own eyes.

5 Because of intense paternal affection, the cowherd men, headed by Nanda, could not believe that Kṛṣṇa could have uprooted the trees in such a wonderful way. Therefore they could not put their faith in the words of the boys. Some of the men, however, were in doubt. "Since Kṛṣṇa was predicted to equal Nārāyaṇa," they thought, "it might be that He could have done it."

6 When Nanda Mahārāja saw his own son bound with ropes to the wooden mortar and dragging it, he smiled and released Kṛṣṇa from His bonds.

7 The gopīs would say, "If You dance, my dear Kṛṣṇa, then I shall give You half a sweetmeat." By saying these words or by clapping their hands, all the gopīs encouraged Kṛṣṇa in different ways. At such times, although He was the supremely powerful Personality of Godhead, He would smile and dance according to their desire, as if He were a wooden doll in their hands. Sometimes He would sing very loudly, at their bidding. In this way, Kṛṣṇa came completely under the control of the gopīs.

8 Sometimes mother Yaśodā and her gopī friends would tell Kṛṣṇa, "Bring this article" or "Bring that article." Sometimes they would order Him to bring a wooden plank, wooden shoes or a wooden measuring pot, and Kṛṣṇa, when thus ordered by the mothers, would try to bring them. Sometimes, however, as if unable to raise these things, He would touch them and stand there. Just to invite the pleasure of His relatives, He would strike His body with His arms to show that He had sufficient strength.

9 To pure devotees throughout the world who could understand His activities, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, exhibited how much He can be subdued by His devotees, His servants. In this way He increased the pleasure of the Vrajavāsīs by His childhood activities.

10 Once a woman selling fruit was calling, "O inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, if you want to purchase some fruits, come here!" Upon hearing this, Kṛṣṇa immediately took some grains and went to barter as if He needed some fruits.

11 While Kṛṣṇa was going to the fruit vendor very hastily, most of the grains He was holding fell. Nonetheless, the fruit vendor filled Kṛṣṇa's hands with fruits, and her fruit basket was immediately filled with jewels and gold.

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12Once, after the uprooting of the yamala-arjuna trees, Rohiṇīdevī went to call Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, who had both gone to the riverside and were playing with the other boys with deep attention.

13Because of being too attached to playing with the other boys, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did not return upon being called by Rohiṇī. Therefore Rohiṇī sent mother Yaśodā to call Them back, because mother Yaśodā was more affectionate to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

14Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, being attached to Their play, were playing with the other boys although it was very late. Therefore mother Yaśodā called Them back for lunch. Because of her ecstatic love and affection for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, milk flowed from her breasts.

15Mother Yaśodā said: My dear son Kṛṣṇa, lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, come here and drink the milk of my breast. My dear darling, You must be very tired because of hunger and the fatigue of playing so long. There is no need to play any more.

16My dear Baladeva, best of our family, please come immediately with Your younger brother, Kṛṣṇa. You both ate in the morning, and now You ought to eat something more.

17Nanda Mahārāja, the King of Vraja, is now waiting to eat. O my dear son Balarāma, he is waiting for You. Therefore, come back to please us. All the boys playing with You and Kṛṣṇa should now go to their homes.

18Mother Yaśodā further told Kṛṣṇa: My dear son, because of playing all day, Your body has become covered with dust and sand. Therefore, come back, take Your bath and cleanse Yourself. Today the moon is conjoined with the auspicious star of Your birth. Therefore, be pure and give cows in charity to the brāhmaṇas.

19Just see how all Your playmates of Your own age have been cleansed and decorated with beautiful ornaments by their mothers. You should come here, and after You have taken Your bath, eaten Your lunch and been decorated with ornaments, You may play with Your friends again.

20My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, because of intense love and affection, mother Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa's mother, considered Kṛṣṇa, who was at the peak of all opulences, to be her own son. Thus she took Kṛṣṇa by the hand, along with Balarāma, and brought Them home, where she performed her duties by fully bathing Them, dressing Them and feeding Them.

21ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Then one time, having seen the great disturbances in Bṛhadvana, all the elderly persons among the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, assembled and began to consider what to do to stop the continuous disturbing situations in Vraja.

22At this meeting of all the inhabitants of Gokula, a cowherd man named Upananda, who was the most mature in age and knowledge and was very experienced according to time, circumstances and country, made this suggestion for the benefit of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

23He said: My dear friends the cowherd men, in order to do good to this place, Gokula, we should leave it, because so many disturbances are always occurring here, just for the purpose of killing Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

24The child Kṛṣṇa, simply by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was somehow or other rescued from the hands of the Rākṣasī Pūtanā, who was determined to kill Him. Then, again by the mercy of the Supreme Godhead, the handcart missed falling upon the child.

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25Then again, the demon Tṛṇāvarta, in the form of a whirlwind, took the child away into the dangerous sky to kill Him, but the demon fell down onto a slab of stone. In that case also, by the mercy of Lord Viṣṇu or His associates, the child was saved.

26Even the other day, neither Kṛṣṇa nor any of His playmates died from the falling of the two trees, although the children were near the trees or even between them. This also is to be considered the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

27All these incidents are being caused by some unknown demon. Before he comes here to create another disturbance, it is our duty to go somewhere else with the boys until there are no more disturbances.

28Between Nandeśvara and Mahāvana is a place named Vṛndāvana. This place is very suitable because it is lush with grass, plants and creepers for the cows and other animals. It has nice gardens and tall mountains and is full of facilities for the happiness of all the gopas and gopīs and our animals.

29Therefore, let us immediately go today. There is no need to wait any further. If you agree to my proposal, let us prepare all the bullock carts and put the cows in front of us, and let us go there.

30Upon hearing this advice from Upananda, the cowherd men unanimously agreed. “Very nice,” they said. “Very nice.” Thus they sorted out their household affairs, placed their clothing and other paraphernalia on the carts, and immediately started for Vṛndāvana.

31-32Keeping all the old men, women, children and household paraphernalia on the bullock carts and keeping all the cows in front, the cowherd men picked up their bows and arrows with great care and sounded bugles made of horn. O King Parīkṣit, in this way, with bugles vibrating all around, the cowherd men, accompanied by their priests, began their journey.

33The cowherd women, riding on the bullock carts, were dressed very nicely with excellent garments, and their bodies, especially their breasts, were decorated with fresh kuṅkuma powder. As they rode, they began to chant with great pleasure the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

34Thus hearing about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with great pleasure, mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇīdevī, so as not to be separated from Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma for even a moment, got up with Them on one bullock cart. In this situation, they all looked very beautiful.

35In this way they entered Vṛndāvana, where it is always pleasing to live in all seasons. They made a temporary place to inhabit by placing their bullock carts around them in the shape of a half moon.

36O King Parīkṣit, when Rāma and Kṛṣṇa saw Vṛndāvana, Govardhana and the banks of the river Yamunā, They both enjoyed great pleasure.

37In this way, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, acting like small boys and talking in half-broken language, gave transcendental pleasure to all the inhabitants of Vraja. In due course of time, They became old enough to take care of the calves.

38Not far away from Their residential quarters, both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, equipped with all kinds of playthings, played with other cowherd boys and began to tend the small calves.

39-40Sometimes Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would play on Their flutes, sometimes They would throw ropes and stones devised for getting fruits from the trees, sometimes They would throw only

stones, and sometimes, Their ankle bells tinkling, They would play football with fruits like bael and āmalakī. Sometimes They would cover Themselves with blankets and imitate cows and bulls and fight with one another, roaring loudly, and sometimes They would imitate the voices of the animals. In this way They enjoyed sporting, exactly like two ordinary human children.

41One day while Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, along with Their playmates, were tending the calves on the bank of the river Yamunā, another demon arrived there, desiring to kill Them.

42When the Supreme Personality of Godhead saw that the demon had assumed the form of a calf and entered among the groups of other calves, He pointed out to Baladeva, “Here is another demon.” Then He very slowly approached the demon, as if He did not understand the demon’s intentions.

43Thereafter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa caught the demon by the hind legs and tail, twirled the demon’s whole body very strongly until the demon was dead, and threw him into the top of a kapittha tree, which then fell down, along with the body of the demon, who had assumed a great form.

44Upon seeing the dead body of the demon, all the cowherd boys exclaimed, “Well done, Kṛṣṇa! Very good, very good! Thank You.” In the upper planetary system, all the demigods were pleased, and therefore they showered flowers on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

45After the killing of the demon, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma finished Their breakfast in the morning, and while continuing to take care of the calves, They wandered here and there. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead, who maintain the entire creation, now took charge of the calves as if cowherd boys.

46One day all the boys, including Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, each boy taking his own group of calves, brought the calves to a reservoir of water, desiring to allow them to drink. After the animals drank water, the boys drank water there also.

47Right by the reservoir, the boys saw a gigantic body resembling a mountain peak broken and struck down by a thunderbolt. They were afraid even to see such a huge living being.

48That great-bodied demon was named Bakāsura. He had assumed the body of a duck with a very sharp beak. Having come there, he immediately swallowed Kṛṣṇa.

49When Balarāma and the other boys saw that Kṛṣṇa had been devoured by the gigantic duck, they became almost unconscious, like senses without life.

50Kṛṣṇa, who was the father of Lord Brahmā but who was acting as the son of a cowherd man, became like fire, burning the root of the demon’s throat, and the demon Bakāsura immediately disgorged Him. When the demon saw that Kṛṣṇa, although having been swallowed, was unharmed, he immediately attacked Kṛṣṇa again with his sharp beak.

51When Kṛṣṇa, the leader of the Vaiṣṇavas, saw that the demon Bakāsura, the friend of Kaṁsa, was endeavoring to attack Him, with His arms He captured the demon by the two halves of the beak, and in the presence of all the cowherd boys Kṛṣṇa very easily bifurcated him, as a child splits a blade of vīraṇa grass. By thus killing the demon, Kṛṣṇa very much pleased the denizens of heaven.

52At that time, the celestial denizens of the higher planetary system showered mallikā-puṣpa, flowers grown in Nandana-kānana, upon Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Bakāsura. They also congratulated Him by sounding celestial kettledrums and conchshells and by offering prayers. Seeing this, the cowherd boys were struck with wonder.

53Just as the senses are pacified when consciousness and life return, so when Kṛṣṇa was freed from this danger, all the boys, including Balarāma, thought that their life had been restored. They embraced Kṛṣṇa in good consciousness, and then they collected their own calves and returned to Vrajabhūmi, where they declared the incident loudly.

54When the cowherd men and women heard about the killing of Bakāsura in the forest, they were very much astonished. Upon seeing Kṛṣṇa and hearing the story, they received Kṛṣṇa very eagerly, thinking that Kṛṣṇa and the other boys had returned from the mouth of death. Thus they looked upon Kṛṣṇa and the boys with silent eyes, not wanting to turn their eyes aside now that the boys were safe.

55The cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, began to contemplate: It is very astonishing that although this boy Kṛṣṇa has many times faced many varied causes of death, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead it was these causes of fear that were killed, instead of Him.

56Although the causes of death, the daityas, were very fierce, they could not kill this boy Kṛṣṇa. Rather, because they came to kill innocent boys, as soon as they approached they themselves were killed, exactly like flies attacking a fire.

57The words of persons in full knowledge of Brahman never become untrue. It is very wonderful that whatever Garga Muni predicted we are now actually experiencing in all detail.

58In this way all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, enjoyed topics about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with great transcendental pleasure, and they could not even perceive material tribulations.

59In this way Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma passed Their childhood age in Vrajabhūmi by engaging in activities of childish play, such as playing hide-and-seek, constructing a make-believe bridge on the ocean, and jumping here and there like monkeys.

SB 10.12: The Killing of the Demon Aghāsura

This chapter describes in detail Kṛṣṇa's pastime of killing Aghāsura.

One day Kṛṣṇa wanted to enjoy a picnic lunch within the forest, and therefore He went out early into the forest with the other cowherd boys, accompanied by their respective groups of calves. While they were enjoying their picnic, Aghāsura, the younger brother of Pūtanā and Bakāsura, appeared there, desiring to kill Kṛṣṇa and His companions. The demon, who had been sent by Kāṁsa, assumed the form of a python, expanding himself to a length of eight miles and the height of a mountain, his mouth seeming to extend from the surface of the earth to the heavenly planets. Having assumed this feature, Aghāsura lay on the road. Kṛṣṇa's friends, the cowherd boys, thought that the demon's form was one of the beautiful spots of Vṛndāvana. Thus they wanted to enter within the mouth of this gigantic python. The gigantic figure of the python became a subject for their sporting pleasure, and they began to laugh, confident that even if this figure were dangerous, Kṛṣṇa was there to protect them. In this way, they proceeded toward the mouth of the gigantic figure.

Kṛṣṇa knew everything about Aghāsura, and therefore He wanted to forbid His friends to enter the demon's mouth, but in the meantime all the cowherd boys, along with their groups of calves, entered the mouth of that gigantic figure. Kṛṣṇa was waiting outside, and Aghāsura was waiting for Kṛṣṇa, thinking that as soon as Kṛṣṇa entered he would close his mouth so that everyone would die. While waiting for Kṛṣṇa, he refrained from swallowing the boys. In the

meantime, Kṛṣṇa was thinking of how to save the boys and kill Aghāsura. Thus He entered the mouth of the gigantic *asura*, and when He was within the demon's mouth along with His friends, He expanded His body to such an extent that the *asura* suffocated and died. After this, Kṛṣṇa, by casting His nectarean glance upon His friends, brought them back to life, and with pleasure they all came out unhurt. Thus Kṛṣṇa encouraged all the demigods, and they expressed their pleasure and happiness. For a crooked, sinful person there is no scope for *sāyujya-mukti*, or becoming one with the effulgence of Kṛṣṇa, but because the Supreme Personality of Godhead entered the body of Aghāsura, by His touch this demon got the opportunity to merge into the existence of the Brahman effulgence and thus attain *sāyujya-mukti*.

When this pastime was performed, Kṛṣṇa was only five years old. One year later, when He was six years old and He stepped into the *pauganḍa* age, this pastime was disclosed to the inhabitants of Vraja. Parīkṣit Mahārāja inquired, "Why is it that this pastime was disclosed only after one year and yet the inhabitants of Vraja thought that it had been performed that very day?" With this question, the Twelfth Chapter ends.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: O King, one day Kṛṣṇa decided to take His breakfast as a picnic in the forest. Having risen early in the morning, He blew His bugle made of horn and woke all the cowherd boys and calves with its beautiful sound. Then Kṛṣṇa and the boys, keeping their respective groups of calves before them, proceeded from Vrajabhūmi to the forest.

2At that time, hundreds and thousands of cowherd boys came out of their respective homes in Vrajabhūmi and joined Kṛṣṇa, keeping before them their hundreds and thousands of groups of calves. The boys were very beautiful, and they were equipped with lunch bags, bugles, flutes, and sticks for controlling the calves.

3Along with the cowherd boys and their own groups of calves, Kṛṣṇa came out with an unlimited number of calves assembled. Then all the boys began to sport in the forest in a greatly playful spirit.

4Although all these boys were already decorated by their mothers with ornaments of *kāca*, *guṣṭā*, pearls and gold, when they went into the forest they further decorated themselves with fruits, green leaves, bunches of flowers, peacock feathers and soft minerals.

5All the cowherd boys used to steal one another's lunch bags. When a boy came to understand that his bag had been taken away, the other boys would throw it farther away, to a more distant place, and those standing there would throw it still farther. When the proprietor of the bag became disappointed, the other boys would laugh, the proprietor would cry, and then the bag would be returned.

6Sometimes Kṛṣṇa would go to a somewhat distant place to see the beauty of the forest. Then all the other boys would run to accompany Him, each one saying, "I shall be the first to run and touch Kṛṣṇa! I shall touch Kṛṣṇa first!" In this way they enjoyed life by repeatedly touching Kṛṣṇa.

7-11All the boys would be differently engaged. Some boys blew their flutes, and others blew bugles made of horn. Some imitated the buzzing of the bumblebees, and others imitated the voice of the cuckoo. Some boys imitated flying birds by running after the birds' shadows on the ground, some imitated the beautiful movements and attractive postures of the swans, some sat down with the ducks, sitting silently, and others imitated the dancing of the peacocks. Some boys attracted young monkeys in the trees, some jumped into the trees, imitating the monkeys,

some made faces as the monkeys were accustomed to do, and others jumped from one branch to another. Some boys went to the waterfalls and crossed over the river, jumping with the frogs, and when they saw their own reflections on the water they would laugh. They would also condemn the sounds of their own echoes. In this way, all the cowherd boys used to play with Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of the Brahman effulgence for jñānīs desiring to merge into that effulgence, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead for devotees who have accepted eternal servitorship, and who for ordinary persons is but another ordinary child. The cowherd boys, having accumulated the results of pious activities for many lives, were able to associate in this way with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. How can one explain their great fortune?

12Yogīs may undergo severe austerities and penances for many births by practicing yama, niyama, āsana and prāṇāyāma, none of which are easily performed. Yet in due course of time, when these yogīs attain the perfection of controlling the mind, they will still be unable to taste even a particle of dust from the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What then can we describe about the great fortune of the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, Vṛndāvana, with whom the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally lived and who saw the Lord face to face?

13My dear King Parīkṣit, thereafter there appeared a great demon named Aghāsura, whose death was being awaited even by the demigods. The demigods drank nectar every day, but still they feared this great demon and awaited his death. This demon could not tolerate the transcendental pleasure being enjoyed in the forest by the cowherd boys.

14Aghāsura, who had been sent by Kaiṁsa, was the younger brother of Pūtanā and Bakāsura. Therefore when he came and saw Kṛṣṇa at the head of all the cowherd boys, he thought, “This Kṛṣṇa has killed my sister and brother, Pūtanā and Bakāsura. Therefore, in order to please them both, I shall kill this Kṛṣṇa, along with His assistants, the other cowherd boys.”

15Aghāsura thought: If somehow or other I can make Kṛṣṇa and His associates serve as the last offering of sesame and water for the departed souls of my brother and sister, then the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, for whom these boys are the life and soul, will automatically die. If there is no life, there is no need for the body; consequently, when their sons are dead, naturally all the inhabitants of Vraja will die.

16After thus deciding, that crooked Aghāsura assumed the form of a huge python, as thick as a big mountain and as long as eight miles. Having assumed this wonderful python’s body, he spread his mouth like a big cave in the mountains and lay down on the road, expecting to swallow Kṛṣṇa and His associates the cowherd boys.

17His lower lip rested on the surface of the earth, and his upper lip was touching the clouds in the sky. The borders of his mouth resembled the sides of a big cave in a mountain, and the middle of his mouth was as dark as possible. His tongue resembled a broad traffic-way, his breath was like a warm wind, and his eyes blazed like fire.

18Upon seeing this demon’s wonderful form, which resembled a great python, the boys thought that it must be a beautiful scenic spot of Vṛndāvana. Thereafter, they imagined it to be similar to the mouth of a great python. In other words, the boys, unafraid, thought that it was a statue made in the shape of a great python for the enjoyment of their pastimes.

19The boys said: Dear friends, is this creature dead, or is it actually a living python with its mouth spread wide just to swallow us all? Kindly clear up this doubt.

20Thereafter they decided: Dear friends, this is certainly an animal sitting here to swallow us

all. Its upper lip resembles a cloud reddened by the sunshine, and its lower lip resembles the reddish shadows of a cloud.

21On the left and right, the two depressions resembling mountain caves are the corners of its mouth, and the high mountain peaks are its teeth.

22In length and breadth the animal's tongue resembles a broad traffic-way, and the inside of its mouth is very, very dark, like a cave in a mountain.

23The hot fiery wind is the breath coming out of his mouth, which is giving off the bad smell of burning flesh because of all the dead bodies he has eaten.

24Then the boys said, "Has this living creature come to swallow us? If he does so, he will immediately be killed like Bakāsura, without delay." Thus they looked at the beautiful face of Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Bakāsura, and, laughing loudly and clapping their hands, they entered the mouth of the python.

25The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is situated as antaryāmī, the Supersoul, in the core of everyone's heart, heard the boys talking among themselves about the artificial python. Unknown to them, it was actually Aghāsura, a demon who had appeared as a python. Kṛṣṇa, knowing this, wanted to forbid His associates to enter the demon's mouth.

26In the meantime, while Kṛṣṇa was considering how to stop them, all the cowherd boys entered the mouth of the demon. The demon, however, did not swallow them, for he was thinking of his own relatives who had been killed by Kṛṣṇa and was just waiting for Kṛṣṇa to enter his mouth.

27Kṛṣṇa saw that all the cowherd boys, who did not know anyone but Him as their Lord, had now gone out of His hand and were helpless, having entered like straws into the fire of the abdomen of Aghāsura, who was death personified. It was intolerable for Kṛṣṇa to be separated from His friends the cowherd boys. Therefore, as if seeing that this had been arranged by His internal potency, Kṛṣṇa was momentarily struck with wonder and unsure of what to do.

28Now, what was to be done? How could both the killing of this demon and the saving of the devotees be performed simultaneously? Kṛṣṇa, being unlimitedly potent, decided to wait for an intelligent means by which He could simultaneously save the boys and kill the demon. Then He entered the mouth of Aghāsura.

29When Kṛṣṇa entered the mouth of Aghāsura, the demigods hidden behind the clouds exclaimed, "Alas! Alas!" But the friends of Aghāsura, like Kaṁsa and other demons, were jubilant.

30When the invincible Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, heard the demigods crying "Alas! Alas!" from behind the clouds, He immediately enlarged Himself within the demon's throat, just to save Himself and the cowherd boys, His own associates, from the demon who wished to smash them.

31Then, because Kṛṣṇa had increased the size of His body, the demon extended his own body to a very large size. Nonetheless, his breathing stopped, he suffocated, and his eyes rolled here and there and popped out. The demon's life air, however, could not pass through any outlet, and therefore it finally burst out through a hole in the top of the demon's head.

32When all the demon's life air had passed away through that hole in the top of his head, Kṛṣṇa glanced over the dead calves and cowherd boys and brought them back to life. Then

Mukunda, who can give one liberation, came out from the demon's mouth with His friends and the calves.

33From the body of the gigantic python, a glaring effulgence came out, illuminating all directions, and stayed individually in the sky until Kṛṣṇa came out from the corpse's mouth. Then, as all the demigods looked on, this effulgence entered into Kṛṣṇa's body.

34Thereafter, everyone being pleased, the demigods began to shower flowers from Nandana-kānana, the celestial dancing girls began to dance, and the Gandharvas, who are famous for singing, offered songs of prayer. The drummers began to beat their kettledrums, and the brāhmaṇas offered Vedic hymns. In this way, both in the heavens and on earth, everyone began to perform his own duties, glorifying the Lord.

35When Lord Brahmā heard the wonderful ceremony going on near his planet, accompanied by music and songs and sounds of "Jaya! Jaya!" he immediately came down to see the function. Upon seeing so much glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he was completely astonished.

36O King Parīkṣit, when the python-shaped body of Aghāsura dried up into merely a big skin, it became a wonderful place for the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana to visit, and it remained so for a long, long time.

37This incident of Kṛṣṇa's saving Himself and His associates from death and of giving deliverance to Aghāsura, who had assumed the form of a python, took place when Kṛṣṇa was five years old. It was disclosed in Vrajabhūmi after one year, as if it had taken place on that very day.

38Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes. The causes and effects of the material world, both higher and lower, are all created by the Supreme Lord, the original controller. When Kṛṣṇa appeared as the son of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, He did so by His causeless mercy. Consequently, for Him to exhibit His unlimited opulence was not at all wonderful. Indeed, He showed such great mercy that even Aghāsura, the most sinful miscreant, was elevated to being one of His associates and achieving sārūpya-mukti, which is actually impossible for materially contaminated persons to attain.

39If even only once or even by force one brings the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead into one's mind, one can attain the supreme salvation by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, as did Aghāsura. What then is to be said of those whose hearts the Supreme Personality of Godhead enters when He appears as an incarnation, or those who always think of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the source of transcendental bliss for all living entities and by whom all illusion is completely removed?

40Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: O learned saints, the childhood pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are very wonderful. Mahārāja Parīkṣit, after hearing about those pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, who had saved him in the womb of his mother, became steady in his mind and again inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī to hear about those pious activities.

41Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired: O great sage, how could things done in the past have been described as being done at the present? Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed this pastime of killing Aghāsura during His kaumāra age. How then, during His paugāṇḍa age, could the boys have described this incident as having happened recently?

42O greatest yogī, my spiritual master, kindly describe why this happened. I am very much curious to know about it. I think that it was nothing but another illusion due to Kṛṣṇa.

43O my lord, my spiritual master, although we are the lowest of kṣatriyas, we are glorified and benefited because we have the opportunity of always hearing from you the nectar of the pious activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

44Sūta Gosvāmī said: O Śaunaka, greatest of saints and devotees, when Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī in this way, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, immediately remembering subject matters about Kṛṣṇa within the core of his heart, externally lost contact with the actions of his senses. Thereafter, with great difficulty, he revived his external sensory perception and began to speak to Mahārāja Parīkṣit about kṛṣṇa-kathā.

SB 10.13: The Stealing of the Boys and Calves by Brahmā

This chapter describes Lord Brahmā's attempt to take away the calves and cowherd boys, and it also describes the bewilderment of Lord Brahmā and finally the clearance of his illusion.

Although the incident concerning Aghāsura had been performed one year before, when the cowherd boys were five years old, when they were six years old they said, "It happened today." What happened was this. After killing Aghāsura, Kṛṣṇa, along with His associates the cowherd boys, went for a picnic within the forest. The calves, being allured by green grasses, gradually went far away, and therefore Kṛṣṇa's associates became a little agitated and wanted to bring back the calves. Kṛṣṇa, however, encouraged the boys by saying, "You take your tiffin without being agitated. I shall go find the calves." And thus the Lord departed. Then, just to examine the potency of Kṛṣṇa, Lord Brahmā took away all the calves and cowherd boys and kept them in a secluded place.

When Kṛṣṇa was unable to find the calves and boys, He could understand that this was a trick performed by Brahmā. Then the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, in order to please Lord Brahmā, as well as His own associates and their mothers, expanded Himself to become the calves and boys, exactly as they were before. In this way, He discovered another pastime. A special feature of this pastime was that the mothers of the cowherd boys thus became more attached to their respective sons, and the cows became more attached to their calves. After nearly a year, Baladeva observed that all the cowherd boys and calves were expansions of Kṛṣṇa. Thus He inquired from Kṛṣṇa and was informed of what had happened.

When one full year had passed, Brahmā returned and saw that Kṛṣṇa was still engaged as usual with His friends and the calves and cows. Then Kṛṣṇa exhibited all the calves and cowherd boys as four-armed forms of Nārāyaṇa. Brahmā could then understand Kṛṣṇa's potency, and he was astonished by the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, his worshipable Lord. Kṛṣṇa, however, bestowed His causeless mercy upon Brahmā and released him from illusion. Thus Brahmā began to offer prayers to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O best of devotees, most fortunate Parīkṣit, you have inquired very nicely, for although constantly hearing the pastimes of the Lord, you are perceiving His activities to be newer and newer.

2Paramahāṁsas, devotees who have accepted the essence of life, are attached to Kṛṣṇa in the core of their hearts, and He is the aim of their lives. It is their nature to talk only of Kṛṣṇa at every moment, as if such topics were newer and newer. They are attached to such topics, just as materialists are attached to topics of women and sex.

3O King, kindly hear me with great attention. Although the activities of the Supreme Lord are very confidential, no ordinary man being able to understand them, I shall speak about them to

you, for spiritual masters explain to a submissive disciple even subject matters that are very confidential and difficult to understand.

4Then, after saving the boys and calves from the mouth of Aghāsura, who was death personified, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, brought them all to the bank of the river and spoke the following words.

5My dear friends, just see how this riverbank is extremely beautiful because of its pleasing atmosphere. And just see how the blooming lotuses are attracting bees and birds by their aroma. The humming and chirping of the bees and birds is echoing throughout the beautiful trees in the forest. Also, here the sands are clean and soft. Therefore, this must be considered the best place for our sporting and pastimes.

6I think we should take our lunch here, since we are already hungry because the time is very late. Here the calves may drink water and go slowly here and there and eat the grass.

7Accepting Lord Kṛṣṇa’s proposal, the cowherd boys allowed the calves to drink water from the river and then tied them to trees where there was green, tender grass. Then the boys opened their baskets of food and began eating with Kṛṣṇa in great transcendental pleasure.

8Like the whorl of a lotus flower surrounded by its petals and leaves, Kṛṣṇa sat in the center, encircled by lines of His friends, who all looked very beautiful. Every one of them was trying to look forward toward Kṛṣṇa, thinking that Kṛṣṇa might look toward him. In this way they all enjoyed their lunch in the forest.

9Among the cowherd boys, some placed their lunch on flowers, some on leaves, fruits, or bunches of leaves, some actually in their baskets, some on the bark of trees and some on rocks. This is what the children imagined to be their plates as they ate their lunch.

10All the cowherd boys enjoyed their lunch with Kṛṣṇa, showing one another the different tastes of the different varieties of preparations they had brought from home. Tasting one another’s preparations, they began to laugh and make one another laugh.

11Kṛṣṇa is yajṣa-bhukthat is, He eats only offerings of yajṣabut to exhibit His childhood pastimes, He now sat with His flute tucked between His waist and His tight cloth on His right side and with His horn bugle and cow-driving stick on His left. Holding in His hand a very nice preparation of yogurt and rice, with pieces of suitable fruit between His fingers, He sat like the whorl of a lotus flower, looking forward toward all His friends, personally joking with them and creating jubilant laughter among them as He ate. At that time, the denizens of heaven were watching, struck with wonder at how the Personality of Godhead, who eats only in yajṣa, was now eating with His friends in the forest.

12O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, while the cowherd boys, who knew nothing within the core of their hearts but Kṛṣṇa, were thus engaged in eating their lunch in the forest, the calves went far away, deep into the forest, being allured by green grass.

13When Kṛṣṇa saw that His friends the cowherd boys were frightened, He, the fierce controller even of fear itself, said, just to mitigate their fear, “My dear friends, do not stop eating. I shall bring your calves back to this spot by personally going after them Myself.”

14“Let Me go and search for the calves,” Kṛṣṇa said. “Don’t disturb your enjoyment.” Then, carrying His yogurt and rice in His hand, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, immediately went out to search for the calves of His friends. To please His friends, He began searching in all the mountains, mountain caves, bushes and narrow passages.

15O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Brahmā, who resides in the higher planetary system in the sky, had observed the activities of the most powerful Kṛṣṇa in killing and delivering Aghāsura, and he was astonished. Now that same Brahmā wanted to show some of his own power and see the power of Kṛṣṇa, who was engaged in His childhood pastimes, playing as if with ordinary cowherd boys. Therefore, in Kṛṣṇa's absence, Brahmā took all the boys and calves to another place. Thus he became entangled, for in the very near future he would see how powerful Kṛṣṇa was.

16Thereafter, when Kṛṣṇa was unable to find the calves, He returned to the bank of the river, but there He was also unable to see the cowherd boys. Thus He began to search for both the calves and the boys, as if He could not understand what had happened.

17When Kṛṣṇa was unable to find the calves and their caretakers, the cowherd boys, anywhere in the forest, He could suddenly understand that this was the work of Lord Brahmā.

18Thereafter, just to create pleasure both for Brahmā and for the mothers of the calves and cowherd boys, Kṛṣṇa, the creator of the entire cosmic manifestation, expanded Himself as calves and boys.

19By His Vāsudeva feature, Kṛṣṇa simultaneously expanded Himself into the exact number of missing cowherd boys and calves, with their exact bodily features, their particular types of hands, legs and other limbs, their sticks, bugles and flutes, their lunch bags, their particular types of dress and ornaments placed in various ways, their names, ages and forms, and their special activities and characteristics. By expanding Himself in this way, beautiful Kṛṣṇa proved the statement samagra-jagad viṣṇumayam: "Lord Viṣṇu is all-pervading."

20Now expanding Himself so as to appear as all the calves and cowherd boys, all of them as they were, and at the same time appear as their leader, Kṛṣṇa entered Vrajabhūmi, the land of His father, Nanda Mahārāja, just as He usually did while enjoying their company.

21O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Kṛṣṇa, who had divided Himself as different calves and also as different cowherd boys, entered different cow sheds as the calves and then different homes as different boys.

22The mothers of the boys, upon hearing the sounds of the flutes and bugles being played by their sons, immediately rose from their household tasks, lifted their boys onto their laps, embraced them with both arms and began to feed them with their breast milk, which flowed forth because of extreme love specifically for Kṛṣṇa. Actually Kṛṣṇa is everything, but at that time, expressing extreme love and affection, they took special pleasure in feeding Kṛṣṇa, the Parabrahman, and Kṛṣṇa drank the milk from His respective mothers as if it were a nectarean beverage.

23Thereafter, O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, as required according to the scheduled round of His pastimes, Kṛṣṇa returned in the evening, entered the house of each of the cowherd boys, and engaged exactly like the former boys, thus enlivening their mothers with transcendental pleasure. The mothers took care of the boys by massaging them with oil, bathing them, smearing their bodies with sandalwood pulp, decorating them with ornaments, chanting protective mantras, decorating their bodies with tilaka and giving them food. In this way, the mothers served Kṛṣṇa personally.

24Thereafter, all the cows entered their different sheds and began mooing loudly, calling for their respective calves. When the calves arrived, the mothers began licking the calves' bodies again and again and profusely feeding them with the milk flowing from their milk bags.

25Previously, from the very beginning, the gopīs had motherly affection for Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, their affection for Kṛṣṇa exceeded even their affection for their own sons. In displaying their affection, they had thus distinguished between Kṛṣṇa and their sons, but now that distinction disappeared.

26Although the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, the cowherd men and cowherd women, previously had more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for their own children, now, for one year, their affection for their own sons continuously increased, for Kṛṣṇa had now become their sons. There was no limit to the increment of their affection for their sons, who were now Kṛṣṇa. Every day they found new inspiration for loving their children as much as they loved Kṛṣṇa.

27In this way, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having Himself become the cowherd boys and groups of calves, maintained Himself by Himself. Thus He continued His pastimes, both in Vṛndāvana and in the forest, for one year.

28One day, five or six nights before the completion of the year, Kṛṣṇa, tending the calves, entered the forest along with Balarāma.

29Thereafter, while pasturing atop Govardhana Hill, the cows looked down to find some green grass and saw their calves pasturing near Vṛndāvana, not very far away.

30When the cows saw their own calves from the top of Govardhana Hill, they forgot themselves and their caretakers because of increased affection, and although the path was very rough, they ran toward their calves with great anxiety, each running as if with one pair of legs. Their milk bags full and flowing with milk, their heads and tails raised, and their humps moving with their necks, they ran forcefully until they reached their calves to feed them.

31The cows had given birth to new calves, but while coming down from Govardhana Hill, the cows, because of increased affection for the older calves, allowed the older calves to drink milk from their milk bags and then began licking the calves' bodies in anxiety, as if wanting to swallow them.

32The cowherd men, having been unable to check the cows from going to their calves, felt simultaneously ashamed and angry. They crossed the rough road with great difficulty, but when they came down and saw their own sons, they were overwhelmed by great affection.

33At that time, all the thoughts of the cowherd men merged in the mellow of paternal love, which was aroused by the sight of their sons. Experiencing a great attraction, their anger completely disappearing, they lifted their sons, embraced them in their arms and enjoyed the highest pleasure by smelling their sons' heads.

34Thereafter the elderly cowherd men, having obtained great feeling from embracing their sons, gradually and with great difficulty and reluctance ceased embracing them and returned to the forest. But as the men remembered their sons, tears began to roll down from their eyes.

35Because of an increase of affection, the cows had constant attachment even to those calves that were grown up and had stopped sucking milk from their mothers. When Baladeva saw this attachment, He was unable to understand the reason for it, and thus He began to consider as follows.

36What is this wonderful phenomenon? The affection of all the inhabitants of Vraja, including Me, toward these boys and calves is increasing as never before, just like our affection for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul of all living entities.

37Who is this mystic power, and where has she come from? Is she a demigod or a demonesse? She must be the illusory energy of My master, Lord Kṛṣṇa, for who else can bewilder Me?

38Thinking in this way, Lord Balarāma was able to see, with the eye of transcendental knowledge, that all these calves and Kṛṣṇa's friends were expansions of the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

39Lord Baladeva said, "O supreme controller! These boys are not great demigods, as I previously thought. Nor are these calves great sages like Nārada. Now I can see that You alone are manifesting Yourself in all varieties of difference. Although one, You are existing in the different forms of the calves and boys. Please briefly explain this to Me." Having thus been requested by Lord Baladeva, Kṛṣṇa explained the whole situation, and Baladeva understood it.

40When Lord Brahmā returned after a moment of time had passed (according to his own measurement), he saw that although by human measurement a complete year had passed, Lord Kṛṣṇa, after all that time, was engaged just as before in playing with the boys and calves, who were His expansions.

41Lord Brahmā thought: Whatever boys and calves there were in Gokula, I have kept them sleeping on the bed of my mystic potency, and to this very day they have not yet risen again.

42A similar number of boys and calves have been playing with Kṛṣṇa for one whole year, yet they are different from the ones illusioned by my mystic potency. Who are they? Where did they come from?

43Thus Lord Brahmā, thinking and thinking for a long time, tried to distinguish between those two sets of boys, who were each separately existing. He tried to understand who was real and who was not real, but he couldn't understand at all.

44Thus because Lord Brahmā wanted to mystify the all-pervading Lord Kṛṣṇa, who can never be mystified, but who, on the contrary, mystifies the entire universe, he himself was put into bewilderment by his own mystic power.

45As the darkness of snow on a dark night and the light of a glowworm in the light of day have no value, the mystic power of an inferior person who tries to use it against a person of great power is unable to accomplish anything; instead, the power of that inferior person is diminished.

46Then, while Lord Brahmā looked on, all the calves and the boys tending them immediately appeared to have complexions the color of bluish rainclouds and to be dressed in yellow silken garments.

47-48All those personalities had four arms, holding conchshell, disc, mace and lotus flower in Their hands. They wore helmets on Their heads, earrings on Their ears and garlands of forest flowers around Their necks. On the upper portion of the right side of Their chests was the emblem of the goddess of fortune. Furthermore, They wore armlets on Their arms, the Kaustubha gem around Their necks, which were marked with three lines like a conchshell, and bracelets on Their wrists. With bangles on Their ankles, ornaments on Their feet, and sacred belts around Their waists, They all appeared very beautiful.

49Every part of Their bodies, from Their feet to the top of Their heads, was fully decorated with fresh, tender garlands of tulasī leaves offered by devotees engaged in worshiping the Lord by the greatest pious activities, namely hearing and chanting.

50Those Viṣṇu forms, by Their pure smiling, which resembled the increasing light of the moon,

and by the sidelong glances of Their reddish eyes, created and protected the desires of Their own devotees, as if by the modes of passion and goodness.

51All beings, both moving and nonmoving, from the four-headed Lord Brahmā down to the most insignificant living entity, had taken forms and were differently worshipping those viṣṇu-mūrtis, according to their respective capacities, with various means of worship, such as dancing and singing.

52All the viṣṇu-mūrtis were surrounded by the opulences, headed by aṇimā-siddhi; by the mystic potencies, headed by Ajā; and by the twenty-four elements for the creation of the material world, headed by the mahat-tattva.

53Then Lord Brahmā saw that kāla (the time factor), svabhāva (one's own nature by association), saṁskāra (reformation), kāma (desire), karma (fruitive activity) and the guṇas (the three modes of material nature), their own independence being completely subordinate to the potency of the Lord, had all taken forms and were also worshipping those viṣṇu-mūrtis.

54The viṣṇu-mūrtis all had eternal, unlimited forms, full of knowledge and bliss and existing beyond the influence of time. Their great glory was not even to be touched by the jñānīs engaged in studying the Upaniṣads.

55Thus Lord Brahmā saw the Supreme Brahman, by whose energy this entire universe, with its moving and nonmoving living beings, is manifested. He also saw at the same time all the calves and boys as the Lord's expansions.

56Then, by the power of the effulgence of those viṣṇu-mūrtis, Lord Brahmā, his eleven senses jolted by astonishment and stunned by transcendental bliss, became silent, just like a child's clay doll in the presence of the village deity.

57The Supreme Brahman is beyond mental speculation, He is self-manifest, existing in His own bliss, and He is beyond the material energy. He is known by the crest jewels of the Vedas by refutation of irrelevant knowledge. Thus in relation to that Supreme Brahman, the Personality of Godhead, whose glory had been shown by the manifestation of all the four-armed forms of Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā, the lord of Sarasvatī, was mystified. "What is this?" he thought, and then he was not even able to see. Lord Kṛṣṇa, understanding Brahmā's position, then at once removed the curtain of His yoga-māyā.

58Lord Brahmā's external consciousness then revived, and he stood up, just like a dead man coming back to life. Opening his eyes with great difficulty, he saw the universe, along with himself.

59Then, looking in all directions, Lord Brahmā immediately saw Vṛndāvana before him, filled with trees, which were the means of livelihood for the inhabitants and which were equally pleasing in all seasons.

60Vṛndāvana is the transcendental abode of the Lord, where there is no hunger, anger or thirst. Though naturally inimical, both human beings and fierce animals live there together in transcendental friendship.

61Then Lord Brahmā saw the Absolute Truth who is one without a second, who possesses full knowledge and who is unlimited assuming the role of a child in a family of cowherd men and standing all alone, just as before, with a morsel of food in His hand, searching everywhere for the calves and His cowherd friends.

62After seeing this, Lord Brahmā hastily got down from his swan carrier, fell down like a golden rod and touched the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa with the tips of the four crowns on his heads. Offering his obeisances, he bathed the feet of Kṛṣṇa with the water of his tears of joy.

63Rising and falling again and again at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa for a long time, Lord Brahmā remembered over and over the Lord's greatness he had just seen.

64Then, rising very gradually and wiping his two eyes, Lord Brahmā looked up at Mukunda. Lord Brahmā, his head bent low, his mind concentrated and his body trembling, very humbly began, with faltering words, to offer praises to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

SB 10.14: Brahmā's Prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa

This chapter describes the prayers Brahmā offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is also known as Nandanāna.

For His satisfaction, Brahmā first praised the beauty of the Lord's transcendental limbs and then declared that His original identity of sweetness is even more difficult to comprehend than His opulence. Only by the devotional process of hearing and chanting transcendental sounds received from Vedic authorities can one realize the Personality of Godhead. It is fruitless to try to realize God through processes outside the scope of Vedic authority.

The mystery of the Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of unlimited spiritual qualities, is inconceivable; it is even more difficult to understand than the impersonal Supreme. Thus only by the mercy of God can one understand His glories. Finally realizing this, Brahmā repeatedly condemned his own actions and recognized that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate shelter of the universe, is Brahmā's own father, the original Nārāyaṇa. In this way Brahmā begged the Lord's forgiveness.

Brahmā then glorified the inconceivable opulence of the Personality of Godhead and described the ways in which Brahmā and Śiva differ from Lord Viṣṇu, the reason for the Supreme Lord's appearance in various species of demigods, animals and so on, the eternal nature of the pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, and the temporality of the material world. By knowing the Supreme Personality in truth, the individual spirit soul can achieve liberation from bondage. In actuality, however, both liberation and bondage are unreal, for it is only from the living entity's conditioned outlook that his bondage and liberation are produced. Thinking the personal form of Lord Kṛṣṇa illusory, fools reject His lotus feet and look elsewhere to find the Supreme Self. But the futility of their search is the obvious proof of their foolishness. There is simply no way to understand the truth of the Personality of Godhead without His mercy.

Having established this conclusion, Lord Brahmā analyzed the great good fortune of the residents of Vraja and then personally prayed to be born there even as a blade of grass, a bush or a creeper. Indeed, the homes of the residents of Vṛndāvana are not prisons of material existence but rather abodes envied even by the *jṣānīs* and *yogīs*. On the other hand, any home without a connection to Lord Kṛṣṇa is in fact a prison cell of material existence. Finally, Brahmā offered his whole self at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and, praising Him again and again, circumambulated Him and took his leave.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then gathered the animals Brahmā stole and led them to the place on the Yamunā's bank where the cowherd boys had been taking lunch. The same friends who had been present before were sitting there now. By the power of Kṛṣṇa's illusory energy, they were not at all aware of what had happened. Thus when Kṛṣṇa arrived with the calves, the boys told Him, "You've returned so quickly! Very good. As long as You were gone we couldn't take even a

morsel of food, so come and eat.”

Laughing at the words of the cowherd boys, Lord Kṛṣṇa began taking His meal in their company. While eating, Kṛṣṇa pointed out to His young friends the skin of the python, and the boys thought, “Kṛṣṇa has just now killed this terrible snake.” Indeed, later they related to the residents of Vṛndāvana the incident of Kṛṣṇa’s killing the Agha demon. In this way, the cowherd boys described pastimes that Lord Kṛṣṇa had performed in His *bālyā* age (one to five), even though His *paugāṇḍā* age (six to ten) had begun.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī concludes this chapter by explaining how the *gopīs* loved Lord Kṛṣṇa even more than they loved their own sons.

1Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, You are the only worshipable Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore I offer my humble obeisances and prayers just to please You. O son of the king of the cowherds, Your transcendental body is dark blue like a new cloud, Your garment is brilliant like lightning, and the beauty of Your face is enhanced by Your guṣṭhā earrings and the peacock feather on Your head. Wearing garlands of various forest flowers and leaves, and equipped with a herding stick, a buffalo horn and a flute, You stand beautifully with a morsel of food in Your hand.

2My dear Lord, neither I nor anyone else can estimate the potency of this transcendental body of Yours, which has shown such mercy to me and which appears just to fulfill the desires of Your pure devotees. Although my mind is completely withdrawn from material affairs, I cannot understand Your personal form. How, then, could I possibly understand the happiness You experience within Yourself?

3Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.

4My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the best path for self-realization. If someone gives up that path and engages in the cultivation of speculative knowledge, he will simply undergo a troublesome process and will not achieve his desired result. As a person who beats an empty husk of wheat cannot get grain, one who simply speculates cannot achieve self-realization. His only gain is trouble.

5O almighty Lord, in the past many yogīs in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavors unto You and faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about You, they came to understand You, O infallible one, and could easily surrender to You and achieve Your supreme abode.

6Nondevotees, however, cannot realize You in Your full personal feature. Nevertheless, it may be possible for them to realize Your expansion as the impersonal Supreme by cultivating direct perception of the Self within the heart. But they can do this only by purifying their mind and senses of all conceptions of material distinctions and all attachment to material sense objects. Only in this way will Your impersonal feature manifest itself to them.

7In time, learned philosophers or scientists might be able to count all the atoms of the earth, the particles of snow, or perhaps even the shining molecules radiating from the sun, the stars and other luminaries. But among these learned men, who could possibly count the unlimited transcendental qualities possessed by You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have

descended onto the surface of the earth for the benefit of all living entities?

8My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.

9My Lord, just see my uncivilized impudence! To test Your power I tried to extend my illusory potency to cover You, the unlimited and primeval Supersoul, who bewilder even the masters of illusion. What am I compared to You? I am just like a small spark in the presence of a great fire.

10Therefore, O infallible Lord, kindly excuse my offenses. I have taken birth in the mode of passion and am therefore simply foolish, presuming myself a controller independent of Your Lordship. My eyes are blinded by the darkness of ignorance, which causes me to think of myself as the unborn creator of the universe. But please consider that I am Your servant and therefore worthy of Your compassion.

11What am I, a small creature measuring seven spans of my own hand? I am enclosed in a potlike universe composed of material nature, the total material energy, false ego, ether, air, water and earth. And what is Your glory? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just as particles of dust pass through the openings of a screened window.

12O Lord Adhokṣaja, does a mother take offense when the child within her womb kicks with his legs? And is there anything in existence whether designated by various philosophers as real or as unreal that is actually outside Your abdomen?

13My dear Lord, it is said that when the three planetary systems are merged into the water at the time of dissolution, Your plenary portion, Nārāyaṇa, lies down on the water, gradually a lotus flower grows from His navel, and Brahmā takes birth upon that lotus flower. Certainly, these words are not false. Thus am I not born from You?

14Are You not the original Nārāyaṇa, O supreme controller, since You are the Soul of every embodied being and the eternal witness of all created realms? Indeed, Lord Nārāyaṇa is Your expansion, and He is called Nārāyaṇa because He is the generating source of the primeval water of the universe. He is real, not a product of Your illusory Māyā.

15My dear Lord, if Your transcendental body, which shelters the entire universe, is actually lying upon the water, then why were You not seen by me when I searched for You? And why, though I could not envision You properly within my heart, did You then suddenly reveal Yourself?

16My dear Lord, in this incarnation You have proved that You are the supreme controller of Māyā. Although You are now within this universe, the whole universal creation is within Your transcendental body a fact You demonstrated by exhibiting the universe within Your abdomen before Your mother, Yaśodā.

17Just as this entire universe, including You, was exhibited within Your abdomen, so it is now manifested here externally in the same exact form. How could such things happen unless arranged by Your inconceivable energy?

18Have You not shown me today that both You Yourself and everything within this creation are manifestations of Your inconceivable potency? First You appeared alone, and then You manifested Yourself as all of Vṛndāvana's calves and cowherd boys, Your friends. Next You

appeared as an equal number of four-handed Viṣṇu forms, who were worshiped by all living beings, including me, and after that You appeared as an equal number of complete universes. Finally, You have now returned to Your unlimited form as the Supreme Absolute Truth, one without a second.

19 To persons ignorant of Your actual transcendental position, You appear as part of the material world, manifesting Yourself by the expansion of Your inconceivable energy. Thus for the creation of the universe You appear as me [Brahmā], for its maintenance You appear as Yourself [Viṣṇu], and for its annihilation You appear as Lord Trinetra [Śiva].

20 O Lord, O supreme creator and master, You have no material birth, yet to defeat the false pride of the faithless demons and show mercy to Your saintly devotees, You take birth among the demigods, sages, human beings, animals and even the aquatics.

21 O supreme great one! O Supreme Personality of Godhead! O Supersoul, master of all mystic power! Your pastimes are taking place continuously in these three worlds, but who can estimate where, how and when You are employing Your spiritual energy and performing these innumerable pastimes? No one can understand the mystery of how Your spiritual energy acts.

22 Therefore this entire universe, which like a dream is by nature unreal, nevertheless appears real, and thus it covers one's consciousness and assails one with repeated miseries. This universe appears real because it is manifested by the potency of illusion emanating from You, whose unlimited transcendental forms are full of eternal happiness and knowledge.

23 You are the one Supreme Soul, the primeval Supreme Personality, the Absolute Truthself-manifested, endless and beginningless. You are eternal and infallible, perfect and complete, without any rival and free from all material designations. Your happiness can never be obstructed, nor have You any connection with material contamination. Indeed, You are the indestructible nectar of immortality.

24 Those who have received the clear vision of knowledge from the sunlike spiritual master can see You in this way, as the very Soul of all souls, the Supersoul of everyone's own self. Thus understanding Your original personality, they are able to cross over the ocean of illusory material existence.

25 A person who mistakes a rope for a snake becomes fearful, but he then gives up his fear upon realizing that the so-called snake does not exist. Similarly, for those who fail to recognize You as the Supreme Soul of all souls, the expansive illusory material existence arises, but knowledge of You at once causes it to subside.

26 The conception of material bondage and the conception of liberation are both manifestations of ignorance. Being outside the scope of true knowledge, they cease to exist when one correctly understands that the pure spirit soul is distinct from matter and always fully conscious. At that time bondage and liberation no longer have any significance, just as day and night have no significance from the perspective of the sun.

27 Just see the foolishness of those ignorant persons who consider You to be some separated manifestation of illusion and who consider the self, which is actually You, to be something else, the material body. Such fools conclude that the supreme soul is to be searched for somewhere outside Your supreme personality.

28 O unlimited Lord, the saintly devotees seek You out within their own bodies by rejecting everything separate from You. Indeed, how can discriminating persons appreciate the real nature of a rope lying before them until they refute the illusion that it is a snake?

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29My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the Vedas for many years.

30My dear Lord, I therefore pray to be so fortunate that in this life as Lord Brahmā or in another life, wherever I take my birth, I may be counted as one of Your devotees. I pray that wherever I may be, even among the animal species, I can engage in devotional service to Your lotus feet.

31O almighty Lord, how greatly fortunate are the cows and ladies of Vṛndāvana, the nectar of whose breast milk You have happily drunk to Your full satisfaction, taking the form of their calves and children! All the Vedic sacrifices performed from time immemorial up to the present day have not given You as much satisfaction.

32How greatly fortunate are Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men and all the other inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi! There is no limit to their good fortune, because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend.

33Yet even though the extent of the good fortune of these residents of Vṛndāvana is inconceivable, we eleven presiding deities of the various senses, headed by Lord Śiva, are also most fortunate, because the senses of these devotees of Vṛndāvana are the cups through which we repeatedly drink the nectarean, intoxicating beverage of the honey of Your lotus feet.

34My greatest possible good fortune would be to take any birth whatever in this forest of Gokula and have my head bathed by the dust falling from the lotus feet of any of its residents. Their entire life and soul is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, the dust of whose lotus feet is still being searched for in the Vedic mantras.

35My mind becomes bewildered just trying to think of what reward other than You could be found anywhere. You are the embodiment of all benedictions, which You bestow upon these residents of the cowherd community of Vṛndāvana. You have already arranged to give Yourself to Pūtanā and her family members in exchange for her disguising herself as a devotee. So what is left for You to give these devotees of Vṛndāvana, whose homes, wealth, friends, dear relations, bodies, children and very lives and hearts are all dedicated only to You?

36My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, until people become Your devotees, their material attachments and desires remain thieves, their homes remain prisons, and their affectionate feelings for their family members remain foot-shackles.

37My dear master, although You have nothing to do with material existence, You come to this earth and imitate material life just to expand the varieties of ecstatic enjoyment for Your surrendered devotees.

38There are people who say, "I know everything about Kṛṣṇa." Let them think that way. As far as I am concerned, I do not wish to speak very much about this matter. O my Lord, let me say this much: As far as Your opulences are concerned, they are all beyond the reach of my mind, body and words.

39My dear Kṛṣṇa, I now humbly request permission to leave. Actually, You are the knower and seer of all things. Indeed, You are the Lord of all the universes, and yet I offer this one universe unto You.

40My dear Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You bestow happiness upon the lotuslike Vṛṣṇi dynasty and expand the great oceans consisting of the earth, the demigods, the brāhmaṇas and the cows. You dispel

the dense darkness of irreligion and oppose the demons who have appeared on this earth. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, as long as this universe exists and as long as the sun shines, I will offer my obeisances unto You.

41Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus offered his prayers, Brahmā circumambulated his worshipable Lord, the unlimited Personality of Godhead, three times and then bowed down at His lotus feet. The appointed creator of the universe then returned to his own residence.

42After granting His son Brahmā permission to leave, the Supreme Personality of Godhead took the calves, who were still where they had been a year earlier, and brought them to the riverbank, where He had been taking His meal and where His cowherd boyfriends remained just as before.

43O King, although the boys had passed an entire year apart from the Lord of their very lives, they had been covered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency and thus considered that year merely half a moment.

44What indeed is not forgotten by those whose minds are bewildered by the Lord's illusory potency? By that power of Māyā, this entire universe remains in perpetual bewilderment, and in this atmosphere of forgetfulness no one can understand his own identity.

45The cowherd boyfriends said to Lord Kṛṣṇa: You have returned so quickly! We have not eaten even one morsel in Your absence. Please come here and take Your meal without distraction.

46Then Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, smiling, finished His lunch in the company of His cowherd friends. While they were returning from the forest to their homes in Vraja, Lord Kṛṣṇa showed the cowherd boys the skin of the dead serpent Aghāsura.

47Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental body was decorated with peacock feathers and flowers and painted with forest minerals, and His bamboo flute loudly and festively resounded. As He called out to His calves by name, His cowherd boyfriends purified the whole world by chanting His glories. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the cow pasture of His father, Nanda Mahārāja, and the sight of His beauty at once produced a great festival for the eyes of all the cowherd women.

48As the cowherd boys reached the village of Vraja, they sang, "Today Kṛṣṇa saved us by killing a great serpent!" Some of the boys described Kṛṣṇa as the son of Yaśodā, and others as the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

49King Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, how could the cowherd women have developed for Kṛṣṇa, someone else's son, such unprecedented pure love they never felt even for their own children? Please explain this.

50ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, for every created being the dearest thing is certainly his own self. The dearness of everything else—children, wealth and so on—is due only to the dearness of the self.

51For this reason, O best of kings, the embodied soul is self-centered: he is more attached to his own body and self than to his so-called possessions like children, wealth and home.

52Indeed, for persons who think the body is the self, O best of kings, those things whose importance lies only in their relationship to the body are never as dear as the body itself.

53If a person comes to the stage of considering the body “mine” instead of “me,” he will certainly not consider the body as dear as his own self. After all, even as the body is growing old and useless, one’s desire to continue living remains strong.

54Therefore it is his own self that is most dear to every embodied living being, and it is simply for the satisfaction of this self that the whole material creation of moving and nonmoving entities exists.

55You should know Kṛṣṇa to be the original Soul of all living entities. For the benefit of the whole universe, He has, out of His causeless mercy, appeared as an ordinary human being. He has done this by the strength of His internal potency.

56Those in this world who understand Lord Kṛṣṇa as He is see all things, whether stationary or moving, as manifest forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such enlightened persons recognize no reality apart from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

57The original, unmanifested form of material nature is the source of all material things, and the source of even that subtle material nature is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. What, then, could one ascertain to be separate from Him?

58For those who have 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 Mura demon, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf’s hoof-print. Their goal is param padam, Vaikuṅṭha, the place where there are no material miseries, not the place where there is danger at every step.

59Since you inquired from me, I have fully described to you those activities of Lord Hari that were performed in His fifth year but not celebrated until His sixth.

60Any person who hears or chants these pastimes Lord Murāri performed with His cowherd friends—the killing of Aghāsura, the taking of lunch on the forest grass, the Lord’s manifestation of transcendental forms, and the wonderful prayers offered by Lord Brahmāis sure to achieve all his spiritual desires.

61In this way the boys spent their childhood in the land of Vṛndāvana playing hide-and-go-seek, building play bridges, jumping about like monkeys and engaging in many other such games.

SB 10.15: The Killing of Dhenuka, the Ass Demon

This chapter describes how Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, while tending Their cows in the pastures of Vṛndāvana, killed Dhenukāsura, enabled the residents of Vṛndāvana to eat the fruits of the *tāla* trees and saved the young cowherds from Kāliya’s poison.

Revealing Their boyhood (*pauganda*) phase of pastimes, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were one day bringing the cows to pasture when They entered an attractive forest decorated with a clear lake. There They began playing forest sports along with Their friends. Pretending to tire, Lord Baladeva laid His head upon the lap of a cowherd boy and rested as Lord Kṛṣṇa helped relieve His elder brother’s fatigue by massaging His feet. Then Kṛṣṇa also placed His head on the lap of a cowherd boy to rest, and another cowherd boy massaged His feet. In this way Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Their cowherd friends enjoyed various pastimes.

During this play, Śrīdāmā, Subala, Stoka-kṛṣṇa and other cowherd boys described to Rāma and Kṛṣṇa a wicked and irrepressible demon named Dhenuka, who had assumed the form of a

jackass and was living in the Tālavana forest near Govardhana Hill. This forest was full of many varieties of sweet fruits. But fearing this demon, no one dared try to relish the taste of those fruits, and thus someone had to kill the demon and all his associates. Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, hearing of the situation, set off for this forest to fulfill the desire of Their companions.

Arriving at the Tālavana, Lord Balarāma shook many fruits out of the palm trees, and as soon as He did so the jackass demon, Dhenuka, ran swiftly to attack Him. But Balarāma grabbed his hind legs with one hand, whirled him around and threw him into the top of a tree, thus slaying him. All of Dhenukāsura's friends, overcome by fury, then rushed to attack, but Rāma and Kṛṣṇa took hold of them one by one, swung them around and killed them, until the disturbance was finally finished. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma returned to the cowherd community, Yaśodā and Rohiṇī placed Them on their respective laps. They kissed Their faces, fed Them with finely prepared food and then put Them to bed.

Some days later Lord Kṛṣṇa went with His friends, but without His older brother, to the banks of the Kālindī in order to tend the cows. The cows and cowherd boys became very thirsty and drank some water from the Kālindī. But it had been contaminated with poison, and they all fell unconscious on the riverbank. Kṛṣṇa then brought them back to life by the merciful rain of His glance, and all of them, regaining their consciousness, appreciated His great mercy.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa attained the age of pauganḍa [six to ten] while living in Vṛndāvana, the cowherd men allowed Them to take up the task of tending the cows. Engaging thus in the company of Their friends, the two boys rendered the land of Vṛndāvana most auspicious by imprinting upon it the marks of Their lotus feet.

2Thus desiring to enjoy pastimes, Lord Mādhava, sounding His flute, surrounded by cowherd boys who were chanting His glories, and accompanied by Lord Baladeva, kept the cows before Him and entered the Vṛndāvana forest, which was full of flowers and rich with nourishment for the animals.

3The Supreme Personality of Godhead looked over that forest, which resounded with the charming sounds of bees, animals and birds, and which was enhanced by a lake whose clear water resembled the minds of great souls and by a breeze carrying the fragrance of hundred-petaled lotuses. Seeing all this, Lord Kṛṣṇa decided to enjoy the auspicious atmosphere.

4The primeval Lord saw that the stately trees, with their beautiful reddish buds and their heavy burden of fruits and flowers, were bending down to touch His feet with the tips of their branches. Thus He smiled gently and addressed His elder brother.

5The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O greatest of Lords, just see how these trees are bowing their heads at Your lotus feet, which are worshipable by the immortal demigods. The trees are offering You their fruits and flowers to eradicate the dark ignorance that has caused their birth as trees.

6O Original Personality, these bees must all be great sages and most elevated devotees of Yours, for they are worshipping You by following You along the path and chanting Your glories, which are themselves a holy place for the entire world. Though You have disguised Yourself within this forest, O sinless one, they refuse to abandon You, their worshipable Lord.

7O worshipable one, these peacocks are dancing before You out of joy, these doe are pleasing You with affectionate glances, just as the gopīs do, and these cuckoos are honoring You with Vedic prayers. All these residents of the forest are most fortunate, and their behavior toward You certainly befits great souls receiving another great soul at home.

8This earth has now become most fortunate, because You have touched her grass and bushes with Your feet and her trees and creepers with Your fingernails, and because You have graced her rivers, mountains, birds and animals with Your merciful glances. But above all, You have embraced the young cowherd women between Your two arms favor hankered after by the goddess of fortune herself.

9Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus expressing His satisfaction with the beautiful forest of Vṛndāvana and its inhabitants, Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoyed tending the cows and other animals with His friends on the banks of the river Yamunā below Govardhana Hill.

10-12Sometimes the honeybees in Vṛndāvana became so mad with ecstasy that they closed their eyes and began to sing. Lord Kṛṣṇa, moving along the forest path with His cowherd boyfriends and Baladeva, would then respond to the bees by imitating their singing while His friends sang about His pastimes. Sometimes Lord Kṛṣṇa would imitate the chattering of a parrot, sometimes, with a sweet voice, the call of a cuckoo, and sometimes the cooing of swans. Sometimes He vigorously imitated the dancing of a peacock, making His cowherd boyfriends laugh. Sometimes, with a voice as deep as the rumbling of clouds, He would call out with great affection the names of the animals who had wandered far from the herd, thus enchanting the cows and the cowherd boys.

13Sometimes He would cry out in imitation of birds such as the cakoras, krauṣcas, cakrāhvas, bhāradvājas and peacocks, and sometimes He would run away with the smaller animals in mock fear of lions and tigers.

14When His elder brother, fatigued from playing, would lie down with His head upon the lap of a cowherd boy, Lord Kṛṣṇa would help Him relax by personally massaging His feet and offering other services.

15Sometimes, as the cowherd boys danced, sang, moved about and playfully fought with each other, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, standing nearby hand in hand, would glorify Their friends' activities and laugh.

16Sometimes Lord Kṛṣṇa grew tired from fighting and lay down at the base of a tree, resting upon a bed made of soft twigs and buds and using the lap of a cowherd friend as His pillow.

17Some of the cowherd boys, who were all great souls, would then massage His lotus feet, and others, qualified by being free of all sin, would expertly fan the Supreme Lord.

18My dear King, other boys would sing enchanting songs appropriate to the occasion, and their hearts would melt out of love for the Lord.

19In this way the Supreme Lord, whose soft lotus feet are personally attended by the goddess of fortune, concealed His transcendental opulences by His internal potency and acted like the son of a cowherd. Yet even while enjoying like a village boy in the company of other village residents, He often exhibited feats only God could perform.

20Once, some of the cowherd boys Śrīdāmā, the very close friend of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, along with Subala, Stokakṛṣṇa and others lovingly spoke the following words.

21[The cowherd boys said:] O Rāma, Rāma, mighty-armed one! O Kṛṣṇa, destroyer of the miscreants! Not far from here is a very great forest filled with rows of palm trees.

22In that Tālavana forest many fruits are falling from the trees, and many are already lying on the ground. But all the fruits are being guarded by the evil Dhenuka.

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23O Rāma, O Kṛṣṇa! Dhenuka is a most powerful demon and has assumed the form of an ass. He is surrounded by many friends who have assumed a similar shape and who are just as powerful as he.

24The demon Dhenuka has eaten men alive, and therefore all people and animals are terrified of going to the Tāla forest. O killer of the enemy, even the birds are afraid to fly there.

25In the Tāla forest are sweet-smelling fruits no one has ever tasted. Indeed, even now we can smell the fragrance of the tāla fruits spreading all about.

26O Kṛṣṇa! Please get those fruits for us. Our minds are so attracted by their aroma! Dear Balarāma, our desire to have those fruits is very great. If You think it's a good idea, let's go to that Tāla forest.

27Hearing the words of Their dear companions, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma laughed and, desiring to please them, set off for the Tālavana surrounded by Their cowherd boyfriends.

28Lord Balarāma entered the Tāla forest first. Then with His two arms He began forcefully shaking the trees with the power of a maddened elephant, causing the tāla fruits to fall to the ground.

29Hearing the sound of the falling fruits, the ass demon Dhenuka ran forward to attack, making the earth and trees tremble.

30The powerful demon rushed up to Lord Baladeva and sharply struck the Lord's chest with the hooves of his hind legs. Then Dhenuka began to run about, braying loudly.

31Moving again toward Lord Balarāma, O King, the furious ass situated himself with his back toward the Lord. Then, screaming in rage, the demon hurled his two hind legs at Him.

32Lord Balarāma seized Dhenuka by his hooves, whirled him about with one hand and threw him into the top of a palm tree. The violent wheeling motion killed the demon.

33Lord Balarāma threw the dead body of Dhenukāsura into the tallest palm tree in the forest, and when the dead demon landed in the treetop, the tree began shaking. The great palm tree, causing a tree by its side also to shake, broke under the weight of the demon. The neighboring tree caused yet another tree to shake, and this one struck yet another tree, which also began shaking. In this way many trees in the forest shook and broke.

34Because of Lord Balarāma's pastime of throwing the body of the ass demon into the top of the tallest palm tree, all the trees began shaking and striking against one another as if blown about by powerful winds.

35My dear Parīkṣit, that Lord Balarāma killed Dhenukāsura is not such a wonderful thing, considering that He is the unlimited Personality of Godhead, the controller of the entire universe. Indeed, the entire cosmos rests upon Him just as a woven cloth rests upon its own horizontal and vertical threads.

36The other ass demons, close friends of Dhenukāsura, were enraged upon seeing his death, and thus they all immediately ran to attack Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

37O King, as the demons attacked, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma easily seized them one after another by their hind legs and threw them all into the tops of the palm trees.

38The earth then appeared beautifully covered with heaps of fruits and with the dead bodies of

the demons, which were entangled in the broken tops of the palm trees. Indeed, the earth shone like the sky decorated with clouds.

39Hearing of this magnificent feat of the two brothers, the demigods and other elevated living beings rained down flowers and offered music and prayers in glorification.

40People now felt free to return to the forest where Dhenuka had been killed, and without fear they ate the fruits of the palm trees. Also, the cows could now graze freely upon the grass there.

41Then lotus-eyed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose glories are most pious to hear and chant, returned home to Vraja with His elder brother, Balarāma. Along the way, the cowherd boys, His faithful followers, chanted His glories.

42Lord Kṛṣṇa's hair, powdered with the dust raised by the cows, was decorated with a peacock feather and forest flowers. The Lord glanced charmingly and smiled beautifully, playing upon His flute while His companions chanted His glories. The gopīs, all together, came forward to meet Him, their eyes very eager to see Him.

43With their beelike eyes, the women of Vṛndāvana drank the honey of the beautiful face of Lord Mukunda, and thus they gave up the distress they had felt during the day because of separation from Him. The young Vṛndāvana ladies cast sidelong glances at the Lordglances filled with bashfulness, laughter and submissionand Śrī Kṛṣṇa, completely accepting these glances as a proper offering of respect, entered the cowherd village.

44Mother Yaśodā and mother Rohiṇī, acting most affectionately toward their two sons, offered all the best things to Them in response to Their every desire and at the various appropriate times.

45By being bathed and massaged, the two young Lords were relieved of the weariness caused by walking on the country roads. Then They were dressed in attractive robes and decorated with transcendental garlands and fragrances.

46After dining sumptuously on the delicious food given Them by Their mothers and being pampered in various ways, the two brothers lay down upon Their excellent beds and happily went to sleep in the village of Vraja.

47O King, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa thus wandered about the Vṛndāvana area, performing His pastimes. Once, surrounded by His boyfriends, He went without Balarāma to the Yamunā River.

48At that time the cows and cowherd boys were feeling acute distress from the glaring summer sun. Afflicted by thirst, they drank the water of the Yamunā River. But it had been contaminated with poison.

49-50As soon as they touched the poisoned water, all the cows and boys lost their consciousness by the divine power of the Lord and fell lifeless at the water's edge. O hero of the Kurus, seeing them in such a condition, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of all masters of mystic potency, felt compassion for these devotees, who had no Lord other than Him. Thus He immediately brought them back to life by showering His nectarean glance upon them.

51Regaining their full consciousness, the cows and boys stood up out of the water and began to look at one another in great astonishment.

52O King, the cowherd boys then considered that although they had drunk poison and in fact

had died, simply by the merciful glance of Govinda they had regained their lives and stood up by their own strength.

SB 10.16: Kṛṣṇa Chastises the Serpent Kāliya

This chapter describes Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastime of subduing the serpent Kāliya within the lake adjoining the river Yamunā and His showing mercy to Kāliya in response to the prayers offered by Kāliya's wives, the Nāgapatnīs.

To restore the purity of the Yamunā's waters, which had been contaminated by Kāliya's poison, Lord Kṛṣṇa climbed into a *kadamba* tree on the riverbank and jumped into the water. Then He began fearlessly playing within the water like a maddened elephant. Kāliya could not tolerate Kṛṣṇa's trespassing upon his personal residence, and the serpent quickly went up to the Lord and bit Him on the chest. When Kṛṣṇa's friends saw this, they fell down on the ground unconscious. At that time all sorts of evil omens appeared in Vraja, such as earth tremors, falling stars and the trembling of various creatures' left limbs.

The residents of Vṛndāvana thought, "Today Kṛṣṇa went to the forest without Balarāma, so we do not know what great misfortune may have befallen Him." Thinking in this way, they traced the path of Kṛṣṇa's footprints to the bank of the Yamunā. Within the water of the lake adjoining the river they saw Lord Kṛṣṇa, the very essence of their lives, enwrapped in the coils of a black snake. The residents thought the three worlds had become empty, and they all prepared to enter the water. But Lord Balarāma checked them, knowing well the power of Kṛṣṇa.

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, seeing how disturbed His friends and relatives had become, expanded His body greatly and forced the serpent to loosen his grip and release Him. Next the Lord began playfully dancing about on the serpent's hoods. By this wonderful, boisterous dancing, Śrī Kṛṣṇa trampled the serpent's one thousand hoods until his body slackened. Vomiting blood from his mouths, Kāliya finally understood that Kṛṣṇa was the primeval personality, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the spiritual master of all moving and nonmoving creatures, and he took shelter of Him.

Seeing how very weary Kāliya had become, his wives, the Nāgapatnīs, bowed down at Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Then they offered Him various prayers in hopes of gaining their husband's freedom: "It is quite fitting that You have brought our cruel husband to this condition. Indeed, by Your anger he has gained great benefit. What piety Kāliya must have amassed in his previous lives! Today he has borne upon his head the dust of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, the attainment of which is difficult for even the mother of the universe, the goddess Lakṣmī. Please kindly forgive the offense Kāliya has committed out of ignorance, and allow him to live."

Satisfied by the Nāgapatnīs' prayers, Kṛṣṇa released Kāliya, who slowly regained his sensory and vital powers. Then Kāliya, in a distressed voice, acknowledged the offense he had committed, and finally he offered Kṛṣṇa many prayers and said he was ready to accept His command. Kṛṣṇa told him to leave the Yamunā lake with his family and return to Ramanaka Island.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, seeing that the Yamunā River had been contaminated by the black snake Kāliya, desired to purify the river, and thus the Lord banished him from it.

2King Parīkṣit inquired: O learned sage, please explain how the Supreme Personality of Godhead chastised the serpent Kāliya within the unfathomable waters of the Yamunā, and how

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it was that Kāliya had been living there for so many ages.

30 brāhmaṇa, the unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead freely acts according to His own desires. Who could be satiated when hearing the nectar of the magnanimous pastimes He performed as a cowherd boy in Vṛndāvana?

4ŚrīSukadeva Gosvāmī said: Within the river Kālindī [Yamunā] was a lake inhabited by the serpent Kāliya, whose fiery poison constantly heated and boiled its waters. Indeed, the vapors thus created were so poisonous that birds flying over the contaminated lake would fall down into it.

5The wind blowing over that deadly lake carried droplets of water to the shore. Simply by coming in contact with that poisonous breeze, all vegetation and creatures on the shore died.

6Lord Kṛṣṇa saw how the Kāliya serpent had polluted the Yamunā River with his terribly powerful poison. Since Kṛṣṇa had descended from the spiritual world specifically to subdue envious demons, the Lord immediately climbed to the top of a very high kadamba tree and prepared Himself for battle. He tightened His belt, slapped His arms and then jumped into the poisonous water.

7When the Supreme Personality of Godhead landed in the serpent's lake, the snakes there became extremely agitated and began breathing heavily, further polluting it with volumes of poison. The force of the Lord's entrance into the lake caused it to overflow on all sides, and poisonous, fearsome waves flooded the surrounding lands up to a distance of one hundred bow-lengths. This is not at all amazing, however, for the Supreme Lord possesses infinite strength.

8Kṛṣṇa began sporting in Kāliya's lake like a lordly elephantswirling His mighty arms and making the water resound in various ways. When Kāliya heard these sounds, he understood that someone was trespassing in his lake. The serpent could not tolerate this and immediately came forward.

9Kāliya saw that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who wore yellow silken garments, was very delicate, His attractive body shining like a glowing white cloud, His chest bearing the mark of Śrīvatsa, His face smiling beautifully and His feet resembling the whorl of a lotus flower. The Lord was playing fearlessly in the water. Despite His wonderful appearance, the envious Kāliya furiously bit Him on the chest and then completely enwrapped Him in his coils.

10When the members of the cowherd community, who had accepted Kṛṣṇa as their dearest friend, saw Him enveloped in the snake's coils, motionless, they were greatly disturbed. They had offered Kṛṣṇa everythingtheir very selves, their families, their wealth, wives and all pleasures. At the sight of the Lord in the clutches of the Kāliya snake, their intelligence became deranged by grief, lamentation and fear, and thus they fell to the ground.

11The cows, bulls and female calves, in great distress, called out piteously to Kṛṣṇa. Fixing their eyes on Him, they stood still in fear, as if ready to cry but too shocked to shed tears.

12In the Vṛndāvana area there then arose all three types of fearful omensthose on the earth, those in the sky and those in the bodies of living creatureswhich announced imminent danger.

13-15Seeing the inauspicious omens, Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men were fearful, for they knew that Kṛṣṇa had gone to herd the cows that day without His elder brother, Balarāma. Because they had dedicated their minds to Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as their very life, they were unaware of His great power and opulence. Thus they concluded that the

inauspicious omens indicated He had met with death, and they were overwhelmed with grief, lamentation and fear. All the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, including the children, women and elderly persons, thought of Kṛṣṇa just as a cow thinks of her helpless young calf, and thus these poor, suffering people rushed out of the village, intent upon finding Him.

16The Supreme Lord Balarāma, the master of all transcendental knowledge, smiled and said nothing when He saw the residents of Vṛndāvana in such distress, since He understood the extraordinary power of His younger brother.

17The residents hurried toward the banks of the Yamunā in search of their dearest Kṛṣṇa, following the path marked by His footprints, which bore the unique signs of the Personality of Godhead.

18The footprints of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of the entire cowherd community, were marked with the lotus flower, barleycorn, elephant goad, thunderbolt and flag. My dear King Parīkṣit, seeing His footprints on the path among the cows' hoofprints, the residents of Vṛndāvana rushed along in great haste.

19As they hurried along the path to the bank of the Yamunā River, they saw from a distance that Kṛṣṇa was in the lake, motionless within the coils of the black serpent. They further saw that the cowherd boys had fallen unconscious and that the animals were standing on all sides, crying out for Kṛṣṇa. Seeing all this, the residents of Vṛndāvana were overwhelmed with anguish and confusion.

20When the young gopīs, whose minds were constantly attached to Kṛṣṇa, the unlimited Supreme Lord, saw that He was now within the grips of the serpent, they remembered His loving friendship, His smiling glances and His talks with them. Burning with great sorrow, they saw the entire universe as void.

21Although the elder gopīs were feeling just as much distress as she and were pouring forth a flood of sorrowful tears, they had to forcibly hold back Kṛṣṇa's mother, whose consciousness was totally absorbed in her son. Standing like corpses, with their eyes fixed upon His face, these gopīs each took turns recounting the pastimes of the darling of Vraja.

22Lord Balarāma then saw that Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men, who had dedicated their very lives to Kṛṣṇa, were beginning to enter the serpent's lake. As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Balarāma fully knew Lord Kṛṣṇa's actual power, and therefore He restrained them.

23The Lord remained for some time within the coils of the serpent, imitating the behavior of an ordinary mortal. But when He understood that the women, children and other residents of His village of Gokula were in acute distress because of their love for Him, their only shelter and goal in life, He immediately rose up from the bonds of the Kāliya serpent.

24His coils tormented by the expanding body of the Lord, Kāliya released Him. In great anger the serpent then raised his hoods high and stood still, breathing heavily. His nostrils appeared like vessels for cooking poison, and the staring eyes in his face like firebrands. Thus the serpent looked at the Lord.

25Again and again Kāliya licked his lips with his bifurcated tongues as He stared at Kṛṣṇa with a glance full of terrible, poisonous fire. But Kṛṣṇa playfully circled around him, just as Garuda would play with a snake. In response, Kāliya also moved about, looking for an opportunity to bite the Lord.

26 Having severely depleted the serpent's strength with His relentless circling, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the origin of everything, pushed down Kāliya's raised shoulders and mounted his broad serpentine heads. Thus Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the original master of all fine arts, began to dance, His lotus feet deeply reddened by the touch of the numerous jewels upon the serpent's heads.

27 Seeing the Lord dancing, His servants in the heavenly planets the Gandharvas, Siddhas, sages, Cāraṇas and wives of the demigods immediately arrived there. With great pleasure they began accompanying the Lord's dancing by playing drums such as mṛdaṅgas, paṇavas and ānakas. They also made offerings of songs, flowers and prayers.

28 My dear King, Kāliya had 101 prominent heads, and when one of them would not bow down, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who inflicts punishment on cruel wrong-doers, would smash that stubborn head by striking it with His feet. Then, as Kāliya entered his death throes, he began wheeling his heads around and vomiting ghastly blood from his mouths and nostrils. The serpent thus experienced extreme pain and misery.

29 Exuding poisonous waste from his eyes, Kāliya, would occasionally dare to raise up one of his heads, which would breathe heavily with anger. Then the Lord would dance on it and subdue it, forcing it to bow down with His foot. The demigods took each of these exhibitions as an opportunity to worship Him, the primeval Personality of Godhead, with showers of flowers.

30 My dear King Parīkṣit, Lord Kṛṣṇa's wonderful, powerful dancing trampled and broke all of Kāliya's one thousand hoods. Then the serpent, profusely vomiting blood from his mouths, finally recognized Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be the eternal Personality of Godhead, the supreme master of all moving and nonmoving beings, Śrī Nārāyaṇa. Thus within his mind Kāliya took shelter of the Lord.

31 When Kāliya's wives saw how the serpent had become so fatigued from the excessive weight of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who carries the entire universe in His abdomen, and how Kāliya's umbrellalike hoods had been shattered by the striking of Kṛṣṇa's heels, they felt great distress. With their clothing, ornaments and hair scattered in disarray, they then approached the eternal Personality of Godhead.

32 Their minds very much disturbed, those saintly ladies placed their children before them and then bowed down to the Lord of all creatures, laying their bodies flat upon the ground. They desired the liberation of their sinful husband and the shelter of the Supreme Lord, the giver of ultimate shelter, and thus they folded their hands in supplication and approached Him.

33 The wives of the Kāliya serpent said: The punishment this offender has been subjected to is certainly just. After all, You have incarnated within this world to curb down envious and cruel persons. You are so impartial that You look equally upon Your enemies and Your own sons, for when You impose a punishment on a living being You know it to be for his ultimate benefit.

34 What You have done here is actually mercy for us, since the punishment You give to the wicked certainly drives away all their contamination. Indeed, because this conditioned soul, our husband, is so sinful that he has assumed the body of a serpent, Your anger toward him is obviously to be understood as Your mercy.

35 Did our husband carefully perform austerities in a previous life, with his mind free of pride and full of respect for others? Is that why You are pleased with him? Or did he in some previous existence carefully execute religious duties with compassion for all living beings, and

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is that why You, the life of all living beings, are now satisfied with him?

36O Lord, we do not know how the serpent Kāliya has attained this great opportunity of being touched by the dust of Your lotus feet. For this end, the goddess of fortune performed austerities for centuries, giving up all other desires and observing austere vows.

37Those who have attained the dust of Your lotus feet never hanker for the kingship of heaven, limitless sovereignty, the position of Brahmā or rulership over the earth. They are not interested even in the perfections of yoga or in liberation itself.

38O Lord, although this Kāliya, the king of the serpents, has taken birth in the mode of ignorance and is controlled by anger, he has achieved that which is difficult for others to achieve. Embodied souls, who are full of desires and are thus wandering in the cycle of birth and death, can have all benedictions manifested before their eyes simply by receiving the dust of Your lotus feet.

39We offer our obeisances unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although present in the hearts of all living beings as the Supersoul, You are all-pervasive. Although the original shelter of all created material elements, You exist prior to their creation. And although the cause of everything, You are transcendental to all material cause and effect, being the Supreme Soul.

40Obeisances unto You, the Absolute Truth, who are the reservoir of all transcendental consciousness and potency and the possessor of unlimited energies. Although completely free of material qualities and transformations, You are the prime mover of material nature.

41Obeisances unto You, who are time itself, the shelter of time and the witness of time in all its phases. You are the universe, and also its separate observer. You are its creator, and also the totality of all its causes.

42-43Obeisances unto You, who are the ultimate soul of the physical elements, of the subtle basis of perception, of the senses, of the vital air of life, and of the mind, intelligence and consciousness. By Your arrangement the infinitesimal spirit souls falsely identify with the three modes of material nature, and their perception of their own true self thus becomes clouded. We offer our obeisances unto You, the unlimited Supreme Lord, the supremely subtle one, the omniscient Personality of Godhead, who are always fixed in unchanging transcendence, who sanction the opposing views of different philosophies, and who are the power upholding expressed ideas and the words that express them.

44We offer our obeisances again and again to You, who are the basis of all authoritative evidence, who are the author and ultimate source of the revealed scriptures, and who have manifested Yourself in those Vedic literatures encouraging sense gratification as well as in those encouraging renunciation of the material world.

45We offer our obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma, the sons of Vasudeva, and to Lord Pradyumna and Lord Aniruddha. We offer our respectful obeisances unto the master of all the saintly devotees of Viṣṇu.

46Obeisances to You, O Lord, who manifest varieties of material and spiritual qualities. You disguise Yourself with the material qualities, and yet the functioning of those same material qualities ultimately reveals Your existence. You stand apart from the material qualities as a witness and can be fully known only by Your devotees.

47O Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, master of the senses, please let us offer our obeisances unto You, whose

pastimes are inconceivably glorious. Your existence can be inferred from the necessity for a creator and revealer of all cosmic manifestations. But although Your devotees can understand You in this way, to the nondevotees You remain silent, absorbed in self-satisfaction.

48Obeisances unto You, who know the destination of all things, superior and inferior, and who are the presiding regulator of all that be. You are distinct from the universal creation, and yet You are the basis upon which the illusion of material creation evolves, and also the witness of this illusion. Indeed, You are the root cause of the entire world.

49O almighty Lord, although You have no reason to become involved in material activity, still You act through Your eternal potency of time to arrange for the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe. You do this by awakening the distinct functions of each of the modes of nature, which before the creation lie dormant. Simply by Your glance You perfectly execute all these activities of cosmic control in a sporting mood.

50Therefore all material bodies throughout the three worldsthose that are peaceful, in the mode of goodness; those that are agitated, in the mode of passion; and those that are foolish, in the mode of ignoranceall are Your creations. Still, those living entities whose bodies are in the mode of goodness are especially dear to You, and it is to maintain them and protect their religious principles that You are now present on the earth.

51At least once, a master should tolerate an offense committed by his child or subject. O supreme peaceful Soul, You should therefore forgive our foolish husband, who did not understand who You are.

52O Supreme Lord, please be merciful. It is proper for the saintly to feel compassion for women like us. This serpent is about to give up his life. Please give us back our husband, who is our life and soul.

53Now please tell us, Your maidservants, what we should do. Certainly anyone who faithfully executes Your order is automatically freed from all fear.

54Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus praised by the Nāgapatnīs, the Supreme Personality of Godhead released the serpent Kāliya, who had fallen unconscious, his heads battered by the striking of the Lord's lotus feet.

55Kāliya slowly regained his vital force and sensory functions. Then, breathing loudly and painfully, the poor serpent addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in humble submission.

56The serpent Kāliya said: Our very birth as a snake has made us envious, ignorant and constantly angry. O my Lord, it is so difficult for people to give up their conditioned nature, by which they identify with that which is unreal.

57O supreme creator, it is You who generate this universe, composed of the variegated arrangement of the material modes, and in the process You manifest various kinds of personalities and species, varieties of sensory and physical strength, and varieties of mothers and fathers with variegated mentalities and forms.

58O Supreme Personality of Godhead, among all the species within Your material creation, we serpents are by nature always enraged. Being thus deluded by Your illusory energy, which is very difficult to give up, how can we possibly give it up on our own?

59O Lord, since You are the omniscient Lord of the universe, You are the actual cause of freedom from illusion. Please arrange for us whatever You consider proper, whether it be

mercy or punishment.

60Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing Kāliya's words, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was acting the role of a human being, replied: O serpent, you may not remain here any longer. Go back to the ocean immediately, accompanied by your retinue of children, wives, other relatives and friends. Let this river be enjoyed by the cows and humans.

61If a mortal being attentively remembers My command to you to leave Vṛndāvana and go to the ocean and narrates this account at sunrise and sunset, he will never be afraid of you.

62If one bathes in this place of My pastimes and offers the water of this lake to the demigods and other worshipable personalities, or if one observes a fast and duly worships and remembers Me, he is sure to become free from all sinful reactions.

63Out of fear of Garuḍa, you left Ramaṇaka Island and came to take shelter of this lake. But because you are now marked with My footprints, Garuḍa will no longer try to eat you.

64Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, having been released by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose activities are wonderful, Kāliya joined his wives in worshiping Him with great joy and reverence.

65-67Kāliya worshiped the Lord of the universe by offering Him fine garments, along with necklaces, jewels and other valuable ornaments, wonderful scents and ointments, and a large garland of lotus flowers. Having thus pleased the Lord, whose flag is marked with the emblem of Garuḍa, Kāliya felt satisfied. Receiving the Lord's permission to leave, Kāliya circumambulated Him and offered Him obeisances. Then, taking his wives, friends and children, he went to his island in the sea. The very moment Kāliya left, the Yamunā was immediately restored to her original condition, free from poison and full of nectarean water. This happened by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was manifesting a humanlike form to enjoy His pastimes.

SB 10.17: The History of Kāliya

This chapter describes how Kāliya left the island of the snakes and how the sleeping residents of Vṛndāvana were saved from a forest fire.

When King Parīkṣit inquired about Kāliya's leaving Ramaṇaka Island, the abode of the serpents, and about why Garuḍa acted inimically toward him, ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī replied as follows: All the serpents on the island were afraid of being devoured by Garuḍa. To placate him, every month they would leave various offerings for him at the foot of a banyan tree. But Kāliya, puffed-up as he was with false pride, would eat these offerings himself. Hearing of this, Garuḍa became furious and went to kill Kāliya, whereupon the snake began biting the great bird. Garuḍa fiercely beat him with his wing, sending Kāliya fleeing for his life to a lake adjoining the Yamunā River.

Prior to the above incident, Garuḍa had once come to the Yamunā and started eating some fish. Saubhari Ṛṣi had tried to stop him, but Garuḍa, agitated by hunger, had refused to heed the sage's prohibitions, and in response the sage had cursed Garuḍa that if he ever came there again he would immediately die. Kāliya had heard of this, and thus he lived there without fear. In the end, however, he was driven out by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

When Lord Balarāma and all the residents of Vṛndāvana saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa rise up out of the lake,

beautifully decorated with many different gems and ornaments, they embraced Him in great pleasure. The spiritual masters, priests and learned *brāhmaṇas* then told Nanda Mahārāja, the king of the cowherds, that although his son had been caught in the grips of Kāliya, it was by the king's good fortune that He was now free again.

Because the people of Vṛndāvana were quite worn out by hunger, thirst and fatigue, they spent that night on the banks of the Yamunā. In the middle of the night, a fire happened to blaze up within the forest, which had become dry during the hot season. As the fire surrounded the sleeping inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, they suddenly awoke and rushed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for protection. Then the unlimitedly powerful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, seeing His dear relatives and friends so distressed, immediately swallowed up the terrible forest fire.

1[Having thus heard how Lord Kṛṣṇa chastised Kāliya,] King Parīkṣit inquired: Why did Kāliya leave Ramaṇaka Island, the abode of the serpents, and why did Garuḍa become so antagonistic toward him alone?

2-3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: To avoid being eaten by Garuḍa, the serpents had previously made an arrangement with him whereby they would each make a monthly offering of tribute at the base of a tree. Thus every month on schedule, O mighty-armed King Parīkṣit, each serpent would duly make his offering to that powerful carrier of Viṣṇu as a purchase of protection.

4Although all the other serpents were dutifully making offerings to Garuḍa, one serpent the arrogant Kāliya, son of Kadru would eat all these offerings before Garuḍa could claim them. Thus Kāliya directly defied the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu.

5O King, the greatly powerful Garuḍa, who is very dear to the Supreme Lord, became angry when he heard of this. Desiring to kill Kāliya, he rushed toward the serpent with tremendous speed.

6As Garuḍa swiftly fell upon him, Kāliya, who had the weapon of poison, raised his numerous heads to counterattack. Showing his ferocious tongues and expanding his horrible eyes, Kāliya then bit Garuḍa with the weapons of his fangs.

7The angry son of Tārksya moved with overwhelming speed in repelling Kāliya's attack. That terribly powerful carrier of Lord Madhusūdana struck the son of Kadru with his left wing, which shone like gold.

8Beaten by Garuḍa's wing, Kāliya was extremely distraught, and thus he took shelter of a lake adjoining the river Yamunā. Garuḍa could not enter this lake. Indeed, he could not even approach it.

9In that very lake Garuḍa had once desired to eat a fishfish being, after all, his normal food. Although forbidden by the sage Saubhari, who was meditating there within the water, Garuḍa took courage and, feeling hungry, seized the fish.

10Seeing how the unfortunate fish in that lake had become most unhappy at the death of their leader, Saubhari uttered the following curse under the impression that he was mercifully acting for the benefit of the lake's residents.

11If Garuḍa ever again enters this lake and eats the fish here, he will immediately lose his life. What I am saying is the truth.

12Of all the serpents, only Kāliya came to know of this affair, and in fear of Garuḍa he took up residence in that Yamunā lake. Later Lord Kṛṣṇa drove him out.

13-14[Resuming his description of Kṛṣṇa's chastisement of Kāliya, Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Kṛṣṇa rose up out of the lake wearing divine garlands, fragrances and garments, covered with many fine jewels, and decorated with gold. When the cowherds saw Him they all stood up immediately, just like an unconscious person's senses coming back to life. Filled with great joy, they affectionately embraced Him.

15Having regained their vital functions, Yaśodā, Rohiṇī, Nanda and all the other cowherd women and men went up to Kṛṣṇa. O descendant of Kuru, even the dried-up trees came back to life.

16Lord Balarāma embraced His infallible brother and laughed, knowing well the extent of Kṛṣṇa's potency. Out of great feelings of love, Balarāma lifted Kṛṣṇa up on His lap and repeatedly looked at Him. The cows, bulls and young female calves also achieved the highest pleasure.

17All the respectable brāhmaṇas, together with their wives, came forward to greet Nanda Mahārāja. They said to him, "Your son was in the grips of Kāliya, but by the grace of Providence He is now free."

18The brāhmaṇas then advised Nanda Mahārāja, "To assure that your son Kṛṣṇa will always be free from danger, you should give charity to the brāhmaṇas." With a satisfied mind, O King, Nanda Mahārāja then very gladly gave them gifts of cows and gold.

19The greatly fortunate mother Yaśodā, having lost her son and then regained Him, placed Him on her lap. That chaste lady cried constant torrents of tears as she repeatedly embraced Him.

20O best of kings [Parīkṣit], because the residents of Vṛndāvana were feeling very weak from hunger, thirst and fatigue, they and the cows spent the night where they were, lying down near the bank of the Kālindī.

21During the night, while all the people of Vṛndāvana were asleep, a great fire blazed up within the dry summer forest. The fire surrounded the inhabitants of Vraja on all sides and began to scorch them.

22Then the residents of Vṛndāvana woke up, extremely disturbed by the great fire threatening to burn them. Thus they took shelter of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, who by His spiritual potency appeared like an ordinary human being.

23[Vṛndāvana's residents said:] Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, O Lord of all opulence! O Rāma, possessor of unlimited power! This most terrible fire is about to devour us, Your devotees!

24O Lord, we are Your true friends and devotees. Please protect us from this insurmountable fire of death. We can never give up Your lotus feet, which drive away all fear.

25Seeing His devotees so disturbed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the infinite Lord of the universe and possessor of infinite power, then swallowed the terrible forest fire.

SB 10.18: Lord Balarāma Slays the Demon Pralamba

The killing of Pralambāsura is described in this chapter. While playing happily in Vṛndāvana, Lord Baladeva climbed up on the shoulders of the demon Pralamba and struck his head with His fist, destroying him.

Śrī Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma enacted Their pastimes, was even during the summer decorated with all the qualities of spring. At that time Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa would become absorbed in various sports, surrounded by Balarāma and all the cowherd boys. One day they were intently dancing, singing and playing when a demon named Pralamba entered their midst, disguised as a cowherd boy. The omniscient Lord Kṛṣṇa saw through the disguise, but even as He thought of how to kill the demon, He treated him as a friend.

Kṛṣṇa then suggested to His young friends and Baladeva that they play a game involving contending parties. Taking the role of leaders, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma divided the boys into two groups and determined that the losers would have to carry the winners on their shoulders. Thus when Śrīdāmā and Vṛṣabha, members of Balarāma's party, were victorious, Kṛṣṇa and another boy in His party carried them on their shoulders. Pralambāsura thought that the unconquerable Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa would be too great an opponent to contend with, so the demon fought with Balarāma instead and was defeated. Taking Lord Balarāma on his back, Pralambāsura began to walk away very swiftly. But Balarāma became as heavy as Mount Sumeru, and the demon, unable to carry Him, had to reveal his true, demoniac form. When Balarāma saw this terrible form, He struck the demon a ferocious blow on the head with His fist. This blow shattered Pralambāsura's head just as lightning bolts hurled by the king of the demigods shatter mountains. The demon repeatedly vomited blood and then fell upon the ground. When the cowherd boys saw Lord Balarāma return, they joyfully embraced and congratulated Him as the demigods showered garlands of flowers from the heavens and glorified Him.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Surrounded by His blissful companions, who constantly chanted His glories, Śrī Kṛṣṇa then entered the village of Vraja, which was decorated with herds of cows.

2While Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were thus enjoying life in Vṛndāvana in the guise of ordinary cowherd boys, the summer season gradually appeared. This season is not very pleasing to embodied souls.

3Nevertheless, because the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally staying in Vṛndāvana along with Balarāma, summer manifested the qualities of spring. Such are the features of the land of Vṛndāvana.

4In Vṛndāvana, the loud sound of waterfalls covered the crickets' noise, and clusters of trees constantly moistened by spray from those waterfalls beautified the entire area.

5The wind wafting over the waves of the lakes and flowing rivers carried away the pollen of many varieties of lotuses and water lilies and then cooled the entire Vṛndāvana area. Thus the residents there did not suffer from the heat generated by the blazing summer sun and seasonal forest fires. Indeed, Vṛndāvana was abundant with fresh green grass.

6With their flowing waves the deep rivers drenched their banks, making them damp and muddy. Thus the rays of the sun, which were as fierce as poison, could not evaporate the earth's sap or parch its green grass.

7Flowers beautifully decorated the forest of Vṛndāvana, and many varieties of animals and birds filled it with sound. The peacocks and bees sang, and the cuckoos and cranes cooed.

8Intending to engage in pastimes, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, accompanied by Lord Balarāma and surrounded by the cowherd boys and the cows, entered the forest of Vṛndāvana as He played His flute.

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9Decorating themselves with newly grown leaves, along with peacock feathers, garlands, clusters of flower buds, and colored minerals, Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and Their cowherd friends danced, wrestled and sang.

10As Kṛṣṇa danced, some of the boys accompanied Him by singing, and others by playing flutes, hand cymbals and buffalo horns, while still others praised His dancing.

11O King, demigods disguised themselves as members of the cowherd community and, just as dramatic dancers praise another dancer, worshiped Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who were also appearing as cowherd boys.

12Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played with their cowherd boyfriends by whirling about, leaping, hurling, slapping and fighting. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would pull the hair on the boys' heads.

13While the other boys were dancing, O King, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would sometimes accompany them with song and instrumental music, and sometimes the two Lords would praise the boys, saying, "Very good! Very good!"

14Sometimes the cowherd boys would play with bilva or kumbha fruits, and sometimes with handfuls of āmalaka fruits. At other times they would play the games of trying to touch one another or of trying to identify somebody while one is blindfolded, and sometimes they would imitate animals and birds.

15They would sometimes jump around like frogs, sometimes play various jokes, sometimes ride in swings and sometimes imitate monarchs.

16In this way Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played all sorts of well-known games as They wandered among the rivers, hills, valleys, bushes, trees and lakes of Vṛndāvana.

17While Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Their cowherd friends were thus tending the cows in that Vṛndāvana forest, the demon Pralamba entered their midst. He had assumed the form of a cowherd boy with the intention of kidnapping Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

18Since the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had appeared in the Daśārha dynasty, sees everything, He understood who the demon was. Still, the Lord pretended to accept the demon as a friend, while at the same time seriously considering how to kill him.

19Kṛṣṇa, who knows all sports and games, then called together the cowherd boys and spoke as follows: "Hey cowherd boys! Let's play now! We'll divide ourselves into two even teams."

20The cowherd boys chose Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as the leaders of the two parties. Some of the boys were on Kṛṣṇa's side, and others joined Balarāma.

21The boys played various games involving carriers and passengers. In these games the winners would climb up on the backs of the losers, who would have to carry them.

22Thus carrying and being carried by one another, and at the same time tending the cows, the boys followed Kṛṣṇa to a banyan tree known as Bhāṇḍīraka.

23My dear King Parīkṣit, when Śrīdāmā, Vṛṣabha and the other members of Lord Balarāma's party were victorious in these games, Kṛṣṇa and His followers had to carry them.

24Defeated, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa carried Śrīdāmā. Bhadrāsena carried Vṛṣabha, and Pralamba carried Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī.

25Considering Lord Kṛṣṇa invincible, that foremost demon [Pralamba] quickly carried Balarāma far beyond the spot where he was supposed to put his passenger down.

26As the great demon carried Balarāma, the Lord became as heavy as massive Mount Sumeru, and Pralamba had to slow down. He then resumed his actual form an effulgent body that was covered with golden ornaments and that resembled a cloud flashing with lightning and carrying the moon.

27When Lord Balarāma, who carries the plow weapon, saw the gigantic body of the demon as he moved swiftly in the sky with his blazing eyes, fiery hair, terrible teeth reaching toward his scowling brows, and an amazing effulgence generated by his armlets, crown and earrings the Lord seemed to become a little frightened.

28Remembering the actual situation, the fearless Balarāma understood that the demon was trying to kidnap Him and take Him away from His companions. The Lord then became furious and struck the demon's head with His hard fist, just as Indra, the king of the demigods, strikes a mountain with his thunderbolt weapon.

29Thus smashed by Balarāma's fist, Pralamba's head immediately cracked open. The demon vomited blood from his mouth and lost all consciousness, and then with a great noise he fell lifeless on the ground, like a mountain devastated by Indra.

30The cowherd boys were most astonished to see how the powerful Balarāma had killed the demon Pralamba, and they exclaimed, "Excellent! Excellent!"

31They offered Balarāma profuse benedictions and then glorified Him, who deserves all glorification. Their minds overwhelmed with ecstatic love, they embraced Him as if He had come back from the dead.

32The sinful Pralamba having been killed, the demigods felt extremely happy, and they showered flower garlands upon Lord Balarāma and praised the excellence of His deed.

SB 10.19: Swallowing the Forest Fire

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa saved the cows and the cowherd boys from a great fire in the Muṣjāraṇya forest.

One day the cowherd boys became absorbed in sporting and allowed the cows to wander into a dense forest. Suddenly a forest fire blazed up, and to escape its flames the cows took refuge in a grove of sharp canes. When the cowherd boys missed their animals, they went searching for them, following their hoofprints and the trail of blades of grass and other plants they had trampled or had broken with their teeth. Finally the boys found the cows and removed them from the cane forest, but by that time the forest fire had grown strong and was threatening both the boys and the cows. Thus the cowherd boys took shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystic power, who told them to close their eyes. They did so, and in a moment He had swallowed up the fierce forest fire and brought them all back to the Bhāṅḍīra tree mentioned in the last chapter. Seeing this wonderful display of mystic potency, the cowherd boys thought Kṛṣṇa must be a demigod, and they began to praise Him. Then they all returned home.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While the cowherd boys were completely absorbed in playing, their cows wandered far away. They hungered for more grass, and with no one to watch them they entered a dense forest.

2Passing from one part of the great forest to another, the goats, cows and buffalo eventually

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entered an area overgrown with sharp canes. The heat of a nearby forest fire made them thirsty, and they cried out in distress.

3Not seeing the cows before them, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Their cowherd friends suddenly felt repentant for having neglected them. The boys searched all around, but could not discover where they had gone.

4Then the boys began tracing out the cows' path by noting their hoofprints and the blades of grass the cows had broken with their hooves and teeth. All the cowherd boys were in great anxiety because they had lost their source of livelihood.

5Within the Muṣjāforest the cowherd boys finally found their valuable cows, who had lost their way and were crying. Then the boys, thirsty and tired, herded the cows onto the path back home.

6The Supreme Personality of Godhead called out to the animals in a voice that resounded like a rumbling cloud. Hearing the sound of their own names, the cows were overjoyed and called out to the Lord in reply.

7Suddenly a great forest fire appeared on all sides, threatening to destroy all the forest creatures. Like a chariot driver, the wind swept the fire onward, and terrible sparks shot in all directions. Indeed, the great fire extended its tongues of flame toward all moving and nonmoving creatures.

8As the cows and cowherd boys stared at the forest fire attacking them on all sides, they became fearful. The boys then approached Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma for shelter, just as those who are disturbed by fear of death approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The boys addressed Them as follows.

9[The cowherd boys said:] O Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Most powerful one! O Rāma! You whose prowess never fails! Please save Your devotees, who are about to be burned by this forest fire and have come to take shelter of You!

10Kṛṣṇa! Certainly Your own friends shouldn't be destroyed. O knower of the nature of all things, we have accepted You as our Lord, and we are souls surrendered unto You!

11Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing these pitiful words from His friends, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa told them, "Just close your eyes and do not be afraid."

12"All right," the boys replied, and immediately closed their eyes. Then the Supreme Lord, the master of all mystic power, opened His mouth and swallowed the terrible fire, saving His friends from danger.

13The cowherd boys opened their eyes and were amazed to find not only that they and the cows had been saved from the terrible fire but that they had all been brought back to the Bhāṇḍīra tree.

14When the cowherd boys saw that they had been saved from the forest fire by the Lord's mystic power, which is manifested by His internal potency, they began to think that Kṛṣṇa must be a demigod.

15It was now late in the afternoon, and Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Balarāma, turned the cows back toward home. Playing His flute in a special way, Kṛṣṇa returned to the cowherd village in the company of His cowherd friends, who chanted His glories.

16The young gopīs took the greatest pleasure in seeing Govinda come home, since for them even a moment without His association seemed like a hundred ages.

SB 10.20: The Rainy Season and Autumn in Vṛndāvana

To enhance the description of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī describes in this chapter the beauty of Vṛndāvana during autumn and the rainy season. In the course of his presentation he gives various charming instructions in metaphorical terms.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:To the ladies of Vṛndāvana, the cowherd boys then related in full detail Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's wonderful activities of delivering them from the forest fire and killing the demon Pralamba.

2The elder cowherd men and ladies were amazed to hear this account, and they concluded that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma must be exalted demigods who had appeared in Vṛndāvana.

3Then the rainy season began, giving life and sustenance to all living beings. The sky began to rumble with thunder, and lightning flashed on the horizon.

4The sky was then covered by dense blue clouds accompanied by lightning and thunder. Thus the sky and its natural illumination were covered in the same way that the spirit soul is covered by the three modes of material nature.

5With its rays, the sun had for eight months drunk up the earth's wealth in the form of water. Now that the proper time had arrived, the sun began releasing this accumulated wealth.

6Flashing with lightning, great clouds were shaken and swept about by fierce winds. Just like merciful persons, the clouds gave their lives for the pleasure of this world.

7The earth had been emaciated by the summer heat, but she became fully nourished again when moistened by the god of rain. Thus the earth was like a person whose body has been emaciated by austerities undergone for a material purpose, but who again becomes fully nourished when he achieves the fruit of those austerities.

8In the evening twilight during the rainy season, the darkness allowed the glowworms but not the stars to shine forth, just as in the Age of Kali the predominance of sinful activities allows atheistic doctrines to overshadow the true knowledge of the Vedas.

9The frogs, who had all along been lying silent, suddenly began croaking when they heard the rumbling of the rain clouds, in the same way that brāhmaṇa students, who perform their morning duties in silence begin reciting their lessons when called by their teacher.

10With the advent of the rainy season, the insignificant streams, which had become dry, began to swell and then strayed from their proper courses, like the body, property and money of a man controlled by the urges of his senses.

11The newly grown grass made the earth emerald green, the indragopa insects added a reddish hue, and white mushrooms added further color and circles of shade. Thus the earth appeared like a person who has suddenly become rich.

12With their wealth of grains, the fields gave joy to the farmers. But those fields created remorse in the hearts of those who were too proud to engage in farming and who failed to understand how everything is under the control of the Supreme.

13As all creatures of the land and water took advantage of the newly fallen rainwater, their

forms became attractive and pleasing, just as a devotee becomes beautiful by engaging in the service of the Supreme Lord.

14Where the rivers joined the ocean it became agitated, its waves blown about by the wind, just as the mind of an immature yogī becomes agitated because he is still tainted by lust and attached to the objects of sense gratification.

15Just as devotees whose minds are absorbed in the Personality of Godhead remain peaceful even when attacked by all sorts of dangers, the mountains in the rainy season were not at all disturbed by the repeated striking of the rain-bearing clouds.

16During the rainy season the roads, not being cleansed, became covered with grass and debris and were thus difficult to make out. These roads were like religious scriptures that brāhmaṇas no longer study and that thus become corrupted and covered over with the passage of time.

17Though the clouds are the well-wishing friends of all living beings, the lightning, fickle in its affinities, moved from one group of clouds to another, like lusty women unfaithful even to virtuous men.

18When the curved bow of Indra [the rainbow] appeared in the sky, which had the quality of thundering sound, it was unlike ordinary bows because it did not rest upon a string. Similarly, when the Supreme Lord appears in this world, which is the interaction of the material qualities, He is unlike ordinary persons because He remains free from all material qualities and independent of all material conditions.

19During the rainy season the moon was prevented from appearing directly by the covering of the clouds, which were themselves illumined by the moon's rays. Similarly, the living being in material existence is prevented from appearing directly by the covering of the false ego, which is itself illumined by the consciousness of the pure soul.

20The peacocks became festive and cried out a joyful greeting when they saw the clouds arrive, just as people distressed in household life feel pleasure when the pure devotees of the infallible Supreme Lord visit them.

21The trees had grown thin and dry, but after they drank the newly fallen rainwater through their feet, their various bodily features blossomed. Similarly, one whose body has grown thin and weak from austerity again exhibits his healthy bodily features upon enjoying the material objects gained through that austerity.

22The cranes continued dwelling on the shores of the lakes, although the shores were agitated during the rainy season, just as materialistic persons with contaminated minds always remain at home, despite the many disturbances there.

23When Indra sent forth his rains, the floodwaters broke through the irrigation dikes in the agricultural fields, just as in the Kali-yuga the atheists' false theories break down the boundaries of Vedic injunctions.

24The clouds, impelled by the winds, released their nectarean water for the benefit of all living beings, just as kings, instructed by their brāhmaṇa priests, dispense charity to the citizens.

25When the Vṛndāvana forest had thus become resplendent, filled with ripe dates and jambu fruits, Lord Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by His cows and cowherd boyfriends and accompanied by Śrī Balarāma, entered that forest to enjoy.

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26The cows had to move slowly because of their weighty milk bags, but they quickly ran to the Supreme Personality of Godhead as soon as He called them, their affection for Him causing their udders to become wet.

27The Lord saw the joyful aborigine girls of the forest, the trees dripping sweet sap, and the mountain waterfalls, whose resounding indicated that there were caves nearby.

28When it rained, the Lord would sometimes enter a cave or the hollow of a tree to play and to eat roots and fruits.

29Lord Kṛṣṇa would take His meal of boiled rice and yogurt, sent from home, in the company of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and the cowherd boys who regularly ate with Him. They would all sit down to eat on a large stone near the water.

30-31Lord Kṛṣṇa watched the contented bulls, calves and cows sitting on the green grass and grazing with closed eyes, and He saw that the cows were tired from the burden of their heavy milk bags. Thus observing the beauty and opulence of Vṛndāvana's rainy season, a perennial source of great happiness, the Lord offered all respect to that season, which was expanded from His own internal potency.

32While Lord Rāma and Lord Keśava were thus dwelling in Vṛndāvana, the fall season arrived, when the sky is cloudless, the water clear and the wind gentle.

33The autumn season, which regenerated the lotus flowers, also restored the various bodies of water to their original purity, just as the process of devotional service purifies the minds of the fallen yogīs when they return to it.

34Autumn cleared the sky of clouds, let the animals get out of their crowded living conditions, cleaned the earth of its covering of mud, and purified the water of contamination, in the same way that loving service rendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa frees the members of the four spiritual orders from their respective troubles.

35The clouds, having given up all they possessed, shone forth with purified effulgence, just like peaceful sages who have given up all material desires and are thus free of all sinful propensities.

36During this season the mountains sometimes released their pure water and sometimes did not, just as experts in transcendental science sometimes give the nectar of transcendental knowledge and sometimes do not.

37The fish swimming in the increasingly shallow water did not at all understand that the water was diminishing, just as foolish family men cannot see how the time they have left to live is diminishing with every passing day.

38Just as a miserly, poverty-stricken person overly absorbed in family life suffers because he cannot control his senses, the fish swimming in the shallow water had to suffer the heat of the autumn sun.

39Gradually the different areas of land gave up their muddy condition and the plants grew past their unripe stage, in the same way that sober sages give up egotism and possessiveness. These are based on things different from the real self, namely, the material body and its by-products.

40With the arrival of autumn, the ocean and the lakes became silent, their water still, just like a sage who has desisted from all material activities and given up his recitation of Vedic mantras.

41In the same way that the practitioners of yoga bring their senses under strict control to check their consciousness from flowing out through the agitated senses, the farmers erected strong mud banks to keep the water within their rice fields from draining out.

42The autumn moon relieved all creatures of the suffering caused by the sun's rays, just as wisdom relieves a person of the misery caused by his identifying with his material body and as Lord Mukunda relieves Vṛndāvana's ladies of the distress caused by their separation from Him.

43Free of clouds and filled with clearly visible stars, the autumn sky shone brilliantly, just like the spiritual consciousness of one who has directly experienced the purport of the Vedic scriptures.

44The full moon shone in the sky, surrounded by stars, just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Yadu dynasty, shone brilliantly on the earth, surrounded by all the Vṛṣṇis.

45Except for the gopīs, whose hearts had been stolen by Kṛṣṇa, the people could forget their suffering by embracing the wind coming from the flower-filled forest. This wind was neither hot nor cold.

46By the influence of the autumn season, all the cows, doe, women and female birds became fertile and were followed by their respective mates in search of sexual enjoyment, just as activities performed for the service of the Supreme Lord are automatically followed by all beneficial results.

47O King Parīkṣit, when the autumn sun rose, all the lotus flowers blossomed happily, except the night-blooming kumut, just as in the presence of a strong ruler everyone becomes fearless, except the thieves.

48In all the towns and villages people held great festivals, performing the Vedic fire sacrifice for honoring and tasting the first grains of the new harvest, along with similar celebrations that followed local custom and tradition. Thus the earth, rich with newly grown grain and especially beautified by the presence of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, shone beautifully as an expansion of the Supreme Lord.

49The merchants, sages, kings and brahmacārī students, kept in by the rain, were at last free to go out and attain their desired objects, just as those who achieve perfection in this life can, when the proper time comes, leave the material body and attain their respective forms.

SB 10.21: The Gopīs Glorify the Song of Kṛṣṇa's Flute

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the enchanting forest of Vṛndāvana upon the arrival of autumn, and the praises the young cowherd girls sang when they heard the vibration of His flute.

As Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Balarāma and Their cowherd friends entered the forest to graze the cows, Kṛṣṇa began playing His flute. The *gopīs* heard the enchanting flute-song and understood that Kṛṣṇa was entering the forest. Then they narrated to each other the Lord's various activities.

The *gopīs* declared: "To see Lord Kṛṣṇa playing His flute while taking the cows to pasture is the highest perfection for the eyes. What pious activities has this flute performed that enable him to freely drink the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lipsa blessing we cowherd girls find difficult to achieve? Hearing the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute, the peacocks dance, and all the other creatures become stunned when they see them. Demigoddesses traveling through the sky in their airplanes are vexed by Cupid, and their garments become loose. The ears of the cows stand on end as they

drink the nectar of this flute-song, and their calves simply stand stunned, the milk they have been drinking from their mothers' udders still in their mouths. The birds take shelter of the branches of the trees and close their eyes, listening to the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute with rapt attention. The flowing rivers become perturbed by conjugal attraction for Kṛṣṇa and, stopping their flow, embrace Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with the arms of their waves, while the clouds serve as parasols to shade Kṛṣṇa's head from the hot sun. The aborigine women of the Śabara race, seeing the grass stained by the red *kunkuma* adorning the Lord's lotus feet, smear this vermilion powder upon their breasts and faces to alleviate the distress created by Cupid. Govardhana Hill offers grass and various kinds of fruits and bulbous roots in worship of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All the nonmoving living beings take on the characteristics of moving creatures, and the moving living beings become stationary. These things are all very wonderful."

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus the Vṛndāvana forest was filled with transparent autumnal waters and cooled by breezes perfumed with the fragrance of lotus flowers growing in the clear lakes. The infallible Lord, accompanied by His cows and cowherd boyfriends, entered that Vṛndāvana forest.

2The lakes, rivers and hills of Vṛndāvana resounded with the sounds of maddened bees and flocks of birds moving about the flowering trees. In the company of the cowherd boys and Balarāma, Madhupati [Śrī Kṛṣṇa] entered that forest, and while herding the cows He began to vibrate His flute.

3When the young ladies in the cowherd village of Vraja heard the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute, which arouses the influence of Cupid, some of them privately began describing Kṛṣṇa's qualities to their intimate friends.

4The cowherd girls began to speak about Kṛṣṇa, but when they remembered His activities, O King, the power of Cupid disturbed their minds, and thus they could not speak.

5Wearing a peacock-feather ornament upon His head, blue *karnikāra* flowers on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold, and the *Vaijayantī* garland, Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited His transcendental form as the greatest of dancers as He entered the forest of Vṛndāvana, beautifying it with the marks of His footprints. He filled the holes of His flute with the nectar of His lips, and the cowherd boys sang His glories.

6O King, when the young ladies in Vraja heard the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, which captivates the minds of all living beings, they all embraced one another and began describing it.

7The cowherd girls said: O friends, those eyes that see the beautiful faces of the sons of Mahārāja Nanda are certainly fortunate. As these two sons enter the forest, surrounded by Their friends, driving the cows before Them, They hold Their flutes to Their mouths and glance lovingly upon the residents of Vṛndāvana. For those who have eyes, we think there is no greater object of vision.

8Dressed in a charming variety of garments, upon which Their garlands rest, and decorating Themselves with peacock feathers, lotuses, lilies, newly grown mango sprouts and clusters of flower buds, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma shine forth magnificently among the assembly of cowherd boys. They look just like the best of dancers appearing on a dramatic stage, and sometimes They sing.

9My dear gopīs, what auspicious activities must the flute have performed to enjoy the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips independently and leave only a taste for us gopīs, for whom that nectar is actually meant! The forefathers of the flute, the bamboo trees, shed tears of pleasure. His mother, the

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river on whose bank the bamboo was born, feels jubilation, and therefore her blooming lotus flowers are standing like hair on her body.

10O friend, Vṛndāvana is spreading the glory of the earth, having obtained the treasure of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī. The peacocks dance madly when they hear Govinda's flute, and when other creatures see them from the hilltops, they all become stunned.

11Blessed are all these foolish deer because they have approached Mahārāja Nanda's son, who is gorgeously dressed and is playing on His flute. Indeed, both the doe and the bucks worship the Lord with looks of love and affection.

12Kṛṣṇa's beauty and character create a festival for all women. Indeed, when the demigods' wives flying in airplanes with their husbands catch sight of Him and hear His resonant flute-song, their hearts are shaken by Cupid, and they become so bewildered that the flowers fall out of their hair and their belts loosen.

13Using their upraised ears as vessels, the cows are drinking the nectar of the flute-song flowing out of Kṛṣṇa's mouth. The calves, their mouths full of milk from their mothers' moist nipples, stand still as they take Govinda within themselves through their tear-filled eyes and embrace Him within their hearts.

14O mother, in this forest all the birds have risen onto the beautiful branches of the trees to see Kṛṣṇa. With closed eyes they are simply listening in silence to the sweet vibrations of His flute, and they are not attracted by any other sound. Surely these birds are on the same level as great sages.

15When the rivers hear the flute-song of Kṛṣṇa, their minds begin to desire Him, and thus the flow of their currents is broken and their waters are agitated, moving around in whirlpools. Then with the arms of their waves the rivers embrace Murāri's lotus feet and, holding on to them, present offerings of lotus flowers.

16In the company of Balarāma and the cowherd boys, Lord Kṛṣṇa is continually vibrating His flute as He herds all the animals of Vraja, even under the full heat of the summer sun. Seeing this, the cloud in the sky has expanded himself out of love. He is rising high and constructing out of his own body, with its multitude of flower-like droplets of water, an umbrella for the sake of his friend.

17The aborigine women of the Vṛndāvana area become disturbed by lust when they see the grass marked with reddish kuṅkuma powder. Endowed with the color of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, this powder originally decorated the breasts of His beloveds, and when the aborigine women smear it on their faces and breasts, they feel fully satisfied and give up all their anxiety.

18Of all the devotees, this Govardhana Hill is the best! O my friends, this hill supplies Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, along with Their calves, cows and cowherd friends, with all kinds of necessitieswater for drinking, very soft grass, caves, fruits, flowers and vegetables. In this way the hill offers respects to the Lord. Being touched by the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, Govardhana Hill appears very jubilant.

19My dear friends, as Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma pass through the forest with Their cowherd friends, leading Their cows, They carry ropes to bind the cows' rear legs at the time of milking. When Lord Kṛṣṇa plays on His flute, the sweet music causes the moving living entities to become stunned and the nonmoving trees to tremble with ecstasy. These things are certainly very wonderful.

20 Thus narrating to one another the playful pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He wandered about in the Vṛndāvana forest, the *gopīs* became fully absorbed in thoughts of Him.

SB 10.22: Kṛṣṇa Steals the Garments of the Unmarried Gopīs

This chapter describes how the marriageable daughters of the cowherd men worshiped Kātyāyanī to get Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their husband, and how Kṛṣṇa stole the garments of the young girls and gave the girls benedictions.

During the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, every day early in the morning the young daughters of the cowherds would take one another's hands and, singing of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental qualities, go to the Yamunā to bathe. Desiring to obtain Kṛṣṇa as their husband, they would then worship the goddess Kātyāyanī with incense, flowers and other items.

One day, the young *gopīs* left their garments on the shore as usual and began playing in the water while chanting of Lord Kṛṣṇa's activities. Suddenly Kṛṣṇa Himself came there, took away all the garments and climbed a nearby *kadamba* tree. Wanting to tease the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa said, "I understand how fatigued you *gopīs* are from your austerities, so please come onto the shore and take back your clothes."

The *gopīs* then pretended to become angry and said the cold water of the Yamunā was giving them great pain. If Kṛṣṇa did not give them back their garments, they said, they would inform King Kāmsa of all that had happened. But if He did give the clothes back, they would willingly carry out His orders in the mood of humble servants.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied that He had no fear of King Kāmsa, and that if the girls really intended to follow His command and be His maidservants they should each immediately come onto the shore and take their respective garments. The girls, trembling from the cold, climbed out of the water with their two hands covering their private parts. Kṛṣṇa, who felt great affection for them, again spoke: "Because while executing a vow you bathed in the water naked, you have committed an offense against the demigods, and to counteract it you should offer obeisances with joined palms. Then your vow of austerity will achieve its full result."

The *gopīs* followed this instruction and, folding their hands in respect, offered obeisances to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Satisfied, He gave them back their clothing. But the young girls had become so attracted to Him that they could not leave. Understanding their minds, Kṛṣṇa said that He knew they had worshiped Kātyāyanī to get Him as their husband. Because they had offered their hearts to Him, their desires would never again become tainted by the mood of materialistic enjoyment, just as fried barleycorns can no longer grow into shoots. Next autumn, He told them, their most cherished desire would be fulfilled.

Then the *gopīs*, fully satisfied, returned to Vraja, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd friends went off to a distant place to graze the cows.

Sometime later, when the boys felt disturbed by the great heat of summer, they took shelter at the base of a tree that stood just like an umbrella. The Lord then said that the life of a tree is most excellent, for even while feeling pain a tree continues to protect others from heat, rain, snow and so on. With its leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, wood, fragrance, sap, ashes, pulp and sprouts, a tree fulfills the desires of everyone. This kind of life is ideal. Indeed, said Kṛṣṇa, the perfection of life is to act with one's vital energy, wealth, intelligence and words for the benefit of all.

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After the Lord had glorified the trees in this way, the entire company went to the Yamunā, where the cowherd boys let the cows drink the sweet water and also drank some themselves.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: During the first month of the winter season, the young unmarried girls of Gokula observed the vow of worshiping goddess Kātyāyanī. For the entire month they ate only unspiced khichrī.

2-3 My dear King, after they had bathed in the water of the Yamunā just as the sun was rising, the gopīs made an earthen deity of goddess Durgā on the riverbank. Then they worshiped her with such aromatic substances as sandalwood pulp, along with other items both opulent and simple, including lamps, fruits, betel nuts, newly grown leaves, and fragrant garlands and incense.

4 Each of the young unmarried girls performed her worship while chanting the following mantra. “O goddess Kātyāyanī, O great potency of the Lord, O possessor of great mystic power and mighty controller of all, please make the son of Nanda Mahārāja my husband. I offer my obeisances unto you.”

5 Thus for an entire month the girls carried out their vow and properly worshiped the goddess Bhadrakālī, fully absorbing their minds in Kṛṣṇa and meditating upon the following thought: “May the son of King Nanda become my husband.”

6 Each day they rose at dawn. Calling out to one another by name, they all held hands and loudly sang the glories of Kṛṣṇa while going to the Kālindī to take their bath.

7 One day they came to the riverbank and, putting aside their clothing as they had done before, happily played in the water while singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa.

8 Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and master of all masters of mystic yoga, was aware of what the gopīs were doing, and thus He went there surrounded by His young companions to award the gopīs the perfection of their endeavor.

9 Taking the girls’ garments, He quickly climbed to the top of a kadamba tree. Then, as He laughed loudly and His companions also laughed, He addressed the girls jokingly.

10 [Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] My dear girls, you may each come here as you wish and take back your garments. I’m telling you the truth and am not joking with you, since I see you’re fatigued from executing austere vows.

11 I have never before spoken a lie, and these boys know it. Therefore, O slender-waisted girls, please come forward, either one by one or all together, and pick out your clothes.

12 Seeing how Kṛṣṇa was joking with them, the gopīs became fully immersed in love for Him, and as they glanced at each other they began to laugh and joke among themselves, even in their embarrassment. But still they did not come out of the water.

13 As Śrī Govinda spoke to the gopīs in this way, His joking words completely captivated their minds. Submerged up to their necks in the cold water, they began to shiver. Thus they addressed Him as follows.

14 [The gopīs said:] Dear Kṛṣṇa, don’t be unfair! We know that You are the respectable son of Nanda and that You are honored by everyone in Vraja. You are also very dear to us. Please give us back our clothes. We are shivering in the cold water.

15 O Śyāmasundara, we are Your maidservants and must do whatever You say. But give us

back our clothing. You know what the religious principles are, and if You don't give us our clothes we will have to tell the king. Please!

16The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: If you girls are actually My maidservants, and if you will really do what I say, then come here with your innocent smiles and let each girl pick out her clothes. If you don't do what I say, I won't give them back to you. And even if the king becomes angry, what can he do?

17Then, shivering from the painful cold, all the young girls rose up out of the water, covering their pubic area with their hands.

18When the Supreme Lord saw how the gopīs were struck with embarrassment, He was satisfied by their pure loving affection. Putting their clothes on His shoulder, the Lord smiled and spoke to them with affection.

19[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] You girls bathed naked while executing your vow, and that is certainly an offense against the demigods. To counteract your sin you should offer obeisances while placing your joined palms above your heads. Then you should take back your lower garments.

20Thus the young girls of Vṛndāvana, considering what Lord Acyuta had told them, accepted that they had suffered a falldown from their vow by bathing naked in the river. But they still desired to successfully complete their vow, and since Lord Kṛṣṇa is Himself the ultimate result of all pious activities, they offered their obeisances to Him to cleanse away all their sins.

21Seeing them bow down like that, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Devakī, gave them back their garments, feeling compassionate toward them and satisfied by their act.

22Although the gopīs had been thoroughly cheated, deprived of their modesty, ridiculed and made to act just like toy dolls, and although their clothing had been stolen, they did not feel at all inimical toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rather, they were simply joyful to have this opportunity to associate with their beloved.

23The gopīs were addicted to associating with their beloved Kṛṣṇa, and thus they became captivated by Him. Thus, even after putting their clothes on they did not move. They simply remained where they were, shyly glancing at Him.

24The Supreme Lord understood the determination of the gopīs in executing their strict vow. The Lord also knew that the girls desired to touch His lotus feet, and thus Lord Dāmodara, Kṛṣṇa, spoke to them as follows.

25[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O saintly girls, I understand that your real motive in this austerity has been to worship Me. That intent of yours is approved of by Me, and indeed it must come to pass.

26The desire of those who fix their minds on Me does not lead to material desire for sense gratification, just as barleycorns burned by the sun and then cooked can no longer grow into new sprouts.

27Go now, girls, and return to Vraja. Your desire is fulfilled, for in My company you will enjoy the coming nights. After all, this was the purpose of your vow to worship goddess Kātyāyanī, O pure-hearted ones.

28Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the young girls, their desire now fulfilled, could bring themselves only with great difficulty to return to the village of Vraja, meditating all the while upon His lotus feet.

29Some time later Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, surrounded by His cowherd friends and accompanied by His elder brother, Balarāma, went a good distance away from Vṛndāvana, herding the cows.

30When the sun's heat became intense, Lord Kṛṣṇa saw that the trees were acting as umbrellas by shading Him, and thus He spoke as follows to His boyfriends.

31-32[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O Stoka Kṛṣṇa and Amśu, O Śrīdāma, Subala and Arjuna, O Viśāla, Vṛṣabha, Ojasvī, Devaprastha and Varūthapa, just see these greatly fortunate trees, whose lives are completely dedicated to the benefit of others. Even while tolerating the wind, rain, heat and snow, they protect us from these elements.

33Just see how these trees are maintaining every living entity! Their birth is successful. Their behavior is just like that of great personalities, for anyone who asks anything from a tree never goes away disappointed.

34These trees fulfill one's desires with their leaves, flowers and fruits, their shade, roots, bark and wood, and also with their fragrance, sap, ashes, pulp and shoots.

35It is the duty of every living being to perform welfare activities for the benefit of others with his life, wealth, intelligence and words.

36Thus moving among the trees, whose branches were bent low by their abundance of twigs, fruits, flowers and leaves, Lord Kṛṣṇa came to the Yamunā River.

37The cowherd boys let the cows drink the clear, cool and wholesome water of the Yamunā. O King Parīkṣit, the cowherd boys themselves also drank that sweet water to their full satisfaction.

38Then, O King, the cowherd boys began herding the animals in a leisurely way within a small forest along the Yamunā. But soon they became afflicted by hunger and, approaching Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, spoke as follows.

SB 10.23: The Brāhmaṇas' Wives Blessed

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after inducing the cowherd boys to beg for food, showed mercy to the wives of some *brāhmaṇas* performing a sacrifice and made the *brāhmaṇas* themselves feel remorse.

When the cowherd boys became very hungry, they asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa about obtaining food, and He sent them to beg some from a group of *brāhmaṇas* who were performing a sacrifice nearby. But these *brāhmaṇas* ignored the boys, thinking Śrī Kṛṣṇa an ordinary human being. The boys returned disappointed, but the Lord sent them off again, advising them to ask the *brāhmaṇas*' wives for the food. These ladies had heard of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental qualities and were very much attached to Him. Thus as soon as they learned He was nearby, they went to Him in great haste, bringing all four varieties of food. In this way they offered themselves to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa told the women that while one can develop transcendental love for Him by seeing His Deity form in the temple, meditating upon Him and chanting His glories, one cannot achieve this result simply by being in His physical presence. He advised them that since they were housewives, their particular duty was to help their husbands perform sacrifices. He therefore instructed them to return to their homes.

When the ladies went back home, their *brāhmaṇa* husbands at once felt remorse, and they lamented, “For anyone inimical to Kṛṣṇa, his three birthseminal, brahminical and sacrificial are all condemned. On the other hand, these womenfolk, who have not undergone the purificatory processes of the brahminical class or performed any austerity or pious rituals, have through devotion for Kṛṣṇa easily cut off the bondage of death.

“Since Lord Kṛṣṇa’s every desire is completely fulfilled, His begging for food was simply an act of mercy toward us *brāhmaṇas*. All the fruits of Vedic sacrifice and indeed all things on earth are His opulences, yet out of ignorance we could not appreciate this fact.”

Having spoken thus, all the *brāhmaṇas* offered their obeisances to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, hoping to counteract their offense. Nonetheless, out of fear of King Kaṁsa they did not go to see the Lord in person.

1The cowherd boys said: O Rāma, Rāma, mighty-armed one! O Kṛṣṇa, chastiser of the wicked! We are being harassed by hunger, and You should do something about it.

2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus entreated by the cowherd boys, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Devakī, replied as follows, desiring to please certain of His devotees who were *brāhmaṇas*’ wives.

3[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Please go to the sacrificial arena where a group of *brāhmaṇas*, learned in the Vedic injunctions, are now performing the Āṅgīrasa sacrifice to gain promotion to heaven.

4When you go there, My dear cowherd boys, simply request some food. Declare to them the name of My elder brother, the Supreme Lord Balarāma, and also My name, and explain that you have been sent by Us.

5Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cowherd boys went there and submitted their request. They stood before the *brāhmaṇas* with palms joined in supplication and then fell flat on the ground to offer respect.

6[The cowherd boys said:] O earthly gods, please hear us. We cowherd boys are executing the orders of Kṛṣṇa, and we have been sent here by Balarāma. We wish all good for you. Please acknowledge our arrival.

7Lord Rāma and Lord Acyuta are tending Their cows not far from here. They are hungry and want you to give Them some of your food. Therefore, O *brāhmaṇas*, O best of the knowers of religion, if you have faith please give some food to Them.

8Except during the interval between the initiation of the performer of a sacrifice and the actual sacrifice of the animal, O most pure *brāhmaṇas*, it is not contaminating for even the initiated to partake of food, at least in sacrifices other than the Sautrāmaṇi.

9The *brāhmaṇas* heard this supplication from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet they refused to pay heed. Indeed, they were full of petty desires and entangled in elaborate rituals. Though presuming themselves advanced in Vedic learning, they were actually inexperienced fools.

10-11Although the ingredients of sacrificial performance—the place, time, particular paraphernalia, mantras, rituals, priests, fires, demigods, performer, offering and the as yet unseen beneficial results—are all simply aspects of His opulences, the *brāhmaṇas* saw Lord Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary human because of their perverted intelligence. They failed to recognize that He is the Supreme Absolute Truth, the directly manifest Personality of Godhead, whom the

material senses cannot ordinarily perceive. Thus bewildered by their false identification with the mortal body, they did not show Him proper respect.

12When the brāhmaṇas failed to reply even with a simple yes or no, O chastiser of the enemy [Parīkṣit], the cowherd boys returned disappointed to Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and reported this to Them.

13Hearing what had happened, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord of the universe, simply laughed. Then He again addressed the cowherd boys, showing them the way men act in this world.

14[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Tell the wives of the brāhmaṇas that I have come here with Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. They will certainly give you all the food you want, for they are most affectionate toward Me and, indeed, with their intelligence reside in Me alone.

15The cowherd boys then went to the house where the brāhmaṇas' wives were staying. There the boys saw those chaste ladies sitting, nicely decorated with fine ornaments. Bowing down to the brāhmaṇa ladies, the boys addressed them in all humility.

16[The cowherd boys said:] Obeisances unto you, O wives of the learned brāhmaṇas. Kindly hear our words. We have been sent here by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is passing by not far from here.

17He has come a long way with the cowherd boys and Lord Balarāma, tending the cows. Now He is hungry, so some food should be given for Him and His companions.

18The wives of the brāhmaṇas were always eager to see Kṛṣṇa, for their minds had been enchanted by descriptions of Him. Thus as soon as they heard that He had come, they became very excited.

19Taking along in large vessels the four kinds of foods, full of fine tastes and aromas, all the ladies went forth to meet their beloved, just as rivers flow toward the sea.

20-21Although their husbands, brothers, sons and other relatives tried to forbid them from going, their hope of seeing Kṛṣṇa, cultivated by extensive hearing of His transcendental qualities, won out. Along the river Yamunā, within a garden decorated with buds of aśoka trees, they caught sight of Him strolling along in the company of the cowherd boys and His elder brother, Balarāma.

22His complexion was dark blue and His garment golden. Wearing a peacock feather, colored minerals, sprigs of flower buds, and a garland of forest flowers and leaves, He was dressed just like a dramatic dancer. He rested one hand upon the shoulder of a friend and with the other twirled a lotus. Lilies graced His ears, His hair hung down over His cheeks, and His lotuslike face was smiling.

23O ruler of men, for a long time those brāhmaṇa ladies had heard about Kṛṣṇa, their beloved, and His glories had become the constant ornaments of their ears. Indeed, their minds were always absorbed in Him. Through the apertures of their eyes they now forced Him to enter within their hearts, and then they embraced Him within for a long time. In this way they finally gave up the pain of separation from Him, just as sages give up the anxiety of false ego by embracing their innermost consciousness.

24Lord Kṛṣṇa, who witnesses the thoughts of all creatures, understood how those ladies had abandoned all worldly hopes and come there simply to see Him. Thus He addressed them as follows with a smile upon His face.

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25[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Welcome, O most fortunate ladies. Please sit down and make yourselves comfortable. What can I do for you? That you have come here to see Me is most appropriate.

26Certainly expert personalities, who can see their own true interest, render unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service directly unto Me, for I am most dear to the soul.

27It is only by contact with the self that one's vital breath, intelligence, mind, friends, body, wife, children, wealth and so on are dear. Therefore what object can possibly be more dear than one's own self?

28You should thus return to the sacrificial arena, because your husbands, the learned brāhmaṇas, are householders and need your assistance to finish their respective sacrifices.

29The wives of the brāhmaṇas replied: O almighty one, please do not speak such cruel words. Rather, You should fulfill Your promise that You always reciprocate with Your devotees in kind. Now that we have attained Your lotus feet, we simply wish to remain here in the forest so we may carry upon our heads the garlands of tulasī leaves that fall from Your lotus feet. We are ready to give up all material relationships.

30Our husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, other relatives and friends will no longer take us back, and how could anyone else be willing to give us shelter? Therefore, since we have thrown ourselves at Your lotus feet and have no other destination, please, O chastiser of enemies, grant our desire.

31The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied: Rest assured that your husbands will not be inimical toward you, nor will your fathers, brothers, sons, other relatives or the general populace. I will personally advise them of the situation. Indeed, even the demigods will express their approval.

32For you to remain in My bodily association would certainly not please people in this world, nor would it be the best way for you to increase your love for Me. Rather, you should fix your minds on Me, and very soon you will achieve Me.

33It is by hearing about Me, seeing My Deity form, meditating upon Me and chanting My names and glories that love for Me develops, not by physical proximity. Therefore please go back to your homes.

34Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus instructed, the wives of the brāhmaṇas returned to the place of sacrifice. The brāhmaṇas did not find any fault with their wives, and together with them they finished the sacrifice.

35One of the ladies had been forcibly kept back by her husband. When she heard the others describe the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, she embraced Him within her heart and gave up her material body, the basis of bondage to material activity.

36Govinda, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, fed the cowherd boys with that food of four varieties. Then the all-powerful Lord Himself partook of the preparations.

37Thus the Supreme Lord, appearing like a human being to perform His pastimes, imitated the ways of human society. He enjoyed pleasing His cows, cowherd boyfriends and cowherd girlfriends with His beauty, words and actions.

38The brāhmaṇas then came to their senses and began to feel great remorse. They thought, "We have sinned, for we have denied the request of the two Lords of the universe, who deceptively appeared as ordinary human beings."

39 Taking note of their wives' pure, transcendental devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and seeing their own lack of devotion, the brāhmaṇas felt most sorrowful and began to condemn themselves.

40 [The brāhmaṇas said:] To hell with our threefold birth, our vow of celibacy and our extensive learning! To hell with our aristocratic background and our expertise in the rituals of sacrifice! These are all condemned because we were inimical to the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

41 The illusory potency of the Supreme Lord certainly bewilders even the great mystics, what to speak of us. As brāhmaṇas we are supposed to be the spiritual masters of all classes of men, yet we have been bewildered about our own real interest.

42 Just see the unlimited love these women have developed for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the entire universe! This love has broken for them the very bonds of death their attachment to family life.

43-44 These women have never undergone the purificatory rites of the twice-born classes, nor have they lived as brahmacārīs in the āśrama of a spiritual master, nor have they executed austerities, speculated on the nature of the self, followed the formalities of cleanliness or engaged in pious rituals. Nevertheless, they have firm devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose glories are chanted by the exalted hymns of the Vedas and who is the supreme master of all masters of mystic power. We, on the other hand, have no such devotion for the Lord, although we have executed all these processes.

45 Indeed, infatuated as we are with our household affairs, we have deviated completely from the real aim of our life. But now just see how the Lord, through the words of these simple cowherd boys, has reminded us of the ultimate destination of all true transcendentalists.

46 Otherwise, why would the supreme controller whose every desire is already fulfilled and who is the master of liberation and all other transcendental benedictions enact this pretense with us, who are always to be controlled by Him?

47 Hoping for the touch of His lotus feet, the goddess of fortune perpetually worships Him alone, leaving aside all others and renouncing her pride and fickleness. That He begs is certainly astonishing to everyone.

48-49 All the aspects of sacrifice the auspicious place and time, the various items of paraphernalia, the Vedic hymns, the prescribed rituals, the priests and sacrificial fires, the demigods, the patron of the sacrifice, the sacrificial offering and the pious results obtained all are simply manifestations of His opulences. Yet even though we had heard that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, the Lord of all mystic controllers, had taken birth in the Yadu dynasty, we were so foolish that we could not recognize Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be none other than Him.

50 Let us offer our obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His intelligence is never bewildered, whereas we, confused by His power of illusion, are simply wandering about on the paths of fruitive work.

51 We were bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency and thus could not understand His influence as the original Personality of Godhead. Now we hope He will kindly forgive our offense.

52 Thus reflecting on the sin they had committed by neglecting Lord Kṛṣṇa, they became very eager to see Him. But being afraid of King Kaṁsa, they did not dare go to Vraja.

SB 10.24: Worshiping Govardhana Hill

In this chapter Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa crushes the pride of Indra by prohibiting a sacrifice intended for him and initiating a substitute sacrifice in worship of Govardhana Hill.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the cowherd men busily preparing for a sacrifice to Indra, He inquired about it from their king, Nanda. Nanda explained that the rain given by Indra enables all living entities to maintain their lives, and therefore this sacrifice would be executed to satisfy him. Kṛṣṇa responded, “It is because of *karma* alone that living entities take their birth in a certain body, experience varieties of happiness and suffering in that body, and then give it up as the *karma* pertaining to it runs out. Thus it is *karma* alone that is our enemy, our friend, our *guru* and our lord, and Indra can do nothing to alter the happiness and distress of anyone, for everyone is tightly bound by his karmic reactions. The material modes of goodness, passion and ignorance bring about the creation, maintenance and destruction of this world. The clouds give forth rain when they are impelled by the mode of passion, and cowherds prosper by protecting the cows. Furthermore, the cowherds’ proper residence is in the forest and on the hills. Therefore you should offer worship to the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and Govardhana Hill.”

After Kṛṣṇa spoke thus, He arranged for the cowherd men to worship Govardhana with the paraphernalia collected for the sacrifice to Indra. He then assumed a huge, unprecedented transcendental form and devoured all the food and other offerings presented to Govardhana. As He did so He proclaimed to the cowherd community that although they had worshiped Indra for so long, he had never appeared in person, whereas Govardhana himself had now manifested before their eyes and eaten their offerings of foodstuffs. Therefore they should all now offer obeisances to Govardhana Hill. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa joined the cowherds in offering obeisances to His own newly assumed form.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While staying in that very place with His brother Baladeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa happened to see the cowherd men busily arranging for a sacrifice to Indra.

2Being the omniscient Supersoul, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa already understood the situation, yet He still humbly inquired from the elders, headed by His father, Nanda Mahārāja.

3[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] My dear father, kindly explain to Me what this great endeavor of yours is all about. What is it meant to accomplish? If this is a ritual sacrifice, then for whose satisfaction is it intended and by what means is it going to be executed?

4Please tell Me about it, O father. I have a great desire to know and am ready to hear in good faith. Certainly, no secrets are to be kept by saintly personalities, who see all others as equal to themselves, who have no conception of “mine” or “another’s” and who do not consider who is a friend, who is an enemy and who is neutral.

5One who is neutral may be avoided like an enemy, but a friend should be considered like one’s own self.

6When people in this world perform activities, sometimes they understand what they are doing and sometimes they don’t. Those who know what they are doing achieve success in their work, whereas ignorant people do not.

7Such being the case, this ritualistic endeavor of yours should be clearly explained to Me. Is it a ceremony based on scriptural injunction, or simply a custom of ordinary society?

8Nanda Mahārāja replied: The great Lord Indra is the controller of the rain. The clouds are his personal representatives, and they directly provide rainwater, which gives happiness and

sustenance to all creatures.

9Not only we, my dear son, but also many other men worship him, the lord and master of the rain-giving clouds. We offer him grain and other paraphernalia of worship produced through his own discharge in the form of rain.

10By accepting the remnants of sacrifices performed to Indra, people sustain their lives and accomplish the threefold aims of religiosity, economic development and sense gratification. Thus Lord Indra is the agent responsible for the fruitive success of industrious people.

11This religious principle is based on sound tradition. Anyone who rejects it out of lust, enmity, fear or greed will certainly fail to achieve good fortune.

12Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Lord Keśava [Kṛṣṇa] heard the statements of His father, Nanda, and other senior residents of Vraja, He addressed His father as follows, to arouse anger in Lord Indra.

13Lord Kṛṣṇa said: It is by the force of karma that a living entity takes birth, and it is by karma alone that he meets his destruction. His happiness, distress, fear and sense of security all arise as the effects of karma.

14Even if there is some supreme controller who awards all others the results of their activities, He must also depend upon a performer's engaging in activity. After all, there is no question of being the bestower of fruitive results unless fruitive activities have actually been performed.

15Living beings in this world are forced to experience the consequences of their own particular previous work. Since Lord Indra cannot in any way change the destiny of human beings, which is born of their own nature, why should people worship him?

16Every individual is under the control of his own conditioned nature, and thus he must follow that nature. This entire universe, with all its demigods, demons and human beings, is based on the conditioned nature of the living entities.

17Because it is karma that causes the conditioned living entity to accept and then give up different high- and low-grade material bodies, this karma is his enemy, friend and neutral witness, his spiritual master and controlling lord.

18Therefore one should seriously worship work itself. A person should remain in the position corresponding to his nature and should perform his own duty. Indeed, that by which we may live nicely is really our worshipable deity.

19If one thing is actually sustaining our life but we take shelter of something else, how can we achieve any real benefit? We would be like an unfaithful woman, who can never achieve any actual benefit by consorting with her paramour.

20The brāhmaṇa maintains his life by studying and teaching the Vedas, the member of the royal order by protecting the earth, the vaiśya by trade, and the śūdra by serving the higher, twice-born classes.

21The occupational duties of the vaiśya are conceived in four divisions: farming, commerce, cow protection and moneylending. Out of these, we as a community are always engaged in cow protection.

22The causes of creation, maintenance and destruction are the three modes of nature—namely goodness, passion and ignorance. In particular, the mode of passion creates this universe and

through sexual combination causes it to become full of variety.

23 Impelled by the material mode of passion, the clouds pour down their rain everywhere, and by this rain all creatures gain their sustenance. What has the great Indra to do with this arrangement?

24 My dear father, our home is not in the cities or towns or villages. Being forest dwellers, we always live in the forest and on the hills.

25 Therefore may a sacrifice for the pleasure of the cows, the brāhmaṇas and Govardhana Hill begin! With all the paraphernalia collected for worshipping Indra, let this sacrifice be performed instead.

26 Let many different kinds of food be cooked, from sweet rice to vegetable soups! Many kinds of fancy cakes, both baked and fried, should be prepared. And all the available milk products should be taken for this sacrifice.

27 The brāhmaṇas who are learned in the Vedic mantras must properly invoke the sacrificial fires. Then you should feed the priests with nicely prepared food and reward them with cows and other gifts.

28 After giving the appropriate food to everyone else, including such fallen souls as dogs and dog-eaters, you should give grass to the cows and then present your respectful offerings to Govardhana Hill.

29 After everyone has eaten to his satisfaction, you should all dress and decorate yourselves handsomely, smear your bodies with sandalwood paste and then circumambulate the cows, the brāhmaṇas, the sacrificial fires and Govardhana Hill.

30 This is My idea, O father, and you may carry it out if it appeals to you. Such a sacrifice will be very dear to the cows, the brāhmaṇas and Govardhana Hill, and also to Me.

31 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is Himself powerful time, desired to destroy the false pride of Lord Indra. When Nanda and the other senior men of Vṛndāvana heard Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement, they accepted His words as proper.

32-33 The cowherd community then did all that Madhusūdana had suggested. They arranged for the brāhmaṇas to recite the auspicious Vedic mantras, and using the paraphernalia that had been intended for Indra's sacrifice, they presented offerings to Govardhana Hill and the brāhmaṇas with reverential respect. They also gave grass to the cows. Then, placing the cows, bulls and calves in front of them, they circumambulated Govardhana.

34 As the beautifully ornamented cowherd ladies followed along, riding on wagons drawn by oxen, they sang the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and their songs mingled with the brāhmaṇas' chanting of benedictions.

35 Kṛṣṇa then assumed an unprecedented, huge form to instill faith in the cowherd men. Declaring "I am Govardhana Mountain!" He ate the abundant offerings.

36 Together with the people of Vraja, the Lord bowed down to this form of Govardhana Hill, thus in effect offering obeisances to Himself. Then He said, "Just see how this hill has appeared in person and bestowed mercy upon us!

37 "This Govardhana Hill, assuming any form he wishes, will kill any residents of the forest who neglect him. Therefore let us pay our obeisances to him for the safety of ourselves and our

cows.”

38The members of the cowherd community, having thus been inspired by Lord Vāsudeva to properly execute the sacrifice to Govardhana Hill, the cows and the brāhmaṇas, returned with Lord Kṛṣṇa to their village, Vraja.

SB 10.25: Lord Kṛṣṇa Lifts Govardhana Hill

This chapter describes how Lord Indra was overcome by anger when the residents of Vraja canceled his sacrifice, how he tried to punish them by sending forth a devastating rainfall to Vṛndāvana, and how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa protected Gokula by lifting Govardhana Hill and for seven days using it as an umbrella to ward off the rain.

Indra, angered at the disruption of the sacrifice meant for him and falsely presuming himself the supreme controller, said, “People often give up the pursuit of transcendental knowledge the means for self-realization and imagine that they can cross over the ocean of material existence by mundane fruitive sacrifices. Similarly, these cowherd men have become intoxicated by pride and have offended me by taking shelter of an ignorant, ordinary child Kṛṣṇa.”

To remove this supposed pride of the residents of Vraja, Indra sent the clouds known as Sāṁvartaka, whose function is to facilitate the destruction of the world. He sent them to harass the Vrajavāsīs with downpours of rain and hail. The cowherd community was very disturbed by this and approached Kṛṣṇa for shelter. Understanding that this trouble was the work of Indra, Kṛṣṇa decided to smash to pieces Indra’s false prestige, and thus He lifted Govardhana Hill with one hand. He then invited the entire cowherd community to take shelter in the dry space beneath the mountain. For seven successive days He held up the hill, until Indra finally understood Kṛṣṇa’s mystic power and ordered the clouds to withdraw.

When the cowherd villagers emerged from beneath the mountain, Kṛṣṇa put Govardhana Hill back in its proper place. The cowherds were in ecstasy, showing loving symptoms such as flowing tears and bodily hairs standing on end. They embraced Kṛṣṇa and offered Him benedictions according to their respective positions, while the demigods in heaven rained down flowers and sang the Lord’s praises.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King Parīkṣit, when Indra understood that his sacrifice had been put aside, he became furious with Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men, who were accepting Kṛṣṇa as their Lord.

2Angry Indra sent forth the clouds of universal destruction, known as Sāṁvartaka. Imagining himself the supreme controller, he spoke as follows.

3[Indra said:] Just see how these cowherd men living in the forest have become so greatly intoxicated by their prosperity! They have surrendered to an ordinary human being, Kṛṣṇa, and thus they have offended the gods.

4Their taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa is just like the foolish attempt of men who abandon transcendental knowledge of the self and instead try to cross over the great ocean of material existence in the false boats of fruitive, ritual sacrifices.

5These cowherd men have acted inimically toward me by taking shelter of this ordinary human being, Kṛṣṇa, who thinks Himself very wise but who is simply a foolish, arrogant, overtalkative child.

6[To the clouds of destruction King Indra said:] The prosperity of these people has made them

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mad with pride, and their arrogance is backed up by Kṛṣṇa. Now go and remove their pride and bring their animals to destruction.

7I will follow you to Vraja, riding on my elephant Airāvata and taking with me the swift and powerful wind-gods to decimate the cowherd village of Nanda Mahārāja.

8Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: On Indra's order the clouds of universal destruction, released untimely from their bonds, went to the cowherd pastures of Nanda Mahārāja. There they began to torment the inhabitants by powerfully pouring down torrents of rain upon them.

9Propelled by the fearsome wind-gods, the clouds blazed with lightning bolts and roared with thunder as they hurled down hailstones.

10As the clouds released torrents of rain as thick as massive columns, the earth was submerged in the flood, and high ground could no longer be distinguished from low.

11The cows and other animals, shivering from the excessive rain and wind, and the cowherd men and ladies, pained by the cold, all approached Lord Govinda for shelter.

12Trembling from the distress brought about by the severe rainfall, and trying to cover their heads and calves with their own bodies, the cows approached the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

13[The cowherd men and women addressed the Lord:] Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, O most fortunate one, please deliver the cows from the wrath of Indra! O Lord, You are so affectionate to Your devotees. Please save us also.

14Seeing the inhabitants of His Gokula rendered practically unconscious by the onslaught of hail and blasting wind, the Supreme Lord Hari understood that this was the work of angry Indra.

15[Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to Himself:] Because We have stopped his sacrifice, Indra has caused this unusually fierce, unseasonable rain, together with terrible winds and hail.

16By My mystic power I will completely counteract this disturbance caused by Indra. Demigods like Indra are proud of their opulence, and out of foolishness they falsely consider themselves the Lord of the universe. I will now destroy such ignorance.

17Since the demigods are endowed with the mode of goodness, the false pride of considering oneself the Lord should certainly not affect them. When I break the false prestige of those bereft of goodness, My purpose is to bring them relief.

18I must therefore protect the cowherd community by My transcendental potency, for I am their shelter, I am their master, and indeed they are My own family. After all, I have taken a vow to protect My devotees.

19Having said this, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is Viṣṇu Himself, picked up Govardhana Hill with one hand and held it aloft just as easily as a child holds up a mushroom.

20The Lord then addressed the cowherd community: O Mother, O Father, O residents of Vraja, if you wish you may now come under this hill with your cows.

21You should have no fear that this mountain will fall from My hand. And don't be afraid of the wind and rain, for your deliverance from these afflictions has already been arranged.

22Their minds thus pacified by Lord Kṛṣṇa, they all entered beneath the hill, where they found

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ample room for themselves and all their cows, wagons, servants and priests, and for all other members of the community as well.

23 Lord Kṛṣṇa, forgetting hunger and thirst and putting aside all considerations of personal pleasure, stood there holding up the hill for seven days as the people of Vraja gazed upon Him.

24 When Indra observed this exhibition of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mystic power, he became most astonished. Pulled down from his platform of false pride, and his intentions thwarted, he ordered his clouds to desist.

25 Seeing that the fierce wind and rain had now ceased, the sky had become clear of rainclouds, and the sun had risen, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the lifter of Govardhana Hill, spoke to the cowherd community as follows.

26 [Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] My dear cowherd men, please go out with your wives, children and possessions. Give up your fear. The wind and rain have stopped, and the rivers' high waters have subsided.

27 After collecting their respective cows and loading their paraphernalia into their wagons, the cowherd men went out. The women, children and elderly persons gradually followed them.

28 While all living creatures looked on, the Supreme Personality of Godhead put down the hill in its original place, just as it had stood before.

29 All the residents of Vṛndāvana were overwhelmed with ecstatic love, and they came forward and greeted Śrī Kṛṣṇa according to their individual relationships with Himsome embracing Him, others bowing down to Him, and so forth. The cowherd women presented water mixed with yogurt and unbroken barleycorns as a token of honor, and they showered auspicious benedictions upon Him.

30 Mother Yaśodā, mother Rohiṇī, Nanda Mahārāja and Balarāma, the greatest of the strong, all embraced Kṛṣṇa. Overwhelmed with affection, they offered Him their blessings.

31 In the heavens, O King, all the demigods, including the Siddhas, Sādhyas, Gandharvas and Cāraṇas, sang the praises of Lord Kṛṣṇa and showered down flowers in great satisfaction.

32 My dear Parīkṣit, the demigods in heaven resoundingly played their conchshells and kettledrums, and the best of the Gandharvas, led by Tumburu, began to sing.

33 Surrounded by His loving cowherd boyfriends and Lord Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa then went off to the place where He had been tending His cows. The cowherd girls returned to their homes, singing joyfully about the lifting of Govardhana Hill and other glorious deeds performed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had so deeply touched their hearts.

SB 10.26: Wonderful Kṛṣṇa

In this chapter Nanda Mahārāja describes Kṛṣṇa's opulences to the cowherd men, as Nanda had heard of them from Garga Muni.

The cowherd men, unaware of Lord Kṛṣṇa's power, were amazed to see His various extraordinary activities. The men approached Nanda Mahārāja and told him that after seeing how Kṛṣṇa, a boy only seven years old, had lifted a mountain, and how He had previously killed the demoness Pūtanā and generated extreme attraction in the hearts of everyone in

Vṛndāvana, the men had become doubtful and bewildered about how Śrī Kṛṣṇa could possibly have taken birth in the unsuitable environment of a cowherd community. Nanda replied by relating to them what Garga Muni had told him about Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Garga Muni had said that in the previous three ages Nanda's boy had manifested Himself in white, red and yellow forms, whereas now, in the Dvāpara age, He had assumed His darkish-blue form, *kṛṣṇa-nīpa*. Because He descended as the son of Vasudeva, one of His many names is Vāsudeva, and He has innumerable other names indicating His many qualities and activities.

Garga Muni had predicted that Kṛṣṇa would prevent all sorts of catastrophes in Gokula, spread unlimited auspiciousness, and increase the ecstasy of the cowherd men and women. In a previous age He had provided protection for the saintly *brāhmaṇas* when they were harassed by low-class dacoits and there was no proper ruler in society. As the demons in the higher planets can never defeat the demigods who have Lord Viṣṇu on their side, no enemy can ever defeat those who love Kṛṣṇa. In His affinity for His devotees and in His opulence and power, Kṛṣṇa is just like Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself.

Overjoyed and awestruck by Garga Muni's statements, the cowherd men concluded that Kṛṣṇa must be an empowered representative of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa. Thus they worshiped Him and Nanda Mahārāja.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The cowherd men were astonished when they saw Kṛṣṇa's activities, such as lifting Govardhana Hill. Unable to understand His transcendental potency, they approached Nanda Mahārāja and spoke as follows.

2[The cowherd men said:] Since this boy performs such extraordinary activities, how could He warrant a birth among worldly men like a birth that for Him would seem contemptible?

3How could this seven-year-old boy playfully hold up the great hill Govardhana with one hand, just as a mighty elephant holds up a lotus flower?

4As a mere infant who had hardly yet opened His eyes, He drank the breast milk of the powerful demoness Pūtanā and then sucked out her very life air as well, just as the force of time sucks out the youth of one's body.

5Once, when only three months old, little Kṛṣṇa was crying and kicking up His feet as He lay beneath a huge cart. Then the cart fell and turned upside-down simply because it was struck by the tip of His toe.

6At the age of one, while sitting peacefully He was taken up into the sky by the demon Tṛṇāvarta. But baby Kṛṣṇa grabbed the demon's neck, causing him great pain, and thus killed him.

7Once, His mother tied Him with ropes to a mortar because she had caught Him stealing butter. Then, crawling on His hands, He dragged the mortar between a pair of arjuna trees and pulled them down.

8Another time, when Kṛṣṇa was tending the calves in the forest together with Balarāma and the cowherd boys, the demon Bakāsura came with the intention of killing Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa seized this inimical demon by the mouth and tore him apart.

9Desiring to kill Kṛṣṇa, the demon Vatsa disguised himself as a calf and entered among Kṛṣṇa's calves. But Kṛṣṇa killed the demon and, using his body, enjoyed the sport of knocking kapittha fruits down from the trees.

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10 Together with Lord Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa killed the jackass demon and all his friends, thereby securing the safety of the Tālavana forest, which abounded with fully ripened palm fruits.

11 After arranging for the mighty Lord Balarāma to kill the terrible demon Pralamba, Kṛṣṇa saved Vraja's cowherd boys and their animals from a forest fire.

12 Kṛṣṇa chastised the most poisonous serpent, Kāliya, and after humbling him He drove him forcibly from the lake of the Yamunā. In this way the Lord made the water of that river free of the snake's powerful poison.

13 Dear Nanda, how is it that we and all the other residents of Vraja cannot give up our constant affection for your son? And how is it that He is so spontaneously attracted to us?

14 On the one hand this boy is only seven years old, and on the other we see that He has lifted the great hill Govardhana. Therefore, O King of Vraja, a doubt about your son arises within us.

15 Nanda Mahārāja replied: O cowherd men, just hear my words and let all your doubts concerning my son be gone. Some time ago Garga Muni spoke to me as follows about this boy.

16 [Garga Muni had said:] Your son Kṛṣṇa appears as an incarnation in every millennium. In the past He assumed three different colors—white, red and yellow—and now He has appeared in a blackish color.

17 For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore, those who are learned sometimes call this child Vāsudeva.

18 For this son of yours there are many forms and names according to His transcendental qualities and activities. These are known to me, but people in general do not understand them.

19 To increase the transcendental bliss of the cowherd men of Gokula, this child will always act auspiciously for you. And by His grace only, you will surpass all difficulties.

20 O Nanda Mahārāja, as recorded in history, when there was an irregular, incapable government, Indra having been dethroned, and when honest people were being harassed and disturbed by thieves, this child appeared in order to curb the rogues and to protect the people and enable them to flourish.

21 Demons cannot harm the demigods, who always have Lord Viṣṇu on their side. Similarly, any person or group attached to all-auspicious Kṛṣṇa cannot be defeated by enemies.

22 Therefore, O Nanda Mahārāja, this child of yours is as good as Nārāyaṇa. In His transcendental qualities, opulence, name, fame and influence, He is exactly like Nārāyaṇa. Thus you should not be astonished by His activities.

23 [Nanda Mahārāja continued:] After Garga Ṛṣi spoke these words to me and returned home, I began to consider that Kṛṣṇa, who keeps us free from trouble, is actually an expansion of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

24 [Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Having heard Nanda Mahārāja relate the statements of Garga Muni, the residents of Vṛndāvana became enlivened. Their perplexity was gone, and they worshiped Nanda and Lord Kṛṣṇa with great respect.

25 Indra became angry when his sacrifice was disrupted, and thus he caused rain and hail to fall on Gokula, accompanied by lightning and powerful winds, all of which brought great suffering to the cowherds, animals and women there. When Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is by nature always

compassionate, saw the condition of those who had only Him as their shelter, He smiled broadly and lifted Govardhana Hill with one hand, just as a small child picks up a mushroom to play with it. Holding up the hill, He protected the cowherd community. May He, Govinda, the Lord of the cows and the destroyer of Indra's false pride, be pleased with us.

SB 10.27: Lord Indra and Mother Surabhi Offer Prayers

This chapter describes how the Surabhi cow and Indra, having seen the amazing power of Lord Kṛṣṇa, performed a bathing ceremony for Him.

Ashamed of having attacked Vṛndāvana with a violent storm, Indra secretly came before Lord Kṛṣṇa, offered obeisances and praised Him. Indra stated that although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is never caught in the current of material illusion, which is born of ignorance, He nevertheless accepts a humanlike body and performs various activities to establish religious principles and chastise the wicked. By this means He crushes the false prestige of those who presume themselves great controllers. Indra went on to declare that Kṛṣṇa is the father, *guru* and Lord of all living entities, and that in the form of time He is the agent of their punishment.

Satisfied with Indra's prayers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa told him that He had stopped the *indra-yajsa* so that Indra, puffed up as he was with false pride, would remember the Lord. Persons intoxicated by material opulence never see Him standing before them with the rod of punishment in His hand. Therefore if Lord Kṛṣṇa desires the actual good fortune of some person, He brings him down from his position of opulence.

Lord Kṛṣṇa ordered Indra to return to his proper position in heaven and to serve there without egotism. Indra, along with the cow Surabhi, then performed a bathing ceremony for Kṛṣṇa, using the water of the heavenly Ganges and the milk of mother Surabhi. Indra and the cow took this opportunity to bestow upon the Lord the name Govinda, and the demigods showered flowers and recited various prayers.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After Kṛṣṇa had lifted Govardhana Hill and thus protected the inhabitants of Vraja from the terrible rainfall, Surabhi, the mother of the cows, came from her planet to see Kṛṣṇa. She was accompanied by Indra.

2Indra was very ashamed of having offended the Lord. Approaching Him in a solitary place, Indra fell down and lay his helmet, whose effulgence was as brilliant as the sun, upon the Lord's lotus feet.

3Indra had now heard of and seen the transcendental power of omnipotent Kṛṣṇa, and his false pride in being the lord of the three worlds was thus defeated. Holding his hands together in supplication, he addressed the Lord as follows.

4King Indra said: Your transcendental form, a manifestation of pure goodness, is undisturbed by change, shining with knowledge and devoid of passion and ignorance. In You does not exist the mighty flow of the modes of material nature, which is based on illusion and ignorance.

5How, then, could there exist in You the symptoms of an ignorant personsuch as greed, lust, anger and envywhich are produced by one's previous involvement in material existence and which cause one to become further entangled in material existence? And yet as the Supreme Lord You impose punishment to protect religious principles and curb down the wicked.

6You are the father and spiritual master of this entire universe, and also its supreme controller. You are insurmountable time, imposing punishment upon the sinful for their own benefit.

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Indeed, in Your various incarnations, selected by Your own free will, You act decisively to remove the false pride of those who presume themselves masters of this world.

7Even fools like me, who proudly think themselves universal lords, quickly give up their conceit and directly take to the path of the spiritually progressive when they see You are fearless even in the face of time. Thus You punish the mischievous only to instruct them.

8Engrossed in pride over my ruling power, ignorant of Your majesty, I offended You. O Lord, may You forgive me. My intelligence was bewildered, but let my consciousness never again be so impure.

9You descend into this world, O transcendent Lord, to destroy the warlords who burden the earth and create many terrible disturbances. O Lord, you simultaneously act for the welfare of those who faithfully serve Your lotus feet.

10Obeisances unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the great Soul, who are all-pervading and who reside in the hearts of all. My obeisances unto You, Kṛṣṇa, the chief of the Yadu dynasty.

11Unto Him who assumes transcendental bodies according to the desires of His devotees, unto Him whose form is itself pure consciousness, unto Him who is everything, who is the seed of everything and who is the Soul of all creatures, I offer my obeisances.

12My dear Lord, when my sacrifice was disrupted I became fiercely angry because of false pride. Thus I tried to destroy Your cowherd community with severe rain and wind.

13O Lord, You have shown mercy to me by shattering my false pride and defeating my attempt [to punish Vṛndāvana]. To You, the Supreme Lord, spiritual master and Supreme Soul, I have now come for shelter.

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus glorified by Indra, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, smiled and then spoke to him as follows in a voice resonant like the clouds.

15The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Indra, it was out of mercy that I stopped the sacrifice meant for you. You were greatly intoxicated by your opulence as King of heaven, and I wanted you to always remember Me.

16A man blinded by intoxication with his power and opulence cannot see Me nearby with the rod of punishment in My hand. If I desire his real welfare, I drag him down from his materially fortunate position.

17Indra, you may now go. Execute My order and remain in your appointed position as King of heaven. But be sober, without false pride.

18Mother Surabhi, along with her progeny, the cows, then offered her obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Respectfully requesting His attention, the gentle lady addressed the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was present before her as a cowherd boy.

19Mother Surabhi said: O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, greatest of mystics! O Soul and origin of the universe! You are the master of the world, and by Your grace, O infallible Lord, we have You as our master.

20You are our worshipable Deity. Therefore, O Lord of the universe, for the benefit of the cows, the brāhmaṇas, the demigods and all other saintly persons, please become our Indra.

21As ordered by Lord Brahmā, we shall perform Your bathing ceremony to coronate You as Indra. O Soul of the universe, You descend to this world to relieve the burden of the earth.

22-23Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus appealed to Lord Kṛṣṇa, mother Surabhi performed His bathing ceremony with her own milk, and Indra, ordered by Aditi and other mothers of the demigods, anointed the Lord with heavenly Gaṅgā water from the trunk of Indra's elephant carrier, Airāvata. Thus, in the company of the demigods and great sages, Indra coronated Lord Kṛṣṇa, the descendant of Daśārha, and gave Him the name Govinda.

24Tumburu, Nārada and other Gandharvas, along with the Vidyādharas, Siddhas and Cāraṇas, came there to sing the glories of Lord Hari, which purify the entire world. And the wives of the demigods, filled with joy, danced together in the Lord's honor.

25The most eminent demigods chanted the praises of the Lord and scattered wonderful showers of flowers all around Him. All three worlds felt supreme satisfaction, and the cows drenched the surface of the earth with their milk.

26Rivers flowed with various kinds of tasty liquids, trees exuded honey, edible plants came to maturity without cultivation, and hills gave forth jewels formerly hidden in their interiors.

27O Parīkṣit, beloved of the Kuru dynasty, upon the ceremonial bathing of Lord Kṛṣṇa, all living creatures, even those cruel by nature, became entirely free of enmity.

28After he had ceremonially bathed Lord Govinda, who is the master of the cows and the cowherd community, King Indra took the Lord's permission and, surrounded by the demigods and other higher beings, returned to his heavenly abode.

SB 10.28: Kṛṣṇa Rescues Nanda Mahārāja from the Abode of Varuṇa

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa brought Nanda Mahārāja back from the abode of Varuṇa and how the cowherd men saw Vaikuṅṭha.

The king of the cowherds, Nanda Mahārāja, observed the prescribed fast on the eleventh day of the lunar month and then considered how to break his fast properly on the twelfth day. By circumstance only a few more minutes remained, and so he decided to take his bath at the very end of the night, although astrologically that was an inauspicious time. Thus he entered the water of the Yamunā. A servant of Varuṇa, the demigod of the ocean, noticed Nanda Mahārāja entering the water at a time forbidden by scripture and took him away to the demigod's abode. In the early morning the cowherd men unsuccessfully searched for Nanda, but Lord Kṛṣṇa immediately understood the situation and went to see Varuṇa. Varuṇa worshiped Kṛṣṇa with great and variegated festivity. Afterwards he begged the Lord to forgive his servant for having foolishly arrested the king of the cowherds.

Nanda was amazed to see the influence Śrī Kṛṣṇa exerted in the court of Varuṇadeva, and after returning home he described his experiences to his friends and relatives. They all thought Kṛṣṇa must be the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself and wanted to see His supreme abode. Thereupon the omniscient Personality of Godhead arranged for them to bathe in the same lake where Akrūra would have his vision of the Absolute Truth. There the Lord revealed to them Brahmaloaka, which is realized by great sages in their mystic trance.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: Having worshiped Lord Janārdana and fasted on the Ekādaśī day, Nanda Mahārāja entered the water of the Kālindī on the Dvādaśī to take his bath.

2Because Nanda Mahārāja entered the water in the dark of night, disregarding that the time was

inauspicious, a demoniac servant of Varuṇa seized him and brought him to his master.

3O King, not seeing Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men loudly cried out, “O Kṛṣṇa! O Rāma!” Lord Kṛṣṇa heard their cries and understood that His father had been captured by Varuṇa. Therefore the almighty Lord, who makes His devotees fearless, went to the court of Varuṇadeva.

4Seeing that the Lord, Hṛṣīkeśa, had arrived, the demigod Varuṇa worshiped Him with elaborate offerings. Varuṇa was in a state of great jubilation upon seeing the Lord, and he spoke as follows.

5Śrī Varuṇa said: Now my body has fulfilled its function. Indeed, now the goal of my life is achieved, O Lord. Those who accept Your lotus feet, O Personality of Godhead, can transcend the path of material existence.

6My obeisances unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Soul, within whom there is no trace of the illusory energy, which orchestrates the creation of this world.

7Your father, who is sitting here, was brought to me by a foolish, ignorant servant of mine who did not understand his proper duty. Therefore, please forgive us.

8O Kṛṣṇa, O seer of everything, please give Your mercy even to me. O Govinda, You are most affectionate to Your father. Please take him home.

9Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus satisfied by Lord Varuṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of lords, took His father and returned home, where their relatives were overjoyed to see them.

10Nanda Mahārāja had been astonished to see for the first time the great opulence of Varuṇa, the ruler of the ocean planet, and also to see how Varuṇa and his servants had offered such humble respect to Kṛṣṇa. Nanda described all this to his fellow cowherd men.

11[Hearing about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with Varuṇa,] the cowherd men considered that Kṛṣṇa must be the Supreme Lord, and their minds, O King, were filled with eagerness. They thought, “Will the Supreme Lord bestow upon us His transcendental abode?”

12Because He sees everything, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, automatically understood what the cowherd men were conjecturing. Wanting to show His compassion to them by fulfilling their desires, the Lord thought as follows.

13[Lord Kṛṣṇa thought:] Certainly people in this world are wandering among higher and lower destinations, which they achieve through activities performed according to their desires and without full knowledge. Thus people do not know their real destination.

14Thus deeply considering the situation, the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari revealed to the cowherd men His abode, which is beyond material darkness.

15Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed the indestructible spiritual effulgence, which is unlimited, conscious and eternal. Sages see that spiritual existence in trance, when their consciousness is free of the modes of material nature.

16The cowherd men were brought by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the Brahma-hrada, made to submerge in the water, and then lifted up. From the same vantage point that Akrūra saw the spiritual world, the cowherd men saw the planet of the Absolute Truth.

17Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa Himself there, surrounded by the personified Vedas, who were offering Him prayers.

SB 10.29: Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs Meet for the Rāsa Dance

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, intending to enjoy the *rāsa* dance, engaged in arguments and counterarguments with the *gopīs*. Then there is a description of the beginning of the *rāsa* dance and the Lord's pastime of disappearing from the midst of the *gopīs*.

Remembering the promise He had made to the *gopīs* when He had stolen their clothes, Lord Kṛṣṇa employed His Yoga-māyā potency and manifested within Himself the desire to enjoy pastimes during an autumn night. Thus He began to play His flute. When the *gopīs* heard the flute's sound, the impulses of Cupid were violently aroused within them, and they immediately abandoned all their household duties and hastily went to Kṛṣṇa. All the *gopīs* had purely spiritual bodies, but when some of the *gopīs*' husbands and other family members stopped the young girls from going, Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for them to temporarily exhibit material bodies, which they then left at the sides of their husbands. In this way they deceived their relatives and went off to meet Kṛṣṇa.

When the *gopīs* came before Lord Kṛṣṇa, He asked, "Why have you come? It is not good for you to travel to such a place in the dead of the night, for this forest is full of violent creatures. Your husbands and children will soon come searching after you to bring you home and engage you again in your household duties. After all, the prime religious duty of a woman is to serve her husband and children. For a respectable woman to consort with a paramour is totally contemptible and sure to obstruct her progress to heaven. Moreover, one develops pure love for Me not by physical proximity but by hearing topics connected with Me, by viewing My Deity form in the temple, by meditating upon Me and by faithfully chanting My glories. Therefore, all of you would do best to return home."

The *gopīs* were crestfallen to hear this, and after crying a little they replied, with a bit of anger, "It is very unfair for You to reject young girls who have abandoned everything in their lives and come to You with the exclusive desire to serve You. By serving our husbands and children we receive only pain, whereas by serving You, the dearest Soul of all living beings, we will perfectly fulfill the true religious duty of the self. What woman will not deviate from her prescribed duties as soon as she hears Your flute-song and sees Your form, which enchants the three worlds? Just as the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu protects the demigods, You destroy the unhappiness of the people of Vṛndāvana. Therefore You should immediately relieve the torment we have felt because of separation from You." Wanting to please the *gopīs*, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is always satisfied in Himself, responded to their appeals by playing with them in various pastimes. But when this show of attention made them a little proud, He humbled them by suddenly disappearing from the arena of the *rāsa* dance.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in all opulences, yet upon seeing those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, He turned His mind toward loving affairs. To fulfill His purposes He employed His internal potency.

2The moon then rose, anointing the face of the eastern horizon with the reddish hue of his comforting rays, and thus dispelling the pain of all who watched him rise. The moon was like a

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beloved husband who returns after a long absence and adorns the face of his beloved wife with red kuṅkuma.

3Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly applied vermilion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the kumuda lotuses opening in response to the moon's presence and the forest gently illumined by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed gopīs.

4When the young women of Vṛndāvana heard Kṛṣṇa's flute-song, which arouses romantic feelings, their minds were captivated by the Lord. They went to where their lover waited, each unknown to the others, moving so quickly that their earrings swung back and forth.

5Some of the gopīs were milking cows when they heard Kṛṣṇa's flute. They stopped milking and went off to meet Him. Some left milk curdling on the stove, and others left cakes burning in the oven.

6-7Some of them were getting dressed, feeding milk to their infants or rendering personal service to their husbands, but they all gave up these duties and went to meet Kṛṣṇa. Other gopīs were taking their evening meals, washing themselves, putting on cosmetics or applying kajjala to their eyes. But all the gopīs stopped these activities at once and, though their clothes and ornaments were in complete disarray, rushed off to Kṛṣṇa.

8Their husbands, fathers, brothers and other relatives tried to stop them, but Kṛṣṇa had already stolen their hearts. Enchanted by the sound of His flute, they refused to turn back.

9Some of the gopīs, however, could not manage to get out of their houses, and instead they remained home with eyes closed, meditating upon Him in pure love.

10-11For those gopīs who could not go to see Kṛṣṇa, intolerable separation from their beloved caused an intense agony that burned away all impious karma. By meditating upon Him they realized His embrace, and the ecstasy they then felt exhausted their material piety. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Soul, these girls simply thought of Him as their male lover and associated with Him in that intimate mood. Thus their karmic bondage was nullified and they abandoned their gross material bodies.

12Śrī Parīkṣit Mahārāja said: O sage, the gopīs knew Kṛṣṇa only as their lover, not as the Supreme Absolute Truth. So how could these girls, their minds caught up in the waves of the modes of nature, free themselves from material attachment?

13Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: This point was explained to you previously. Since even Śiśupāla, who hated Kṛṣṇa, achieved perfection, then what to speak of the Lord's dear devotees.

14O King, the Supreme Lord is inexhaustible and immeasurable, and He is untouched by the material modes because He is their controller. His personal appearance in this world is meant for bestowing the highest benefit on humanity.

15Persons who constantly direct their lust, anger, fear, protective affection, feeling of impersonal oneness or friendship toward Lord Hari are sure to become absorbed in thought of Him.

16You should not be so astonished by Kṛṣṇa, the unborn master of all masters of mystic power, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After all, it is the Lord who liberates this world.

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17 Seeing that the girls of Vraja had arrived, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the best of speakers, greeted them with charming words that bewildered their minds.

18 Lord Kṛṣṇa said: O most fortunate ladies, welcome. What may I do to please you? Is everything well in Vraja? Please tell Me the reason for your coming here.

19 This night is quite frightening, and frightening creatures are lurking about. Return to Vraja, slender-waisted girls. This is not a proper place for women.

20 Not finding you at home, your mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands are certainly searching for you. Don't cause anxiety for your family members.

21-22 Now you have seen this Vṛndāvana forest, full of flowers and resplendent with the light of the full moon. You have seen the beauty of the trees, with their leaves trembling in the gentle breeze coming from the Yamunā. So now go back to the cowherd village. Don't delay. O chaste ladies, serve your husbands and give milk to your crying babies and calves.

23 On the other hand, perhaps you have come here out of your great love for Me, which has taken control of your hearts. This is of course quite commendable on your part, since all living entities possess natural affection for Me.

24 The highest religious duty for a woman is to sincerely serve her husband, behave well toward her husband's family and take good care of her children.

25 Women who desire a good destination in the next life should never abandon a husband who has not fallen from his religious standards, even if he is obnoxious, unfortunate, old, unintelligent, sickly or poor.

26 For a woman from a respectable family, petty adulterous affairs are always condemned. They bar her from heaven, ruin her reputation and bring her difficulty and fear.

27 Transcendental love for Me arises by the devotional processes of hearing about Me, seeing My Deity form, meditating on Me and faithfully chanting My glories. The same result is not achieved by mere physical proximity. So please go back to your homes.

28 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing these unpleasant words spoken by Govinda, the gopīs became morose. Their great hopes were frustrated and they felt insurmountable anxiety.

29 Their heads hanging down and their heavy, sorrowful breathing drying up their reddened lips, the gopīs scratched the ground with their toes. Tears flowed from their eyes, carrying their kajjala and washing away the vermilion smeared on their breasts. Thus they stood, silently bearing the burden of their unhappiness.

30 Although Kṛṣṇa was their beloved, and although they had abandoned all other objects of desire for His sake, He had been speaking to them unfavorably. Nonetheless, they remained unflinching in their attachment to Him. Stopping their crying, they wiped their eyes and began to speak, their voices stammering with agitation.

31 The beautiful gopīs said: O all-powerful one, You should not speak in this cruel way. Do not reject us, who have renounced all material enjoyment to render devotional service to Your lotus feet. Reciprocate with us, O stubborn one, just as the primeval Lord, Śrī Nārāyaṇa, reciprocates with His devotees in their endeavors for liberation.

32 Our dear Kṛṣṇa, as an expert in religion You have advised us that the proper religious duty for women is to faithfully serve their husbands, children and other relatives. We agree that this

principle is valid, but actually this service should be rendered to You. After all, O Lord, You are the dearest friend of all embodied souls. You are their most intimate relative and indeed their very Self.

33Expert transcendentalists always direct their affection toward You because they recognize You as their true Self and eternal beloved. What use do we have for these husbands, children and relatives of ours, who simply give us trouble? Therefore, O supreme controller, grant us Your mercy. O lotus-eyed one, please do not cut down our long-cherished hope to have Your association.

34Until today our minds were absorbed in household affairs, but You easily stole both our minds and our hands away from our housework. Now our feet won't move one step from Your lotus feet. How can we go back to Vraja? What would we do there?

35Dear Kṛṣṇa, please pour the nectar of Your lips upon the fire within our hearts a fire You ignited with Your smiling glances and the sweet song of Your flute. If You do not, we will consign our bodies to the fire of separation from You, O friend, and thus like yogīs attain to the abode of Your lotus feet by meditation.

36O lotus-eyed one, the goddess of fortune considers it a festive occasion whenever she touches the soles of Your lotus feet. You are very dear to the residents of the forest, and therefore we will also touch those lotus feet. From that time on we will be unable even to stand in the presence of any other man, for we will have been fully satisfied by You.

37Goddess Lakṣmī, whose glance is sought after by the demigods with great endeavor, has achieved the unique position of always remaining on the chest of her Lord, Nārāyaṇa. Still, she desires the dust of His lotus feet, even though she has to share that dust with Tulasī-devī and indeed with the Lord's many other servants. Similarly, we have approached the dust of Your lotus feet for shelter.

38Therefore, O vanquisher of all distress, please show us mercy. To approach Your lotus feet we abandoned our families and homes, and we have no desire other than to serve You. Our hearts are burning with intense desires generated by Your beautiful smiling glances. O jewel among men, please make us Your maidservants.

39Seeing Your face encircled by curling locks of hair, Your cheeks beautified by earrings, Your lips full of nectar, and Your smiling glance, and also seeing Your two imposing arms, which take away our fear, and Your chest, which is the only source of pleasure for the goddess of fortune, we must become Your maidservants.

40Dear Kṛṣṇa, what woman in all the three worlds wouldn't deviate from religious behavior when bewildered by the sweet, drawn-out melody of Your flute? Your beauty makes all three worlds auspicious. Indeed, even the cows, birds, trees and deer manifest the ecstatic symptom of bodily hair standing on end when they see Your beautiful form.

41Clearly You have taken birth in this world to relieve the fear and distress of the people of Vraja, just as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the primeval Lord, protects the domain of the demigods. Therefore, O friend of the distressed, kindly place Your lotus hand on Your maidservants' heads and burning breasts.

42Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Smiling upon hearing these despondent words from the gopīs, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme master of all masters of mystic yoga, mercifully enjoyed with them, although He is self-satisfied.

43Among the assembled gopīs, the infallible Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared just like the moon surrounded by stars. He whose activities are so magnanimous made their faces blossom with His affectionate glances, and His broad smiles revealed the effulgence of His jasmine-bud-like teeth.

44As the gopīs sang His praises, that leader of hundreds of women sang loudly in reply. He moved among them, wearing His Vaijayantī garland, beautifying the Vṛndāvana forest.

45-46Śrī Kṛṣṇa went with the gopīs to the bank of the Yamunā, where the sand was cooling and the wind, enlivened by the river's waves, bore the fragrance of lotuses. There Kṛṣṇa threw His arms around the gopīs and embraced them. He aroused Cupid in the beautiful young ladies of Vraja by touching their hands, hair, thighs, belts and breasts, by playfully scratching them with His fingernails, and also by joking with them, glancing at them and laughing with them. In this way the Lord enjoyed His pastimes.

47The gopīs became proud of themselves for having received such special attention from Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and each of them thought herself the best woman on earth.

48Lord Keśava, seeing the gopīs too proud of their good fortune, wanted to relieve them of this pride and show them further mercy. Thus He immediately disappeared.

SB 10.30: The Gopīs Search for Kṛṣṇa

This chapter describes how the *gopīs*, tormented through the long night by separation from Kṛṣṇa, wandered like madwomen from forest to forest in search of Him.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared from the arena of the *nāsa* dance, the *gopīs*, their minds fully absorbed in thoughts of Him, began looking for Him in the various forests. From all the moving and nonmoving creatures they asked for news of Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts. Finally they became so distraught that they began imitating His pastimes.

Later, while wandering in a corner of the forest, the *gopīs* saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa's footprints, which appeared mixed with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's. Seeing these footprints perturbed them greatly, and they declared that surely Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī must have worshiped Kṛṣṇa with unusual excellence, since She had been privileged to associate with Him in seclusion. Further along the path the *gopīs* came to a place where they could no longer see Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's footprints; they then concluded that Kṛṣṇa must have taken Rādhārāṇī onto His shoulders. In another place they noticed that Kṛṣṇa's footprints were showing only the toes, and thus the *gopīs* concluded He had been picking flowers with which to decorate His beloved. In yet another spot the *gopīs* saw signs that led them to imagine that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had been tying the locks of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hair. All these thoughts brought pain to the *gopīs'* minds.

Because of the special attention She received from Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā began to consider Herself the most fortunate of women. She told Him that She could walk no further and that He would have to carry Her on His shoulders. But just then Lord Kṛṣṇa disappeared from Her sight. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, extremely troubled, then began looking everywhere for Him, and when She finally met Her *gopī* girlfriends She related to them what had happened. All the *gopīs* then went out to look for Kṛṣṇa in the forest, going as far as the moonlight reached. But in the end they were unsuccessful, so they went back to the shore of the Yamunā and simply sang Kṛṣṇa's glories in utter helplessness.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Lord Kṛṣṇa disappeared so suddenly, the gopīs felt great

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sorrow at losing sight of Him, like a group of female elephants who have lost their mate.

2As the cowherd women remembered Lord Kṛṣṇa, their hearts were overwhelmed by His movements and loving smiles, His playful glances and enchanting talks, and by the many other pastimes He would enjoy with them. Thus absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Ramā, the gopīs began acting out His various transcendental pastimes.

3Because the beloved gopīs were absorbed in thoughts of their beloved Kṛṣṇa, their bodies imitated His way of moving and smiling, His way of beholding them, His speech and His other distinctive features. Deeply immersed in thinking of Him and maddened by remembering His pastimes, they declared to one another, “I am Kṛṣṇa!”

4Singing loudly of Kṛṣṇa, they searched for Him throughout the Vṛndāvana forest like a band of madwomen. They even asked the trees about Him, who as the Supersoul is present inside and outside of all created things, just like the sky.

5[The gopīs said:] O aśvattha tree, O plakṣa, O nyagrodha, have you seen Kṛṣṇa? That son of Nanda Mahārāja has gone away after stealing our minds with His loving smiles and glances.

6O kurabaka tree, O aśoka, O nāga, punnāga and campaka, has Balarāma’s younger brother, whose smile removes the audacity of all proud women, passed this way?

7O most kind tulasī, to whom the feet of Govinda are so dear, have you seen that infallible one walk by, wearing you and encircled by swarms of bees?

8O mālati, O mallikā, O jāti and yūthikā, has Mādhava gone by here, giving you pleasure with the touch of His hand?

9O cūta, O priyāla, O panasa, āsana and kovidāra, O jambu, O arka, O bilva, bakula and āmra, O kadamba and nīpa and all you other plants and trees living by the banks of the Yamunā who have dedicated your very existence to the welfare of others, we gopīs have lost our minds, so please tell us where Kṛṣṇa has gone.

10O mother earth, what austerity did you perform to attain the touch of Lord Keśava’s lotus feet, which has brought you such great joy that your bodily hairs are standing on end? You appear very beautiful in this condition. Was it during the Lord’s current appearance that you acquired this ecstatic symptom, or was it perhaps much earlier, when He stepped upon you in His form of the dwarf Vāmanadeva, or even earlier, when He embraced you in His form of the boar Varāhadeva?

11O friend, wife of the deer, has Lord Acyuta been here with His beloved, bringing great joy to your eyes? Indeed, blowing this way is the fragrance of His garland of kunda flowers, which was smeared with the kuṅkuma from the breasts of His girlfriend when He embraced Her.

12O trees, we see that you are bowing down. When the younger brother of Rāma walked by here, followed by intoxicated bees swarming around the tulasī maṣjarīs decorating His garland, did He acknowledge your obeisances with His affectionate glances? He must have been resting His arm on the shoulder of His beloved and carrying a lotus flower in His free hand.

13Let us ask these creepers about Kṛṣṇa. Even though they are embracing the arms of their husband, this tree, they certainly must have been touched by Kṛṣṇa’s fingernails, since out of joy they are manifesting eruptions on their skin.

14Having spoken these words, the gopīs, distraught from searching for Kṛṣṇa, began to act out

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His various pastimes, fully absorbed in thoughts of Him.

15One gopī imitated Pūtanā, while another acted like infant Kṛṣṇa and pretended to suck her breast. Another gopī, crying in imitation of infant Kṛṣṇa, kicked a gopī who was taking the role of the cart demon, Śakaṭāsura.

16One gopī took the role of Tṛṇāvarta and carried away another, who was acting like infant Kṛṣṇa, while yet another gopī crawled about, her ankle bells tinkling as she pulled her feet.

17Two gopīs acted like Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in the midst of several others, who took the role of cowherd boys. One gopī enacted Kṛṣṇa’s killing of the demon Vatsāsura, represented by another gopī, and a pair of gopīs acted out the killing of Bakāsura.

18When one gopī perfectly imitated how Kṛṣṇa would call the cows who had wandered far away, how He would play His flute and how He would engage in various sports, the others congratulated her with exclamations of “Well done! Well done!”

19Another gopī, her mind fixed on Kṛṣṇa, walked about with her arm resting on the shoulder of a friend and declared, “I am Kṛṣṇa! Just see how gracefully I move!”

20“Don’t be afraid of the wind and rain,” said one gopī. “I will save you.” And with that she lifted her shawl above her head.

21[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O King, one gopī climbed on another’s shoulders and, putting her foot on the other’s head, said, “Go away from here, O wicked snake! You should know that I have taken birth in this world just to punish the envious.”

22Then another gopī spoke up: My dear cowherd boys, look at this raging forest fire! Quickly close your eyes and I will easily protect you.

23One gopī tied up her slender companion with a flower garland and said, “Now I will bind this boy who has broken the butter pots and stolen the butter.” The second gopī then covered her face and beautiful eyes, pretending to be afraid.

24While the gopīs were thus imitating Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and asking Vṛndāvana’s creepers and trees where Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, might be, they happened to see His footprints in a corner of the forest.

25[The gopīs said:] The marks of a flag, lotus, thunderbolt, elephant goad, barleycorn and so forth on these footprints clearly distinguish them as belonging to that great soul, the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

26The gopīs began following Kṛṣṇa’s path, as shown by His many footprints, but when they saw that these prints were thoroughly intermixed with those of His dearest consort, they became perturbed and spoke as follows.

27[The gopīs said:] Here we see the footprints of some gopī who must have been walking along with the son of Nanda Mahārāja. He must have put His arm on Her shoulder, just as an elephant rests His trunk on the shoulder of an accompanying she-elephant.

28Certainly this particular gopī has perfectly worshiped the all-powerful Personality of Godhead, Govinda, since He was so pleased with Her that He abandoned the rest of us and brought Her to a secluded place.

29O girls! The dust of Govinda's lotus feet is so sacred that even Brahmā, Śiva and the goddess Ramā take that dust upon their heads to dispel sinful reactions.

30These footprints of that special gopī greatly disturb us. Of all the gopīs, She alone was taken away to a secluded place, where She is enjoying the lips of Kṛṣṇa. Look, we can't see Her footprints over here! It's obvious that the grass and sprouts were hurting the tender soles of Her feet, and so the lover lifted up His beloved.

31Please observe, my dear gopīs, how in this place lusty Kṛṣṇa's footprints are pressed more deeply into the ground. Carrying the weight of His beloved must have been difficult for Him. And over here that intelligent boy must have put Her down to gather some flowers.

32Just see how in this place dear Kṛṣṇa collected flowers for His beloved. Here He has left the impression of only the front part of His feet because He was standing on His toes to reach the flowers.

33Certainly Kṛṣṇa sat down here with His girlfriend to arrange Her hair. The lusty boy must have made a crown for that lusty girl out of the flowers He had collected.

34[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoyed with that gopī, although He enjoys only within, being self-satisfied and complete in Himself. Thus by contrast He showed the wretchedness of ordinary lusty men and hardhearted women.

35-36As the gopīs wandered about, their minds completely bewildered, they pointed out various signs of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. The particular gopī whom Kṛṣṇa had led into a secluded forest when He had abandoned all the other young girls began to think Herself the best of women. "My beloved has rejected all the other gopīs," She thought, "even though they are driven by Cupid himself. He has chosen to reciprocate with Me alone."

37As the two lovers passed through one part of the Vṛndāvana forest, the special gopī began feeling proud of Herself. She told Lord Keśava, "I cannot walk any further. Please carry Me wherever You want to go."

38Thus addressed, Lord Kṛṣṇa replied, "Just climb on My shoulder." But as soon as He said this, He disappeared. His beloved consort then immediately felt great remorse.

39She cried out: O master! My lover! O dearmost, where are You? Where are You? Please, O mighty-armed one, O friend, show Yourself to Me, Your poor servant!

40Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While continuing to search out Kṛṣṇa's path, the gopīs discovered their unhappy friend close by. She was bewildered by separation from Her lover.

41She told them how Mādhava had given Her much respect, but how She then suffered dishonor because of Her misBehavior. The gopīs were extremely amazed to hear this.

42In search of Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs then entered the depths of the forest as far as the light of the moon shone. But when they found themselves engulfed in darkness, they decided to turn back.

43Their minds absorbed in thoughts of Him, they conversed about Him, acted out His pastimes and felt themselves filled with His presence. They completely forgot about their homes as they loudly sang the glories of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental qualities.

44The gopīs again came to the bank of the Kālindī. Meditating on Kṛṣṇa and eagerly hoping He

would come, they sat down together to sing of Him.

SB 10.31: The Gopīs' Songs of Separation

This chapter relates how the *gopīs*, overwhelmed by feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, sat down on the bank of the Yamunā and began praying for His audience and singing His glories.

Because the *gopīs* had dedicated their minds and very lives to Kṛṣṇa, they were beside themselves with the transcendental pain of separation. But their crying, which appears like evidence of misery, actually shows their exalted state of transcendental bliss. As it is said, *yata dekha vaiṣṇaver vyavahāra duḥkha/ niścaya jāniha sei paramānanda sukha*: “Whenever one sees a Vaiṣṇava acting unhappy, one should know it for sure that he is actually experiencing the highest spiritual bliss.” Thus each of the *gopīs* began addressing Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa according to her individual mode of ecstasy, and they all prayed for Him for His mercy.

As the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa spontaneously arose in the minds of the *gopīs*, they sang their song, which relieves the agony of those suffering from the burning pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa and which bestows supreme auspiciousness. They sang, “O Lord, O lover, O cheater, when we remember Your smile, Your loving glances and Your pastimes with Your boyhood friends, we become extremely agitated. Remembering Your lotus face, adorned with locks of blackish hair smeared with the dust of the cows, we become irrevocably attached to You. And when we remember how You followed the cows from forest to forest with Your tender feet, we feel great pain.”

In their separation from Kṛṣṇa the *gopīs* considered a single moment an entire age. Even when they had previously seen Him they had found the blinking of their eyelids intolerable, for it blocked their vision of Him for a fraction of a second.

The ecstatic sentiments for Lord Kṛṣṇa that the *gopīs* expressed may appear like symptoms of lust, but in reality they are manifestations of their pure desire to satisfy the Supreme Lord's spiritual senses. There is not even the slightest trace of lust in these moods of the *gopīs*.

1The *gopīs* said: O beloved, Your birth in the land of Vraja has made it exceedingly glorious, and thus Indirā, the goddess of fortune, always resides here. It is only for Your sake that we, Your devoted servants, maintain our lives. We have been searching everywhere for You, so please show Yourself to us.

2O Lord of love, in beauty Your glance excels the whorl of the finest, most perfectly formed lotus within the autumn pond. O bestower of benedictions, You are killing the maidservants who have given themselves to You freely, without any price. Isn't this murder?

3O greatest of personalities, You have repeatedly saved us from all kinds of danger from poisoned water, from the terrible man-eater Agha, from the great rains, from the wind demon, from the fiery thunderbolt of Indra, from the bull demon and from the son of Maya Dānava.

4You are not actually the son of the *gopī* Yaśodā, O friend, but rather the indwelling witness in the hearts of all embodied souls. Because Lord Brahmā prayed for You to come and protect the universe, You have now appeared in the Sātvata dynasty.

5O best of the Vṛṣṇis, Your lotuslike hand, which holds the hand of the goddess of fortune, grants fearlessness to those who approach Your feet out of fear of material existence. O lover, please place that wish-fulfilling lotus hand on our heads.

6O You who destroy the suffering of Vraja's people, O hero of all women, Your smile shatters

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the false pride of Your devotees. Please, dear friend, accept us as Your maidservants and show us Your beautiful lotus face.

7Your lotus feet destroy the past sins of all embodied souls who surrender to them. Those feet follow after the cows in the pastures and are the eternal abode of the goddess of fortune. Since You once put those feet on the hoods of the great serpent Kāliya, please place them upon our breasts and tear away the lust in our hearts.

8O lotus-eyed one, Your sweet voice and charming words, which attract the minds of the intelligent, are bewildering us more and more. Our dear hero, please revive Your maidservants with the nectar of Your lips.

9The nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those suffering in this material world. These narrations, transmitted by learned sages, eradicate one's sinful reactions and bestow good fortune upon whoever hears them. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Certainly those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent.

10Your smiles, Your sweet, loving glances, the intimate pastimes and confidential talks we enjoyed with You all these are auspicious to meditate upon, and they touch our hearts. But at the same time, O deceiver, they very much agitate our minds.

11Dear master, dear lover, when You leave the cowherd village to herd the cows, our minds are disturbed with the thought that Your feet, more beautiful than a lotus, will be pricked by the spiked husks of grain and the rough grass and plants.

12At the end of the day You repeatedly show us Your lotus face, covered with dark blue locks of hair and thickly powdered with dust. Thus, O hero, You arouse lusty desires in our minds.

13Your lotus feet, which are worshiped by Lord Brahmā, fulfill the desires of all who bow down to them. They are the ornament of the earth, they give the highest satisfaction, and in times of danger they are the appropriate object of meditation. O lover, O destroyer of anxiety, please put those lotus feet upon our breasts.

14O hero, kindly distribute to us the nectar of Your lips, which enhances conjugal pleasure and vanquishes grief. That nectar is thoroughly relished by Your vibrating flute and makes people forget any other attachment.

15When You go off to the forest during the day, a tiny fraction of a second becomes like a millennium for us because we cannot see You. And even when we can eagerly look upon Your beautiful face, so lovely with its adornment of curly locks, our pleasure is hindered by our eyelids, which were fashioned by the foolish creator.

16Dear Acyuta, You know very well why we have come here. Who but a cheater like You would abandon young women who come to see Him in the middle of the night, enchanted by the loud song of His flute? Just to see You, we have completely rejected our husbands, children, ancestors, brothers and other relatives.

17Our minds are repeatedly bewildered as we think of the intimate conversations we had with You in secret, feel the rise of lust in our hearts and remember Your smiling face, Your loving glances and Your broad chest, the resting place of the goddess of fortune. Thus we experience the most severe hankering for You.

18O beloved, Your all-auspicious appearance vanquishes the distress of those living in Vraja's forests. Our minds long for Your association. Please give to us just a bit of that medicine, which

counteracts the disease in Your devotees' hearts.

19O dearly beloved! Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path.

SB 10.32: The Reunion

This chapter describes how Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested Himself in the midst of the *gopīs*, who had become extremely disturbed by their separation from Him. After He consoled them, they expressed to Him their deep feelings of ecstasy.

The *gopīs* having shown in various ways their great eagerness to see Kṛṣṇa, the attractor of Cupid, He appeared before them wearing silken yellow garments and a beautiful flower garland. Some of the *gopīs*, overwhelmed with ecstasy at seeing Him, grasped His hands, others placed His arm on their shoulders, and others accepted the remnants of betel nut He had chewed. Thus they served Him.

One *gopī*, impelled by loving anger toward Kṛṣṇa, bit her lip and looked askance at Him. Because the *gopīs* were so attached to Kṛṣṇa, they were not satiated even by continuously gazing at Him. One of them then placed Kṛṣṇa within her heart, closed her eyes and, embracing Him within herself again and again, became absorbed in transcendental bliss, just like a *yogī*. In this way the pain the *gopīs* had felt because of separation from the Lord was dispelled.

Next Lord Kṛṣṇa went to the bank of the Yamunā in the company of the cowherd girls, His internal potencies. The *gopīs* then made a seat for Kṛṣṇa out of their shawls, and after He had sat down they enjoyed with Him by gesturing amorously. The *gopīs* still felt hurt that Kṛṣṇa had disappeared, so He explained to them why He had done so. He further told them that He had come under the exclusive control of their loving devotion and would ever remain indebted to them.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, having thus sung and spoken their hearts out in various charming ways, the *gopīs* began to weep loudly. They were very eager to see Lord Kṛṣṇa.

2Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, a smile on His lotus face, appeared before the *gopīs*. Wearing a garland and a yellow garment, He directly appeared as one who can bewilder the mind of Cupid, who himself bewilders the minds of ordinary people.

3When the *gopīs* saw that their dearest Kṛṣṇa had returned to them, they all stood up at once, and out of their affection for Him their eyes bloomed wide. It was as if the air of life had reentered their bodies.

4One *gopī* joyfully took Kṛṣṇa's hand between her folded palms, and another placed His arm, anointed with sandalwood paste, on her shoulder.

5A slender *gopī* respectfully took in her joined hands the betel nut He had chewed, and another *gopī*, burning with desire, put His lotus feet on her breasts.

6One *gopī*, beside herself with loving anger, bit her lips and stared at Him with frowning eyebrows, as if to wound Him with her harsh glances.

7Another *gopī* looked with unblinking eyes upon His lotus face, but even after deeply relishing

its sweetness She did not feel satiated, just as mystic saints are never satiated when meditating upon the Lord's feet.

8One gopī took the Lord through the aperture of her eyes and placed Him within her heart. Then, with her eyes closed and her bodily hairs standing on end, she continuously embraced Him within. Thus immersed in transcendental ecstasy, she resembled a yogī meditating upon the Lord.

9All the gopīs enjoyed the greatest festivity when they saw their beloved Keśava again. They gave up the distress of separation, just as people in general forget their misery when they gain the association of a spiritually enlightened person.

10Encircled by the gopīs, who were now relieved of all distress, Lord Acyuta, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, shone forth splendidly. My dear King, Kṛṣṇa thus appeared like the Supersoul encircled by His spiritual potencies.

11-12The almighty Lord then took the gopīs with Him to the bank of the Kālindī, who with the hands of her waves had scattered piles of soft sand upon the shore. In that auspicious place the breeze, bearing the fragrance of blooming kunda and mandāra flowers, attracted many bees, and the abundant rays of the autumn moon dispelled the darkness of night.

13Their heartache vanquished by the ecstasy of seeing Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs, like the personified Vedas before them, felt their desires completely fulfilled. For their dear friend Kṛṣṇa they arranged a seat with their shawls which were smeared with the kuṅkuma powder from their breasts.

14Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for whom the great masters of mystic meditation arrange a seat within their hearts, took His seat in the assembly of gopīs. His transcendental body, the exclusive abode of beauty and opulence within the three worlds, shone brilliantly as the gopīs worshiped Him.

15Śrī Kṛṣṇa had awakened romantic desires within the gopīs, and they honored Him by glancing at Him with playful smiles, gesturing amorously with their eyebrows, and massaging His hands and feet as they held them in their laps. Even while worshiping Him, however, they felt somewhat angry, and thus they addressed Him as follows.

16The gopīs said: Some people reciprocate the affection only of those who are affectionate toward them, while others show affection even to those who are indifferent or inimical. And yet others will not show affection toward anyone. Dear Kṛṣṇa, please properly explain this matter to us.

17The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: So-called friends who show affection for each other only to benefit themselves are actually selfish. They have no true friendship, nor are they following the true principles of religion. Indeed, if they did not expect benefit for themselves, they would not reciprocate.

18My dear slender-waisted gopīs, some people are genuinely merciful or, like parents, naturally affectionate. Such persons, who devotedly serve even those who fail to reciprocate with them, are following the true, faultless path of religion, and they are true well-wishers.

19Then there are those individuals who are spiritually self-satisfied, materially fulfilled or by nature ungrateful or simply envious of superiors. Such persons will not love even those who love them, what to speak of those who are inimical.

20But the reason I do not immediately reciprocate the affection of living beings even when they worship Me, O gopīs, is that I want to intensify their loving devotion. They then become like a poor man who has gained some wealth and then lost it, and who thus becomes so anxious about it that he can think of nothing else.

21My dear girls, understanding that simply for My sake you had rejected the authority of worldly opinion, of the Vedas and of your relatives, I acted as I did only to increase your attachment to Me. Even when I removed Myself from your sight by suddenly disappearing, I never stopped loving you. Therefore, My beloved gopīs, please do not harbor any bad feelings toward Me, your beloved.

22I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahmā. Your connection with Me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped Me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation.

SB 10.33: The Rāsa Dance

This chapter describes Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa* dance, which He enjoyed with His beloved girlfriends in the forests along the Yamunā River.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is most expert in the knowledge of transcendental moods. In the company of the *gopīs*, who were tightly bound to Him by the ropes of affection and totally dedicated to His service, the Lord expanded Himself into numerous forms. The *gopīs* became intoxicated with their enthusiasm to enjoy the *rāsa* dance, and thus they began satisfying Kṛṣṇa's senses by singing, dancing and gesturing amorously. The sweet voices of the *gopīs* filled all the directions.

Even after Lord Kṛṣṇa manifested Himself in numerous forms, each *gopī* thought He was standing next to her alone. Gradually the *gopīs* became fatigued from the continuous dancing and singing, and each of them placed her arm on the shoulder of the Kṛṣṇa standing beside her. Some *gopīs* smelled and kissed Kṛṣṇa's arm, which bore the fragrance of the lotus and was anointed with sandalwood paste. Others put Kṛṣṇa's hand on their bodies, and yet others gave Kṛṣṇa pleasure by embracing Him lovingly.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, being the Supreme Absolute Truth, is the only actual enjoyer and object of enjoyment. Although He is one without a second, He expands Himself into many forms to increase His personal pastimes. Therefore great scholars say that Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā* is like a child's playing with His own reflection. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is self-satisfied and fully endowed with inconceivable, transcendental opulences. When He exhibits such pastimes as the *rāsa-līlā*, all living beings, from Brahmā down to the blades of grass, become merged in the ocean of astonishment.

When Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard the narration of Kṛṣṇa's conjugal pastimes with the *gopīs*, which superficially resemble the activities of lusty, wanton persons, he expressed a doubt to the great devotee Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Śukadeva dispelled this doubt by stating, "Since Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the absolute enjoyer, such pastimes as these can never be contaminated by any fault. But if anyone other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead tries to enjoy such pastimes, he will suffer the same fate that someone other than Lord Rudra would suffer if he attempted to drink an ocean of poison. Moreover, even one who only thinks of imitating Lord Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā* will certainly suffer misfortune."

The Supreme Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is present within the hearts of all living entities as their

indwelling witness. When out of His mercy He exhibits His intimate pastimes to His devotees, these activities are never besmirched by mundane imperfection. Any living being who hears of the spontaneous loving attraction the *gopīs* felt for Lord Kṛṣṇa will have his desires for material sense gratification destroyed at the root and will develop his natural propensity for serving the Supreme Lord, the spiritual master, and the Lord's devotees.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the cowherd girls heard the Supreme Personality of Godhead speak these most charming words, they forgot their distress caused by separation from Him. Touching His transcendental limbs, they felt all their desires fulfilled.

2There on the Yamunā's banks Lord Govinda then began the pastime of the *rāsa* dance in the company of those jewels among women, the faithful *gopīs*, who joyfully linked their arms together.

3The festive *rāsa* dance commenced, with the *gopīs* arrayed in a circle. Lord Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself and entered between each pair of *gopīs*, and as that master of mystic power placed His arms around their necks, each girl thought He was standing next to her alone. The demigods and their wives were overwhelmed with eagerness to witness the *rāsa* dance, and they soon crowded the sky with their hundreds of celestial airplanes.

4Kettledrums then resounded in the sky while flowers rained down and the chief Gandharvas and their wives sang Lord Kṛṣṇa's spotless glories.

5A tumultuous sound arose from the armlets, ankle bells and waist bells of the *gopīs* as they sported with their beloved Kṛṣṇa in the circle of the *rāsa* dance.

6In the midst of the dancing *gopīs*, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared most brilliant, like an exquisite sapphire in the midst of golden ornaments.

7As the *gopīs* sang in praise of Kṛṣṇa, their feet danced, their hands gestured, and their eyebrows moved with playful smiles. With their braids and belts tied tight, their waists bending, their faces perspiring, the garments on their breasts moving this way and that, and their earrings swinging on their cheeks, Lord Kṛṣṇa's young consorts shone like streaks of lightning in a mass of clouds.

8Eager to enjoy conjugal love, their throats colored with various pigments, the *gopīs* sang loudly and danced. They were overjoyed by Kṛṣṇa's touch, and they sang songs that filled the entire universe.

9One *gopī*, joining Lord Mukunda in His singing, sang pure melodious tones that rose harmoniously above His. Kṛṣṇa was pleased and showed great appreciation for her performance, saying "Excellent! Excellent!" Then another *gopī* repeated the same melody, but in a special metrical pattern, and Kṛṣṇa praised her also.

10When one *gopī* grew tired from the *rāsa* dance, She turned to Kṛṣṇa, standing at Her side holding a baton, and grasped His shoulder with Her arm. The dancing had loosened Her bracelets and the flowers in Her hair.

11Upon the shoulder of one *gopī* Kṛṣṇa placed His arm, whose natural blue-lotus fragrance was mixed with that of the sandalwood pulp anointing it. As the *gopī* relished that fragrance, her bodily hair stood on end in jubilation, and she kissed His arm.

12Next to Kṛṣṇa's cheek one *gopī* put her own, beautified by the effulgence of her earrings, which glittered as she danced. Kṛṣṇa then carefully gave her the betel nut He was chewing.

13Another gopī became fatigued as she danced and sang, the bells on her ankles and waist tinkling. So she placed upon her breasts the comforting lotus hand of Lord Acyuta, who was standing by her side.

14Having attained as their intimate lover Lord Acyuta, the exclusive consort of the goddess of fortune, the gopīs enjoyed great pleasure. They sang His glories as He held their necks with His arms.

15Enhancing the beauty of the gopīs' faces were the lotus flowers behind their ears, the locks of hair decorating their cheeks, and drops of perspiration. The reverberation of their armlets and ankle bells made a loud musical sound, and their chaplets scattered. Thus the gopīs danced with the Supreme Lord in the arena of the rāsa dance as swarms of bees sang in accompaniment.

16In this way Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original Lord Nārāyaṇa, master of the goddess of fortune, took pleasure in the company of the young women of Vraja by embracing them, caressing them and glancing lovingly at them as He smiled His broad, playful smiles. It was just as if a child were playing with his own reflection.

17Their senses overwhelmed by the joy of having His physical association, the gopīs could not prevent their hair, their dresses and the cloths covering their breasts from becoming disheveled. Their garlands and ornaments scattered, O hero of the Kuru dynasty.

18The wives of the demigods, observing Kṛṣṇa's playful activities from their airplanes, were entranced and became agitated with lust. Indeed, even the moon and his entourage, the stars, became astonished.

19Expanding Himself as many times as there were cowherd women to associate with, the Supreme Lord, though self-satisfied, playfully enjoyed their company.

20Seeing that the gopīs were fatigued from conjugal enjoyment, my dear King, merciful Kṛṣṇa lovingly wiped their faces with His comforting hand.

21The gopīs honored their hero with smiling glances sweetened by the beauty of their cheeks and the effulgence of their curly locks and glittering golden earrings. Overjoyed from the touch of His fingernails, they chanted the glories of His all-auspicious transcendental pastimes.

22Lord Kṛṣṇa's garland had been crushed during His conjugal dalliance with the gopīs and colored vermilion by the kuṅkuma powder on their breasts. To dispel the fatigue of the gopīs, Kṛṣṇa entered the water of the Yamunā, followed swiftly by bees who were singing like the best of the Gandharvas. He appeared like a lordly elephant entering the water to relax in the company of his consorts. Indeed, the Lord had transgressed all worldly and Vedic morality just as a powerful elephant might break the dikes in a paddy field.

23My dear King, in the water Kṛṣṇa found Himself being splashed on all sides by the laughing gopīs, who looked at Him with love. As the demigods worshiped Him by showering flowers from their airplanes, the self-satisfied Lord took pleasure in playing like the king of the elephants.

24Then the Lord strolled through a small forest on the bank of the Yamunā. This forest was filled to its limits with breezes carrying the fragrances of all the flowers growing on the land and in the water. Followed by His entourage of bees and beautiful women, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared like an intoxicated elephant with his she-elephants.

25Although the gopīs were firmly attached to Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose desires are always fulfilled, the Lord was not internally affected by any mundane sex desire. Still, to perform His pastimes the Lord took advantage of all those moonlit autumn nights, which inspire poetic descriptions of transcendental affairs.

26-27Parīkṣit Mahārāja said: O brāhmaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord of the universe, has descended to this earth along with His plenary portion to destroy irreligion and reestablish religious principles. Indeed, He is the original speaker, follower and guardian of moral laws. How, then, could He have violated them by touching other men's wives?

28O faithful upholder of vows, please destroy our doubt by explaining to us what purpose the self-satisfied Lord of the Yadus had in mind when He behaved so contemptibly.

29Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The status of powerful controllers is not harmed by any apparently audacious transgression of morality we may see in them, for they are just like fire, which devours everything fed into it and remains unpolluted.

30One who is not a great controller should never imitate the behavior of ruling personalities, even mentally. If out of foolishness an ordinary person does imitate such behavior, he will simply destroy himself, just as a person who is not Rudra would destroy himself if he tried to drink an ocean of poison.

31The statements of the Lord's empowered servants are always true, and the acts they perform are exemplary when consistent with those statements. Therefore one who is intelligent should carry out their instructions.

32My dear Prabhu, when these great persons who are free from false ego act piously in this world, they have no selfish motives to fulfill, and even when they act in apparent contradiction to the laws of piety, they are not subject to sinful reactions.

33How, then, could the Lord of all created beings—animals, men and demigods—have any connection with the piety and impiety that affect His subject creatures?

34Material activities never entangle the devotees of the Supreme Lord, who are fully satisfied by serving the dust of His lotus feet. Nor do material activities entangle those intelligent sages who have freed themselves from the bondage of all fruitive reactions by the power of yoga. So how could there be any question of bondage for the Lord Himself, who assumes His transcendental forms according to His own sweet will?

35He who lives as the overseeing witness within the gopīs and their husbands, and indeed within all embodied living beings, assumes forms in this world to enjoy transcendental pastimes.

36When the Lord assumes a humanlike body to show mercy to His devotees, He engages in such pastimes as will attract those who hear about them to become dedicated to Him.

37The cowherd men, bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency, thought their wives had remained home at their sides. Thus they did not harbor any jealous feelings against Him.

38After an entire night of Brahmā had passed, Lord Kṛṣṇa advised the gopīs to return to their homes. Although they did not wish to do so, the Lord's beloved consorts complied with His command.

39Anyone who faithfully hears or describes the Lord's playful affairs with the young gopīs of Vṛndāvana will attain the Lord's pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober

and conquer lust, the disease of the heart.

SB 10.34: Nanda Mahārāja Saved and Śaṅkhacūḍa Slain

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa saved His father Nanda from the clutches of a serpent and delivered a Vidyādhara named Sudarśana from the curse of the Āṅgīrasa sages.

One day Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men placed their family members on their bullock carts and went to the Ambikāvana forest to worship Lord Śiva. After bathing in the Sarasvatī River and worshipping Lord Sadāśiva, a form of Lord Viṣṇu, they decided to spend the night in the forest. As they slept, a hungry serpent came and began to swallow Nanda Mahārāja. Terrified, Nanda cried out in distress, “O Kṛṣṇa! O my son, please save this surrendered soul!” The cowherd men immediately awoke and began beating the serpent with wooden torches, but the serpent would not release Nanda. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa came and touched the serpent with His lotus foot. The serpent was immediately freed from his reptilian body and appeared in his original form as a demigod. He told them about his previous identity and described how he had been cursed by a group of sages. Then he offered his homage at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and, on the Lord’s order, returned to his own abode.

Later, during the Dola-pūrṇimā festival, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva enjoyed pastimes in the forest with the young women of Vraja. The girlfriends of Baladeva and those of Kṛṣṇa joined together and sang about Their transcendental qualities. When the two Lords became absorbed in singing to the point of apparent intoxication, a servant of Kuvera’s named Śaṅkhacūḍa boldly came forward and began abducting the *gopīs*. The young girls called out, “Kṛṣṇa, please save us!” and He and Rāma began to chase after Śaṅkhacūḍa. “Don’t be afraid!” Kṛṣṇa called out to the *gopīs*. In fear of the Lords, Śaṅkhacūḍa left the *gopīs* aside and ran for his life. Kṛṣṇa chased after him, swiftly approached him and with a blow of His fist removed Śaṅkhacūḍa’s jewel, together with his head. Then Kṛṣṇa brought the jewel back and presented it to Lord Baladeva.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: One day the cowherd men, eager to take a trip to worship Lord Śiva, traveled by bullock carts to the Ambikā forest.

2O King, after arriving there, they bathed in the Sarasvatī and then devotedly worshiped with various paraphernalia the powerful Lord Paśupati and his consort, goddess Ambikā.

3The cowherd men gave the brāhmaṇas gifts of cows, gold, clothing and cooked grains mixed with honey. Then the cowherds prayed, “May the lord be pleased with us.”

4Nanda, Sunanda and the other greatly fortunate cowherds spent that night on the bank of the Sarasvatī, strictly observing their vows. They fasted, taking only water.

5During the night a huge and extremely hungry snake appeared in that thicket. Slithering on his belly up to the sleeping Nanda Mahārāja, the snake began swallowing him.

6In the clutches of the snake, Nanda Mahārāja cried out, “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, my dear boy! This huge serpent is swallowing me! Please save me, who am surrendered to You!”

7When the cowherd men heard the cries of Nanda, they immediately rose up and saw that he was being swallowed. Distraught, they beat the serpent with blazing torches.

8But even though the firebrands were burning him, the serpent would not release Nanda Mahārāja. Then the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, master of His devotees, came to the spot and touched the snake with His foot.

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9The snake had all his sinful reactions destroyed by the touch of the Supreme Lord's divine foot, and thus he gave up his serpent body and appeared in the form of a worshipable Vidyādhara.

10The Supreme Lord Hṛṣīkeśa then questioned this personality, who was standing before Him with his head bowed, his brilliantly effulgent body bedecked with golden necklaces.

11[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] My dear sir, you appear so wonderful, glowing with such great beauty. Who are you? And who forced you to assume this terrible body of a snake?

12-13The serpent replied: I am the well-known Vidyādhara named Sudarśana. I was very opulent and beautiful, and I used to wander freely in all directions in my airplane. Once I saw some homely sages of the lineage of Aṅgirā Muni. Proud of my beauty, I ridiculed them, and because of my sin they made me assume this lowly form.

14It was actually for my benefit that those merciful sages cursed me, since now I have been touched by the foot of the supreme spiritual master of all the worlds and have thus been relieved of all inauspiciousness.

15My Lord, You destroy all fear for those who, fearing this material world, take shelter of You. By the touch of Your feet I am now freed from the curse of the sages. O destroyer of distress, please let me return to my planet.

16O master of mystic power, O great personality, O Lord of the devotees, I surrender to You. Please command me as You will, O supreme God, Lord of all lords of the universe.

17O infallible one, I was immediately freed from the brāhmaṇas' punishment simply by seeing You. Anyone who chants Your name purifies all who hear his chanting, as well as himself. How much more beneficial, then, is the touch of Your lotus feet?

18Thus receiving the permission of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the demigod Sudarśana circumambulated Him, bowed down to offer Him homage and then returned to his heavenly planet. Nanda Mahārāja was thus delivered from peril.

19The inhabitants of Vraja were astonished to see the mighty power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Dear King, they then completed their worship of Lord Śiva and returned to Vraja, along the way respectfully describing Kṛṣṇa's powerful acts.

20Once Lord Govinda and Lord Rāma, the performers of wonderful feats, were playing in the forest at night with the young girls of Vraja.

21Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wore flower garlands and spotless garments, and Their limbs were beautifully decorated and anointed. The women sang Their glories in a charming way, bound to Them by affection.

22The two Lords praised the nightfall, signaled by the rising of the moon and the appearance of stars, a lotus-scented breeze and bees intoxicated by the fragrance of jasmine flowers.

23Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma sang, producing the entire range of musical sounds simultaneously. Their singing brought happiness to the ears and minds of all living beings.

24The gopīs became stunned when they heard that song. Forgetting themselves, O King, they did not notice that their fine garments were becoming loose and their hair and garlands disheveled.

25While Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma thus played according to Their own sweet will and sang to the point of apparent intoxication, a servant of Kuvera named Śaṅkhacūḍa came upon the scene.

26O King, even as the two Lords looked on, Śaṅkhacūḍa brazenly began driving the women off toward the north. The women, who had accepted Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as their Lords, began to cry out to Them.

27Hearing Their devotees crying out “Kṛṣṇa! Rāma!” and seeing that they were just like cows being stolen by a thief, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma began to run after the demon.

28The Lords called out in reply, “Do not fear!” Then They picked up logs of the śala tree and quickly pursued that lowest of Guhyakas, who swiftly ran away.

29When Śaṅkhacūḍa saw the two of Them coming toward him like the personified forces of Time and Death, he was filled with anxiety. Confused, he abandoned the women and fled for his life.

30Lord Govinda chased the demon wherever he ran, eager to take his crest jewel. Meanwhile Lord Balarāma stayed with the women to protect them.

31The mighty Lord overtook Śaṅkhacūḍa from a great distance as if from nearby, my dear King, and then with His fist the Lord removed the wicked demon’s head, together with his crest jewel.

32Having thus killed the demon Śaṅkhacūḍa and taken away his shining jewel, Lord Kṛṣṇa gave it to His elder brother with great satisfaction as the gopīs watched.

SB 10.35: The Gopīs Sing of Kṛṣṇa as He Wanders in the Forest

This chapter contains the songs the *gopīs* sing to express their feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa when He goes to the forest during the day.

As the *gopīs*’ mood of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes ever more intense, His names, forms, qualities and pastimes begin spontaneously manifesting in their hearts. Thus they join together and sing as follows: “The beauty of Kṛṣṇa attracts the minds of all. When He stands in His threefold-bending way and plays upon His flute, the Siddhas’ wives, flying in the sky with their husbands, become attracted to Him and forget external reality. The bulls, cows and other animals in the pasture become stunned in ecstasy, and they stand so still, with the grass unchewed between their teeth, that they appear like figures in a drawing. Indeed, even the unconscious rivers stop flowing.

“Just see! When Kṛṣṇa dresses Himself in forest array and calls the cows’ names by blowing on His flute, even the trees and creepers become so ecstatic out of love that their limbs display eruptions and their sap pours down like a torrent of tears. The sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute causes the cranes, swans and other birds in the lakes to close their eyes in deep meditation, the clouds in the sky to gently rumble, imitating the flute’s vibration, and even such great authorities in the science of music as Indra, Śiva and Brahmā to become astonished. And just as we *gopīs* are anxious to offer everything we have to Kṛṣṇa, so the wives of the black deer follow Him about, imitating us.

“When Kṛṣṇa is returning to Vraja, He constantly plays His flute while His young companions chant His glories, and Brahmā and other chief demigods come to worship His lotus feet.”

Thus the *gopīs*, feeling intense separation from Kṛṣṇa, sing of His pastimes.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Whenever Kṛṣṇa went to the forest, the minds of the *gopīs* would run after Him, and thus the young girls sadly spent their days singing of His pastimes.

2-3The *gopīs* said: When Mukunda vibrates the flute He has placed to His lips, stopping its holes with His tender fingers, He rests His left cheek on His left arm and makes His eyebrows dance. At that time the demigoddesses traveling in the sky with their husbands, the Siddhas, become amazed. As those ladies listen, they are embarrassed to find their minds yielding to the pursuit of lusty desires, and in their distress they are unaware that the belts of their garments are loosening.

4-5O girls! This son of Nanda, who gives joy to the distressed, bears steady lightning on His chest and has a smile like a jeweled necklace. Now please hear something wonderful. When He vibrates His flute, Vraja's bulls, deer and cows, standing in groups at a great distance, are all captivated by the sound, and they stop chewing the food in their mouths and cock their ears. Stunned, they appear as if asleep, or like figures in a painting.

6-7My dear *gopī*, sometimes Mukunda imitates the appearance of a wrestler by decorating Himself with leaves, peacock feathers and colored minerals. Then, in the company of Balarāma and the cowherd boys, He plays His flute to call the cows. At that time the rivers stop flowing, their water stunned by the ecstasy they feel as they eagerly wait for the wind to bring them the dust of His lotus feet. But like us, the rivers are not very pious, and thus they merely wait with their arms trembling out of love.

8-11Kṛṣṇa moves about the forest in the company of His friends, who vividly chant the glories of His magnificent deeds. He thus appears just like the Supreme Personality of Godhead exhibiting His inexhaustible opulences. When the cows wander onto the mountainsides and Kṛṣṇa calls out to them with the sound of His flute, the trees and creepers in the forest respond by becoming so luxuriant with fruits and flowers that they seem to be manifesting Lord Viṣṇu within their hearts. As their branches bend low with the weight, the filaments on their trunks and vines stand erect out of the ecstasy of love of God, and both the trees and the creepers pour down a rain of sweet sap.

12-13O goddesses of Vraja, when Kṛṣṇa is enjoying Himself with Balarāma on the mountain slopes, playfully wearing a flower garland on the top of His head, He englistens all with the resonant vibrations of His flute. Thus He delights the entire world. At that time the nearby cloud, afraid of offending a great personality, thunders very gently in accompaniment. The cloud showers flowers onto his dear friend Kṛṣṇa and shades Him from the sun like an umbrella.

14-15O pious mother Yaśodā, your son, who is expert in all the arts of herding cows, has invented many new styles of flute-playing. When He takes His flute to His bimba-red lips and sends forth the tones of the harmonic scale in variegated melodies, Brahmā, Śiva, Indra and other chief demigods become confused upon hearing the sound. Although they are the most learned authorities, they cannot ascertain the essence of that music, and thus they bow down their heads and hearts.

16-17As Kṛṣṇa strolls through Vraja with His lotus-petal-like feet, marking the ground with the distinctive emblems of flag, thunderbolt, lotus and elephant goad, He relieves the distress the ground feels from the cows' hooves. As He plays His renowned flute, His body moves with the grace of an elephant. Thus we *gopīs*, who become agitated by Cupid when Kṛṣṇa playfully glances at us, stand as still as trees, unaware that our hair and garments are slackening.

18-19 Now Kṛṣṇa is standing somewhere counting His cows on a string of gems. He wears a garland of tulasī flowers that bear the fragrance of His beloved, and He has thrown His arm over the shoulder of an affectionate cowherd boyfriend. As Kṛṣṇa plays His flute and sings, the music attracts the black deer's wives, who approach that ocean of transcendental qualities and sit down beside Him. Just like us cowherd girls, they have given up all hope for happiness in family life.

20-21 O sinless Yaśodā, your darling child, the son of Mahārāja Nanda, has festively enhanced His attire with a jasmine garland, and He is now playing along the Yamunā in the company of the cows and cowherd boys, amusing His dear companions. The gentle breeze honors Him with its soothing fragrance of sandalwood, while the various Upadevas, standing on all sides like panegyrists, offer their music, singing and gifts of tribute.

22-23 Out of great affection for the cows of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa became the lifter of Govardhana Hill. At the end of the day, having rounded up all His own cows, He plays a song on His flute, while exalted demigods standing along the path worship His lotus feet and the cowherd boys accompanying Him chant His glories. His garland is powdered by the dust raised by the cows' hooves, and His beauty, enhanced by His fatigue, creates an ecstatic festival for everyone's eyes. Eager to fulfill His friends' desires, Kṛṣṇa is the moon arisen from the womb of mother Yaśodā.

24-25 As Kṛṣṇa respectfully greets His well-wishing friends, His eyes roll slightly as if from intoxication. He wears a flower garland, and the beauty of His soft cheeks is accentuated by the brilliance of His golden earrings and the whiteness of His face, which has the color of a badara berry. With His cheerful face resembling the moon, lord of the night, the Lord of the Yadus moves with the grace of a regal elephant. Thus He returns in the evening, delivering the cows of Vraja from the heat of the day.

26 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, thus during the daytime the women of Vṛndāvana took pleasure in continuously singing about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and those ladies' minds and hearts, absorbed in Him, were filled with great festivity.

SB 10.36: The Slaying of Ariṣṭā, the Bull Demon

This chapter describes how Kṛṣṇa killed Ariṣṭāsura and how Kāṁsa reacted when he learned from Nārada that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were the sons of Vasudeva.

The demon Ariṣṭa wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and thus he assumed the form of a huge bull with sharp horns. Everyone in Kṛṣṇa's cowherd village became terrified when Ariṣṭāsura approached it, but the Lord pacified them, and when the bull demon charged Him He seized him by the horns and threw him about six yards. Though weakened, Ariṣṭa still wanted to attack Kṛṣṇa. Thus, dripping with sweat, he charged the Lord once again. This time Kṛṣṇa grabbed his horns, threw him to the ground and thrashed him like a pile of wet clothing. The demon vomited blood and gave up his life. Then Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, while being honored by the demigods and cowherd boys, returned to the village.

A short time later Nārada Muni, the great sage among the demigods, came to see King Kāṁsa. He informed the King that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were not Nanda's sons but rather Vasudeva's. It was out of fear of Kāṁsa that Vasudeva had put the two boys under Nanda's care. Furthermore, said Nārada, Kāṁsa would meet his death at Their hands.

Kāṁsa shook with fear and anger when he heard all this, and in great agitation he began thinking of how to destroy Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. He called for the demons Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika

and instructed them to kill the two brothers in a wrestling match. Then he spoke to Akrūra, who was expert at executing his duties. Taking Akrūra by the hand, Kaṁsa persuaded him to go to Vraja to bring the two boys to Mathurā. Akrūra agreed to carry out Kaṁsa's order and then returned home.

1Śukadeva Goswāmī said: The demon Ariṣṭa then came to the cowherd village. Appearing in the form of a bull with a large hump, he made the earth tremble as he tore it apart with his hooves.

2Ariṣṭāsura bellowed very harshly and pawed the ground. With his tail raised and his eyes glaring, he began to tear up the embankments with the tips of his horns, every now and then passing a little stool and urine.

3-4My dear King, clouds hovered about sharp-horned Ariṣṭāsura's hump, mistaking it for a mountain, and when the cowherd men and ladies caught sight of the demon, they were struck with terror. Indeed, the strident reverberation of his roar so frightened the pregnant cows and women that they lost their fetuses in miscarriages.

5The domestic animals fled the pasture in fear, O King, and all the inhabitants rushed to Lord Govinda for shelter, crying, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa!"

6When the Supreme Lord saw the cowherd community distraught and fleeing in fear, He calmed them, saying, "Don't be afraid." Then He called out to the bull demon as follows.

7You fool! What do you think you're doing, you wicked rascal, frightening the cowherd community and their animals when I am here just to punish corrupt miscreants like you!

8Having spoken these words, the infallible Lord Hari slapped His arms with His palms, further angering Ariṣṭa with the loud sound. The Lord then casually threw His mighty, serpentine arm over the shoulder of a friend and stood facing the demon.

9Thus provoked, Ariṣṭa pawed the ground with one of his hooves and then, with the clouds hovering around his upraised tail, furiously charged Kṛṣṇa.

10Pointing the tips of his horns straight ahead and glaring menacingly at Lord Kṛṣṇa from the corners of his bloodshot eyes, Ariṣṭa rushed toward Him at full speed, like a thunderbolt hurled by Indra.

11The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa seized Ariṣṭāsura by the horns and threw him back eighteen steps, just as an elephant might do when fighting a rival elephant.

12Thus repulsed by the Supreme Lord, the bull demon got up and, breathing hard and sweating all over his body, again charged Him in a mindless rage.

13As Ariṣṭa attacked, Lord Kṛṣṇa seized him by the horns and knocked him to the ground with His foot. The Lord then thrashed him as if he were a wet cloth, and finally He yanked out one of the demon's horns and struck him with it until he lay prostrate.

14Vomiting blood and profusely excreting stool and urine, kicking his legs and rolling his eyes about, Ariṣṭāsura thus went painfully to the abode of Death. The demigods honored Lord Kṛṣṇa by scattering flowers upon Him.

15Having thus killed the bull demon Ariṣṭa, He who is a festival for the gopīs' eyes entered the cowherd village with Balarāma.

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16After Ariṣṭāsura had been killed by Kṛṣṇa, who acts wonderfully, Nārada Muni went to speak to King Kaṁsa. That powerful sage of godly vision addressed the King as follows.

17[Nārada told Kaṁsa:] Yaśodā's child was actually a daughter, and Kṛṣṇa is the son of Devakī. Also, Rāma is the son of Rohiṇī. Out of fear, Vasudeva entrusted Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to his friend Nanda Mahārāja, and it is these two boys who have killed your men.

18Upon hearing this, the master of the Bhojas became furious and lost control of his senses. He picked up a sharp sword to kill Vasudeva.

19But Nārada restrained Kaṁsa by reminding him that it was the two sons of Vasudeva who would cause his death. Kaṁsa then had Vasudeva and his wife shackled in iron chains.

20After Nārada left, King Kaṁsa summoned Keśī and ordered him, "Go kill Rāma and Kṛṣṇa."

21The King of the Bhojas next called for his ministers, headed by Muṣṭika, Cāṇūra, Śāla and Tośāla, and also for his elephant-keepers. The King addressed them as follows.

22-23My dear heroic Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika, please hear this. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the sons of Ānakadundubhi [Vasudeva], are living in Nanda's cowherd village. It has been predicted that these two boys will be the cause of my death. When They are brought here, kill Them on the pretext of engaging Them in a wrestling match.

24Erect a wrestling ring with many surrounding viewing stands, and bring all the residents of the city and the outlying districts to see the open competition.

25You, elephant-keeper, my good man, should position the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa at the entrance to the wrestling arena and have him kill my two enemies.

26Commence the bow sacrifice on the Caturdaśī day in accordance with the relevant Vedic injunctions. In ritual slaughter offer the appropriate kinds of animals to the magnanimous Lord Śiva.

27Having thus commanded his ministers, Kaṁsa next called for Akrūra, the most eminent of the Yadus. Kaṁsa knew the art of securing personal advantage, and thus he took Akrūra's hand in his own and spoke to him as follows.

28My dear Akrūra, most charitable one, please do me a friendly favor out of respect. Among the Bhojas and Vṛṣṇis, there is no one else as kind to us as you.

29Gentle Akrūra, you always carry out your duties soberly, and therefore I am depending on you, just as powerful Indra took shelter of Lord Viṣṇu to achieve his goals.

30Please go to Nanda's village, where the two sons of Ānakadundubhi are living, and without delay bring Them here on this chariot.

31The demigods, who are under the protection of Viṣṇu, have sent these two boys as my death. Bring Them here, and also have Nanda and the other cowherd men come with gifts of tribute.

32After you bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, I will have Them killed by my elephant, who is as powerful as death itself. And if by chance They escape from him, I will have Them killed by my wrestlers, who are as strong as lightning.

33When these two have been killed, I will kill Vasudeva and all Their lamenting relatives

Vṛṣṇis, Bhojas and Daśārhas.

34I will also kill my old father, Ugrasena, who is greedy for my kingdom, and I will kill his brother Devaka and all my other enemies as well.

35Then, my friend, this earth will be free of thorns.

36My elder relative Jarāsandha and my dear friend Dvidida are solid well-wishers of mine, as are Śambara, Naraka and Bāṇa. I will use them all to kill off those kings who are allied with the demigods, and then I will rule the earth.

37Now that you understand my intentions, please go at once and bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to watch the bow sacrifice and see the opulence of the Yadus' capital.

38Śrī Akrūra said: O King, you have expertly devised a process to free yourself of misfortune. Still, one should be equal in success and failure, since it is certainly destiny that produces the results of one's work.

39An ordinary person is determined to act on his desires even when fate prevents their fulfillment. Therefore he encounters both happiness and distress. Yet even though such is the case, I will execute your order.

40Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus instructed Akrūra, King Kaṁsa dismissed his ministers and retired to his quarters, and Akrūra returned home.

SB 10.37: The Killing of the Demons Keśi and Vyoma

This chapter describes the killing of the horse demon, Keśi; Nārada's glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa's future pastimes; and Kṛṣṇa's killing of Vyomāsura.

On Kaṁsa's order the Keśi demon assumed the form of a huge horse and went to Vraja. As he approached, his loud neighing terrified all the inhabitants, and they began looking for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When He saw the demon, Kṛṣṇa came forward and challenged him to come near. Keśi charged Kṛṣṇa and tried to strike Him with his front legs, but the Lord seized them, whirled the demon around several times, and then threw him a distance of one hundred bow-lengths. Keśi remained unconscious for some time. When the demon regained consciousness, he furiously charged Kṛṣṇa again, his mouth agape. The Lord then thrust His left arm into the horse demon's mouth, and as Keśi tried to bite the arm, it felt like a red-hot iron rod. Kṛṣṇa's arm expanded more and more, finally choking the demon, and in extreme agony Keśi gave up his life. Lord Kṛṣṇa then removed His arm. He stood calmly, showing no pride at having killed the demon, as the demigods showered down flowers from the sky and glorified the Lord with prayers.

Soon thereafter Nārada Muni, the great sage among the demigods, approached Kṛṣṇa and prayed to Him in various ways, glorifying the Lord's future pastimes. Then Nārada paid his obeisances and departed.

One day, while tending the cows, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and the cowherd boys became engrossed in playing hide-and-go-seek. Some of the boys took the role of sheep, some the role of thieves, and others shepherds. The shepherds would search for the sheep when the thieves stole them. Taking advantage of this game, a demon named Vyoma, sent by Kaṁsa, dressed himself like a cowherd boy and joined the band of "thieves." He abducted a few cowherd boys at a time and threw them into a mountain cave, keeping them there by blocking the entrance with a boulder. Gradually Vyomāsura abducted all but four or five cowherd boys. When Kṛṣṇa saw what the demon was doing, He ran after him, grabbed him and killed him just as one would kill a

sacrificial animal.

1-2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The demon Keśī, sent by Kāmsa, appeared in Vraja as a great horse. Running with the speed of the mind, he tore up the earth with his hooves. The hairs of his mane scattered the clouds and the demigods' airplanes throughout the sky, and he terrified everyone present with his loud neighing.

3Seeing the Lord standing before him, Keśī ran toward Him in extreme rage, his mouth gaping as if to swallow up the sky. Rushing with furious speed, the unconquerable and unapproachable horse demon tried to strike the lotus-eyed Lord with his two front legs.

4But the transcendental Lord dodged Keśī's blow and then with His arms angrily seized the demon by the legs, whirled him around in the air and contemptuously threw him the distance of one hundred bow-lengths, just as Garuḍa might throw a snake. Lord Kṛṣṇa then stood there.

5Upon regaining consciousness Keśī angrily got up, opened his mouth wide and again rushed to attack Lord Kṛṣṇa. But the Lord just smiled and thrust His left arm into the horse's mouth as easily as one would make a snake enter a hole in the ground.

6Keśī's teeth immediately fell out when they touched the Supreme Lord's arm, which to the demon felt as hot as molten iron. Within Keśī's body the Supreme Personality's arm then expanded greatly, like a diseased stomach swelling because of neglect.

7As Lord Kṛṣṇa's expanding arm completely blocked Keśī's breathing, his legs kicked convulsively, his body became covered with sweat, and his eyes rolled around. The demon then passed stool and fell on the ground, dead.

8The mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa withdrew His arm from Keśī's body, which now appeared like a long karkaṭikā fruit. Without the least display of pride at having so effortlessly killed His enemy, the Lord accepted the demigods' worship in the form of flowers rained down from above.

9My dear King, thereafter Lord Kṛṣṇa was approached in a solitary place by the great sage among the demigods, Nārada Muni. That most exalted devotee spoke as follows to the Lord, who effortlessly performs His pastimes.

10-11[Nārada Muni said:] O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, unlimited Lord, source of all mystic power, Lord of the universe! O Vāsudeva, shelter of all beings and best of the Yadus! O master, You are the Supreme Soul of all created beings, sitting unseen within the cave of the heart like the fire dormant within kindling wood. You are the witness within everyone, the Supreme Personality and the ultimate controlling Deity.

12You are the shelter of all souls, and being the supreme controller, You fulfill Your desires simply by Your will. By Your personal creative potency You manifested in the beginning the primal modes of material nature, and through their agency You create, maintain and then destroy this universe.

13You, that very same creator, have now descended to the earth to annihilate the Daitya, Pramatha and Rākṣasa demons who are posing as kings, and also to protect the godly.

14The horse demon was so terrifying that his neighing frightened the demigods into leaving their heavenly kingdom. But by our good fortune You have enjoyed the sport of killing him.

15-20In just two days, O almighty Lord, I will see the deaths of Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika and other wrestlers, along with those of the elephant Kūvalayāpīḍa and King Kāmsa all by Your hand.

Then I will see You kill Kālayavana, Mura, Naraka and the conch demon, and I will also see You steal the pārijāta flower and defeat Indra. I will then see You marry many daughters of heroic kings after paying for them with Your valor. Then, O Lord of the universe, in Dvārakā You will deliver King Nṛga from a curse and take for Yourself the Syamantaka jewel, together with another wife. You will bring back a brāhmaṇa's dead son from the abode of Your servant Yamarāja, and thereafter You will kill Pauṇḍraka, burn down the city of Kāśī and slay Dantavakra, and You will also put an end to the King of Cedi during the great Rājasūya sacrifice. I shall see all these heroic pastimes, along with many others You will perform during Your residence in Dvārakā. These pastimes are glorified on this earth in the songs of transcendental poets.

21Subsequently I will see You appear as time personified, serving as Arjuna's chariot driver and destroying entire armies of soldiers to rid the earth of her burden.

22Let us approach You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for shelter. You are full of perfectly pure spiritual awareness and are always situated in Your original identity. Since Your will is never thwarted, You have already achieved all possible desirable things, and by the power of Your spiritual energy You remain eternally aloof from the flow of the qualities of illusion.

23I bow down to You, the supreme controller, who are dependent only on Yourself. By Your potency You have constructed the unlimited particular arrangements of this universe. Now you have appeared as the greatest hero among the Yadus, Vṛṣṇis and Sātvatas and have chosen to participate in human warfare.

24Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa, the chief of the Yadu dynasty, Nārada bowed down and offered Him obeisances. Then that great sage and most eminent devotee took his leave from the Lord and went away, feeling great joy at having directly seen Him.

25After killing the demon Keśī in battle, the Supreme Personality of Godhead continued to tend the cows and other animals in the company of His joyful cowherd boyfriends. Thus He brought happiness to all the residents of Vṛndāvana.

26One day the cowherd boys, while grazing their animals on the mountain slopes, played the game of stealing and hiding, acting out the roles of rival thieves and herders.

27In that game, O King, some acted as thieves, others as shepherds and others as sheep. They played their game happily, without fear of danger.

28A powerful magician named Vyoma, son of the demon Maya, then appeared on the scene in the guise of a cowherd boy. Pretending to join the game as a thief, he proceeded to steal most of the cowherd boys who were acting as sheep.

29Gradually the great demon abducted more and more of the cowherd boys and cast them into a mountain cave, which he sealed shut with a boulder. Finally only four or five boys acting as sheep remained in the game.

30Lord Kṛṣṇa, who shelters all saintly devotees, understood perfectly well what Vyomāsura was doing. Just as a lion grabs a wolf, Kṛṣṇa forcefully seized the demon as he was taking away more cowherd boys.

31The demon changed into his original form, as big and powerful as a great mountain. But try as he might to free himself, he could not do so, having lost his strength from being held in the

Lord's tight grip.

32 Lord Acyuta clutched Vyomāsura between His arms and threw him to the ground. Then, while the demigods in heaven looked on, Kṛṣṇa killed him in the same way that one kills a sacrificial animal.

33 Kṛṣṇa then smashed the boulder blocking the cave's entrance and led the trapped cowherd boys to safety. Thereafter, as the demigods and cowherd boys sang His glories, He returned to His cowherd village, Gokula.

SB 10.38: Akrūra's Arrival in Vṛndāvana

This chapter describes Akrūra's trip from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana, his meditation on Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma along the way and the honor the two Lords showed Akrūra upon his arrival.

Early in the morning on the day after Kaṁsa had ordered him to bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā, Akrūra prepared his chariot and set off for Gokula. As he traveled, he thought as follows: "I am about to attain the great good fortune of seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, which are worshiped by Brahmā, Rudra and the other demigods. Although Kaṁsa is an enemy of the Supreme Lord and His devotees, still, it is by Kaṁsa's grace that I will get this great boon of seeing the Lord. When I first catch sight of His lotus feet, all my sinful reactions will be destroyed at once. I will descend from my chariot and fall at the feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and even though I have been sent by Kaṁsa, the omniscient Śrī Kṛṣṇa will certainly harbor no animosity toward me." As Akrūra thus thought to himself, he arrived in Gokula at sunset. Alighting from his chariot in the cowherd pasture, he began rolling about in the dust in great ecstasy.

Then Akrūra continued on to Vraja. When he saw Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma he fell at Their lotus feet, and both the Lords embraced him. Afterward They brought him to Their residence, inquired from him about the comfort of his trip and honored him in various ways offering him water for washing his feet, *arghya*, a seat and so forth. They relieved him of his fatigue by massaging his feet and served him a delicious banquet. Mahārāja Nanda also honored Akrūra with many sweet words.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After passing the night in the city of Mathurā, the high-minded Akrūra mounted his chariot and set off for the cowherd village of Nanda Mahārāja.

2 As he traveled on the road, the great soul Akrūra felt tremendous devotion for the lotus-eyed Personality of Godhead, and thus he began to consider as follows.

3 [Śrī Akrūra thought:] What pious deeds have I done, what severe austerities undergone, what worship performed or charity given so that today I will see Lord Keśava?

4 Since I am a materialistic person absorbed simply in sense gratification, I think it is as difficult for me to have gotten this opportunity to see Lord Uttamaḥśloka as it would be for one born a śūdra to be allowed to recite the Vedic mantras.

5 But enough of such thoughts! After all, even a fallen soul like me can have the chance to behold the infallible Supreme Lord, for one of the conditioned souls being swept along in the river of time may sometimes reach the shore.

6 Today all my sinful reactions have been eradicated and my birth has become worthwhile, since I will offer my obeisances to the Supreme Lord's lotus feet, which mystic yogīs meditate upon.

7Indeed, today King Kāmsa has shown me extreme mercy by sending me to see the lotus feet of Lord Hari, who has now appeared in this world. Simply by the effulgence of His toenails, many souls in the past have transcended the insurmountable darkness of material existence and achieved liberation.

8Those lotus feet are worshiped by Brahmā, Śiva and all the other demigods, by the goddess of fortune, and also by the great sages and Vaiṣṇavas. Upon those lotus feet the Lord walks about the forest while herding the cows with His companions, and those feet are smeared with the kuṅkuma from the gopīs' breasts.

9Surely I shall see the face of Lord Mukunda, since the deer are now walking past me on my right. That face, framed by His curly hair, is beautified by His attractive cheeks and nose, His smiling glances and His reddish lotus eyes.

10I am going to see the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, the reservoir of all beauty, who by His own sweet will has now assumed a humanlike form to relieve the earth of her burden. Thus there is no denying that my eyes will achieve the perfection of their existence.

11He is the witness of material cause and effect, yet He is always free from false identification with them. By His internal potency He dispels the darkness of separation and confusion. The individual souls in this world, who are manifested here when He glances upon His material creative energy, indirectly perceive Him in the activities of their life airs, senses and intelligence.

12All sins are destroyed and all good fortune is created by the Supreme Lord's qualities, activities and appearances, and words that describe these three things animate, beautify and purify the world. On the other hand, words bereft of His glories are like the decorations on a corpse.

13That same Supreme Lord has descended into the dynasty of the Sātvatas to delight the exalted demigods, who maintain the principles of religion He has created. Residing in Vṛndāvana, He spreads His fame, which the demigods glorify in song and which brings auspiciousness to all.

14Today I shall certainly see Him, the goal and spiritual master of the great souls. Seeing Him brings jubilation to all who have eyes, for He is the true beauty of the universe. Indeed, His personal form is the shelter desired by the goddess of fortune. Now all the dawns of my life have become auspicious.

15Then I will at once alight from my chariot and bow down to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead. Theirs are the same feet that great mystic yogīs striving for self-realization bear within their minds. I will also offer my obeisances to the Lords' cowherd boyfriends and to all the other residents of Vṛndāvana.

16And when I have fallen at His feet, the almighty Lord will place His lotus hand upon my head. For those who seek shelter in Him because they are greatly disturbed by the powerful serpent of time, that hand removes all fear.

17By offering charity to that lotus hand, Purandara and Bali earned the status of Indra, King of heaven, and during the pleasure pastimes of the rāsa dance, when the Lord wiped away the gopīs' perspiration and removed their fatigue, the touch of their faces made that hand as fragrant as a sweet flower.

18The infallible Lord will not consider me an enemy, even though Kāmsa has sent me here as

his messenger. After all, the omniscient Lord is the actual knower of the field of this material body, and with His perfect vision He witnesses, both externally and internally, all the endeavors of the conditioned soul's heart.

19Thus He will cast His smiling, affectionate glance upon me as I remain fixed with joined palms, fallen in obeisances at His feet. Then all my contamination will at once be dispelled, and I will give up all doubts and feel the most intense bliss.

20Recognizing me as an intimate friend and relative, Kṛṣṇa will embrace me with His mighty arms, instantly sanctifying my body and diminishing to nil all my material bondage, which is due to fruitive activities.

21Having been embraced by the all-famous Lord Kṛṣṇa, I will humbly stand before Him with bowed head and joined palms, and He will address me, "My dear Akrūra." At that very moment my life's purpose will be fulfilled. Indeed, the life of anyone whom the Supreme Personality fails to recognize is simply pitiable.

22The Supreme Lord has no favorite and no dearest friend, nor does He consider anyone undesirable, despicable or fit to be neglected. All the same, He lovingly reciprocates with His devotees in whatever manner they worship Him, just as the trees of heaven fulfill the desires of whoever approaches them.

23And then Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, the foremost of the Yadus, will grasp my joined hands while I am still standing with my head bowed, and after embracing me He will take me to His house. There He will honor me with all items of ritual welcome and inquire from me about how Kāṁsa has been treating His family members.

24Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, while the son of Śvaphalka, traveling on the road, thus meditated deeply on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he reached Gokula as the sun was beginning to set.

25In the cowherd pasture Akrūra saw the footprints of those feet whose pure dust the rulers of all the planets in the universe hold on their crowns. Those footprints of the Lord, distinguished by such marks as the lotus, barleycorn and elephant goad, made the ground wonderfully beautiful.

26Increasingly agitated by ecstasy at seeing the Lord's footprints, his bodily hairs standing on end because of his pure love, and his eyes filled with tears, Akrūra jumped down from his chariot and began rolling about among those footprints, exclaiming, "Ah, this is the dust from my master's feet!"

27The very goal of life for all embodied beings is this ecstasy, which Akrūra experienced when, upon receiving Kāṁsa's order, he put aside all pride, fear and lamentation and absorbed himself in seeing, hearing and describing the things that reminded him of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

28-33Akrūra then saw Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in the village of Vraja, going to milk the cows. Kṛṣṇa wore yellow garments, Balarāma blue, and Their eyes resembled autumnal lotuses. One of those two mighty-armed youths, the shelters of the goddess of fortune, had a dark-blue complexion, and the other's was white. With Their fine-featured faces They were the most beautiful of all persons. As They walked with the gait of young elephants, glancing about with compassionate smiles, Those two exalted personalities beautified the cow pasture with the impressions of Their feet, which bore the marks of the flag, lightning bolt, elephant goad and lotus. The two Lords, whose pastimes are most magnanimous and attractive, were ornamented with jeweled necklaces and flower garlands, anointed with auspicious, fragrant substances, freshly bathed, and dressed in spotless raiment. They were the primeval Supreme Personalities,

the masters and original causes of the universes, who had for the welfare of the earth now descended in Their distinct forms of Keśava and Balarāma. O King Parīkṣit, They resembled two gold-bedecked mountains, one of emerald and the other of silver, as with Their effulgence They dispelled the sky's darkness in all directions.

34Akrūra, overwhelmed with affection, quickly jumped down from his chariot and fell at the feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma like a rod.

35The joy of seeing the Supreme Lord flooded Akūra's eyes with tears and decorated his limbs with eruptions of ecstasy. He felt such eagerness that he could not speak to present himself, O King.

36Recognizing Akūra, Lord Kṛṣṇa drew him close with His hand, which bears the sign of the chariot wheel, and then embraced him. Kṛṣṇa felt pleased, for He is always benignly disposed toward His surrendered devotees.

37-38As Akūra stood with his head bowed, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa [Balarāma] grasped his joined hands, and then Balarāma took him to His house in the company of Lord Kṛṣṇa. After inquiring from Akūra whether his trip had been comfortable, Balarāma offered him a first-class seat, bathed his feet in accordance with the injunctions of scripture and respectfully served him milk with honey.

39The almighty Lord Balarāma presented Akūra with the gift of a cow, massaged his feet to relieve him of fatigue and then with great respect and faith fed him suitably prepared food of various fine tastes.

40When Akūra had eaten to his satisfaction, Lord Balarāma, the supreme knower of religious duties, offered him aromatic herbs for sweetening his mouth, along with fragrances and flower garlands. Thus Akūra once again enjoyed the highest pleasure.

41Nanda Mahārāja asked Akūra: O descendant of Daśārha, how are all of you maintaining yourselves while that merciless Kaṁsa remains alive? You are just like sheep under the care of a butcher.

42That cruel, self-serving Kaṁsa murdered the infants of his own sister in her presence, even as she cried in anguish. So why should we even ask about the well-being of you, his subjects?

43Honored by Nanda Mahārāja with these true and pleasing words of inquiry, Akūra forgot the fatigue of his journey.

SB 10.39: Akūra's Vision

This chapter describes how Akūra informed Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma of Kaṁsa's plans and his activities in Mathurā; what the *gopīs* cried out in distress when Kṛṣṇa left for Mathurā; and also the vision of Lord Viṣṇu's abode that Akūra saw within the water of the Yamunā.

When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma offered Akūra great respect and comfortably seated him on a couch, he felt that all the desires he had reflected on while traveling to Vṛndāvana were now fulfilled. After the evening meal, Kṛṣṇa asked Akūra whether his trip had been peaceful and whether he was well. The Lord also inquired about how Kaṁsa was behaving toward their family members, and finally He asked why Akūra had come.

Akūra described how Kaṁsa had been persecuting the Yādavas, what Nārada had told Kaṁsa and how Kaṁsa had been treating Vasudeva cruelly. Akūra also spoke of Kaṁsa's desire to

bring Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā to kill Them on the pretext of Their seeing the bow sacrifice and engaging in a wrestling match. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma laughed out loud when They heard this. They went to Their father, Nanda, and informed him of Kāṁsa's orders. Nanda then issued an order to all the residents of Vraja that they should collect various offerings for the King and prepare to go to Mathurā.

The young *gopīs* were extremely upset to hear that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would be going to Mathurā. They lost all external awareness and began to remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Condemning the creator for separating them from Him, they began to lament. They said that Akrūra did not deserve his name (*a*, "not"; *krūra*, "cruel"), since he was so cruel to be taking away their dearest Kṛṣṇa. "It must be that fate is against us," they lamented, "because otherwise the elders of Vraja would have forbidden Kṛṣṇa to leave. So let us forget our shyness and try to stop Lord Mādhava from going." With these words the young cowherd girls began to chant Kṛṣṇa's names and cry.

But even as they wept, Akrūra began taking Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā in his chariot. The cowherd men of Gokula followed behind on their wagons, and the young *gopīs* also walked behind for some distance, but then they became placated by Kṛṣṇa's glances and gestures and pacified by a message from Him that said "I will return." With their minds completely absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd girls stood as still as figures in a painting until they could no longer see the chariot's flag or the dust cloud being raised on the road. Then, chanting Kṛṣṇa's glories all the while, they despondently returned to their homes.

Akrūra halted the chariot at the bank of the Yamunā so Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma could perform a ritual of purification and drink some water. After the two Lords had gotten back into the chariot, Akrūra took Their permission to bathe in the Yamunā. As he recited Vedic *mantras*, he was startled to see the two Lords standing in the water. Akrūra came out of the river and returned to the chariot where he saw the Lords still sitting. Then he returned to the water to find out if the two figures he had seen there were real or not.

What Akrūra saw in the water was four-armed Lord Vāsudeva. His complexion was dark blue like a fresh raincloud, He wore yellow garments and He lay on the lap of thousand-hooded Ananta Śeṣa. Lord Vāsudeva was receiving the prayers of perfected beings, celestial serpents and demons, and He was encircled by His personal attendants. Serving Him were His many potencies, such as Śrī, Puṣṭi and Ilā, while Brahmā and other demigods sang His praises. Akrūra rejoiced at this vision and, joining his palms in supplication, began to pray to the Supreme Lord in a voice choked with emotion.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having been honored so much by Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, Akrūra, seated comfortably on a couch, felt that all the desires he had contemplated on the road were now fulfilled.

2 My dear King, what is unattainable for one who has satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the shelter of the goddess of fortune? Even so, those who are dedicated to His devotional service never want anything from Him.

3 After the evening meal, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, asked Akrūra how Kāṁsa was treating their dear relatives and friends and what the King was planning to do.

4 The Supreme Lord said: My dear, gentle Uncle Akrūra, was your trip here comfortable? May all good fortune be yours. Are our well-wishing friends and our relatives, both close and distant, happy and in good health?

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5But, my dear Akrūra, as long as King Kāmsa that disease of our family who goes by the name “maternal uncle” is still prospering, why should I even bother to ask about the well-being of our family members and his other subjects?

6Just see how much suffering I have caused My offenseless parents! Because of Me their sons were killed and they themselves imprisoned.

7By good fortune We have today fulfilled Our desire to see you, Our dear relative. O gentle uncle, please tell Us why you have come.

8Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In response to the Supreme Lord’s request, Akrūra, the descendant of Madhu, described the whole situation, including King Kāmsa’s enmity toward the Yadus and his attempt to murder Vasudeva.

9Akrūra relayed the message he had been sent to deliver. He also described Kāmsa’s real intentions and how Nārada had informed Kāmsa that Kṛṣṇa had been born as the son of Vasudeva.

10Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma, the vanquisher of heroic opponents, laughed when They heard Akrūra’s words. The Lords then informed Their father, Nanda Mahārāja, of King Kāmsa’s orders.

11-12Nanda Mahārāja then issued orders to the cowherd men by having the village constable make the following announcement throughout Nanda’s domain of Vraja: “Go collect all the available milk products. Bring valuable gifts and yoke your wagons. Tomorrow we shall go to Mathurā, present our milk products to the King and see a very great festival. The residents of all the outlying districts are also going.”

13When the young gopīs heard that Akrūra had come to Vraja to take Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to the city, they became extremely distressed.

14Some gopīs felt so pained at heart that their faces turned pale from their heavy breathing. Others were so anguished that their dresses, bracelets and braids became loose.

15Other gopīs entirely stopped their sensory activities and became fixed in meditation on Kṛṣṇa. They lost all awareness of the external world, just like those who attain the platform of self-realization.

16And still other young women fainted simply by remembering the words of Lord Śauri [Kṛṣṇa]. These words, decorated with wonderful phrases and expressed with affectionate smiles, would deeply touch the young girls’ hearts.

17-18The gopīs were frightened at the prospect of even the briefest separation from Lord Mukunda, so now, as they remembered His graceful gait, His pastimes, His affectionate, smiling glances, His heroic deeds and His joking words, which would relieve their distress, they were beside themselves with anxiety at the thought of the great separation about to come. They gathered in groups and spoke to one another, their faces covered with tears and their minds fully absorbed in Acyuta.

19The gopīs said: O Providence, you have no mercy! You bring embodied creatures together in friendship and love and then senselessly separate them before they fulfill their desires. This whimsical play of yours is like a child’s game.

20Having shown us Mukunda’s face, framed by dark locks and beautified by His fine cheeks,

raised nose and gentle smiles, which eradicate all misery, you are now making that face invisible. This behavior of yours is not at all good.

21O Providence, though you come here with the name Akrūra, you are indeed cruel, for like a fool you are taking away what you once gave us those eyes with which we have seen, even in one feature of Lord Madhudviṣa's form, the perfection of your entire creation.

22Alas, Nanda's son, who breaks loving friendships in a second, will not even look directly at us. Forcibly brought under His control, we abandoned our homes, relatives, children and husbands just to serve Him, but He is always looking for new lovers.

23The dawn following this night will certainly be auspicious for the women of Mathurā. All their hopes will now be fulfilled, for as the Lord of Vraja enters their city, they will be able to drink from His face the nectar of the smile emanating from the corners of His eyes.

24O gopīs, although our Mukunda is intelligent and very obedient to His parents, once He has fallen under the spell of the honey-sweet words of the women of Mathurā and been enchanted by their alluring, shy smiles, how will He ever return to us unsophisticated village girls?

25When the Dāśārhas, Bhojas, Andhakas, Vṛṣṇis and Sātvatas see the son of Devakī in Mathurā, they will certainly enjoy a great festival for their eyes, as will all those who see Him traveling along the road to the city. After all, He is the darling of the goddess of fortune and the reservoir of all transcendental qualities.

26He who is doing this merciless deed should not be called Akrūra. He is so extremely cruel that without even trying to console the sorrowful residents of Vraja, he is taking away Kṛṣṇa, who is more dear to us than life itself.

27Hard-hearted Kṛṣṇa has already mounted the chariot, and now the foolish cowherds are hurrying after Him in their bullock carts. Even the elders are saying nothing to stop Him. Today fate is working against us.

28Let us directly approach Mādhava and stop Him from going. What can our family elders and other relatives do to us? Now that fate is separating us from Mukunda, our hearts are already wretched, for we cannot bear to give up His association even for a fraction of a second.

29When He brought us to the assembly of the rāsa dance, where we enjoyed His affectionate and charming smiles, His delightful secret talks, His playful glances and His embraces, we passed many nights as if they were a single moment. O gopīs, how can we possibly cross over the insurmountable darkness of His absence?

30How can we exist without Ananta's friend Kṛṣṇa, who in the evening would return to Vraja in the company of the cowherd boys, His hair and garland powdered with the dust raised by the cows' hooves? As He played His flute, He would captivate our minds with His smiling sidelong glances.

31Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After speaking these words, the ladies of Vraja, who were so attached to Kṛṣṇa, felt extremely agitated by their imminent separation from Him. They forgot all shame and loudly cried out, "O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava!"

32But even as the gopīs cried out in this way, Akrūra, having at sunrise performed His morning worship and other duties, began to drive the chariot.

33Led by Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men followed behind Lord Kṛṣṇa in their wagons. The

men brought along many offerings for the King, including clay pots filled with ghee and other milk products.

34[With His glances] Lord Kṛṣṇa somewhat pacified the gopīs, and they also followed behind for some time. Then, hoping He would give them some instruction, they stood still.

35As He departed, that best of the Yadus saw how the gopīs were lamenting, and thus He consoled them by sending a messenger with this loving promise: “I will return.”

36Sending their minds after Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs stood as motionless as figures in a painting. They remained there as long as the flag atop the chariot was visible, and even until they could no longer see the dust raised by the chariot wheels.

37The gopīs then turned back, without hope that Govinda would ever return to them. Full of sorrow, they began to spend their days and nights chanting about the pastimes of their beloved.

38My dear King, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, traveling as swiftly as the wind in that chariot with Lord Balarāma and Akrūra, arrived at the river Kālindī, which destroys all sins.

39The river’s sweet water was more effulgent than brilliant jewels. After Lord Kṛṣṇa had touched it for purification, He drank some from His hand. Then He had the chariot moved near a grove of trees and climbed back on, along with Balarāma.

40Akrūra asked the two Lords to take Their seats on the chariot. Then, taking Their permission, he went to a pool in the Yamunā and took his bath as enjoined in the scriptures.

41While immersing himself in the water and reciting eternal mantras from the Vedas, Akrūra suddenly saw Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa before him.

42-43Akrūra thought, “How can the two sons of Ānakadundubhi, who are sitting in the chariot, be standing here in the water? They must have left the chariot.” But when he came out of the river, there They were on the chariot, just as before. Asking himself “Was the vision I had of Them in the water an illusion?” Akrūra reentered the pool.

44-45There Akrūra now saw Ananta Śeṣa, the Lord of the serpents, receiving praise from Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas and demons, who all had their heads bowed. The Personality of Godhead whom Akrūra saw had thousands of heads, thousands of hoods and thousands of helmets. His blue garment and His fair complexion, as white as the filaments of a lotus stem, made Him appear like white Kailāsa Mountain with its many peaks.

46-48Akrūra then saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead lying peacefully on the lap of Lord Ananta Śeṣa. The complexion of that Supreme Person was like a dark-blue cloud. He wore yellow garments and had four arms and reddish lotus-petal eyes. His face looked attractive and cheerful with its smiling, endearing glance and lovely eyebrows, its raised nose and finely formed ears, and its beautiful cheeks and reddish lips. The Lord’s broad shoulders and expansive chest were beautiful, and His arms long and stout. His neck resembled a conchshell, His navel was deep, and His abdomen bore lines like those on a banyan leaf.

49-50He had large loins and hips, thighs like an elephant’s trunk, and shapely knees and shanks. His raised ankles reflected the brilliant effulgence emanating from the nails on His petallike toes, which beautified His lotus feet.

51-52Adorned with a helmet, bracelets and armlets, which were all bedecked with many

priceless jewels, and also with a belt, a sacred thread, necklaces, ankle bells and earrings, the Lord shone with dazzling effulgence. In one hand He held a lotus flower, in the others a conchshell, discus and club. Gracing His chest were the Śrīvatsa mark, the brilliant Kaustubha gem and a flower garland.

53-55 Encircling the Lord and worshiping Him were Nanda, Sunanda and His other personal attendants; Sanaka and the other Kumāras; Brahmā, Rudra and other chief demigods; the nine chief brāhmaṇas; and the best of the saintly devotees, headed by Prahlāda, Nārada and Uparicara Vasu. Each of these great personalities was worshiping the Lord by chanting sanctified words of praise in his own unique mood. Also in attendance were the Lord's principal internal potencies Śrī, Puṣṭi, Gīr, Kānti, Kīrti, Tuṣṭi, Ilā and Ūrjāas were His material potencies Vidyā, Avidyā and Māyā, and His internal pleasure potency, Śakti.

56-57 As the great devotee Akrūra beheld all this, he became extremely pleased and felt enthused with transcendental devotion. His intense ecstasy caused His bodily hairs to stand on end and tears to flow from his eyes, drenching his entire body. Somehow managing to steady himself, Akrūra bowed his head to the ground. Then he joined his palms in supplication and, in a voice choked with emotion, very slowly and attentively began to pray.

SB 10.40: The Prayers of Akrūra

This chapter relates Akrūra's prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Akrūra prayed, "Brahmā, who created this visible world, emanated from the lotus navel of the Supreme Lord. The five elements of physical nature, the five corresponding objects of perception, the ten senses, the ego, the total nature, the primeval creator and the demigods all originate from His bodily limbs. He cannot be known by sensory knowledge, and thus even Brahmā and the other demigods are ignorant of His real identity.

"Different classes of people worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in different ways. Fruitive workers worship Him by performing Vedic sacrifices, philosophers by renouncing material work and pursuing spiritual knowledge, *yogīs* by meditating, Śaivites by worshiping Lord Śiva, Vaiṣṇavas by following the injunctions of such scriptures as the *Paścaraṭra*, and other saintly persons by worshiping Him as the original form of the self, of the material substance and of the controlling demigods. Just as rivers flow from various directions into the ocean, the worship of those who dedicate themselves to these various entities finds its ultimate purpose within the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu.

"The form of the total universe, the Virāṭ-rūpa, is imagined to be the form of Lord Viṣṇu. Like aquatics moving about in water or like tiny insects burrowing in an *udumbara* fruit, all living beings move about within the Lord. These living beings, bewildered by His Māyā, wander along the path of material work, falsely identifying with body, home and so forth. Under the sway of illusion, a foolish person may overlook a reservoir of water covered by grass and leaves and instead run after a mirage. Similarly, living beings caught in the grip of ignorance abandon Lord Viṣṇu and become attached to their bodies, homes and so on. Such faithful servants of their senses cannot take shelter of the Supreme Lord's lotus feet. Only if, by His mercy, they get the association of saintly devotees will their material entanglement end. Only then can they develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness by serving the Lord's pure devotees."

1 Śrī Akrūra said: I bow down to You, the cause of all causes, the original and inexhaustible Supreme Person, Nārāyaṇa. From the whorl of the lotus born from Your navel, Brahmā appeared, and by his agency this universe has come into being.

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2Earth; water; fire; air; ether and its source, false ego; the mahat-tattva; the total material nature and her source, the Supreme Lord's puruṣa expansion; the mind; the senses; the sense objects; and the senses' presiding deitiesall these causes of the cosmic manifestation are born from Your transcendental body.

3The total material nature and these other elements of creation certainly cannot know You as You are, for they are manifested in the realm of dull matter. Since You are beyond the modes of nature, even Lord Brahmā, who is bound up in these modes, does not know Your true identity.

4Pure yogīs worship You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by conceiving of You in the threefold form comprising the living entities, the material elements that constitute the living entities' bodies, and the controlling deities of those elements.

5Brāhmaṇas who follow the regulations concerning the three sacred fires worship You by chanting mantras from the three Vedas and performing elaborate fire sacrifices for the various demigods, who have many forms and names.

6In pursuit of spiritual knowledge, some persons renounce all material activities and, having thus become peaceful, perform the sacrifice of philosophic investigation to worship You, the original form of all knowledge.

7And yet othersthose whose intelligence is purefollow the injunctions of Vaiṣṇava scriptures promulgated by You. Absorbing their minds in thought of You, they worship You as the one Supreme Lord manifesting in multiple forms.

8There are still others, who worship You, the Supreme Lord, in the form of Lord Śiva. They follow the path described by him and interpreted in various ways by many teachers.

9But all these people, my Lord, even those who have turned their attention away from You and are worshiping other deities, are actually worshiping You alone, O embodiment of all the demigods.

10As rivers born from the mountains and filled by the rain flow from all sides into the sea, so do all these paths in the end reach You, O master.

11Goodness, passion and ignorance, the qualities of Your material nature, entangle all conditioned living beings, from Brahmā down to the nonmoving creatures.

12I offer My obeisances to You, who as the Supreme Soul of all beings witness everyone's consciousness with unbiased vision. The current of Your material modes, produced by the force of ignorance, flows strongly among the living beings who assume identities as demigods, humans and animals.

13-14Fire is said to be Your face, the earth Your feet, the sun Your eye, and the sky Your navel. The directions are Your sense of hearing, the chief demigods Your arms, and the oceans Your abdomen. Heaven is thought to be Your head, and the wind Your vital air and physical strength. The trees and plants are the hairs on Your body, the clouds the hair on Your head, and the mountains the bones and nails of You, the Supreme. The passage of day and night is the blinking of Your eyes, the progenitor of mankind Your genitals, and the rain Your semen.

15All the worlds, with their presiding demigods and teeming populations, originate in You, the inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead. These worlds travel within You, the basis of the mind and senses, just as aquatics swim in the sea or tiny insects burrow within an udumbara fruit.

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16To enjoy Your pastimes You manifest Yourself in various forms in this material world, and these incarnations cleanse away all the unhappiness of those who joyfully chant Your glories.

17-18I offer my obeisances to You, the cause of the creation, Lord Matsya, who swam about in the ocean of dissolution, to Lord Hayagrīva, the killer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha, to the immense tortoise [Lord Kūrma], who supported Mandara Mountain, and to the boar incarnation [Lord Varāha], who enjoyed lifting the earth.

19Obeisances to You, the amazing lion [Lord Nṛsimha], who remove Your saintly devotees' fear, and to the dwarf Vāmana, who stepped over the three worlds.

20Obeisances to You, Lord of the Bhrgus, who cut down the forest of the conceited royal order, and to Lord Rāma, the best of the Raghu dynasty, who put an end to the demon Rāvaṇa.

21Obeisances to You, Lord of the Sātvatas, and to Your forms of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

22Obeisances to Your form as the faultless Lord Buddha, who will bewilder the Daityas and Dānavas, and to Lord Kalki, the annihilator of the meat-eaters posing as kings.

23O Supreme Lord, the living entities in this world are bewildered by Your illusory energy. Becoming involved in the false concepts of "I" and "my," they are forced to wander along the paths of fruitive work.

24I too am deluded in this way, O almighty Lord, foolishly thinking my body, children, home, wife, money and followers to be real, though they are actually as unreal as a dream.

25Thus mistaking the temporary for the eternal, my body for my self, and sources of misery for sources of happiness, I have tried to take pleasure in material dualities. Covered in this way by ignorance, I could not recognize You as the real object of my love.

26Just as a fool overlooks a body of water covered by the vegetation growing in it and chases a mirage, so I have turned away from You.

27My intelligence is so crippled that I cannot find the strength to curb my mind, which is disturbed by material desires and activities and constantly dragged here and there by my obstinate senses.

28Being thus fallen, I am approaching Your feet for shelter, O Lord, because although the impure can never attain Your feet, I think it is nevertheless possible by Your mercy. Only when one's material life has ceased, O lotus-naveled Lord, can one develop consciousness of You by serving Your pure devotees.

29Obeisances to the Supreme Absolute Truth, the possessor of unlimited energies. He is the embodiment of pure, transcendental knowledge, the source of all kinds of awareness, and the predominator of the forces of nature that rule over the living being.

30O son of Vasudeva, obeisances to You, within whom all living beings reside. O Lord of the mind and senses, again I offer You my obeisances. O master, please protect me, who am surrendered unto You.

SB 10.41: Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma Enter Mathurā

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the city of Mathurā, killed a washerman and bestowed benedictions upon a weaver and a garland-maker named Sudāmā.

After showing His Viṣṇu form to Akrūra in the waters of the Yamunā and receiving Akrūra's prayers, Lord Kṛṣṇa withdrew that vision just as an actor winds up his performance. Akrūra emerged from the water and in great amazement approached the Lord, who asked him whether he had seen something wonderful while bathing. Akrūra replied, "Whatever wonderful things there are in the realms of water, earth or sky, all have their existence within You. Thus when one has seen You, nothing remains unseen." Akrūra then began driving the chariot again.

Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Akrūra reached Mathurā late in the afternoon. After meeting up with Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherds, who had gone on ahead, Kṛṣṇa asked Akrūra to return home, promising to visit him there after He had killed Kaṁsa. Akrūra unhappily bid the Lord goodbye, went to King Kaṁsa to inform him that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had come, and went home.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma took the cowherd boys with Them to see the splendid city. As they all entered Mathurā, the women of the city eagerly came out of their houses to see Kṛṣṇa. They had often heard about Him and had long since developed a deep attraction for Him. But now that they were actually seeing Him, they were overwhelmed with happiness, and all their distress due to His absence was eradicated.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then came upon Kaṁsa's wicked washerman. Kṛṣṇa asked him for some of the first-class garments he was carrying, but he refused and even chastised the two Lords. At this Kṛṣṇa became very angry and beheaded the man with His fingertips. The washerman's assistants, seeing his untimely end, dropped their bundles of clothes on the spot and ran off in all directions. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then took some of the garments They especially fancied.

Next a weaver approached the two Lords and arrayed Them suitably, for which service he received from Kṛṣṇa opulence in this life and liberation in the next. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then went to the house of the garland-maker Sudāmā. Sudāmā offered Them his full obeisances, worshiped Them by bathing Their feet and offering Them such items as *arghya* and sandalwood paste, and chanted prayers in Their honor. Then he adorned Them with garlands of fragrant flowers. Pleased, the Lords offered him whatever benedictions he wished, and then They moved on.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While Akrūra was still offering prayers, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa withdrew His form that He had revealed in the water, just as an actor winds up his performance.

2When Akrūra saw the vision disappear, he came out of the water and quickly finished his various ritual duties. He then returned to the chariot, astonished.

3Lord Kṛṣṇa asked Akrūra: Have you seen something wonderful on the earth, in the sky or in the water? From your appearance, We think you have.

4Śrī Akrūra said: Whatever wonderful things the earth, sky or water contain, all exist in You. Since You encompass everything, when I am seeing You, what have I not seen?

5And now that I am seeing You, O Supreme Absolute Truth, in whom reside all amazing things on the earth, in the sky and in the water, what amazing things could I see in this world?

6With these words, Akrūra, the son of Gāndinī, began driving the chariot onward. At the end of the day he arrived in Mathurā with Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

7Wherever they passed along the road, O King, the village people came forward and looked

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upon the two sons of Vasudeva with great pleasure. In fact, the villagers could not withdraw their eyes from Them.

8Nanda Mahārāja and the other residents of Vṛndāvana, having reached Mathurā ahead of the chariot, had stopped at a garden on the outskirts of the city to wait for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

9After joining Nanda and the others, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, the controller of the universe, took humble Akrūra's hand in His own and, smiling, spoke as follows.

10[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Take the chariot and enter the city ahead of us. Then go home. After resting here a while, we will go to see the city.

11Śrī Akrūra said: O master, without the two of You I shall not enter Mathurā. I am Your devotee, O Lord, so it is not fair for You to abandon me, since You are always affectionate to Your devotees.

12Come, let us go to my house with Your elder brother, the cowherd men and Your companions. O best of friends, O transcendental Lord, in this way please grace my house with its master.

13I am simply an ordinary householder attached to ritual sacrifices, so please purify my home with the dust of Your lotus feet. By that act of purification, my forefathers, the sacrificial fires and the demigods will all become satisfied.

14By bathing Your feet, the exalted Bali Mahārāja attained not only glorious fame and unequalled power but also the final destination of pure devotees.

15The water of the river Ganges has purified the three worlds, having become transcendental by bathing Your feet. Lord Śiva accepted that water on his head, and by that water's grace the sons of King Sagara attained to heaven.

16O Lord of lords, master of the universe, O You whose glories it is most pious to hear and chant! O best of the Yadus, O You whose fame is recounted in excellent poetry! O Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, I offer You my obeisances.

17The Supreme Lord said: I will come to Your house with My elder brother, but first I must satisfy My friends and well-wishers by killing the enemy of the Yadu clan.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed by the Lord, Akrūra entered the city with a heavy heart. He informed King Kaṁsa of the success of his mission and then went home.

19Lord Kṛṣṇa desired to see Mathurā, so toward evening He took Lord Balarāma and the cowherd boys with Him and entered the city.

20-23The Lord saw Mathurā, with its tall gates and household entrances made of crystal, its immense archways and main doors of gold, its granaries and other storehouses of copper and brass, and its impregnable moats. Beautifying the city were pleasant gardens and parks. The main intersections were fashioned of gold, and there were mansions with private pleasure gardens, along with guildhalls and many other buildings. Mathurā resounded with the calls of peacocks and pet turtledoves, who sat in the small openings of the lattice windows and on the gem-studded floors, and also on the columned balconies and on the ornate rafters in front of the houses. These balconies and rafters were adorned with vaidūrya stones, diamonds, crystal quartz, sapphires, coral, pearls and emeralds. All the royal avenues and commercial streets were sprinkled with water, as were the side roads and courtyards, and flower garlands, newly

grown sprouts, parched grains and rice had been scattered about everywhere. Gracing the houses' doorways were elaborately decorated pots filled with water, which were bedecked with mango leaves, smeared with yogurt and sandalwood paste, and encircled by flower petals and ribbons. Near the pots were flags, rows of lamps, bunches of flowers and the trunks of banana and betel-nut trees.

24The women of Mathurā hurriedly assembled and went forth to see the two sons of Vasudeva as They entered the city on the King's road, surrounded by Their cowherd boyfriends. Some of the women, my dear King, eagerly climbed to the roofs of their houses to see Them.

25Some of the ladies put their clothes and ornaments on backwards, others forgot one of their earrings or ankle bells, and others applied makeup to one eye but not the other.

26Those who were taking their meals abandoned them, others went out without finishing their baths or massages, women who were sleeping at once rose when they heard the commotion, and mothers breast-feeding their infants simply put them aside.

27The lotus-eyed Lord, smiling as He recalled His bold pastimes, captivated those ladies' minds with His glances. He walked with the gait of a lordly elephant in rut, creating a festival for their eyes with His transcendental body, which is the source of pleasure for the divine goddess of fortune.

28The ladies of Mathurā had repeatedly heard about Kṛṣṇa, and thus as soon as they saw Him their hearts melted. They felt honored that He was sprinkling upon them the nectar of His glances and broad smiles. Taking Him into their hearts through their eyes, they embraced Him, the embodiment of all ecstasy, and as their bodily hairs stood on end, O subduer of enemies, they forgot the unlimited distress caused by His absence.

29Their lotus faces blooming with affection, the ladies who had climbed to the roofs of the mansions rained down showers of flowers upon Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

30Brāhmaṇas standing along the way honored the two Lords with presentations of yogurt, unbroken barleycorns, pots full of water, garlands, fragrant substances such as sandalwood paste, and other items of worship.

31The women of Mathurā exclaimed: Oh, what severe austerities the gopīs must have performed to be able to regularly see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who are the greatest source of pleasure for all mankind!

32Seeing a washerman approaching who had been dyeing some clothes, Kṛṣṇa asked him for the finest laundered garments he had.

33[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Please give suitable garments to the two of Us, who certainly deserve them. If you grant this charity, you will undoubtedly receive the greatest benefit.

34Thus requested by the Supreme Lord, who is perfectly complete in all respects, that arrogant servant of the King became angry and replied insultingly.

35[The washerman said:] You impudent boys! You're accustomed to roaming the mountains and forests, and yet You would dare put on such clothes as these! These are the King's possessions You're asking for!

36Fools, get out of here quickly! Don't beg like this if You want to stay alive. When someone is too bold, the King's men arrest him and kill him and take all his property.

37As the washerman thus spoke brazenly, the son of Devakī became angry, and then merely with His fingertips He separated the man's head from his body.

38The washerman's assistants all dropped their bundles of clothes and fled down the road, scattering in all directions. Lord Kṛṣṇa then took the clothes.

39Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma put on pairs of garments that especially pleased Them, and then Kṛṣṇa distributed the remaining clothes among the cowherd boys, leaving some scattered on the ground.

40Thereupon a weaver came forward and, feeling affection for the Lords, nicely adorned Their attire with cloth ornaments of various colors.

41Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma looked resplendent, each in His own unique, wonderfully ornamented outfit. They resembled a pair of young elephants, one white and the other black, decorated for a festive occasion.

42Pleased with the weaver, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa blessed him that after death he would achieve the liberation of attaining a form like the Lord's, and that while in this world he would enjoy supreme opulence, physical strength, influence, memory and sensory vigor.

43The two Lords then went to the house of the garland-maker Sudāmā. When Sudāmā saw Them he at once stood up and then bowed down, placing his head on the ground.

44After offering Them seats and bathing Their feet, Sudāmā worshiped Them and Their companions with arghya, garlands, pān, sandalwood paste and other presentations.

45[Sudāmā said:] O Lord, my birth is now sanctified and my family free of contamination. Now that You both have come here, my forefathers, the demigods and the great sages are certainly all satisfied with me.

46You two Lords are the ultimate cause of this entire universe. To bestow sustenance and prosperity upon this realm, You have descended with Your plenary expansions.

47Because You are the well-wishing friends and Supreme Soul of the whole universe, You regard all with unbiased vision. Therefore, although You reciprocate Your devotees' loving worship, You always remain equally disposed toward all living beings.

48Please order me, Your servant, to do whatever You wish. To be engaged by You in some service is certainly a great blessing for anyone.

49[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O best of kings, having spoken these words, Sudāmā could understand what Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wanted. Thus with great pleasure he presented Them with garlands of fresh, fragrant flowers.

50Beautifully adorned with these garlands, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were delighted, and so were Their companions. The two Lords then offered the surrendered Sudāmā, who was bowing down before Them, whatever benedictions he desired.

51Sudāmā chose unshakable devotion for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul of all existence; friendship with His devotees; and transcendental compassion for all living beings.

52Not only did Lord Kṛṣṇa grant Sudāmā these benedictions, but He also awarded him strength, long life, fame, beauty and ever-increasing prosperity for his family. Then Kṛṣṇa and His elder brother took Their leave.

SB 10.42: The Breaking of the Sacrificial Bow

This chapter describes the benediction Trivakrā received, the breaking of the sacrificial bow, the destruction of Kāṁsa's soldiers, the inauspicious omens Kāṁsa saw and the festivities at the wrestling arena.

After leaving Sudāmā's house, Lord Kṛṣṇa came upon Trivakrā, a young hunchbacked maidservant of Kāṁsa's who was carrying a tray of fine ointments. The Lord asked her who she was and requested some ointment from her. Entranced by His beauty and joking words, Trivakrā gave both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma a good deal of ointment. In return, Kṛṣṇa stepped on her toes with His lotus feet, took hold of her chin and lifted, thus straightening her spine. The now beautiful and charming Trivakrā then grabbed the edge of Kṛṣṇa's upper cloth and asked Him to come to her house. Kṛṣṇa replied that after He had taken care of some business He would certainly come and relieve her mental torment. Then the two Lords continued Their sightseeing tour of Mathurā.

As Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma walked along the King's road, the merchants worshiped Them with various offerings. Kṛṣṇa asked where the bow sacrifice was to take place, and when He arrived at the arena He saw the wonderful bow, which resembled Lord Indra's. Despite the guards' protests, Kṛṣṇa forcibly picked up the bow, easily strung it and in an instant broke it in half, producing an ear-splitting sound that filled the heavens and struck terror in the heart of Kāṁsa. The many guards attacked Kṛṣṇa, crying out "Seize Him! Kill Him!" But Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma simply picked up the two halves of the bow and beat the guards to death. Next the Lords annihilated a company of soldiers sent by Kāṁsa, and then They left the arena and continued Their tour.

When the people of the city saw the amazing prowess and beauty of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they thought They must be two chief demigods. Indeed, as the residents of Mathurā gazed upon the Lords, they enjoyed all the blessings the *gopīs* had predicted.

At sunset Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma returned to the cowherds' camp for Their evening meal. They then passed the night resting comfortably. But King Kāṁsa was not so fortunate. When he heard how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had easily broken the mighty bow and destroyed his soldiers, he spent the night in great anxiety. Both while awake and while dreaming he saw many ill omens portending his imminent death, and his fear ruined any chance for rest.

At dawn the wrestling festival began. Crowds of people from the city and outlying districts entered the arena and took their seats in the lavishly decorated galleries. Kāṁsa, his heart trembling, sat down on the royal dais and invited Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men to come sit in their places, and they did so after offering him their gifts. The musical overture then began as the sounds of the wrestlers slapping their arms resounded.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: As He walked down the King's road, Lord Mādhava then saw a young hunchback woman with an attractive face, who carried a tray of fragrant ointments as she walked along. The bestower of the ecstasy of love smiled and inquired from her as follows.

2[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Who are you, O beautiful-thighed one? Ah, ointment! Who is it for, my dear lady? Please tell Us truthfully. Give Us both some of your finest ointment and you will soon gain a great boon.

3The maidservant replied: O handsome one, I am a servant of King Kāṁsa, who highly regards me for the ointments I make. My name is Trivakrā. Who else but You two deserve my ointments, which the lord of the Bhojas likes so much?

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4Her mind overwhelmed by Kṛṣṇa's beauty, charm, sweetness, smiles, words and glances, Trivakrā gave both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma generous amounts of ointment.

5Anointed with these most excellent cosmetics, which adorned Them with hues that contrasted with Their complexions, the two Lords appeared extremely beautiful.

6Lord Kṛṣṇa was pleased with Trivakrā, so He decided to straighten that hunchbacked girl with the lovely face just to demonstrate the result of seeing Him.

7Pressing down on her toes with both His feet, Lord Acyuta placed one upward-pointing finger of each hand under her chin and straightened up her body.

8Simply by Lord Mukunda's touch, Trivakrā was suddenly transformed into an exquisitely beautiful woman with straight, evenly proportioned limbs and large hips and breasts.

9Now endowed with beauty, character and generosity, Trivakrā began to feel lusty desires for Lord Keśava. Taking hold of the end of His upper cloth, she smiled and addressed Him as follows.

10[Trivakrā said:] Come, O hero, let us go to my house. I cannot bear to leave You here. O best of males, please take pity on me, since You have agitated my mind.

11Thus entreated by the woman, Lord Kṛṣṇa first glanced at the face of Balarāma, who was watching the incident, and then at the faces of the cowherd boys. Then with a laugh Kṛṣṇa replied to her as follows.

12[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O lady with beautiful eyebrows, as soon as I fulfill My purpose I will certainly visit your house, where men can relieve their anxiety. Indeed, you are the best refuge for Us homeless travelers.

13Leaving her with these sweet words, Lord Kṛṣṇa walked further down the road. The merchants along the way worshiped Him and His elder brother by presenting Them with various respectful offerings, including pān, garlands and fragrant substances.

14The sight of Kṛṣṇa aroused Cupid in the hearts of the city women. Thus agitated, they forgot themselves. Their clothes, braids and bangles became disheveled, and they stood as still as figures in a painting.

15Lord Kṛṣṇa then asked the local people where the arena was in which the bow sacrifice would take place. When He went there He saw the amazing bow, which resembled Lord Indra's.

16That most opulent bow was guarded by a large company of men, who were respectfully worshipping it. Kṛṣṇa pushed His way forward and, despite the guards' attempts to stop Him, picked it up.

17Easily lifting the bow with His left hand, Lord Urukrama strung it in a fraction of a second as the King's guards looked on. He then powerfully pulled the string and snapped the bow in half, just as an excited elephant might break a stalk of sugar cane.

18The sound of the bow's breaking filled the earth and sky in all directions. Upon hearing it, Kamsa was struck with terror.

19The enraged guards then took up their weapons and, wanting to seize Kṛṣṇa and His companions, surrounded them and shouted, "Grab Him! Kill Him!"

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20 Seeing the guards coming upon Them with evil intent, Balarāma and Keśava took up the two halves of the bow and began striking them down.

21 After also killing a contingent of soldiers sent by Kāmsa, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma left the sacrificial arena by its main gate and continued Their walk about the city, happily looking at the opulent sights.

22 Having witnessed the amazing deed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had performed, and seeing Their strength, boldness and beauty, the people of the city thought They must be two prominent demigods.

23 As They strolled about at will, the sun began to set, so They left the city with the cowherd boys and returned to the cowherds' wagon encampment.

24 At the time of Mukunda's [Kṛṣṇa's] departure from Vṛndāvana, the gopīs had foretold that the residents of Mathurā would enjoy many benedictions, and now the gopīs' predictions were coming true, for those residents were gazing upon the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the jewel among men. Indeed, the goddess of fortune desired the shelter of that beauty so much that she abandoned many other men, although they worshiped her.

25 After Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's feet were bathed, the two Lords ate rice with milk. Then, although knowing what Kāmsa intended to do, They spent the night there comfortably.

26-27 Wicked King Kāmsa, on the other hand, was terrified, having heard how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had broken the bow and killed his guards and soldiers, all simply as a game. He remained awake for a long time, and both while awake and while dreaming he saw many bad omens, messengers of death.

28-31 When he looked at his reflection he could not see his head; for no reason the moon and stars appeared double; he saw a hole in his shadow; he could not hear the sound of his life air; trees seemed covered with a golden hue; and he could not see his footprints. He dreamt that he was being embraced by ghosts, riding a donkey and drinking poison, and also that a naked man smeared with oil was passing by wearing a garland of nalada flowers. Seeing these and other such omens both while dreaming and while awake, Kāmsa was terrified by the prospect of death, and out of anxiety he could not sleep.

32 When the night had finally passed and the sun rose up again from the water, Kāmsa set about arranging for the grand wrestling festival.

33 The King's men performed the ritual worship of the wrestling arena, sounded their drums and other instruments and decorated the viewing galleries with garlands, flags, ribbons and arches.

34 The city-dwellers and residents of the outlying districts, led by brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas, came and sat down comfortably in the galleries. The royal guests received special seats.

35 Surrounded by his ministers, Kāmsa took his seat on the imperial dais. But even as he sat amidst his various provincial rulers, his heart trembled.

36 While the musical instruments loudly played in the rhythmic meters appropriate for wrestling matches, the lavishly ornamented wrestlers proudly entered the arena with their coaches and sat down.

37 Enthused by the pleasing music, Canura, Muṣṭika, Kūṭa, Śāla and Tośāla sat down on the

wrestling mat.

38Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherds, summoned by the King of the Bhojas, presented him with their offerings and then took their seats in one of the galleries.

SB 10.43: Kṛṣṇa Kills the Elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa

This chapter tells how Lord Kṛṣṇa killed the lordly elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered the wrestling arena and what Kṛṣṇa said to the wrestler Cāṇūra.

After finishing Their early-morning rituals, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma heard kettledrums heralding the start of the wrestling match, and They went to see the festivities. At the gate of the wrestling arena They encountered an elephant named Kuvalayāpīḍa, who attacked Kṛṣṇa at the urging of his keeper. The mighty elephant grabbed at Kṛṣṇa with his trunk, but the Lord struck back and then disappeared from the beast's sight among his legs. Enraged at not being able to see Kṛṣṇa, Kuvalayāpīḍa sought Him out with his sense of smell and seized Him. But the Lord pulled loose. In this way Kṛṣṇa teased and tormented Kuvalayāpīḍa, finally yanking out one of his tusks and beating him and his keepers to death.

Sprinkled with the elephant's blood and carrying one of his tusks on His shoulder as a weapon, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared unprecedentedly beautiful as He entered the wrestling arena. There the various classes of people saw Him in different ways, according to their specific relationship with Him.

When King Kaṁsa heard how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had killed Kuvalayāpīḍa, he realized They were invincible and became filled with anxiety. The members of the audience, on the other hand, became joyful as they reminded one another about the Lords' amazing pastimes. The people declared that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma must be two expansions of the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa who had descended into the house of Vasudeva.

Cāṇūra then stepped forward and challenged Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to wrestle, saying King Kaṁsa wished to see such a match. Kṛṣṇa replied, "Although We are merely nomadic forest folk, We are nonetheless subjects of the King; thus We will not hesitate to please him with an exhibition of wrestling." As soon as Cāṇūra heard this, he suggested that Kṛṣṇa should wrestle him and that Balarāma should wrestle Muṣṭika.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O chastiser of enemies, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, having executed all necessary purification, then heard the kettledrums resounding at the wrestling arena, and They went there to see what was happening.

2When Lord Kṛṣṇa reached the entrance to the arena, He saw the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa blocking His way at the urging of his keeper.

3Securely binding up His clothes and tying back His curly locks, Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed the elephant-keeper with words as grave as the rumbling of a cloud.

4[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O driver, driver, move aside at once and let Us pass! If you don't, this very day I will send both you and your elephant to the abode of Yamarāja!

5Thus threatened, the elephant-keeper became angry. He goaded his furious elephant, who appeared equal to time, death and Yamarāja, into attacking Lord Kṛṣṇa.

6The lord of the elephants charged Kṛṣṇa and violently seized Him with his trunk. But Kṛṣṇa slipped away, struck him a blow and disappeared from his view among his legs.

7Infuriated at being unable to see Lord Keśava, the elephant sought Him out with his sense of smell. Once again Kuvalayāpīḍa seized the Lord with the end of his trunk, only to have the Lord forcefully free Himself.

8Lord Kṛṣṇa then grabbed the powerful Kuvalayāpīḍa by the tail and playfully dragged him twenty-five bow-lengths as easily as Garuḍa might drag a snake.

9As Lord Acyuta held on to the elephant's tail, the animal tried to twist away to the left and to the right, making the Lord swerve in the opposite direction, as a young boy would swerve when pulling a calf by the tail.

10Kṛṣṇa then came face to face with the elephant and slapped him and ran away. Kuvalayāpīḍa pursued the Lord, managing to touch Him again and again with each step, but Kṛṣṇa outmaneuvered the elephant and made him trip and fall.

11As Kṛṣṇa dodged about, He playfully fell on the ground and quickly got up again. The raging elephant, thinking Kṛṣṇa was down, tried to gore Him with his tusks but struck the earth instead.

12His prowess foiled, the lordly elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa went into a frenzied rage out of frustration. But the elephant-keepers goaded him on, and he furiously charged Kṛṣṇa once again.

13The Supreme Lord, killer of the demon Madhu, confronted the elephant as he attacked. Seizing his trunk with one hand, Kṛṣṇa threw him to the ground.

14Lord Hari then climbed onto the elephant with the ease of a mighty lion, pulled out a tusk, and with it killed the beast and his keepers.

15Leaving the dead elephant aside, Lord Kṛṣṇa held on to the tusk and entered the wrestling arena. With the tusk resting on His shoulder, drops of the elephant's blood and sweat sprinkled all over Him, and His lotus face covered with fine drops of His own perspiration, the Lord shone with great beauty.

16My dear King, Lord Baladeva and Lord Janārdana, each carrying one of the elephant's tusks as His chosen weapon, entered the arena with several cowherd boys.

17The various groups of people in the arena regarded Kṛṣṇa in different ways when He entered it with His elder brother. The wrestlers saw Kṛṣṇa as a lightning bolt, the men of Mathurā as the best of males, the women as Cupid in person, the cowherd men as their relative, the impious rulers as a chastiser, His parents as their child, the King of the Bhojas as death, the unintelligent as the Supreme Lord's universal form, the yogīs as the Absolute Truth and the Vṛṣṇis as their supreme worshipable Deity.

18When Kāmsa saw that Kuvalayāpīḍa was dead and the two brothers were invincible, he was overwhelmed with anxiety, O King.

19Arrayed with variegated ornaments, garlands and garments, just like a pair of excellently costumed actors, the two mighty-armed Lords shone splendidly in the arena. Indeed, They overpowered the minds of all onlookers with Their effulgences.

20O King, as the citizens of the city and the people from outlying districts gazed upon those two Supreme Personalities from their seats in the galleries, the force of the people's happiness caused their eyes to open wide and their faces to blossom. They drank in the vision of the

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Lords' faces without becoming satiated.

21-22The people seemed to be drinking Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with their eyes, licking Them with their tongues, smelling Them with their nostrils and embracing Them with their arms. Reminded of the Lords' beauty, character, charm and bravery, the members of the audience began describing these features to one another according to what they had seen and heard.

23[The people said:] These two boys are certainly expansions of the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa who have descended to this world in the home of Vasudeva.

24This one [Kṛṣṇa] took birth from mother Devakī and was brought to Gokula, where He has remained concealed all this time, growing up in the house of King Nanda.

25He made Pūtanā and the whirlwind demon meet with death, pulled down the twin Arjuna trees, and killed Śaṅkhacūḍa, Keśī, Dhenuka and similar demons.

26-27He saved the cows and the cowherds from a forest fire and subdued the serpent Kāliya. He removed Lord Indra's false pride by holding up the best of mountains with one hand for an entire week, thus protecting the inhabitants of Gokula from rain, wind and hail.

28The gopīs overcame all kinds of distress and experienced great happiness by seeing His face, which is always cheerful with smiling glances and ever free of fatigue.

29It is said that under His full protection the Yadu dynasty will become extremely famous and attain wealth, glory and power.

30This lotus-eyed elder brother of His, Lord Balarāma, is the proprietor of all transcendental opulences. He has killed Pralamba, Vatsaka, Baka and other demons.

31While the people talked in this way and the musical instruments resounded, the wrestler Cāṇūra addressed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with the following words.

32[Cāṇūra said:] O son of Nanda, O Rāma, You two are well respected by courageous men and are both skillful at wrestling. Having heard of Your prowess, the King has called You here, wanting to see for himself.

33Subjects of the King who try to please him with their thoughts, acts and words are sure to achieve good fortune, but those who fail to do so will suffer the opposite fate.

34It is well known that cowherd boys are always joyful as they tend their calves, and that the boys playfully wrestle with each other while grazing their animals in the various forests.

35Therefore let's do what the King wants. Everyone will be pleased with us, for the king embodies all living beings.

36Hearing this, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who liked to wrestle and welcomed the challenge, replied with words appropriate to the time and place.

37[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Although forest-dwellers, We are also subjects of the Bhoja king. We must gratify his desires, for such behavior will confer upon Us the greatest benefit.

38We are just young boys and should play with those of equal strength. The wrestling match must go on properly so that irreligion does not taint the respectable members of the audience.

39Cāṇūra said: You aren't really a child or even a young man, and neither is Balarāma, the strongest of the strong. After all, You playfully killed an elephant who had the strength of a

thousand other elephants.

40Therefore You two should fight powerful wrestlers. There's certainly nothing unfair about that. You, O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, can show Your prowess against me, and Balarāma can fight with Muṣṭika.

SB 10.44: The Killing of Kaṁsa

This chapter tells how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed the wrestlers, how Kṛṣṇa killed Kaṁsa and consoled Kaṁsa's wives, and how the two Lords were reunited with Their mother and father.

Deciding to wrestle, Lord Kṛṣṇa faced off against Cāṇūra, and Lord Baladeva took on Muṣṭika. Battling arm to arm, head to head, knee to knee and chest to chest, the opponents attacked each other so fiercely that they appeared to be harming even their own bodies. The ladies in the arena, seeing the violent battle, began to condemn the King and all the members of the assembly: "A respectable audience should never have allowed a wrestling match between such huge wrestlers, whose limbs are as tough as lightning bolts, and such tender young boys, who are just entering youth. An intelligent person should never enter an assembly if he sees injustice being done there." Because Vasudeva and Devakī did not fully understand the power of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they became extremely unhappy when they heard the women of the audience speak these words.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa then grabbed Cāṇūra's arms, whirled him around several times and threw him to the ground, killing him. Muṣṭika met a similar fate: after being struck powerfully by Lord Baladeva's palm, he began vomiting blood and then fell down dead. Thereupon the wrestlers named Kūṭa, Śāla and Tośāla came forward, but Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma easily killed them with the blows of Their fists and feet. The remaining wrestlers, fearing for their lives, all fled.

Except for Kaṁsa, everyone present cheered Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. The King, in a rage, stopped the festive music and ordered that Vasudeva, Nanda, Ugrasena and all the cowherds be severely punished and that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma be driven from the assembly. Kṛṣṇa became furious when He heard Kaṁsa speak this way, and He instantly leapt onto the lofty royal dais. He grabbed Kaṁsa by the hair, hurled him down onto the floor of the wrestling ring and threw Himself on top of him. In this way, Kaṁsa met his death. Because out of fear Kaṁsa had always thought of Kṛṣṇa, after his death he gained the liberation of having a form like the Lord's.

Kaṁsa's eight brothers then attacked Kṛṣṇa, but Balarāma easily killed each of them with His club, just as a lion kills defenseless animals. Kettledrums resounded in the sky as the joyful demigods rained down flowers and chanted the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma.

The wives of Kaṁsa, grieving for their husband, lamented that he had died because of his violence toward other living beings and his lack of respect for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, who creates, maintains and destroys the entire universe. The Lord consoled the widows, had the funeral rites performed for Kaṁsa and his brothers and then released His mother and father from bondage. Kṛṣṇa offered obeisances at His parents' feet, but they, now understanding Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead, did not embrace Him.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed, Lord Kṛṣṇa made up His mind to accept the challenge. He paired off with Cāṇūra, and Lord Balarāma with Muṣṭika.

2Seizing each other's hands and locking legs with each other, the opponents struggled powerfully, eager for victory.

3They each struck fists against fists, knees against knees, head against head and chest against chest.

4Each fighter contended with his opponent by dragging him about in circles, shoving and crushing him, throwing him down and running before and behind him.

5Forcefully lifting and carrying each other, pushing each other away and holding each other down, the fighters hurt even their own bodies in their great eagerness for victory.

6My dear King, all the women present, considering the match an unfair fight between the strong and the weak, felt extreme anxiety due to compassion. They assembled in groups around the arena and spoke to one another as follows.

7[The women said:] Alas, what a greatly irreligious act the members of this royal assembly are committing! As the King watches this fight between the strong and the weak, they also want to see it.

8What comparison can there be between these two professional wrestlers, with limbs as strong as lightning bolts and bodies resembling mighty mountains, and these two young, immature boys with exceedingly tender limbs?

9Religious principles have certainly been violated in this assembly. One should not remain for even a moment in a place where irreligion is flourishing.

10A wise person should not enter an assembly if he knows the participants there are committing acts of impropriety. And if, having entered such an assembly, he fails to speak the truth, speaks falsely or pleads ignorance, he will certainly incur sin.

11Just see the lotus face of Kṛṣṇa as He darts around His foe! That face, covered with drops of perspiration brought on by the strenuous fight, resembles a lotus covered with dew.

12Don't you see the face of Lord Balarāma, with its eyes copper-red from His anger toward Muṣṭika and its beauty enhanced by His laughter and His absorption in the fight?

13How pious are the tracts of land in Vraja, for there the primeval Personality of Godhead, disguising Himself with human traits, wanders about, enacting His many pastimes! Adorned with wonderfully variegated forest garlands, He whose feet are worshiped by Lord Śiva and goddess Ramā vibrates His flute as He tends the cows in the company of Balarāma.

14What austerities must the gopīs have performed! With their eyes they always drink the nectar of Lord Kṛṣṇa's form, which is the essence of loveliness and is not to be equaled or surpassed. That form is the only abode of beauty, fame and opulence. It is self-perfect, ever fresh and extremely rare.

15The ladies of Vraja are the most fortunate of women because, with their minds fully attached to Kṛṣṇa and their throats always choked up with tears, they constantly sing about Him while milking the cows, winnowing grain, churning butter, gathering cow dung for fuel, riding on swings, taking care of their crying babies, sprinkling the ground with water, cleaning their houses, and so on. By their exalted Kṛṣṇa consciousness they automatically acquire all desirable things.

16When the gopīs hear Kṛṣṇa playing His flute as He leaves Vraja in the morning with His cows or returns with them at sunset, the young girls quickly come out of their houses to see Him. They must have performed many pious activities to be able to see Him as He walks on the road, His smiling face mercifully glancing upon them.

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17[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] As the women spoke thus, O hero of the Bhāratas, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystic power, made up His mind to kill His opponent.

18Out of affection for the two Lords, Their parents [Devakī and Vasudeva] became overwhelmed with sorrow when they heard the women's fearful statements. They grieved, not knowing their sons' strength.

19Lord Balarāma and Muṣṭika, expertly displaying numerous wrestling techniques, battled each other in the same way that Lord Kṛṣṇa and His opponent did.

20The harsh blows from the Supreme Lord's limbs fell like crushing lightning bolts upon Cāṇūra, breaking every part of his body and causing him more and more pain and fatigue.

21Furious, Cāṇūra attacked Lord Vāsudeva with the speed of a hawk and struck His chest with both fists.

22-23No more shaken by the demon's mighty blows than an elephant struck with a flower garland, Lord Kṛṣṇa grabbed Cāṇūra by his arms, swung him around several times and hurled him onto the ground with great force. His clothes, hair and garland scattering, the wrestler fell down dead, like a huge festival column collapsing.

24-25Similarly, Muṣṭika struck Lord Balabhadra with his fist and was slain. Receiving a violent blow from the mighty Lord's palm, the demon trembled all over in great pain, vomited blood and then fell lifeless onto the ground, like a tree blown down by the wind.

26Confronted next by the wrestler Kūṭa, Lord Balarāma, the best of fighters, playfully and nonchalantly killed him with His left fist, O King.

27Then Kṛṣṇa kicked in Śāla's head and tore Tośāla in half, and both wrestlers fell down dead.

28Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kūṭa, Śāla and Tośāla having been killed, the remaining wrestlers all fled for their lives.

29Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then called Their young cowherd boyfriends to join Them, and in their company the Lords danced about and sported, Their ankle bells resounding as musical instruments played.

30Everyone except Kāmsa rejoiced at the wonderful feat Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had performed. The exalted brāhmaṇas and great saints exclaimed, "Excellent! Excellent!"

31The Bhoja king, seeing that his best wrestlers had all been killed or had fled, stopped the musical performance originally meant for his pleasure and spoke the following words.

32[Kāmsa said:] Drive the two wicked sons of Vasudeva out of the city! Confiscate the cowherds' property and arrest that fool Nanda!

33Kill that most evil fool Vasudeva! And also kill my father, Ugrasena, along with his followers, who have all sided with our enemies!

34As Kāmsa thus raved so audaciously, the infallible Lord Kṛṣṇa, intensely angry, quickly and easily jumped up onto the high royal dais.

35Seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa approaching like death personified, the quick-witted Kāmsa instantly rose from his seat and took up his sword and shield.

36Sword in hand, Kaṁsa moved quickly from side to side like a hawk in the sky. But Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose fearsome strength is irresistible, powerfully seized the demon just as the son of Tārksya might capture a snake.

37Grabbing Kaṁsa by the hair and knocking off his crown, the lotus-naveled Lord threw him off the elevated dais onto the wrestling mat. Then the independent Lord, the support of the entire universe, threw Himself upon the King.

38As a lion drags a dead elephant, the Lord then dragged Kaṁsa's dead body along the ground in full view of everyone present. O King, all the people in the arena tumultuously cried out, "Oh! Oh!"

39Kaṁsa had always been disturbed by the thought that the Supreme Lord was to kill him. Therefore when drinking, eating, moving about, sleeping or simply breathing, the King had always seen the Lord before him with the disc weapon in His hand. Thus Kaṁsa achieved the rare boon of attaining a form like the Lord's.

40Kaṁsa's eight younger brothers, led by Kaṅka and Nyagrodhaka, then attacked the Lords in a rage, seeking to avenge their brother's death.

41As they ran swiftly toward the two Lords, ready to strike, the son of Rohiṇī slew them with His club just as a lion easily kills other animals.

42Kettledrums resounded in the sky as Brahmā, Śiva and other demigods, the Lord's expansions, rained down flowers upon Him with pleasure. They chanted His praises, and their wives danced.

43My dear King, the wives of Kaṁsa and his brothers, aggrieved by the death of their well-wishing husbands, came forward with tearful eyes, beating their heads.

44Embracing their husbands, who lay on a hero's final bed, the sorrowful women loudly lamented while shedding constant tears.

45[The women cried out:] Alas, O master, O dear one, O knower of religious principles! O kind and compassionate protector of the shelterless! By your being slain we have also been slain, together with your household and offspring.

46O great hero among men, bereft of you, its master, this city has lost its beauty, just as we have, and all festivity and good fortune within it have come to an end.

47O dear one, you have been brought to this state because of the terrible violence you committed against innocent creatures. How can one who harms others attain happiness?

48Lord Kṛṣṇa causes the appearance and disappearance of all beings in this world, and He is their maintainer as well. One who disrespects Him can never prosper happily.

49Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After consoling the royal ladies, Lord Kṛṣṇa, sustainer of all the worlds, arranged for the prescribed funeral rites to be performed.

50Then Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma released Their mother and father from bondage and offered obeisances to them, touching their feet with Their heads.

51Devakī and Vasudeva, now knowing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to be the Lords of the universe, simply stood with joined palms. Being apprehensive, they did not embrace their sons.

SB 10.45: Kṛṣṇa Rescues His Teacher's Son

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa consoled Devakī, Vasudeva and Nanda Mahārāja and installed Ugrasena as king. It also relates how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma completed Their education, retrieved the dead son of Their *guru* and then returned home.

Noting that His parents Vasudeva and Devakī had realized His true position as God, Śrī Kṛṣṇa expanded His Yogamāyā to again make them think of Him as their dear child. Then, with Lord Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa approached them and said how unhappy He was that He and they had been unable to enjoy the mutual satisfaction of parents and children who live together. Then He stated, “Even in a lifetime of one hundred years, no son can ever repay the debt he owes his parents, from whom he receives his very body. Any capable son who fails to support his parents will be forced, in the hereafter, to eat his own flesh. Indeed, any person who does not maintain and nourish those under his care children, wife, spiritual masters, *brāhmaṇas*, elderly parents, and so on is simply a living corpse. It was out of fear of Kāmsa that We could not serve you, so now please forgive Us.” Vasudeva and Devakī, overcome with emotion upon hearing these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's, embraced their two sons and in ecstasy shed a torrent of tears.

Having thus satisfied His mother and father, Lord Kṛṣṇa offered Kāmsa's kingdom to His maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, and then arranged for all His family members who had fled in fear of Kāmsa to return to their homes. Protected by the mighty arms of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Yādavas began to enjoy supreme bliss.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma next approached Nanda Mahārāja and praised him for having cared so lovingly for Them, another's sons. Kṛṣṇa then said to Nanda, “Dear Father, please return to Vraja. Knowing how much you and Our other relatives are suffering in separation from Us, Balarāma and I will come to see you as soon as We have satisfied your friends here in Mathurā.” Kṛṣṇa then worshiped Nanda with various offerings, and Nanda felt overwhelmed with love for his sons. After tearfully embracing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, he took the cowherd men and departed for Vraja. Next Vasudeva had his priests perform his sons' ritual of second birth. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then went to Garga Muni to take the vow of *brahmacarya*, celibacy. Afterward, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, though omniscient, desired to reside at the school of a spiritual master, and thus They went to live with Sāndīpani Muni at Avantīpura.

To teach the proper way to respect one's *guru*, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma served Their spiritual master with great devotion, as They would a Deity of the Supreme Lord Himself. Sāndīpani Muni, pleased by Their service, imparted to Them detailed knowledge of all the *Vedas*, together with their six corollaries and the *Upaniṣads*. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma needed to hear each subject explained only once to assimilate it completely, and thus in sixty-four days They learned the sixty-four traditional arts.

Before taking leave of Their *guru*, the two Lords offered Sāndīpani Muni any gift he desired. The wise Sāndīpani, seeing Their amazing prowess, requested that They bring back his son, who had died in the ocean at Prabhāsa.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma mounted a chariot and went to Prabhāsa, where They approached the shore and were worshiped by the presiding deity of the ocean. Kṛṣṇa asked the ocean to return His spiritual master's son, and the lord of the ocean replied that a demon dwelling within the ocean named Pāṣcājana had taken the boy away. Hearing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the ocean, killed that demon and took the shell that had grown from his body. But when Kṛṣṇa did not find His *guru*'s son within the demon's belly, He went to the planet of Yamarāja, the lord of death. Yamarāja came forward when he heard Kṛṣṇa blow the Pāṣcājanya conchshell and

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devotedly worshiped Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa then asked Yamarāja for Sāndīpani Muni's son, and Yamarāja immediately gave him to the two Lords.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then returned to Their spiritual master and presented him with his son, requesting him to choose yet another favor. But Sāndīpani Muni replied that by having obtained disciples such as Them, all his desires were fulfilled. He thus instructed Them to return home.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma traveled to Their home by chariot, and upon Their arrival all the citizens became unlimitedly ecstatic to see Them, just like persons who have regained a lost treasure.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Understanding that His parents were becoming aware of His transcendental opulences, the Supreme Personality of Godhead thought that this should not be allowed to happen. Thus He expanded His Yoga-māyā, which bewilders His devotees.

2Lord Kṛṣṇa, the greatest of the Sātvatas, approached His parents with His elder brother. Humbly bowing His head and gratifying them by respectfully addressing them as “My dear mother” and “My dear father,” Kṛṣṇa spoke as follows.

3[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Dear Father, because of Us, your two sons, you and mother Devakī always remained in anxiety and could never enjoy Our childhood, boyhood or youth.

4Deprived by fate, We could not live with you and enjoy the pampered happiness most children enjoy in their parents' home.

5With one's body one can acquire all goals of life, and it is one's parents who give the body birth and sustenance. Therefore no mortal man can repay his debt to his parents, even if he serves them for a full lifetime of a hundred years.

6A son who, though able to do so, fails to provide for his parents with his physical resources and wealth is forced after his death to eat his own flesh.

7A man who, though able to do so, fails to support his elderly parents, chaste wife, young child or spiritual master, or who neglects a brāhmaṇa or anyone who comes to him for shelter, is considered dead, though breathing.

8Thus We have wasted all these days, unable as We were to properly honor you because Our minds were always disturbed by fear of Kaṁsa.

9Dear Father and Mother, please forgive Us for not serving you. We are not independent and have been greatly frustrated by cruel Kaṁsa.

10Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus beguiled by the words of Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul of the universe, who by His internal illusory potency appeared to be a human, His parents joyfully raised Him up on their laps and embraced Him.

11Pouring out a shower of tears upon the Lord, His parents, who were bound up by the rope of affection, could not speak. They were overwhelmed, O King, and their throats choked up with tears.

12Thus having comforted His mother and father, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing as the son of Devakī, installed His maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, as King of the Yadus.

13The Lord told him: O mighty King, We are your subjects, so please command Us. Indeed,

because of the curse of Yayāti, no Yadu may sit on the royal throne.

14Since I am present in your entourage as your personal attendant, all the demigods and other exalted personalities will come with heads bowed to offer you tribute. What, then, to speak of the rulers of men?

15-16The Lord then brought all His close family members and other relatives back from the various places to which they had fled in fear of Kaṁsa. He received the Yadus, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Madhus, Dāśārhas, Kukuras and other clans with due honor, and He also consoled them, for they were weary of living in foreign lands. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, the creator of the universe, resettled them in their homes and gratified them with valuable gifts.

17-18The members of these clans, protected by the arms of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, felt that all their desires were fulfilled. Thus they enjoyed perfect happiness while living at home with their families. Because of the presence of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they no longer suffered from the fever of material existence. Every day these loving devotees could see Mukunda's ever-cheerful lotus face, which was decorated with beautiful, merciful smiling glances.

19Even the most elderly inhabitants of the city appeared youthful, full of strength and vitality, for with their eyes they constantly drank the elixir of Lord Mukunda's lotus face.

20Then, O exalted Parīkṣit, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, along with Lord Balarāma, approached Nanda Mahārāja. The two Lords embraced him and then addressed him as follows.

21[Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma said:] O Father, you and mother Yaśodā have affectionately maintained Us and cared for Us so much! Indeed, parents love their children more than their own lives.

22They are the real father and mother who care for, as they would their own sons, children abandoned by relatives unable to maintain and protect them.

23Now you should all return to Vraja, dear Father. We shall come to see you, Our dear relatives who suffer in separation from Us, as soon as We have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends.

24Thus consoling Nanda Mahārāja and the other men of Vraja, the infallible Supreme Lord respectfully honored them with gifts of clothing, jewelry, household utensils and so on.

25Nanda Mahārāja was overwhelmed with affection upon hearing Kṛṣṇa's words, and his eyes brimmed with tears as he embraced the two Lords. Then he went back to Vraja with the cowherd men.

26My dear King, then Vasudeva, the son of Śūrasena, arranged for a priest and other brāhmaṇas to perform his two sons' second-birth initiation.

27Vasudeva honored these brāhmaṇas by worshiping them and giving them fine ornaments and well-ornamented cows with their calves. All these cows wore gold necklaces and linen wreaths.

28The magnanimous Vasudeva then remembered the cows he had mentally given away on the occasion of Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's birth. Kaṁsa had stolen those cows, and Vasudeva now recovered them and gave them away in charity also.

29After attaining twice-born status through initiation, the Lords, sincere in Their vows, took the

further vow of celibacy from Garga Muni, the spiritual master of the Yadus.

30-31 Concealing Their innately perfect knowledge by Their humanlike activities, those two omniscient Lords of the universe, Themselves the origin of all branches of knowledge, next desired to reside at the school of a spiritual master. Thus They approached Sāndīpani Muni, a native of Kāsī living in the city of Avantī.

32 Sāndīpani thought very highly of these two self-controlled disciples, whom he had obtained so fortuitously. By serving him as devotedly as one would serve the Supreme Lord Himself, They showed others an irreproachable example of how to worship the spiritual master.

33 That best of brāhmaṇas, the spiritual master Sāndīpani, was satisfied with Their submissive behavior, and thus he taught Them the entire Vedas, together with their six corollaries and the Upaniṣads.

34 He also taught Them the Dhanur-veda, with its most confidential secrets; the standard books of law; the methods of logical reasoning and philosophical debate; and the sixfold science of politics.

35-36 O King, those best of persons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, being Themselves the original promulgators of all varieties of knowledge, could immediately assimilate each and every subject after hearing it explained just once. Thus with fixed concentration They learned the sixty-four arts and skills in as many days and nights. Thereafter, O King, They satisfied Their spiritual master by offering him guru-dakṣiṇā.

37 O King, the learned brāhmaṇa Sāndīpani carefully considered the two Lords' glorious and amazing qualities and Their superhuman intelligence. Then, after consulting with his wife, he chose as his remuneration the return of his young son, who had died in the ocean at Prabhāsa.

38 "So be it," replied those two great chariot warriors of limitless might, and They at once mounted Their chariot and set off for Prabhāsa. When They reached that place, They walked up to the shore and sat down. In a moment the deity of the ocean, recognizing Them to be the Supreme Lords, approached Them with offerings of tribute.

39 The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed the lord of the ocean: Let the son of My guru be presented at once the one you seized here with your mighty waves.

40 The ocean replied: O Lord Kṛṣṇa, it was not I who abducted him, but a demonic descendant of Diti named Paścajana, who travels in the water in the form of a conch.

41 "Indeed," the ocean said, "that demon has taken him away." Hearing this, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the ocean, found Paścajana and killed him. But the Lord did not find the boy within the demon's belly.

42-44 Lord Janārdana took the conchshell that had grown around the demon's body and went back to the chariot. Then He proceeded to Saṁyamanī, the beloved capital of Yamarāja, the lord of death. Upon arriving there with Lord Balarāma, He loudly blew His conchshell, and Yamarāja, who keeps the conditioned souls in check, came as soon as he heard the resounding vibration. Yamarāja elaborately worshiped the two Lords with great devotion, and then he addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa, who lives in everyone's heart: "O Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, what shall I do for You and Lord Balarāma, who are playing the part of ordinary humans?"

45 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Suffering the bondage of his past activity, My spiritual master's son was brought here to you. O great King, obey My command and bring this

boy to Me without delay.

46Yamarāja said, “So be it,” and brought forth the guru’s son. Then those two most exalted Yadus presented the boy to Their spiritual master and said to him, “Please select another boon.”

47The spiritual master said: My dear boys, You two have completely fulfilled the disciple’s obligation to reward his spiritual master. Indeed, with disciples like You, what further desires could a guru have?

48O heroes, now please return home. May Your fame sanctify the world, and may the Vedic hymns be ever fresh in Your minds, both in this life and the next.

49Thus receiving Their guru’s permission to leave, the two Lords returned to Their city on Their chariot, which moved as swiftly as the wind and resounded like a cloud.

50All the citizens rejoiced upon seeing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, whom they had not seen for many days. The people felt just like those who have lost their wealth and then regained it.

SB 10.46: Uddhava Visits Vṛndāvana

This chapter describes how Śrī Kṛṣṇa sent Uddhava to Vraja to relieve the distress of Nanda, Yaśodā and the young *gopīs*.

One day Lord Kṛṣṇa asked His intimate friend Uddhava to take news of Him to Vraja and thus relieve His parents and the *gopīs* of their misery caused by their separation from Him. Riding on a chariot, Uddhava reached Vraja at sunset. He saw the cows returning home to the cowherd village and the calves jumping here and there as their mothers followed slowly behind, weighed down by their heavy milk bags. The cowherd men and women were chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and the village was attractively decorated with burning incense and rows of lamps. All this presented a scene of exceptional transcendental beauty.

Nanda Mahārāja welcomed Uddhava warmly into his home. The cowherd King then worshiped him as nondifferent from Lord Vāsudeva, fed him nicely, seated him comfortably upon a bed and then inquired from him about the welfare of Vasudeva and his sons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Nanda asked, “Does Kṛṣṇa still remember His friends, the village of Gokula and Govardhana Hill? He protected us from a forest fire, wind and rain, and many other disasters. By remembering His pastimes again and again, we are relieved of all karmic entanglement, and when we see the places marked by His lotus feet, our minds become fully absorbed in thought of Him. Garga Muni told me that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have both descended directly from the spiritual world. Just see how They have so easily dispatched Kaṁsa, the wrestlers, the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa and many other demons!” As Nanda remembered Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, his throat choked up with tears and he could speak no further. Meanwhile, as mother Yaśodā heard her husband speak of Kṛṣṇa, the intense love she felt for her son caused a flood of milk to pour from her breasts and a torrent of tears from her eyes.

Seeing the superexcellent affection Nanda and Yaśodā had for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava commented, “You two are indeed most glorious. One who has attained pure love for the Supreme Absolute Truth in His humanlike form has nothing further to accomplish. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are present in the hearts of all living beings, just as fire lies dormant within wood. These two Lords see all equally, having no particular friends or enemies. Free from egoism and possessiveness, They have no father, mother, wife or children, are never subject to birth, and have no material body. Only to enjoy spiritual happiness and deliver Their saintly devotees do They appear by

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Their own sweet will among various species of life, both high and low.

“Lord Kṛṣṇa is not merely the son of you, O Nanda and Yaśodā, but the son of all persons, as well as their mother and father. In fact, He is everyone’s dearest relation inasmuch as nothing that is seen or heard in the past, present or future, among the moving or nonmoving, is independent of Him.”

Nanda Mahārāja and Uddhava passed the night talking about Kṛṣṇa in this way. Then the cowherd women performed their morning worship and began churning butter, singing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they busily pulled the churning ropes. The sounds of churning and singing reverberated into the sky, cleansing the world of all inauspiciousness.

When the sun rose, the *gopīs* saw Uddhava’s chariot at the edge of the cowherd village, and they thought that Akṛūra might have returned. But just then Uddhava finished his morning duties and presented himself before them.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The supremely intelligent Uddhava was the best counselor of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, a beloved friend of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and a direct disciple of Bṛhaspati.

2The Supreme Lord Hari, who relieves the distress of all who surrender to Him, once took the hand of His fully devoted, dearest friend Uddhava and addressed him as follows.

3[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Dear gentle Uddhava, go to Vraja and give pleasure to Our parents. And also relieve the *gopīs*, suffering in separation from Me, by giving them My message.

4The minds of those *gopīs* are always absorbed in Me, and their very lives are ever devoted to Me. For My sake they have abandoned everything related to their bodies, renouncing ordinary happiness in this life, as well as religious duties necessary for such happiness in the next life. I alone am their dearest beloved and, indeed, their very Self. I personally sustain such devotees, who for My sake give up all worldly duties.

5My dear Uddhava, for those women of Gokula I am the most cherished object of love. Thus when they remember Me, who am so far away, they are overwhelmed by the anxiety of separation.

6Simply because I have promised to return to them, My fully devoted cowherd girlfriends struggle to maintain their lives somehow or other.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed, O King, Uddhava respectfully accepted his master’s message, mounted his chariot and set off for Nanda-gokula.

8The fortunate Uddhava reached Nanda Mahārāja’s pastures just as the sun was setting, and since the returning cows and other animals were raising dust with their hooves, his chariot passed unnoticed.

9-13Gokula resounded on all sides with the sounds of bulls in rut fighting with one another for fertile cows; with the mooing of cows, burdened by their udders, chasing after their calves; with the noise of milking and of the white calves jumping here and there; with the loud reverberation of flute-playing; and with the singing of the all-auspicious deeds of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma by the cowherd men and women, who made the village resplendent with their wonderfully ornamented attire. The cowherds’ homes in Gokula appeared most charming with their abundant paraphernalia for worship of the sacrificial fire, the sun, unexpected guests, the cows, the brāhmaṇas, the forefathers and the demigods. On all sides lay the flowering forest, echoing with flocks of birds and swarms of bees and beautified by its lakes crowded with

swans, kārāṇḍava ducks and bowers of lotuses.

14As soon as Uddhava arrived at Nanda Mahārāja's home, Nanda came forward to meet him. The cowherd King embraced him in great happiness and worshiped him as nondifferent from Lord Vāsudeva.

15After Uddhava had eaten first-class food, been seated comfortably on a bed and been relieved of his fatigue by a foot massage and other means, Nanda inquired from him as follows.

16[Nanda Mahārāja said:] My dear most fortunate one, does the son of Śūra fare well, now that he is free and has rejoined his children and other relatives?

17Fortunately, because of his own sins, the sinful Kāmsa has been killed, along with all his brothers. He always hated the saintly and righteous Yadus.

18Does Kṛṣṇa remember us? Does He remember His mother and His friends and well-wishers? Does He remember the cowherds and their village of Vraja, of which He is the master? Does He remember the cows, Vṛndāvana forest and Govardhana Hill?

19Will Govinda return even once to see His family? If He ever does, we may then glance upon His beautiful face, with its beautiful eyes, nose and smile.

20We were saved from the forest fire, the wind and rain, the bull and serpent demons from all such insurmountable, deadly dangers by that very great soul, Kṛṣṇa.

21As we remember the wonderful deeds Kṛṣṇa performed, His playful sidelong glances, His smiles and His words, O Uddhava, we forget all our material engagements.

22When we see the places where Mukunda enjoyed His sporting pastime—the rivers, hills and forests He decorated with His feet—our minds become totally absorbed in Him.

23In my opinion, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma must be two exalted demigods who have come to this planet to fulfill some great mission of the demigods. Such was foretold by Garga Ṛṣi.

24After all, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed Kāmsa, who was as strong as ten thousand elephants, as well as the wrestlers Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika and the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa. They killed them all sportingly, as easily as a lion disposes of small animals.

25With the ease of a royal elephant breaking a stick, Kṛṣṇa broke a powerful, giant bow three tālas long. He also held a mountain aloft for seven days with just one hand.

26Here in Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma easily destroyed demons like Pralamba, Dhenuka, Arista, Tṛṇāvarta and Baka, who had themselves defeated both demigods and other demons.

27Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus intensely remembering Kṛṣṇa again and again, Nanda Mahārāja, his mind completely attached to the Lord, felt extreme anxiety and fell silent, overcome by the strength of his love.

28As mother Yaśodā heard the descriptions of her son's activities, she poured out her tears, and milk flowed from her breasts out of love.

29Uddhava then joyfully addressed Nanda Mahārāja, having clearly seen the supreme loving attraction he and Yaśodā felt for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

30Śrī Uddhava said: O respectful Nanda, certainly you and mother Yaśodā are the most

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praiseworthy persons in the entire world, since you have developed such a loving attitude toward Lord Nārāyaṇa, the spiritual master of all living beings.

31These two Lords, Mukunda and Balarāma, are each the seed and womb of the universe, the creator and His creative potency. They enter the hearts of living beings and control their conditioned awareness. They are the primeval Supreme.

32-33Anyone, even a person in an impure state, who absorbs his mind in Him for just a moment at the time of death burns up all traces of sinful reactions and immediately attains the supreme transcendental destination in a pure, spiritual form as effulgent as the sun. You two have rendered exceptional loving service to Him, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supersoul of all and the cause of all existence, the great soul who, although the original cause of everything, has a humanlike form. What pious deeds could still be required of you?

34Infallible Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the devotees, will soon return to Vraja to satisfy His parents.

35Having killed Kaṁsa, the enemy of all the Yadus, in the wrestling arena, Kṛṣṇa will now surely fulfill His promise to you by coming back.

36O most fortunate ones, do not lament. You will see Kṛṣṇa again very soon. He is present in the hearts of all living beings, just as fire lies dormant in wood.

37For Him no one is especially dear or despicable, superior or inferior, and yet He is not indifferent to anyone. He is free from all desire for respect and yet gives respect to all others.

38He has no mother, no father, no wife, children or other relatives. No one is related to Him, and yet no one is a stranger to Him. He has no material body and no birth.

39He has no work to do in this world that would oblige Him to take birth in pure, impure or mixed species of life. Yet to enjoy His pastimes and deliver His saintly devotees, He manifests Himself.

40Although beyond the three modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—the transcendental Lord accepts association with them as His play. Thus the unborn Supreme Lord utilizes the material modes to create, maintain and destroy.

41Just as a person who is whirling around perceives the ground to be turning, one who is affected by false ego thinks himself the doer, when actually only his mind is acting.

42The Supreme Lord Hari is certainly not your son alone. Rather, being the Lord, He is the son, Soul, father and mother of everyone.

43Nothing can be said to exist independent of Lord Acyuta—nothing heard or seen, nothing in the past, present or future, nothing moving or unmoving, great or small. He indeed is everything, for He is the Supreme Soul.

44While Kṛṣṇa's messenger continued speaking with Nanda, the night ended, O King. The women of the cowherd village rose from bed and, lighting lamps, worshiped their household deities. Then they began churning the yogurt into butter.

45As they pulled on the churning ropes with their bangled arms, the women of Vraja shone with the splendor of their jewels, which reflected the lamps' light. Their hips, breasts and necklaces moved about, and their faces, anointed with reddish kuṅkuma, glowed radiantly with the luster of their earrings reflecting from their cheeks.

46As the ladies of Vraja loudly sang the glories of lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, their songs blended with the sound of their churning, ascended to the sky and dissipated all inauspiciousness in every direction.

47When the godly sun had risen, the people of Vraja noticed the golden chariot in front of Nanda Mahārāja's doorway. "Who does this belong to?" they asked.

48"Perhaps Akrūra has returned he who fulfilled Kāṁsa's desire by taking lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā.

49"Is he going to use our flesh to offer funeral oblations for his master, who was so satisfied with his service?" As the women were speaking in this way, Uddhava appeared, having finished his early-morning duties.

SB 10.47: The Song of the Bee

This chapter describes how Uddhava, on the order of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, delivered the Lord's message to the *gopīs*, consoled them and then returned to Mathurā.

When the young maidens of Vraja saw lotus-eyed Uddhava, who wore a yellow garment and attractive earrings, they were astonished at how much he resembled Kṛṣṇa. Thinking "Who is this?" they approached and encircled him. When they realized that Kṛṣṇa must have sent him, they brought him to a secluded place where he could speak to them confidentially.

The *gopīs* then began to remember the pastimes they had enjoyed with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and putting aside all ordinary propriety and shyness, they loudly wept. One *gopī*, while deeply meditating on Her association with Kṛṣṇa, noticed a bumblebee before Her. Imagining the bee to be a messenger from Him, She said, "Just as bees wander among various flowers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has abandoned the young girls of Vraja and developed affection for other women." The *gopī* continued to speak in this way, contrasting Her own supposed ill fortune to Her rival lovers' good fortune, all the while glorifying the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. She then declared that although Kṛṣṇa may have abandoned the *gopīs*, they could not possibly stop remembering Him for even a moment.

Uddhava tried to console the damsels of Vraja, who were so anxious to see Kṛṣṇa once again. Uddhava explained, "While ordinary persons must perform many pious deeds to qualify as servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa, you simple cowherd girls are so extremely fortunate that the Lord has favored you with the very highest degree of pure devotion for Him." Uddhava then related to them the Lord's message.

Quoting Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava said, "I am the Supreme Soul and supreme shelter of all. By My potencies I create, maintain and destroy the cosmos. I am indeed most dear to you *gopīs*, but to increase your attraction for Me and intensify your remembrance of Me, I left you. After all, when a woman's beloved is far away, she fixes her mind upon him constantly. By incessantly remembering Me, you are sure to regain My association without delay."

The *gopīs* then asked Uddhava, "Is Kṛṣṇa happy now that Kāṁsa is dead and He can enjoy the company of His family members and the women of Mathurā? Does He still remember all the pastimes He enjoyed with us, such as the *nāsa* dance? Will Śrī Kṛṣṇa once again appear before us and give us ecstasy, just as Lord Indra, with his rain, gives life back to the forests aggrieved by the summer heat? Although we know that the greatest happiness comes from renunciation, we simply cannot stop hoping to attain Kṛṣṇa, for the marks of His lotus feet are still present

throughout the land of Vraja, reminding us of His graceful gait, generous smiles and gentle talks. By all these our hearts have been stolen away.”

Having said this, the *gopīs* loudly chanted Lord Kṛṣṇa’s names, calling out, “O Govinda, please come and destroy our suffering!” Uddhava then pacified the *gopīs* with statements that dispelled their pain of separation, and they in turn worshiped him as nondifferent from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Uddhava stayed in the district of Vraja for several months, giving pleasure to the residents by reminding them about Kṛṣṇa in various ways. Very satisfied at seeing the extent of the *gopīs*’ love for the Lord, he declared, “These cowherd girls have perfected their lives by coming to the platform of unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, even Lord Brahmā is inferior to them. The goddess of fortune herself, who always resides on Kṛṣṇa’s chest, could not get the same mercy as that which the *gopīs* obtained during the *nāsa* dance, when Kṛṣṇa embraced their necks with His mighty arms. What, then, to speak of other women! Indeed, I would consider myself most fortunate to take birth as even a bush or creeper that would sometimes be touched by the dust of these *gopīs*’ lotus feet.”

Finally, Uddhava entreated Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men for permission to go back to Mathurā. Nanda presented him with many gifts and prayed to Uddhava for the ability to always remember Kṛṣṇa. Returning to Mathurā, Uddhava offered Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and King Ugrasena the gifts sent by Nanda Mahārāja and described to them everything he had experienced in Vraja.

1-2 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The young women of Vraja became astonished upon seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa’s servant, who had long arms, whose eyes resembled a newly grown lotus, who wore a yellow garment and a lotus garland, and whose lotuslike face glowed with brightly polished earrings. “Who is this handsome man?” the *gopīs* asked. “Where has he come from, and whom does he serve? He’s wearing Kṛṣṇa’s clothes and ornaments!” Saying this, the *gopīs* eagerly crowded around Uddhava, whose shelter was the lotus feet of Lord Uttamaḥśloka, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

3 Bowing their heads in humility, the *gopīs* duly honored Uddhava with their shy, smiling glances and pleasing words. They took him to a quiet place, seated him comfortably and began to question him, for they recognized him to be a messenger from Kṛṣṇa, the master of the goddess of fortune.

4 [The *gopīs* said:] We know that you are the personal servant of Kṛṣṇa, the chief of the Yadus, and that you have come here on the order of your good master, who desires to give pleasure to His parents.

5 We see nothing else He might consider worth remembering in these cow pastures of Vraja. Indeed, the bonds of affection for one’s family members are difficult to break, even for a sage.

6 The friendship shown toward other those who are not family members is motivated by personal interest, and thus it is a pretense that lasts only until one’s purpose is fulfilled. Such friendship is just like the interest men take in women, or bees in flowers.

7 Prostitutes abandon a penniless man, subjects an incompetent king, students their teacher once they have finished their education, and priests a man who has remunerated them for a sacrifice.

8 Birds abandon a tree when its fruits are gone, guests a house after they have eaten, animals a forest that has burnt down, and a lover the woman he has enjoyed, even though she remains

attached to him.

9-10 Thus speaking, the gopīs, whose words, bodies and minds were fully dedicated to Lord Govinda, put aside all their regular work now that Kṛṣṇa's messenger, Śrī Uddhava, had arrived among them. Constantly remembering the activities their beloved Kṛṣṇa had performed in His childhood and youth, they sang about them and cried without shame.

11 One of the gopīs, while meditating on Her previous association with Kṛṣṇa, saw a honeybee before Her and imagined it to be a messenger sent by Her beloved. Thus She spoke as follows.

12 The gopī said: O honeybee, O friend of a cheater, don't touch My feet with your whiskers, which are smeared with the kuṅkuma that rubbed onto Kṛṣṇa's garland when it was crushed by the breasts of a rival lover! Let Kṛṣṇa satisfy the women of Mathurā. One who sends a messenger like you will certainly be ridiculed in the Yadus' assembly.

13 After making us drink the enchanting nectar of His lips only once, Kṛṣṇa suddenly abandoned us, just as you might quickly abandon some flowers. How is it, then, that Goddess Padmā willingly serves His lotus feet? Alas! The answer must certainly be that her mind has been stolen away by His deceitful words.

14 O bee, why do you sing here so much about the Lord of the Yadus, in front of us homeless people? These topics are old news to us. Better you sing about that friend of Arjuna in front of His new girlfriends, the burning desire in whose breasts He has now relieved. Those ladies will surely give you the charity you are begging.

15 In heaven, on earth or in the subterranean sphere, what women are unavailable to Him? He simply arches His eyebrows and smiles with deceptive charm, and they all become His. The supreme goddess herself worships the dust of His feet, so what is our position in comparison? But at least those who are wretched can chant His name, Uttamaḥśloka.

16 Keep your head off My feet! I know what you're doing. You expertly learned diplomacy from Mukunda, and now you come as His messenger with flattering words. But He abandoned those who for His sake alone gave up their children, husbands and all other relations. He's simply ungrateful. Why should I make up with Him now?

17 Like a hunter, He cruelly shot the king of the monkeys with arrows. Because He was conquered by a woman, He disfigured another woman who came to Him with lusty desires. And even after consuming the gifts of Bali Mahārāja, He bound him up with ropes as if he were a crow. So let us give up all friendship with this dark-complexioned boy, even if we can't give up talking about Him.

18 To hear about the pastimes that Kṛṣṇa regularly performs is nectar for the ears. For those who relish just a single drop of that nectar, even once, their dedication to material duality is ruined. Many such persons have suddenly given up their wretched homes and families and, themselves becoming wretched, traveled here to Vṛndāvana to wander about like birds, begging for their living.

19 Faithfully taking His deceitful words as true, we became just like the black deer's foolish wives, who trust the cruel hunter's song. Thus we repeatedly felt the sharp pain of lust caused by the touch of His nails. O messenger, please talk about something besides Kṛṣṇa.

20 O friend of My dear one, has My beloved sent you here again? I should honor you, friend, so please choose whatever boon you wish. But why have you come back here to take us to Him, whose conjugal love is so difficult to give up? After all, gentle bee, His consort is the goddess

Śrī, and she is always with Him, staying upon His chest.

21O Uddhava! It is indeed regrettable that Kṛṣṇa resides in Mathurā. Does He remember His father's household affairs and His friends, the cowherd boys? O great soul! Does He ever talk about us, His maidservants? When will He lay on our heads His aguru-scented hand?

22Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having heard this, Uddhava then tried to pacify the gopīs, who were most eager to see Lord Kṛṣṇa. He thus began relating to them the message of their beloved.

23Śrī Uddhava said: Certainly you gopīs are all-successful and are universally worshiped because you have dedicated your minds in this way to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva.

24Devotional service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa is attained by charity, strict vows, austerities and fire sacrifices, by japa, study of Vedic texts, observance of regulative principles and, indeed, by the performance of many other auspicious practices.

25By your great fortune you have established an unexcelled standard of pure devotion for the Lord, Uttamaḥślokaa standard even the sages can hardly attain.

26By your great fortune you have left your sons, husbands, bodily comforts, relatives and homes in favor of the supreme male, who is known as Kṛṣṇa.

27You have rightfully claimed the privilege of unalloyed love for the transcendental Lord, O most glorious gopīs. Indeed, by exhibiting your love for Kṛṣṇa in separation from Him, you have shown me great mercy.

28My good ladies, now please hear your beloved's message, which I, the confidential servant of my master, have come here to bring you.

29The Supreme Lord said: You are never actually separated from Me, for I am the Soul of all creation. Just as the elements of nature ether, air, fire, water and earth are present in every created thing, so I am present within everyone's mind, life air and senses, and also within the physical elements and the modes of material nature.

30By Myself I create, sustain and withdraw Myself within Myself by the power of My personal energy, which comprises the material elements, the senses and the modes of nature.

31Being composed of pure consciousness, or knowledge, the soul is distinct from everything material and is uninvolved in the entanglements of the modes of nature. We can perceive the soul through the three functions of material nature known as wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep.

32As a person just arisen from sleep may continue to meditate on a dream even though it is illusory, so by the agency of the mind one meditates on the sense objects, which the senses can then obtain. Therefore one should become fully alert and bring the mind under control.

33According to intelligent authorities, this is the ultimate conclusion of all the Vedas, as well as all practice of yoga, Sāṅkhya, renunciation, austerity, sense control and truthfulness, just as the sea is the ultimate destination of all rivers.

34But the actual reason why I, the beloved object of your sight, have stayed far away from you is that I wanted to intensify your meditation upon Me and thus draw your minds closer to Me.

35When her lover is far away, a woman thinks of him more than when he is present before her.

36Because your minds are totally absorbed in Me and free from all other engagement, you remember Me always, and so you will very soon have Me again in your presence.

37Although some gopīs had to remain in the cowherd village and so could not join the rāsa dance to sport with Me at night in the forest, they were nonetheless fortunate. Indeed, they attained Me by thinking of My potent pastimes.

38Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The women of Vraja were pleased to hear this message from their dearest Kṛṣṇa. His words having revived their memory, they addressed Uddhava as follows.

39The gopīs said: It is very good that Kāmsa, the enemy and persecutor of the Yadus, has now been killed, along with his followers. And it is also very good that Lord Acyuta is living happily in the company of His well-wishing friends and relatives, whose every desire is now fulfilled.

40Gentle Uddhava, is the elder brother of Gada now bestowing on the city women the pleasure that actually belongs to us? We suppose those ladies worship Him with generous glances full of affectionate, shy smiles.

41Śrī Kṛṣṇa is expert in all kinds of conjugal affairs and is the darling of the city women. How can He not become entangled, now that He's constantly adored by their enchanting words and gestures?

42O saintly one, does Govinda ever remember us during His conversations with the city women? Does He ever mention us village girls as He freely talks with them?

43Does He recall those nights in the Vṛndāvana forest, lovely with lotus, jasmine and the bright moon? As we glorified His charming pastimes, He enjoyed with us, His beloved girlfriends, in the circle of the rāsa dance, which resounded with the music of ankle bells.

44Will that descendant of Daśārha return here and by the touch of His limbs bring back to life those who are now burning with the grief He Himself has caused? Will He save us in that way, just as Lord Indra brings a forest back to life with his water-bearing clouds?

45But why should Kṛṣṇa come here after winning a kingdom, killing His enemies and marrying the daughters of kings? He's satisfied there, surrounded by all His friends and well-wishers.

46The great soul Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of the goddess of fortune, and He automatically achieves whatever He desires. How can we forest-dwellers or any other women fulfill His purposes when He is already fulfilled within Himself?

47Indeed, the greatest happiness is to renounce all desires, as even the prostitute Piṅgalā has declared. Yet even though we know this, we cannot give up our hopes of attaining Kṛṣṇa.

48Who can bear to give up intimate talks with Lord Uttamaḥśloka? Although He shows no interest in her, Goddess Śrī never moves from her place on His chest.

49Dear Uddhava Prabhu, when Kṛṣṇa was here in the company of Saṅkarṣaṇa, He enjoyed all these rivers, hills, forests, cows and flute sounds.

50All these remind us constantly of Nanda's son. Indeed, because we see Kṛṣṇa's footprints, which are marked with divine symbols, we can never forget Him.

51O Uddhava, how can we forget Him when our hearts have been stolen away by the charming way He walks, His generous smile and playful glances, and His honeylike words?

52O master, O master of the goddess of fortune, O master of Vraja! O destroyer of all suffering, Govinda, please lift Your Gokula out of the ocean of distress in which it is drowning!

53Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Lord Kṛṣṇa's messages having relieved their fever of separation, the gopīs then worshiped Uddhava, recognizing him as nondifferent from their Lord, Kṛṣṇa.

54Uddhava remained there for several months, dispelling the gopīs' sorrow by chanting the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Thus he brought joy to all the people of Gokula.

55All the days that Uddhava dwelled in Nanda's cowherd village seemed like a single moment to the residents of Vraja, for Uddhava was always discussing Kṛṣṇa.

56That servant of Lord Hari, seeing the rivers, forests, mountains, valleys and flowering trees of Vraja, enjoyed inspiring the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana by reminding them of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

57Thus seeing how the gopīs were always disturbed because of their total absorption in Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava was supremely pleased. Desiring to offer them all respect, he sang as follows.

58[Uddhava sang:] Among all persons on earth, these cowherd women alone have actually perfected their embodied lives, for they have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for Lord Govinda. Their pure love is hankered after by those who fear material existence, by great sages, and by ourselves as well. For one who has tasted the narrations of the infinite Lord, what is the use of taking birth as a high-class brāhmaṇa, or even as Lord Brahmā himself?

59How amazing it is that these simple women who wander about the forest, seemingly spoiled by improper behavior, have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul! Still, it is true that the Supreme Lord Himself awards His blessings even to an ignorant worshiper, just as the best medicine works even when taken by a person ignorant of its ingredients.

60When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was dancing with the gopīs in the rāsa-līlā, the gopīs were embraced by the arms of the Lord. This transcendental favor was never bestowed upon the goddess of fortune or other consorts in the spiritual world. Indeed, never was such a thing even imagined by the most beautiful girls in the heavenly planets, whose bodily luster and aroma resemble the lotus flower. And what to speak of worldly women who are very beautiful according to material estimation?

61The gopīs of Vṛndāvana have given up the association of their husbands, sons and other family members, who are very difficult to give up, and they have forsaken the path of chastity to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa, which one should search for by Vedic knowledge. Oh, let me be fortunate enough to be one of the bushes, creepers or herbs in Vṛndāvana, because the gopīs trample them and bless them with the dust of their lotus feet.

62The goddess of fortune herself, along with Lord Brahmā and all the other demigods, who are masters of yogic perfection, can worship the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa only within her mind. But during the rāsa dance Lord Kṛṣṇa placed His feet upon these gopīs' breasts, and by embracing those feet the gopīs gave up all distress.

63I repeatedly offer my respects to the dust from the feet of the women of Nanda Mahārāja's cowherd village. When these gopīs loudly chant the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the vibration purifies

the three worlds.

64Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Uddhava, the descendant of Daśārha, then took permission to leave from the gopīs and from mother Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāja. He bade farewell to all the cowherd men and, about to depart, mounted his chariot.

65As Uddhava was about to leave, Nanda and the others approached him bearing various items of worship. With tears in their eyes they addressed him as follows.

66[Nanda and the other cowherds said:] May our mental functions always take shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, may our words always chant His names, and may our bodies always bow down to Him and serve Him.

67Wherever we are made to wander about this world by the Supreme Lord's will, in accordance with the reactions to our fruitive work, may our good works and charity always grant Us love for Lord Kṛṣṇa.

68[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O ruler of men, thus honored by the cowherd men with expressions of devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava went back to the city of Mathurā, which was under Kṛṣṇa's protection.

69After falling down to pay his homage, Uddhava described to Lord Kṛṣṇa the immense devotion of the residents of Vraja. Uddhava also described it to Vasudeva, Lord Balarāma and King Ugrasena and presented to them the gifts of tribute he had brought with him.

SB 10.48: Kṛṣṇa Pleases His Devotees

In this chapter Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa first visits Trivakrā (also known as Kubjā) and enjoys with her, and then He visits Akrūra. The Lord sends Akrūra to Hastināpura to satisfy the Pāṇḍavas.

After Uddhava had related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa the news of Vraja, the Lord went to the home of Trivakrā, which was decorated with diverse ornamentation conducive to sexual enjoyment. Trivakrā welcomed Kṛṣṇa with great respect, giving Him a raised seat and, together with her female companions, worshiping Him. She also offered Uddhava a seat, as befitted his position, but Uddhava simply touched the seat and sat on the floor.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then reclined on an opulent bed as the maidservant Trivakrā elaborately washed and decorated herself. Then she approached Him. Kṛṣṇa invited Trivakrā to the bed and began to enjoy with her in various ways. By embracing Lord Kṛṣṇa, Trivakrā freed herself of the torment of lust. She asked Kṛṣṇa to remain with her for some time, and the considerate Lord promised to fulfill her request in due course. He then returned with Uddhava to His residence. Apart from offering sandal paste to Kṛṣṇa, Trivakrā had never performed any pious acts, yet simply on the strength of the piety of this single act she attained the rare personal association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa next went to Akrūra's house with Lord Baladeva and Uddhava. Akrūra honored the three of them by bowing down and presenting them with suitable sitting places. Then he worshiped Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, washed Their feet and poured the water on his head. Akrūra also offered Them many prayers.

Lord Kṛṣṇa was pleased with Akrūra's prayers. He told him that since he, Akrūra, was in fact Their paternal uncle, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma should be the recipients of his protection and mercy. Lord Kṛṣṇa then praised Akrūra as a saint and purifier of the sinful, and He asked him to visit Hastināpura to find out how the Pāṇḍavas, deprived of their father, were faring. Finally, the

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Lord returned home, taking Balarāma and Uddhava with Him.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Next, after assimilating Uddhava's report, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the omniscient Soul of all that be, desired to satisfy the serving girl Trivakrā, who was troubled by lust. Thus He went to her house.

2Trivakrā's home was opulently appointed with expensive furnishings and replete with sensual accoutrements meant to inspire sexual desire. There were banners, rows of strung pearls, canopies, fine beds and sitting places, and also fragrant incense, oil lamps, flower garlands and aromatic sandalwood paste.

3When Trivakrā saw Him arriving at her house, she at once rose from her seat in a flurry. Coming forward graciously with her girlfriends, she respectfully greeted Lord Acyuta by offering Him an excellent seat and other articles of worship.

4Uddhava also received a seat of honor, since he was a saintly person, but he simply touched it and sat on the floor. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, imitating the manners of human society, quickly made Himself comfortable on an opulent bed.

5Trivakrā prepared herself by bathing, anointing her body, and dressing in fine garments, by putting on jewelry, garlands and perfume, and also by chewing betel nut, drinking fragrant liquor, and so on. She then approached Lord Mādhava with shy, playful smiles and coquettish glances.

6Calling forward His beloved, who was anxious and shy at the prospect of this new contact, the Lord pulled her by her bangled hands onto the bed. Thus He enjoyed with that beautiful girl, whose only trace of piety was her having offered ointment to the Lord.

7Simply by smelling the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, Trivakrā cleansed away the burning lust Cupid had aroused in her breasts, chest and eyes. With her two arms she embraced between her breasts her lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the personification of bliss, and thus she gave up her long-standing distress.

8Having thus gotten the hard-to-get Supreme Lord by the simple act of offering Him body ointment, unfortunate Trivakrā submitted to that Lord of freedom the following request.

9[Trivakrā said:] O beloved, please stay here with me for a few days more and enjoy. I cannot bear to give up Your association, O lotus-eyed one!

10Promising her the fulfillment of this lusty desire, considerate Kṛṣṇa, Lord of all beings, paid Trivakrā His respects and then returned with Uddhava to His own supremely opulent residence.

11Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord of all lords, is ordinarily difficult to approach. One who has properly worshiped Him and then chooses the benediction of mundane sense gratification is certainly of poor intelligence, for he is satisfied with an insignificant result.

12Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, wanting to have some things done, went to Akrūra's house with Balarāma and Uddhava. The Lord also desired to please Akrūra.

13-14Akrūra stood up in great joy when he saw them, his own relatives and the greatest of exalted personalities, coming from a distance. After embracing them and greeting them, Akrūra bowed down to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and was greeted by Them in return. Then, when his guests had taken their seats, he worshiped them in accordance with scriptural rules.

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15-16O King, Akrūra bathed the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma and then poured the bath water on his head. He presented Them with gifts of fine clothing, aromatic sandalwood paste, flower garlands and excellent jewelry. After thus worshiping the two Lords, he bowed his head to the floor. He then began to massage Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet, placing them on his lap, and with his head bowed in humility he addressed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as follows.

17[Akrūra said:] It is our good fortune that You two Lords have killed the evil Kāṁsa and his followers, thus delivering Your dynasty from endless suffering and causing it to flourish.

18You both are the original Supreme Person, the cause of the universe and its very substance. Not the slightest subtle cause or manifest product of creation exists apart from You.

19O Supreme Absolute Truth, with Your personal energies You create this universe and then enter into it. Thus one can perceive You in many different forms by hearing from authorities and by direct experience.

20Just as the primary element earth and so on manifest themselves in abundant variety among all the species of mobile and immobile life, so You, the one independent Supreme Soul, appear to be manifold among the variegated objects of Your creation.

21You create, destroy and also maintain this universe with Your personal energies the modes of passion, ignorance and goodness yet You are never entangled by these modes or the activities they generate. Since You are the original source of all knowledge, what could ever cause You to be bound by illusion?

22Since it has never been demonstrated that You are covered by material, bodily designations, it must be concluded that for You there is neither birth in a literal sense nor any duality. Therefore You never undergo bondage or liberation, and if You appear to, it is only because of Your desire that we see You in that way, or simply because of our lack of discrimination.

23You originally enunciated the ancient religious path of the Vedas for the benefit of the whole universe. Whenever that path becomes obstructed by wicked persons following the path of atheism, You assume one of Your incarnations, which are all in the transcendental mode of goodness.

24You are that very same Supreme Person, my Lord, and You have now appeared in the home of Vasudeva with Your plenary portion. You have done this to relieve the earth's burden by killing hundreds of armies led by kings who are expansions of the demigods' enemies, and also to spread the fame of our dynasty.

25Today, O Lord, my home has become most fortunate because You have entered it. As the Supreme Truth, You embody the forefathers, ordinary creatures, human beings and demigods, and the water that has washed Your feet purifies the three worlds. Indeed, O transcendent one, You are the spiritual master of the universe.

26What learned person would approach anyone but You for shelter, when You are the affectionate, grateful and truthful well-wisher of Your devotees? To those who worship You in sincere friendship You reward everything they desire, even Your own self, yet You never increase or diminish.

27It is by our great fortune, Janārdana, that You are now visible to us, for even the masters of yoga and the foremost demigods can achieve this goal only with great difficulty. Please quickly cut the ropes of our illusory attachment for children, wife, wealth, influential friends, home and body. All such attachment is simply the effect of Your illusory material energy.

28[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus worshiped and fully glorified by His devotee, the Supreme Lord Hari smilingly addressed Akrūra, completely charming him with His words.

29The Supreme Lord said: You are Our spiritual master, paternal uncle and praiseworthy friend, and We are like your sons, always dependent on your protection, sustenance and compassion.

30Exalted souls like you are the true objects of service and the most worshipable authorities for those who desire the highest good in life. Demigods are generally concerned with their own interests, but saintly devotees never are.

31No one can deny that there are holy places with sacred rivers, or that the demigods appear in deity forms made of earth and stone. But these purify the soul only after a long time, whereas saintly persons purify just by being seen.

32You are indeed the best of Our friends, so please go to Hastināpura and, as the well-wisher of the Pāṇḍavas, find out how they are doing.

33We have heard that when their father passed away, the young Pāṇḍavas were brought with their anguished mother to the capital city by King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and that they are now living there.

34Indeed, weak-minded Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Ambikā, has come under the control of his wicked sons, and therefore that blind King is not treating his brother's sons fairly.

35Go and see whether Dhṛtarāṣṭra is acting properly or not. When We find out, We will make the necessary arrangements to help Our dear friends.

36[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus fully instructing Akrūra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari then returned to His residence, accompanied by Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and Uddhava.

SB 10.49: Akrūra's Mission in Hastināpura

This chapter describes how Akrūra went to Hastināpura, saw Dhṛtarāṣṭra's unfair behavior toward his nephews, the Pāṇḍavas, and then returned to Mathurā.

On the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Akrūra went to Hastināpura, where he met the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas and then set about to find out how Dhṛtarāṣṭra was treating the latter. This task would keep Akrūra in Hastināpura for several months.

Vidura and Kuntīdevī described to Akrūra in detail how Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons, envious of the exalted qualities of the Pāṇḍavas, had tried to destroy them by various evil means and were contemplating further atrocities. With tearful eyes, Kuntīdevī asked Akrūra, "Do my parents and other relatives, headed by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, ever think of me and my sons, and will Kṛṣṇa ever come to console us in our distress?" Then Kuntīdevī began to chant Lord Kṛṣṇa's names for her protection, and she also chanted *mantras* expressing surrender to Him. Akrūra assured Kuntīdevī, "Since your sons were born from demigods like Dharma and Vāyu, there is no reason to expect that any misfortune will befall them; rather, you should be confident that very soon they will receive the greatest possible good fortune."

Akrūra then delivered to Dhṛtarāṣṭra the message from Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Akrūra told the King, "You have assumed the royal throne after the death of Pāṇḍu. Seeing all equally, which is the religious duty of kings, you should protect all your subjects and personal relations. By such fair behavior you will gain all fame and good fortune. But if you act otherwise, you will attain

only infamy in this life and condemnation to a hellish existence in the next. A living being takes his birth all alone, and alone he gives up his life. Alone he enjoys the fruits of his piety and sin. If one fails to understand the true identity of the self and instead maintains his progeny by indulging in evil deeds, then surely he will go to hell. One should therefore learn to understand the unsteadiness of material existence, which is like a sleeper's dream, a magician's illusion or a flight of fancy, and should thus control his mind in order to remain peaceful and equipoised."

To this Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied, "I cannot hear enough of your beneficial words, O Akrūra, which are like the sweet nectar of immortality. But because the tight knot of affection for my sons has made me biased toward them, your statements cannot become fixed within my mind. No one can transgress the arrangement of the Supreme Lord; His purpose for descending into the Yadu dynasty will inevitably be fulfilled."

Knowing now the mentality of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Akrūra took permission from his dear relatives and friends and returned to Mathurā, where he related everything to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma.

1-2 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Akrūra went to Hastināpura, the city distinguished by the glory of the Paurava rulers. There he saw Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Bhīṣma, Vidura and Kuntī, along with Bāhlika and his son Somadatta. He also saw Droṇācārya, Kṛpācārya, Karṇa, Duryodhana, Aśvatthāmā, the Pāṇḍavas and other close friends.

3 After Akrūra, the son of Gāndinī, had appropriately greeted all his relatives and friends, they asked him for news of their family members, and he in turn asked about their welfare.

4 He remained in Hastināpura for several months to scrutinize the conduct of the weak-willed King, who had bad sons and who was inclined to give in to the whims of mischievous advisers.

5-6 Kuntī and Vidura described to Akrūra in detail the evil intentions of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons, who could not tolerate the great qualities of Kuntī's sons such as their powerful influence, military skill, physical strength, bravery and humility or the intense affection the citizens had for them. Kuntī and Vidura also told Akrūra about how the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra had tried to poison the Pāṇḍavas and carry out other such plots.

7 Kuntīdevī, taking advantage of her brother Akrūra's visit, approached him confidentially. While remembering her birthplace, she spoke with tears in her eyes.

8 [Queen Kuntī said:] O gentle one, do my parents, brothers, sisters, nephews, family women and girlhood friends still remember us?

9 Does my nephew Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality and the compassionate shelter of His devotees, still remember His aunt's sons? And does lotus-eyed Rāma remember them also?

10 Now that I am suffering in the midst of my enemies like a doe in the midst of wolves, will Kṛṣṇa come to console me and my fatherless sons with His words?

11 Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa! O great yogi! O Supreme Soul and protector of the universe! O Govinda! Please protect me, who have surrendered to You. I and my sons are being overwhelmed by trouble.

12 For persons fearful of death and rebirth, I see no shelter other than Your liberating lotus feet, for You are the Supreme Lord.

13 I offer my obeisances unto You, Kṛṣṇa, the supreme pure, the Absolute Truth and the Supersoul, the Lord of pure devotional service and the source of all knowledge. I have come to You for shelter.

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14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus meditating on her family members and also on Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe, your great-grandmother Kuntīdevī began to cry out in grief, O King.

15Both Akrūra, who shared Queen Kuntī's distress and happiness, and the illustrious Vidura consoled the Queen by reminding her of the extraordinary way her sons had taken birth.

16The ardent affection King Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt for his sons had made him act unjustly toward the Pāṇḍavas. Just before leaving, Akrūra approached the King, who was seated among his friends and supporters, and related to him the message that his relatives Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāmahad sent out of friendship.

17Akrūra said: O my dear son of Vicitravīrya, O enhancer of the Kurus' glory, your brother Pāṇḍu having passed away, you have now assumed the royal throne.

18By religiously protecting the earth, delighting your subjects with your noble character, and treating all your relatives equally, you will surely achieve success and glory.

19If you act otherwise, however, people will condemn you in this world, and in the next life you will enter the darkness of hell. Remain equally disposed, therefore, toward Pāṇḍu's sons and your own.

20In this world no one has any permanent relationship with anyone else, O King. We cannot stay forever even with our own body, what to speak of our wife, children and the rest.

21Every creature is born alone and dies alone, and alone one experiences the just rewards of his good and evil deeds.

22In the guise of dear dependents, strangers steal the sinfully acquired wealth of a foolish man, just as the offspring of a fish drink up the water that sustains the fish.

23A fool indulges in sin to maintain his life, wealth and children and other relatives, for he thinks, "These things are mine." In the end, however, these very things all abandon him, leaving him frustrated.

24Abandoned by his so-called dependents, ignorant of the actual goal of life, indifferent to his real duty, and having failed to fulfill his purposes, the foolish soul enters the blindness of hell, taking his sinful reactions with him.

25Therefore, O King, looking upon this world as a dream, a magician's illusion or a flight of fancy, please control your mind with intelligence and become equipoised and peaceful, my lord.

26Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O master of charity, I can never be satiated while hearing your auspicious words. Indeed, I am like a mortal who has obtained the nectar of the gods.

27Even so, gentle Akrūra, because my unsteady heart is prejudiced by affection for my sons, these pleasing words of yours cannot remain fixed there, just as lightning cannot remain fixed in a cloud.

28Who can defy the injunctions of the Supreme Lord, who has now descended in the Yadu dynasty to diminish the earth's burden?

29I offer my obeisances to Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who creates this universe by the inconceivable activity of His material energy and then distributes the various modes of nature by entering within the creation. From Him, the meaning of whose pastimes is

unfathomable, come both the entangling cycle of birth and death and the process of deliverance from it.

30Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus apprised himself of the King's attitude, Akrūra, the descendant of Yadu, took permission from his well-wishing relatives and friends and returned to the capital of the Yādavas.

31Akrūra reported to Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa how Dhṛtarāṣṭra was behaving toward the Pāṇḍavas. Thus, O descendant of the Kurus, he fulfilled the purpose for which he had been sent.

SB 10.50: Kṛṣṇa Establishes the City of Dvārakā

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa defeated Jarāsandha seventeen times in battle and then constructed the city of Dvārakā.

After Kamsa was killed, his two queens, Asti and Prāpti, went to the home of their father, Jarāsandha, and sorrowfully described to him how Kṛṣṇa had made them widows. Upon hearing this account, King Jarāsandha became angry. He vowed to rid the earth of all the Yādavas, and he gathered an immense army to lay siege to Mathurā. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw Jarāsandha attacking, the Lord considered the reasons for His descent to this world and then decided to destroy Jarāsandha's army, which was a burden to the earth.

Two effulgent chariots suddenly appeared, equipped with drivers and furnishings, together with all the Lord's personal weapons. Seeing this, Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed Lord Baladeva, "My dear brother, Jarāsandha is now attacking Mathurā-purī, so please mount Your chariot and let Us go destroy the enemy's army." The two Lords took up Their weapons, mounted Their chariots and went forth from the city.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa came before His opponent's army, He sounded His conchshell, striking fear into His enemies' hearts. King Jarāsandha surrounded Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with his soldiers, chariots and so on, and the women of the city, having climbed up to the roofs of the palaces, became extremely unhappy because they could not see the Lords. Then Kṛṣṇa twanged His bow and started to rain down a torrent of arrows upon the enemy soldiers. Soon Jarāsandha's unfathomable army had been annihilated.

Then Lord Baladeva arrested Jarāsandha and was about to bind him up with ropes when Śrī Kṛṣṇa had Baladeva release the King. Lord Kṛṣṇa reasoned that Jarāsandha would assemble another army and return again to fight; this would facilitate Kṛṣṇa's goal of removing the earth's burden. Released, Jarāsandha returned to Magadha and vowed to perform austerities with the aim of avenging his defeat. The other kings advised him that his defeat was only a reaction of his *karma*. Thus informed, King Jarāsandha withdrew to his kingdom with a heavy heart.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa rejoined the citizens of Mathurā, who began rejoicing, singing songs of triumph and arranging victory celebrations. The Lord brought all the warriors' jewelry and ornaments that had been picked up from the battlefield and presented them to Mahārāja Ugrasena.

Jarāsandha attacked the Yādavas in Mathurā seventeen times, and each time his armies were totally destroyed. Then, as Jarāsandha prepared to attack for the eighteenth time, a warrior named Kālayavana, who had been searching for a worthy opponent, was sent by Nārada Muni to fight the Yādavas. With thirty million soldiers Kālayavana laid siege to the Yādava capital. Lord Kṛṣṇa looked upon this attack with concern, for He knew that with Jarāsandha's arrival imminent, there was a serious danger that the simultaneous attack of these two enemies might

endanger the Yādavas. Therefore the Lord constructed a wonderful city within the sea as a safe haven for the Yādavas; then He brought them all there by His mystic power. This city was fully populated with members of all four social orders, and within it no one felt the pangs of thirst and hunger. The various demigods, headed by Indra, each offered as tribute to Lord Kṛṣṇa the same opulences they had originally obtained from Him to establish their positions of authority.

Once He saw His subjects safely settled, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa took permission from Lord Baladeva and went out of Mathurā unarmed.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Kāmsa was killed, O heroic descendant of Bharata, his two queens, Asti and Prāpti, went to their father's house in great distress.

2The sorrowful queens told their father, King Jarāsandha of Magadha, all about how they had become widows.

3Hearing this odious news, O King, Jarāsandha was filled with sorrow and anger, and he began the greatest possible endeavor to rid the earth of the Yādavas.

4With a force of twenty-three akṣauhiṇī divisions, he laid siege to the Yadu capital, Mathurā, on all sides.

5-6Although Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the original cause of this world, when He descended to the earth He played the role of a human being. Thus when He saw Jarāsandha's assembled army surrounding His city like a great ocean overflowing its shores, and when He saw how this army was striking fear into His subjects, the Lord considered what His suitable response should be according to the time, place and specific purpose of His current incarnation.

7-8[The Supreme Lord thought:] Since it is such a burden on the earth, I will destroy Jarāsandha's army, consisting of akṣauhiṇīs of foot soldiers, horses, chariots and elephants, which the King of Magadha has assembled from all subservient kings and brought together here. But Jarāsandha himself should not be killed, since in the future he will certainly assemble another army.

9This is the purpose of My present incarnation to relieve the earth of its burden, protect the pious and kill the impious.

10I also assume other bodies to protect religion and to end irreligion whenever it flourishes in the course of time.

11[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] As Lord Govinda was thinking in this way, two chariots as effulgent as the sun suddenly descended from the sky. They were complete with drivers and equipment.

12The Lord's eternal divine weapons also appeared before Him spontaneously. Seeing these, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Lord of the senses, addressed Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa.

13-14[The Supreme Lord said:] My respected elder brother, see this danger which has beset Your dependents, the Yadus! And see, dear master, how Your personal chariot and favorite weapons have come before You. The purpose for which We have taken birth, My Lord, is to secure the welfare of Our devotees. Please now remove from the earth the burden of these twenty-three armies.

15After Lord Kṛṣṇa had thus invited His brother, the two Dāśārhas, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma,

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wearing armor and displaying Their resplendent weapons, drove out of the city in Their chariots. Only a very small contingent of soldiers accompanied Them.

16As Lord Kṛṣṇa came out of the city with Dāruka at the reins of His chariot, He blew His conchshell, and the enemy soldiers' hearts began to tremble with fear.

17Jarāsandha looked at the two of Them and said: O Kṛṣṇa, lowest of men! I do not wish to fight alone with You, since it would be a shame to fight with a mere boy. You fool who keep Yourself hidden, O murderer of Your relatives, go away! I will not fight with You.

18You, Rāma, should gather Your courage and fight with me, if You think You can do it. You may either give up Your body when it is cut to pieces by my arrows, and thus attain to heaven, or else kill me.

19The Supreme Lord said: Real heroes do not simply boast but rather show their prowess in action. We cannot take seriously the words of one who is full of anxiety and who wants to die.

20Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Just as the wind covers the sun with clouds or a fire with dust, the son of Jarā marched toward the two descendants of Madhu and with his huge assemblage of armies surrounded Them and Their soldiers, chariots, flags, horses and charioteers.

21The women stood in the watchtowers, palaces and high gates of the city. When they could no longer see Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's chariots, identified by banners marked with the emblems of Garuḍa and a palm tree, they were struck with grief and fainted.

22Seeing His army tormented by the relentless and savage rain of arrows from the massive opposing forces gathered like clouds about Him, Lord Hari twanged His excellent bow, Śārṅga, which both gods and demons worship.

23Lord Kṛṣṇa took arrows from His quiver, fixed them on the bowstring, pulled back, and released endless torrents of sharp shafts, which struck the enemy's chariots, elephants, horses and infantrymen. The Lord shooting His arrows resembled a blazing circle of fire.

24Elephants fell to the ground, their foreheads split open, cavalry horses fell with severed necks, chariots fell with their horses, flags, drivers and masters all shattered, and foot soldiers collapsed with severed arms, thighs and shoulders.

25-28On the battlefield, hundreds of rivers of blood flowed from the limbs of the humans, elephants and horses who had been cut to pieces. In these rivers arms resembled snakes; human heads, turtles; dead elephants, islands; and dead horses, crocodiles. Hands and thighs appeared like fish, human hair like waterweeds, bows like waves, and various weapons like clumps of bushes. The rivers of blood teemed with all of these.

29For Him who orchestrates the creation, maintenance and destruction of the three worlds and who possesses unlimited spiritual qualities, it is hardly amazing that He subdues an opposing party. Still, when the Lord does so, imitating human behavior, sages glorify His acts.

30Jarāsandha, with his chariot lost and all his soldiers dead, was left with only his breath. At that point Lord Balarāma forcibly seized the powerful warrior, just as one lion takes hold of another.

31With the divine noose of Varuṇa and other, mortal ropes, Balarāma began tying up Jarāsandha, who had killed so many foes. But Lord Govinda still had a purpose to fulfill through Jarāsandha, and thus He asked Balarāma to stop.

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32-33 Jarāsandha, whom fighters had highly honored, was ashamed after being released by the two Lords of the universe, and thus he decided to undergo penances. On the road, however, several kings convinced him with both spiritual wisdom and mundane arguments that he should give up his idea of self-abnegation. They told him, “Your defeat by the Yadus was simply the unavoidable reaction of your past karma.”

34 All of his armies having been killed, and himself neglected by the Personality of Godhead, King Jarāsandha, son of Bṛhadratha, then sadly returned to the kingdom of the Magadhas.

35-36 Lord Mukunda had crossed the ocean of His enemy’s armies with His own military force completely intact. He received congratulations from the denizens of heaven, who showered Him with flowers. The people of Mathurā, relieved of their feverish anxiety and filled with joy, came out to meet Him as professional bards, heralds and panegyrists sang in praise of His victory.

37-38 As the Lord entered His city, conchshells and kettledrums sounded, and many drums, horns, vīṇās, flutes and mṛdaṅgas played in concert. The boulevards were sprinkled with water, there were banners everywhere, and the gateways were decorated for the celebration. The citizens were elated, and the city resounded with the chanting of Vedic hymns.

39 As the women of the city affectionately looked at the Lord, their eyes wide open with love, they scattered flower garlands, yogurt, parched rice and newly grown sprouts upon Him.

40 Lord Kṛṣṇa then presented to the Yadu king all the wealth that had fallen on the battlefield—namely, the countless ornaments of the dead warriors.

41 Seventeen times the King of Magadha met defeat in this very way. And yet throughout these defeats he fought on with his akṣauhiṇī divisions against the forces of the Yadu dynasty who were protected by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

42 By the power of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Vṛṣṇis would invariably annihilate all of Jarāsandha’s forces, and when all his soldiers had been killed, the King, released by his enemies, would again go away.

43 Just as the eighteenth battle was about to take place, a barbarian warrior named Kālayavana, sent by Nārada, appeared on the battlefield.

44 Arriving at Mathurā, this Yavana laid siege to the city with thirty million barbarian soldiers. He had never found a human rival worth fighting, but he had heard that the Vṛṣṇis were his equals.

45 When Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa saw Kālayavana, Kṛṣṇa thought about the situation and said, “Ah, a great danger now threatens the Yadus from two sides.

46 “This Yavana is besieging us already, and the mighty King of Magadha will soon arrive here, if not today then tomorrow or the next day.

47 “If powerful Jarāsandha comes while we two are busy fighting Kālayavana, Jarāsandha may kill our relatives or else take them away to his capital.

48 “Therefore we will immediately construct a fortress that no human force can penetrate. Let us settle our family members there and then kill the barbarian king.”

49 After thus discussing the matter with Balarāma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead had a fortress twelve yojanas in circumference built within the sea. Inside that fort He had a city built

containing all kinds of wonderful things.

50-53 In the construction of that city could be seen the full scientific knowledge and architectural skill of Viśvakarmā. There were wide avenues, commercial roads and courtyards laid out on ample plots of land; there were splendid parks, and also gardens stocked with trees and creepers from the heavenly planets. The gateway towers were topped with golden turrets touching the sky, and their upper levels were fashioned of crystal quartz. The gold-covered houses were adorned in front with golden pots and on top with jeweled roofs, and their floors were inlaid with precious emeralds. Beside the houses stood treasury buildings, warehouses, and stables for fine horses, all built of silver and brass. Each residence had a watchtower, and also a temple for its household deity. Filled with citizens of all four social orders, the city was especially beautified by the palaces of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Yadus.

54 Lord Indra brought Śrī Kṛṣṇa the Sudharmā assembly hall, standing within which a mortal man is not subject to the laws of mortality. Indra also gave the pārijāta tree.

55 Lord Varuṇa offered horses as swift as the mind, some of which were pure dark-blue, others white. The treasurer of the demigods, Kuvera, gave his eight mystic treasures, and the rulers of various planets each presented their own opulences.

56 The Supreme Lord having come to the earth, O King, these demigods now offered Him whatever powers of control He had previously delegated to them for the exercise of their particular authority.

57 After transporting all His subjects to the new city by the power of His mystic Yoga-māyā, Lord Kṛṣṇa consulted with Lord Balarāma, who had remained in Mathurā to protect it. Then, wearing a garland of lotuses but bearing no weapons, Lord Kṛṣṇa went out of Mathurā by its main gate.

SB 10.51: The Deliverance of Mucukunda

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa caused Mucukunda to kill Kālayavana with his harsh glance, and it also relates the conversation between Mucukunda and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

After placing His family members safely within the Dvārakā fortress, Śrī Kṛṣṇa went out of Mathurā. He appeared like the rising moon. Kālayavana saw that Kṛṣṇa's brilliantly effulgent body matched Nārada's description of the Lord, and thus the Yavana knew He was the Personality of Godhead. Seeing that the Lord carried no weapons, Kālayavana put his own weapons aside and ran toward Him from behind, wanting to fight with Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa ran from the Yavana, staying just barely beyond Kālayavana's grasp at every step and eventually leading him a long distance toward a mountain cave. As Kālayavana ran, he hurled insults at the Lord, but he could not grasp Him, since his stock of impious *karma* was not yet depleted. Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the cave, whereupon Kālayavana followed after Him and saw a man lying on the ground. Taking him for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Kālayavana kicked him. The man had been sleeping for a very long time, and now, having been violently awakened, he looked around angrily in all directions and saw Kālayavana. The man stared harshly at him, igniting a fire in Kālayavana's body and in a moment burning him to ashes.

This extraordinary person was a son of Mandhātā's named Mucukunda. He was devoted to brahminical culture and always true to his vow. Previously, he had spent many long years helping to protect the demigods from the demons. When the demigods had eventually obtained Kārttikeya as their protector, they allowed Mucukunda to retire, offering him any boon other than liberation, which only Lord Viṣṇu can bestow. Mucukunda had chosen from

the demigods the benediction of being covered by sleep, and thus since then he had been lying asleep within the cave.

Upon Kālayavana's immolation, Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed Himself to Mucukunda, who was struck with wonder at seeing Kṛṣṇa's incomparable beauty. Mucukunda asked Lord Kṛṣṇa who He was and also explained to the Lord his own identity. Mucukunda said, "After growing weary from remaining awake for a long time, I was enjoying my sleep here in this cave when some stranger disturbed me and, suffering the reaction of his sins, was burnt to ashes. O Lord, O vanquisher of all enemies, it is my great fortune that I now have the vision of Your beautiful form."

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa then told Mucukunda who He was and offered him a boon. The wise Mucukunda, understanding the futility of material life, asked only that he might be allowed to take shelter of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Pleased at this request, the Lord said to Mucukunda, "My devotees are never enticed by material benedictions offered to them; only nondevotees, namely *yogīs* and speculative philosophers, are interested in material benedictions, having mundane desires in their hearts. My dear Mucukunda, you will have perpetual devotion for Me. Now, always remaining surrendered to Me, go perform penances to eradicate the sinful reactions incurred from the killing you had to do in your role as a warrior. In your next life you will become a first-class *brāhmaṇa* and attain Me." Thus the Lord offered Mucukunda His blessings.

1-6 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Kālayavana saw the Lord come out from Mathurā like the rising moon. The Lord was most beautiful to behold, with His dark-blue complexion and yellow silk garment. Upon His chest He bore the mark of Śrīvatsa, and the Kaustubha gem adorned His neck. His four arms were sturdy and long. He displayed His ever-joyful lotuslike face, with eyes pink like lotuses, beautifully effulgent cheeks, a pristine smile and glittering shark-shaped earrings. The barbarian thought, "This person must indeed be Vāsudeva, since He possesses the characteristics Nārada mentioned: He is marked with Śrīvatsa, He has four arms, His eyes are like lotuses, He wears a garland of forest flowers, and He is extremely handsome. He cannot be anyone else. Since He goes on foot and unarmed, I will fight Him without weapons." Resolving thus, he ran after the Lord, who turned His back and ran away. Kālayavana hoped to catch Lord Kṛṣṇa, though great mystic *yogīs* cannot attain Him.

7 Appearing virtually within reach of Kālayavana's hands at every moment, Lord Hari led the King of the Yavanas far away to a mountain cave.

8 While chasing the Lord, the Yavana cast insults at Him, saying "You took birth in the Yadu dynasty. It's not proper for You to run away!" But still Kālayavana could not reach Lord Kṛṣṇa, because his sinful reactions had not been cleansed away.

9 Although insulted in this way, the Supreme Lord entered the mountain cave. Kālayavana also entered, and there he saw another man lying asleep.

10 "So, after leading me such a long distance, now He is lying here like some saint!" Thus thinking the sleeping man to be Lord Kṛṣṇa, the deluded fool kicked him with all his strength.

11 The man awoke after a long sleep and slowly opened his eyes. Looking all about, he saw Kālayavana standing beside him.

12 The awakened man was angry and cast his glance at Kālayavana, whose body burst into flames. In a single moment, O King Parīkṣit, Kālayavana was burnt to ashes.

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13King Parīkṣit said: Who was that person, O brāhmaṇa? To which family did he belong, and what were his powers? Why did that destroyer of the barbarian lie down to sleep in the cave, and whose son was he?

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Mucukunda was the name of this great personality, who was born in the Ikṣvāku dynasty as the son of Māndhātā. He was devoted to brahminical culture and always true to his vow in battle.

15Begged by Indra and the other demigods to help protect them when they were terrorized by the demons, Mucukunda defended them for a long time.

16When the demigods obtained Kārttikeya as their general, they told Mucukunda, “O King, you may now give up your troublesome duty of guarding us.

17“Abandoning an unopposed kingdom in the world of men, O valiant one, you neglected all your personal desires while engaged in protecting us.

18“The children, queens, relatives, ministers, advisers and subjects who were your contemporaries are no longer alive. They have all been swept away by time.

19“Inexhaustible time, stronger than the strong, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Like a herdsman moving his animals along, He moves mortal creatures as His pastime.

20“All good fortune to you! Now please choose a benediction from us anything but liberation, since only the infallible Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, can bestow that.”

21Addressed thus, King Mucukunda took his respectful leave of the demigods and went to a cave, where he lay down to enjoy the sleep they had granted him.

22After the Yavana was burnt to ashes, the Supreme Lord, chief of the Sātvatas, revealed Himself to the wise Mucukunda.

23-26As he gazed at the Lord, King Mucukunda saw that He was dark blue like a cloud, had four arms, and wore a yellow silk garment. On His chest He bore the Śrīvatsa mark and on His neck the brilliantly glowing Kaustubha gem. Adorned with a Vaijayantī garland, the Lord displayed His handsome, peaceful face, which attracts the eyes of all mankind with its shark-shaped earrings and affectionately smiling glance. The beauty of His youthful form was unexcelled, and He moved with the nobility of an angry lion. The highly intelligent King was overwhelmed by the Lord’s effulgence, which showed Him to be invincible. Expressing his uncertainty, Mucukunda hesitantly questioned Lord Kṛṣṇa as follows.

27Śrī Mucukunda said: Who are You who have come to this mountain cave in the forest, having walked on the thorny ground with feet as soft as lotus petals?

28Perhaps You are the potency of all potent beings. Or maybe You are the powerful god of fire, or the sun-god, the moon-god, the King of heaven or the ruling demigod of some other planet.

29I think You are the Supreme Personality among the three chief gods, since You drive away the darkness of this cave as a lamp dispels darkness with its light.

30O best among men, if You like, please truly describe Your birth, activities and lineage to us, who are eager to hear.

31As for ourselves, O tiger among men, we belong to a family of fallen kṣatriyas, descendants

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of King Ikṣvāku. My name is Mucukunda, my Lord, and I am the son of Yauvanāśva.

32I was fatigued after remaining awake for a long time, and my senses were overwhelmed by sleep. Thus I slept comfortably here in this solitary place until, just now, someone woke me.

33The man who woke me was burned to ashes by the reaction of his sins. Just then I saw You, possessing a glorious appearance and the power to chastise Your enemies.

34Your unbearably brilliant effulgence overwhelms our strength, and thus we cannot fix our gaze upon You. O exalted one, You are to be honored by all embodied beings.

35[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus addressed by the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, origin of all creation, smiled and then replied to him in a voice as deep as the rumbling of clouds.

36The Supreme Lord said: My dear friend, I have taken thousands of births, lived thousands of lives and accepted thousands of names. In fact My births, activities and names are limitless, and thus even I cannot count them.

37After many lifetimes someone might count the dust particles on the earth, but no one can ever finish counting My qualities, activities, names and births.

38O King, the greatest sages enumerate My births and activities, which take place throughout the three phases of time, but never do they reach the end of them.

39-40Nonetheless, O friend, I will tell you about My current birth, name and activities. Kindly hear. Some time ago, Lord Brahmā requested Me to protect religious principles and destroy the demons who were burdening the earth. Thus I descended in the Yadu dynasty, in the home of Ānakadundubhi. Indeed, because I am the son of Vasudeva, people call Me Vāsudeva.

41I have killed Kālanemi, reborn as Kaṁsa, as well as Pralamba and other enemies of the pious. And now, O King, this barbarian has been burnt to ashes by your piercing glance.

42Since in the past you repeatedly prayed to Me, I have personally come to this cave to show you mercy, for I am affectionately inclined to My devotees.

43Now choose some benedictions from Me, O saintly King. I will fulfill all your desires. One who has satisfied Me need never again lament.

44Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Mucukunda bowed down to the Lord when he heard this. Remembering the words of the sage Garga, he joyfully recognized Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa. The King then addressed Him as follows.

45Śrī Mucukunda said: O Lord, the people of this world, both men and women, are bewildered by Your illusory energy. Unaware of their real benefit, they do not worship You but instead seek happiness by entangling themselves in family affairs, which are actually sources of misery.

46That person has an impure mind who, despite having somehow or other automatically obtained the rare and highly evolved human form of life, does not worship Your lotus feet. Like an animal that has fallen into a blind well, such a person has fallen into the darkness of a material home.

47I have wasted all this time, O unconquerable one, becoming more and more intoxicated by my domain and opulence as an earthly king. Misidentifying the mortal body as the self, becoming attached to children, wives, treasury and land, I suffered endless anxiety.

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48With deep arrogance I took myself to be the body, which is a material object like a pot or a wall. Thinking myself a god among men, I traveled the earth surrounded by my charioteers, elephants, cavalry, foot soldiers and generals, disregarding You in my deluding pride.

49A man obsessed with thoughts of what he thinks needs to be done, intensely greedy, and delighting in sense enjoyment is suddenly confronted by You, who are ever alert. Like a hungry snake licking its fangs before a mouse, You appear before him as death.

50The body that at first rides high on fierce elephants or chariots adorned with gold and is known by the name “king” is later, by Your invincible power of time, called “feces,” “worms,” or “ashes.”

51Having conquered the entire circle of directions and being thus free of conflict, a man sits on a splendid throne, receiving praise from leaders who were once his equals. But when he enters the women’s chambers, where sex pleasure is found, he is led about like a pet animal, O Lord.

52A king who desires even greater power than he already has strictly performs his duties, carefully practicing austerity and forgoing sense enjoyment. But he whose urges are so rampant, thinking “I am independent and supreme,” cannot attain happiness.

53When the material life of a wandering soul has ceased, O Acyuta, he may attain the association of Your devotees. And when he associates with them, there awakens in him devotion unto You, who are the goal of the devotees and the Lord of all causes and their effects.

54My Lord, I think You have shown me mercy, since my attachment to my kingdom has spontaneously ceased. Such freedom is prayed for by saintly rulers of vast empires who desire to enter the forest for a life of solitude.

55O all-powerful one, I desire no boon other than service to Your lotus feet, the boon most eagerly sought by those free of material desire. O Hari, what enlightened person who worships You, the giver of liberation, would choose a boon that causes his own bondage?

56Therefore, O Lord, having put aside all objects of material desire, which are bound to the modes of passion, ignorance and goodness, I am approaching You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for shelter. You are not covered by mundane designations; rather, You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, full in pure knowledge and transcendental to the material modes.

57For so long I have been pained by troubles in this world and have been burning with lamentation. My six enemies are never satiated, and I can find no peace. Therefore, O giver of shelter, O Supreme Soul, please protect me. O Lord, in the midst of danger I have by good fortune approached Your lotus feet, which are the truth and which thus make one fearless and free of sorrow.

58The Supreme Lord said: O emperor, great ruler, your mind is pure and potent. Though I enticed You with benedictions, your mind was not overcome by material desires.

59Understand that I enticed you with benedictions just to prove that you would not be deceived. The intelligence of My unalloyed devotees is never diverted by material blessings.

60The minds of nondevotees who engage in such practices as *prāṇāyama* are not fully cleansed of material desires. Thus, O King, material desires are again seen to arise in their minds.

61Wander this earth at will, with your mind fixed on Me. May you always possess such unflinching devotion for Me.

62Because you followed the principles of a kṣatriya, you killed living beings while hunting and performing other duties. You must vanquish the sins thus incurred by carefully executing penances while remaining surrendered to Me.

63O King, in your very next life you will become an excellent brāhmaṇa, the greatest well-wisher of all creatures, and certainly come to Me alone.

SB 10.52: Rukmiṇī's Message to Lord Kṛṣṇa

This chapter describes how Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, running as if in fear, went to Dvārakā. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa heard the message of Rukmiṇī from the mouth of a *brāhmaṇa* and chose her as His wife.

King Mucukunda, shown mercy by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, offered obeisances and circumambulated Him. The King then left the cave and saw that humans, animals, trees and plants were all smaller than when he had fallen asleep. From this he could understand that the Age of Kali was at hand. Thus, in a mood of detachment from all material association, the King began worshiping the Supreme Lord, Śrī Hari.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned to Mathurā, which was still under siege by the barbarian army. He destroyed this army, collected all the valuables the soldiers had been carrying, and set off for Dvārakā. Just then Jarāsandha arrived on the scene with a force of twenty-three *akṣauhīṇīs*. Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, acting as if fearful, left Their riches aside and ran far away. Because Jarāsandha could not appreciate Their true power, he ran after Them. After running a long way, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa came to a mountain named Pravarṣaṇa and proceeded to climb it. Jarāsandha thought They had hidden inside a cave and looked all over for Them. Unable to find Them, he built fires on all sides of the mountain. As the vegetation on the mountain slopes burst into flame, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma jumped off the peak. After reaching the ground unseen by Jarāsandha and his followers, They returned to the Dvārakā fort, which floated within the sea. Jarāsandha decided that Rāma and Kṛṣṇa had burned to death in the fire, and he took his army back to his kingdom.

At this point Mahārāja Parīkṣit asked a question, and Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī responded to it by beginning to narrate the history of the marriage of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī. Rukmiṇī, the young daughter of Bhīṣmaka, King of Vidarbha, had heard of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty, strength and other fine qualities, and she therefore made up her mind that He would be the perfect husband for her. Lord Kṛṣṇa also wanted to marry her. But although Rukmiṇī's other relatives approved of her marriage to Kṛṣṇa, her brother Rukmī was envious of the Lord and thus forbade her to marry Him. Rukmī wanted her to marry Śiśupāla instead. Rukmiṇī unhappily took up her duties in preparation for the marriage, but she also sent a trustworthy *brāhmaṇa* to Kṛṣṇa with a letter.

When the *brāhmaṇa* arrived in Dvārakā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa properly honored him with ritual worship and other tokens of reverence. The Lord then asked the *brāhmaṇa* why he had come. The *brāhmaṇa* opened Rukmiṇī's letter and showed it to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had the messenger read it to Him. Rukmiṇī-devī wrote: "Ever since I have heard about You, my Lord, I have become completely attracted to You. Without fail please come before my marriage to Śiśupāla and take me away. In accordance with family custom, on the day before my marriage I will visit the temple of goddess Ambikā. That would be the best opportunity for You to appear and easily kidnap me. If You do not show me this favor, I will give up my life by fasting and observing severe vows. Then perhaps in my next life I will be able to obtain You."

After reading Rukmiṇī's letter to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the *brāhmaṇa* took his leave so he might carry out

his daily religious duties.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, thus graced by Lord Kṛṣṇa, Mucukunda circumambulated Him and bowed down to Him. Then Mucukunda, the beloved descendant of Ikṣvāku, exited through the mouth of the cave.

2Seeing that the size of all the human beings, animals, trees and plants was severely reduced, and thus realizing that the Age of Kali was at hand, Mucukunda left for the north.

3The sober King, beyond material association and free of doubt, was convinced of the value of austerity. Absorbing his mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa, he came to Gandhamādana Mountain.

4There he arrived at Badarikāśrama, the abode of Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa, where, remaining tolerant of all dualities, he peacefully worshiped the Supreme Lord Hari by performing severe austerities.

5The Lord returned to Mathurā, which was still surrounded by Yavanas. Then He destroyed the army of barbarians and began taking their valuables to Dvārakā.

6As the wealth was being carried by oxen and men under Lord Kṛṣṇa's direction, Jarāsandha appeared at the head of twenty-three armies.

7O King, seeing the fierce waves of the enemy's army, the two Mādhavas, imitating human behavior, ran swiftly away.

8Abandoning the abundant riches, fearless but feigning fear, They went many yojanas on Their lotuslike feet.

9When he saw Them fleeing, powerful Jarāsandha laughed loudly and then pursued Them with charioteers and foot soldiers. He could not understand the exalted position of the two Lords.

10Apparently exhausted after fleeing a long distance, the two Lords climbed a high mountain named Pravarṣaṇa, upon which Lord Indra showers incessant rain.

11Although he knew They were hiding on the mountain, Jarāsandha could find no trace of Them. Therefore, O King, he placed firewood on all sides and set the mountain ablaze.

12The two of Them then suddenly jumped from the burning mountain, which was eleven yojanas high, and fell to the ground.

13Unseen by Their opponent or his followers, O King, those two most exalted Yadus returned to Their city of Dvārakā, which had the ocean as a protective moat.

14Jarāsandha, moreover, mistakenly thought that Balarāma and Keśava had burned to death in the fire. Thus he withdrew his vast military force and returned to the Magadha kingdom.

15As ordered by Lord Brahmā, Raivata, the opulent ruler of Ānarta, gave Lord Balarāma his daughter Raivatī in marriage. This has already been discussed.

16-17O hero among the Kurus, the Supreme Lord Himself, Govinda, married Bhīsmaka's daughter, Vaidarbhī, who was a direct expansion of the goddess of fortune. The Lord did this by her desire, and in the process He beat down Śālva and other kings who took Śiśupāla's side. Indeed, as everyone watched, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took Rukmiṇī just as Garuḍa boldly stole nectar from the demigods.

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18King Parīkṣit said: The Supreme Lord married Rukmiṇī, the beautiful-faced daughter of Bhīṣmaka, in the Rākṣasa style so I have heard.

19My lord, I wish to hear how the immeasurably powerful Lord Kṛṣṇa took away His bride while defeating such kings as Māgadha and Sālva.

20What experienced listener, O brāhmaṇa, could ever grow satiated while listening to the pious, charming and ever-fresh topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which cleanse away the world's contamination?

21Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: There was a king named Bhīṣmaka, the powerful ruler of Vidarbha. He had five sons and one daughter of lovely countenance.

22Rukmī was the first-born son, followed by Rukmaratha, Rukmabāhu, Rukmakeśa and Rukmamālī. Their sister was the exalted Rukmiṇī.

23Hearing of the beauty, prowess, transcendental character and opulence of Mukunda from visitors to the palace who sang His praises, Rukmiṇī decided that He would be the perfect husband for her.

24Lord Kṛṣṇa knew that Rukmiṇī possessed intelligence, auspicious bodily markings, magnanimity, beauty, proper behavior and all other good qualities. Concluding that she would be an ideal wife for Him, He made up His mind to marry her.

25O King, because Rukmī envied the Lord, he forbade his family members to give his sister to Kṛṣṇa, although they wanted to. Instead, Rukmī decided to give Rukmiṇī to Śiśupāla.

26Dark-eyed Vaidarbhī was aware of this plan, and it deeply upset her. Analyzing the situation, she quickly sent a trustworthy brāhmaṇa to Kṛṣṇa.

27Upon reaching Dvārakā, the brāhmaṇa was brought inside by the gatekeepers and saw the primeval Personality of Godhead sitting on a golden throne.

28Seeing the brāhmaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Lord of the brāhmaṇas, came down from His throne and seated him. Then the Lord worshiped him just as He Himself is worshiped by the demigods.

29After the brāhmaṇa had eaten and rested, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the goal of saintly devotees, came forward, and while massaging the brāhmaṇa's feet with His own hands, He patiently questioned him as follows.

30[The Supreme Lord said:] O best of exalted brāhmaṇas, are your religious practices, sanctioned by senior authorities, proceeding without great difficulty? Is your mind always fully satisfied?

31When a brāhmaṇa is satisfied with whatever comes his way and does not fall away from his religious duties, those very religious principles become his desire cow, fulfilling all his wishes.

32An unsatisfied brāhmaṇa wanders restlessly from one planet to another, even if he becomes King of heaven. But a satisfied brāhmaṇa, though he may possess nothing, rests peacefully, all his limbs free of distress.

33I repeatedly bow My head in respect to those brāhmaṇas who are satisfied with their lot. Saintly, prideless and peaceful, they are the best well-wishers of all living beings.

34O brāhmaṇa, is your King attending to your welfare? Indeed, that king in whose country the

citizens are happy and protected is very dear to Me.

35Whence have you come, crossing the impassable sea, and for what purpose? Explain all this to Us if it is not a secret, and tell Us what We may do for you.

36Thus questioned by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who incarnates to perform His pastimes, the brāhmaṇa told Him everything.

37Śrī Rukmiṇī said [in her letter, as read by the brāhmaṇa]: O beauty of the worlds, having heard of Your qualities, which enter the ears of those who hear and remove their bodily distress, and having also heard of Your beauty, which fulfills all the visual desires of those who see, I have fixed my shameless mind upon You, O Kṛṣṇa.

38O Mukunda, You are equal only to Yourself in lineage, character, beauty, knowledge, youthfulness, wealth and influence. O lion among men, You delight the minds of all mankind. What aristocratic, sober-minded and marriageable girl of a good family would not choose You as her husband when the proper time has come?

39Therefore, my dear Lord, I have chosen You as my husband, and I surrender myself to You. Please come swiftly, O almighty one, and make me Your wife. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, let Śīsupāla never touch the hero's portion like a jackal stealing the property of a lion.

40If I have sufficiently worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead by pious works, sacrifices, charity, rituals and vows, and also by worshiping the demigods, brāhmaṇas and gurus, then may Gadāgraja come and take my hand, and not Damaghoṣa's son or anyone else.

41O unconquerable one, tomorrow when my marriage ceremony is about to begin, You should arrive unseen in Vidarbha and surround Yourself with the leaders of Your army. Then crush the forces of Caidya and Magadhendra and marry me in the Rākṣasa style, winning me with Your valor.

42Since I will be staying within the inner chambers of the palace, You may wonder, "How can I carry you away without killing some of your relatives?" But I shall tell You a way: On the day before the marriage there is a grand procession to honor the royal family's deity, and in this procession the new bride goes outside the city to visit Goddess Girijā.

43O lotus-eyed one, great souls like Lord Śiva hanker to bathe in the dust of Your lotus feet and thereby destroy their ignorance. If I cannot obtain Your mercy, I shall simply give up my vital force, which will have become weak from the severe penances I will perform. Then, after hundreds of lifetimes of endeavor, I may obtain Your mercy.

44The brāhmaṇa said: This is the confidential message I have brought with me, O Lord of the Yadus. Please consider what must be done in these circumstances, and do it at once.

SB 10.53: Kṛṣṇa Kidnaps Rukmiṇī

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa arrived in Kuṇḍina, the capital of Vidarbha, and kidnapped Rukmiṇī in the presence of powerful enemies.

After Lord Kṛṣṇa had heard the *brāhmaṇa* messenger recite Rukmiṇī's letter, the Lord said to him, "I am indeed attracted to Rukmiṇī, and I know of her brother Rukmī's opposition to My marrying her. Therefore I must kidnap her after crushing all the low-class kings, just as one might generate fire from wood by friction." Since the solemnizing of vows between Rukmiṇī and Śīsupāla was scheduled to occur in only three days, Lord Kṛṣṇa had Dāruka ready His

chariot at once. Then He immediately set out for Vidarbha, which He reached after one night's travel.

King Bhīṣmaka, trapped by his affection for his son Rukmī, was prepared to give his daughter to Śiśupāla. Bhīṣmaka saw to all the necessary preparations: he had the city decorated in various ways and had its main roads and intersections thoroughly cleansed. Damaghoṣa, the King of Cedi, having also done everything necessary to prepare for his son's marriage, arrived in Vidarbha. King Bhīṣmaka greeted him properly and gave him a place to stay. Many other kings, such as Jarāsandha, Śālva and Dantavakra, also came to witness the occasion. These enemies of Kṛṣṇa had conspired to kidnap the bride if Kṛṣṇa came. They planned to fight Him together and thus guarantee Śiśupāla his bride. Hearing of these plans, Lord Baladeva gathered His entire army and quickly went to Kuṇḍinapura.

On the night before the wedding, Rukmiṇī, about to retire, had still not seen either the *brāhmaṇa* or Kṛṣṇa arrive. In anxiety, she cursed her bad fortune. But just then she felt her left side twitch, a good omen. Indeed, the *brāhmaṇa* shortly appeared and related to her what Kṛṣṇa had said, including His firm promise to kidnap her.

When King Bhīṣmaka heard that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had arrived, he went out to greet Them to the accompaniment of triumphant music. He worshiped the Lords with various gifts and then designated residences for Them. Thus the King showed due respect to the Lords, as he did to each of his numerous royal guests.

The people of Vidarbha, seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa, remarked to one another that He alone would be a suitable husband for Rukmiṇī. They prayed that on the strength of whatever pious credit they had, Kṛṣṇa might win Rukmiṇī's hand.

When the time came for Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī to visit the temple of Śrī Ambikā, she proceeded there surrounded by many guards. After bowing down to the deity, Rukmiṇī prayed to be allowed to have Śrī Kṛṣṇa as her husband. Then she took the hand of a girlfriend and left the Ambikā temple. Seeing her inexpressible beauty, the great heroes present dropped their weapons and fell to the ground unconscious. Rukmiṇī walked with deliberate steps until she noticed Kṛṣṇa. Then, as everyone looked on, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took Rukmiṇī onto His chariot. Like a lion claiming his rightful share from a band of jackals, He drove back all the opposing kings and slowly made His exit, followed by His associates. Jarāsandha and the other kings, unable to bear their defeat and dishonor, loudly condemned themselves, declaring that this defamation was like a petty animal's stealing away what rightfully belongs to the lion.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus hearing the confidential message of Princess Vaidarbhī, Lord Yadunandana took the brāhmaṇa's hand and, smiling, spoke to him as follows.

2The Supreme Lord said: Just as Rukmiṇī's mind is fixed on Me, My mind is fixed on her. I can't even sleep at night. I know that Rukmī, out of envy, has forbidden our marriage.

3She has dedicated herself exclusively to Me, and her beauty is flawless. I will bring her here after thrashing those worthless kings in battle, just as one brings a blazing flame out of firewood.

4Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Madhusūdana also understood the exact lunar time for Rukmiṇī's wedding. Thus He told His driver, "Dārūka, ready My chariot immediately."

5Dārūka brought the Lord's chariot, yoked with the horses named Śaibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka. He then stood before Lord Kṛṣṇa with joined palms.

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6Lord Śauri mounted His chariot and had the brāhmaṇa do likewise. Then the Lord's swift horses took them from the Ānarta district to Vidarbha in a single night.

7King Bhīṣmaka, the master of Kuṇḍina, having succumbed to the sway of affection for his son, was about to give his daughter to Śiśupāla. The King saw to all the required preparations.

8-9The king had the main avenues, commercial roads and intersections thoroughly cleaned and then sprinkled with water, and he also had the city decorated with triumphant archways and multicolored banners on poles. The men and women of the city, arrayed in spotless raiment and anointed with fragrant sandalwood paste, wore precious necklaces, flower garlands and jeweled ornaments, and their opulent homes were filled with the aroma of aguru.

10King, in accordance with prescribed rituals, Mahārāja Bhīṣmaka worshiped the forefathers, demigods and brāhmaṇas, feeding them all properly. Then He had the traditional mantras chanted for the well-being of the bride.

11The bride cleaned her teeth and bathed, after which she put on the auspicious wedding necklace. Then she was dressed in brand-new upper and lower garments and adorned with most excellent jeweled ornaments.

12The best of brāhmaṇas chanted mantras of the Ṛg, Sāma and Yajur Vedas for the bride's protection, and the priest learned in the Atharva Veda offered oblations to pacify the controlling planets.

13Outstanding in his knowledge of regulative principles, the King rewarded the brāhmaṇas with gold, silver, clothing, cows and sesame seeds mixed with raw sugar.

14Rājā Damaghoṣa, lord of Cedi, had also engaged brāhmaṇas expert in chanting mantras to perform all rituals necessary to assure his son's prosperity.

15King Damaghoṣa traveled to Kuṇḍina accompanied by armies of elephants exuding mada, chariots hung with golden chains, and numerous cavalry and infantry soldiers.

16Bhīṣmaka, the lord of Vidarbha, came out of the city and met King Damaghoṣa, offering him tokens of respect. Bhīṣmaka then settled Damaghoṣa in a residence especially constructed for the occasion.

17Śiśupāla's supportersŚālva, Jarāsandha, Dantavakra and Vidūrathaall came, along with Pauṇḍraka and thousands of other kings.

18-19To secure the bride for Śiśupāla, the kings who envied Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma came to the following decision among themselves: "If Kṛṣṇa comes here with Balarāma and the other Yadus to steal the bride, we shall band together and fight Him." Thus those envious kings went to the wedding with their entire armies and a full complement of military conveyances.

20-21When Lord Balarāma heard about these preparations of the inimical kings and how Lord Kṛṣṇa had set off alone to steal the bride, He feared that a fight would ensue. Immersed in affection for His brother, He hurried to Kuṇḍina with a mighty army consisting of infantry and of soldiers riding on elephants, horses and chariots.

22The lovely daughter of Bhīṣmaka anxiously awaited the arrival of Kṛṣṇa, but when she did not see the brāhmaṇa return she thought as follows.

23[Princess Rukmiṇī thought:] Alas, my wedding is to take place when the night ends! How

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unlucky I am! Lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa does not come. I don't know why. And even the brāhmaṇa messenger has not yet returned.

24Perhaps the faultless Lord, even while preparing to come here, saw something contemptible in me and therefore has not come to take my hand.

25I am extremely unfortunate, for the creator is not favorably disposed toward me, nor is the great Lord Śiva. Or perhaps Śiva's wife, Devī, who is known as Gaurī, Rudrāṇī, Girijā and Satī, has turned against me.

26As she thought in this way, the young maiden, whose mind had been stolen by Kṛṣṇa, closed her tear-filled eyes, remembering that there was still time.

27O King, as the bride thus awaited the arrival of Govinda, she felt a twitch in her left thigh, arm and eye. This was a sign that something desirable would happen.

28Just then the purest of learned brāhmaṇas, following Kṛṣṇa's order, came to see the divine Princess Rukmiṇī within the inner chambers of the palace.

29Noting the brāhmaṇa's joyful face and serene movements, saintly Rukmiṇī, who could expertly interpret such symptoms, inquired from him with a pure smile.

30The brāhmaṇa announced to her the arrival of Lord Yadunandana and relayed the Lord's promise to marry her.

31Princess Vaidarbhī was overjoyed to learn of Kṛṣṇa's arrival. Not finding anything at hand suitable to offer the brāhmaṇa, she simply bowed down to him.

32The King, upon hearing that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had come and were eager to witness his daughter's wedding, went forth with abundant offerings to greet Them as music resounded.

33Presenting Them with madhu-parka, new clothing and other desirable gifts, he worshiped Them according to standard rituals.

34Generous King Bhīṣmaka arranged opulent accommodations for the two Lords, and also for Their army and entourage. In this way he afforded Them proper hospitality.

35Thus it was that Bhīṣmaka gave all desirable things to the kings who had assembled for the occasion, honoring them as befitted their political power, age, physical prowess and wealth.

36When the residents of Vidarbha-pura heard that Lord Kṛṣṇa had come, they all went to see Him. With the cupped palms of their eyes they drank the honey of His lotus face.

37[The people of the city said:] Rukmiṇī, and no one else, deserves to become His wife, and He also, possessing such flawless beauty, is the only suitable husband for Princess Bhaiṣmī.

38May Acyuta, the creator of the three worlds, be satisfied with whatever pious work we may have done and show His mercy by taking the hand of Vaidarbhī.

39Bound by their swelling love, the city's residents spoke in this way. Then the bride, protected by guards, left the inner palace to visit the temple of Ambikā.

40-41Rukmiṇī silently went out on foot to see the lotus feet of the deity Bhavānī. Accompanied by her mothers and girlfriends and protected by the King's valiant soldiers, who held their upraised weapons at the ready, she simply absorbed her mind in the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. And all

the while mṛdaṅgas, conchshells, paṇavas, horns and other instruments resounded.

42-43 Behind the bride followed thousands of prominent courtesans bearing various offerings and presents, along with well-adorned brāhmaṇas' wives singing and reciting prayers and bearing gifts of garlands, scents, clothing and jewelry. There were also professional singers, musicians, bards, chroniclers and heralds.

44 Upon reaching the goddess's temple, Rukmiṇī first washed her lotus feet and hands and then sipped water for purification. Thus sanctified and peaceful, she came into the presence of mother Ambikā.

45 The older wives of brāhmaṇas, expert in the knowledge of rituals, led young Rukmiṇī in offering respects to Bhavānī, who appeared with her consort, Lord Bhava.

46 [Princess Rukmiṇī prayed:] O mother Ambikā, wife of Lord Siva, I repeatedly offer my obeisances unto you, together with your children. May Lord Kṛṣṇa become my husband. Please grant this!

47-48 Rukmiṇī worshiped the goddess with water, scents, whole grains, incense, clothing, garlands, necklaces, jewelry and other prescribed offerings and gifts, and also with arrays of lamps. The married brāhmaṇa women each performed worship simultaneously with the same items, also offering savories and cakes, prepared betel nut, sacred threads, fruit and sugarcane juice.

49 The ladies gave the bride the remnants of the offerings and then blessed her. She in turn bowed down to them and the deity and accepted the remnants as prasādam.

50 The princess then gave up her vow of silence and left the Ambikā temple, holding on to a maidservant with her hand, which was adorned with a jeweled ring.

51-55 Rukmiṇī appeared as enchanting as the Lord's illusory potency, who enchants even the sober and grave. Thus the kings gazed upon her virgin beauty, her shapely waist, and her lovely face adorned with earrings. Her hips were graced with a jewel-studded belt, her breasts were just budding, and her eyes seemed apprehensive of her encroaching locks of hair. She smiled sweetly, her jasmine-bud teeth reflecting the glow of her bimba-red lips. As she walked with the motions of a royal swan, the effulgence of her tinkling ankle bells beautified her feet. Seeing her, the assembled heroes were totally bewildered. Lust tore at their hearts. Indeed, when the kings saw her broad smile and shy glance, they became stupefied, dropped their weapons and fell unconscious to the ground from their elephants, chariots and horses. On the pretext of the procession, Rukmiṇī displayed her beauty for Kṛṣṇa alone. Slowly she advanced the two moving lotus-whorls of her feet, awaiting the arrival of the Supreme Lord. With the fingernails of her left hand she pushed some strands of hair away from her face and shyly looked from the corners of her eyes at the kings standing before her. At that moment she saw Kṛṣṇa. Then, while His enemies looked on, the Lord seized the princess, who was eager to mount His chariot.

56 Lifting the princess onto His chariot, whose flag bore the emblem of Garuḍa, Lord Mādhava drove back the circle of kings. With Balarāma in the lead, He slowly exited, like a lion removing his prey from the midst of jackals.

57 The kings inimical to the Lord, headed by Jarāsandha, could not tolerate this humiliating defeat. They exclaimed, "Oh, damn us! Though we are mighty archers, mere cowherds have stolen our honor, just as puny animals might steal the honor of lions!"

SB 10.54: The Marriage of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa defeated the opposing kings after kidnapping Rukmiṇī, disfigured Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī, brought Rukmiṇī to His capital and married her.

As Śrī Kṛṣṇa was taking Princess Rukmiṇī away, the inimical kings gathered their armies and pursued Him. Lord Baladeva and the generals of the Yādava army turned to face these opponents, blocking their advance. The enemy armies then began pouring incessant showers of arrows upon Lord Kṛṣṇa's army. Seeing her husband-to-be's forces under such violent attack, Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī looked at Śrī Kṛṣṇa fearfully. But Kṛṣṇa simply smiled and told her there was nothing to fear because His army would surely destroy the enemy in short order.

Lord Balarāma and the other heroes then began to annihilate the opposing army with *nārāca* arrows. The enemy kings, headed by Jarāsandha, retreated after suffering the destruction of their armies at the hands of the Yādavas.

Jarāsandha consoled Śīsupāla: "Happiness and distress are never permanent and are under the control of the Supreme Lord. Seventeen times Kṛṣṇa defeated me, but in the end I was victorious over Him. Thus seeing that victory and defeat are under the control of destiny and time, I have learned not to succumb to either lamentation or joy. Time now favors the Yādavas, so they have defeated you with only a small army, but in the future time will favor you, and you will surely conquer them." Consoled in this way, Śīsupāla took his followers and returned to his kingdom.

Rukmiṇī's brother Rukmī, who hated Kṛṣṇa, was infuriated by Kṛṣṇa's kidnapping of his sister. So, after vowing before all the kings present that he would not return to Kuṇḍina until Kṛṣṇa had been destroyed and Rukmiṇī rescued, Rukmī set out with his army to attack the Lord. Ignorant of Lord Kṛṣṇa's glories, Rukmī boldly went out to attack Kṛṣṇa in a lone chariot. He approached the Lord, struck Him with arrows and demanded that He release Rukmiṇī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa fended off Rukmī's weapons, breaking them to pieces. Then He raised His sword high and was about to kill Rukmī when Rukmiṇī interceded and fervently pleaded that her brother's life be spared. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not kill Rukmī, but with His sword He shaved off bits of Rukmī's hair here and there, leaving him disfigured. Just then Lord Baladeva appeared on the scene with the Yādava army. Seeing Rukmī disfigured, He gently reproached Kṛṣṇa: "To disfigure such a close family member is as good as killing him; therefore he should not be killed but set free."

Lord Baladeva then told Rukmiṇī that the sorry condition of her brother was only the fruit of his past work, since everyone is responsible for his own happiness and suffering. He further instructed her about the transcendental position of the *jīva* soul and how the illusion of happiness and distress is simply a result of ignorance. Accepting Lord Balarāma's instructions, Rukmiṇī gave up her sorrow.

Rukmī, meanwhile, felt totally frustrated, deprived as he was of all his strength and his will to fight. Since he had vowed not to return home without conquering Kṛṣṇa, Rukmī constructed a city on that very spot and took up residence there in a mood of undiminished anger.

Lord Kṛṣṇa took Rukmiṇī to His capital, Dvārakā, and married her. All the citizens celebrated in lavish style, broadcasting throughout the city accounts of how the Lord had kidnapped Rukmiṇī. Everyone in Dvārakā was delighted to see Lord Kṛṣṇa united with Rukmiṇī.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus spoken, all those infuriated kings donned their armor and mounted their conveyances. Each king, bow in hand, was surrounded by his own army as

he went after Lord Kṛṣṇa.

2The commanders of the Yādava army, seeing the enemy racing to attack, turned to face them and stood firm, O King, twanging their bows.

3Mounted on the backs of horses, the shoulders of elephants and the seats of chariots, the enemy kings, expert with weapons, rained down arrows upon the Yadus like clouds pouring rain on mountains.

4Slender-waisted Rukmiṇī, seeing her Lord's army covered by torrents of arrows, shyly looked at His face with fear-stricken eyes.

5In response the Lord laughed and assured her, "Do not be afraid, beautiful-eyed one. This enemy force is about to be destroyed by your soldiers."

6The heroes of the Lord's army, headed by Gada and Saṅkarṣaṇa, could not tolerate the aggression of the opposing kings. Thus with iron arrows they began to strike down the enemy's horses, elephants and chariots.

7The heads of soldiers fighting on chariots, horses and elephants fell to the ground by the millions; some heads wore earrings and helmets, others turbans.

8Lying all around were thighs, legs and fingerless hands, along with hands clutching swords, clubs and bows, and also the heads of horses, donkeys, elephants, camels, wild asses and humans.

9Seeing their armies being struck down by the Vṛṣṇis, who were eager for victory, the kings headed by Jarāsandha were discouraged and left the battlefield.

10The kings approached Śiśupāla, who was disturbed like a man who has lost his wife. His complexion was drained of color, his enthusiasm was gone, and his face appeared dried up. The kings spoke to him as follows.

11[Jarāsandha said:] Listen, Śiśupāla, O tiger among men, give up your depression. After all, embodied beings' happiness and unhappiness is never seen to be permanent, O King.

12Just as a puppet in the form of a woman dances by the desire of the puppeteer, so this world, controlled by the Supreme Lord, struggles in both happiness and misery.

13In battle with Kṛṣṇa I and my twenty-three armies lost seventeen times; only once did I defeat Him.

14But still I never lament or rejoice, because I know this world is driven by time and fate.

15And now all of us, great commanders of military leaders, have been defeated by the Yadus and their small entourage, who are protected by Kṛṣṇa.

16Now our enemies have conquered because time favors them, but in the future, when time is auspicious for us, we shall conquer.

17Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus persuaded by his friends, Śiśupāla took his followers and went back to his capital. The surviving warriors also returned to their respective cities.

18Powerful Rukmī, however, was especially envious of Kṛṣṇa. He could not bear the fact that Kṛṣṇa had carried off his sister to marry her in the Rākṣasa style. Thus he pursued the Lord with an entire military division.

19-20Frustrated and enraged, mighty-armed Rukmī, dressed in armor and wielding his bow, had sworn before all the kings, “I shall not again enter Kuṇḍina if I do not kill Kṛṣṇa in battle and bring Rukmiṇī back with me. I swear this to you.”

21Having said this, he had mounted his chariot and told his charioteer, “Drive the horses quickly to where Kṛṣṇa is. He and I must fight.

22“This wicked-minded cowherd boy, infatuated with His prowess, has violently abducted my sister. But today I will remove His pride with my sharp arrows.”

23Boasting thus, foolish Rukmī, ignorant of the true extent of the Supreme Lord’s power, approached Lord Govinda in his lone chariot and challenged Him, “Just stand and fight!”

24Rukmī drew his bow with great strength and struck Lord Kṛṣṇa with three arrows. Then he said, “Stand here for a moment, O defiler of the Yadu dynasty!

25“Wherever You go, carrying off my sister like a crow stealing sacrificial butter, I will follow. This very day I shall relieve You of Your false pride, You fool, You deceiver, You cheater in battle!

26“Release the girl before You are struck dead by my arrows and made to lie down!” In response to this, Lord Kṛṣṇa smiled, and with six arrows He struck Rukmī and broke his bow.

27The Lord struck Rukmī’s four horses with eight arrows, his chariot driver with two, and the chariot’s flag with three. Rukmī grabbed another bow and struck Lord Kṛṣṇa with five arrows.

28Although hit by these many arrows, Lord Acyuta again broke Rukmī’s bow. Rukmī picked up yet another bow, but the infallible Lord broke that one to pieces as well.

29Iron bludgeon, three-pointed spear, sword and shield, pike, javelinwhatever weapon Rukmī picked up, Lord Hari smashed it to bits.

30Then Rukmī leaped down from his chariot and, sword in hand, rushed furiously toward Kṛṣṇa to kill Him, like a bird flying into the wind.

31As Rukmī attacked Him, the Lord shot arrows that broke Rukmī’s sword and shield into small pieces. Kṛṣṇa then took up His own sharp sword and prepared to kill Rukmī.

32Seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa ready to kill her brother, saintly Rukmiṇī was filled with alarm. She fell at her husband’s feet and piteously spoke as follows.

33Śrī Rukmiṇī said: O controller of all mystic power, immeasurable one, Lord of lords, master of the universe! O all auspicious and mighty-armed one, please do not kill my brother!

34Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Rukmiṇī’s utter fear caused her limbs to tremble and her mouth to dry up, while her throat choked up out of sorrow. And in her agitation her golden necklace scattered. She grasped Kṛṣṇa’s feet, and the Lord, feeling compassionate, desisted.

35Lord Kṛṣṇa tied up the evil-doer with a strip of cloth. He then proceeded to disfigure Rukmī by comically shaving him, leaving parts of his mustache and hair. By that time the Yadu heroes had crushed the extraordinary army of their opponents, just as elephants crush a lotus flower.

36As the Yadus approached Lord Kṛṣṇa, they saw Rukmī in this sorry condition, practically dying of shame. When the all-powerful Lord Balarāma saw Rukmī, He compassionately released him and spoke the following to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

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37[Lord Balarāma said:] My dear Kṛṣṇa, You have acted improperly! This deed will bring shame on Us, for to disfigure a close relative by shaving off his mustache and hair is as good as killing him.

38Saintly lady, please do not be displeased with Us out of anxiety for your brother's disfigurement. No one but oneself is responsible for one's joy and grief, for a man experiences the result of his own deeds.

39[Again addressing Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma said:] A relative should not be killed even if his wrongdoing warrants capital punishment. Rather, he should be thrown out of the family. Since he has already been killed by his own sin, why kill him again?

40[Turning to Rukmiṇī, Balarāma continued:] The code of sacred duty for warriors established by Lord Brahmā enjoins that one may have to kill even his own brother. That is indeed a most dreadful law.

41[Again Balarāma addressed Kṛṣṇa:] Blinded by conceit with their personal opulences, proud men offend others for the sake of such things as kingdom, land, wealth, women, honor and power.

42[To Rukmiṇī Balarāma said:] Your attitude is unfair, for like an ignorant person you wish good to those who are inimical to all living beings and who have done evil to your true well-wishers.

43The Supreme Lord's Māyā makes men forget their real selves, and thus, taking the body for the self, they consider others to be friends, enemies or neutral parties.

44Those who are bewildered perceive the one Supreme Soul, who resides in all embodied beings, as many, just as one may perceive the light in the sky, or the sky itself, as many.

45This material body, which has a beginning and an end, is composed of the physical elements, the senses and the modes of nature. The body, imposed on the self by material ignorance, causes one to experience the cycle of birth and death.

46O intelligent lady, the soul never undergoes contact with or separation from insubstantial, material objects, because the soul is their very origin and illuminator. Thus the soul resembles the sun, which neither comes in contact with nor separates from the sense of sight and what is seen.

47Birth and other transformations are undergone by the body but never by the self, just as change occurs for the moon's phases but never for the moon, though the new-moon day may be called the moon's "death."

48As a sleeping person perceives himself, the objects of sense enjoyment and the fruits of his acts within the illusion of a dream, so one who is unintelligent undergoes material existence.

49Therefore, with transcendental knowledge dispel the grief that is weakening and confounding your mind. Please resume your natural mood, O princess of the pristine smile.

50Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus enlightened by Lord Balarāma, slender Rukmiṇī forgot her depression and steadied her mind by spiritual intelligence.

51Left with only his life air, cast out by his enemies and deprived of his strength and bodily radiance, Rukmī could not forget how he had been disfigured. In frustration he constructed for his residence a large city, which he called Bhojakaṭa.

52Because he had promised “I will not reenter Kuṇḍina until I have killed wicked Kṛṣṇa and brought back my younger sister,” in a mood of angry frustration Rukmī took up residence at that very place.

53Thus defeating all the opposing kings, the Supreme Personality of Godhead brought the daughter of Bhīṣmaka to His capital and married her according to the Vedic injunctions, O protector of the Kurus.

54At that time, O King, there was great rejoicing in all the homes of Yadupurī, whose citizens loved only Kṛṣṇa, chief of the Yadus.

55All the men and women, full of joy and adorned with shining jewels and earrings, brought wedding presents, which they reverently offered to the exquisitely dressed groom and bride.

56The city of the Vṛṣṇis appeared most beautiful: there were tall, festive columns, and also archways decorated with flower garlands, cloth banners and precious gems. Arrangements of auspicious, full waterpots, aguru-scented incense, and lamps graced every doorway.

57The city’s streets were cleansed by the intoxicated elephants belonging to the beloved kings who were guests at the wedding, and these elephants further enhanced the beauty of the city by placing trunks of plantain and betel-nut trees in all the doorways.

58Those who belonged to the royal families of the Kuru, Śṛṣṭjaya, Kaikeya, Vidarbha, Yadu and Kunti clans joyfully met one another in the midst of the crowds of people excitedly running here and there.

59The kings and their daughters were totally astonished to hear the story of Rukmiṇī’s abduction, which was being glorified in song everywhere.

60Dvārakā’s citizens were overjoyed to see Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all opulence, united with Rukmiṇī, the goddess of fortune.

SB 10.55: The History of Pradyumna

This chapter tells how Pradyumna was born as the son of Lord Kṛṣṇa and then kidnapped by the demon Śambara. It also describes how Pradyumna killed Śambara and returned home with a wife.

Kāmadeva (Cupid), an expansion of Lord Vāsudeva, had been burned to ashes by Lord Śiva’s anger and was reborn as part and parcel of Pradyumna from the womb of Rukmiṇī. A demon named Śambara, thinking Pradyumna his enemy, kidnapped Him from the maternity room even before He was ten days old. Śambara threw Pradyumna into the ocean and returned to his kingdom. A powerful fish swallowed Pradyumna and was caught by fishermen in a net. They presented the huge fish to Śambara, and when his cooks cut it open they found a child within its belly. The cooks gave the infant to the maidservant Māyāvātī, who was astonished to see Him. Just then Nārada Muni appeared and told her who the infant was. Māyāvātī was actually Kāmadeva’s wife, Ratidevī. While waiting for her husband to be reborn in a new body, she had taken employment as a cook in the household of Śambara. Now that she understood who the infant was, she began to feel intense affection for Him. After a very short time, Pradyumna grew to youthful maturity, entrancing all the women with His beauty.

Once, Ratidevī approached Pradyumna and playfully moved her eyebrows in a conjugal mood. Addressing her as His mother, Pradyumna commented that she was putting aside her proper maternal mood and behaving like a passionate girlfriend. Rati then told Pradyumna who they

both were. She advised Him to kill Śambara, and to help Him she instructed Him in the mystic *mantras* known as Mahā-māyā. Pradyumna went to Śambara and, after angering him with various insults, challenged him to fight, upon which Śambara angrily took up his club and marched outside. The demon tried various magic spells against Pradyumna, but Pradyumna fended off all of them with the Mahā-māyā *mantras* and then beheaded Śambara with His sword. At that moment Ratidevī appeared in the sky and took Pradyumna away to Dvārakā.

When Pradyumna and His wife entered the inner chambers of Lord Kṛṣṇa's palace, the many beautiful ladies there thought He was Kṛṣṇa Himself, so much did His appearance and dress resemble the Lord's. Out of shyness the ladies ran here and there to hide themselves. But after a little while they noticed small differences in Pradyumna's and Kṛṣṇa's appearances, and once they understood that He was not Lord Kṛṣṇa, they gathered around Him.

When Rukmiṇī-devī saw Pradyumna, she felt overwhelmed with motherly love, and milk began to flow spontaneously from her breasts. Noting that Pradyumna looked exactly like Kṛṣṇa, she became eager to find out who He was. She remembered how one of her sons had been abducted from the maternity room. "If He were still alive," she thought, "He would be the same age as this Pradyumna standing before me." While Rukmiṇī reflected in this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa arrived in the company of Devakī and Vasudeva. Although the Lord understood the situation perfectly well, He remained silent. Then Nārada Muni arrived and explained everything. Everyone was amazed to hear the account and embraced Pradyumna in great ecstasy.

Because Pradyumna's beauty so closely resembled Kṛṣṇa's, the ladies in a maternal relationship with Pradyumna could not help thinking of Him as their conjugal lover. He was, after all, the exact reflection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and therefore it was natural for them to see Him in this way.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Kāmadeva [Cupid], an expansion of Vāsudeva, had previously been burned to ashes by Rudra's anger. Now, to obtain a new body, he merged back into the body of Lord Vāsudeva.

2He took birth in the womb of Vaidarbhī from the seed of Lord Kṛṣṇa and received the name Pradyumna. In no respect was He inferior to His father.

3The demon Śambara, who could assume any form he desired, kidnapped the infant before He was even ten days old. Understanding Pradyumna to be his enemy, Śambara threw Him into the sea and then returned home.

4A powerful fish swallowed Pradyumna, and this fish, along with others, was caught in a huge net and seized by fishermen.

5The fishermen presented that extraordinary fish to Śambara, who had his cooks bring it to the kitchen, where they began cutting it up with a butcher knife.

6Seeing a male child in the belly of the fish, the cooks gave the infant to Māyāvātī, who was astonished. Nārada Muni then appeared and explained to her everything about the child's birth and His entering the fish's abdomen.

7-8Māyāvātī was in fact Cupid's renowned wife, Rati. While waiting for her husband to obtain a new body his previous one having been burnt up she had been assigned by Śambara to prepare vegetables and rice. Māyāvātī understood that this infant was actually Kāmadeva, and thus she began to feel love for Him.

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9After a short time, this son of KṛṣṇaPradyumnaattained His full youth. He enchanted all women who gazed upon Him.

10My dear King, with a bashful smile and raised eyebrows, Māyāvātīexhibited various gestures of conjugal attraction as she lovingly approached her husband, whose eyes were broad like the petals of a lotus, whose arms were very long and who was the most beautiful of men.

11Lord Pradyumna told her, “O mother, your attitude has changed. You are overstepping the proper feelings of a mother and behaving like a lover.”

12Rati said: You are the son of Lord Nārāyaṇa and were kidnapped from Your parents’ home by Śambara. I, Rati, am Your legitimate wife, O master, because You are Cupid.

13That demon, Śambara, threw You into the sea when You were not even ten days old, and a fish swallowed You. Then in this very place we recovered You from the fish’s abdomen, O master.

14Now kill this dreadful Śambara, Your formidable enemy. Although he knows hundreds of magic spells, You can defeat him with bewildering magic and other techniques.

15Your poor mother, having lost her son, cries for You like a kurarī bird. She is overwhelmed with love for her child, just like a cow that has lost its calf.

16[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Speaking thus, Māyāvātī gave to the great soul Pradyumna the mystic knowledge called Mahā-māyā, which vanquishes all other deluding spells.

17Pradyumna approached Śambara and called him to battle, hurling intolerable insults at him to foment a conflict.

18Offended by these harsh words, Śambara became as agitated as a kicked snake. He came out, club in hand, his eyes red with rage.

19Śambara whirled his club swiftly about and then hurled it at the wise Pradyumna, producing a sound as sharp as a thunder crack.

20As Śambara’s club came flying toward Him, Lord Pradyumna knocked it away with His own. Then, O King, Pradyumna angrily threw His club at the enemy.

21Resorting to the black magic of the Daityas taught to him by Maya Dānava, Śambara suddenly appeared in the sky and released a downpour of weapons upon Kṛṣṇa’s son.

22Harassed by this rain of weapons, Lord Raukmiṇeya, the greatly powerful warrior, made use of the mystic science called Mahā-māyā, which was created from the mode of goodness and which could defeat all other mystic power.

23The demon then unleashed hundreds of mystic weapons belonging to the Guhyakas, Gandharvas, Piśācas, Uragas and Rākṣasas, but Lord Kārṣṇi, Pradyumna, struck them all down.

24Drawing His sharp-edged sword, Pradyumna forcefully cut off Śambara’s head, complete with red mustache, helmet and earrings.

25As the residents of the higher planets showered Pradyumna with flowers and chanted His praises, His wife appeared in the sky and transported Him through the heavens, back to the city of Dvārakā.

26O King, Lord Pradyumna and His wife resembled a cloud accompanied by lightning as they descended from the sky into the inner quarters of Kṛṣṇa's most excellent palace, which were crowded with lovely women.

27-28The women of the palace thought He was Lord Kṛṣṇa when they saw His dark-blue complexion the color of a rain cloud, His yellow silk garments, His long arms and red-tinged eyes, His charming lotus face adorned with a pleasing smile, His fine ornaments and His thick, curly blue hair. Thus the women became bashful and hid themselves here and there.

29Gradually, from the slight differences between His appearance and Kṛṣṇa's, the ladies realized He was not the Lord. Delighted and astonished, they approached Pradyumna and His consort, who was a jewel among women.

30Seeing Pradyumna, sweet-voiced, dark-eyed Rukmiṇī remembered her lost son, and her breasts became moist out of affection.

31[Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī said:] Who is this lotus-eyed jewel among men? What man's son is He, and what woman carried Him in her womb? And who is this woman He has taken as His wife?

32If my lost son, who was kidnapped from the maternity room, were still alive somewhere, He would be of the same age and appearance as this young man.

33But how is it that this young man so much resembles my own Lord, Kṛṣṇa, the wielder of Śārṅga, in His bodily form and His limbs, in His gait and the tone of His voice, and in His smiling glance?

34Yes, He must be the same child I bore in my womb, since I feel great affection for Him and my left arm is quivering.

35As Queen Rukmiṇī conjectured in this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, arrived on the scene with Vasudeva and Devakī.

36Although Lord Janārdana knew perfectly well what had transpired, He remained silent. The sage Nārada, however, explained everything, beginning with Śambara's kidnapping of the child.

37When the women of Lord Kṛṣṇa's palace heard this most amazing account, they joyfully greeted Pradyumna, who had been lost for many years but who had now returned as if from the dead.

38Devakī, Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and all the women of the palace, especially Queen Rukmiṇī, embraced the young couple and rejoiced.

39Hearing that lost Pradyumna had come home, the residents of Dvārakā declared, "Ah, providence has allowed this child to return as if from death!"

40It is not astonishing that the palace women, who should have felt maternal affection for Pradyumna, privately felt ecstatic attraction for Him as if He were their own Lord. After all, the son exactly resembled His father. Indeed, Pradyumna was a perfect reflection of the beauty of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the shelter of the goddess of fortune, and appeared before their eyes as Cupid Himself. Since even those on the level of His mother felt conjugal attraction for Him, then what to speak of how other women felt when they saw Him?

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This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa recovered the Syamantaka jewel to allay false accusations against Him and married the daughters of Jāmbavān and Satrājīṭ. By enacting the pastime involving the Syamantaka jewel, the Lord demonstrated the futility of material wealth.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī mentioned that King Satrājīṭ offended Lord Kṛṣṇa on account of the Syamantaka jewel, King Parīkṣit became curious to hear the details of this incident. Thus Śukadeva Gosvāmī narrated the story.

King Satrājīṭ received the Syamantaka gem by the grace of his best well-wisher, the sun-god, Sūrya. After fastening the gem to a chain, which he then hung around his neck, Satrājīṭ traveled to Dvārakā. The residents, thinking he was the sun-god himself, went to Kṛṣṇa and told Him that Lord Sūrya had come to take His audience. But Kṛṣṇa replied that the man who had come was not Sūrya but King Satrājīṭ, who looked extremely effulgent because he was wearing the Syamantaka jewel.

In Dvārakā Satrājīṭ installed the precious stone on a special altar in his home. Every day the gem produced a large quantity of gold, and it had the additional power of assuring that wherever it was properly worshiped no calamity could occur.

On one occasion Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa requested Satrājīṭ to give the gem to the King of the Yadus, Ugrasena. But Satrājīṭ refused, obsessed as he was with greed. Shortly thereafter Satrājīṭ's brother Prasena left the city to hunt on horseback, wearing the Syamantaka jewel on his neck. On the road a lion killed Prasena and took the jewel away to a mountain cave, where the king of the bears, Jāmbavān, happened to be living. Jāmbavān killed the lion and gave the jewel to his son to play with.

When King Satrājīṭ's brother did not return, the King presumed that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had killed him for the Syamantaka gem. Lord Kṛṣṇa heard about this rumor circulating among the general populace, and to clear His name He went with some of the citizens to find Prasena. Following his path, they eventually found his body and that of his horse lying on the road. Further on they saw the body of the lion Jāmbavān had killed. Lord Kṛṣṇa told the citizens to remain outside the cave while He went in to investigate.

The Lord entered Jāmbavān's cave and saw the Syamantaka jewel lying next to a child. But when Kṛṣṇa tried to take the jewel, the child's nurse cried out in alarm, bringing Jāmbavān quickly to the scene. Jāmbavān considered Kṛṣṇa an ordinary man and began fighting with Him. For twenty-eight days continuously the two fought, until finally Jāmbavān grew weak from the Lord's blows. Now understanding that Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Jāmbavān began to praise Him. The Lord touched Jāmbavān with His lotus hand, dispelling his fear, and then explained everything about the jewel. With great devotion Jāmbavān gladly presented the Syamantaka jewel to the Lord, together with his unmarried daughter, Jāmbavatī.

Meanwhile Lord Kṛṣṇa's companions, having waited twelve days for Kṛṣṇa to come out of the cave, returned to Dvārakā despondent. All of Kṛṣṇa's friends and family members became extremely sorrowful and began regularly worshiping Goddess Durgā to assure the Lord's safe return. Even as they performed this worship, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the city in the company of His new wife. He summoned Satrājīṭ to the royal assembly and, after recounting to him the entire story of the Syamantaka jewel's recovery, gave the jewel back to him. Satrājīṭ accepted the jewel, but with great shame and remorse. He went back to his home, and there he decided to offer Lord Kṛṣṇa not only the jewel but also his daughter so as to atone for the offense he had committed against the Lord's lotus feet. Śrī Kṛṣṇa accepted the hand of Satrājīṭ's daughter,

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Satyabhāmā, who was endowed with all divine qualities. But the jewel He refused, returning it to King Satrājīit.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having offended Lord Kṛṣṇa, Satrājīit tried as best he could to atone by presenting Him with his daughter and the Syamantaka jewel.

2Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired: O brāhmaṇa, what did King Satrājīit do to offend Lord Kṛṣṇa? Where did he get the Syamantaka jewel, and why did he give his daughter to the Supreme Lord?

3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Sūrya, the sun-god, felt great affection for his devotee Satrājīit. Acting as his greatest friend, the demigod gave him the jewel called Syamantaka as a token of his satisfaction.

4Wearing the jewel on his neck, Satrājīit entered Dvārakā. He shone as brightly as the sun itself, O King, and thus he went unrecognized because of the jewel's effulgence.

5As the people looked at Satrājīit from a distance, his brilliance blinded them. They presumed he was the sun-god, Sūrya, and went to tell Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was at that time playing at dice.

6[The residents of Dvārakā said:] Obeisances unto You, O Nārāyaṇa, O holder of the conch, disc and club, O lotus-eyed Dāmodara, O Govinda, O cherished descendant of Yadu!

7Lord Savitā has come to see You, O Lord of the universe. He is blinding everyone's eyes with his intensely effulgent rays.

8The most exalted demigods in the three worlds are certainly anxious to seek You out, O Lord, now that You have hidden Yourself among the Yadu dynasty. Thus the unborn sun-god has come to see You here.

9Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Hearing these innocent words, the lotus-eyed Lord smiled broadly and said, "This is not the sun-god, Ravi, but rather Satrājīit, who is glowing because of his jewel."

10King Satrājīit entered his opulent home, festively executing auspicious rituals. He had qualified brāhmaṇas install the Syamantaka jewel in the house's temple room.

11Each day the gem would produce eight bhāras of gold, my dear Prabhu, and the place in which it was kept and properly worshiped would be free of calamities such as famine or untimely death, and also of evils like snake bites, mental and physical disorders and the presence of deceitful persons.

12On one occasion Lord Kṛṣṇa requested Satrājīit to give the jewel to the Yadu king, Ugrasena, but Satrājīit was so greedy that he refused. He gave no thought to the seriousness of the offense he committed by denying the Lord's request.

13Once Satrājīit's brother, Prasena, having hung the brilliant jewel about his neck, mounted a horse and went hunting in the forest.

14A lion killed Prasena and his horse and took the jewel. But when the lion entered a mountain cave he was killed by Jāmbavān, who wanted the jewel.

15Within the cave Jāmbavān let his young son have the Syamantaka jewel as a toy to play with. Meanwhile Satrājīit, not seeing his brother return, became deeply troubled.

16He said, "Kṛṣṇa probably killed my brother, who went to the forest wearing the jewel on his

neck.” The general populace heard this accusation and began whispering it in one another’s ears.

17When Lord Kṛṣṇa heard this rumor, He wanted to remove the stain on His reputation. So He took some of Dvārakā’s citizens with Him and set out to retrace Prasena’s path.

18In the forest they found Prasena and his horse, both killed by the lion. Further on they found the lion dead on a mountainside, slain by Ṛkṣa [Jāmbavān].

19The Lord stationed His subjects outside the terrifying, pitch-dark cave of the king of the bears, and then He entered alone.

20There Lord Kṛṣṇa saw that the most precious of jewels had been made into a child’s plaything. Determined to take it away, He approached the child.

21The child’s nurse cried out in fear upon seeing that extraordinary person standing before them. Jāmbavān, strongest of the strong, heard her cries and angrily ran toward the Lord.

22Unaware of His true position and thinking Him an ordinary man, Jāmbavān angrily began fighting with the Supreme Lord, his master.

23The two fought furiously in single combat, each determined to win. Contending against each other with various weapons and then with stones, tree trunks and finally their bare arms, they struggled like two hawks battling over a piece of flesh.

24The fight went on without rest for twenty-eight days, the two opponents striking each other with their fists, which fell like the cracking blows of lightning.

25His bulging muscles pummeled by the blows of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s fists, his strength faltering and his limbs perspiring, Jāmbavān, greatly astonished, finally spoke to the Lord.

26[Jāmbavān said:] I know now that You are the life air and the sensory, mental and bodily strength of all living beings. You are Lord Viṣṇu, the original person, the supreme, all-powerful controller.

27You are the ultimate creator of all creators of the universe, and of everything created You are the underlying substance. You are the subduer of all subduers, the Supreme Lord and Supreme Soul of all souls.

28You are He who impelled the ocean to give way when His sidelong glances, slightly manifesting His anger, disturbed the crocodiles and timingila fish within the watery depths. You are He who built a great bridge to establish His fame, who burned down the city of Laṅkā, and whose arrows severed the heads of Rāvaṇa, which then fell to the ground.

29-30[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O King, Lord Kṛṣṇa then addressed the king of the bears, who had understood the truth. The lotus-eyed Personality of Godhead, the son of Devakī, touched Jāmbavān with His hand, which bestows all blessings, and spoke to His devotee with sublime compassion, His grave voice deeply resounding like a cloud.

31[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] It is for this jewel, O lord of the bears, that we have come to your cave. I intend to use the jewel to disprove the false accusations against Me.

32Thus addressed, Jāmbavān happily honored Lord Kṛṣṇa by offering Him his maiden daughter, Jāmbavatī, together with the jewel.

33After Lord Śauri had entered the cave, the people of Dvārakā who had accompanied Him had waited twelve days without seeing Him come out again. Finally they had given up and returned to their city in great sorrow.

34When Devakī, Rukmiṇī-devī, Vasudeva and the Lord's other relatives and friends heard that He had not come out of the cave, they all lamented.

35Cursing Satrājī, the sorrowful residents of Dvārakā approached the Durgā deity named Candrabhāgā and prayed to her for Kṛṣṇa's return.

36When the citizens had finished worshipping the demigoddess, she spoke to them in response, promising to grant their request. Just then Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had achieved His purpose, appeared before them in the company of His new wife, filling them with joy.

37Seeing Lord Hṛṣīkeśa return as if from death, accompanied by His new wife and wearing the Syamantaka jewel on His neck, all the people were roused to jubilation.

38Lord Kṛṣṇa summoned Satrājī to the royal assembly. There, in the presence of King Ugrasena, Kṛṣṇa announced the recovery of the jewel and then formally presented it to Satrājī.

39Hanging his head in great shame, Satrājī took the gem and returned home, all the while feeling remorse for his sinful behavior.

40-42Pondering over his grievous offense and worried about the possibility of conflict with the Lord's mighty devotees, King Satrājī thought, "How can I cleanse myself of my contamination, and how may Lord Acyuta become satisfied with me? What can I do to regain my good fortune and avoid being cursed by the populace for being so short-sighted, miserly, foolish and avaricious? I shall give my daughter, the jewel of all women, to the Lord, together with the Syamantaka jewel. That, indeed, is the only proper way to pacify Him."

43Having thus intelligently made up his mind, King Satrājī personally arranged to present Lord Kṛṣṇa with his fair daughter and the Syamantaka jewel.

44The Lord married Satyabhāmā in proper religious fashion. Possessed of excellent behavior, along with beauty, broad-mindedness and all other good qualities, she had been sought by many men.

45The Supreme Personality of Godhead told Satrājī: We do not care to take this jewel back, O King. You are the sun-god's devotee, so let it stay in your possession. Thus We will also enjoy its benefits.

SB 10.57: Satrājī Murdered, the Jewel Returned

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa, after the murder of Satrājī, killed Śatadhanvā and had Akrūra bring the Syamantaka jewel back to Dvārakā.

When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa heard that the Pāṇḍavas had supposedly been burned to death in the palace of lac, He went to Hastināpura with Lord Baladeva to maintain the principles of worldly protocol, even though, being omniscient, He knew the report was false. With Kṛṣṇa out of Dvārakā, Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā incited Śatadhanvā to steal the Syamantaka jewel from Satrājī. Bewildered by their words, the sinful Śatadhanvā murdered King Satrājī in his sleep and stole the gem. Queen Satyabhāmā was overcome with grief at the death of her father, and she rushed to Hastināpura to report the sorrowful news to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Together with Lord Baladeva, Kṛṣṇa then returned to Dvārakā to kill Śatadhanvā.

Śatadhanvā went to Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā to beg for help, but when they refused he left the jewel with Akrūra and fled for his life. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma pursued him, and Lord Kṛṣṇa beheaded him with His sharp-edged disc. When the Lord could not find the Syamantaka jewel on Śatadhanvā's person, Baladeva told Him that Śatadhanvā must have left it in someone's care. Baladeva further suggested that Kṛṣṇa return to Dvārakā to find the jewel while He, Baladeva, would take the opportunity to visit the King of Videha. Thus Lord Balarāma traveled to Mithilā and remained there for a few years, during which He taught King Duryodhana the art of fighting with a club.

Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā and had the funeral rites performed for Satrājī. When Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā heard how Śatadhanvā had met his death, they fled Dvārakā. Soon many kinds of disturbances mental, physical and so on began to afflict Dvārakā, and the citizens concluded that the cause of these troubles must be Akrūra's exile. The city elders explained, "Once there was a drought in Benares, and the king of the region gave his daughter in marriage to Akrūra's father, who was visiting Benares at the time. As a result of this gift, the drought ended." The elders, thinking Akrūra had the same power as his father, declared that Akrūra should be brought back.

Lord Kṛṣṇa knew that Akrūra's exile was not the main cause of the disturbances. Still, He had Akrūra brought back to Dvārakā, and after properly honoring him with worship and greeting him with sweet words, Kṛṣṇa told him, "I know Śatadhanvā left the jewel in your care. Since Satrājī had no sons, his daughter's offspring are the just claimants to whatever property he has left behind. Nonetheless, it would be best for you to keep the troublesome jewel in your care. Just let Me show it once to My relatives." Akrūra presented Kṛṣṇa with the jewel, which shone as brilliantly as the sun, and after the Lord had shown it to His family members He returned it to Akrūra.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: Although Lord Govinda was fully aware of what had actually occurred, when He heard reports that the Pāṇḍavas and Queen Kunī had burned to death, He went with Lord Balarāma to the kingdom of the Kurus to fulfill the family obligations expected of Him.

2The two Lords met with Bhīṣma, Kṛpa, Vidura, Gāndhārī and Droṇa. Showing sorrow equal to theirs, They cried out, "Alas, how painful this is!"

3Taking advantage of this opportunity, O King, Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā went to Śatadhanvā and said, "Why not take the Syamantaka jewel?"

4"Satrājī promised his jewellike daughter to us but then gave her to Kṛṣṇa instead, contemptuously neglecting us. So why should Satrājī not follow his brother's path?"

5His mind thus influenced by their advice, wicked Śatadhanvā murdered Satrājī in his sleep simply out of greed. In this way the sinful Śatadhanvā shortened his own life span.

6As the women of Satrājī's palace screamed and helplessly wept, Śatadhanvā took the jewel and left, like a butcher after he has killed some animals.

7When Satyabhāmā saw her dead father, she was plunged into grief. Lamenting "My father, my father! Oh, I am killed!" she fell unconscious.

8Queen Satyabhāmā put her father's corpse in a large vat of oil and went to Hastināpura, where she sorrowfully told Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was already aware of the situation, about her father's murder.

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9When Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma heard this news, O King, They exclaimed, “Alas! This is the greatest tragedy for Us!” Thus imitating the ways of human society, They lamented, Their eyes brimming with tears.

10The Supreme Lord returned to His capital with His wife and elder brother. After arriving in Dvārakā, He readied Himself to kill Śatadhanvā and retrieve the jewel from him.

11Upon learning that Lord Kṛṣṇa was preparing to kill him, Śatadhanvā was struck with fear. To save his life he approached Kṛtavarmā and begged him for help, but Kṛtavarmā replied as follows.

12-13[Kṛtavarmā said:] I dare not offend the Supreme Lords, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Indeed, how can one who troubles Them expect any good fortune? Kāmsa and all his followers lost both their wealth and their lives because of enmity toward Them, and after battling Them seventeen times Jarāsandha was left without even a chariot.

14His appeal refused, Śatadhanvā went to Akrūra and begged him for protection. But Akrūra similarly told him, “Who would oppose the two Personalities of Godhead if he knew Their strength?”

15“It is the Supreme Lord who creates, maintains and destroys this universe simply as His pastime. The cosmic creators cannot even understand His purpose, bewildered as they are by His illusory Māyā.

16“As a child of seven, Kṛṣṇa uprooted an entire mountain and held it aloft as easily as a young boy picks up a mushroom.

17“I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, whose every deed is amazing. He is the Supreme Soul, the unlimited source and fixed center of all existence.”

18His appeal thus rejected by Akrūra also, Śatadhanvā placed the precious jewel in Akrūra’s care and fled on a horse that could travel one hundred yojanas [eight hundred miles].

19My dear King, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma mounted Kṛṣṇa’s chariot, which flew the flag of Garuḍa and was yoked with tremendously swift horses, and pursued Their elder’s murderer.

20In a garden on the outskirts of Mithilā, the horse Śatadhanvā was riding collapsed. Terrified, he abandoned the horse and began to flee on foot, with Kṛṣṇa in angry pursuit.

21As Śatadhanvā fled on foot, the Supreme Lord, also going on foot, cut off his head with His sharp-edged disc. The Lord then searched Śatadhanvā’s upper and lower garments for the Syamantaka jewel.

22Not finding the jewel, Lord Kṛṣṇa went to His elder brother and said, “We have killed Śatadhanvā uselessly. The jewel isn’t here.”

23To this Lord Balarāma replied, “Indeed, Śatadhanvā must have placed the jewel in the care of someone. You should return to Our city and find that person.

24“I wish to visit King Videha, who is most dear to Me.” O King, having said this, Lord Balarāma, the beloved descendant of Yadu, entered the city of Mithilā.

25The King of Mithilā immediately rose from his seat when he saw Lord Balarāma approaching. With great love the King honored the supremely worshipable Lord by offering Him elaborate worship, as stipulated by scriptural injunctions.

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26The almighty Lord Balarāma stayed in Mithilā for several years, honored by His affectionate devotee Janaka Mahārāja. During that time Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Duryodhana learned from Balarāma the art of fighting with a club.

27Lord Keśava arrived in Dvārakā and described the demise of Śatadhanvā and His own failure to find the Syamantaka jewel. He spoke in a way that would please His beloved, Satyabhāmā.

28Lord Kṛṣṇa then had the various funeral rites performed for His deceased relative, Satrājit. The Lord attended the funeral along with well-wishers of the family.

29When Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā, who had originally incited Śatadhanvā to commit his crime, heard that he had been killed, they fled Dvārakā in terror and took up residence elsewhere.

30In Akrūra's absence ill omens arose in Dvārakā, and the citizens began to suffer continually from physical and mental distresses, as well as from disturbances caused by higher powers and by creatures of the earth.

31Some men proposed [that the troubles were due to Akrūra's absence], but they had forgotten the glories of the Supreme Lord, which they themselves had so often described. Indeed, how can calamities occur in a place where the Personality of Godhead, the residence of all the sages, resides?

32[The elders said:] Previously, when Lord Indra had withheld rain from Kāśī [Benares], the king of that city gave his daughter Gāndinī to Śvaphalka, who was then visiting him. It soon rained in the kingdom of Kāśī.

33Wherever his equally powerful son Akrūra stays, Lord Indra will provide sufficient rain. Indeed, that place will be free of miseries and untimely deaths.

34Hearing these words from the elders, Lord Janārdana, though aware that the absence of Akrūra was not the only cause of the evil omens, had him summoned back to Dvārakā and spoke to him.

35-36Lord Kṛṣṇa honored Akrūra, greeted him confidentially and spoke pleasant words with him. Then the Lord, who was fully aware of Akrūra's heart by virtue of His being the knower of everything, smiled and addressed him: "O master of charity, surely the opulent Syamantaka jewel was left in your care by Śatadhanvā and is still with you. Indeed, We have known this all along.

37"Since Satrājit had no sons, his daughter's sons should receive his inheritance. They should pay for memorial offerings of water and piṇḍa, clear their grandfather's outstanding debts and keep the remainder of the inheritance for themselves.

38-39"Nevertheless, the jewel should remain in your care, O trustworthy Akrūra, because no one else can keep it safely. But please show the jewel just once, since My elder brother does not fully believe what I have told Him about it. In this way, O most fortunate one, you will pacify My relatives. [Everyone knows you have the jewel, for] you are now continually performing sacrifices on altars of gold."

40Thus shamed by Lord Kṛṣṇa's conciliatory words, the son of Śvaphalka brought out the jewel from where he had concealed it in his clothing and gave it to the Lord. The brilliant gem shone like the sun.

41After the almighty Lord had shown the Syamantaka jewel to His relatives, thus dispelling the

false accusations against Him, He returned it to Akrūra.

42This narration, rich with descriptions of the prowess of Lord Śrī Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, removes sinful reactions and bestows all auspiciousness. Anyone who recites, hears or remembers it will drive away his own infamy and sins and attain peace.

SB 10.58: Kṛṣṇa Marries Five Princesses

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa married five brides, beginning with Kālindī, and went to Indraprastha to visit the Pāṇḍavas.

After the Pāṇḍavas had completed their incognito exile, Lord Kṛṣṇa went with Sātyaki and other Yadus to see them in Indraprastha. The Pāṇḍavas greeted the Lord and embraced Him in great ecstasy. Their new bride, Draupadī, shyly approached Kṛṣṇa and bowed down to Him. Then the Pāṇḍavas properly worshiped and welcomed Sātyaki and the Lord's other companions, offering them sitting places.

Lord Kṛṣṇa paid a visit to Queen Kuntī, and after He had offered her His respects, they inquired from each other about their family members. As Kuntīdevi recalled the various miseries Duryodhana had inflicted upon her and her sons, she remarked that Kṛṣṇa was their only protector. "You are the well-wisher of the entire universe," she said, "yet even though You are free from all delusion of 'mine' and 'another's,' You nonetheless reside within the hearts of those who meditate on You constantly, and from within their hearts You destroy all their miseries." Then Yudhiṣṭhira told Kṛṣṇa, "Only because we executed many pious acts are we able to see Your lotus feet, which even great *yogīs* find it impossible to attain." Honored by King Yudhiṣṭhira, Śrī Kṛṣṇa happily remained as a guest in Indraprastha for several months.

One day, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna went hunting in the forest. While bathing in the Yamunā River, they saw a charming young maiden. On Kṛṣṇa's request Arjuna went up to the girl and asked who she was. The beautiful maiden replied, "I am Kālindī, the daughter of the sun-god. Hoping to attain Lord Viṣṇu as my husband, I have been performing severe austerities. I will accept no one else as my husband, and until He marries me I will remain in the Yamunā, living in a house my father built for me here." After Arjuna reported all this to Kṛṣṇa, the omniscient Lord took Kālindī onto His chariot, and then the three of them returned to Yudhiṣṭhira's residence.

Later the Pāṇḍavas requested Kṛṣṇa to build them a city, and He did so by having Viśvakarmā, the architect of the demigods, construct one that was extremely attractive. The Lord satisfied His beloved devotees by remaining with them there for some time. Then, to please Agni, the fire-god, Kṛṣṇa arranged to offer him the Khāṇḍava forest. The Lord asked Arjuna to burn down the forest and accompanied him as his charioteer. Agni was so satisfied with the offering that he presented Arjuna with the Gāṇḍīva bow, a team of horses, a chariot, two inexhaustible quivers, and armor. While the Khāṇḍava forest burned, Arjuna saved a demon named Maya from the blaze. Maya Dānava reciprocated by building Arjuna a splendid palace. In this building Duryodhana would later get a good drenching after mistaking the surface of a pond for a solid floor, thus embarrassing himself.

Next Lord Kṛṣṇa took permission from Arjuna and His other relatives and went back to Dvārakā with His entourage. There He married Kālindī. Some time later He went to Avantīpura, where, in the presence of many kings, He abducted the King of Avantī's sister, Mitravindā, who was very much attracted to Him.

In the kingdom of Ayodhyā lived a devout king named Nagnajit. He had an extraordinarily beautiful, marriageable daughter named Satyā, or Nāgnajitī. The girl's relatives had laid down

the stipulation that any man who could subdue a certain group of seven ferocious bulls would win her hand. When Kṛṣṇa heard about this princess, He went to Ayodhyā with a large contingent of soldiers. King Nagnajit greeted Him hospitably and joyfully worshiped Him with various offerings. When Satyā saw Kṛṣṇa, she immediately desired Him as her husband, and King Nagnajit, understanding his daughter's intentions, informed Lord Kṛṣṇa of his own wish that the Lord and his daughter be married. The King affectionately told the Lord, "You alone would be a suitable husband for my daughter, and if You subdue the seven bulls You may certainly marry her."

Lord Kṛṣṇa then manifested Himself in seven separate forms and subdued the seven bulls. King Nagnajit duly presented his daughter to the Lord, together with a dowry of abundant gifts, and the Lord took Satyā onto His chariot for the journey back to Dvārakā. Just then the rival kings who had been defeated by the bulls tried to attack Lord Kṛṣṇa. But Arjuna easily beat them back, and Kṛṣṇa proceeded with Nāgnajitī to Dvārakā.

Subsequently Śrī Kṛṣṇa married Lakṣmaṇā after abducting her from her *svayamvara* ceremony, and He also married Bhadrā, the royal sister of Santardana.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Once, the supremely opulent Personality of Godhead went to Indraprastha to visit the Pāṇḍavas, who had again appeared in public. Accompanying the Lord were Yuyudhāna and other associates.

2 When the Pāṇḍavas saw that Lord Mukunda had arrived, those heroic sons of Pṛthā all stood up at once, like the senses responding to the return of the life air.

3 The heroes embraced Lord Acyuta, and the touch of His body freed them of sin. Looking at His affectionate, smiling face, they were overwhelmed with joy.

4 After the Lord bowed down at the feet of Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīma and firmly embraced Arjuna, He accepted obeisances from the twin brothers, Nakula and Sahadeva.

5 Faultless Draupadī, the Pāṇḍavas' newly married wife, slowly and somewhat timidly approached Lord Kṛṣṇa, who sat on an exalted seat, and offered Him her obeisances.

6 Sātyaki also accepted a seat of honor after receiving worship and welcome from the Pāṇḍavas, and the Lord's other companions, being duly honored, sat down in various places.

7 The Lord then went to see His aunt, Queen Kuntī. He bowed down to her and she embraced Him, her eyes moist with great affection. Lord Kṛṣṇa inquired from her and her daughter-in-law, Draupadī, about their welfare, and they in turn questioned Him at length about His relatives [in Dvārakā].

8 So overcome by love that her throat choked up and her eyes filled with tears, Queen Kuntī remembered the many troubles she and her sons had endured. Thus she addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa, who appears before His devotees to drive away their distress

9 [Queen Kuntī said:] My dear Kṛṣṇa, our welfare was assured only when You remembered us, Your relatives, and gave us Your protection by sending my brother to visit us.

10 For You, the well-wishing friend and Supreme Soul of the universe, there is never any illusion of "us" and "them." Yet even so, residing within the hearts of all, You eradicate the sufferings of those who remember You constantly.

11 King Yudhiṣṭhira said: O supreme controller, I do not know what pious deeds we fools have

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done so that we can see You, whom the masters of yogic perfection rarely see.

12Requested by the King to stay with them, the almighty Lord remained happily in Indraprastha during the months of the rainy season, giving joy to the eyes of the city's residents.

13-14Once Arjuna, the slayer of powerful enemies, donned his armor, mounted his chariot flying the flag of Hanumān, took up his bow and his two inexhaustible quivers, and went to sport with Lord Kṛṣṇa in a large forest filled with fierce animals.

15With his arrows Arjuna shot tigers, boars and buffalo in that forest, along with rurus, śarabhas, gavayas, rhinoceroses, black deer, rabbits and porcupines.

16A crew of servants carried to King Yudhiṣṭhira the slain animals fit to be offered in sacrifice on some special occasion. Then, feeling thirsty and tired, Arjuna went to the bank of the Yamunā.

17After the two Kṛṣṇas bathed there, they drank the river's clear water. The great warriors then saw an attractive young girl walking nearby.

18Sent by his friend, Arjuna approached the exceptional young woman, who possessed beautiful hips, fine teeth and a lovely face, and inquired from her as follows.

19[Arjuna said:] Who are you, O fine-waisted lady? Whose daughter are you, and where do you come from? What are you doing here? I think you must be looking for a husband. Please explain everything, O beautiful one.

20Śrī Kālindī said: I am the daughter of the sun-god. I desire to get as my husband the most excellent and munificent Lord Viṣṇu, and to that end I am performing severe penances.

21I will accept no husband other than Him, the abode of the goddess of fortune. May that Mukunda, the Supreme Personality, the shelter of the helpless, be pleased with me.

22I am known as Kālindī, and I live in a mansion my father built for me within the water of the Yamunā. There I will stay until I meet Lord Acyuta.

23[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Arjuna repeated all this to Lord Vāsudeva, who was already aware of it. The Lord then took Kālindī onto His chariot and went back to see King Yudhiṣṭhira.

24[Describing a previous incident, Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:] Upon the request of the Pāṇḍavas, Lord Kṛṣṇa had Viśvakarmā build them a most wonderful and amazing city.

25The Supreme Lord stayed in that city for some time to please His devotees. On one occasion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to give the Khāṇḍava forest as a gift to Agni, and so the Lord became Arjuna's charioteer.

26Being pleased, O King, Lord Agni presented Arjuna with a bow, a set of white horses, a chariot, a pair of inexhaustible quivers, and armor that no fighter could pierce with weapons.

27When the demon Maya was saved from the fire by his friend Arjuna, Maya presented him with an assembly hall, in which Duryodhana would later mistake water for a solid floor.

28Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, given leave by Arjuna and other well-wishing relatives and friends, returned to Dvārakā with Sātyaki and the rest of His entourage.

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29The supremely auspicious Lord then married Kālindī on a day when the season, the lunar asterism and the configurations of the sun and other heavenly bodies were all propitious. In this way He brought the greatest pleasure to His devotees.

30Vindya and Anuvindya, who shared the throne of Avantī, were followers of Duryodhana's. When the time came for their sister [Mitravindā] to select her husband in the svayamvara ceremony, they forbade her to choose Kṛṣṇa, although she was attracted to Him.

31My dear King, Lord Kṛṣṇa forcibly took away Princess Mitravindā, the daughter of His aunt Rājādhivevī, before the eyes of the rival kings.

32O King, Nagnajit, the very pious King of Kośala, had a lovely daughter named Satyā, or Nāgnajitī.

33The kings who came as suitors were not allowed to marry her unless they could subdue seven sharp-horned bulls. These bulls were extremely vicious and uncontrollable, and they could not tolerate even the smell of warriors.

34When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the Vaiṣṇavas, heard of the princess who was to be won by the conqueror of the bulls, He went to the capital of Kauśalya with a large army.

35The King of Kośala, pleased to see Lord Kṛṣṇa, worshiped Him by rising from his throne and offering Him a seat of honor and substantial gifts. Lord Kṛṣṇa also greeted the King respectfully.

36When the King's daughter saw that most agreeable suitor arrive, she immediately desired to have Him, the Lord of Goddess Rāma. She prayed, "May He become my husband. If I have kept my vows, may the sacred fire bring about the fulfillment of my hopes.

37"Goddess Lakṣmī, Lord Brahma, Lord Śiva and the rulers of the various planets place the dust of His lotus feet on their heads, and to protect the codes of religion, which He has created, He assumes pastime incarnations at various times. How may that Supreme Personality of Godhead become pleased with me?"

38King Nagnajit first worshiped the Lord properly and then addressed Him: "O Nārāyaṇa, Lord of the universe, You are full in Your own spiritual pleasure. Therefore what can this insignificant person do for You?"

39Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O beloved descendant of Kuru, the Supreme Lord was pleased, and after accepting a comfortable seat He smiled and addressed the King in a voice as deep as the rumbling of a cloud.

40The Supreme Lord said: O ruler of men, learned authorities condemn begging for a person in the royal order who is executing his religious duties. Even so, desiring your friendship, I ask you for your daughter, though We offer no gifts in exchange.

41The King said: My Lord, who could be a better husband for my daughter than You, the exclusive abode of all transcendental qualities? On Your body the goddess of fortune herself resides, never leaving You for any reason.

42But to ascertain the proper husband for my daughter, O chief of the Sātvatas, we previously set a condition to test the prowess of her suitors.

43These seven wild bulls are impossible to tame, O hero. They have defeated many princes, breaking their limbs.

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44If You can subdue them, O descendant of Yadu, You will certainly be the appropriate bridegroom for my daughter, O Lord of Śrī.

45Upon hearing these terms, the Lord tightened His clothing, expanded Himself into seven forms and easily subdued the bulls.

46Lord Śauri tied up the bulls, whose pride and strength were now broken, and pulled them with ropes just as a child playfully pulls wooden toy bulls.

47Then King Nagnajit, pleased and astonished, presented his daughter to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme Personality of Godhead accepted this suitable bride in the proper Vedic fashion.

48The King's wives felt the greatest ecstasy upon attaining Lord Kṛṣṇa as the dear husband of the royal princess, and a mood of great festivity arose.

49Conchshells, horns and drums resounded, along with vocal and instrumental music and the sounds of brāhmaṇas, invoking blessings. The joyful men and women adorned themselves with fine clothing and garlands.

50-51As the dowry, powerful King Nagnajit gave ten thousand cows, three thousand young maidservants wearing golden ornaments on their necks and bedecked in fine clothing, nine thousand elephants, a hundred times as many chariots as elephants, a hundred times as many horses as chariots, and a hundred times as many manservants as horses.

52The King of Kośala, his heart melting with affection, had the bride and groom seated on their chariot, and then he sent them on their way surrounded by a great army.

53When the intolerant kings who had been rival suitors heard what had happened, they tried to stop Lord Kṛṣṇa on the road as He took His bride home. But just as the bulls had broken the kings' strength before, the Yadu warriors broke it now.

54Arjuna, wielder of the Gāṇḍīva bow, was always eager to please his friend Kṛṣṇa, and thus he drove back those opponents, who were shooting torrents of arrows at the Lord. He did this just as a lion drives away insignificant animals.

55Lord Devakī-suta, the chief of the Yadus, then took His dowry and Satyā to Dvārakā and continued to live there happily.

56Bhadrā was a princess of the Kaikeya kingdom and the daughter of Lord Kṛṣṇa's paternal aunt Śrutakīrti. The Lord married Bhadrā when her brothers, headed by Santardana, offered her to Him.

57Then the Lord married Lakṣmaṇā, the daughter of the King of Madra. Kṛṣṇa appeared alone at her svayaṁvara ceremony and took her away, just as Garuḍa once stole the demigods' nectar.

58Lord Kṛṣṇa also acquired thousands of other wives equal to these when He killed Bhaumāsura and freed the beautiful maidens the demon was holding captive.

SB 10.59: The Killing of the Demon Naraka

This chapter tells how Lord Kṛṣṇa killed Narakāsura, the son of the earth-goddess, and married the thousands of maidens the demon had kidnapped. It also describes how the Lord stole the *pārijāta* tree from heaven and how He behaved like an ordinary householder in each of His palaces.

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After Narakāsura stole Lord Varuṇa’s umbrella, mother Aditi’s earrings, and the playground of the demigods known as Maṇi-parvata, Indra went to Dvārakā and described the demon’s transgressions to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Together with Queen Satyabhāmā, the Lord mounted His carrier Garuḍa and traveled to the capital of Narakāsura’s kingdom. On a field outside the city He decapitated the demon Mura with His disc. Then He fought Mura’s seven sons and sent them all to the abode of death, after which Narakāsura himself entered the battlefield on the back of an elephant. Naraka threw his *śakti* lance at Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but the weapon proved ineffective, and the Lord cut the demon’s entire army to pieces. Finally, with His sharp-edged disc Kṛṣṇa cut off Narakāsura’s head.

The earth-goddess, Pṛthivī, then approached Lord Kṛṣṇa and gave Him the various items Narakāsura had stolen. She offered prayers to the Lord and presented Naraka’s frightened son at Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. After pacifying the demon’s son, Kṛṣṇa entered Narakāsura’s palace, where He found sixteen thousand one hundred young women. As soon as they caught sight of the Lord, they all decided to accept Him as their husband. The Lord sent them to Dvārakā along with a great quantity of treasure and then went with Queen Satyabhāmā to the abode of Indra. There He returned Aditi’s earrings, and Indra and his wife, Śacīdevī, worshiped Him. On Satyabhāmā’s request, Lord Kṛṣṇa uprooted the heavenly *pārijāta* tree and put it on the back of Garuḍa. After defeating Indra and the other demigods who opposed His taking of the tree, Kṛṣṇa returned with Queen Satyabhāmā to Dvārakā, where He planted it in a garden adjacent to Satyabhāmā’s palace.

Indra had originally come to Lord Kṛṣṇa offering obeisances and begging Him to kill Narakāsura, but afterwards, when his business had been accomplished, he quarreled with the Lord. The demigods are prone to anger because they become intoxicated with pride in their opulences.

The infallible Supreme Lord manifested Himself in sixteen thousand one hundred separate forms and married each of the sixteen thousand one hundred brides in a different temple. He took up the required activities of household life just like an ordinary person, accepting various kinds of service from each of His many wives.

1[King Parīkṣit said:] How was Bhaumātura, who kidnapped so many women, killed by the Supreme Lord? Please narrate this adventure of Lord Śārngadhanvā’s.

2-3Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After Bhauma had stolen the earrings belonging to Indra’s mother, along with Varuṇa’s umbrella and the demigods’ playground at the peak of Mandara mountain, Indra went to Lord Kṛṣṇa and informed Him of these misdeeds. The Lord, taking His wife Satyabhāmā with Him, then rode on Garuḍa to Prāgyotiṣa-pura, which was surrounded on all sides by fortifications consisting of hills, unmanned weapons, water, fire and wind, and by obstructions of mura-pāśa wire.

4With His club the Lord broke through the rock fortifications; with His arrows, the weapon fortifications; with His disc, the fire, water and wind fortifications; and with His sword, the mura-pāśa cables.

5With the sound of His conchshell Lord Gadādhara then shattered the magic seals of the fortress, along with the hearts of its brave defenders, and with His heavy club He demolished the surrounding earthen ramparts.

6The five-headed demon Mura, who slept at the bottom of the city’s moat, awoke and rose up out of the water when he heard the vibration of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Pāṣcajanya conchshell, a sound as

terrifying as the thunder at the end of the cosmic age.

7Shining with the blinding, terrible effulgence of the sun's fire at the end of a millennium, Mura seemed to be swallowing up the three worlds with his five mouths. He lifted up his trident and fell upon Garuḍa, the son of Tārksya, like an attacking snake.

8Mura whirled his trident and then hurled it fiercely at Garuḍa, roaring from all five mouths. The sound filled the earth and sky, all directions and the limits of outer space, until it reverberated against the very shell of the universe.

9Then with two arrows Lord Hari struck the trident flying toward Garuḍa and broke it into three pieces. Next the Lord hit Mura's faces with several arrows, and the demon angrily hurled his club at the Lord.

10As Mura's club sped toward Him on the battlefield, Lord Gadāgraja intercepted it with His own and broke it into thousands of pieces. Mura then raised his arms high and rushed at the unconquerable Lord, who easily sliced off his heads with His disc weapon.

11Lifeless, Mura's decapitated body fell into the water like a mountain whose peak has been severed by the power of Lord Indra's thunderbolt. The demon's seven sons, enraged by their father's death, prepared to retaliate.

12Ordered by Bhaumāśura, Mura's seven sons Tāmra, Antarikṣa, Śravaṇa, Vibhāvasu, Vasu, Nabhasvān and Aruṇa followed their general, Pīṭha, onto the battlefield bearing their weapons.

13These fierce warriors furiously attacked invincible Lord Kṛṣṇa with arrows, swords, clubs, spears, lances and tridents, but the Supreme Lord, with unfailing prowess, cut this mountain of weapons into tiny pieces with His arrows.

14The Lord severed the heads, thighs, arms, legs and armor of these opponents led by Pīṭha and sent them all to the abode of Yamarāja. Narakāśura, the son of the earth, could not contain his fury when he saw the fate of his military leaders. Thus he went out of the citadel with elephants born from the Milk Ocean who were exuding mada from their foreheads out of excitement.

15Lord Kṛṣṇa and His wife, mounted upon Garuḍa, looked like a cloud with lightning sitting above the sun. Seeing the Lord, Bhauma released his Śataghñī weapon at Him, whereupon all of Bhauma's soldiers simultaneously attacked with their weapons.

16At that moment Lord Gadāgraja shot His sharp arrows at Bhaumāśura's army. These arrows, displaying variegated feathers, soon reduced that army to a mass of bodies with severed arms, thighs and necks. The Lord similarly killed the opposing horses and elephants.

17-19Lord Hari then struck down all the missiles and weapons the enemy soldiers threw at Him, O hero of the Kurus, destroying each and every one with three sharp arrows. Meanwhile Garuḍa, as he carried the Lord, struck the enemy's elephants with his wings. Beaten by Garuḍa's wings, beak and talons, the elephants fled back into the city, leaving Narakāśura alone on the battlefield to oppose Kṛṣṇa.

20Seeing his army driven back and tormented by Garuḍa, Bhauma attacked him with his spear, which had once defeated Lord Indra's thunderbolt. But though struck by that mighty weapon, Garuḍa was not shaken. Indeed, he was like an elephant hit with a flower garland.

21Bhauma, frustrated in all his attempts, took up his trident to kill Lord Kṛṣṇa. But even before

he could release it, the Lord cut off his head with His razor-sharp cakra as the demon sat atop his elephant.

22 Fallen on the ground, Bhaumāsura’s head shone brilliantly, decorated as it was with earrings and an attractive helmet. As cries of “Alas, alas!” and “Well done!” arose, the sages and principal demigods worshiped Lord Mukunda by showering Him with flower garlands.

23 The goddess of the earth then approached Lord Kṛṣṇa and presented Him with Aditi’s earrings, which were made of glowing gold inlaid with shining jewels. She also gave Him a Vaijayantī flower garland, Varuṇa’s umbrella and the peak of Mandara Mountain.

24 O King, after bowing down to Him and then standing with joined palms, the goddess, her mind filled with devotion, began to praise the Lord of the universe, whom the best of demigods worship.

25 Goddess Bhūmi said: Obeisances unto You, O Lord of the chief demigods, O holder of the conchshell, disc and club. O Supreme Soul within the heart, You assume Your various forms to fulfill Your devotees’ desires. Obeisances unto You.

26 My respectful obeisances are unto You, O Lord, whose abdomen is marked with a depression like a lotus flower, who are always decorated with garlands of lotus flowers, whose glance is as cool as the lotus and whose feet are engraved with lotuses.

27 Obeisances unto You, the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, the primeval person, the original seed. Obeisances unto You, the omniscient one.

28 Obeisances unto You of unlimited energies, the unborn progenitor of this universe, the Absolute. O Soul of the high and the low, O Soul of the created elements, O all-pervading Supreme Soul, obeisances unto You.

29 Desiring to create, O unborn master, You increase and then assume the mode of passion. You do likewise with the mode of ignorance when You wish to annihilate the universe and with goodness when You wish to maintain it. Nonetheless, You remain uncovered by these modes. You are time, the pradhāna, and the puruṣa, O Lord of the universe, yet still You are separate and distinct.

30 This is illusion: that earth, water, fire, air, ether, sense objects, demigods, mind, the senses, false ego and the total material energy exist independent of You. In fact, they are all within You, my Lord, who are one without a second.

31 Here is the son of Bhaumāsura. Frightened, he is approaching Your lotus feet, since You remove the distress of all who seek refuge in You. Please protect him. Place Your lotus hand, which dispels all sins, upon his head.

32 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus entreated by Goddess Bhūmi in words of humble devotion, the Supreme Lord bestowed fearlessness upon her grandson and then entered Bhaumāsura’s palace, which was filled with all manner of riches.

33 There Lord Kṛṣṇa saw sixteen thousand royal maidens, whom Bhauma had taken by force from various kings.

34 The women became enchanted when they saw that most excellent of males enter. In their minds they each accepted Him, who had been brought there by destiny, as their chosen husband.

35With the thought “May providence grant that this man become my husband,” each and every princess absorbed her heart in contemplation of Kṛṣṇa.

36The Lord had the princesses arrayed in clean, spotless garments and then sent them in palanquins to Dvārakā, together with great treasures of chariots, horses and other valuables.

37Lord Kṛṣṇa also dispatched sixty-four swift white elephants, descendants of Airāvata, who each sported four tusks.

38-39The Lord then went to the abode of Indra, the demigods’ king, and gave mother Aditi her earrings; there Indra and his wife worshiped Kṛṣṇa and His beloved consort Satyabhāmā. Then, at Satyabhāmā’s behest the Lord uprooted the heavenly pārijāta tree and put it on the back of Garuḍa. After defeating Indra and all the other demigods, Kṛṣṇa brought the pārijāta to His capital.

40Once planted, the pārijāta tree beautified the garden of Queen Satyabhāmā’s palace. Bees followed the tree all the way from heaven, greedy for its fragrance and sweet sap.

41Even after Indra had bowed down to Lord Acyuta, touched His feet with the tips of his crown and begged the Lord to fulfill his desire, that exalted demigod, having achieved his purpose, chose to fight with the Supreme Lord. What ignorance there is among the gods! To hell with their opulence!

42Then the imperishable Supreme Personality, assuming a separate form for each bride, duly married all the princesses simultaneously, each in her own palace.

43The Lord, performer of the inconceivable, constantly remained in each of His queens’ palaces, which were unequalled and unexcelled by any other residence. There, although fully satisfied within Himself, He enjoyed with His pleasing wives, and like an ordinary husband He carried out His household duties.

44Thus those women obtained as their husband the husband of the goddess of fortune, although even great demigods like Brahmā do not know how to approach Him. With ever-increasing pleasure they experienced loving attraction for Him, exchanged smiling glances with Him and reciprocated with Him in ever-fresh intimacy, replete with joking and feminine shyness.

45Although the Supreme Lord’s queens each had hundreds of maidservants, they chose to personally serve the Lord by approaching Him humbly, offering Him a seat, worshiping Him with excellent paraphernalia, bathing and massaging His feet, giving Him pān to chew, fanning Him, anointing Him with fragrant sandalwood paste, adorning Him with flower garlands, dressing His hair, arranging His bed, bathing Him, and presenting Him with various gifts.

SB 10.60: Lord Kṛṣṇa Teases Queen Rukmiṇī.

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa provoked anger in Queen Rukmiṇī with joking words and then consoled her, thus demonstrating the opulence of a lovers’ quarrel.

One day Lord Kṛṣṇa sat at ease in Queen Rukmiṇī’s bedroom while she and her maidservants attended to Him in various ways. Rukmiṇī always responded to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s moods, whatever they might be. On this occasion the Lord looked at Rukmiṇī, whose beauty was faultless, and began to tease her: “Previously many wealthy kings, worthy of you in their appearance and character, wanted to marry you. In fact, your father and brother intended to give you in

marriage to Śiśupāla. Why, then, did you accept such an unsuitable husband as Me, who once renounced My kingdom and fled to the sea in fear of Jarāsandha? Besides, I transgress worldly morality, and because I own nothing I am dear to other paupers. Certainly the well-to-do would not worship one such as Me.

“When a man and a woman share the same social class, influence, physical beauty and so on, marriage or friendship can flourish between them. But out of shortsightedness you have accepted a husband who lacks every good quality and is glorified by beggars. Better you had married some prominent warrior; then you might have been happy in this life and the next. Your brother Rukmī and kings like Śiśupāla all hate Me, and it was only to cut down their pride that I kidnapped you. But as for such things as body, home, wife and children, I’m indifferent to them, being the self-satisfied Personality of Godhead, transcendental to all material affairs.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa stopped speaking, having destroyed Queen Rukmiṇī’s confidence that she was her husband’s favorite. She began to cry, and soon she became stunned in extreme fear, pain and sadness and fell unconscious. Lord Kṛṣṇa saw that she had misunderstood His joking, and thus He felt compassion for her. He picked her up from the floor and, caressing her face, consoled her: “I know you are totally attached to Me. It was only out of eagerness to see your lotus face adorned with a frown that I teased you. To joke with one’s beloved is the highest enjoyment for householders.” These words dispelled Rukmiṇī’s fear of rejection. Seeing that Kṛṣṇa had spoken only in jest, she said, “What You said about the two of us being mismatched is actually true. After all, no one is equal to You, the omnipotent master of the three principal deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.” Rukmiṇī went on to show how everything Kṛṣṇa had said denigrating Himself was actually glorification.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then spoke to Rukmiṇī with deep affection: “I did not intend to agitate your mind with My joking words; rather, I wanted to demonstrate the strength of your chastity. Anyone who prays to Me for sense gratification and happiness in family life is simply deluded by My illusory energy, Māyā. Such a person will take a low birth. Ordinary women with corrupt desires cannot possibly worship Me faithfully, as you have done. At the time of your marriage you showed no interest in any of the royal suitors; rather, you sent a *brāhmaṇa* messenger for Me. Thus you are certainly the most beloved of all My consorts.”

In this way the Lord of the universe, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, took pleasure in joking with the goddess of fortune in her form as Rukmiṇī, and in a similar fashion He fulfilled all the duties of a householder in each palace of His other queens.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: Once, in the company of her maidservants, Queen Rukmiṇī was personally serving her husband, the spiritual master of the universe, by fanning Him as He relaxed on her bed.

2The unborn Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, who creates, maintains and then devours this universe simply as His play, took birth among the Yadus to preserve His own laws.

3-6Queen Rukmiṇī’s quarters were extremely beautiful, boasting a canopy hung with brilliant strings of pearls, as well as effulgent jewels serving as lamps. Garlands of jasmine and other flowers hung here and there, attracting swarms of humming bees, and the spotless rays of the moon shone through the holes of the lattice windows. As aguru incense drifted out of the window holes, my dear King, the breeze wafting the scent of the pārijāta grove carried the mood of a garden into the room. There the Queen served her husband, the Supreme Lord of all the worlds, as He reclined upon an opulent pillow on her bed, which was as soft and white as the foam of milk.

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7From her maidservant's hand Goddess Rukmiṇī took a yak-hair fan with a jeweled handle, and then she began to worship her master by fanning Him.

8Her hand adorned with rings, bangles and the cāmara fan, Queen Rukmiṇī looked resplendent standing near Lord Kṛṣṇa. Her jeweled ankle-bells tinkled, and her necklace glittered, reddened by the kuṅkuma from her breasts, which were covered by the end of her sari. On her hips she wore a priceless belt.

9As He contemplated her, the goddess of fortune herself, who desires only Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa smiled. The Lord assumes various forms to enact His pastimes, and He was pleased that the form the goddess of fortune had assumed was just suitable for her to serve as His consort. Her charming face was adorned with curling hair, earrings, a locket on her neck, and the nectar of her bright, happy smile. The Lord then spoke to her as follows.

10The Supreme Lord 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.

11Since your brother and father offered you to them, why did you reject the King of Cedi and all those other suitors, who stood before you, maddened by Cupid? Why, instead, did you choose Us, who are not at all your equal?

12Terrified of these kings, O lovely-browed one, We took shelter in the ocean. We have become enemies of powerful men, and We practically abandoned Our royal throne.

13O 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.

14We have no material possessions, and We are dear to those who similarly have nothing. Therefore, O slender one, the wealthy hardly ever worship Me.

15Marriage 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.

16O Vaidarbhī, not being farsighted, you didn't realize this, and therefore you chose Us as your husband, even though We have no good qualities and are glorified only by deluded beggars.

17Now you should definitely accept a more suitable husband, a first-class man of the royal order who can help you achieve everything you want, both in this life and the next.

18Kings like Śiśupāla, Śālva, Jarāsandha and Dantavakra all hate Me, O beautiful-thighed one, and so does your elder brother Rukmī.

19It was to dispel the arrogance of these kings that I carried you away, My good woman, for they were blinded by the intoxication of power. My purpose was to curb the strength of the wicked.

20We care nothing for wives, children and wealth. Always satisfied within Ourselves, We do not work for body and home, but like a light, We merely witness.

21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Rukmiṇī had thought herself especially beloved by the Lord because He never left her company. By saying these things to her He vanquished her pride, and then He stopped speaking.

22 Goddess Rukmiṇī had never before heard such unpleasantries from her beloved, the Lord of universal rulers, and she became frightened. A tremor arose in her heart, and in terrible anxiety she began to cry.

23 With her tender foot, effulgent with the reddish glow of her nails, she scratched the ground, and tears darkened by her eye makeup sprinkled her kuṅkuma-reddened breasts. There she stood, face downward, her voice choked up by extreme sorrow.

24 Rukmiṇī's mind was overwhelmed with unhappiness, fear and grief. Her bangles slipped from her hand, and her fan fell to the ground. In her bewilderment she suddenly fainted, her hair scattering all about as her body fell to the ground like a plantain tree blown over by the wind.

25 Seeing that His beloved was so bound to Him in love that she could not understand the full meaning of His teasing, merciful Lord Kṛṣṇa felt compassion for her.

26 The Lord quickly got down from the bed. Manifesting four arms, He picked her up, gathered her hair and caressed her face with His lotus hand.

27-28 Wiping her tear-filled eyes and her breasts, which were stained by tears of grief, the Supreme Lord, the goal of His devotees, embraced His chaste wife, who desired nothing but Him, O King. Expert in the art of pacification, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tenderly consoled pitiable Rukmiṇī, whose mind was bewildered by His clever joking and who did not deserve to suffer so.

29 The Supreme Lord said: O Vaidarbhī, do not be displeased with Me. I know that you are fully devoted to Me. I only spoke in jest, dear lady, because I wanted to hear what you would say.

30 I also wanted to see your face with lips trembling in loving anger, the reddish corners of your eyes throwing sidelong glances and the line of your beautiful eyebrows knit in a frown.

31 The greatest pleasure worldly householders can enjoy at home is to spend time joking with their beloved wives, My dear timid and temperamental one.

32 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Queen Vaidarbhī was fully pacified by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and understood that His words had been spoken in jest. Thus she gave up her fear that her beloved would reject her.

33 Smiling bashfully as she cast charming, affectionate glances upon the face of the Lord, the best of males, Rukmiṇī spoke the following, O descendant of Bharata.

34 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?

35 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.

36 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.

37You possess nothing because there is nothing beyond You. Even the great enjoyers of tributeBrahmā and other demigodspay 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.

38You 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.

39Knowing 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?

40My 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.

41Wanting Your association, the best of kingsAṅga, Vainya, Jāyanta, Nāhuṣa, Gaya and othersabandoned their absolute sovereignty and entered the forest to seek You out. How could those kings suffer frustration in this world, O lotus-eyed one?

42The 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?

43Because 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.

44O 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.

45A 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.

46O 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.

47Actually, I don't consider Your words false, Madhūsudana. Quite often an unmarried girl is attracted to a man, as in the case of Ambā.

48The mind of a promiscuous woman always hankers for new lovers, even if she is married.

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An intelligent man should not keep such an unchaste wife, for if he does he will lose his good fortune both in this life and the next.

49The Supreme Lord said: O saintly lady, O princess, We deceived you only because We wanted to hear you speak like this. Indeed, everything you said in reply to My words is most certainly true.

50Whatever benedictions you hope for in order to become free of material desires are ever yours, O fair and noble lady, for you are My unalloyed devotee.

51O sinless one, I have now seen firsthand the pure love and chaste attachment you have for your husband. Even though shaken by My words, your mind could not be pulled away from Me.

52Although I have the power to award spiritual liberation, lusty persons worship Me with penance and vows in order to get My blessings for their mundane family life. Such persons are bewildered by My illusory energy.

53O supreme reservoir of love, unfortunate are they who even after obtaining Me, the Lord of both liberation and material riches, hanker only for material treasures. These worldly gains can be found even in hell. Since such persons are obsessed with sense gratification, hell is a fitting place for them.

54Fortunately, O mistress of the house, you have always rendered Me faithful devotional service, which liberates one from material existence. This service is very difficult for the envious to perform, especially for a woman whose intentions are wicked, who lives only to gratify her bodily demands, and who indulges in duplicity.

55In all My palaces I can find no other wife as loving as you, O most respectful one. When you were to be married, you disregarded all the kings who had assembled to seek your hand, and simply because you had heard authentic accounts concerning Me, you sent a brāhmaṇa to Me with your confidential message.

56When your brother, who had been defeated in battle and then disfigured, was later killed during a gambling match on Aniruddha's wedding day, you felt unbearable grief, yet out of fear of losing Me you spoke not a word. By this silence you have conquered Me.

57When you sent the messenger with your most confidential plan and yet I delayed going to you, you began to see the whole world as void and wanted to quit your body, which could never have been given to anyone but Me. May this greatness of yours remain with you always; I can do nothing to reciprocate except joyfully thank you for your devotion.

58Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: And so the self-satisfied Supreme Lord of the universe enjoyed with the goddess of fortune, engaging her in lovers' talks and thus imitating the ways of human society.

59The almighty Lord Hari, preceptor of all the worlds, similarly behaved like a conventional householder in the palaces of His other queens, performing the religious duties of a family man.

SB 10.61: Lord Balarāma Slays Rukmī

This chapter lists Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sons, grandsons and other progeny. It also describes how Lord Balarāma killed Rukmī at Aniruddha's marriage ceremony and how Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for His sons and daughters to be married.

Not understanding the full truth about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, each of His wives thought that since He remained constantly in her palace she must be His favorite wife. They were all entranced by the Lord's beauty and His loving conversations with them, but they could not agitate His mind with the charming gestures of their eyebrows or by any other means. Having attained as their husband Lord Kṛṣṇa, whom even demigods like Brahmā find it difficult to know in truth, the Lord's queens were always eager to associate with Him. Thus, although each of them had hundreds of maidservants, they would personally render Him menial service.

Each of Lord Kṛṣṇa's wives had ten sons, who in turn each fathered many sons and grandsons. In the womb of Rukmī's daughter Rukmavatī, Pradyumna fathered Aniruddha. Though Śrī Kṛṣṇa had disrespected Rukmī, to please his sister Rukmī gave his daughter in marriage to Pradyumna, and his granddaughter to Aniruddha. Balī, the son of Kṛtavarmā, married Rukmiṇī's daughter Cārumatī.

At Aniruddha's wedding, Lord Baladeva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other Yādavas went to Rukmī's palace in the city of Bhojakaṭa. After the ceremony, Rukmī challenged Lord Baladeva to a game of dice. In the first match Rukmī defeated Baladeva, whereupon the King of Kaliṅga laughed at the Lord, displaying all his teeth. Lord Baladeva won the next match, but Rukmī refused to concede defeat. A voice then spoke from the sky, announcing that Baladeva had in fact won. But Rukmī, encouraged by the wicked kings, offended Lord Baladeva by saying that while He was certainly expert at tending cows, He knew nothing of playing dice. Thus insulted, Lord Baladeva angrily struck Rukmī dead with His club. The King of Kaliṅga tried to flee, but Lord Baladeva seized him and knocked out all his teeth. Then the other offensive kings, their arms, thighs and heads wounded by Baladeva's blows, fled in all directions, bleeding profusely. Śrī Kṛṣṇa expressed neither approval nor disapproval of His brother-in-law's death, fearing He would jeopardize His loving ties with either Rukmiṇī or Baladeva.

Lord Baladeva and the other Yādavas then seated Aniruddha and His bride on a fine chariot, and they all set off for Dvārakā.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Each of Lord Kṛṣṇa's wives gave birth to ten sons, who were not less than their father, having all His personal opulence.

2Because each of these princesses saw that Lord Acyuta never left her palace, each thought herself the Lord's favorite. These women did not understand the full truth about Him.

3The Supreme Lord's wives were fully enchanted by His lovely, lotuslike face, His long arms and large eyes, His loving glances imbued with laughter, and His charming talks with them. But with all their charms these ladies could not conquer the mind of the all-powerful Lord.

4The arched eyebrows of these sixteen thousand queens enchantingly expressed those ladies' secret intentions through coyly smiling sidelong glances. Thus their eyebrows boldly sent forth conjugal messages. Yet even with these arrows of Cupid, and with other means as well, they could not agitate Lord Kṛṣṇa's senses.

5Thus these women obtained as their husband the master of the goddess of fortune, although even great demigods like Brahmā do not know how to approach Him. With ever-increasing pleasure, they felt loving attraction for Him, exchanged smiling glances with Him, eagerly anticipated associating with Him in ever-fresh intimacy and enjoyed in many other ways.

6Although the Supreme Lord's queens each had hundreds of maidservants, they chose to personally serve the Lord by approaching Him humbly, offering Him a seat, worshiping Him with excellent paraphernalia, bathing and massaging His feet, giving Him pān to chew, fanning

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Him, anointing Him with fragrant sandalwood paste, adorning Him with flower garlands, dressing His hair, arranging His bed, bathing Him and presenting Him with various gifts.

7Among Lord Kṛṣṇa's wives, each of whom had ten sons, I previously mentioned eight principal queens. I shall now recite for you the names of those eight queens' sons, headed by Pradyumna.

8-9The first son of Queen Rukmiṇī was Pradyumna, and also born of her were Cārudeṣṇa, Sudeṣṇa and the powerful Cārudeha, along with Sucāru, Cārugupta, Bhadracāru, Cārucandra, Vicāru and Cāru, the tenth. None of these sons of Lord Hari was less than his father.

10-12The ten sons of Satyabhāmā were Bhānu, Subhānu, Svarbhānu, Prabhānu, Bhānumān, Candrabhānu, Bṛhadbhānu, Atibhānu (the eighth), Śrībhānu and Pratibhānu. Sāmba, Sumitra, Purujit, Śatajit, Sahasrajit, Vijaya, Citraketu, Vasumān, Draviḍa and Kratu were the sons of Jāmbavatī. These ten, headed by Sāmba, were their father's favorites.

13The sons of Nāgnajitī were Vīra, Candra, Aśvasena, Citragu, Vegavān, Vṛṣa, Āma, Śaṅku, Vasu and the opulent Kunti.

14Śruta, Kavi, Vṛṣa, Vīra, Subāhu, Bhadra, Śānti, Darśa and Pūrṇamāsa were sons of Kālindī. Her youngest son was Somaka.

15Mādrā's sons were Praghoṣa, Gātravān, Simha, Bala, Prabala, Ūrdhaga, Mahāśakti, Saha, Oja and Aparājita.

16Mitravindā's sons were Vṛka, Harṣa, Anila, Gṛdhra, Vardhana, Unnāda, Mahāmsa, Pāvana, Vahni and Kṣudhi.

17Saṅgrāmajit, Bṛhatsena, Śūra, Praharāṇa, Arijit, Jaya and Subhadra were the sons of Bhadrā, together with Vāma, Āyur and Satyaka.

18Dīptimān, Tāmratapta and others were the sons of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rohiṇī. Lord Kṛṣṇa's son Pradyumna fathered the greatly powerful Aniruddha in the womb of Rukmavatī, the daughter of Rukmī. O King, this took place while they were living in the city of Bhojakaṭa.

19My dear King, the sons and grandsons of Lord Kṛṣṇa's children numbered in the tens of millions. Sixteen thousand mothers gave rise to this dynasty.

20King Parīkṣit said: How could Rukmī give his daughter to his enemy's son? After all, Rukmī had been defeated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in battle and was waiting for an opportunity to kill Him. Please explain this to me, O learned one how these two inimical parties became united through marriage.

21Mystic yogīs can perfectly see that which has not yet happened, as well as things in the past or present, beyond the senses, remote or blocked by physical obstacles.

22ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: At her svayaṁvara ceremony, Rukmavatī herself chose Pradyumna, who was the re-embodiment of Cupid. Then, although He fought alone on a single chariot, Pradyumna defeated the assembled kings in battle and took her away.

23Though Rukmī always remembered his enmity toward Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had insulted him, in order to please his sister he sanctioned his daughter's marriage to his nephew.

24O King, Balī, the son of Kṛtavarmā, married Rukmiṇī's young daughter, large-eyed Cārumatī.

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25Rukmī gave his granddaughter Rocanā to his daughter's son, Aniruddha, despite Rukmī's relentless feud with Lord Hari. Although Rukmī considered this marriage irreligious, he wanted to please his sister, bound as he was by the ropes of affection.

26On the joyous occasion of that marriage, O King, Queen Rukmiṇī, Lord Balarāma, Lord Kṛṣṇa and several of the Lord's sons, headed by Sāmba and Pradyumna, went to the city of Bhojakāṭa.

27-28After the wedding, a group of arrogant kings headed by the King of Kaliṅga told Rukmī, "You should defeat Balarāma at dice. He's not expert at dice, O King, but still He's quite addicted to it." Thus advised, Rukmī challenged Balarāma and began a gambling match with Him.

29In that match Lord Balarāma first accepted a wager of one hundred coins, then one thousand, then ten thousand. Rukmī won this first round, and the King of Kaliṅga laughed loudly at Lord Balarāma, showing all his teeth. Lord Balarāma could not tolerate this.

30Next Rukmī accepted a bet of one hundred thousand coins, which Lord Balarāma won. But Rukmī tried to cheat, declaring "I'm the winner!"

31Shaking with anger like the ocean on the full-moon day, handsome Lord Balarāma, His naturally reddish eyes even redder in His fury, accepted a wager of one hundred million gold coins.

32Lord Balarāma fairly won this wager also, but Rukmī again resorted to cheating and declared, "I have won! Let these witnesses here say what they saw."

33Just then a voice from the sky declared, "Balarāma has fairly won this wager. Rukmī is surely lying."

34Urged on by the wicked kings, Rukmī ignored the divine voice. In fact destiny itself was urging Rukmī on, and thus he ridiculed Lord Balarāma as follows.

35[Rukmī said:] You cowherds who wander about the forests know nothing about dice. Playing with dice and sporting with arrows are only for kings, not for the likes of You.

36Thus insulted by Rukmī and ridiculed by the kings, Lord Balarāma was provoked to anger. In the midst of the auspicious wedding assembly, He raised His club and struck Rukmī dead.

37The King of Kaliṅga, who had laughed at Lord Balarāma and shown his teeth, tried to run away, but the furious Lord quickly seized him on his tenth step and knocked out all his teeth.

38Tormented by Lord Balarāma's club, the other kings fled in fear, their arms, thighs and heads broken and their bodies drenched in blood.

39When His brother-in-law Rukmī was slain, Lord Kṛṣṇa neither applauded nor protested, O King, for He feared jeopardizing His affectionate ties with either Rukmiṇī or Balarāma.

40Then the descendants of Daśārha, headed by Lord Balarāma, seated Aniruddha and His bride on a fine chariot and set off from Bhojakāṭa for Dvārakā. Having taken shelter of Lord Madhusūdana, they had fulfilled all their purposes.

SB 10.62: The Meeting of Ūṣā and Aniruddha

This chapter recounts the meeting of Aniruddha and Ūṣā, and also Aniruddha's battle with Bāṇāsura.

Of the one hundred sons of King Bali, the oldest was Bāṇāsura. He was a great devotee of Lord Śiva, who favored Bāṇa so much that even demigods like Indra would serve him. Bāṇāsura once satisfied Śiva by playing musical instruments with his one thousand hands while Śiva danced his *tāṇḍava-nṛtya*. In response, Śiva offered Bāṇa whatever benediction he chose, and Bāṇa asked Śiva to become the guardian of his city.

One day when Bāṇa was feeling an urge to do battle, he told Lord Śiva: "Except for you, in the whole world there is no warrior strong enough to fight me. Therefore these thousand arms you've given me are merely a heavy burden." Angered by these words, Lord Śiva replied, "Your pride will be crushed in battle when you meet my equal. Indeed, your chariot flag will fall to the ground, broken."

Bāṇāsura's daughter, Ūṣā, once had an encounter with a lover in her sleep. Several nights in a row this occurred, until one night she failed to see Him in her dreams. She suddenly awoke, speaking aloud to Him in a state of agitation, but when she noticed her maidservants around her, she felt embarrassed. Ūṣā's companion Citralekhā asked her who she had been addressing, and Ūṣā told her everything. Hearing of Ūṣā's dreamlover, Citralekhā tried to relieve her friend's distress by drawing pictures of Gandharvas and other celestial personalities, as well as various men of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty. Citralekhā asked Ūṣā to pick out the man she had seen in her dreams, and Ūṣā pointed to the picture of Aniruddha. Citralekhā, who had mystic powers, knew at once that the young man her friend had pointed out was Lord Kṛṣṇa's grandson Aniruddha. Then, using her mystic powers, Citralekhā flew through the sky to Dvārakā, found Aniruddha and brought Him back with her to Śoṇitapura, Bāṇāsura's capital. There she presented Him to Ūṣā.

Having obtained the man of her desires, Ūṣā began serving Him very affectionately within her private quarters, which were supposed to be strictly off limits to men. After some time the female guards of the inner palace noticed symptoms of sexual activity on Ūṣā's person, and they went to Bāṇāsura to inform him. Greatly disturbed, Bāṇāsura rushed to his daughter's apartments with many armed guards and, to his great surprise, saw Aniruddha there. As the guards attacked Him, Aniruddha took up His club and succeeded in killing a few before the powerful Bāṇa could capture Him with his mystic *nāga-pāśa* ropes, filling Ūṣā with lamentation.

1King Parīkṣit said: The best of the Yadus married Bāṇāsura's daughter, Ūṣā, and as a result a great, fearsome battle occurred between Lord Hari and Lord Śaṅkara. Please explain everything about this incident, O most powerful of mystics.

2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Bāṇa was the oldest of the hundred sons fathered by the great saint Bali Mahārāja, who gave the whole earth in charity to Lord Hari when He appeared as Vāmanadeva. Bāṇāsura, born from Bali's semen, became a great devotee of Lord Śiva. His behavior was always respectable, and he was generous, intelligent, truthful and firm in his vows. The beautiful city of Śoṇitapura was under his dominion. Because Lord Śiva had favored him, the very demigods waited on Bāṇāsura like menial servants. Once, when Śiva was dancing his *tāṇḍava-nṛtya*, Bāṇa especially satisfied the lord by playing a musical accompaniment with his one thousand arms.

3The lord and master of all created beings, the compassionate refuge of his devotees, gladdened Bāṇāsura by offering him the benediction of his choice. Bāṇa chose to have him,

Lord Śiva, as the guardian of his city.

4Bāṇāsura was intoxicated with his strength. One day, when Lord Śiva was standing beside him, Bāṇāsura touched the lord's lotus feet with his helmet, which shone like the sun, and spoke to him as follows.

5[Bāṇāsura said:] O Lord Mahādeva, I bow down to you, the spiritual master and controller of the worlds. You are like the heavenly tree that fulfills the desires of those whose desires are unfulfilled.

6These one thousand arms you bestowed upon me have become merely a heavy burden. Besides you, I find no one in the three worlds worthy to fight.

7Eager to fight with the elephants who rule the directions, O primeval lord, I went forth, pulverizing mountains with my arms, which were itching for battle. But even those great elephants fled in fear.

8Hearing this, Lord Śiva became angry and replied, "Your flag will be broken, fool, when you have done battle with one who is my equal. That fight will vanquish your conceit."

9Thus advised, unintelligent Bāṇāsura was delighted. The fool then went home, O King, to wait for that which Lord Giriśa had predicted: the destruction of his prowess.

10In a dream Bāṇa's daughter, the maiden Ūṣā, had an amorous encounter with the son of Pradyumna, though she had never before seen or heard of her lover.

11Losing sight of Him in her dream, Ūṣā suddenly sat up in the midst of her girlfriends, crying out "Where are You, my lover?" She was greatly disturbed and embarrassed.

12Bāṇāsura had a minister named Kumbhāṇḍa, whose daughter was Citralekhā. A companion of Ūṣā's, she was filled with curiosity, and thus she inquired from her friend.

13[Citralkhā said:] Who are you searching for, O fine-browed one? What is this hankering you're feeling? Until now, O princess, I haven't seen any man take your hand in marriage.

14[Ūṣā said:] In my dream I saw a certain man who had a darkblue complexion, lotus eyes, yellow garments and mighty arms. He was the kind who touches women's hearts.

15It is that lover I search for. After making me drink the honey of His lips, He has gone elsewhere, and thus He has thrown me, hankering fervently for Him, into the ocean of distress.

16Citralkhā said: I will remove your distress. If He is to be found anywhere in the three worlds, I will bring this future husband of yours who has stolen your heart. Please show me who He is.

17Saying this, Citralekhā proceeded to draw accurate pictures of various demigods, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Pannagas, Daityas, Vidyādharas, Yakṣas and humans.

18-19O King, among the humans, Citralekhā drew pictures of the Vṛṣṇis, including Śūrasena, Ānakadundubhi, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. When Ūṣā saw the picture of Pradyumna she became bashful, and when she saw Aniruddha's picture she bent her head down in embarrassment. Smiling, she exclaimed, "He's the one! It's Him!"

20Citralkhā, endowed with mystic powers, recognized Him as Kṛṣṇa's grandson [Aniruddha]. My dear King, she then traveled by the mystic skyway to Dvārakā, the city under Lord Kṛṣṇa's

protection.

21There she found Pradyumna's son Aniruddha sleeping upon a fine bed. With her yogic power she took Him away to Śoṇitapura, where she presented her girlfriend Ūṣā with her beloved.

22When Ūṣā beheld Him, the most beautiful of men, her face lit up with joy. She took the son of Pradyumna to her private quarters, which men were forbidden even to see, and there enjoyed with Him.

23-24Ūṣā worshiped Aniruddha with faithful service, offering Him priceless garments, along with garlands, fragrances, incense, lamps, sitting places and so on. She also offered Him beverages, all types of food, and sweet words. As He thus remained hidden in the young ladies' quarters, Aniruddha did not notice the passing of the days, for His senses were captivated by Ūṣā, whose affection for Him ever increased.

25-26The female guards eventually noticed unmistakable symptoms of romantic involvement in Ūṣā, who, having broken her maiden vow, was being enjoyed by the Yadu hero and showing signs of conjugal happiness. The guards went to Bāṇāsura and told him, "O King, we have detected in your daughter the kind of improper behavior that spoils the reputation of a young girl's family.

27"We have been carefully watching over her, never leaving our posts, O master, so we cannot understand how this maiden, whom no man can even see, has been corrupted within the palace."

28Very agitated to hear of his daughter's corruption, Bāṇāsura rushed at once to the maidens' quarters. There he saw the pride of the Yadus, Aniruddha.

29-30Bāṇāsura saw before him Cupid's own son, possessed of unrivaled beauty, with dark-blue complexion, yellow garments, lotus eyes and formidable arms. His face was adorned with effulgent earrings and hair, and also with smiling glances. As He sat opposite His most auspicious lover, playing with her at dice, there hung between His arms a garland of spring jasmines that had been smeared with kuṅkuma powder from her breasts when He had embraced her. Bāṇāsura was astonished to see all this.

31Seeing Bāṇāsura enter with many armed guards, Aniruddha raised His iron club and stood resolute, ready to strike anyone who attacked Him. He resembled death personified holding his rod of punishment.

32As the guards converged on Him from all sides, trying to capture Him, Aniruddha struck them just as the leader of a pack of boars strikes back at dogs. Hit by His blows, the guards fled the palace, running for their lives with shattered heads, thighs and arms.

33But even as Aniruddha was striking down the army of Bāṇa, that powerful son of Bali angrily caught Him with the mystic nāga-pāśa ropes. When Ūṣā heard of Aniruddha's capture, she was overwhelmed with grief and depression; her eyes filled with tears, and she wept.

SB 10.63: Lord Kṛṣṇa Fights with Bāṇāsura

This chapter describes the battle between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śiva, as well as Śiva's glorification of Kṛṣṇa after the Lord had cut off Bāṇāsura's arms.

When Aniruddha did not return from Śoṇitapura, His family and friends passed the four

months of the rainy season in extreme distress. When they finally heard from Nārada Muni how Aniruddha had been captured, a large army of the best Yādava warriors, under Kṛṣṇa's protection, set off for Bāṇāsura's capital and laid siege to it. Bāṇāsura fiercely opposed them with his own army of equal size. To help Bāṇāsura, Lord Śiva, accompanied by Kārtikeya and a horde of mystic sages, took up arms against Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Bāṇa began fighting against Sātyaki, and Bāṇa's son fought against Sāmba. All the demigods assembled in the sky to witness the battle. With His arrows Lord Kṛṣṇa harassed the followers of Lord Śiva, and by putting Lord Śiva into a state of confusion He was able to destroy Bāṇāsura's army. Kārtikeya was so strongly beaten by Pradyumna that he fled the battlefield, while the remnants of Bāṇāsura's army, harried by the blows of Lord Balarāma's club, scattered in all directions.

Enraged to see his army's destruction, Bāṇāsura rushed Kṛṣṇa to attack Him. But the Lord immediately killed Bāṇa's chariot driver and broke his chariot and bow, and then He sounded His Pāścājanya conchshell. Next Bāṇāsura's mother, trying to save her son, appeared naked in front of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who averted His face to avoid looking at her. Seeing his chance, Bāṇa fled into his city.

After Lord Kṛṣṇa had thoroughly defeated the ghosts and hobgoblins fighting under Lord Śiva, the Śiva-jvara weapon personification of fever with three heads and three legs approached Lord Kṛṣṇa to fight Him. Seeing the Śiva-jvara, Kṛṣṇa released His Viṣṇu-jvara. The Śiva-jvara was overwhelmed by the Viṣṇu-jvara; having nowhere else to turn for shelter, the Śiva-jvara began to address Lord Kṛṣṇa, glorifying Him and asking for mercy. Lord Kṛṣṇa was pleased with the Śiva-jvara, and after the Lord had promised him freedom from fear, the Śiva-jvara bowed down to Him and departed.

Next Bāṇāsura returned and attacked Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa again, wielding all kinds of weapons in his thousand hands. But Lord Kṛṣṇa took His Sudarśana disc and began cutting off all the demon's arms. Lord Śiva approached Kṛṣṇa to pray for Bāṇāsura's life, and when the Lord agreed to spare him, He spoke as follows to Śiva: "Bāṇāsura does not deserve to die, since he was born in the family of Prahāda Mahārāja. I have severed all but four of Bāṇa's arms just to destroy his false pride, and I have annihilated his army because they were a burden to the earth. Henceforward he will be free from old age and death, and remaining fearless in all circumstances, he will be one of your principal attendants."

Assured he had nothing to fear, Bāṇāsura then offered his obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa and had Ūṣā and Aniruddha seated on their wedding chariot and brought before the Lord. Kṛṣṇa then set off for Dvārakā with Aniruddha and His bride leading the procession. When the newlyweds arrived at the Lord's capital, they were honored by the citizens, the Lord's relatives and the *brāhmaṇas*.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O descendant of Bharata, the relatives of Aniruddha, not seeing Him return, continued to lament as the four rainy months passed.

2 After hearing from Nārada the news of Aniruddha's deeds and His capture, the Vṛṣṇis, who worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa as their personal Deity, went to Śoṇitapura.

3-4 With Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa in the lead, the chiefs of the Sātvata clan Pradyumna, Sātyaki, Gada, Sāmba, Sāraṇa, Nanda, Upananda, Bhadra and others converged with an army of twelve divisions and laid siege to Bāṇāsura's capital, completely surrounding the city on all sides.

5 Bāṇāsura became filled with anger upon seeing them destroy his city's suburban gardens,

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ramparts, watchtowers and gateways, and thus he went out to confront them with an army of equal size.

6Lord Rudra, accompanied by his son Kārtikeya and the Pramathas, came riding on Nandi, his bull carrier, to fight Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa on Bāṇa's behalf.

7A most astonishing, tumultuous and hair-raising battle then commenced, with Lord Kṛṣṇa matched against Lord Śaṅkara, and Pradyumna against Kārtikeya.

8Lord Balarāma fought with Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa, Sāmba with Bāṇa's son, and Sātyaki with Bāṇa.

9Brahmā and the other ruling demigods, along with Siddhas, Cāraṇas and great sages, as well as Gandharvas, Apsarās and Yakṣas, all came in their celestial airplanes to watch.

10-11With sharp-pointed arrows discharged from His bow Śārṅga, Lord Kṛṣṇa drove away the various followers of Lord ŚivaBhūtas, Pramathas, Guhyakas, Dākinīs, Yātudhānas, Vetālas, Vināyakas, Pretas, Mātās, Piśācas, Kuṣmāṇḍas and Brahma-rākṣasas.

12Lord Śiva, wielder of the trident, shot various weapons at Lord Kṛṣṇa, wielder of Śārṅga. But Lord Kṛṣṇa was not in the least perplexed: He neutralized all these weapons with appropriate counterweapons.

13Lord Kṛṣṇa counteracted a brahmāstra with another brahmāstra, a wind weapon with a mountain weapon, a fire weapon with a rain weapon, and Lord Śiva's personal pāśupatāstra weapon with His own personal weapon, the nārāyaṇāstra.

14After bewildering Lord Śiva by making him yawn with a yawning weapon, Lord Kṛṣṇa proceeded to strike down Bāṇāsura's army with His sword, club and arrows.

15Lord Kārtikeya was distressed by the flood of Pradyumna's arrows raining down from all sides, and thus he fled the battlefield on his peacock as blood poured from his limbs.

16Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa, tormented by Lord Balarāma's club, fell down dead. When the soldiers of these two demons saw that their leaders had been killed, they scattered in all directions.

17Bāṇāsura was furious to see his entire military force being torn apart. Leaving his fight with Sātyaki, he charged across the battlefield on his chariot and attacked Lord Kṛṣṇa.

18Excited to a frenzy by the fighting, Bāṇa simultaneously pulled taut all the strings of his five hundred bows and fixed two arrows on each string.

19Lord Śrī Hari split every one of Bāṇāsura's bows simultaneously, and also struck down his chariot driver, chariot and horses. The Lord then sounded His conchshell.

20Just then Bāṇāsura's mother, Koṭarā, desiring to save her son's life, appeared before Lord Kṛṣṇa naked and with her hair undone.

21Lord Gadāgraja turned His face away to avoid seeing the naked woman, and Bāṇāsura deprived of his chariot, his bow shatteredtook the opportunity to flee into his city.

22After Lord Śiva's followers had been driven away, the Śiva-jvara, who had three heads and three feet, pressed forward to attack Lord Kṛṣṇa. As the Śiva-jvara approached, he seemed to

burn everything in the ten directions.

23 Seeing this personified weapon approach, Lord Nārāyaṇa then released His own personified fever weapon, the Viṣṇu-jvara. The Śiva-jvara and Viṣṇu-jvara thus battled each other.

24 The Śiva-jvara, overwhelmed by the strength of the Viṣṇu-jvara, cried out in pain. But finding no refuge, the frightened Śiva-jvara approached Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses, hoping to attain His shelter. Thus with joined palms he began to praise the Lord.

25 The Śiva-jvara said: I bow down to You of unlimited potencies, the Supreme Lord, the Supersoul of all beings. You possess pure and complete consciousness and are the cause of cosmic creation, maintenance and dissolution. Perfectly peaceful, You are the Absolute Truth to whom the Vedas indirectly refer.

26 Time; fate; karma; the jīva and his propensities; the subtle material elements; the material body; the life air; false ego; the various senses; and the totality of these as reflected in the living being's subtle body—all this constitutes your material illusory energy, māyā, an endless cycle like that of seed and plant. I take shelter of You, the negation of this māyā.

27 With various intentions, You perform pastimes to maintain the demigods, the saintly persons and the codes of religion for this world. By these pastimes You also kill those who stray from the right path and live by violence. Indeed, your present incarnation is meant to relieve the earth's burden.

28 I am tortured by the fierce power of Your terrible fever weapon, which is cold yet burning. All embodied souls must suffer as long as they remain bound to material ambitions and thus averse to serving Your feet.

29 The Supreme Lord said: O three-headed one, I am pleased with you. May your fear of My fever weapon be dispelled, and may whoever remembers our conversation here have no reason to fear you.

30 Thus addressed, the Māheśvara-jvara bowed down to the infallible Lord and went away. But Bāṇāsura then appeared, riding forth on his chariot to fight Lord Kṛṣṇa.

31 Carrying numerous weapons in his thousand hands, O King, the terribly infuriated demon shot many arrows at Lord Kṛṣṇa, the carrier of the disc weapon.

32 As Bāṇa continued hurling weapons at Him, the Supreme Lord began using His razor-sharp cakṛa to cut off Bāṇāsura's arms as if they were tree branches.

33 Lord Śiva felt compassion for his devotee Bāṇāsura, whose arms were being cut off, and thus he approached Lord Cakrāyudha [Kṛṣṇa] and spoke to Him as follows.

34 Śrī Rudra said: You alone are the Absolute Truth, the supreme light, the mystery hidden within the verbal manifestation of the Absolute. Those whose hearts are spotless can see You, for You are uncontaminated, like the sky.

35-36 The sky is Your navel, fire Your face, water Your semen, and heaven Your head. The cardinal directions are Your sense of hearing, herbal plants the hairs on Your body, and water-bearing clouds the hair on Your head. The earth is Your foot, the moon Your mind, and the sun Your vision, while I am Your ego. The ocean is Your abdomen, Indra Your arm, Lord Brahmā Your intelligence, the progenitor of mankind Your genitals, and religion Your heart. You are indeed the original puruṣa, creator of the worlds.

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37Your current descent into the material realm, O Lord of unrestricted power, is meant for upholding the principles of justice and benefiting the entire universe. We demigods, each depending on Your grace and authority, develop the seven planetary systems.

38You are the original person, one without a second, transcendental and self-manifesting. Uncaused, you are the cause of all, and You are the ultimate controller. You are nonetheless perceived in terms of the transformations of matter effected by Your illusory energytransformations You sanction so that the various material qualities can fully manifest.

39O almighty one, just as the sun, though hidden by a cloud, illuminates the cloud and all other visible forms as well, so You, although hidden by the material qualities, remain self-luminous and thus reveal all those qualities, along with the living entities who possess them.

40Their intelligence bewildered by Your māyā, fully attached to children, wife, home and so on, persons immersed in the ocean of material misery sometimes rise to the surface and sometimes sink down.

41One who has attained this human form of life as a gift from God, yet who fails to control his senses and honor Your feet, is surely to be pitied, for he is only cheating himself.

42That mortal who rejects Youhis true Self, dearest friend, and Lordfor the sake of sense objects, whose nature is just the opposite, refuses nectar and instead consumes poison.

43I, Lord Brahmā, the other demigods and the pure-minded sages have all surrendered wholeheartedly unto You, our dearest Self and Lord.

44Let us worship You, the Supreme Lord, to be freed from material life. You are the maintainer of the universe and the cause of its creation and demise. Equipoised and perfectly at peace, You are the true friend, Self and worshipable Lord. You are one without a second, the shelter of all the worlds and all souls.

45This Bāṇāsura is my dear and faithful follower, and I have awarded him freedom from fear. Therefore, my Lord, please grant him Your mercy, just as You showed mercy to Prahlāda, the lord of the demons.

46The Supreme Lord said: My dear lord, for your pleasure We must certainly do what you have requested of Us. I fully agree with your conclusion.

47I will not kill this demonic son of Vairocāni, for I gave Prahlāda Mahārāja the benediction that I would not kill any of his descendants.

48It was to subdue Bāṇāsura's false pride that I severed his arms. And I slew his mighty army because it had become a burden upon the earth.

49This demon, who still has four arms, will be immune to old age and death, and he will serve as one of your principal attendants. Thus he will have nothing to fear on any account.

50Thus attaining freedom from fear, Bāṇāsura offered obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa by touching his head to the ground. Bāṇa then seated Aniruddha and His bride on their chariot and brought them before the Lord.

51At the front of the party Lord Kṛṣṇa then placed Aniruddha and His bride, both beautifully adorned with fine clothes and ornaments, and surrounded them with a full military division. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa took His leave of Lord Śiva and departed.

52The Lord then entered His capital. The city was lavishly decorated with flags and victory arches, and its avenues and crossways were all sprinkled with water. As conchshells, ānakas and dundubhi drums resounded, the Lord's relatives, the brāhmaṇas and the general populace all came forward to greet Him respectfully.

53Whoever rises early in the morning and remembers Lord Kṛṣṇa's victory in His battle with Lord Śiva will never experience defeat.

SB 10.64: The Deliverance of King Nṛga

This chapter describes how Śrī Kṛṣṇa released King Nṛga from a curse and instructed the royal order on the great danger of taking a *brāhmaṇa*'s property.

One day Sāmba and other young boys of the Yādava dynasty went to the forest to play, and after playing for a long time they became very thirsty and began looking for water. Inside a dry well they found an amazing creature: a huge lizard resembling a hill. The boys felt sorry for it and tried to pull it out. But after several attempts with leather thongs and ropes, they saw that they would not be able to rescue the creature, and thus they went to Lord Kṛṣṇa and told Him what had happened. The Lord accompanied them to the well and, extending His left hand, easily lifted the lizard out. By the touch of Lord Kṛṣṇa's hand the creature transformed at once into a demigod. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa asked, "Who are you, and how did you assume such a lowly form?"

The divine being replied, "My name was King Nṛga, son of Ikṣvāku, and I was famous for giving charity. Indeed, I gave away countless cows to numerous *brāhmaṇas*. But on one occasion a cow belonging to a first-class *brāhmaṇa* wandered into my herd. Unaware of this, I gave this cow in charity to a different *brāhmaṇa*. When the cow's previous owner saw the second *brāhmaṇa* taking this cow away, the first *brāhmaṇa* claimed the cow as his and began arguing with the second *brāhmaṇa*. After quarreling for some time they approached me, and I implored them to each take one hundred thousand cows in exchange for that one cow, and to please forgive me for the offense I had unknowingly committed. But neither *brāhmaṇa* would accept my proposal, and the matter remained unsettled.

"Shortly thereafter I died and was taken by the Yamadūtas to the court of Yamarāja. Yama asked me which I preferred to do first: suffer the results of my sins or enjoy the results of my pious acts. I decided to suffer my sinful reactions first, and thus I assumed the body of a lizard."

After King Nṛga had told his story, he offered prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa and then mounted a celestial airplane, which transported him to heaven.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then instructed His personal associates, as well as the general mass of people, on the dangers of stealing a *brāhmaṇa*'s property. Finally, the Lord returned to His palace.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: O King, one day Sāmba, Pradyumna, Cāru, Bhānu, Gada and other young boys of the Yadu dynasty went to a small forest to play.

2After playing for a long time, they became thirsty. As they searched for water, they looked inside a dry well and saw a peculiar creature.

3The boys were astonished to behold this creature, a lizard who looked like a hill. They felt sorry for it and tried to lift it out of the well.

4They caught on to the trapped lizard with leather thongs and then with woven ropes, but still they could not lift it out. So they went to Lord Kṛṣṇa and excitedly told Him about the creature.

5The lotus-eyed Supreme Lord, maintainer of the universe, went to the well and saw the lizard. Then with His left hand He easily lifted it out.

6Touched by the hand of the glorious Supreme Lord, the being at once gave up its lizard form and assumed that of a resident of heaven. His complexion was beautifully colored like molten gold, and he was adorned with wonderful ornaments, clothes and garlands.

7Lord Kṛṣṇa understood the situation, but to inform people in general He inquired as follows: “Who are you, O greatly fortunate one? Seeing your excellent form, I think you must surely be an exalted demigod.

8“By what past activity were you brought to this condition? It seems you did not deserve such a fate, O good soul. We are eager to know about you, so please inform us about yourself, that is, you think this the proper time and place to tell us.”

9Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus questioned by Kṛṣṇa, whose forms are unlimited, the King, his helmet as dazzling as the sun, bowed down to Lord Mādhava and replied as follows.

10King Nṛga said: I am a king known as Nṛga, the son of Ikṣvāku. Perhaps, Lord, You have heard of me when lists of charitable men were recited.

11What could possibly be unknown to You, O master? With vision undisturbed by time, You witness the minds of all living beings. Nevertheless, on Your order I will speak.

12I gave in charity as many cows as there are grains of sand on the earth, stars in the heavens, or drops in a rain shower.

13Young, brown, milk-laden cows, who were well-behaved, beautiful and endowed with good qualities, who were all acquired honestly, and who had gilded horns, silver-plated hooves and decorations of fine ornamental cloths and garlandssuch were the cows, along with their calves, that I gave in charity.

14-15I first honored the brāhmaṇas who were recipients of my charity by decorating them with fine ornaments. Those most exalted brāhmaṇas, whose families were in need, were young and possessed of excellent character and qualities. They were dedicated to truth, famous for their austerity, vastly learned in the Vedic scriptures and saintly in their behavior. I gave them cows, land, gold and houses, along with horses, elephants and marriageable girls with maidservants, as well as sesame, silver, fine beds, clothing, jewels, furniture and chariots. In addition, I performed Vedic sacrifices and executed various pious welfare activities.

16Once a cow belonging to a certain first-class brāhmaṇa wandered away and entered my herd. Unaware of this, I gave that cow in charity to a different brāhmaṇa.

17When the cow’s first owner saw her being led away, he said, “She is mine!” The second brāhmaṇa, who had accepted her as a gift, replied, “No, she’s mine! Nṛga gave her to me.”

18As the two brāhmaṇas argued, each trying to fulfill his own purpose, they came to me. One of them said, “You gave me this cow,” and the other said, “But you stole her from me.” Hearing this, I was bewildered.

19-20Finding myself in a terrible dilemma concerning my duty in the situation, I humbly entreated both the brāhmaṇas: “I will give one hundred thousand of the best cows in exchange for this one. Please give her back to me. Your good selves should be merciful to me, your servant. I did not know what I was doing. Please save me from this difficult situation, or I’ll surely fall into a filthy hell.”

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21The present owner of the cow said, “I don’t want anything in exchange for this cow, O King,” and went away. The other brāhmaṇa declared, “I don’t want even ten thousand more cows [than you are offering],” and he too went away.

22O Lord of lords, O master of the universe, the agents of Yamarāja, taking advantage of the opportunity thus created, later carried me to his abode. There Yamarāja himself questioned me.

23[Yamarāja said:] My dear King, do you wish to experience the results of your sins first, or those of your piety? Indeed, I see no end to the dutiful charity you have performed, or to your consequent enjoyment in the radiant heavenly planets.

24I replied, “First, my lord, let me suffer my sinful reactions,” and Yamarāja said, “Then fall!” At once I fell, and while falling I saw myself becoming a lizard, O master.

25O Keśava, as Your servant I was devoted to the brāhmaṇas and generous to them, and I always hankered for Your audience. Therefore even till now I have never forgotten [my past life].

26O almighty one, how is it that my eyes see You here before me? You are the Supreme Soul, whom the greatest masters of mystic yoga can meditate upon within their pure hearts only by employing the spiritual eye of the Vedas. Then how, O transcendental Lord, are You directly visible to me, since my intelligence has been blinded by the severe tribulations of material life? Only one who has finished his material entanglement in this world should be able to see You.

27-28O Devadeva, Jagannātha, Govinda, Puruṣottama, Nārāyaṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa, Puṇyaśloka, Acyuta, Avyaya! O Kṛṣṇa, please permit me to depart for the world of the demigods. Wherever I live, O master, may my mind always take shelter of Your feet.

29I offer my repeated obeisances unto You, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva. You are the source of all beings, the Supreme Absolute Truth, the possessor of unlimited potencies, the master of all spiritual disciplines.

30Having spoken thus, Mahārāja Nṛga circumambulated Lord Kṛṣṇa and touched his crown to the Lord’s feet. Granted permission to depart, King Nṛga then boarded a wonderful celestial airplane as all the people present looked on.

31The Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī who is especially devoted to the brāhmaṇas and who embodies the essence of religion, then spoke to His personal associates and thus instructed the royal class in general.

32[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] How indigestible is the property of a brāhmaṇa, even when enjoyed just slightly and by one more potent than fire! What then to speak of kings who try to enjoy it, presuming themselves lords.

33I do not consider hālāhala to be real poison, because it has an antidote. But a brāhmaṇa’s property, when stolen, can truly be called poison, for it has no antidote in this world.

34Poison kills only the person who ingests it, and an ordinary fire may be extinguished with water. But the fire generated from the kindling wood of a brāhmaṇa’s property burns the thief’s entire family down to the root.

35If a person enjoys a brāhmaṇa’s property without receiving due permission, that property destroys three generations of his family. But if he takes it by force or gets the government or other outsiders to help him usurp it, then ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations

of his descendants are all destroyed.

36Members of the royal order, blinded by royal opulence, fail to foresee their own downfall. Childishly hankering to enjoy a brāhmaṇa's property, they are actually hankering to go to hell.

37-38For as many years as there are particles of dust touched by the tears of generous brāhmaṇas who have dependent families and whose property is stolen, uncontrolled kings who usurp a brāhmaṇa's property are cooked, along with their royal families, in the hell known as Kumbhīpāka.

39Whether it be his own gift or someone else's, a person who steals a brāhmaṇa's property will take birth as a worm in feces for sixty thousand years.

40I do not desire brāhmaṇas' wealth. Those who lust after it become short-lived and are defeated. They lose their kingdoms and become snakes, who trouble others.

41My dear followers, never treat a learned brāhmaṇa harshly, even if he has sinned. Even if he attacks you physically or repeatedly curses you, always continue to offer him obeisances.

42Just as I always carefully bow down to brāhmaṇas, so all of you should likewise bow down to them. I will punish anyone who acts otherwise.

43When a brāhmaṇa's property is stolen, even unknowingly, it certainly causes the person who takes it to fall down, just as the brāhmaṇa's cow did to Nṛga.

44Having thus instructed the residents of Dvārakā, Lord Mukunda, purifier of all the worlds, entered His palace.

SB 10.65: Lord Balarāma Visits Vṛndāvana

This chapter relates how Lord Balarāma went to Gokula, enjoyed the company of the cowherd girls and dragged the Yamunā River.

One day Lord Balarāma went to Gokula to see His relatives and friends. When He arrived there, the elder *gopīs* and Lord Kṛṣṇa's parents, Nanda and Yaśodā, who had all been in great anxiety for a long time, embraced Him and blessed Him. Lord Balarāma offered appropriate respects and greetings to each of His worshipable elders according to age, friendship and family relation. After Gokula's residents and Lord Balarāma had inquired about each other's welfare, the Lord rested from His journey.

In a short while the young *gopīs* came to Lord Balarāma and questioned Him about Kṛṣṇa's well-being. They asked, "Does Kṛṣṇa still remember His parents and friends, and will He be coming to Gokula to visit them? For Kṛṣṇa's sake we gave up everything even our fathers, mothers and other relatives but now He has abandoned us. How could we help but put our faith in Kṛṣṇa's words after seeing His sweetly smiling face and thus being overwhelmed by the urges of Cupid? Still, if Kṛṣṇa can spend His days in separation from us, why can't we tolerate separation from Him? So there is no reason to keep talking about Him." In this manner the *gopīs* remembered Śrī Kṛṣṇa's charming talks, enchanting glances, playful gestures and loving embraces, and as a result they began to cry. Lord Balarāma consoled them by conveying the attractive messages Kṛṣṇa had given Him for them.

Lord Balarāma stayed in Gokula for two months, sporting with the *gopīs* in the groves on the Yamunā's shore. The demigods who witnessed these pastimes played kettledrums in the heavens and showered down flower petals, while the celestial sages recited Balarāma's glories.

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One day Lord Balarāma became intoxicated by drinking some *vāruṇī* liquor and began wandering about the forest in the company of the *gopīs*. He called out to the Yamunā, “Come near so I and the *gopīs* can enjoy sporting in your waters.” But the Yamunā ignored His command. Lord Balarāma then started to pull the Yamunā with the end of His plow, splitting her into hundreds of tributaries. Trembling out of fright, the goddess Yamunā appeared, fell down at Lord Balarāma’s feet and prayed for forgiveness. The Lord let her go and then entered her waters with His girlfriends to sport for some time. When they rose from the water, the goddess Kānti presented Lord Balarāma with beautiful ornaments, clothing and garlands. Even today the Yamunā River flows through the many channels cut by Lord Baladeva’s plow, the signs of His having subdued her.

While Lord Balarāma played, His mind became enchanted by the *gopīs*’ pastimes. Thus the many nights He spent in their company seemed to Him like a single night.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O best of the Kurus, once Lord Balarāma, eager to visit His well-wishing friends, mounted His chariot and traveled to Nanda Gokula.

2Having long suffered the anxiety of separation, the cowherd men and their wives embraced Lord Balarāma. The Lord then offered respects to His parents, and they joyfully greeted Him with prayers.

3[Nanda and Yaśodā prayed,] “O descendant of Daśārha, O Lord of the universe, may You and Your younger brother Kṛṣṇa ever protect us.” Saying this, they raised Śrī Balarāma onto their laps, embraced Him and moistened Him with tears from their eyes.

4-6Lord Balarāma then paid proper respects to the elder cowherd men, and the younger ones all greeted Him respectfully. He met them all with smiles, handshakes and so on, dealing personally with each one according to age, degree of friendship, and family relationship. Then, after resting, the Lord accepted a comfortable seat, and they all gathered around Him. With voices faltering out of love for Him, those cowherds, who had dedicated everything to lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, asked about the health of their dear ones [in Dvārakā], and Balarāma in turn asked about the cowherds’ welfare.

7[The cowherds said:] O Rāma, are all our relatives doing well? And Rāma, do all of you, with your wives and children, still remember us?

8It is our great fortune that sinful Kaṁsa has been killed and our dear relatives have been freed. And it is also our good fortune that our relatives have killed and defeated their enemies and found complete security in a great fortress.

9[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Honored to have the personal audience of Lord Balarāma, the young *gopīs* smiled and asked Him, “Is Kṛṣṇa, the darling of the city women, living happily?”

10“Does He remember His family members, especially His father and mother? Do you think He will ever come back even once to see His mother? And does mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa remember the service we always did for Him?”

11-12“For Kṛṣṇa’s sake, O descendant of Dāśārha, we abandoned our mothers, fathers, brothers, husbands, children and sisters, even though these family relations are difficult to give up. But now, O Lord, that same Kṛṣṇa has suddenly abandoned us and gone away, breaking off all affectionate ties with us. And yet how could any woman fail to trust His promises?”

13“How can intelligent city women possibly trust the words of one whose heart is so unsteady and who is so ungrateful? They must believe Him because He speaks so wonderfully, and also

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because His beautiful smiling glances arouse their lust.

14“Why bother talking about Him, dear gopī? Please talk of something else. If He passes His time without us, then we shall similarly pass ours [without Him].”

15While speaking these words, the young cowherd women remembered Lord Śāuri’s laughter, His pleasing conversations with them, His attractive glances, His style of walking and His loving embraces. Thus they began to cry.

16The Supreme Lord Balarāma, the attractor of all, being expert at various kinds of conciliation, consoled the gopīs by relaying to them the confidential messages Lord Kṛṣṇa had sent with Him. These messages deeply touched the gopīs’ hearts.

17Lord Balarāma, the Personality of Godhead, resided there for the two months of Madhu and Mādhava, and during the nights He gave His cowherd girlfriends conjugal pleasure.

18In the company of numerous women, Lord Balarāma enjoyed in a garden by the Yamunā River. This garden was bathed in the rays of the full moon and caressed by breezes bearing the fragrance of night-blooming lotuses.

19Sent by the demigod Varuṇa, the divine vāruṇī liquor flowed from a tree hollow and made the entire forest even more fragrant with its sweet aroma.

20The wind carried to Balarāma the fragrance of that flood of sweet liquor, and when He smelled it He went [to the tree]. There He and His female companions drank.

21As the Gandharvas sang His glories, Lord Balarāma enjoyed within the brilliant circle of young women. He appeared just like Indra’s elephant, the lordly Airāvata, enjoying in the company of she-elephants.

22At that time kettledrums resounded in the sky, the Gandharvas joyfully rained down flowers, and the great sages praised Lord Balarāma’s heroic deeds.

23As His deeds were sung, Lord Halāyudha wandered as if inebriated among the various forests with His girlfriends. His eyes rolled from the effects of the liquor.

24-25Intoxicated with joy, Lord Balarāma sported flower garlands, including the famous Vaijayantī. He wore a single earring, and beads of perspiration decorated His smiling lotus face like snowflakes. The Lord then summoned the Yamunā River so that He could play in her waters, but she disregarded His command, thinking He was drunk. This angered Balarāma, and He began dragging the river with the tip of His plow.

26[Lord Balarāma said:] O sinful one disrespecting Me, you do not come when I call you but rather move only by your own whim. Therefore with the tip of My plow I shall bring you here in a hundred streams!

27[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus scolded by the Lord, O King, the frightened river-goddess Yamunā came and fell at the feet of Śrī Balarāma, the beloved descendant of Yadu. Trembling, she spoke to Him the following words.

28[Goddess Yamunā said:] Rāma, Rāma, O mighty-armed one! I know nothing of Your prowess. With a single portion of Yourself You hold up the earth, O Lord of the universe.

29My Lord, please release me. O soul of the universe, I didn’t understand Your position as the Supreme Godhead, but now I have surrendered unto You, and You are always kind to Your

devotees.

30[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thereupon Lord Balarāma released the Yamunā and, like the king of the elephants with his entourage of she-elephants, entered the river's water with His female companions.

31The Lord played in the water to His full satisfaction, and when He came out Goddess Kānti presented Him with blue garments, precious ornaments and a brilliant necklace.

32Lord Balarāma dressed Himself in the blue garments and put on the gold necklace. Anointed with fragrances and beautifully adorned, He appeared as resplendent as Indra's royal elephant.

33Even today, O King, one can see how the Yamunā flows through the many channels created when it was dragged by the unlimitedly powerful Lord Balarāma. Thus she demonstrates His prowess.

34Thus for Lord Balarāma all the nights passed like a single night as He enjoyed in Vraja, His mind enchanted by the exquisite charm and beauty of Vraja's young ladies.

SB 10.66: Pauṇḍraka, the False Vāsudeva

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa went to Kāśī (present-day Benares) and killed Pauṇḍraka and Kāśīrāja, and how the Lord's Sudarśana disc defeated a demon, incinerated the city of Kāśī and killed Sudakṣiṇa.

While Lord Baladeva was visiting Vraja, King Pauṇḍraka of Karūṣa, encouraged by fools, announced that he was the real Vāsudeva. Thus he challenged Lord Kṛṣṇa with the following message: "Since I alone am the true Personality of Godhead, You should give up Your false claim to this position, as well as my divine symbols, and take shelter of me. If You do not, then prepare for battle."

When Ugrasena and the members of his royal assembly heard Pauṇḍraka's foolish boast, they all laughed heartily. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then told Pauṇḍraka's messenger to convey a message to his master: "O fool, I will force you to give up the so-called Sudarśana disc and the other divine symbols of Mine you have dared to assume. And when you lie down on the battlefield, you will become the shelter of dogs."

Lord Kṛṣṇa then went to Kāśī. Pauṇḍraka, seeing the Lord preparing for battle, quickly came out of the city to confront Him with his army. His friend Kāśīrāja followed him, leading the rear guard. Just as the fire of universal devastation destroys every living being in all directions, so Lord Kṛṣṇa annihilated the armies of Pauṇḍraka and Kāśīrāja. Then, after chastising Pauṇḍraka, the Lord beheaded both him and Kāśīrāja with His Sudarśana disc. Thereafter, He returned to Dvārakā. Because Pauṇḍraka had constantly meditated on the Supreme Lord, even dressing like Him, he gained liberation.

When Kṛṣṇa beheaded Kāśīrāja, the King's head flew into his city, and when his queens, sons and other relatives saw it, they all began to lament. At that time a son of Kāśīrāja's named Sudakṣiṇa, wanting to avenge his father's death, began worshiping Lord Śiva with the intention of destroying his father's killer. Gratified by Sudakṣiṇa's worship, Lord Śiva offered him a choice of benedictions, and Sudakṣiṇa asked for a means to kill the one who had slain his father. Lord Śiva advised him to worship the Dakṣiṇāgni fire with black magic rituals. This Sudakṣiṇa did, with the result that a fearsome demon with a body of flames appeared from the pit of the sacrificial fire. The demon rose up carrying a fiery trident and at once set off for

Dvārakā.

The residents of Lord Kṛṣṇa's capital became terrified as the demon approached the city, but Lord Kṛṣṇa assured them of protection and dispatched His Sudarśana *cakra* to oppose the magic creation of Lord Śiva. The Sudarśana overpowered the demon, who then returned to Vārāṇasī and burned Sudakṣiṇa to ashes, together with his priests. The Sudarśana disc, following the demon, entered Vārāṇasī and burned the entire city to the ground. Then the Lord's disc returned to His side in Dvārakā.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, while Lord Balarāma was away visiting Nanda's village of Vraja, the ruler of Karūṣa, foolishly thinking "I am the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva," sent a messenger to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

2Paunḍraka was emboldened by the flattery of childish men, who told him, "You are Vāsudeva, the Supreme Lord and master of the universe, who have now descended to the earth." Thus he imagined himself to be the infallible Personality of Godhead.

3Thus slow-witted King Paunḍraka sent a messenger to the inscrutable Lord Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā. Paunḍraka was acting just like an unintelligent child whom other children are pretending is a king.

4Arriving in Dvārakā, the messenger found lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa in His royal assembly and relayed the King's message to that almighty Lord.

5[On Paunḍraka's behalf, the messenger said:] I am the one and only Lord Vāsudeva, and there is no other. It is I who have descended to this world to show mercy to the living beings. Therefore give up Your false name.

6O Sātvata, give up my personal symbols, which out of foolishness You now carry, and come to me for shelter. If You do not, then You must give me battle.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: King Ugrasena and the other members of the assembly laughed loudly when they heard this vain boasting of unintelligent Paunḍraka.

8The Personality of Godhead, after enjoying the jokes of the assembly, told the messenger [to relay a message to his master:] "You fool, I will indeed let loose the weapons you boast of in this way.

9"When you lie dead, O fool, your face covered by vultures, herons and vaṭa birds, you will become the shelter of dogs."

10When the Lord had thus spoken, the messenger conveyed His insulting reply to his master in its entirety. Lord Kṛṣṇa then mounted His chariot and went to the vicinity of Kāśī.

11Upon observing Lord Kṛṣṇa's preparations for battle, the mighty warrior Paunḍraka quickly went out of the city with two full military divisions.

12-14Paunḍraka's friend, the King of Kāśī, followed behind, O King, leading the rear guard with three akṣauhīṇī divisions. Lord Kṛṣṇa saw that Paunḍraka was carrying the Lord's own insignia, such as the conchshell, disc, sword and club, and also an imitation Śārṅga bow and Śrīvatsa mark. He wore a mock Kaustubha gem, was decorated with a garland of forest flowers and was dressed in upper and lower garments of fine yellow silk. His banner bore the image of Garuḍa, and he wore a valuable crown and gleaming, shark-shaped earrings.

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15 Lord Hari laughed heartily when He saw how the King had dressed up in exact imitation of His own appearance, just like an actor onstage.

16 The enemies of Lord Hari attacked Him with tridents, clubs, bludgeons, pikes, ṛṣtis, barbed darts, lances, swords, axes and arrows.

17 But Lord Kṛṣṇa fiercely struck back at the army of Pauṇḍraka and Kāśirāja, which consisted of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry. The Lord tormented His enemies with His club, sword, Sudarśana disc and arrows, just as the fire of annihilation torments the various kinds of creatures at the end of a cosmic age.

18 The battlefield, strewn with the dismembered chariots, horses, elephants, humans, mules and camels that had been cut to pieces by the Lord's disc weapon, shone like the gruesome playground of Lord Bhūtapati, giving pleasure to the wise.

19 Lord Kṛṣṇa then addressed Pauṇḍraka: My dear Pauṇḍraka, the very weapons you spoke of through your messenger, I now release unto you.

20 O fool, now I shall make you renounce My name, which you have falsely assumed. And I will certainly take shelter of you if I do not wish to fight you.

21 Having thus derided Pauṇḍraka, Lord Kṛṣṇa destroyed his chariot with His sharp arrows. The Lord then cut off his head with the Sudarśana disc, just as Lord Indra lops off a mountain peak with his thunderbolt weapon.

22 With His arrows, Lord Kṛṣṇa similarly severed Kāśirāja's head from his body, sending it flying into Kāśī city like a lotus flower thrown by the wind.

23 Having thus killed envious Pauṇḍraka and his ally, Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā. As He entered the city, the Siddhas of heaven chanted His immortal, nectarean glories.

24 By constantly meditating upon the Supreme Lord, Pauṇḍraka shattered all his material bonds. Indeed, by imitating Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance, O King, he ultimately became Kṛṣṇa conscious.

25 Seeing a head decorated with earrings lying at the gate of the royal palace, the people present were puzzled. Some of them asked, "What is this?" and others said, "It is a head, but whose is it?"

26 My dear King, when they recognized it as the head of their King the lord of Kāśī his queens, sons and other relatives, along with all the citizens of the city, began to cry pitifully: "Alas, we are killed! O my lord, my lord!"

27-28 After the King's son Sudakṣiṇa had performed the obligatory funeral rituals for his father, he resolved within his mind: "Only by killing my father's murderer can I avenge his death." Thus the charitable Sudakṣiṇa, together with his priests, began worshiping Lord Maheśvara with great attention.

29 Satisfied by the worship, the powerful Lord Śiva appeared in the sacred precinct of Avimukta and offered Sudakṣiṇa his choice of benedictions. The prince chose as his benediction a means to slay his father's killer.

30-31 Lord Śiva told him, "Accompanied by brāhmaṇas, serve the Dakṣiṇāgni fire the original priest following the injunctions of the abhicāra ritual. Then the Dakṣiṇāgni fire, together with many Pramathas, will fulfill your desire if you direct it against someone inimical to the

brāhmaṇas.” So instructed, Sudakṣiṇa strictly observed the ritualistic vows and invoked the abhicāra against Lord Kṛṣṇa.

32-33 Thereupon the fire rose up out of the altar pit, assuming the form of an extremely fearsome, naked person. The fiery creature’s beard and tuft of hair were like molten copper, and his eyes emitted blazing hot cinders. His face looked most frightful with its fangs and terrible arched and furrowed brows. As he licked the corners of his mouth with his tongue, the demon shook his flaming trident.

34 On legs as tall as palm trees, the monster raced toward Dvārakā in the company of ghostly spirits, shaking the ground and burning the world in all directions.

35 Seeing the approach of the fiery demon created by the abhicāra ritual, the residents of Dvārakā were all struck with fear, like animals terrified by a forest fire.

36 Distraught with fear, the people cried out to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was then playing at dice in the royal court: “Save us! Save us, O Lord of the three worlds, from this fire burning up the city!”

37 When Lord Kṛṣṇa heard the people’s agitation and saw that even His own men were disturbed, that most worthy giver of shelter simply laughed and told them, “Do not fear; I shall protect you.”

38 The almighty Lord, the internal and external witness of all, understood that the monster had been produced by Lord Śiva from the sacrificial fire. To defeat the demon, Kṛṣṇa dispatched His disc weapon, who was waiting at His side.

39 That Sudarśana, the disc weapon of Lord Mukunda, blazed forth like millions of suns. His effulgence blazed like the fire of universal annihilation, and with his heat he pained the sky, all the directions, heaven and earth, and also the fiery demon.

40 Frustrated by the power of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s weapon, O King, the fiery creature produced by black magic turned his face away and retreated. Created for violence, the demon then returned to Vārāṇasī, where he surrounded the city and then burned Sudakṣiṇa and his priests to death, even though Sudakṣiṇa was his creator.

41 Lord Viṣṇu’s disc also entered Vārāṇasī, in pursuit of the fiery demon, and proceeded to burn the city to the ground, including all its assembly halls and residential palaces with raised porches, its numerous marketplaces, gateways, watchtowers, warehouses and treasuries, and all the buildings housing elephants, horses, chariots and grains.

42 After burning down the entire city of Vārāṇasī, Lord Viṣṇu’s Sudarśana cakra returned to the side of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose actions are effortless.

43 Any mortal who recounts this heroic pastime of Lord Uttamaḥ-śloka’s, or who simply hears it attentively, will become freed from all sins.

SB 10.67: Lord Balarāma Slays Dvidida Gorilla

This chapter describes how Lord Baladeva enjoyed the company of the young girls of Vraja on Raivataka Mountain and killed the ape Dvidida there.

Narakāsura, a demon whom Lord Kṛṣṇa killed, had a friend named Dvidida, an ape. Dvidida wanted to avenge the death of his friend, so he set fire to the homes of the cowherds, devastated Lord Kṛṣṇa’s province of Ānarta and flooded coastal lands by churning the ocean’s

water with his mighty arms. The rascal then tore down the trees in the *āśramas* of great sages and even passed stool and urine on their sacrificial fires. He kidnapped men and women and imprisoned them in mountain caves, which he sealed off with boulders. After thus disrupting the entire land and polluting many young women of respectable families, Dvidida came upon Raivataka Mountain, where he found Lord Baladeva enjoying in the company of a bevy of attractive women. Ignoring Lord Baladeva, who was apparently intoxicated from drinking *vāruṇī* liquor, Dvidida displayed his anus to the women right in front of the Lord and further insulted them by making crude gestures with his eyebrows and passing stool and urine.

Dvidida's outrageous behavior angered Lord Baladeva, and He threw a stone at the ape. But Dvidida managed to dodge it. He then ridiculed Lord Baladeva and tugged at the women's dresses. Seeing this audacity, Lord Baladeva decided to kill Dvidida. Thus He took up His club and His plow weapon. Powerful Dvidida then armed himself by pulling up a *śāla* tree from the ground, and with this tree he struck the Lord on the head. Lord Baladeva, however, remained unmoved and smashed the tree trunk to pieces. Dvidida uprooted another tree, and yet another and another, until the forest was denuded. But although he struck Baladeva on the head with one tree after another, the Lord simply broke all the trees to pieces. Then the foolish ape started throwing a barrage of stones. Lord Baladeva crushed them all to powder, after which Dvidida charged the Lord and hit Him on the chest with his fists, infuriating Him. Putting aside His club and plow weapons, Lord Balarāma then struck Dvidida's throat and shoulder, at which point the ape vomited blood and fell down dead.

Having killed Dvidida, Lord Baladeva set off for Dvārakā as demigods and sages showered flowers from the sky and offered Him praises, prayers and obeisances.

1The glorious King Parīkṣit said: I wish to hear further about Śrī Balarāma, the unlimited and immeasurable Supreme Lord, whose activities are all astounding. What else did He do?

2ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: There was an ape named Dvidida who was a friend of Narakāsura's. This powerful Dvidida, the brother of Mainda, had been instructed by King Sugrīva.

3To avenge the death of his friend [Naraka], the ape Dvidida ravaged the land, setting fires that burned cities, villages, mines and cowherd dwellings.

4Once Dvidida tore up a number of mountains and used them to devastate all the neighboring kingdoms, especially the province of Ānarta, wherein dwelt his friend's killer, Lord Hari.

5Another time he entered the ocean and, with the strength of ten thousand elephants, churned up its water with his arms and thus submerged the coastal regions.

6The wicked ape tore down the trees in the hermitages of exalted sages and contaminated their sacrificial fires with his feces and urine.

7Just as a wasp imprisons smaller insects, he arrogantly threw both men and women into caves in a mountain valley and sealed the caves shut with boulders.

8Once, while Dvidida was thus engaged in harassing the neighboring kingdoms and polluting women of respectable families, he heard very sweet singing coming from Raivataka Mountain. So he went there.

9-10There he saw Śrī Balarāma, the Lord of the Yadus, adorned with a garland of lotuses and appearing most attractive in every limb. He was singing amidst a crowd of young women, and since He had drunk *vāruṇī* liquor, His eyes rolled as if He were intoxicated. His body shone

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brilliantly as He behaved like an elephant in rut.

11The mischievous ape climbed a tree branch and then revealed his presence by shaking the trees and making the sound kilakilā.

12When Lord Baladeva's consorts saw the ape's impudence, they began to laugh. They were, after all, young girls who were fond of joking and prone to silliness.

13Even as Lord Balarāma looked on, Dvidida insulted the girls by making odd gestures with his eyebrows, coming right in front of them, and showing them his anus.

14-15Angered, Lord Balarāma, the best of fighters, hurled a rock at him, but the cunning ape dodged the rock and grabbed the Lord's pot of liquor. Further infuriating Lord Balarāma by laughing and by ridiculing Him, wicked Dvidida then broke the pot and offended the Lord even more by pulling at the girls' clothing. Thus the powerful ape, puffed up with false pride, continued to insult Śrī Balarāma.

16Lord Balarāma saw the ape's rude behavior and thought of the disruptions he had created in the surrounding kingdoms. Thus the Lord angrily took up His club and His plow weapon, having decided to put His enemy to death.

17Mighty Dvidida also came forward to do battle. Uprooting a śāla tree with one hand, he rushed toward Balarāma and struck Him on the head with the tree trunk.

18But Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa remained as motionless as a mountain and simply grabbed the log as it fell upon His head. He then struck Dvidida with His club, named Sunanda.

19-21Struck on the skull by the Lord's club, Dvidida became brilliantly decorated by the outpour of blood, like a mountain beautified by red oxide. Ignoring the wound, Dvidida uprooted another tree, stripped it of leaves by brute force and struck the Lord again. Now enraged, Lord Balarāma shattered the tree into hundreds of pieces, upon which Dvidida grabbed yet another tree and furiously hit the Lord again. This tree, too, the Lord smashed into hundreds of pieces.

22Thus fighting the Lord, who again and again demolished the trees He was attacked with, Dvidida kept on uprooting trees from all sides until the forest was left treeless.

23The angry ape then released a rain of stones upon Lord Balarāma, but the wielder of the club easily pulverized them all.

24Dvidida, the most powerful of apes, now clenched his fists at the end of his palm-tree-sized arms, came before Lord Balarāma and beat his fists against the Lord's body.

25The furious Lord of the Yādavas then threw aside His club and plow and with His bare hands hammered a blow upon Dvidida's collarbone. The ape collapsed, vomiting blood.

26When he fell, O tiger among the Kurus, Raivataka Mountain shook, along with its cliffs and trees, like a wind-tossed boat at sea.

27In the heavens the demigods, perfect mystics and great sages cried out, "Victory to You! Obeisances to You! Excellent! Well done!" and showered flowers upon the Lord.

28Having thus killed Dvidida, who had disturbed the whole world, the Supreme Lord returned to His capital as the people along the way chanted His glories.

SB 10.68: The Marriage of Sāmba

This chapter describes how the Kauravas captured Sāmba and how Lord Baladeva dragged the city of Hastināpura to secure his release.

Sāmba, the darling son of Jāmbavatī, kidnapped Duryodhana's daughter Lakṣmaṇā from her *svayamvara* assembly. In response, the Kauravas joined forces to arrest him. After Sāmba held them off single-handedly for some time, six warriors of the Kaurava party deprived him of his chariot, broke his bow to pieces, seized him, tied him up and brought both him and Lakṣmaṇā back to Hastināpura.

When King Ugrasena heard of Sāmba's capture, he called upon the Yādavas to retaliate. Angered, they prepared to fight, but Lord Balarāma pacified them, hoping to avoid a quarrel between the Kuru and Yadu dynasties. The Lord set off for Hastināpura, together with several *brāhmaṇas* and Yādava elders.

The party of Yādavas set up camp in a garden outside the city, and Lord Balarāma sent Uddhava to ascertain King Dhṛtarāṣṭra's frame of mind. When Uddhava appeared in the Kaurava court and announced Lord Balarāma's arrival, the Kauravas worshiped Uddhava and went to see the Lord, taking auspicious items to offer Him. The Kauravas honored Balarāma with rituals and items of respect, but when He conveyed Ugrasena's demand that they release Sāmba, they became angry. "It is very amazing," they said, "that the Yādavas are trying to give orders to the Kauravas. This is like a shoe trying to climb atop one's head. It is from us alone that the Yādavas have obtained their royal thrones, and yet now they are presuming themselves our equals. No longer will we extend to them royal privileges."

Having said this, the Kaurava nobles went inside their city, and Lord Baladeva decided that the only way to deal with those who are maddened by false prestige is through brute punishment. Thus He took His plow weapon and, intending to rid the earth of all the Kurus, began dragging Hastināpura toward the Ganges. Seeing that their city was in imminent danger of falling into the river, the terrified Kauravas quickly brought Sāmba and Lakṣmaṇā before Lord Balarāma and began to glorify Him. Then they prayed, "O Lord, please forgive us, who were so ignorant of Your true identity."

Baladeva assured the Kauravas He would not harm them, and Duryodhana presented various wedding gifts to his daughter and new son-in-law. Then Duryodhana, extending his greetings to the Yādavas, requested Lord Baladeva to return to Dvārakā with Sāmba and Lakṣmaṇā.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Jāmbavatī's son Sāmba, ever victorious in battle, kidnapped Duryodhana's daughter Lakṣmaṇā from her *svayamvara* ceremony.

2The angry Kurus said: This ill-behaved boy has offended us, forcibly kidnapping our unmarried daughter against her will.

3Arrest this ill-behaved Sāmba! What will the Vṛṣṇis do? By our grace they are ruling land that we have granted them.

4If the Vṛṣṇis come here when they learn that their son has been captured, we will break their pride. Thus they'll become subdued, like bodily senses brought under strict control.

5After saying this and having their plan sanctioned by the senior member of the Kuru dynasty, Karṇa, Śāla, Bhūri, Yajñaketu and Suyodhana set out to attack Sāmba.

6Seeing Duryodhana and his companions rushing toward him, Sāmba, the great chariot-fighter,

took up his splendid bow and stood alone like a lion.

7Determined to capture him, the angry bowmen led by Karṇa shouted at Sāmba, ‘Stand and fight! Stand and fight!’ They came straight for him and showered him with arrows.

8O best of the Kurus, as Kṛṣṇa’s son Sāmba was being unjustly harassed by the Kurus, that darling of the Yadu dynasty did not tolerate their attack, any more than a lion would tolerate an attack by puny animals.

9-10Twanging his wonderful bow, heroic Sāmba struck with arrows the six warriors headed by Karṇa. He pierced the six chariots with as many arrows, each team of four horses with four arrows, and each chariot driver with a single arrow, and he similarly struck the great bowmen who commanded the chariots. The enemy warriors congratulated Sāmba for this display of prowess.

11But they forced him down from his chariot, and thereupon four of them struck his four horses, one of them struck down his chariot driver, and another broke his bow.

12Having deprived Sāmba of his chariot during the fight, the Kuru warriors tied him up with great difficulty and then returned victorious to their city, taking the young boy and their princess.

13O King, when the Yādavas heard news of this from Śrī Nārada, they became angry. Urged on by King Ugrasena, they prepared for war against the Kurus.

14-15Lord Balarāma, however, cooled the tempers of the Vṛṣṇi heroes, who had already put on their armor. He who purifies the age of quarrel did not want a quarrel between the Kurus and Vṛṣṇis. Thus, accompanied by brāhmaṇas and family elders, He went to Hastināpura on His chariot, which was as effulgent as the sun. As He went, He appeared like the moon surrounded by the ruling planets.

16Upon arriving at Hastināpura, Lord Balarāma remained in a garden outside the city and sent Uddhava ahead to probe King Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s intentions.

17After he had offered proper respects to the son of Ambikā [Dhṛtarāṣṭra] and to Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Bāhlika and Duryodhana, Uddhava informed them that Lord Balarāma had arrived.

18Overjoyed to hear that Balarāma, their dearest friend, had come, they first honored Uddhava and then went forth to meet the Lord, carrying auspicious offerings in their hands.

19They approached Lord Balarāma and worshiped Him with gifts of cows and arghya, as was fitting. Those among the Kurus who understood His true power bowed down to Him, touching their heads to the ground.

20After both parties had heard that their relatives were doing well and both had inquired into each other’s welfare and health, Lord Balarāma forthrightly spoke to the Kurus as follows.

21[Lord Balarāma said:] King Ugrasena is our master and the ruler of kings. With undivided attention you should hear what he has ordered you to do, and then you should do it at once.

22[King Ugrasena has said:] Even though by irreligious means several of you defeated a single opponent who follows the religious codes, still I am tolerating this for the sake of unity among family members.

23Upon hearing these words of Lord Baladeva’s, which were full of potency, courage and

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strength and were appropriate to His transcendental power, the Kauravas became furious and spoke as follows.

24[The Kuru nobles said:] Oh, how amazing this is! The force of time is indeed insurmountable: a lowly shoe now wants to climb on the head that bears the royal crown.

25It is because these Vṛṣṇis are bound to us by marital ties that we have granted them equality, allowing them to share our beds, seats and meals. Indeed, it is we who have given them their royal thrones.

26Only because we looked the other way could they enjoy the pair of yak-tail fans and the conchshell, white umbrella, throne, and royal bed.

27No longer should the Yadus be allowed to use these royal symbols, which now cause trouble for those who gave them, like milk fed to poisonous snakes. Having prospered by our grace, these Yādavas have now lost all shame and are daring to command us!

28How would even Indra dare usurp anything that Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Arjuna or the other Kurus have not given him? It would be like a lamb claiming the lion's kill.

29Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: O best of the Bhāratas, after the arrogant Kurus, thoroughly puffed up by the opulence of their high birth and relations, had spoken these harsh words to Lord Balarāma, they turned and went back to their city.

30Seeing the bad character of the Kurus and hearing their nasty words, the infallible Lord Balarāma became filled with rage. His countenance frightful to behold, He laughed repeatedly and spoke as follows.

31[Lord Balarāma said:] “Clearly the many passions of these scoundrels have made them so proud that they do not want peace. Then let them be pacified by physical punishment, as animals are with a stick.

32-33“Ah, only gradually was I able to calm the furious Yadus and Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was also enraged. Desiring peace for these Kauravas, I came here. But they are so dull-headed, fond of quarrel and mischievous by nature that they have repeatedly disrespected Me. Out of conceit they dared to address Me with harsh words!

34“King Ugrasena, the lord of the Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas, is not fit to command, when Indra and other planetary rulers obey his orders?

35“That same Kṛṣṇa who occupies the Sudharmā assembly hall and for His enjoyment took the pārijāta tree from the immortal demigodsthat very Kṛṣṇa is indeed not fit to sit on a royal throne?

36“The goddess of fortune herself, ruler of the entire universe, worships His feet. And the master of the goddess of fortune does not deserve the paraphernalia of a mortal king?

37“The dust of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, which is the source of holiness for all places of pilgrimage, is worshiped by all the great demigods. The principal deities of all planets are engaged in His service, and they consider themselves most fortunate to take the dust of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa on their crowns. Great demigods like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, and even the goddess of fortune and I, are simply parts of His spiritual identity, and we also carefully carry that dust on our heads. And still Kṛṣṇa is not fit to use the royal insignia or even sit on the royal throne?

38“We Vṛṣṇis enjoy only whatever small parcel of land the Kurus allow us? And we are indeed

shoes, whereas the Kurus are the head?

39“Just see how these puffed-up Kurus are intoxicated with their so-called power, like ordinary drunken men! What actual ruler, with the power to command, would tolerate their foolish, nasty words?

40“Today I shall rid the earth of the Kauravas!” declared the furious Balarāma. Thus He took His plow weapon and rose up as if to set the three worlds ablaze.

41The Lord angrily dug up Hastināpura with the tip of His plow and began to drag it, intending to cast the entire city into the Ganges.

42-43Seeing that their city was tumbling about like a raft at sea as it was being dragged away, and that it was about to fall into the Ganges, the Kauravas became terrified. To save their lives they approached the Lord for shelter, taking their families with them. Placing Sāmba and Lakṣmaṇā in front, they joined their palms in supplication.

44[The Kauravas said:] O Rāma, Rāma, foundation of everything! We know nothing of Your power. Please excuse our offense, for we are ignorant and misguided.

45You alone cause the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the cosmos, and of You there is no prior cause. Indeed, O Lord, authorities say that the worlds are mere playthings for You as You perform Your pastimes.

46O unlimited one of a thousand heads, as Your pastime You carry this earthly globe upon one of Your heads. At the time of annihilation You withdraw the entire universe within Your body and, remaining all alone, lie down to rest.

47Your anger is meant for instructing everyone; it is not a manifestation of hatred or envy. O Supreme Lord, You sustain the pure mode of goodness, and You become angry only to maintain and protect this world.

48We bow down to You, O Soul of all beings, O wielder of all potencies, O tireless maker of the universe! Offering You obeisances, we take shelter of You.

49Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus propitiated by the Kurus, whose city was trembling and who were surrendering to Him in great distress, Lord Balarāma became very calm and kindly disposed toward them. “Do not be afraid,” He said, and took away their fear.

50-51Duryodhana, being very affectionate to his daughter, gave as her dowry 1,200 sixty-year-old elephants, 120,000 horses, 6,000 golden chariots shining like the sun, and 1,000 maidservants with jeweled lockets on their necks.

52The Supreme Lord, chief of the Yādavas, accepted all these gifts and then departed with His son and daughter-in-law as His well-wishers bid Him farewell.

53Then Lord Halāyudha entered His city [Dvārakā] and met His relatives, whose hearts were all bound to Him in loving attachment. In the assembly hall He reported to the Yadu leaders everything about His dealings with the Kurus.

54Even today the city of Hastināpura is visibly elevated on its southern side along the Ganges, thus showing the signs of Lord Balarāma’s prowess.

SB 10.69: Nārada Muni Visits Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Palaces in Dvārakā

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This chapter relates how Nārada Muni was amazed to see the household pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and how he offered prayers to the Lord.

After killing the demon Naraka, Lord Kṛṣṇa had simultaneously married sixteen thousand maidens, and sage Nārada wanted to observe the Lord's diverse activities in this unique family situation. Thus he went to Dvārakā. Nārada entered one of the sixteen thousand palaces and saw Goddess Rukmiṇī personally rendering menial service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, despite her being in the company of thousands of maidservants. As soon as Lord Kṛṣṇa noticed Nārada, He got up from His bed, offered obeisances to the sage and seated him on His own seat. Then the Lord bathed Nārada's feet and sprinkled the water on His own head. Such was the exemplary behavior of the Lord.

After conversing with the Lord for a short while, Nārada went to another of His palaces, where the sage saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa playing at dice with His queen and Uddhava. Going from there to another palace, he found Lord Kṛṣṇa coddling His infant children. In another palace he saw Him preparing to take a bath; in another, performing fire sacrifices, in another, feeding *brāhmaṇas*; and in another, eating the remnants left by *brāhmaṇas*. In one palace the Lord was performing noontime rituals; in another, quietly chanting the *Gāyatrīmantra*; in another, sleeping on His bed; in another, consulting with His ministers; and in yet another, playing in the water with His female companions. Somewhere the Lord was giving charity to *brāhmaṇas*, in another place He was joking and laughing with His consort, in yet another place He was meditating on the Supersoul, somewhere He was serving His spiritual masters, in another place He was arranging for the marriages of His sons and daughters, somewhere else He was going out to hunt animals, and elsewhere He was moving about in disguise to find out what the citizens were thinking.

Having seen all this, Nārada addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa: “Only because I have served Your lotus feet can I understand these varieties of Your Yoga-māyā potency, which ordinary living beings bewildered by illusion cannot begin to perceive. Thus I am most fortunate, and I simply desire to travel all over the three worlds chanting the glories of Your pastimes, which purify all the worlds.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa asked Nārada not to be confused by his vision of the Lord's transcendental opulences, and He described to him the purposes of His appearances in this world. He then honored the sage properly, according to religious principles, and Nārada departed, continuously meditating on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

1-6 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing that Lord Kṛṣṇa had killed Narakāśura and had alone married many brides, Nārada Muni desired to see the Lord in this situation. He thought, “It is quite amazing that in a single body Lord Kṛṣṇa simultaneously married sixteen thousand women, each in a separate palace.” Thus the sage of the demigods eagerly went to Dvārakā.

7-8 In the city of Dvārakā was a beautiful private quarter worshiped by the planetary rulers. This district, where the demigod Viśvakarmā had shown all his divine skill, was the residential area of Lord Hari, and thus it was gorgeously decorated by the sixteen thousand palaces of Lord Kṛṣṇa's queens. Nārada Muni entered one of these immense palaces.

9-12 Supporting the palace were coral pillars decoratively inlaid with vaidūrya gems. Sapphires bedecked the walls, and the floors glowed with perpetual brilliance. In that palace Tvaṣṭā had arranged canopies with hanging strands of pearls; there were also seats and beds fashioned of ivory and precious jewels. In attendance were many well-dressed maidservants bearing lockets on their necks, and also armor-clad guards with turbans, fine uniforms and jeweled earrings.

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The glow of numerous jewel-studded lamps dispelled all darkness in the palace. My dear King, on the ornate ridges of the roof danced loudly crying peacocks, who saw the fragrant aguru incense escaping through the holes of the latticed windows and mistook it for a cloud.

13In that palace the learned brāhmaṇa saw the Lord of the Sātvatas, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, together with His wife, who fanned Him with a gold-handled yak-tail fan. She personally served Him in this way, even though she was constantly attended by a thousand maidservants equal to her in personal character, beauty, youth and fine dress.

14The Supreme Lord is the greatest upholder of religious principles. Thus when He noticed Nārada, He rose at once from Goddess Śrī's bed, bowed His crowned head at Nārada's feet and, joining His palms, had the sage sit in His own seat.

15The Lord bathed Nārada's feet and then put the water on His own head. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme spiritual authority of the universe and the master of His devotees, it was proper for Him to behave in this way, for His name is Brahmaṇya-deva, "the Lord who favors the brāhmaṇas." Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa honored the sage Nārada by bathing his feet, even though the water that bathes the Lord's own feet becomes the Ganges, the ultimate holy shrine.

16After fully worshiping the great sage of the demigods according to Vedic injunctions, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is Himself the original sage Nārāyaṇa, the friend of Nara, conversed with Nārada, and the Lord's measured speech was as sweet as nectar. Finally the Lord asked Nārada, "What may We do for you, Our lord and master?"

17Śrī Nārada said: O almighty Lord, it is no surprise that You, the ruler of all worlds, show friendship for all people and yet subdue the envious. As we well know, You descend by Your sweet will in order to bestow the highest good on this universe by maintaining and protecting it. Thus Your glories are widely sung.

18Now I have seen Your feet, which grant liberation to Your devotees, which even Lord Brahmā and other great personalities of unfathomable intelligence can only meditate upon within their hearts, and which those who have fallen into the well of material existence resort to for deliverance. Please favor me so that I may constantly think of You as I travel about. Please grant Me the power to remember You.

19Nārada then entered the palace of another of Lord Kṛṣṇa's wives, my dear King. He was eager to witness the spiritual potency possessed by the master of all masters of mystic power.

20-22There he saw the Lord playing at dice with His beloved consort and His friend Uddhava. Lord Kṛṣṇa worshiped Nārada by standing up, offering him a seat, and so on, and then, as if He did not know, asked him, "When did you arrive? What can needy persons like Us do for those who are full in themselves? In any case, My dear brāhmaṇa, please make My life auspicious." Thus addressed, Nārada was astonished. He simply stood up silently and went to another palace.

23This time Nārada jī saw that Lord Kṛṣṇa was engaged as an affectionate father petting His small children. From there he entered another palace and saw Lord Kṛṣṇa preparing to take His bath.

24In one place the Lord was offering oblations into the sacrificial fires; in another, worshiping through the five mahā-yajṣas; in another, feeding brāhmaṇas; and in yet another, eating the remnants of food left by brāhmaṇas.

25Somewhere Lord Kṛṣṇa was observing the rituals for worship at sunset by refraining from

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speech and quietly chanting the Gāyatrī mantra, and elsewhere He was moving about with sword and shield in the areas set aside for sword practice.

26In one place Lord Gadāgraja was riding on horses, elephants and chariots, and in another place He was resting on His bed while bards recited His glories.

27Somewhere He was consulting with royal ministers like Uddhava, and somewhere else He was enjoying in the water, surrounded by many society girls and other young women.

28Somewhere He was giving well-decorated cows to exalted brāhmaṇas, and elsewhere he was listening to the auspicious narration of epic histories and Purāṇas.

29Somewhere Lord Kṛṣṇa was found enjoying the company of a particular wife by exchanging joking words with her. Somewhere else He was found engaged, along with His wife, in religious ritualistic functions. Somewhere Kṛṣṇa was found engaged in matters of economic development, and somewhere else He was found enjoying family life according to the regulative principles of the śāstras.

30Somewhere He was sitting alone, meditating on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to material nature, and somewhere He was rendering menial service to His elders, offering them desirable things and reverential worship.

31In one place He was planning battles in consultation with some of His advisers, and in another place He was making peace. Somewhere Lord Keśava and Lord Balarāma were together pondering the welfare of the pious.

32Nārada saw Lord Kṛṣṇa engaged in getting His sons and daughters married to suitable brides and bridegrooms at the appropriate time, and the marriage ceremonies were being performed with great pomp.

33Nārada observed how Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of all yoga masters, arranged to send away His daughters and sons-in-law, and also to receive them home again, at the time of great holiday celebrations. All the citizens were astonished to see these celebrations.

34Somewhere He was worshiping all the demigods with elaborate sacrifices, and elsewhere He was fulfilling His religious obligations by doing public welfare work, such as the construction of wells, public parks and monasteries.

35In another place He was on a hunting expedition. Mounted on His Sindhī horse and accompanied by the most heroic of the Yadus, He was killing animals meant for offering in sacrifice.

36Somewhere Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of mystic power, was moving about in disguise among the homes of ministers and other citizens in order to understand what each of them was thinking.

37Having thus seen this display of the Lord's Yoga-māyā, Nārada mildly laughed and then addressed Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, who was adopting the behavior of a human being.

38[Nārada said:] Now we understand Your mystic potencies, which are difficult to comprehend, even for great mystics, O Supreme Soul, master of all mystic power. Only by serving Your feet have I been able to perceive Your powers.

39O Lord, please give me Your leave. I will wander about the worlds, which are flooded with Your fame, loudly singing about Your pastimes, which purify the universe.

40The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O brāhmaṇa, I am the speaker of religion, its performer and sanctioner. I observe religious principles to teach them to the world, My child, so do not be disturbed.

41Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus in every palace Nārada saw the Lord in His same personal form, executing the transcendental principles of religion that purify those engaged in household affairs.

42Having repeatedly seen the vast mystic display of Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose power is unlimited, the sage was amazed and filled with wonder.

43Lord Kṛṣṇa greatly honored Nārada, faithfully presenting him with gifts related to economic prosperity, sense gratification and religious duties. Thus fully satisfied, the sage departed, constantly remembering the Lord.

44In this way Lord Nārāyaṇa imitated the ways of ordinary humans, manifesting His divine potencies for the benefit of all beings. Thus He enjoyed, dear King, in the company of His sixteen thousand exalted consorts, who served the Lord with their shy, affectionate glances and laughter.

45Lord Hari is the ultimate cause of universal creation, maintenance and destruction. My dear King, anyone who chants about, hears about or simply appreciates the extraordinary activities He performed in this world, which are impossible to imitate, will surely develop devotion for the Supreme Lord, the bestower of liberation.

SB 10.70: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Daily Activities

This chapter describes Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's daily activities and two proposals placed before Himone by a messenger from Dvārakā and another by the sage Nārada.

In the early hours of the morning, Lord Kṛṣṇa would rise from bed and bathe Himself in clear water. After executing the dawn rituals and other religious duties, He would offer oblations into the sacred fire, chant the Gāyatrī *mantra*, worship and pay tribute to the demigods, sages and forefathers, and offer respects to learned *brāhmaṇas*. Then He would touch auspicious substances, decorate Himself with celestial ornaments and gratify His subjects by giving them whatever they desired.

The Lord's chariot driver, Dārūka, would bring His chariot, and the Lord would mount it and drive to the royal assembly hall. When He would take His seat in the assembly, surrounded by the Yādavas, He would appear like the moon surrounded by the circle of stars called *nakṣatras*. Bards would recite His praises to the accompaniment of drums, cymbals, *vīṇās* and other instruments.

On one occasion, the doorkeepers escorted a messenger into the assembly hall. The messenger offered prostrated obeisances to the Lord and then, standing with joined palms, addressed Him: "O Lord, Jarāsandha has captured twenty thousand kings and is holding them prisoner. Please do something, for these kings are all Your surrendered devotees."

Just at that moment Nārada Muni appeared. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all the members of the assembly stood up and offered obeisances to Nārada by bowing their heads. The sage accepted a seat, and then Lord Kṛṣṇa gently questioned him: "Since you travel all over the universe, please inform Us what the Pāṇḍava brothers are planning to do." Nārada then praised the Supreme Lord and replied, "King Yudhiṣṭhira desires to perform the Rājasūya sacrifice. For this he requests Your sanction and presence. Many demigods and illustrious kings will come just to

see You.”

Understanding that the Yādavas wanted Him to defeat Jarāsandha, Lord Kṛṣṇa asked His wise minister Uddhava to determine which of the two matters at hand—the defeat of Jarāsandha or the Rājasūya sacrifice—should be attended to first.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: As dawn approached, the wives of Lord Mādhava, each embraced around the neck by her husband, cursed the crowing roosters. The ladies were disturbed that now they would be separated from Him.

2 The bees’ buzzing, caused by the fragrant breeze from the pārijāta garden, roused the birds from sleep. And when the birds began to sing loudly, they woke Lord Kṛṣṇa like court poets reciting His glories.

3 Lying in her beloved’s arms, Queen Vaidarbhī did not like this most auspicious hour, for it meant she would lose His embrace.

4-5 Lord Mādhava would rise during the brāhma-muhūrta period and touch water. With a clear mind He would then meditate upon Himself, the single, self-luminous, unequaled and infallible Supreme Truth, known as Brahman, who by His very nature ever dispels all contamination, and who through His personal energies, which cause the creation and destruction of this universe, manifests His own pure and blissful existence.

6 That most saintly of personalities would then bathe in sanctified water, dress Himself in lower and upper garments and perform the entire sequence of prescribed rituals, beginning with worship at dawn. After offering oblations into the sacred fire, Lord Kṛṣṇa would silently chant the Gāyatrī mantra.

7-9 Each day the Lord worshiped the rising sun and propitiated the demigods, sages and forefathers, who are all His expansions. The self-possessed Lord would then carefully worship His elders and the brāhmaṇas. To those well-attired brāhmaṇas He would offer herds of tame and peaceful cows with gold-plated horns and pearl necklaces. These cows were also dressed in fine cloth, and the fronts of their hooves were plated with silver. Providers of abundant milk, they had each given birth only once and were accompanied by their calves. Daily the Lord gave many groups of 13,084 cows to the learned brāhmaṇas, together with linen, deerskins and sesame seeds.

10 Lord Kṛṣṇa would offer obeisances to the cows, brāhmaṇas and demigods, His elders and spiritual masters, and all living beings—all of whom are expansions of His supreme personality. Then He would touch auspicious things.

11 He would decorate His body, the very ornament of human society, with His own special clothes and jewelry and with divine flower garlands and ointments.

12 He would then look at ghee, a mirror, the cows and bulls, the brāhmaṇas and the demigods and see to it that the members of all the social classes living in the palace and throughout the city were satisfied with gifts. After this He would greet His ministers, gratifying them by fulfilling all their desires.

13 After first distributing flower garlands, pān and sandalwood paste to the brāhmaṇas, He would give these gifts to His friends, ministers and wives, and finally He would partake of them Himself.

14 By then the Lord’s driver would have brought His supremely wonderful chariot, yoked with

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Sugrīva and His other horses. His charioteer would bow down to the Lord and then stand before Him.

15 Holding on to His charioteer's hands, Lord Kṛṣṇa would mount the chariot, together with Sātyaki and Uddhava, just like the sun rising over the easternmost mountain.

16 The palace women would look upon Lord Kṛṣṇa with shy, loving glances, and thus He would get free from them only with difficulty. He would then set off, His smiling face captivating their minds.

17 The Lord, attended by all the Vṛṣṇis, would enter the Sudharmā assembly hall, which protects those who enter it from the six waves of material life, dear King.

18 As the almighty Supreme Lord would seat Himself upon His exalted throne there in the assembly hall, He shone with His unique effulgence, illuminating all the quarters of space. Surrounded by the Yadus, lions among men, that best of the Yadus appeared like the moon amidst many stars.

19 And there, O King, jesters would entertain the Lord by displaying various comic moods, expert entertainers would perform for Him, and female dancers would dance energetically.

20 These performers would dance and sing to the sounds of mṛdaṅgas, vīṇās, murajas, flutes, cymbals and conchshells, while professional poets, chroniclers and panegyrists would recite the Lord's glories.

21 Some brāhmaṇas sitting in that assembly hall would fluently chant Vedic mantras, while others recounted stories of past kings of pious renown.

22 Once a certain person arrived in the assembly, O King, who had never been seen there before. The doorkeepers announced him to the Lord and then escorted him inside.

23 That person bowed down to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and with joined palms he described to the Lord how a number of kings were suffering because Jarāsandha had imprisoned them.

24 Twenty thousand kings who had refused to submit absolutely to Jarāsandha during his world conquest had been forcibly imprisoned by him in the fortress named Girivraja.

25 The kings said [as related through their messenger]: O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, O immeasurable Soul, destroyer of fear for those surrendered to You! Despite our separatist attitude, we have come to You for shelter out of fear of material existence.

26 People in this world are always engaged in sinful activities and are thus bewildered about their real duty, which is to worship You according to Your commandments. This activity would truly bring them good fortune. Let us offer our obeisances unto the all-powerful Lord, who appears as time and suddenly cuts down one's stubborn hope for a long life in this world.

27 You are the predominating Lord of the universe and have descended into this world with Your personal power to protect the saintly and suppress the wicked. We cannot understand, O Lord, how anyone can transgress Your law and still continue to enjoy the fruits of his work.

28 O Lord, with this corpselike body, always full of fear, we bear the burden of the relative happiness of kings, which is just like a dream. Thus we have rejected the real happiness of the soul, which comes by rendering selfless service to You. Being so very wretched, we simply suffer in this life under the spell of Your illusory energy.

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29Therefore, since Your feet relieve the sorrow of those who surrender to them, please release us prisoners from the shackles of karma, manifest as the King of Magadha. Wielding alone the prowess of ten thousand maddened elephants, he has locked us up in his house just as a lion captures sheep.

30O wielder of the disc! Your strength is unlimited, and thus seventeen times You crushed Jarāsandha in battle. But then, absorbed in human affairs, You allowed him to defeat You once. Now he is so filled with pride that he dares to torment us, Your subjects. O unconquerable one, please rectify this situation.

31The messenger continued: This is the message of the kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha, who all hanker for Your audience, having surrendered to Your feet. Please bestow good fortune on these poor souls.

32Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the kings' messenger had thus spoken, the sage of the demigods, Nārada, suddenly appeared. Bearing a mass of golden matted locks on his head, the supremely effulgent sage entered like the brilliant sun.

33Lord Kṛṣṇa is the worshipable master of even planetary rulers like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, yet as soon as He saw that Nārada Muni had arrived, He joyfully stood up along with His ministers and secretaries to receive the great sage and offer His respectful obeisances by bowing His head.

34After Nārada had accepted the seat offered to him, Lord Kṛṣṇa honored the sage according to scriptural injunctions and, gratifying him with His reverence, spoke the following truthful and pleasing words.

35[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] It is certain that today the three worlds have attained freedom from all fear, for that is the influence of such a great personality as you, who travel at will throughout all the worlds.

36There is nothing unknown to you within God's creation. Therefore please tell Us what the Pāṇḍavas intend to do.

37Śrī Nārada said: I have seen many times the insurmountable power of Your Māyā, O almighty one, by which You bewilder even the creator of the universe, Brahmā. O all-encompassing Lord, it does not surprise me that You disguise Yourself by Your own energies while moving among the created beings, as a fire covers its own light with smoke.

38Who can properly understand Your purpose? With Your material energy You expand and also withdraw this creation, which thus appears to have substantial existence. Obeisances to You, whose transcendental position is inconceivable.

39The living being caught in the cycle of birth and death does not know how he can be delivered from the material body, which brings him so much trouble. But You, the Supreme Lord, descend to this world in various personal forms, and by performing Your pastimes You illumine the soul's path with the blazing torch of Your fame. Therefore I surrender unto You.

40Nonetheless, O Supreme Truth playing the part of a human being, I shall tell You what Your devotee Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, the son of Your father's sister, intends to do.

41Desiring unrivaled sovereignty, King Yudhiṣṭhira intends to worship You with the greatest fire sacrifice, the Rājasūya. Please bless his endeavor.

42O Lord, exalted demigods and glorious kings, eager to see You, will all come to that best of

sacrifices.

43O Lord, even outcastes are purified by hearing and chanting Your glories and meditating upon You, the Absolute Truth. What then to speak of those who see and touch You?

44My dear Lord, You are the symbol of everything auspicious. Your transcendental name and fame is spread like a canopy all over the universe, including the higher, middle and lower planetary systems. The transcendental water that washes Your lotus feet is known in the higher planetary systems as the Mandākinī River, in the lower planetary systems as the Bhogavatī and in this earthly planetary system as the Ganges. This sacred, transcendental water flows throughout the entire universe, purifying wherever it goes.

45Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When His supporters, the Yādavas, objected to this proposal out of eagerness to defeat Jarāsandha, Lord Keśava turned to His servant Uddhava and, smiling, addressed him with fine words.

46The Personality of Godhead said: You are indeed Our best eye and closest friend, for you know perfectly the relative value of various kinds of counsel. Therefore please tell Us what should be done in this situation. We trust your judgment and shall do as you say.

47[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus requested by his master, who, though omniscient, acted as if perplexed, Uddhava took this order upon his head and replied as follows.

SB 10.71: The Lord Travels to Indraprastha

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa followed Uddhava's advice and went to Indraprastha, where the Pāṇḍavas celebrated His arrival with great festivity.

Wise Uddhava, knowing Lord Kṛṣṇa's inner desire, advised the Lord as follows: "By conquering all directions and then performing the Rājasūya sacrifice, King Yudhiṣṭhira will fulfill all his purposesdefeating Jarāsandha, protecting those who have taken shelter of You, and executing the Rājasūya-yajña. Thus the Yādavas' powerful enemy will be destroyed and the imprisoned kings freed, and both deeds will glorify You.

"King Jarāsandha can be killed only by Bhīma, and since Jarāsandha is very devoted to the *brāhmaṇas*, Bhīma should disguise himself as a *brāhmaṇa*, go to Jarāsandha and beg a fight from him. Then, in Your presence, Bhīma will defeat the demon."

Nārada Muni, the Yādava elders and Lord Kṛṣṇa praised Uddhava's plan, and Lord Kṛṣṇa proceeded to mount His chariot and head for Indraprastha, followed by His devoted queens. Soon Lord Kṛṣṇa arrived in that city. Hearing of the Lord's arrival, King Yudhiṣṭhira immediately came out of the city to greet Him. Yudhiṣṭhira repeatedly embraced Lord Kṛṣṇa, losing external consciousness in his ecstasy. Then Bhīmasena, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva and others each embraced or bowed down to Him, as was appropriate.

After Lord Kṛṣṇa had properly greeted everyone, He entered the city as a fanfare of many musical instruments played and reverential hymns were chanted. The women of the city scattered flowers down from the rooftops, remarking on the extreme good fortune of the Lord's queens.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the royal palace and offered respects to Queen Kuntīdevī, who embraced her nephew, and Draupadī and Subhadrā offered obeisances to the Lord. Kuntīdevī then requested Draupadī to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa's wives.

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The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, gratified King Yudhiṣṭhira by remaining there for some months. During this stay He enjoyed strolling here and there. He would drive on chariots with Arjuna, followed by many warriors and soldiers.

1 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus heard the statements of Devarṣi Nārada, and understanding the opinions of both the assembly and Lord Kṛṣṇa, the great-minded Uddhava began to speak.

2 Śrī Uddhava said: O Lord, as the sage advised, You should help Your cousin fulfill his plan for performing the Rājasūya sacrifice, and You should also protect the kings who are begging for Your shelter.

3 Only one who has conquered all opponents in every direction can perform the Rājasūya sacrifice, O almighty one. Thus, in my opinion, conquering Jarāsandha will serve both purposes.

4 By this decision there will be great gain for us, and You will save the kings. Thus, Govinda, You will be glorified.

5 The invincible King Jarāsandha is as strong as ten thousand elephants. Indeed, other powerful warriors cannot defeat him. Only Bhīma is equal to him in strength.

6 He will be defeated in a match of single chariots, not when he is with his hundred military divisions. Now, Jarāsandha is so devoted to brahminical culture that he never refuses requests from brāhmaṇas.

7 Bhīma should go to him disguised as a brāhmaṇa and beg charity. Thus he will obtain single combat with Jarāsandha, and in Your presence Bhīma will no doubt kill him.

8 Even Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva act only as Your instruments in cosmic creation and annihilation, which are ultimately done by You, the Supreme Lord, in Your invisible aspect of time.

9 In their homes, the godly wives of the imprisoned kings sing of Your noble deeds about how You will kill their husbands' enemy and deliver them. The gopīs also sing Your glories: how You killed the enemy of the elephant king, Gajendra; the enemy of Sīta, daughter of Janaka; and the enemies of Your own parents as well. So also do the sages who have obtained Your shelter glorify You, as do we ourselves.

10 Kṛṣṇa, the killing of Jarāsandha, which is certainly a reaction of his past sins, will bring immense benefit. Indeed, it will make possible the sacrificial ceremony You desire.

11 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Devarṣi Nārada, the Yadu elders and Lord Kṛṣṇa all welcomed Uddhava's proposal, which was entirely auspicious and infallible.

12 The almighty Personality of Godhead, the son of Devakī, begged His superiors for permission to leave. Then He ordered His servants, headed by Dāruka and Jaitra, to prepare for departure.

13 O slayer of enemies, after He had arranged for the departure of His wives, children and baggage and taken leave of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and King Ugrasena, Lord Kṛṣṇa mounted His chariot, which had been brought by His driver. It flew a flag marked with the emblem of Garuḍa.

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14As the vibrations resounding from mṛdaṅgas, bherīs, kettledrums, conchshells and gomukhas filled the sky in all directions, Lord Kṛṣṇa set out on His journey. He was accompanied by the chief officers of His corps of chariots, elephants, infantry and cavalry and surrounded on all sides by His fierce personal guard.

15Lord Acyuta's faithful wives, along with their children, followed the Lord on golden palanquins carried by powerful men. The queens were adorned with fine clothing, ornaments, fragrant oils and flower garlands, and they were surrounded on all sides by soldiers carrying swords and shields in their hands.

16On all sides proceeded finely adorned women-attendants of the royal household, as well as courtesans. They rode on palanquins and camels, bulls and buffalo, donkeys, mules, bullock carts and elephants. Their conveyances were fully loaded with grass tents, blankets, clothes and other items for the trip.

17The Lord's army boasted royal umbrellas, cāmara fans and huge flagpoles with waving banners. During the day the sun's rays reflected brightly from the soldiers' fine weapons, jewelry, helmets and armor. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa's army, noisy with shouts and clatter, appeared like an ocean stirring with agitated waves and timiṅgila fish.

18Honored by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the chief of the Yadus, Nārada Muni bowed down to the Lord. All of Nārada's senses were satisfied by his meeting with Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus, having heard the decision of the Lord and having been worshiped by Him, Nārada placed Him firmly within his heart and departed through the sky.

19With pleasing words the Lord addressed the messenger sent by the kings: "My dear messenger, I wish all good fortune to you. I shall arrange for the killing of King Magadha. Do not fear."

20Thus addressed, the messenger departed and accurately relayed the Lord's message to the kings. Eager for freedom, they then waited expectantly for their meeting with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

21As He traveled through the provinces of Ānarta, Sauvīra, Marudeśa and Vinaśana, Lord Hari crossed rivers and passed mountains, cities, villages, cow pastures and quarries.

22After crossing the rivers Dṛṣadvatī and Sarasvatī, He passed through Paścāla and Matsya and finally came to Indraprastha.

23King Yudhiṣṭhira was delighted to hear that the Lord, whom human beings rarely see, had now arrived. Accompanied by his priests and dear associates, the King came out to meet Lord Kṛṣṇa.

24As songs and musical instruments resounded along with the loud vibration of Vedic hymns, the King went forth with great reverence to meet Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, just as the senses go forth to meet the consciousness of life.

25The heart of King Yudhiṣṭhira melted with affection when he saw his dearest friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa, after such a long separation, and he embraced the Lord again and again.

26The eternal form of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the everlasting residence of the goddess of fortune. As soon as King Yudhiṣṭhira embraced Him, the King became free of all the contamination of material existence. He immediately felt transcendental bliss and merged in an ocean of happiness. There were tears in his eyes, and his body shook due to ecstasy. He completely forgot that he was living in this material world.

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27Then Bhīma, his eyes brimming with tears, laughed with joy as he embraced his maternal cousin, Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva also joyfully embraced their dearest friend, the infallible Lord, and they cried profusely.

28After Arjuna had embraced Him once more and Nakula and Sahadeva had offered Him their obeisances, Lord Kṛṣṇa bowed down to the brāhmaṇas and elders present, thus properly honoring the respectable members of the Kuru, Śrījaya and Kaikaya clans.

29Sūtas, Māgadhas, Gandharvas, Vandīs, jesters and brāhmaṇas all glorified the lotus-eyed Lord some reciting prayers, some dancing and singing as mṛdaṅgas, conchshells, kettledrums, vīṇās, paṇavas and gomukhas resounded.

30Thus surrounded by His well-wishing relatives and praised on all sides, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the crest jewel of the justly renowned, entered the decorated city.

31-32The roads of Indraprastha were sprinkled with water perfumed by the liquid from elephants' foreheads, and colorful flags, golden gateways and full waterpots enhanced the city's splendor. Men and young girls were beautifully arrayed in fine, new garments, adorned with flower garlands and ornaments, and anointed with aromatic sandalwood paste. Every home displayed glowing lamps and respectful offerings, and from the holes of the latticed windows drifted incense, further beautifying the city. Banners waved, and the roofs were decorated with golden domes on broad silver bases. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the royal city of the King of the Kurus.

33When the young women of the city heard that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of pleasure for human eyes, had arrived, they hurriedly went onto the royal road to see Him. They abandoned their household duties and even left their husbands in bed, and in their eagerness the knots of their hair and garments came loose.

34The royal road being quite crowded with elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers, the women climbed to the top of their houses, where they caught sight of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His queens. The city ladies scattered flowers upon the Lord, embraced Him in their minds and expressed their heartfelt welcome with broadly smiling glances.

35Observing Lord Mukunda's wives passing on the road like stars accompanying the moon, the women exclaimed, "What have these ladies done so that the best of men bestows upon their eyes the joy of His generous smiles and playful sidelong glances?"

36In various places citizens of the city came forward holding auspicious offerings for Lord Kṛṣṇa, and sinless leaders of occupational guilds came forward to worship the Lord.

37With wide-open eyes, the members of the royal household came forward in a flurry to lovingly greet Lord Mukunda, and thus the Lord entered the royal palace.

38When Queen Pṛthā saw her nephew Kṛṣṇa, the master of the three worlds, her heart became filled with love. Rising from her couch with her daughter-in-law, she embraced the Lord.

39King Yudhiṣṭhira respectfully brought Lord Govinda, the Supreme God of gods, to his personal quarters. The King was so overcome with joy that he could not remember all the rituals of worship.

40Lord Kṛṣṇa bowed down to His aunt and the wives of His elders, O King, and then Draupadī and the Lord's sister bowed down to Him.

41-42 Encouraged by her mother-in-law, Draupadī worshiped all of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s wives, including Rukmiṇī; Satyabhāmā; Bhadrā; Jāmbavatī; Kālindī; Mitravindā, the descendant of Śibi; the chaste Nāgnajitī; and the other queens of the Lord who were present. Draupadī honored them all with such gifts as clothing, flower garlands and jewelry.

43 King Yudhiṣṭhira arranged for Kṛṣṇa’s rest and saw to it that all who came along with Him—namely His queens, soldiers, ministers and secretaries—were comfortably situated. He arranged that they would experience a new feature of reception every day while staying as guests of the Pāṇḍavas.

44-45 Desiring to please King Yudhiṣṭhira, the Lord resided at Indraprastha for several months. During His stay, He and Arjuna satisfied the fire-god by offering him the Khāṇḍava forest, and they saved Maya Dānava, who then built King Yudhiṣṭhira a celestial assembly hall. The Lord also took the opportunity to go riding in His chariot in the company of Arjuna, surrounded by a retinue of soldiers.

SB 10.72: The Slaying of the Demon Jarāsandha

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa heard King Yudhiṣṭhira’s request and then arranged for Bhīmasena to defeat Jarāsandha.

One day King Yudhiṣṭhira addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa as He sat in the royal assembly: “My Lord, I wish to perform the Rājasūya sacrifice. In this sacrifice people uninterested in Your devotional service will be able to see firsthand the superiority of Your devotees and the inferiority of nondevotees. They will also be able to see Your lotus feet.”

Lord Kṛṣṇa extolled Yudhiṣṭhira’s proposition: “Your scheme is so excellent that it will spread your fame throughout the universe. Indeed, all living beings should desire that this sacrifice be performed. To make this sacrifice possible, however, you must first defeat all the kings of the earth and collect all the necessary paraphernalia.”

Satisfied with Lord Kṛṣṇa’s words, King Yudhiṣṭhira sent his brothers to conquer the various directions. After they had conquered or won the fealty of the kings in their assigned directions, they brought back abundant wealth to Yudhiṣṭhira. They informed him, however, that Jarāsandha could not be defeated. As King Yudhiṣṭhira pondered how he could subdue Jarāsandha, Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed to him the means for doing so, following the previous advice of Uddhava.

Bhīma, Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa then disguised themselves as *brāhmaṇas* and went to the palace of Jarāsandha, who was very devoted to the brahminical class. They introduced themselves as *brāhmaṇas* to King Jarāsandha, flattering him by praising his reputation for hospitality, and requested him to grant their desire. Seeing the marks of bowstrings on their limbs, Jarāsandha concluded that they were warriors and not *brāhmaṇas*, but still, even though fearful, he promised to fulfill whatever desire they might have. At that point Lord Kṛṣṇa discarded His disguise and asked Jarāsandha to fight Him in one-to-one combat. But Jarāsandha refused, claiming that Kṛṣṇa was a coward because He had once fled the battlefield. Jarāsandha also declined to fight Arjuna on the plea that he was inferior in age and size. But Bhīma he considered a worthy opponent.

Thus Jarāsandha handed Bhīma a club and took up another himself, and they all went outside the city to begin the fight.

After the fight had gone on for some time, it became clear that the two opponents were too

equally matched for either to gain victory. Lord Kṛṣṇa then split a small tree branch in half, thus showing Bhīma how to kill Jarāsandha. Bhīma threw Jarāsandha to the ground, stepped on one of his legs, seized the other with his arms and proceeded to tear him apart from his genitals to his head.

Seeing Jarāsandha dead, his relatives and subjects cried out in lamentation. Lord Kṛṣṇa then appointed Jarāsandha's son ruler of Magadha and released the kings Jarāsandha had imprisoned.

1-2 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: One day, as King Yudhiṣṭhira sat in the royal assembly surrounded by eminent sages, brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, and also by his brothers, spiritual masters, family elders, blood relations, in-laws and friends, he addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa as everyone listened.

3 Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: O Govinda, I desire to worship Your auspicious, opulent expansions by the Rājasūya sacrifice, the king of Vedic ceremonies. Please make our endeavor a success, my Lord.

4 Purified persons who constantly serve, meditate upon and glorify Your shoes, which destroy everything inauspicious, are sure to obtain freedom from material existence, O lotus-aveled one. Even if they desire something in this world, they obtain it, whereas otherstthose who do not take shelter of You are never satisfied, O Lord.

5 Therefore, O Lord of lords, let the people of this world see the power of devotional service rendered to Your lotus feet. Please show them, O almighty one, the position of those Kurus and Sṛjayas who worship You, and the position of those who do not.

6 Within Your mind there can be no such differentiation as "This one is mine, and that is another's," because You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Soul of all beings, always equipoised and enjoying transcendental happiness within Yourself. Just like the heavenly desire tree, You bless all who properly worship You, granting their desired fruits in proportion to the service they render You. There is nothing wrong in this.

7 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Your decision is perfect, O King, and thus your noble fame will spread to all the worlds, O tormentor of your enemies.

8 Indeed, My lord, for the great sages, the forefathers and the demigods, for Our well-wishing friends and, indeed, for all living beings, the performance of this king of Vedic sacrifices is desirable.

9 First conquer all kings, bring the earth under your control and collect all the required paraphernalia; then execute this great sacrifice.

10 These brothers of yours, O King, have taken birth as partial expansions of the demigods ruling various planets. And you are so self-controlled that you have conquered even Me, who am unconquerable for those who cannot control their senses.

11 No one in this world, even a demigod what to speak of an earthly king can defeat My devotee with his strength, beauty, fame or riches.

12 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Upon hearing these words sung by the Supreme Lord, King Yudhiṣṭhira became joyful, and his face blossomed like a lotus. Thus he sent forth his brothers, who were empowered with Lord Viṣṇu's potency, to conquer all directions.

13 He sent Sahadeva to the south with the Sṛjayas, Nakula to the west with the Matsyas,

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Arjunato the north with the Kekayas, and Bhīma to the east with the Madrakas.

14After defeating many kings with their prowess, these heroic brothers brought back abundant wealth for Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, who was intent on performing the sacrifice, O King.

15When King Yudhiṣṭhira heard that Jarāsandha remained undefeated, he set to pondering, and then the primeval Lord, Hari, told him the means Uddhava had described for defeating Jarāsandha.

16Thus Bhīmasena, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa disguised themselves as brāhmaṇas and went to Girivraja, my dear King, where the son of Bṛhadratha was to be found.

17Disguised as brāhmaṇas, the royal warriors approached Jarāsandha at home during the appointed hour for receiving guests. They submitted their entreaty to that dutiful householder, who was especially respectful to the brahminical class.

18[Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna and Bhīma said:] O King, know us to be needy guests who have come to you from afar. We wish all good unto you. Please grant us whatever we desire.

19What can the tolerant not bear? What will the wicked not do? What will the generous not give in charity? And who will those of equal vision see as an outsider?

20He indeed is to be censured and pitied who, though able to do so, fails to achieve with his temporary body the lasting fame glorified by great saints.

21Hariścandra, Rantideva, Uṣchavṛtti Mudgala, Śibi, Bali, the legendary hunter and pigeon, and many others have attained the permanent by means of the impermanent.

22Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: From the sound of their voices, their physical stature and the marks of bowstrings on their forearms, Jarāsandha could tell that his guests were of the royal order. He began to think he had seen them somewhere before.

23[Jarāsandha thought:] These are surely members of the royal order dressed as brāhmaṇas, but still I must grant their request for charity, even if they beg me for my own body.

24-25Indeed, the spotless glories of Bali Mahārāja are heard throughout the world. Lord Viṣṇu, wishing to recover Indra's opulence from Bali, appeared before him in the guise of a brāhmaṇa and made him fall from his powerful position. Though aware of the ruse and forbidden by his guru, Bali, king of the demons, still gave Viṣṇu the whole earth in charity.

26What is the use of an unqualified kṣatriya who goes on living but fails to gain everlasting glory by working with his perishable body for the benefit of brāhmaṇas?

27[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus making up his mind, the generous Jarāsandha addressed Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna and Bhīma: "O learned brāhmaṇas, choose whatever you wish. I will give it to you, even if it is my own head."

28The Supreme Lord said: O exalted King, give us battle in the form of a duel, if you think it fitting. We are princes and have come to beg a fight. We have no other request to make of you.

29Over there is Bhīma, son of Prthā, and this is his brother Arjuna. Know Me to be their maternal cousin, Kṛṣṇa, your enemy.

30[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus challenged, Magadharāja laughed out loud and contemptuously said, "All right, you fools, I'll give you a fight!"

31“But I will not fight with You, Kṛṣṇa, for You are a coward. Your strength abandoned You in the midst of battle, and You fled Your own capital of Mathurā to take shelter in the sea.

32“As for this one, Arjuna, he is not as old as I, nor is he very strong. Since he is no match for me, he should not be the contender. Bhīma, however, is as strong as I am.”

33Having said this, Jarāsandha offered Bhīmasena a huge club, took up another himself and went outside the city.

34The two heroes thus began battling each other on the level fighting grounds outside the city. Maddened with the fury of combat, they struck each other with their lightning-bolt-like clubs.

35As they skillfully circled left and right, like actors dancing on a stage, the fight presented a magnificent spectacle.

36When Jarāsandha’s and Bhīmasena’s clubs loudly collided, O King, the sound was like the impact of the big tusks of two fighting elephants, or the crash of a thunderbolt in a flashing electrical storm.

37They swung their clubs at each other with such speed and force that as the clubs struck their shoulders, hips, feet, hands, thighs and collarbones, the weapons were crushed and broken like branches of arka trees with which two enraged elephants furiously attack each other.

38Their clubs thus ruined, those great heroes among men angrily pummeled each other with their iron-hard fists. As they slapped each other, the sound resembled the crash of elephants colliding or harsh thunderclaps.

39As they thus fought, this contest between opponents of equal training, strength and stamina reached no conclusion. And so they kept on fighting, O King, without any letup.

40Lord Kṛṣṇa knew the secret of His enemy Jarāsandha’s birth and death, and also how he had been given life by the demoness Jarā. Considering all this, Lord Kṛṣṇa imparted His special power to Bhīma.

41Having determined how to kill the enemy, that Lord of infallible vision made a sign to Bhīma by tearing in half a small branch of a tree.

42Understanding this sign, mighty Bhīma, the best of fighters, seized his opponent by the feet and threw him to the ground.

43Bhīma pressed down on one leg with his foot while grabbing Jarāsandha’s other leg in his hands, and just as a great elephant might break the branch of a tree, Bhīma tore Jarāsandha apart from the anus upward.

44The King’s subjects then saw him lying in two separate pieces, each with a single leg, thigh, testicle, hip, shoulder, arm, eye, eyebrow and ear, and with half a back and chest.

45With the death of the lord of Magadha, a great cry of lamentation arose, while Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa congratulated Bhīma by embracing him.

46The immeasurable Supreme Personality of Godhead, the sustainer and benefactor of all living beings, coronated Jarāsandha’s son, Sahadeva, as the new ruler of the Magadhas. The Lord then freed all the kings Jarāsandha had imprisoned.

SB 10.73: Lord Kṛṣṇa Blesses the Liberated Kings

This chapter relates how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after freeing the kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha, mercifully gave them His audience and bestowed royal gifts upon them.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa freed the 20,800 kings Jarāsandha had imprisoned, they immediately fell to the ground to pay Him obeisances. Then they stood with joined palms and began to pray to Him. Seeing their imprisonment as an act of mercy by the Lord to smash their false pride, the kings prayed only to be granted whatever would facilitate their perpetual remembrance of His lotus feet.

The Lord assured the kings that their prayer would be fulfilled. He instructed them, “Worship Me by performing Vedic sacrifices, and protect your subjects in accordance with the principles of religion. Fixing your minds on Me, beget progeny, and remain always equipoised in happiness and distress. Thus at the end of your lives you will surely attain Me.”

Lord Kṛṣṇa then saw to it that the kings were properly bathed and dressed, and He had Sahadeva offer them flower garlands, sandalwood pulp, fine clothing and other things suitable for kings. After having them adorned with jewels and golden ornaments, He seated them on chariots and sent them off to their respective kingdoms. In accordance with the orders the Lord had given them, they began to carry out their various duties once again.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma and Arjuna then departed for Indraprastha, where they met with King Yudhiṣṭhira and related to him everything that had happened.

1-6 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Jarāsandha had defeated 20,800 kings in combat and thrown them into prison. As these kings emerged from the Giridronī fortress, they appeared dirty and shabbily dressed. They were emaciated by hunger, their faces were dried up, and they were greatly weakened by their long imprisonment.

7 The ecstasy of beholding Lord Kṛṣṇa having dispelled the weariness of their imprisonment, the kings stood with joined palms and offered words of praise to that supreme master of the senses.

8 The kings said: Obeisances to You, O Lord of the ruling demigods, O destroyer of Your surrendered devotees' distress. Since we have surrendered to You, O inexhaustible Kṛṣṇa, please save us from this terrible material life, which has made us so despondent.

9 O master, Madhusūdana, we do not blame this King of Magadha, since it is actually by Your mercy that kings fall from their royal position, O almighty Lord.

10 Infatuated with his opulence and ruling power, a king loses all self-restraint and cannot obtain his true welfare. Thus bewildered by Your illusory energy, he imagines his temporary assets to be permanent.

11 Just as men of childish intelligence consider a mirage in the desert to be a pond of water, so those who are irrational look upon the illusory transformations of Māyā as substantial.

12-13 Previously, blinded by the intoxication of riches, we wanted to conquer this earth, and thus we fought one another to achieve victory, mercilessly harassing our own subjects. We arrogantly disregarded You, O Lord, who stood before us as death. But now, O Kṛṣṇa, that powerful form of Yours called time, moving mysteriously and irresistibly, has deprived us of our opulences. Now that You have mercifully destroyed our pride, we beg simply to remember Your lotus feet.

14Never again will we hanker for a miragelike kingdoma kingdom that must be slavishly served by this mortal body, which is simply a source of disease and suffering and which is declining at every moment. Nor, O almighty Lord, will we hanker to enjoy the heavenly fruits of pious work in the next life, since the promise of such rewards is simply an empty enticement for the ears.

15Please tell us how we may constantly remember Your lotus feet, though we continue in the cycle of birth and death in this world.

16Again and again we offer our obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, Hari, the son of Vasudeva. That Supreme Soul, Govinda, vanquishes the suffering of all who surrender to Him.

17Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus the kings, now freed from bondage, glorified the Supreme Lord. Then, my dear Parīkṣit, that merciful bestower of shelter spoke to them in a gentle voice.

18The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: From now on, my dear kings, you will have firm devotion to Me, the Supreme Self and the Lord of all that be. I assure you this will come to pass, just as you desire.

19Fortunately you have come to the proper conclusion, my dear kings, and what you have spoken is true. I can see that human beings' lack of self-restraint, which arises from their intoxication with opulence and power, simply leads to madness.

20Haihaya, Nahuṣa, Veṇa, Rāvaṇa, Naraka and many other rulers of demigods, men and demons fell from their elevated positions because of infatuation with material opulence.

21Understanding that this material body and everything connected with it have a beginning and an end, worship Me by Vedic sacrifices, and with clear intelligence protect your subjects in accordance with the principles of religion.

22As you live your lives, begetting generations of progeny and encountering happiness and distress, birth and death, always keep your minds fixed on Me.

23Be detached from the body and everything connected to it. Remaining self-satisfied, steadfastly keep your vows while concentrating your minds fully on Me. In this way you will ultimately attain Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

24Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus instructed the kings, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme master of all the worlds, engaged male and female servants in bathing and grooming them.

25O descendant of Bharata, the Lord then had King Sahadeva honor them with offerings of clothing, jewelry, garlands and sandalwood paste, all suitable for royalty.

26After they had been properly bathed and adorned, Lord Kṛṣṇa saw to it that they dined on excellent food. He also presented them with various items befitting the pleasure of kings, such as betel nut.

27Honored by Lord Mukunda and freed from tribulation, the kings shone splendidly, their earrings gleaming, just as the moon and other celestial bodies shine brilliantly in the sky at the end of the rainy season.

28Then the Lord arranged for the kings to be seated on chariots drawn by fine horses and adorned with jewels and gold, and pleasing them with gracious words, He sent them off to their own kingdoms.

29 Thus liberated from all difficulty by Kṛṣṇa, the greatest of personalities, the kings departed, and as they went they thought only of Him, the Lord of the universe, and of His wonderful deeds.

30 The kings told their ministers and other associates what the Personality of Godhead had done, and then they diligently carried out the orders He had imparted to them.

31 Having arranged for Bhīmasena to kill Jarāsandha, Lord Keśava accepted worship from King Sahadeva and then departed with the two sons of Pṛthā.

32 When they arrived at Indraprastha, the victorious heroes blew their conchshells, bringing joy to their well-wishing friends and sorrow to their enemies.

33 The residents of Indraprastha were very pleased to hear that sound, for they understood that now the King of Magadha had been put to rest. King Yudhiṣṭhira felt that his desires were now fulfilled.

34 Bhīma, Arjuna and Janārdana offered their respects to the King and informed him fully about what they had done.

35 Upon hearing their account of the great favor Lord Keśava had mercifully shown him, King Dharmarāja shed tears of ecstasy. He felt such love that he could not say anything.

SB 10.74: The Deliverance of Śiśupāla at the Rājasūya Sacrifice

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa received the honor of first worship during the Rājasūya sacrifice, and how He killed Śiśupāla.

After glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa, King Yudhiṣṭhira selected qualified *brāhmaṇas* such as Bharadvāja, Gautama and Vasiṣṭha to serve as the priests of the Rājasūya sacrifice. Then many exalted guests of all the four social orders arrived to see the sacrificial performance.

As the sacrifice proceeded, the ritual of “first worship” had to be performed, and the members of the assembly were called upon to decide who would receive this honor. Sahadeva spoke up: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, is indeed the most exalted person, for He Himself comprises all the deities worshiped by Vedic sacrifice. In His role as the Supersoul in the heart, He arranges for everyone in the universe to engage in his particular kind of work, and by His mercy alone human beings can perform various kinds of pious activities and receive the resultant benefits. One who worships Him worships all living entities. Surely Lord Kṛṣṇa should be worshiped first.”

Nearly everyone in the assembly agreed with Sahadeva’s proposal and loudly congratulated him. Thus King Yudhiṣṭhira happily worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa. After bathing His feet, the King took the wash water and sprinkled it on his head, and his wives, younger brothers, ministers and relatives also sprinkled that water on their heads. Then everyone shouted, “All victory, all victory!” and bowed down to Lord Kṛṣṇa as flowers rained down from above.

Śiśupāla, however, could not tolerate this worship and glorification of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He stood up from his seat and harshly rebuked the wise elders for choosing Kṛṣṇa to be worshiped first. “After all” he said, “this Kṛṣṇa is outside the system of Vedic social and spiritual orders and the society of respectable families. He follows no principles of religion and has no good qualities.”

Even as Śiśupāla continued to blaspheme Him in this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa remained silent. But many members of the assembly covered their ears and quickly left the hall, while the Pāṇḍava

brothers raised their weapons and prepared to kill Śiśupāla. Lord Kṛṣṇa stopped them from attacking, however, and instead used His Sudarśana disc to decapitate the offender. At that moment an effulgent spark of light rose out of Śiśupāla's dead body and entered the transcendental body of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Having lived through three births as the enemy of the Lord, Śiśupāla now attained the liberation of *sāyujya*, merging into Him, by dint of his constant meditation on Him.

King Yudhiṣṭhira then distributed profuse gifts to the respected guests of the assembly and to the priests, and finally he executed the purificatory oblations known as the *prāyaścitta-homa*, which counteract errors made during the sacrifice. Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice having now been completed, Lord Kṛṣṇa took His leave from the King and set off for Dvārakā in the company of His wives and ministers.

Duryodhana could not bear to see this abundant manifestation of King Yudhiṣṭhira's prosperity, but apart from him, everyone happily praised the glories of the Rājasūya sacrifice and of the Lord of all sacrifices, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus heard of the killing of Jarāsandha, and also of almighty Kṛṣṇa's wonderful power, King Yudhiṣṭhira addressed the Lord as follows with great pleasure.

2Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: All the exalted spiritual masters of the three worlds, together with the inhabitants and rulers of the various planets, carry on their heads Your command, which is rarely obtained.

3That You, the lotus-eyed Supreme Lord, accept the orders of wretched fools who presume themselves rulers is a great pretense on Your part, O all-pervading one.

4But of course the power of the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Soul, the primeval one without a second, is neither increased nor diminished by His activities, any more than the sun's power is by its movements.

5O unconquerable Mādhava, even Your devotees make no distinctions of "I" and "mine," "you" and "yours," for this is the perverted mentality of animals.

6Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having said this, King Yudhiṣṭhira waited until the proper time for the sacrifice was at hand. Then with Lord Kṛṣṇa's permission he selected suitable priests, all expert authorities on the Vedas, to execute the sacrifice.

7-9He selected Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana, Bharadvāja, Sumantu, Gotama and Asita, along with Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Kaṇva, Maitreya, Kavaṣa and Trita. He also selected Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Sumati, Jaimini, Kratu, Paila and Parāśara, as well as Garga, Vaiśampāyana, Atharvā, Kaśyapa, Dhaumya, Rāma of the Bhārgavas, Āsuri, Vītihoṭra, Madhucchandā, Vīrasena and Akṛtavraṇa.

10-11O King, others who were invited included Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Kṛpa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra with his sons, the wise Vidura, and many other brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, all eager to witness the sacrifice. Indeed, all the kings came there with their entourages.

12The brāhmaṇa priests then plowed the sacrificial ground with golden plowshares and initiated King Yudhiṣṭhira for the sacrifice in accordance with the traditions set down by standard authorities.

13-15The utensils used in the sacrifice were made of gold, just as in the ancient Rājasūya performed by Lord Varuṇa. Indra, Brahmā, Śiva and many other planetary rulers; the Siddhas

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and Gandharvas with their entourage; the Vidyādhara; great serpents; sages; Yakṣas; Rākṣasas; celestial birds; Kinnaras; Cāraṇas; and earthly kings all were invited, and indeed they all came from every direction to the Rājasūya sacrifice of King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu. They were not in the least astonished to see the opulence of the sacrifice, since it was quite appropriate for a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

16The priests, as powerful as gods, performed the Rājasūya sacrifice for King Yudhiṣṭhira in accordance with the Vedic injunctions, just as the demigods had previously performed it for Varuṇa.

17On the day of extracting the soma juice, King Yudhiṣṭhira properly and very attentively worshiped the priests and the most exalted personalities of the assembly.

18The members of the assembly then pondered over who among them should be worshiped first, but since there were many personalities qualified for this honor, they were unable to decide. Finally Sahadeva spoke up.

19[Sahadeva said:] Certainly it is Acyuta, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and chief of the Yādavas, who deserves the highest position. In truth, He Himself comprises all the demigods worshiped in sacrifice, along with such aspects of the worship as the sacred place, the time and the paraphernalia.

20-21This entire universe is founded upon Him, as are the great sacrificial performances, with their sacred fires, oblations and mantras. Sāṅkhya and yoga both aim toward Him, the one without a second. O assembly members, that unborn Lord, relying solely on Himself, creates, maintains and destroys this cosmos by His personal energies, and thus the existence of this universe depends on Him alone.

22He creates the many activities of this world, and thus by His grace the whole world endeavors for the ideals of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation.

23Therefore we should give the highest honor to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. If we do so, we will be honoring all living beings and also our own selves.

24Anyone who wishes the honor he gives to be reciprocated infinitely should honor Kṛṣṇa, the perfectly peaceful and perfectly complete Soul of all beings, the Supreme Lord, who views nothing as separate from Himself.

25[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Having said this, Sahadeva, who understood Lord Kṛṣṇa's powers, fell silent. And having heard his words, all the saintly persons present congratulated him, exclaiming "Excellent! Excellent!"

26The King was delighted to hear this pronouncement of the brāhmaṇas, from which he understood the mood of the entire assembly. Overwhelmed with love, he fully worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses.

27-28After bathing Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira joyfully sprinkled the water upon his own head, and then upon the heads of his wife, brothers, other family members and ministers. That water purifies the whole world. As he honored the Lord with presentations of yellow silken garments and precious jeweled ornaments, the King's tear-filled eyes prevented him from looking directly at the Lord.

29When they saw Lord Kṛṣṇa thus honored, nearly all who were present joined their palms

reverentially, exclaiming “Obeisances to You! All victory to You!” and then bowed down to Him. Flowers rained down from above.

30The intolerant son of Damaghoṣa became infuriated upon hearing the glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental qualities. He stood up from his seat and, angrily waving his arms, fearlessly spoke to the entire assembly the following harsh words against the Supreme Lord.

31[Śiśupāla said:] The statement of the Vedas that time is the unavoidable controller of all has indeed been proven true, since the intelligence of wise elders has now become diverted by the words of a mere boy.

32O leaders of the assembly, you know best who is a fit candidate for being honored. Therefore you should not heed the words of a child when he claims that Kṛṣṇa deserves to be worshiped.

33-34How can you pass over the most exalted members of this assemblytopmost sages dedicated to the Absolute Truth endowed with powers of austerity, divine insight and strict adherence to severe vows, sanctified by knowledge and worshiped even by the rulers of the universe? How does this cowherd boy, the disgrace of His family, deserve your worship, any more than a crow deserves to eat the sacred puroḍāśa rice cake?

35How does one who follows no principles of the social and spiritual orders or of family ethics, who has been excluded from all religious duties, who behaves whimsically, and who has no good qualitieshow does such a person deserve to be worshiped?

36Yayāti cursed the dynasty of these Yādavas, and ever since then they have been ostracized by honest men and addicted to liquor. How, then, does Kṛṣṇa deserve to be worshiped?

37These Yādavas have abandoned the holy lands inhabited by saintly sages and have instead taken shelter of a fortress in the sea, a place where no brahminical principles are observed. There, just like thieves, they harass their subjects.

38[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Bereft of all good fortune, Śiśupāla spoke these and other insults. But the Supreme Lord said nothing, just as a lion ignores a jackal’s cry.

39Upon hearing such intolerable blasphemy of the Lord, several members of the assembly covered their ears and walked out, angrily cursing the King of Cedi.

40Anyone who fails to immediately leave the place where he hears criticism of the Supreme Lord or His faithful devotee will certainly fall down, bereft of his pious credit.

41Then the sons of Pāṇḍu became furious, and together with the warriors of the Matsya, Kaikaya and Sṛṣṭya clans, they rose up from their seats with weapons poised, ready to kill Śiśupāla.

42Undaunted, Śiśupāla then took up his sword and shield in the midst of all the assembled kings, O Bhārata, and hurled insults at those who sided with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

43At that point the Supreme Lord stood up and checked His devotees. He then angrily sent forth His razor-sharp disc and severed the head of His enemy as he was attacking.

44When Śiśupāla was thus killed, a great roar and howl went up from the crowd. Taking advantage of that disturbance, the few kings who were supporters of Śiśupāla quickly left the assembly out of fear for their lives.

45An effulgent light rose from Śiśupāla's body and, as everyone watched, entered Lord Kṛṣṇa just like a meteor falling from the sky to the earth.

46Obsessed with hatred of Lord Kṛṣṇa throughout three lifetimes, Śiśupāla attained the Lord's transcendental nature. Indeed, one's consciousness determines one's future birth.

47Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira gave generous gifts to the sacrificial priests and the members of the assembly, properly honoring them all in the manner prescribed by the Vedas. He then took the avabhṛtha bath.

48Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all masters of mystic yoga, saw to the successful execution of this great sacrifice on behalf of King Yudhiṣṭhira. Afterwards, the Lord stayed with His intimate friends for a few months at their earnest request.

49Then the Lord, the son of Devakī, took the reluctant permission of the King and returned to His capital with His wives and ministers.

50I have already described to you in detail the history of the two residents of Vaikuṅṭha who had to undergo repeated births in the material world because of being cursed by brāhmaṇas.

51Purified in the final, avabhṛthya ritual, which marked the successful completion of the Rājasūya sacrifice, King Yudhiṣṭhira shone among the assembled brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas like the King of the demigods himself.

52The demigods, humans and residents of intermediate heavens, all properly honored by the King, happily set off for their respective domains while singing the praises of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the great sacrifice.

53[All were satisfied] except sinful Duryodhana, the personification of the age of quarrel and the disease of the Kuru dynasty. He could not bear to see the flourishing opulence of the son of Pāṇḍu.

54One who recites these activities of Lord Viṣṇu, including the killing of Śiśupāla, the deliverance of the kings and the performance of the Rājasūya sacrifice, is freed from all sins.

SB 10.75: Duryodhana Humiliated

This chapter describes the glorious conclusion of the Rājasūya sacrifice, and how Prince Duryodhana was humiliated in King Yudhiṣṭhira's palace.

At the time of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice, many of his relatives and well-wishers endeavored to please him by performing necessary services. When the sacrifice was complete, the King adorned the priests, the exalted members of the assembly and his own relatives with fragrant sandalwood paste, flower garlands and fine clothing. Then they all went to the banks of the Ganges to perform the ritual bathing that marks the end of the sponsor's period of initiation for the sacrifice. Before the final bathing, there was much sporting in the river among the male and female participants. Sprinkled with aromatic water and other liquids, Draupadī and the other ladies appeared most beautiful, their faces shining with bashful laughter.

After the priests had executed the final rituals, the King and his queen, Śrīmatī Draupadī, bathed in the Ganges. Then all those present who belonged to the orders of *vamāśrama* bathed. Yudhiṣṭhira put on new clothes and worshiped the learned *brāhmaṇas*, his family, friends and well-wishers, each in the particular manner suitable for them, and offered them all various gifts. The guests then departed for their homes. But King Yudhiṣṭhira was so anxious

about his imminent separation from those who were dear to him that he compelled several of his relatives and closest friends, including Lord Kṛṣṇa, to remain in Indraprastha a bit longer.

King Yudhiṣṭhira's royal palace had been constructed by Maya Dānava, who had endowed it with many wonderful features and opulences. King Duryodhana burned with envy when he saw these riches. One day, Yudhiṣṭhira was seated with Lord Kṛṣṇa in his royal assembly hall. Attended by his subordinates and family members, he was manifesting magnificence equal to that of Lord Indra. At that time Duryodhana entered the hall in a fitful mood. Bewildered by the mystic craft of Maya Dānava, Duryodhana mistook parts of the solid floor for water and thus lifted his garment, while in one place he fell into the water, mistaking it for the solid floor. When Bhīmasena, the ladies of the court and the royal princes present saw this, they began to laugh. Although Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira tried to stop them, Lord Kṛṣṇa encouraged their laughter. Thoroughly embarrassed, Duryodhana left the assembly hall in a fury and immediately departed for Hastināpura.

1-2Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, according to what I have heard from you, all the assembled kings, sages and demigods were delighted to see the wonderful festivities of King Ajātaśatru's Rājasūya sacrifice, with the sole exception of Duryodhana. Please tell me why this was so, my lord.

3Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: At the Rājasūya sacrifice of your saintly grandfather, his family members, bound by their love for him, engaged themselves in humble services on his behalf.

4-7Bhīma supervised the kitchen, Duryodhana looked after the treasury, while Sahadeva respectfully greeted the arriving guests. Nakula procured needed items, Arjuna attended the respectable elders, and Kṛṣṇa washed everyone's feet, while Draupadī served food, and generous Karṇa gave out the gifts. Many others, such as Yuyudhāna; Vikarṇa, Hārdikya; Vidura; Bhūriśravā and other sons of Bāhlīka; and Santardana, similarly volunteered for various duties during the elaborate sacrifice. They did so because of their eagerness to please Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, O best of kings.

8After the priests, the prominent delegates, the greatly learned saints and the King's most intimate well-wishers had all been properly honored with pleasing words, auspicious offerings and various gifts as remuneration, and after the King of Cedi had entered the lotus feet of the Lord of the Sātvatas, the avabhṛtha bath was performed in the divine river Yamunā.

9During the avabhṛtha celebration, the music of many kinds of instruments resounded, including mṛdaṅgas, conchshells, panavas, dhundhuris, kettledrums and gomukha horns.

10Female dancers danced with great joy, and choruses sang, while the loud vibrations of vīnās, flutes and hand cymbals reached all the way to the heavenly regions.

11All the kings, wearing gold necklaces, then set off for the Yamunā. They had flags and banners of various colors and were accompanied by infantrymen and well-adorned soldiers riding lordly elephants, chariots and horses.

12The massed armies of the Yadus, Sṛṣṭayas, Kāmbojas, Kurus, Kekayas and Kośalas made the earth tremble as they followed Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, the performer of the sacrifice, in procession.

13The assembly officials, the priests and other excellent brāhmaṇas resoundingly vibrated Vedic mantras, while the demigods, divine sages, Pitās and Gandharvas sang praises and rained down flowers.

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14Men and women, all adorned with sandalwood paste, flower garlands, jewelry and fine clothing, sported by smearing and sprinkling one another with various liquids.

15The men smeared the courtesans with plentiful oil, yogurt, perfumed water, turmeric and kuṅkuma powder, and the courtesans playfully smeared the men with the same substances.

16Surrounded by guards, King Yudhiṣṭhira's queens came out on their chariots to see the fun, just as the demigods' wives appeared in the sky in celestial airplanes. As maternal cousins and intimate friends sprinkled the queens with liquids, the ladies' faces bloomed with shy smiles, enhancing the queens' splendid beauty.

17As the queens squirted water from syringes at their brothers-in-law and other male companions, their own garments became drenched, revealing their arms, breasts, thighs and waists. In their excitement, the flowers fell from their loosened braids. By these charming pastimes they agitated those with contaminated consciousness.

18The emperor, mounted upon his chariot drawn by excellent horses wearing golden collars, appeared splendid in the company of his wives, just like the brilliant Rājasūya sacrifice surrounded by its various rituals.

19The priests led the King through the execution of the final rituals of patnī-saṁyāja and avabhṛthya. Then they had him and Queen Draupadī sip water for purification and bathe in the Ganges.

20The kettledrums of the gods resounded, along with those of human beings. Demigods, sages, forefathers and humans all poured down showers of flowers.

21All the citizens belonging to the various orders of varṇa and āśrama then bathed in that place, where even the most grievous sinner can immediately be freed from all sinful reactions.

22Next the King put on new silken garments and adorned himself with fine jewelry. He then honored the priests, assembly officials, learned brāhmaṇas and other guests by presenting them with ornaments and clothing.

23In various ways King Yudhiṣṭhira, who had totally dedicated his life to Lord Nārāyaṇa, continuously honored his relatives, his immediate family, the other kings, his friends and well-wishers, and all others present as well.

24All the men there shone like demigods. They were adorned with jeweled earrings, flower garlands, turbans, waistcoats, silk dhotīs and valuable pearl necklaces. The lovely faces of the women were beautified by their matched earrings and locks of hair, and they all wore golden belts.

25-26Then the highly cultured priests, the great Vedic authorities who had served as sacrificial witnesses, the specially invited kings, the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, demigods, sages, forefathers and mystic spirits, and the chief planetary rulers and their followers all of them, having been worshiped by King Yudhiṣṭhira, took his permission and departed, O King, each for his own abode.

27As they all glorified the wonderful Rājasūya-yajña performed by that great saintly King and servant of Lord Hari, they were not satiated, just as an ordinary man is never satiated when drinking nectar.

28At that time Rājā Yudhiṣṭhira stopped a number of his friends, immediate family members and other relatives from departing, among them Lord Kṛṣṇa. Out of love Yudhiṣṭhira could not

let them go, for he felt the pain of imminent separation.

29My dear Parīkṣit, the Supreme Lord remained there for some time to please the King, after first sending Sāmba and the other Yadu heroes back to Dvārakā.

30Thus King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, was at last relieved of his burning ambition, having by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa successfully crossed the vast and formidable ocean of his desires.

31One day Duryodhana, while observing the riches of King Yudhiṣṭhira's palace, felt greatly disturbed by the magnificence of both the Rājasūya sacrifice and its performer, the King, whose life and soul was Lord Acyuta.

32In that palace all the collected opulences of the kings of men, demons and gods were brilliantly manifest, having been brought there by the cosmic inventor, Maya Dānava. With those riches Draupadī served her husbands, and Duryodhana, the prince of the Kurus, lamented because he was very much attracted to her.

33Lord Madhupati's thousands of queens were also staying in the palace. Their feet moved slowly, weighed down by their hips, and the bells on their feet tinkled charmingly. Their waists were very slender, the kuṅkuma from their breasts reddened their pearl necklaces, and their swaying earrings and flowing locks of hair enhanced the exquisite beauty of their faces.

34-35It so happened that Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, was sitting just like Indra on a golden throne in the assembly hall built by Maya Dānava. Present with him were his attendants and family members, and also Lord Kṛṣṇa, his special eye. Displaying the opulences of Brahma himself, King Yudhiṣṭhira was being praised by the court poets.

36Proud Duryodhana, holding a sword in his hand and wearing a crown and necklace, angrily went into the palace in the company of his brothers, O King, insulting the doorkeepers as he entered.

37Bewildered by the illusions created through Maya Dānava's magic, Duryodhana mistook the solid floor for water and lifted the end of his garment. And elsewhere he fell into the water, mistaking it for the solid floor.

38My dear Parīkṣit, Bhīma laughed to see this, and so did the women, kings and others. King Yudhiṣṭhira tried to stop them, but Lord Kṛṣṇa showed His approval.

39Humiliated and burning with anger, Duryodhana turned his face down, left without uttering a word and went back to Hastināpura. The saintly persons present loudly cried out, "Alas, alas!" and King Yudhiṣṭhira was somewhat saddened. But the Supreme Lord, whose mere glance had bewildered Duryodhana, remained silent, for His intention was to remove the burden of the earth.

40I have now replied to your question, O King, concerning why Duryodhana was dissatisfied on the occasion of the great Rājasūya sacrifice.

SB 10.76: The Battle Between Śālva and the Vṛṣṇis

This chapter relates how the demon Śālva acquired a huge and terrifying airship, how he used it to attack the Vṛṣṇis in Dvārakā, and how Lord Pradyumna was taken from the battlefield during the fighting that ensued.

Śālva was one of the kings who had been defeated at the time of Rukmiṇī-devī's marriage. Having vowed then that he would rid the earth of all the Yādavas, he began worshipping Lord Śiva each day by eating only a palmful of dust. After a year had passed, Śiva appeared before Śālva and asked him to choose a benediction. Śālva begged for a flying machine that could go anywhere and that would strike terror into the hearts of demigods, demons and humans alike. Lord Śiva granted this request and had Maya Dānava construct for Śālva a flying iron city named Saubha. Śālva took this vehicle to Dvārakā, where he and his huge army laid siege to the city. From his airplane Śālva bombarded Dvārakā with tree trunks, boulders and other missiles, and he produced a mighty whirlwind that obscured everything with dust.

When Pradyumna, Sātyaki and the other Yadu heroes saw the plight of Dvārakā and her residents, they went out to do battle with Śālva's forces. Pradyumna, the best of warriors, destroyed with His divine weapons all of Śālva's illusory magic, and He also bewildered Śālva himself. Thus Śālva's airplane began wandering aimlessly on the earth, in the sky and on the tops of mountains. But then a follower of Śālva's named Dyumān struck Pradyumna on the chest with his club, whereupon Pradyumna's chariot driver, thinking his master seriously injured, carried Him from the battlefield. But Pradyumna quickly regained consciousness and sharply criticized His driver for doing this.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Now please hear, O King, another wondrous deed performed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in His humanlike body to enjoy transcendental pastimes. Hear how He killed the master of Saubha.

2Śālva was a friend of Śiśupāla's. When he attended the wedding of Rukmiṇī, the Yadu warriors defeated him in battle, along with Jarāsandha and the other kings.

3Śālva swore in the presence of all the kings: "I will rid the earth of Yādavas. Just see my prowess!"

4Having thus made his vow, the foolish King proceeded to worship Lord Paśupati [Śiva] as his deity by eating a handful of dust each day, and nothing more.

5The great Lord Umāpati is known as "he who is quickly pleased," yet only at the end of a year did he gratify Śālva, who had approached him for shelter, by offering him a choice of benedictions.

6Śālva chose a vehicle that could be destroyed by neither demigods, demons, humans, Gandharvas, Uragas nor Rākṣasas, that could travel anywhere he wished to go, and that would terrify the Vṛṣṇis.

7Lord Śiva said, "So be it." On his order, Maya Dānava, who conquers his enemies' cities, constructed a flying iron city named Saubha and presented it to Śālva.

8This unassailable vehicle was filled with darkness and could go anywhere. Upon obtaining it, Śālva went to Dvārakā, remembering the Vṛṣṇis' enmity toward him.

9-11Śālva besieged the city with a large army, O best of the Bharatas, decimating the outlying parks and gardens, the mansions along with their observatories, towering gateways and surrounding walls, and also the public recreational areas. From his excellent airship he threw down a torrent of weapons, including stones, tree trunks, thunderbolts, snakes and hailstones. A fierce whirlwind arose and blanketed all directions with dust.

12Thus terribly tormented by the airship Saubha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's city had no peace, O King, just

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like the earth when it was attacked by the three aerial cities of the demons.

13 Seeing His subjects so harassed, the glorious and heroic Lord Pradyumna told them, “Do not fear,” and mounted His chariot.

14-15 The chief commanders of the chariot warriors Sātyaki, Cārudeṣṇa, Sāmba, Akrūra and his younger brothers, along with Hārdikya, Bhānuvinda, Gada, Śuka and Sāraṇa went out of the city with many other eminent bowmen, all girded in armor and protected by contingents of soldiers riding on chariots, elephants and horses, and also by companies of infantry.

16 A tumultuous, hair-raising battle then commenced between Śālva’s forces and the Yadus. It equaled the great battles between the demons and demigods.

17 With His divine weapons Pradyumna instantly destroyed all of Śālva’s magic illusions, in the same way that the warm rays of the sun dissipate the darkness of night.

18-19 Lord Pradyumna’s arrows all had gold shafts, iron heads and perfectly smooth joints. With twenty-five of them He struck down Śālva’s commander-in-chief [Dyumān], and with one hundred He struck Śālva himself. Then He pierced Śālva’s officers with one arrow each, his chariot drivers with ten arrows each, and his horses and other carriers with three arrows each.

20 When they saw the glorious Pradyumna perform that amazing and mighty feat, all the soldiers on both sides praised Him.

21 At one moment the magic airship built by Maya Dānava appeared in many identical forms, and the next moment it was again only one. Sometimes it was visible, and sometimes not. Thus Śālva’s opponents could never be sure where it was.

22 From one moment to the next the Saubha airship appeared on the earth, in the sky, on a mountain peak or in the water. Like a whirling, flaming baton, it never remained in any one place.

23 Wherever Śālva would appear with his Saubha ship and his army, there the Yadu commanders would shoot their arrows.

24 Śālva became bewildered upon seeing his army and aerial city thus harassed by his enemy’s arrows, which struck like fire and the sun and were as intolerable as snake venom.

25 Because the heroes of the Vṛṣṇi clan were eager for victory in this world and the next, they did not abandon their assigned posts on the battlefield, even though the downpour of weapons hurled by Śālva’s commanders tormented them.

26 Śālva’s minister Dyumān, previously wounded by Śrī Pradyumna, now ran up to Him and, roaring loudly, struck Him with his club of black steel.

27 Pradyumna’s driver, the son of Dāruka, thought that his valiant master’s chest had been shattered by the club. Knowing well his religious duty, he removed Pradyumna from the battlefield.

28 Quickly regaining consciousness, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s son Pradyumna said to His charioteer, “O driver, this is abominable for Me to have been removed from the battlefield!

29 “Except for Me, no one born in the Yadu dynasty has ever been known to abandon the battlefield. My reputation has now been stained by a driver who thinks like a eunuch.

30“What will I say to My fathers, Rāma and Keśava, when I return to Them after having simply fled the battle? What can I tell Them that will befit My honor?”

31“Certainly My sisters-in-law will laugh at Me and say, ‘O hero, tell us how in the world Your enemies turned You into such a coward in battle.’”

32The driver replied: O long-lived one, I have done this knowing full well my prescribed duty. O my Lord, the chariot driver must protect the master of the chariot when he is in danger, and the master must also protect his driver.

33With this rule in mind, I removed You from the battlefield, since You had been struck unconscious by Your enemy’s club and I thought You were seriously injured.

SB 10.77: Lord Kṛṣṇa Slays the Demon Śālva

This chapter describes how Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa disposed of Śālva, the master of deception, and destroyed his airship Saubha.

Having been removed from the battlefield, Pradyumna was extremely ashamed, and He ordered His driver to take His chariot once again into the presence of Dyumān. As Pradyumna fought with Dyumān, other Yadu heroes like Gada, Sātyaki, and Sāmba began to create havoc among Śālva’s army. The battle continued in this way for twenty-seven days and nights.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā, He found it under siege. At once He ordered Dāruka to drive Him onto the battlefield. Suddenly Śālva noticed the Lord and threw his spear at Kṛṣṇa’s charioteer, but the Lord shattered the weapon into hundreds of pieces and pierced Śālva and his Saubha vehicle with numerous arrows. Śālva responded by shooting an arrow that struck Kṛṣṇa’s left arm. Amazingly, the Lord dropped the Śārṅga bow He was holding in His left hand. The demigods watching the battle cried out in alarm upon seeing the bow fall, while Śālva took the opportunity to insult Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then struck Śālva with His club, but the demon, vomiting blood, disappeared. A moment later a man came before Lord Kṛṣṇa and, after offering Him obeisances, introduced himself as a messenger from Mother Devakī. The man informed the Lord that His father, Vasudeva, had been kidnapped by Śālva. Upon hearing this, Lord Kṛṣṇa seemed to lament like an ordinary man. Śālva then led forward someone who looked just like Vasudeva, decapitated him and took the head with him into his Saubha airship. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however, could understand the magic tricks of Śālva. Thus He pierced Śālva with a shower of arrows and struck the Saubha vehicle with His club, demolishing it. Śālva descended from his airplane and rushed toward Lord Kṛṣṇa to attack Him, but the Lord took up His Sudarśana disc and severed Śālva’s head from his body.

With the killing of Śālva, the demigods in the sky played kettledrums in jubilation. The demon Dantavakra then took a vow to avenge his friend Śālva’s death.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After refreshing Himself with water, putting on His armor and picking up His bow, Lord Pradyumna told His driver, “Take Me back to where the hero Dyumān is standing.”

2In Pradyumna’s absence, Dyumān had been devastating His army, but now Pradyumna counterattacked Dyumān and, smiling, pierced him with eight nārāca arrows.

3With four of these arrows He struck Dyumān’s four horses, with one arrow, his driver, with

two more arrows, his bow and chariot flag, and with the last arrow, Dyumān's head.

4Gada, Sātyaki, Sāmba and others began killing Śālva's army, and thus all the soldiers inside the airship began falling into the ocean, their necks severed.

5As the Yadus and Śālva's followers thus went on attacking one another, the tumultuous, fearsome battle continued for twenty-seven days and nights.

6-7Invited by Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, Lord Kṛṣṇa had gone to Indraprastha. Now that the Rājasūya sacrifice had been completed and Śiśupāla killed, the Lord began to see inauspicious omens. So He took leave of the Kuru elders and the great sages, and also of Pṛthā and her sons, and returned to Dvārakā.

8The Lord said to Himself: Because I have come here with My respected elder brother, kings partial to Śiśupāla may well be attacking My capital city.

9[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] After He arrived at Dvārakā and saw how His people were threatened with destruction, and also saw Śālva and his Saubha airship, Lord Keśava arranged for the city's defense and then addressed Dārūka as follows.

10[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O driver, quickly take My chariot near Śālva. This lord of Saubha is a powerful magician; don't let him bewilder you.

11Thus ordered, Dārūka took command of the Lord's chariot and drove forth. As the chariot entered the battlefield, everyone there, both friend and foe, caught sight of the emblem of Garuḍa.

12When Śālva, the master of a decimated army, saw Lord Kṛṣṇa approaching, he hurled his spear at the Lord's charioteer. The spear roared frighteningly as it flew across the battlefield.

13Śālva's hurtling spear lit up the whole sky like a mighty meteor, but Lord Śauri tore the great weapon into hundreds of pieces with His arrows.

14Lord Kṛṣṇa then pierced Śālva with sixteen arrows and struck the Saubha airship with a deluge of arrows as it darted about the sky. Firing His arrows, the Lord appeared like the sun flooding the heavens with its rays.

15Śālva then managed to strike Lord Kṛṣṇa's left arm, which held His bow Śārṅga, and, amazingly, Śārṅga fell from His hand.

16Those who witnessed this all cried out in dismay. Then the master of Saubha roared loudly and addressed Lord Janārdana.

17-18[Śālva said:] You fool! Because in our presence You kidnapped the bride of our friend Śiśupāla, Your own cousin, and because You later murdered him in the sacred assembly while he was inattentive, today with my sharp arrows I will send You to the land of no return! Though You think Yourself invincible, I will kill You now if You dare stand before me.

19The Supreme Lord said: O dullard, you boast in vain, since you fail to see death standing near you. Real heroes do not talk much but rather show their prowess in action.

20Having said this, the furious Lord swung His club with frightening power and speed and hit Śālva on the collarbone, making him tremble and vomit blood.

21But as soon as Lord Acyuta withdrew His club, Śālva disappeared from sight, and a moment

later a man approached the Lord. Bowing his head down to Him, he announced, “Devakī has sent me,” and, sobbing, spoke the following words.

22[The man said:] O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, mighty-armed one, who are so affectionate to Your parents! Śālva has seized Your father and taken him away, as a butcher leads an animal to slaughter.

23When He heard this disturbing news, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was playing the role of a mortal man, showed sorrow and compassion, and out of love for His parents He spoke the following words like an ordinary conditioned soul.

24[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Balarāma is ever vigilant, and no demigod or demon can defeat Him. So how could this insignificant Śālva defeat Him and abduct My father? Indeed, fate is all-powerful!

25After Govinda spoke these words, the master of Saubha again appeared, apparently leading Vasudeva before the Lord. Śālva then spoke as follows.

26[Śālva said:] Here is Your dear father, who begot You and for whose sake You are living in this world. I shall now kill him before Your very eyes. Save him if You can, weakling!

27After he had mocked the Lord in this way, the magician Śālva appeared to cut off Vasudeva’s head with his sword. Taking the head with him, he entered the Saubha vehicle, which was hovering in the sky.

28By nature Lord Kṛṣṇa is full in knowledge, and He possesses unlimited powers of perception. Yet for a moment, out of great affection for His loved ones, He remained absorbed in the mood of an ordinary human being. He soon recalled, however, that this was all a demoniac illusion engineered by Maya Dānava and employed by Śālva.

29Now alert to the actual situation, Lord Acyuta saw before Him on the battlefield neither the messenger nor His father’s body. It was as if He had awakened from a dream. Seeing His enemy flying above Him in his Saubha plane, the Lord then prepared to kill him.

30Such is the account given by some sages, O wise King, but those who speak in this illogical way are contradicting themselves, having forgotten their own previous statements.

31How can lamentation, bewilderment, material affection or fear, all born out of ignorance, be ascribed to the infinite Supreme Lord, whose perception, knowledge and power are all similarly infinite?

32By virtue of self-realization fortified by service rendered to His feet, devotees of the Lord dispel the bodily concept of life, which has bewildered the soul since time immemorial. Thus they attain eternal glory in His personal association. How, then, can that Supreme Truth, the destination of all genuine saints, be subject to illusion?

33While Śālva continued to hurl torrents of weapons at Him with great force, Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose prowess never fails, shot His arrows at Śālva, wounding him and shattering his armor, bow and crest jewel. Then with His club the Lord smashed His enemy’s Saubha airship.

34Shattered into thousands of pieces by Lord Kṛṣṇa’s club, the Saubha airship plummeted into the water. Śālva abandoned it, stationed himself on the ground, took up his club and rushed toward Lord Acyuta.

35As Śālva rushed at Him, the Lord shot a bhalla dart and cut off his arm that held the club. Having finally decided to kill Śālva, Kṛṣṇa then raised His Sudarśana disc weapon, which

resembled the sun at the time of universal annihilation. The brilliantly shining Lord appeared like the easternmost mountain bearing the rising sun.

36Employing His disc, Lord Hari removed that great magician's head with its earrings and crown, just as Purandara had used his thunderbolt to cut off Vṛtra's head. Seeing this, all of Śālva's followers cried out, "Alas, alas!"

37With the sinful Śālva now dead and his Saubha airship destroyed, the heavens resounded with kettledrums played by groups of demigods. Then Dantavakra, wanting to avenge the death of his friends, furiously attacked the Lord.

SB 10.78: The Killing of Dantavakra, Vidūratha and Romaharṣaṇa

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa killed Dantavakra and Vidūratha, visited Vṛndāvana, and then returned to Dvārakā. It also describes how Lord Baladeva killed the offensive Romaharṣaṇa Sūta.

Intent upon avenging the death of his friend Śālva, Dantavakra appeared on the battlefield with club in hand. Lord Kṛṣṇa took up His own club and came before him. Dantavakra then insulted the Lord with harsh words and struck Him a terrific blow on the head. Without budging in the slightest, Lord Kṛṣṇa bludgeoned Dantavakra's chest, shattering his heart. Dantavakra had a brother named Vidūratha, and he became distraught at Dantavakra's death. Taking up his sword, Vidūratha confronted Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but the Lord cut off Vidūratha's head with His Sudarśana disc. Lord Kṛṣṇa then visited Vṛndāvana for two months, and finally He returned to Dvārakā.

When Lord Baladeva heard that the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas were about to go to war, in order to remain neutral He left Dvārakā on the pretext of going on pilgrimage. The Lord bathed in sacred places such as Prabhāsa, Tritakūpa and Viśāla, and eventually He came to the holy Naimiṣāranya forest, where great sages were performing an extended fire sacrifice. While being worshiped by the assembled sages and offered a seat of honor, the Lord noticed that Romaharṣaṇa Sūta, sitting on the speaker's seat, had failed to stand in deference to Him. Greatly angered by this offense, Lord Balarāma killed Romaharṣaṇa by touching him with the tip of a blade of *kuśa* grass.

The assembled sages were disturbed by what Lord Baladeva had done, and they said to Him, "You have unknowingly killed a *brāhmaṇa*. Therefore, even though You are above the Vedic injunctions, we request You to set a perfect example for the general populace by atoning for this sin." Then Śrī Baladeva, following the Vedic maxim that "one's son takes birth as one's own self," granted to Romaharṣaṇa's son Ugraśravā the position of speaker of the *Purāṇas*, and in accordance with the sages' desires He promised Ugraśravā a long life with unflinching sensory capacity.

Wanting to do something more for the sages, Lord Baladeva promised to kill a demon named Balvala, who had been polluting their sacrificial arena. Finally, on the sages' advice, He agreed to go on a year-long pilgrimage of all the holy places in India.

1-2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Acting out of friendship for Śiśupāla, Śālva and Pauṇḍraka, who had all passed on to the next world, the wicked Dantavakra appeared on the battlefield in a great rage, O King. All alone, on foot and wielding a club in his hand, the mighty warrior shook the earth with his footsteps.

3Seeing Dantavakra approach, Lord Kṛṣṇa quickly picked up His club, jumped down from His

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chariot and stopped His advancing opponent just as the shore holds back the ocean.

4Raising his club, the reckless King of Karūṣa said to Lord Mukunda, “What luck! What luck to have You come before me today!

5“You are our maternal cousin, Kṛṣṇa, but You committed violence against my friends, and now You want to kill me also. Therefore, fool, I will kill You with my thunderbolt club.

6“Then, O unintelligent one, I who am obliged to my friends will have repaid my debt to them by killing You, my enemy disguised as a relative, who are like a disease within my body.”

7Thus trying to harass Lord Kṛṣṇa with harsh words, as one might prick an elephant with sharp goads, Dantavakra struck the Lord on the head with his club and roared like a lion.

8Although hit by Dantavakra’s club, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the deliverer of the Yadus, did not budge from His place on the battlefield. Rather, with His massive Kaumodakī club the Lord struck Dantavakra in the middle of his chest.

9His heart shattered by the club’s blow, Dantavakra vomited blood and fell lifeless to the ground, his hair disheveled and his arms and legs sprawling.

10A most subtle and wondrous spark of light then [rose from the demon’s body and] entered Lord Kṛṣṇa while everyone looked on, O King, just as when Śiśupāla was killed.

11But then Dantavakra’s brother Vidūratha, immersed in sorrow over his brother’s death, came forward breathing heavily, sword and shield in hand. He wanted to kill the Lord.

12O best of kings, as Vidūratha fell upon Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa used His razor-edged Sudarśana disc to remove his head, complete with its helmet and earrings.

13-15Having thus destroyed Śālva and his Saubha airship, along with Dantavakra and his younger brother, all of whom were invincible before any other opponent, the Lord was praised by demigods, human beings and great sages, by Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and Mahoragas, and also by Apsarās, Pitās, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and Cāraṇas. As they sang His glories and showered Him with flowers, the Supreme Lord entered His festively decorated capital city in the company of the most eminent Vṛṣṇis.

16Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master all mystic power and Lord of the universe, is ever victorious. Only those of beastly vision think He sometimes suffers defeat.

17Lord Balarāma then heard that the Kurus were preparing for war with the Pāṇḍavas. Being neutral, He departed on the pretext of going to bathe in holy places.

18After bathing at Prabhāsa and honoring the demigods, sages, forefathers and prominent human beings, He went in the company of brāhmaṇas to the portion of the Sarasvatī that flows westward into the sea.

19-20Lord Balarāma visited the broad Bindu-saras Lake, Tritakūpa, Sudarśana, Viśāla, Brahma-tīrtha, Cakra-tīrtha and the eastward-flowing Sarasvatī. He also went to all the holy places along the Yamunā and the Ganges, O Bhārata, and then He came to the Naimiṣa forest, where great sages were performing an elaborate sacrifice.

21Recognizing the Lord upon His arrival, the sages, who had been engaged in their sacrificial rituals for a long time, greeted Him properly by standing up, bowing down and worshipping

Him.

22After being thus worshiped along with His entourage, the Lord accepted a seat of honor. Then He noticed that Romaharṣaṇa, Vyāsadeva's disciple, had remained seated.

23Lord Balarāma became extremely angry upon seeing how this member of the sūta caste had failed to stand up, bow down or join his palms, and also how he was sitting above all the learned brāhmaṇas.

24[Lord Balarāma said:] Because this fool born from an improperly mixed marriage sits above all these brāhmaṇas and even above Me, the protector of religion, he deserves to die.

25-26Although he is a disciple of the divine sage Vyāsa and has thoroughly learned many scriptures from him, including the lawbooks of religious duties and the epic histories and Purāṇas, all this study has not produced good qualities in him. Rather, his study of the scriptures is like an actor's studying his part, for he is not self-controlled or humble and vainly presumes himself a scholarly authority, though he has failed to conquer his own mind.

27The very purpose of My descent into this world is to kill such hypocrites who pretend to be religious. Indeed, they are the most sinful rascals.

28[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Although Lord Balarāma had stopped killing the impious, Romaharṣaṇa's death was inevitable. Thus, having spoken, the Lord killed him by picking up a blade of kuśa grass and touching him with its tip.

29All the sages cried out, "Alas, alas!" in great distress. They told Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, "O master, You have committed an irreligious act!

30"O favorite of the Yadus, we gave him the seat of the spiritual master and promised him long life and freedom from physical pain for as long as this sacrifice continues.

31-32"You have unknowingly killed a brāhmaṇa. Of course, even the injunctions of revealed scripture cannot dictate to You, the Lord of all mystic power. But if by Your own free will You nonetheless carry out the prescribed purification for this slaying of a brāhmaṇa, O purifier of the whole world, people in general will greatly benefit by Your example."

33The Personality of Godhead said: I will certainly perform the atonement for this killing, since I wish to show compassion to the people in general. Please, therefore, prescribe for Me whatever ritual is to be done first.

34O sages, just say the word, and by My mystic power I shall restore everything you promised him long life, strength and sensory power.

35The sages said: Please see to it, O Rāma, that Your power and that of Your kuśa weapon, as well as our promise and Romaharṣaṇa's death, all remain intact.

36The Supreme Lord said: The Vedas instruct us that one's own self takes birth again as one's son. Thus let Romaharṣaṇa's son become the speaker of the Purāṇas, and let him be endowed with long life, strong senses and stamina.

37Please tell Me your desire, O best of sages, and I shall certainly fulfill it. And, O wise souls, please carefully determine My proper atonement, since I do not know what it might be.

38The sages said: A fearsome demon named Balvala, the son of Ilvala, comes here every new-moon day and contaminates our sacrifice.

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39O descendant of Daśārha, please kill that sinful demon, who pours down pus, blood, feces, urine, wine and meat upon us. This is the best service You can do for us.

40Thereafter, for twelve months, You should circumambulate the land of Bhārata in a mood of serious meditation, executing austerities and bathing at various holy pilgrimage sites. In this way You will become purified.

SB 10.79: Lord Balarāma Goes on Pilgrimage

This chapter describes how Lord Baladeva satisfied the *brāhmaṇas* by killing Balvala, bathed at various holy pilgrimage sites and attempted to dissuade Bhīmasena and Duryodhana from fighting.

At the sacrificial arena of the sages at Naimiṣāranya forest, a harsh wind began to blow on the new-moon day, spreading the obnoxious smell of pus and obscuring everything with dust. The demon Balvala then appeared there with a trident in his hand, his massive body pitch black and his face very frightening. Lord Baladeva caught the demon with His plow and then struck him a ferocious blow on the head with His club, killing him. The sages chanted Lord Baladeva's glories and presented Him with lavish gifts.

Lord Balarāma then began His pilgrimage, during which He visited many holy *ūrthas*. When He heard news of the battle between the Kurus and Pāṇḍavas, the Lord went to Kurukṣetra to try to stop the duel between Bhīma and Duryodhana. But He could not dissuade them from fighting, so deep was their enmity. Understanding that the fight was the arrangement of fate, Lord Baladeva left the battlefield and returned to Dvārakā.

Some time later, Balarāma again went to the Naimiṣāranya forest, where the sages performed a number of fire sacrifices on His behalf. Lord Baladeva reciprocated by granting the sages transcendental knowledge and revealing to them His eternal identity.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then, on the new-moon day, O King, a fierce and frightening wind arose, scattering dust all about and spreading the smell of pus everywhere.

2Next, onto the sacrificial arena came a downpour of abominable things sent by Balvala, after which the demon himself appeared, trident in hand.

3-4The immense demon resembled a mass of black carbon. His topknot and beard were like molten copper, and his face had horrible fangs and furrowed eyebrows. Upon seeing him, Lord Balarāma thought of His club, which tears to pieces His enemies' armies, and His plow weapon, which punishes the demons. Thus summoned, His two weapons appeared before Him at once.

5With the tip of His plow Lord Balarāma caught hold of the demon Balvala as he flew through the sky, and with His club the Lord angrily struck that harasser of *brāhmaṇas* on the head.

6Balvala cried out in agony and fell to the ground, his forehead cracked open and gushing blood. He resembled a red mountain struck by a lightning bolt.

7The exalted sages honored Lord Rāma with sincere prayers and awarded Him infallible blessings. Then they performed His ritual bath, just as the demigods had formally bathed Indra when he killed Vṛtra.

8They gave Lord Balarāma a Vaijayantī garland of unfading lotuses in which resided the goddess of fortune, and they also gave Him a set of divine garments and jewelry.

9Then, given leave by the sages, the Lord went with a contingent of brāhmaṇas to the Kauśikī River, where He bathed. From there He went to the lake from which flows the river Sarayū.

10The Lord followed the course of the Sarayū until He came to Prayāga, where He bathed and then performed rituals to propitiate the demigods and other living beings. Next He went to the āśrama of Pulaha Ṛṣi.

11-15Lord Balarāma bathed in the Gomatī, Gaṇḍakī and Vipāśā rivers, and also immersed Himself in the Śoṇa. He went to Gayā, where He worshiped His forefathers, and to the mouth of the Ganges, where He performed purifying ablutions. At Mount Mahendra He saw Lord Paraśurāma and offered Him prayers, and then He bathed in the seven branches of the Godāvārī River, and also in the rivers Veṅā, Pampā and Bhīmarathī. Then Lord Balarāma met Lord Skanda and visited Śrī-śaila, the abode of Lord Giriśa. In the southern provinces known as Draviḍa-deśa the Supreme Lord saw the sacred Veṅkaṭa Hill, as well as the cities of Kāmakoṣṇī and Kāścī, the exalted Kāverī River and the most holy Śrī-raṅga, where Lord Kṛṣṇa has manifested Himself. From there He went to Ṛṣabha Mountain, where Lord Kṛṣṇa also lives, and to the southern Mathurā. Then He came to Setubandha, where the most grievous sins are destroyed.

16-17There at Setubandha [Rāmeśvaram] Lord Halāyudha gave brāhmaṇas ten thousand cows in charity. He then visited the Kṛtamālā and Tāmraparṇī rivers and the great Malaya Mountains. In the Malaya range Lord Balarāma found Agastya Ṛṣi sitting in meditation. After bowing down to the sage, the Lord offered him prayers and then received blessings from him. Taking leave from Agastya, He proceeded to the shore of the southern ocean, where He saw Goddess Durgā in her form of Kanyā-kumārī.

18Next He went to Phālguna-tīrtha and bathed in the sacred Paścāpsarā Lake, where Lord Viṣṇu had directly manifested Himself. At this place He gave away another ten thousand cows.

19-21The Supreme Lord then traveled through the kingdoms of Kerala and Trigarta, visiting Lord Śiva's sacred city of Gokarna, where Lord Dhūrjaṭi [Śiva] directly manifests himself. After also visiting Goddess Pārvatī, who dwells on an island, Lord Balarāma went to the holy district of Śūrpāraka and bathed in the Tāpī, Payoṣṇī and Nirvindhya rivers. He next entered the Daṇḍaka forest and went to the river Revā, along which the city of Māhiṣmatī is found. Then He bathed at Manu-tīrtha and finally returned to Prabhāsa.

22The Lord heard from some brāhmaṇas how all the kings involved in the battle between the Kurus and Pāṇḍavas had been killed. From this He concluded that the earth was now relieved of her burden.

23Wanting to stop the club fight then raging between Bhīma and Duryodhana on the battlefield, Lord Balarāma went to Kurukṣetra.

24When Yudhiṣṭhira, Lord Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna and the twin brothers Nakula and Sahadeva saw Lord Balarāma, they offered Him respectful obeisances but said nothing, thinking "What has He come here to tell us?"

25Lord Balarāma found Duryodhana and Bhīma with clubs in their hands, each furiously striving for victory over the other as they circled about skillfully. The Lord addressed them as follows.

26[Lord Balarāma said:] King Duryodhana! And Bhīma! Listen! You two warriors are equal in fighting prowess. I know that one of you has greater physical power, while the other is better

trained in technique.

27Since you are so evenly matched in fighting prowess, I do not see how either of you can win or lose this duel. Therefore please stop this useless battle.

28[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] They did not accept Lord Balarāma's request, O King, although it was logical, for their mutual enmity was irrevocable. Each of them constantly remembered the insults and injuries he had suffered from the other.

29Concluding that the battle was the arrangement of fate, Lord Balarāma went back to Dvārakā. There He was greeted by Ugrasena and His other relatives, who were all delighted to see Him.

30Later Lord Balarāma returned to Naimiṣāraṇya, where the sages joyfully engaged Him, the embodiment of all sacrifice, in performing various kinds of Vedic sacrifice. Lord Balarāma was now retired from warfare.

31The all-powerful Lord Balarāma bestowed upon the sages pure spiritual knowledge, by which they could see the whole universe within Him and also see Him pervading everything.

32After executing with His wife the avabhṛtha ablutions, the beautifully dressed and ornamented Lord Balarāma, encircled by His immediate family and other relatives and friends, looked as splendid as the moon surrounded by its effulgent rays.

33Countless other such pastimes were performed by mighty Balarāma, the unlimited and immeasurable Supreme Lord, whose mystic Yoga-māyā power makes Him appear to be a human being.

34All the activities of the unlimited Lord Balarāma are amazing. Anyone who regularly remembers them at dawn and dusk will become very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Viṣṇu.

SB 10.80: The Brāhmaṇa Sudāmā Visits Lord Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa worshiped His *brāhmaṇa* friend Sudāmā, who came to His palace seeking charity, and how the two of them discussed the pastimes they had shared while living at the home of their spiritual master, Sāndīpani Muni.

The *brāhmaṇa* Sudāmā, a personal friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa's, was completely free of material desires. He maintained himself and his wife with whatever came of its own accord, and thus they were poverty-stricken. One day Sudāmā's wife, unable to find any food to prepare for her husband, went to him and asked that he visit his friend Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā and beg some charity. Sudāmā was reluctant, but when she persisted he agreed to go, reflecting that an opportunity to see the Lord was extremely auspicious. His wife begged a few handfuls of flattened rice as a gift for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Sudāmā set off for Dvārakā.

As Sudāmā approached the palace of Lord Kṛṣṇa's principal wife, Rukmiṇī-devī, the Lord saw him from a distance. Kṛṣṇa immediately rose from His seat on Rukmiṇī's bed and embraced His friend with great joy. Then He sat Sudāmā down on the bed, washed his feet with His own hands and sprinkled the wash water on His head. After this He presented him with various gifts and worshiped him with incense, lamps and so on. Meanwhile, Rukmiṇī fanned the shabbily dressed *brāhmaṇa* with a yaktail whisk. All of this astonished the residents of the palace.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa then took the hand of His friend, and the two of them reminisced about the things they had done together long ago, while living in the school of their spiritual master.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

Sudāmā pointed out that Kṛṣṇa engages in the pastime of acquiring an education only to set an example for human society.

1King Parīkṣit said: My lord, O master, I wish to hear about other valorous deeds performed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, whose valor is unlimited.

2O brāhmaṇa, how could anyone who knows the essence of life and is disgusted with endeavoring for sense gratification give up the transcendental topics of Lord Uttamaḥśloka after hearing them repeatedly?

3Actual speech is that which describes the qualities of the Lord, real hands are those that work for Him, a true mind is that which always remembers Him dwelling within everything moving and nonmoving, and actual ears are those that listen to sanctifying topics about Him.

4An actual head is one that bows down to the Lord in His manifestations among the moving and nonmoving creatures, real eyes are those that see only the Lord, and actual limbs are those which regularly honor the water that has bathed the Lord's feet or those of His devotees.

5Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus questioned by King Viṣṇurāta, the powerful sage Bādarāyaṇi replied, his heart fully absorbed in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva.

6Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Kṛṣṇa had a certain brāhmaṇa friend [named Sudāmā] who was most learned in Vedic knowledge and detached from all sense enjoyment. Furthermore, his mind was peaceful and his senses subdued.

7Living as a householder, he maintained himself with whatever came of its own accord. The wife of that poorly dressed brāhmaṇa suffered along with him and was emaciated from hunger.

8The chaste wife of the poverty-stricken brāhmaṇa once approached him, her face dried up because of her distress. Trembling with fear, she spoke as follows.

9[Sudāmā's wife said:] O brāhmaṇa, isn't it true that the husband of the goddess of fortune is the personal friend of your exalted self? That greatest of Yādavas, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, is compassionate to brāhmaṇas and very willing to grant them His shelter.

10O fortunate one, please approach Him, the real shelter of all saints. He will certainly give abundant wealth to such a suffering householder as you.

11Lord Kṛṣṇa is now the ruler of the Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas and is staying at Dvārakā. Since He gives even His own self to anyone who simply remembers His lotus feet, what doubt is there that He, the spiritual master of the universe, will bestow upon His sincere worshiper prosperity and material enjoyment, which are not even very desirable?

12-13[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] When his wife thus repeatedly implored him in various ways, the brāhmaṇa thought to himself, "To see Lord Kṛṣṇa is indeed the greatest achievement in life." Thus he decided to go, but first he told her, "My good wife, if there is anything in the house I can bring as a gift, please give it to me."

14Sudāmā's wife begged four handfuls of flat rice from neighboring brāhmaṇas, tied up the rice in a torn piece of cloth and gave it to her husband as a present for Lord Kṛṣṇa.

15Taking the flat rice, the saintly brāhmaṇa set off for Dvārakā, all the while wondering "How will I be able to have Kṛṣṇa's audience?"

16-17The learned brāhmaṇa, joined by some local brāhmaṇas, passed three guard stations and

went through three gateways, and then he walked by the homes of Lord Kṛṣṇa's faithful devotees, the Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis, which ordinarily no one could do. He then entered one of the opulent palaces belonging to Lord Hari's sixteen thousand queens, and when he did so he felt as if he were attaining the bliss of liberation.

18At that time Lord Acyuta was seated on His consort's bed. Spotting the brāhmaṇa at some distance, the Lord immediately stood up, went forward to meet him and with great pleasure embraced him.

19The lotus-eyed Supreme Lord felt intense ecstasy upon touching the body of His dear friend, the wise brāhmaṇa, and thus He shed tears of love.

20-22Lord Kṛṣṇa seated His friend Sudāmā upon the bed. Then the Lord, who purifies the whole world, personally offered him various tokens of respect and washed his feet, O King, after which He sprinkled the water on His own head. He anointed him with divinely fragrant sandalwood, aguru and kuṅkuma pastes and happily worshiped him with aromatic incense and arrays of lamps. After finally offering him betel nut and the gift of a cow, He welcomed him with pleasing words.

23By fanning him with her cāmara, the divine goddess of fortune personally served that poor brāhmaṇa, whose clothing was torn and dirty and who was so thin that veins were visible all over his body.

24The people in the royal palace were astonished to see Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of spotless glory, so lovingly honor this shabbily dressed brāhmaṇa.

25-26[The residents of the palace said:] What pious acts has this unkempt, impoverished brāhmaṇa performed? People regard him as lowly and contemptible, yet the spiritual master of the three worlds, the abode of Goddess Śrī, is serving him reverently. Leaving the goddess of fortune sitting on her bed, the Lord has embraced this brāhmaṇa as if he were an older brother.

27[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Taking each other's hands, O King, Kṛṣṇa and Sudāmā talked pleasantly about how they once lived together in the school of their guru.

28The Supreme Lord said: My dear brāhmaṇa, you know well the ways of dharma. After you offered the gift of remuneration to our guru and returned home from his school, did you marry a compatible wife or not?

29Even though you are mostly involved in household affairs, your mind is not affected by material desires. Nor, O learned one, do you take much pleasure in the pursuit of material wealth. This I am well aware of.

30Having renounced all material propensities, which spring from the Lord's illusory energy, some people execute worldly duties with their minds undisturbed by mundane desires. They act as I do, to instruct the general populace.

31My dear brāhmaṇa, do you remember how we lived together in our spiritual master's school? When a twice-born student has learned from his guru all that is to be learned, he can enjoy spiritual life, which lies beyond all ignorance.

32My dear friend, he who gives a person his physical birth is his first spiritual master, and he who initiates him as a twice-born brāhmaṇa and engages him in religious duties is indeed more directly his spiritual master. But the person who bestows transcendental knowledge upon the members of all the spiritual orders of society is one's ultimate spiritual master. Indeed, he is as

good as My own self.

33Certainly, O brāhmaṇa, of all the followers of the varṇāśrama system, those who take advantage of the words I speak in My form as the spiritual master and thus easily cross over the ocean of material existence best understand their own true welfare.

34I, the Soul of all beings, am not as satisfied by ritual worship, brahminical initiation, penances or self-discipline as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master.

35-36O brāhmaṇa, do you remember what happened to us while we were living with our spiritual master? Once our guru's wife sent us to fetch firewood, and after we entered the vast forest, O twice-born one, an unseasonal storm arose, with fierce wind and rain and harsh thunder.

37Then, as the sun set, the forest was covered by darkness in every direction, and with all the flooding we could not distinguish high land from low.

38Constantly besieged by the powerful wind and rain, we lost our way amidst the flooding waters. We simply held each other's hands and, in great distress, wandered aimlessly about the forest.

39Our guru, Sāṅdīpani, understanding our predicament, set out after sunrise to search for us, his disciples, and found us in distress.

40[Sāṅdīpani said:] O my children, you have suffered so much for my sake! The body is most dear to every living creature, but you are so dedicated to me that you completely disregarded your own comfort.

41This indeed is the duty of all true disciples: to repay the debt to their spiritual master by offering him, with pure hearts, their wealth and even their very lives.

42You boys are first-class brāhmaṇas, and I am satisfied with you. May all your desires be fulfilled, and may the Vedic mantras you have learned never lose their meaning for you, in this world or the next.

43[Lord Kṛṣṇa continued:] We had many similar experiences while living in our spiritual master's home. Simply by the grace of the spiritual master a person can fulfill life's purpose and attain eternal peace.

44The brāhmaṇa said: What could I possibly have failed to achieve, O Lord of lords, O universal teacher, since I was able to personally live with You, whose every desire is fulfilled, at the home of our spiritual master?

45O almighty Lord, Your body comprises the Absolute Truth in the form of the Vedas and is thus the source of all auspicious goals of life. That You took up residence at the school of a spiritual master is simply one of Your pastimes in which You play the role of a human being.

SB 10.81: The Lord Blesses Sudāmā Brāhmaṇa

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa ate a morsel of the flat rice brought by His friend Sudāmā and bestowed upon him wealth greater than that of the King of heaven.

In the course of His loving talks with His friend Sudāmā, Lord Kṛṣṇa said, “My dear *brāhmaṇa*,

have you brought any gift for Me from home? I regard as very significant even the smallest offering from My loving devotee.” But the poor *brāhmaṇa* was ashamed to present Kṛṣṇa with his meager gift of flat rice. However, since Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul dwelling in all hearts, He knew why Sudāmā had come to visit Him. So He grabbed the bundle of flat rice Sudāmā was hiding and ate a handful of it with great pleasure. He was about to eat a second morsel when Rukmiṇī devī stopped Him.

Feeling as if he had gone back to Godhead, Sudāmā spent that night comfortably in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s palace, and the next morning he set off for home. As he passed along the highway, he thought of how fortunate he was to have been so honored by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Absorbed in this meditation, Sudāmā arrived at the place where his home used to be and he was struck with great wonder. Instead of his broken-down hovel, he saw a series of opulent palaces. While he stood astonished, a group of beautiful men and women came forward to greet him with singing and music. The *brāhmaṇa*’s wife, wonderfully adorned with celestial jewelry, came out of the palace and welcomed him with great love and reverence. Sudāmā entered his home together with her, thinking that this extraordinary transformation must have been due to the Supreme Lord’s mercy on him.

From then on Sudāmā lived his life amidst lavish wealth, yet he maintained his mood of detachment and constantly chanted the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In a short time he broke off all bonds of bodily attachment and attained to the kingdom of God.

1-2[Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:] Lord Hari, Kṛṣṇa, perfectly knows the hearts of all living beings, and He is especially devoted to the *brāhmaṇas*. While the Supreme Lord, the goal of all saintly persons, conversed in this way with the best of the twice-born, He laughed and spoke the following words to that dear friend of His, the *brāhmaṇa* Sudāmā, all the while smiling and looking upon him with affection.

3The Supreme Lord said: O *brāhmaṇa*, what gift have you brought Me from home? I regard as great even the smallest gift offered by My devotees in pure love, but even great offerings presented by nondevotees do not please Me.

4If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I will accept it.

5[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Even after being addressed in this way, O King, the *brāhmaṇa* felt too embarrassed to offer his palmfuls of flat rice to the husband of the goddess of fortune. He simply kept his head bowed in shame.

6-7Being the direct witness in the hearts of all living beings, Lord Kṛṣṇa fully understood why Sudāmā had come to see Him. Thus He thought, “In the past My friend has never worshiped Me out of a desire for material opulence, but now he comes to Me to satisfy his chaste and devoted wife. I will give him riches that even the immortal demigods cannot obtain.”

8Thinking like this, the Lord snatched from the *brāhmaṇa*’s garment the grains of flat rice tied up in an old piece of cloth and exclaimed, “What is this?”

9“My friend, have You brought this for Me? It gives Me extreme pleasure. Indeed, these few grains of flat rice will satisfy not only Me but also the entire universe.”

10After saying this, the Supreme Lord ate one palmful and was about to eat a second when the devoted goddess Rukmiṇī took hold of His hand.

11[Queen Rukmiṇī said:] This is more than enough, O Soul of the universe, to secure him an abundance of all kinds of wealth in this world and the next. After all, one’s prosperity depends

simply on Your satisfaction.

12[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] The brāhmaṇa spent that night in Lord Acyuta's palace after eating and drinking to his full satisfaction. He felt as if he had gone to the spiritual world.

13The next day, Sudāmā set off for home while being honored by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the self-satisfied maintainer of the universe. The brāhmaṇa felt greatly delighted, my dear King, as he walked along the road.

14Although he had apparently received no wealth from Lord Kṛṣṇa, Sudāmā was too shy to beg for it on his own. He simply returned home, feeling perfectly satisfied to have had the Supreme Lord's audience.

15[Sudāmā thought:] Lord Kṛṣṇa is known to be devoted to the brāhmaṇas, and now I have personally seen this devotion. Indeed, He who carries the goddess of fortune on His chest has embraced the poorest beggar.

16Who am I? A sinful, poor friend of a brāhmaṇa. And who is Kṛṣṇa? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in six opulences. Nonetheless, He has embraced me with His two arms.

17He treated me just like one of His brothers, making me sit on the bed of His beloved consort. And because I was fatigued, His queen personally fanned me with a yak-tail cāmara.

18Although He is the Lord of all demigods and the object of worship for all brāhmaṇas, He worshiped me as if I were a demigod myself, massaging my feet and rendering other humble services.

19Devotional service to His lotus feet is the root cause of all the perfections a person can find in heaven, in liberation, in the subterranean regions and on earth.

20Thinking "If this poor wretch suddenly becomes rich, he will forget Me in his intoxicating happiness," the compassionate Lord did not grant me even a little wealth.

21-23[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thinking thus to himself, Sudāmā finally came to the place where his home stood. But that place was now crowded on all sides with towering, celestial palaces rivaling the combined brilliance of the sun, fire and the moon. There were splendid courtyards and gardens, each filled with flocks of cooing birds and beautified by ponds in which kumuda, ambhoja, kahlāra and utpala lotuses grew. Finely attired men and doe-eyed women stood in attendance. Sudāmā wondered, "What is all this? Whose property is it? How has this all come about?"

24As he continued to ponder in this way, the beautiful men and maidservants, as effulgent as demigods, came forward to greet their greatly fortunate master with loud song and instrumental music.

25When she heard that her husband had arrived, the brāhmaṇa's wife quickly came out of the house in a jubilant flurry. She resembled the goddess of fortune herself emerging from her divine abode.

26When the chaste lady saw her husband, her eyes filled with tears of love and eagerness. As she held her eyes closed, she solemnly bowed down to him, and in her heart she embraced him.

27Sudāmā was amazed to see his wife. Shining forth in the midst of maidservants adorned with jeweled lockets, she looked as effulgent as a demigoddess in her celestial airplane.

28With pleasure he took his wife with him and entered his house, where there were hundreds of gem-studded pillars, just as in the palace of Lord Mahendra.

29-32In Sudāmā's home were beds as soft and white as the foam of milk, with bedsteads made of ivory and ornamented with gold. There were also couches with golden legs, as well as royal cāmara fans, golden thrones, soft cushions and gleaming canopies hung with strings of pearls. Upon the walls of sparkling crystal glass, inlaid with precious emeralds, shone jeweled lamps, and the women in the palace were all adorned with precious gems. As he viewed this luxurious opulence of all varieties, the brāhmaṇa calmly reasoned to himself about his unexpected prosperity.

33[Sudāmā thought:] I have always been poor. Certainly the only possible way that such an unfortunate person as myself could become suddenly rich is that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supremely opulent chief of the Yadu dynasty, has glanced upon Me.

34After all, my friend Kṛṣṇa, the most exalted of the Dāśārhas and the enjoyer of unlimited wealth, noticed that I secretly intended to beg from Him. Thus even though He said nothing about it when I stood before Him, He actually bestowed upon me the most abundant riches. In this way He acted just like a merciful rain cloud.

35The Lord considers even His greatest blessings to be insignificant, while He magnifies even a small service rendered to Him by His well-wishing devotee. Thus with pleasure the Supreme Soul accepted a single palmful of the flat rice I brought Him.

36The Lord is the supremely compassionate reservoir of all transcendental qualities. Life after life may I serve Him with love, friendship and sympathy, and may I cultivate such firm attachment for Him by the precious association of His devotees.

37To a devotee who lacks spiritual insight, the Supreme Lord will not grant the wonderful opulences of this worldkingly power and material assets. Indeed, in His infinite wisdom the unborn Lord well knows how the intoxication of pride can cause the downfall of the wealthy.

38[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus firmly fixing his determination by means of his spiritual intelligence, Sudāmā remained absolutely devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the shelter of all living beings. Free from avarice, he enjoyed, together with his wife, the sense pleasures that had been bestowed upon him, always with the idea of eventually renouncing all sense gratification.

39Lord Hari is the God of all gods, the master of all sacrifices, and the supreme ruler. But He accepts the saintly brāhmaṇas as His masters, and so there exists no deity higher than them.

40Thus seeing how the unconquerable Supreme Lord is nonetheless conquered by His own servants, the Lord's dear brāhmaṇa friend felt the remaining knots of material attachment within his heart being cut by the force of his constant meditation on the Lord. In a short time he attained Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme abode, the destination of great saints.

41The Lord always shows brāhmaṇas special favor. Anyone who hears this account of the Supreme Lord's kindness to brāhmaṇas will come to develop love for the Lord and thus become freed from the bondage of material work.

SB 10.82: Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma Meet the Inhabitants of Vṛndāvana

This chapter describes how the Yādavas and many other kings met at Kurukṣetra during a solar

eclipse and discussed topics concerning Lord Kṛṣṇa. It also relates how Kṛṣṇa met Nanda Mahārāja and the other residents of Vṛndāvana at Kurukṣetra and gave them great joy.

Hearing that a total eclipse of the sun was soon to occur, people from all over Bhārata-varṣa, including the Yādavas, converged at Kurukṣetra to earn special pious credit. After the Yadus had bathed and performed other obligatory rituals, they noticed that kings of Matsya, Uśīnara and other places had also come, as well as Nanda Mahārāja and the cowherd community of Vraja, who were always feeling the intense anxiety of separation from Kṛṣṇa. The Yādavas, overjoyed to see all these old friends, embraced them one by one as they shed tears of happiness. Their wives also embraced one another with great pleasure.

When Queen Kuntī saw her brother Vasudeva and other members of her family, she put aside her sorrow. Yet still she said to Vasudeva, “O brother, I am so unfortunate, because all of you forgot me during my tribulations. Alas, even one’s relatives forget a person whom Providence no longer favors.”

Vasudeva replied, “My dear sister, everyone is merely a plaything of fate. We Yādavas were so harassed by Kāṁsa that we were forced to scatter and take shelter in foreign lands. So there was no way for us to keep in touch with you.”

The kings present were struck with wonder upon beholding Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His wives, and they began to glorify the Yādavas for having gotten the Lord’s personal association. Seeing Nanda Mahārāja, the Yādavas were delighted, and each of them embraced him tightly. Vasudeva also embraced Nanda with great joy and remembered how, when Vasudeva was tormented by Kāṁsa, Nanda had taken his sons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, under his protection. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa embraced and bowed down to mother Yaśodā, but Their throats choked up with emotion and they could say nothing to her. Nanda and Yaśodā lifted their two sons onto their laps and embraced Them, and in this way they relieved the distress of separation. Rohiṇī and Devakī both embraced Yaśodā and, remembering the great friendship she had shown them, told her that the kindness she had done by raising and supporting Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma could not be repaid even with the wealth of Indra.

Then the Supreme Lord approached the young cowherd girls in a secluded place. He consoled them by pointing out that He is all-pervasive, being the source of all energies, and thus He implied that they could never be separated from Him. Having been at long last reunited with Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* prayed simply to have His lotus feet manifested in their hearts.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Once, while Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were living in Dvārakā, there occurred a great eclipse of the sun, just as if the end of Lord Brahmā’s day had come.

2Knowing of this eclipse in advance, O King, many people went to the holy place known as Samanta-paścaka in order to earn pious credit.

3-6After ridding the earth of kings, Lord Paraśurāma, the foremost of warriors, created huge lakes from the kings’ blood at Samantaka-paścaka. Although he is never tainted by karmic reactions, Lord Paraśurāma performed sacrifices there to instruct people in general; thus he acted like an ordinary person trying to free himself of sins. From all parts of Bhārata-varṣa a great number of people now came to that Samanta-paścaka on pilgrimage. O descendant of Bharata, among those arriving at the holy place were many Vṛṣṇis, such as Gada, Pradyumna and Sāmba, hoping to be relieved of their sins; Akrūra, Vasudeva, Āhuka and other kings also went there. Aniruddha remained in Dvārakā with Sucandra, Śuka and Sāraṇa to guard the city, together with Kṛtavarmā, the commander of their armed forces.

7-8The mighty Yādavas passed with great majesty along the road. They were attended by their soldiers, who rode on chariots rivaling the airplanes of heaven, on horses moving with a rhythmic gait, and on bellowing elephants as huge as clouds. Also with them were many infantrymen as effulgent as celestial Vidyādhara. The Yādavas were so divinely dressed being adorned with gold necklaces and flower garlands and wearing fine armor that as they proceeded along the road with their wives they seemed to be demigods flying through the sky.

9At Samanta-paścaka, the saintly Yādavas bathed and then observed a fast with careful attention. Afterward they presented brāhmaṇas with cows bedecked with garments, flower garlands and gold necklaces.

10In accordance with scriptural injunctions, the descendants of Vṛṣṇi then bathed once more in Lord Paraśurāma's lakes and fed first-class brāhmaṇas with sumptuous food. All the while they prayed, "May we be granted devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa."

11Then, with the permission of Lord Kṛṣṇa, their sole object of worship, the Vṛṣṇis ate breakfast and sat down at their leisure beneath trees that gave cooling shade.

12-13The Yādavas saw that many of the kings who had arrived were old friends and relatives the Matsyas, Uśīnaras, Kauśalyas, Vidarbhas, Kurus, Śṛṅjayas, Kāmbhojas, Kaikayas, Madras, Kuntīs and the kings of Ānarta and Kerala. They also saw many hundreds of other kings, both allies and adversaries. In addition, my dear King Parīkṣit, they saw their dear friends Nanda Mahārāja and the cowherd men and women, who had been suffering in anxiety for so long.

14As the great joy of seeing one another made the lotuses of their hearts and faces bloom with fresh beauty, the men embraced one another enthusiastically. With tears pouring from their eyes, the hair on their bodies standing on end and their voices choked up, they all felt intense bliss.

15The women glanced at one another with pure smiles of loving friendship. And when they embraced, their breasts, smeared with saffron paste, pressed against one another as their eyes filled with tears of affection.

16They all then offered obeisances to their elders and received respect in turn from their younger relatives. After inquiring from one another about the comfort of their trip and their well-being, they proceeded to talk about Kṛṣṇa.

17Queen Kuntī met with her brothers and sisters and their children, and also with her parents, her brothers' wives and Lord Mukunda. While talking with them she forgot her sorrow.

18Queen Kuntī said: My dear, respectable brother, I feel that my desires have been frustrated, because although all of you are most saintly, you forgot me during my calamities.

19Friends and family memberseven children, brothers and parentsforget a dear one whom Providence no longer favors.

20Śrī Vasudeva said: Dear sister, please do not be angry with us. We are only ordinary men, playthings of fate. Indeed, whether a person acts on his own or is forced by others, he is always under the Supreme Lord's control.

21Harassed by Kāṁsa, we all fled in various directions, but by the grace of Providence we have now finally been able to return to our homes, my dear sister.

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22Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Vasudeva, Ugrasena and the other Yadus honored the various kings, who became supremely blissful and content upon seeing Lord Acyuta.

23-26All the royalty present, including Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī and her sons, the Pāṇḍavas and their wives, Kuntī, Saṅjaya, Vidura, Kṛpācārya, Kuntībhoja, Virāṭa, Bhīṣmaka, the great Nagnajit, Purujit, Drupada, Śalya, Dhṛṣṭaketu, Kāśirāja, Damaghoṣa, Viśālākṣa, Maithila, Madra, Kekaya, Yudhāmanyu, Suśarmā, Bāhlika with his associates and their sons, and the many other kings subservient to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhiraall of them, O best of kings, were simply amazed to see the transcendental form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the abode of all opulence and beauty, standing before them with His consorts.

27After Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa had liberally honored them, with great joy and enthusiasm these kings began to praise the members of the Vṛṣṇi clan, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's personal associates.

28[The kings said:] O King of the Bhojas, you alone among men have achieved a truly exalted birth, for you continually behold Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is rarely visible even to great yogīs.

29-30His fame, as broadcast by the Vedas, the water that has washed His feet, and the words He speaks in the form of the revealed scriptures these thoroughly purify this universe. Although the earth's good fortune was ravaged by time, the touch of His lotus feet has revitalized her, and thus she is raining down on us the fulfillment of all our desires. The same Lord Viṣṇu who makes one forget the goals of heaven and liberation has now entered into marital and blood relationships with you, who otherwise travel on the hellish path of family life. Indeed, in these relationships you see and touch Him directly, walk beside Him, converse with Him, and together with Him lie down to rest, sit at ease and take your meals.

31Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Nanda Mahārāja learned that the Yadus had arrived, led by Kṛṣṇa, he immediately went to see them. The cowherds accompanied him, their various possessions loaded on their wagons.

32Seeing Nanda, the Vṛṣṇis were delighted and stood up like dead bodies coming back to life. Having felt much distress at not seeing him for so long, they held him in a tight embrace.

33Vasudeva embraced Nanda Mahārāja with great joy. Beside himself with ecstatic love, Vasudeva remembered the troubles Kāmsa had caused him, forcing him to leave his sons in Gokula for Their safety.

34O hero of the Kurus, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma embraced Their foster parents and bowed down to them, but Their throats were so choked up with tears of love that the two Lords could say nothing.

35Raising their two sons onto their laps and holding Them in their arms, Nanda and saintly mother Yaśodā forgot their sorrow.

36Then Rohiṇī and Devakī both embraced the Queen of Vraja, remembering the faithful friendship she had shown them. Their throats choking with tears, they addressed her as follows.

37[Rohiṇī and Devakī said:] What woman could forget the unceasing friendship you and Nanda have shown us, dear Queen of Vraja? There is no way to repay you in this world, even with the wealth of Indra.

38Before these two boys had ever seen Their real parents, you acted as Their parents and gave

Them all affectionate care, training, nourishment and protection. They were never afraid, good lady, because you protected Them just as eyelids protect the eyes. Indeed, saintly persons like you never discriminate between outsiders and their own kin.

39Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While gazing at their beloved Kṛṣṇa, the young gopīs used to condemn the creator of their eyelids, [which would momentarily block their vision of Him]. Now, seeing Kṛṣṇa again after such a long separation, with their eyes they took Him into their hearts, and there they embraced Him to their full satisfaction. In this way they became totally absorbed in ecstatic meditation on Him, although those who constantly practice mystic yoga find such absorption difficult to achieve.

40The Supreme Lord approached the gopīs in a secluded place as they stood in their ecstatic trance. After embracing each of them and inquiring about their well-being, He laughed and spoke as follows.

41[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] My dear girlfriends, do you still remember Me? It was for My relatives' sake that I stayed away so long, intent on destroying My enemies.

42Do you perhaps think I'm ungrateful and thus hold Me in contempt? After all, it is the Supreme Lord who brings living beings together and then separates them.

43Just as the wind brings together masses of clouds, blades of grass, wisps of cotton and particles of dust, only to scatter them all again, so the creator deals with His created beings in the same way.

44Rendering devotional service to Me qualifies any living being for eternal life. But by your good fortune you have developed a special loving attitude toward Me, by which you have obtained Me.

45Dear ladies, I am the beginning and end of all created beings and exist both within and without them, just as the elements ether, water, earth, air and fire are the beginning and end of all material objects and exist both within and without them.

46In this way all created things reside within the basic elements of creation, while the spirit souls pervade the creation, remaining in their own true identity. You should see both of these the material creation and the self as manifest within Me, the imperishable Supreme Truth.

47Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus been instructed by Kṛṣṇa in spiritual matters, the gopīs were freed of all tinges of false ego because of their incessant meditation upon Him. And with their deepening absorption in Him, they came to understand Him fully.

48The gopīs spoke thus: Dear Lord, whose navel is just like a lotus flower, Your lotus feet are the only shelter for those who have fallen into the deep well of material existence. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic yogīs and highly learned philosophers. We wish that these lotus feet may also be awakened within our hearts, although we are only ordinary persons engaged in household affairs.

SB 10.83: Draupadī Meets the Queens of Kṛṣṇa

This chapter relates a conversation between Draupadī and Lord Kṛṣṇa's foremost queens, in which each of them describes how the Lord married her.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa returned from His meeting with the *gopīs* and asked King Yudhiṣṭhira and His other relatives whether they were well. They replied, "My Lord, anyone who has just once imbibed through his ears the honey of Your pastimes can never know misfortune."

Then Draupadī inquired from Lord Kṛṣṇa’s wives how the Lord had come to marry them. Queen Rukmiṇī spoke first: “Many kings, headed by Jarāsandha, were intent on giving me in marriage to Śīsupāla. Thus at my wedding they all stood with bows in hand, ready to support Śīsupāla against any opponents. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa came and forcibly took me away, as a lion takes his prey from amidst goats and sheep.”

Queen Satyabhāmā said, “When my uncle Prasena was killed, my father, Satrājī, falsely accused Lord Kṛṣṇa of murder. To clear His name, Kṛṣṇa defeated Jāmbavān, recovered the Syamantaka jewel and returned it to Satrājī. Repentant, my father presented the Lord with both the jewel and myself.”

Queen Jāmbavatī said, “When Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered my father’s cave in search of the Syamantaka jewel, at first my father, Jāmbavān, did not understand who He was. So my father fought with Him for twenty-seven days and nights. Finally, Jāmbavān understood that Kṛṣṇa was none other than Lord Rāmacandra, his worshipable Lord. Thus he gave Kṛṣṇa the Syamantaka jewel, along with me.”

Queen Kālindī said, “To obtain Kṛṣṇa as my husband, I performed severe austerities. Then one day Lord Kṛṣṇa came to me in the company of Arjuna, and at that time the Lord agreed to marry me.”

Queen Mitravindā said, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to my *svayamvara* ceremony, where He defeated all the opposing kings and took me away to His city of Dvārakā.”

Queen Satyā said, “My father stipulated that to win my hand, a prospective suitor would have to subdue and tie up seven powerful bulls. Accepting this challenge, Lord Kṛṣṇa playfully subdued them, defeated all His rival suitors and married me.”

Queen Bhadrā said, “My father invited his nephew Kṛṣṇa, to whom I had already given my heart, and offered me to Him as His bride. The dowry was an entire military division and a retinue of my female companions.”

Queen Lakṣmaṇā said to Draupadī, “At my *svayamvara*, as at yours, a fish-target was fastened near the ceiling. But in my case the fish was concealed on all sides, and only its reflection could be seen in a pot of water below. Several kings tried to hit the fish with an arrow but failed. Arjuna then made his attempt. He concentrated on the reflection of the fish in the water and took careful aim, but when he released his arrow it only grazed the target. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa fixed His arrow on the bow and shot it straight through the target, knocking it to the ground. I placed the victory necklace on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s neck, but the kings who had failed raised a violent protest. Lord Kṛṣṇa valiantly fought them, cutting off the heads, arms and legs of many and sending the rest fleeing for their lives. Then the Lord took me to Dvārakā for our lavish wedding.”

Rohiṇī-devī, representing all the other queens, explained that they were daughters of the kings defeated by Bhaumāsura. The demon had held them captive, but when Lord Kṛṣṇa killed him He had released them and married them all.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the gopīs and the very purpose of their life, showed them His mercy. He then met with Yudhiṣṭhira and all His other relatives and inquired from them about their welfare.

2Feeling greatly honored, King Yudhiṣṭhira and the others, freed of all sinful reactions by seeing the feet of the Lord of the universe, gladly answered His inquiries.

3[Lord Kṛṣṇa's relatives said:] O master, how can misfortune arise for those who have even once freely drunk the nectar coming from Your lotus feet? This intoxicating liquor pours into the drinking cups of their ears, having flowed from the minds of great devotees through their mouths. It destroys the embodied souls' forgetfulness of the creator of their bodily existence.

4The radiance of Your personal form dispels the threefold effects of material consciousness, and by Your grace we become immersed in total happiness. Your knowledge is indivisible and unrestricted. By Your Yoga-māyā potency You have assumed this human form for protecting the Vedas, which had been threatened by time. We bow down to You, the final destination of perfect saints.

5The great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: As Yudhiṣṭhira and the others were thus praising Lord Kṛṣṇa, the crest jewel of all sublimely glorified personalities, the women of the Andhaka and Kaurava clans met with one another and began discussing topics about Govinda that are sung throughout the three worlds. Please listen as I relate these to you.

6-7Śrī Draupadī said: O Vaidarbhī, Bhadrā and Jāmbavatī, O Kauśalā, Satyabhāmā and Kālindī, O Śaibyā, Rohiṇī, Lakṣmaṇā and other wives of Lord Kṛṣṇa, please tell me how the Supreme Lord Acyuta, imitating the ways of this world by His mystic power, came to marry each of you.

8Śrī Rukmiṇī said: When all the kings held their bows at the ready to assure that I would be presented to Śiśupāla, He who puts the dust of His feet on the heads of invincible warriors took me from their midst, as a lion forcibly takes his prey from the midst of goats and sheep. May I always be allowed to worship those feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the abode of Goddess Śrī.

9Śrī Satyabhāmā said: My father, his heart tormented by his brother's death, accused Kṛṣṇa of killing him. To remove the stain on His reputation, the Lord defeated the king of the bears and took back the Syamantaka jewel, which He then returned to my father. Fearing the consequences of his offense, my father offered me to the Lord, even though I had already been promised to others.

10Śrī Jāmbavatī said: Unaware that Lord Kṛṣṇa was none other than his own master and worshipable Deity, the husband of Goddess Sītā, my father fought with Him for twenty-seven days. When my father finally came to his senses and recognized the Lord, he took hold of His feet and presented Him with both me and the Syamantaka jewel as tokens of his reverence. I am simply the Lord's maidservant.

11Śrī Kālindī said: The Lord knew I was performing severe austerities and penances with the hope of one day touching His lotus feet. So He came to me in the company of His friend and took my hand in marriage. Now I am engaged as a sweeper in His palace.

12Śrī Mitravindā said: At my svayamvara ceremony He came forward, defeated all the kings present including my brothers, who dared insult Him and took me away just as a lion removes his prey from amidst a pack of dogs. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, the shelter of the goddess of fortune, brought me to His capital city. May I be allowed to serve Him by washing His feet, life after life.

13-14Śrī Satyā said: My father arranged for seven extremely powerful and vigorous bulls with deadly sharp horns to test the prowess of the kings who desired my hand in marriage. Although these bulls destroyed the false pride of many heroes, Lord Kṛṣṇa subdued them effortlessly, tying them up in the same way that children playfully tie up a goat's kids. He thus purchased me with His valor. Then He took me away with my maidservants and a full army of four divisions, defeating all the kings who opposed Him along the road. May I be granted the privilege of serving that Lord.

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15-16Śrī Bhadrā said: My dear Draupadī, of his own free will my father invited his nephew Kṛṣṇa, to whom I had already dedicated my heart, and offered me to Him as His bride. My father presented me to the Lord with an akṣauhiṇi military guard and a retinue of my female companions. My ultimate perfection is this: to always be allowed to touch Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet as I wander from life to life, bound by my karma.

17Śrī Lakṣmaṇā said: O Queen, I repeatedly heard Nārada Muni glorify the appearances and activities of Acyuta, and thus my heart also became attached to that Lord, Mukunda. Indeed, even Goddess Padmahastā chose Him as her husband after careful consideration, rejecting the great demigods who rule various planets.

18My father, Bṛhatsena, was by nature compassionate to his daughter, and knowing how I felt, O saintly lady, he arranged to fulfill my desire.

19Just as a fish was used as a target in your svayaṁvara ceremony, O Queen, to assure that you would obtain Arjuna as your husband, so a fish was also used in my ceremony. In my case, however, it was concealed on all sides, and only its reflection could be seen in a pot of water below.

20Hearing of this, thousands of kings expert in shooting arrows and in wielding other weapons converged from all directions on my father's city, accompanied by their military teachers.

21My father properly honored each king according to his strength and seniority. Then those whose minds were fixed on me took up the bow and arrow and one by one tried to pierce the target in the midst of the assembly.

22Some of them picked up the bow but could not string it, and so they threw it aside in frustration. Some managed to pull the bowstring toward the tip of the bow, only to have the bow spring back and knock them to the ground.

23A few heroesnamely Jarāsandha, Śiśupāla, Bhīma, Duryodhana, Karṇa and the King of Ambaṣṭhasucceeded in stringing the bow, but none of them could find the target.

24Then Arjuna looked at the reflection of the fish in the water and determined its position. When he carefully shot his arrow at it, however, he did not pierce the target but merely grazed it.

25-26After all the arrogant kings had given up, their pride broken, the Supreme Personality of Godhead picked up the bow, easily strung it and then fixed His arrow upon it. As the sun stood in the constellation Abhijit, He looked at the fish in the water only once and then pierced it with the arrow, knocking it to the ground.

27Kettledrums resounded in the sky, and on the earth people shouted "Jaya! Jaya!" Overjoyed, demigods showered flowers.

28Just then I walked onto the ceremonial ground, the ankle bells on my feet gently tinkling. I was wearing new garments of the finest silk, tied with a belt, and I carried a brilliant necklace fashioned of gold and jewels. There was a shy smile on my face and a wreath of flowers in my hair.

29I lifted my face, which was encircled by my abundant locks and effulgent from the glow of my earrings reflected from my cheeks. Smiling coolly, I glanced about. Then, looking around at all the kings, I slowly placed the necklace on the shoulder of Murāri, who had captured my heart.

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30Just then there were loud sounds of conchshells and mṛdaṅga, paṭaha, bherī and ānaka drums, as well as other instruments. Men and women began to dance, and singers began to sing.

31The leading kings there could not tolerate my having chosen the Supreme Personality of Godhead, O Draupadī. Burning with lust, they became quarrelsome.

32The Lord then placed me on His chariot, drawn by four most excellent horses. Donning His armor and readying His bow Śārṅga, He stood on the chariot, and there on the battleground He manifested His four arms.

33Dārūka drove the Lord's gold-trimmed chariot as the kings looked on, O Queen, like small animals helplessly watching a lion.

34The kings pursued the Lord like village dogs chasing a lion. Some kings, raising their bows, stationed themselves on the road to stop Him as He passed by.

35These warriors were deluged by arrows shot from the Lord's bow, Śārṅga. Some of the kings fell on the battlefield with severed arms, legs and necks; the rest gave up the fight and fled.

36The Lord of the Yadus then entered His capital city, Kuśasthalī [Dvārakā], which is glorified in heaven and on earth. The city was elaborately decorated with flagpoles carrying banners that blocked the sun, and also with splendid archways. As Lord Kṛṣṇa entered, He appeared like the sun-god entering his abode.

37My father honored his friends, family and in-laws with priceless clothing and jewelry and with royal beds, thrones and other furnishings.

38With devotion he presented the perfectly complete Lord with a number of maidservants bedecked with precious ornaments. Accompanying these maidservants were guards walking on foot and others riding elephants, chariots and horses. He also gave the Lord extremely valuable weapons.

39Thus, by renouncing all material association and practicing austere penances, we queens have all become personal maidservants of the self-satisfied Supreme Lord.

40Rohiṇī-devi, speaking for the other queens, said: After killing Bhaumāsura and his followers, the Lord found us in the demon's prison and could understand that we were the daughters of the kings whom Bhauma had defeated during his conquest of the earth. The Lord set us free, and because we had been constantly meditating upon His lotus feet, the source of liberation from material entanglement, He agreed to marry us, though His every desire is already fulfilled.

41-42O saintly lady, we do not desire dominion over the earth, the sovereignty of the King of heaven, unlimited facility for enjoyment, mystic power, the position of Lord Brahmā, immortality or even attainment of the kingdom of God. We simply desire to carry on our heads the glorious dust of Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet, enriched by the fragrance of kuṅkuma from His consort's bosom.

43We desire the same contact with the Supreme Lord's feet that the young women of Vraja, the cowherd boys and even the aborigine Pulinda women desire the touch of the dust He leaves on the plants and grass as He tends His cows.

SB 10.84: The Sages' Teachings at Kurukṣetra

This chapter describes the arrival of great sages at Kurukṣetra to observe the auspicious

occasion of a solar eclipse, the sages' glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Vasudeva's enthusiastic performance of sacrifices.

On the occasion of a solar eclipse at Kurukṣetra, exalted ladies like Kuntī, Draupadī and Subhadṛā got the chance to associate with Lord Kṛṣṇa's queens. Seeing how much the Lord's consorts loved their husband, the ladies were struck with wonder. As the women talked among themselves, and the men did likewise, great sages headed by Nārada and Vyāsadeva arrived there, desiring to see Lord Kṛṣṇa. The various kings and other leading personalities who were sitting at their leisure, including the Pāṇḍavas, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, stood up as soon as they saw the sages. The leaders all bowed down to the great souls, inquired about their well-being and worshiped them by offering them sitting places, water and so on. Lord Kṛṣṇa then said, "Now our lives are successful, for we have obtained the goal of life: the audience of great sages and *yoga* masters, which even demigods only rarely obtain. The water at a holy place of pilgrimage and the deity forms of the gods can purify one only after a long time, but saintly sages purify just by being seen. Those who identify themselves with their bodies and neglect to honor transcendental sages like you are no better than asses."

After hearing Lord Kṛṣṇa speak these words in the mood of a mere mortal, the sages remained silent for some time, bewildered. Then they said, "How amazing our Lord is! He covers His true identity with humanlike activities and pretends to be subject to superior control. Surely He has spoken in this way only to enlighten the general populace. Such behavior of His is indeed inconceivable." The sages continued to glorify the Lord as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, and the friend and worshiper of the *brāhmaṇas*.

After the sages had praised Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa offered them His obeisances, and they begged His permission to return to their hermitages. But just then Vasudeva came forward, bowed to the sages and asked, "What activities can one perform to be freed from the bondage of fruitive work?" The sages replied, "By worshiping the Supreme Lord, Hari, through the performance of Vedic sacrifices, you will become free from the bondage of fruitive work." Vasudeva then requested the sages to act as his priests, and he arranged for Vedic sacrifices to be performed with superexcellent paraphernalia. Afterward, Vasudeva presented the priests with valuable gifts of cows and jewelry, and also with marriageable *brāhmaṇa* girls. He then performed the ritual bath marking the end of the sacrifice and fed everyone sumptuously, even the village dogs. Next he gave ample gifts to his relatives, the various kings and others, who all took Śrī Kṛṣṇa's leave and returned to their own homes.

Unable to depart because of his intense affection for his relatives, Nanda Mahārāja remained at Kurukṣetra for three months, served with reverence by the Yādavas. On one occasion, Vasudeva began to describe the deep friendship Nanda had shown him, shedding tears openly. At the end of three months, Nanda left for Mathurā with the fond farewells of all the Yādavas. When the Yādavas finally saw that the rainy season was about to begin, they returned to Dvārakā, where they related all that had happened at Kurukṣetra to the residents of their capital.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Pṛthā, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadṛā, the wives of other kings and the Lord's cowherd girlfriends were all amazed to hear of the queens' deep love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Soul of all beings, and their eyes filled with tears.

2-5As the women thus talked among themselves and the men among themselves, a number of great sages arrived there, all of them eager to see Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma. They included Dvaipāyana, Nārada, Cyavana, Devala and Asita, Viśvāmitra, Śatānanda, Bharadvāja and Gautama, Lord Paraśurāma and his disciples, Vasiṣṭha, Gālava, Bhṛgu, Pulastya and Kaśyapa,

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Atri, Mārkaṇḍeya and Bṛhaspati, Dvita, Trita, Ekata and the four Kumāras, and Aṅgirā, Agastya, Yājñavalkya and Vāmadeva.

6As soon as they saw the sages approaching, the kings and other gentlemen who had been seated immediately stood up, including the Pāṇḍava brothers and Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. They all then bowed down to the sages, who are honored throughout the universe.

7Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Balarāma and the other kings and leaders properly worshiped the sages by offering them words of greeting, sitting places, water for washing their feet, drinking water, flower garlands, incense and sandalwood paste.

8After the sages were comfortably seated, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose transcendental body protects religious principles, addressed them in the midst of that great assembly. Everyone listened silently with rapt attention.

9The Supreme Lord said: Now our lives are indeed successful, for we have obtained life's ultimate goal: the audience of great yoga masters, which even demigods only rarely obtain.

10How is it that people who are not very austere and who recognize God only in His Deity form in the temple can now see you, touch you, inquire from you, bow down to you, worship your feet and serve you in other ways?

11Mere bodies of water are not the real sacred places of pilgrimage, nor are mere images of earth and stone the true worshipable deities. These purify one only after a long time, but saintly sages purify one immediately upon being seen.

12Neither the demigods controlling fire, the sun, the moon and the stars nor those in charge of earth, water, ether, air, speech and mind actually remove the sins of their worshipers, who continue to see in terms of dualities. But wise sages destroy one's sins when respectfully served for even a few moments.

13One who identifies his self as the inert body composed of mucus, bile and air, who assumes his wife and family are permanently his own, who thinks an earthen image or the land of his birth is worshipable, or who sees a place of pilgrimage as merely the water there, but who never identifies himself with, feels kinship with, worships or even visits those who are wise in spiritual truth such a person is no better than a cow or an ass.

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing such unfathomable words from the unlimitedly wise Lord Kṛṣṇa, the learned brāhmaṇas remained silent, their minds bewildered.

15For some time the sages pondered the Supreme Lord's behavior, which resembled that of a subordinate living being. They concluded that He was acting this way to instruct the people in general. Thus they smiled and spoke to Him, the spiritual master of the universe.

16The great sages said: Your power of illusion has totally bewildered us, the most exalted knowers of the truth and leaders among the universal creators. Ah, how amazing is the behavior of the Supreme Lord! He covers Himself with His humanlike activities and pretends to be subject to superior control.

17Indeed, the humanlike pastimes of the Almighty are simply a pretense! Effortlessly, He alone sends forth from His Self this variegated creation, maintains it and then swallows it up again, all without becoming entangled, just as the element earth takes on many names and forms in its various transformations.

18Nonetheless, at suitable times You assume the pure mode of goodness to protect Your

devotees and punish the wicked. Thus You, the Soul of the varṇāśrama social order, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, maintain the eternal path of the Vedas by enjoying Your pleasure pastimes.

19The Vedas are Your spotless heart, and through them one can perceive by means of austerity, study and self-control the manifest, the unmanifest and the pure existence transcendental to both.

20Therefore, O Supreme Brahman, You honor the members of the brahminical community, for they are the perfect agents by which one can realize You through the evidence of the Vedas. For that very reason You are the foremost worshiper of the brāhmaṇas.

21Today our birth, education, austerity and vision have all become perfect because we have been able to associate with You, the goal of all saintly persons. Indeed, You Yourself are the ultimate, supreme blessing.

22Let us offer obeisances unto that Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the infinitely intelligent Supersoul, who has disguised His greatness through His mystic Yoga-māyā.

23Neither these kings nor even the Vṛṣṇis, who enjoy Your intimate association, know You as the Soul of all existence, the force of time and the supreme controller. For them You are covered by the curtain of Māyā.

24-25A sleeping person imagines an alternative reality for himself and, seeing himself as having various names and forms, forgets his waking identity, which is distinct from the dream. Similarly, the senses of one whose consciousness is bewildered by illusion perceive only the names and forms of material objects. Thus such a person loses his memory and cannot know You.

26Today we have directly seen Your feet, the source of the holy Ganges, which washes away volumes of sins. Perfected yogīs can at best meditate upon Your feet within their hearts. But only those who render You wholehearted devotional service and in this way vanquish the soul's covering the material mind attain You as their final destination. Therefore kindly show mercy to us, Your devotees.

27Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having thus spoken, O wise king, the sages then took leave of Lord Dāśārha, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Yudhiṣṭhira and prepared to depart for their āśramas.

28Seeing that they were about to leave, the renowned Vasudeva approached the sages. After bowing down to them and touching their feet, he spoke to them with carefully chosen words.

29Śrī Vasudeva said: Obeisances to you, the residence of all the demigods. Please hear me, O sages. Kindly tell us how the reactions of one's work can be counteracted by further work.

30Śrī Nārada Muni said: O brāhmaṇas, it is not so amazing that in his eagerness to know, Vasudeva has asked us about his ultimate benefit, for he considers Kṛṣṇa a mere boy.

31In this world familiarity breeds contempt. For example, one who lives on the banks of the Ganges might travel to some other body of water to be purified.

32-33The Supreme Lord's awareness is never disturbed by time, by the creation and destruction of the universe, by changes in its own qualities, or by anything else, whether self-caused or external. But although the consciousness of the Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme one without a second, is never affected by material distress, by the reactions of material work or by the constant flow of nature's modes, ordinary persons nonetheless think that the Lord is

covered by His own creations of prāṇa and other material elements, just as one may think that the sun is covered by clouds, snow or an eclipse.

34[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] The sages then spoke again, O King, addressing Vasudeva while all the kings, along with Lord Acyuta and Lord Rāma, listened.

35[The sages said:] It has been definitely concluded that work is counteracted by further work when one executes Vedic sacrifices as a means of worshiping Viṣṇu, the Lord of all sacrifices, with sincere faith.

36Learned authorities who see through the eye of scripture have demonstrated that this is the easiest method of subduing the agitated mind and attaining liberation, and that it is a sacred duty which brings joy to the heart.

37This is the most auspicious path for a religious householder of the twice-born order to selflessly worship the Personality of Godhead with wealth honestly obtained.

38An intelligent person should learn to renounce his desire for wealth by performing sacrifices and acts of charity. He should learn to renounce his desire for wife and children by experiencing family life. And he should learn to renounce his desire for promotion to a higher planet in his next life, O saintly Vasudeva, by studying the effects of time. Self-controlled sages who have thus renounced their attachment to household life go to the forest to perform austerities.

39Dear Prabhu, a member of the twice-born classes is born with three kinds of debt—those owed to the demigods, to the sages and to his forefathers. If he leaves his body without first liquidating these debts by performing sacrifice, studying the scriptures and begetting children, he will fall down into a hellish condition.

40But you, O magnanimous soul, are already free from two of your debts—those to the sages and the forefathers. Now absolve yourself of your debt to the demigods by executing Vedic sacrifices, and in this way free yourself completely of debt and renounce all material shelter.

41O Vasudeva, without doubt you must have previously worshiped Lord Hari, the master of all worlds. Both you and your wife must have perfectly worshiped Him with supreme devotion, since He has accepted the role of your son.

42Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing these statements of the sages, generous Vasudeva bowed his head to the ground and, praising them, requested them to become his priests.

43Thus requested by him, O King, the sages engaged the pious Vasudeva in performing fire sacrifices at that holy place of Kurukṣetra according to strict religious principles and with most excellent ritual arrangements.

44-45When Mahārāja Vasudeva was about to be initiated for the sacrifice, O King, the Vṛṣṇis came to the initiation pavilion after bathing and putting on fine clothes and garlands of lotuses. The other kings also came, elaborately ornamented, as well as all their joyful queens, who wore jeweled lockets around their necks and were also clad in fine garments. The royal wives were anointed with sandalwood paste and carried auspicious items for the worship.

46Mṛdaṅgas, paṭahas, conchshells, bherīs, ānakas and other instruments resounded, male and female dancers danced, and sūtas and māgadhas recited glorifications. Sweet-voiced Gandharvīs sang, accompanied by their husbands.

47After Vasudeva's eyes had been decorated with black cosmetic and his body smeared with

fresh butter, the priests initiated him according to scriptural rules by sprinkling him and his eighteen wives with sacred water. Encircled by his wives, he resembled the regal moon encircled by stars.

48Vasudeva received initiation along with his wives, who wore silk saris and were adorned with bangles, necklaces, ankle bells and earrings. With his body wrapped in a deerskin, Vasudeva shone splendidly.

49My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Vasudeva's priests and the officiating members of the assembly, dressed in silk dhotīs and jeweled ornaments, looked so effulgent that they seemed to be standing in the sacrificial arena of Indra, the killer of Vṛtra.

50At that time Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the Lords of all living entities, shone forth with great majesty in the company of Their respective sons, wives and other family members, who were expansions of Their opulences.

51Performing various kinds of Vedic sacrifice according to the proper regulations, Vasudeva worshiped the Lord of all sacrificial paraphernalia, mantras and rituals. He executed both primary and secondary sacrifices, offering oblations to the sacred fire and carrying out other aspects of sacrificial worship.

52Then, at the appropriate time and according to scripture, Vasudeva remunerated the priests by decorating them with precious ornaments, though they were already richly adorned, and offering them valuable gifts of cows, land and marriageable girls.

53After supervising the patnī-samyāja and avabhṛthya rituals, the great brāhmaṇa sages bathed in Lord Paraśurāma's lake with the sponsor of the sacrifice, Vasudeva, who led them.

54His sacred bath complete, Vasudeva joined with his wives in giving the jewelry and clothes they had been wearing to the professional reciters. Vasudeva then put on new garments, after which he honored all classes of people by feeding everyone, even the dogs.

55-56With opulent gifts he honored his relatives, including all their wives and children; the royalty of the Vidarbha, Kosala, Kuru, Kāśī, Kekaya and Sṛṣjaya kingdoms; the officiating members of the assembly; and also the priests, witnessing demigods, humans, spirits, forefathers and Cāraṇas. Then, taking permission from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the shelter of the goddess of fortune, the various guests departed as they all chanted the glories of Vasudeva's sacrifice.

57-58The Yadus were all embraced by their friends, close family members and other relatives, including Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his younger brother, Vidura; Pṛthā and her sons; Bhīṣma; Droṇa; the twins Nakula and Sahadeva; Nārada; and Vedavyāsa, the Personality of Godhead. Their hearts melting with affection, these and the other guests left for their kingdoms, their progress slowed by the pain of separation.

59Nanda Mahārāja showed his affection for his relatives, the Yadus, by remaining with them a little longer, together with his cowherds. During his stay, Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Ugrasena and the others honored him with especially opulent worship.

60Having so easily crossed over the vast ocean of his ambition, Vasudeva felt fully satisfied. In the company of his many well-wishers, he took Nanda by the hand and addressed him as follows.

61ŚrīVasudeva said: My dear brother, God Himself has tied the knot called affection, which tightly binds human beings together. It seems to me that even great heroes and mystics find it

very difficult to free themselves from it.

62Indeed, the Supreme Lord must have created the bonds of affection, for such exalted saints as you have never stopped showing matchless friendship toward us ingrates, although it has never been properly reciprocated.

63Previously, dear brother, we did nothing to benefit you because we were unable to, yet even now that you are present before us, our eyes are so blinded by the intoxication of material good fortune that we continue to ignore you.

64O most respectful one, may a person who wants the highest benefit in life never gain kingly opulence, for it leaves him blind to the needs of his own family and friends.

65ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: His heart softened by feelings of intimate sympathy, Vasudeva wept. His eyes brimmed with tears as he remembered the friendship Nanda had shown him.

66And on his part, Nanda was also full of affection for his friend Vasudeva. Thus during the following days Nanda would repeatedly announce, “I will be leaving later today” and “I will be leaving tomorrow.” But out of love for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma he remained there for three more months, honored by all the Yadus.

67-68Then, after Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava, Balarāma and others had fulfilled his desires and presented him with precious ornaments, fine linen and varieties of priceless household furnishings, Nanda Mahārāja accepted all these gifts and took his leave. Seen off by all the Yadus, he departed with his family members and the residents of Vraja.

69Unable to withdraw their minds from Lord Govinda’s lotus feet, where they had surrendered them, Nanda and the cowherd men and women returned to Mathurā.

70Their relatives having thus departed, and seeing that the rainy season was approaching, the Vṛṣṇis, whose only Lord was Kṛṣṇa, went back to Dvārakā.

71They told the people of the city about the festive sacrifices performed by Vasudeva, lord of the Yadus, and about everything else that had happened during their pilgrimage, especially how they had met with all their loved ones.

SB 10.85: Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Vasudeva and Retrieves Devakī’s Sons

This chapter relates how Lord Kṛṣṇa imparted divine knowledge to His father and, along with Lord Balarāma, retrieved His mother’s dead sons.

Having heard the visiting sages glorify Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva ceased to regard Him and Balarāma as his sons and began praising Their omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After glorifying his sons, Vasudeva fell at Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet and begged Him to drive away the conception that the Lord was his son. Instead, Lord Kṛṣṇa restored that conception by instructing Vasudeva in the science of Godhead, and upon hearing these instructions, Vasudeva became peaceful and free of doubt.

Then Mother Devakī praised Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, reminding Them how They had retrieved the dead son of Their spiritual master. She said, “Please fulfill my desire in the same way. Please bring back my sons who were killed by Kāmsa so I may see them once again.” Entreated in this way by Their mother, the two Lords went to the subterranean planet of Sutala, where They approached Bali Mahārāja. King Bali greeted Them respectfully, offering Them seats of honor, worshiping Them and reciting prayers. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then requested Bali to return

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Devakī's dead sons. The Lords received the boys from Bali and returned them to Devakī who felt such a surge of affection for them that milk began spontaneously flowing from her breasts. Overjoyed, Devakī fed the children her breastmilk, and by drinking the remnants of milk once drunk by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, they regained their original forms as demigods and went back to heaven.

1Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: One day the two sons of VasudevaSaṅkarṣaṇa and Acyutacame to pay him respects, bowing down at his feet. Vasudeva greeted Them with great affection and spoke to Them.

2Having heard the great sages' words concerning the power of his two sons, and having seen Their valorous deeds, Vasudeva became convinced of Their divinity. Thus, addressing Them by name, he spoke to Them as follows.

3[Vasudeva said:] O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, best of yogīs, O eternal Saṅkarṣaṇa! I know that You two are personally the source of universal creation and the ingredients of creation as well.

4You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who manifest as the Lord of both nature and the creator of nature [Mahā-Viṣṇu]. Everything that comes into existence, however and whenever it does so, is created within You, by You, from You, for You and in relation to You.

5O transcendental Lord, from Yourself You created this entire variegated universe, and then You entered within it in Your personal form as the Supersoul. In this way, O unborn Supreme Soul, as the life force and consciousness of everyone, You maintain the creation.

6Whatever potencies the life air and other elements of universal creation exhibit are actually all personal energies of the Supreme Lord, for both life and matter are subordinate to Him and dependent on Him, and also different from one another. Thus everything active in the material world is set into motion by the Supreme Lord.

7The glow of the moon, the brilliance of fire, the radiance of the sun, the twinkling of the stars, the flash of lightning, the permanence of mountains and the aroma and sustaining power of the earthall these are actually You.

8My Lord, You are water, and also its taste and its capacities to quench thirst and sustain life. You exhibit Your potencies through the manifestations of the air as bodily warmth, vitality, mental power, physical strength, endeavor and movement.

9You are the directions and their accommodating capacity, the all-pervading ether and the elemental sound residing within it. You are the primeval, unmanifested form of sound; the first syllable, om; and audible speech, by which sound, as words, acquires particular references.

10You are the power of the senses to reveal their objects, the senses' presiding demigods, and the sanction these demigods give for sensory activity. You are the capacity of the intelligence for decision-making, and the living being's ability to remember things accurately.

11You are false ego in the mode of ignorance, which is the source of the physical elements; false ego in the mode of passion, which is the source of the bodily senses; false ego in the mode of goodness, which is the source of the demigods; and the unmanifest, total material energy, which underlies everything.

12You are the one indestructible entity among all the destructible things of this world, like the underlying substance that is seen to remain unchanged while the things made from it undergo transformations.

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13The modes of material nature—namely goodness, passion and ignorance—together with all their functions, become directly manifest within You, the Supreme Absolute Truth, by the arrangement of Your Yoga-māyā.

14Thus these created entities, transformations of material nature, do not exist except when material nature manifests them within You, at which time You also manifest within them. But aside from such periods of creation, You stand alone as the transcendental reality.

15They are truly ignorant who, while imprisoned within the ceaseless flow of this world's material qualities, fail to know You, the Supreme Soul of all that be, as their ultimate, sublime destination. Because of their ignorance, the entanglement of material work forces such souls to wander in the cycle of birth and death.

16By good fortune a soul may obtain a healthy human life—an opportunity rarely achieved. But if he is nonetheless deluded about what is best for him, O Lord, Your illusory Māyā will cause him to waste his entire life.

17You keep this whole world bound up by the ropes of affection, and thus when people consider their material bodies, they think, “This is me,” and when they consider their progeny and other relations, they think, “These are mine.”

18You are not our sons but the very Lords of both material nature and its creator [Mahā-Viṣṇu]. As You Yourself have told us, You have descended to rid the earth of the rulers who are a heavy burden upon her.

19Therefore, O friend of the distressed, I now approach Your lotus feet for shelter—the same lotus feet that dispel all fear of worldly existence for those who have surrendered to them. Enough! Enough with hankering for sense enjoyment, which makes me identify with this mortal body and think of You, the Supreme, as my child.

20Indeed, while still in the maternity room You told us that You, the unborn Lord, had already been born several times as our son in previous ages. After manifesting each of these transcendental bodies to protect Your own principles of religion, You then made them unmanifest, thus appearing and disappearing like a cloud. O supremely glorified, all-pervading Lord, who can understand the mystic, deluding potency of Your opulent expansions?

21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having heard His father's words, the Supreme Lord, leader of the Sātvatas, replied in a gentle voice as He bowed His head in humility and smiled.

22The Supreme Lord said: My dear Father, I consider your statements appropriate, since you have explained the various categories of existence by referring to Us, your sons.

23Not only I, but also you, along with My respected brother and these residents of Dvārakā, should all be considered in this same philosophical light, O best of the Yadus. Indeed, we should include all that exists, both moving and nonmoving.

24The supreme spirit, Paramātmā, is indeed one. He is self-luminous and eternal, transcendental and devoid of material qualities. But through the agency of the very modes He has created, the one Supreme Truth manifests as many among the expansions of those modes.

25The elements of ether, air, fire, water and earth become visible, invisible, minute or extensive as they manifest in various objects. Similarly, the Paramātmā, though one, appears to become many.

26Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, hearing these instructions spoken to him by the Supreme

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Lord, Vasudeva became freed from all ideas of duality. Satisfied at heart, he remained silent.

27-28At that time, O best of the Kurus, the universally worshiped Devakī took the opportunity to address her two sons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Previously she had heard with astonishment that They had brought Their spiritual master's son back from death. Now, thinking of her own sons who had been murdered by Kāmsa, she felt great sorrow, and thus with tear-filled eyes she beseeched Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

29Śrī Devakī said: O Rāma, Rāma, immeasurable Supreme Soul! O Kṛṣṇa, Lord of all masters of yoga! I know that You are the ultimate rulers of all universal creators, the primeval Personalities of Godhead.

30Taking birth from me, You have now descended to this world in order to kill those kings whose good qualities have been destroyed by the present age, and who thus defy the authority of revealed scriptures and burden the earth.

31O Soul of all that be, the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe are all carried out by a fraction of an expansion of an expansion of Your expansion. Today I have come to take shelter of You, the Supreme Lord.

32-33It is said that when Your spiritual master ordered You to retrieve his long-dead son, You brought him back from the forefathers' abode as a token of remuneration for Your guru's mercy. Please fulfill my desire in the same way, O supreme masters of all yoga masters. Please bring back my sons who were killed by the King of Bhoja, so that I may see them once again.

34The sage Śukadeva said: Thus entreated by Their mother, O Bhārata, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa employed Their mystic Yoga-māyā potency and entered the region of Sutala.

35When the King of the Daityas, Bali Mahārāja, noticed the arrival of the two Lords, his heart overflowed with joy, since he knew Them to be the Supreme Soul and worshipable Deity of the entire universe, and especially of himself. He immediately stood up and then bowed down to offer respects, along with his entire entourage.

36Bali took pleasure in offering Them elevated seats. After They sat down, he washed the feet of the two Supreme Personalities. Then he took that water, which purifies the whole world even up to Lord Brahmā, and poured it upon himself and his followers.

37He worshiped Them with all the riches at his disposalpriceless clothing, ornaments, fragrant sandalwood paste, betel nut, lamps, sumptuous food and so on. Thus he offered Them all his family's wealth, and also his own self.

38Taking hold of the Lords' lotus feet again and again, Bali, the conqueror of Indra's army, spoke from his heart, which was melting out of his intense love. O King, as tears of ecstasy filled his eyes and the hair on his limbs stood on end, he began to speak with faltering words.

39King Bali said: Obeisances to the unlimited Lord, Ananta, the greatest of all beings. And obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the creator of the universe, who appears as the impersonal Absolute and the Supersoul in order to disseminate the principles of sāṅkhya and yoga.

40Seeing You Lords is a rare achievement for most living beings. But even persons like us, situated in the modes of passion and ignorance, can easily see You when You reveal Yourself by Your own sweet will.

41-43Many who had been constantly absorbed in enmity toward You ultimately became attracted to You, who are the direct embodiment of transcendental goodness and whose divine

form comprises the revealed scriptures. These reformed enemies include Daityas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Vidyādhara, Cāraṇas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas, Bhūtas, Pramathas and Nāyakas, and also ourselves and many others like us. Some of us have become attracted to You because of exceptional hatred, while others have become attracted because of their mood of devotion based on lust. But the demigods and others infatuated by material goodness feel no such attraction for You.

44What to speak of ourselves, O Lord of all perfect yogīs, even the greatest mystics do not know what Your spiritual power of delusion is or how it acts.

45Please be merciful to me so I may get out of the blind well of family lifemy false homeand find the true shelter of Your lotus feet, which selfless sages always seek. Then, either alone or in the company of great saints, who are the friends of everyone, I may wander freely, finding life's necessities at the feet of the universally charitable trees.

46O Lord of all subordinate creatures, please tell us what to do and thus free us of all sin. One who faithfully executes Your command, O master, is no longer obliged to follow the ordinary Vedic rites.

47The Supreme Lord said: During the age of the first Manu, the sage Marīci had six sons by his wife Ūrnā. They were all exalted demigods, but once they laughed at Lord Brahmā when they saw him preparing to have sex with his own daughter.

48-49Because of that improper act, they immediately entered a demoniac form of life, and thus they took birth as sons of Hiranyakaśipu. The goddess Yoga-māyā then took them away from Hiranyakaśipu, and they were born again from Devakī's womb. After this, O King, Kāmsa murdered them. Devakī still laments for them, thinking of them as her sons. These same sons of Marīci are now living here with you.

50We wish to take them from this place to dispel their mother's sorrow. Then, released from their curse and free from all suffering, they will return to their home in heaven.

51By My grace these sixSmara, Udgītha, Pariṣvaṅga, Pataṅga, Kṣudrabhṛt and Ghṛṇīwill return to the abode of pure saints.

52[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] After saying this, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma, having been duly worshiped by Bali Mahārāja, took the six sons and returned to Dvārakā, where They presented them to Their mother.

53When she saw her lost children, Goddess Devakī felt such affection for them that milk flowed from her breasts. She embraced them and took them onto her lap, smelling their heads again and again.

54Lovingly she let her sons drink from her breast, which became wet with milk just by their touch. She was entranced by the same illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu that initiates the creation of the universe.

55-56By drinking her nectarean milk, the remnants of what Kṛṣṇa Himself had previously drunk, the six sons touched the transcendental body of the Lord, Nārāyaṇa, and this contact awakened them to their original identities. They bowed down to Govinda, Devakī, their father and Balarāma, and then, as everyone looked on, they left for the abode of the demigods.

57Seeing her sons return from death and then depart again, saintly Devakī was struck with wonder, O King. She concluded that this was all simply an illusion created by Kṛṣṇa.

58Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul, the Lord of unlimited valor, performed countless pastimes just as amazing as this one, O descendant of Bharata.

59Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: This pastime enacted by Lord Murāri, whose fame is eternal, totally destroys the sins of the universe and serves as the transcendental ornament for His devotees' ears. Anyone who carefully hears or narrates this pastime, as recounted by the venerable son of Vyāsa, will be able to fix his mind in meditation on the Supreme Lord and attain to the all-auspicious kingdom of God.

SB 10.86: Arjuna Kidnaps Subhadṛā, and Kṛṣṇa Blesses His Devotees

This chapter describes how Arjuna kidnapped Subhadṛā and how Lord Kṛṣṇa went to Mithilā to bless His devotees Bahulāśva and Śrutadeva.

When King Parīkṣit desired to learn about the marriage of his grandmother, Subhadṛā-devī, ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said, “While touring on pilgrimage, Arjuna heard that Lord Baladeva intended to give the hand of His sister Subhadṛā to Duryodhana in marriage. Wanting to kidnap Subhadṛā and marry her himself, Arjuna disguised himself as a renunciant and went to Dvārakā. So effective was the disguise that neither Balarāma nor any other resident of Dvārakā recognized him; rather, they all showed him the respect due a Vaiṣṇava mendicant. In this way the four months of the rainy season passed. One day Arjuna received an invitation to dine at Lord Balarāma's home. There he caught sight of Subhadṛā and was immediately overwhelmed with desire for her. Subhadṛā also desired to have Arjuna as her husband, and thus she glanced back at him shyly. A few days later, Subhadṛā left the palace to participate in a chariot festival. Taking this opportunity, Arjuna abducted Subhadṛā and defeated the Yādavas who tried to stop him. Lord Balarāma was at first greatly angered to hear of this, but when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other family members pacified Him, He became joyful and sent the bride and groom off with elaborate wedding gifts.”

There was a *brāhmaṇa* devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's named Śrutadeva, who lived in the city of Mithilā. By the will of Providence, he could earn only barely enough to keep himself and his family alive. Still, he was always satisfied and spent all his time executing his religious duties. King Bahulāśva was another great devotee of the Lord residing in Mithilā. A member of the dynasty in which King Janaka had appeared, Bahulāśva ruled over the whole province of Videha, yet he remained as detached from material wealth as Śrutadeva. Pleased with the devotional attitude of both these great souls, Lord Kṛṣṇa went on His chariot to Mithilā to visit them, taking along Nārada and several other learned sages. The people of Mithilā greeted the Lord and His saintly entourage with great delight. Bearing various gifts for Kṛṣṇa, they bowed down and offered obeisances to both Him and the sages.

Bahulāśva and Śrutadeva both stepped forward and respectfully requested Śrī Kṛṣṇa to visit their homes. To satisfy both of them, the Lord expanded Himself and went to each of their homes simultaneously. They each worshiped Him suitably, offered prayers, washed His feet and then sprinkled themselves and all their family members with the wash water. Lord Kṛṣṇa then praised the sages who were with Him and glorified *brāhmaṇas* in general. He also imparted instructions to His hosts concerning devotional service. Understanding these instructions, both Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva honored the sages and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa with single-minded devotion. Lord Kṛṣṇa then returned to Dvārakā.

1King Parīkṣit said: O *brāhmaṇa*, we would like to learn how Arjuna married Lord Balarāma's and Lord Kṛṣṇa's sister, who was my grandmother.

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2-3 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: While traveling far and wide visiting various holy places of pilgrimage, Arjuna came to Prabhāsa. There he heard that Lord Balarāma intended to give his maternal cousin Subhadrā to Duryodhana in marriage, and that no one else approved of this plan. Arjuna wanted to marry her himself, so he disguised himself as a renunciant, complete with triple staff, and went to Dvārakā.

4 He stayed there during the monsoon months to fulfill his purpose. Lord Balarāma and the other residents of the city, not recognizing him, offered him all honor and hospitality.

5 One day Lord Balarāma brought him to His home as His invited dinner guest, and Arjuna ate the food the Lord respectfully offered him.

6 There he saw the wonderful maiden Subhadrā, who was enchanting to heroes. His eyes opened wide with delight, and his mind became agitated and absorbed in thoughts of her.

7 Arjuna was very attractive to women, and as soon as Subhadrā saw him, she wanted to have him as her husband. Smiling bashfully with sidelong glances, she fixed her heart and eyes upon him.

8 Meditating only on her and waiting for the opportunity to take her away, Arjuna had no peace. His heart trembled with passionate desire.

9 Once, on the occasion of a great temple festival in honor of the Supreme Lord, Subhadrā rode out of the fortresslike palace on a chariot, and at that time the mighty chariot warrior Arjuna took the opportunity to kidnap her. Subhadrā's parents and Kṛṣṇa had sanctioned this.

10 Standing on his chariot, Arjuna took up his bow and drove off the valiant fighters and palace guards who tried to block his way. As her relatives shouted in anger, he took Subhadrā away just as a lion takes his prey from the midst of lesser animals.

11 When He heard of Subhadrā's kidnapping, Lord Balarāma became as disturbed as the ocean during the full moon, but Lord Kṛṣṇa respectfully took hold of His feet and, together with other family members, pacified Him by explaining the matter.

12 Lord Balarāma then happily sent the bride and groom very valuable wedding gifts consisting of elephants, chariots, horses and male and female servants.

13 Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: There was a devotee of Kṛṣṇa's known as Śrutadeva, who was a first-class brāhmaṇa. Perfectly satisfied by rendering unalloyed devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, he was peaceful, learned and free from sense gratification.

14 Living as a religious householder in the city of Mithilā, within the kingdom of Videha, he managed to fulfill his obligations while maintaining himself with whatever sustenance easily came his way.

15 By the will of Providence he obtained each day just what he needed for his maintenance, and no more. Satisfied with this much, he properly executed his religious duties.

16 Similarly free from false ego was the ruler of that kingdom, my dear Parīkṣit, a descendant of the Mithila dynasty named Bahulāśva. Both these devotees were very dear to Lord Acyuta.

17 Pleased with both of them, the Supreme Personality of Godhead mounted His chariot, which Dārūka had brought, and traveled to Videha with a group of sages.

18 Among these sages were Nārada, Vāmadeva, Atri, Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa, Paraśurāma,

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Asita, Aruṇi, myself, Bṛhaspati, Kaṇva, Maitreya and Cyavana.

19In every city and town the Lord passed along the way, O King, the people came forward to worship Him with offerings of arghya water in their hands, as if to worship the risen sun surrounded by planets.

20The men and women of Ānarta, Dhanva, Kuru-jāṅgala, Kaṅka, Matsya, Paścāla, Kunti, Madhu, Kekaya, Kośala, Arṇa and many other kingdoms drank with their eyes the nectarean beauty of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotuslike face, which was graced with generous smiles and affectionate glances.

21Simply by glancing at those who came to see Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the three worlds, delivered them from the blindness of materialism. As He thus endowed them with fearlessness and divine vision, He heard demigods and men singing His glories, which purify the entire universe and destroy all misfortune. Gradually, He reached Videha.

22Hearing that Lord Acyuta had arrived, O King, the residents of the cities and villages of Videha joyfully came forth to receive Him with offerings in their hands.

23As soon as the people saw Lord Uttamaḥśloka, their faces and hearts blossomed with affection. Joining their palms above their heads, they bowed down to the Lord and to the sages accompanying Him, whom they had previously only heard about.

24Both the King of Mithilā and Śrutadeva fell at the Lord's feet, each thinking that the spiritual master of the universe had come there just to show him mercy.

25At exactly the same time, King Maithila and Śrutadeva each went forward with joined palms and invited the Lord of the Daśārhas to be his guest, along with the brāhmaṇa sages.

26Wanting to please them both, the Lord accepted both their invitations. Thus He simultaneously went to both homes, and neither could see Him entering the other's house.

27-29When King Bahulāśva, a descendant of Janaka, saw Lord Kṛṣṇa approaching his house from a distance with the sages, who were somewhat fatigued from the journey, he immediately arranged to have seats of honor brought out for them. After they were all comfortably seated, the wise King, his heart overflowing with joy and his eyes clouded by tears, bowed down to them and washed their feet with intense devotion. Taking the wash water, which could purify the entire world, he sprinkled it on his head and the heads of his family members. Then he worshiped all those great lords by offering them fragrant sandalwood paste, flower garlands, fine clothing and ornaments, incense, lamps, arghya and cows and bulls.

30When they had eaten to their full satisfaction, for their further pleasure the King began to speak slowly and in a gentle voice as he held Lord Viṣṇu's feet in his lap and happily massaged them.

31Śrī Bahulāśva said: O almighty Lord, You are the Soul of all created beings, their self-illuminated witness, and now You are giving Your audience to us, who constantly meditate on Your lotus feet.

32You have said, "Neither Ananta, Goddess Śrī nor unborn Brahmā is dearer to Me than My unalloyed devotee." To prove Your own words true, You have now revealed Yourself to our eyes.

33What person who knows this truth would ever abandon Your lotus feet, when You are ready to give Your very self to peaceful sages who call nothing their own?

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34 Appearing in the Yadu dynasty, You have spread Your glories, which can remove all the sins of the three worlds, just to deliver those entrapped in the cycle of birth and death.

35 Obeisances to You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose intelligence is ever unrestricted. Obeisances to the sage Nara-Nārāyaṇa, who always undergoes austerities in perfect peace.

36 Please stay a few days in our house, along with these brāhmaṇas, O all-pervading one, and with the dust of Your feet sanctify this dynasty of Nimi.

37 [Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus invited by the King, the Supreme Lord, sustainer of the world, consented to stay for some time to bestow good fortune on the men and women of Mithilā.

38 Śrutadeva received Lord Acyuta into his home with as much enthusiasm as that shown by King Bahulāsya. After bowing down to the Lord and the sages, Śrutadeva began to dance with great joy, waving his shawl.

39 After bringing mats of grass and darbha straw and seating his guests upon them, he greeted them with words of welcome. Then he and his wife washed their feet with great pleasure.

40 With the wash water, the virtuous Śrutadeva copiously sprinkled himself, his house and his family. Overjoyed, he felt that all his desires had now been fulfilled.

41 He worshiped them with offerings of auspicious items easily available to him, such as fruits, uśīra root, pure, nectarean water, fragrant clay, tulasī leaves, kuśa grass and lotus flowers. Then he offered them food that increases the mode of goodness.

42 He wondered: How is it that I, fallen into the blind well of family life, have been able to meet Lord Kṛṣṇa? And how have I also been allowed to meet these great brāhmaṇas, who always carry the Lord within their hearts? Indeed, the dust of their feet is the shelter of all holy places.

43 When his guests were seated comfortably, having each received a proper welcome, Śrutadeva approached them and sat down nearby with his wife, children and other dependents. Then, while massaging the Lord's feet, he addressed Kṛṣṇa and the sages.

44 Śrutadeva said: It is not that we have attained the audience of the Supreme Person only today, for we have in fact been associating with Him ever since He created this universe with His energies and then entered it in His transcendental form.

45 The Lord is like a sleeping person who creates a separate world in his imagination and then enters his own dream and sees himself within it.

46 You reveal Yourself within the hearts of those persons of pure consciousness who constantly hear about You, chant about You, worship You, glorify You and converse with one another about You.

47 But although You reside within the heart, You are very far away from those whose minds are disturbed by their entanglement in material work. Indeed, no one can grasp You by his material powers, for You reveal Yourself only in the hearts of those who have learned to appreciate Your transcendental qualities.

48 Let me offer my obeisances unto You. You are realized as the Supreme Soul by those who know the Absolute Truth, whereas in Your form of time You impose death upon the forgetful souls. You appear both in Your causeless spiritual form and in the created form of this

universe, thus simultaneously uncovering the eyes of Your devotees and obstructing the vision of the nondevotees.

49O Lord, You are that Supreme Soul, and we are Your servants. How shall we serve You? My Lord, simply seeing You puts an end to all the troubles of human life.

50ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: After hearing Śrutadeva speak these words, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who relieves His surrendered devotees' distress, took Śrutadeva's hand in His own and, smiling, spoke to him as follows.

51The Supreme Lord said: My dear brāhmaṇa, you should know that these great sages have come here just to bless you. They travel throughout the worlds with Me, purifying them with the dust of their feet.

52One can gradually become purified by seeing, touching and worshiping temple deities, places of pilgrimage and holy rivers. But one can attain the same result immediately simply by receiving the glance of exalted sages.

53By his very birth, a brāhmaṇa is the best of all living beings in this world, and he becomes even more exalted when he is endowed with austerity, learning and self-satisfaction, what to speak of devotion to Me.

54Even My own four-armed form is no dearer to Me than a brāhmaṇa. Within himself a learned brāhmaṇa comprises all the Vedas, just as within Myself I comprise all the demigods.

55Ignorant of this truth, foolish people neglect and enviously offend a learned brāhmaṇa, who, being nondifferent from Me, is their spiritual master and very self. They consider worshipable only such obvious manifestations of divinity as My Deity form.

56Because he has realized Me, a brāhmaṇa is firmly fixed in the knowledge that everything moving and nonmoving in the universe, and also the primary elements of its creation, are all manifest forms expanded from Me.

57Therefore you should worship these brāhmaṇa sages, O brāhmaṇa, with the same faith you have in Me. If you do so, you will worship Me directly, which you cannot do otherwise, even with offerings of vast riches.

58ŚrīŚuka said: So instructed by his Lord, with single-minded devotion Śrutadeva worshiped ŚrīKṛṣṇa and the topmost brāhmaṇas accompanying Him, and King Bahulāśva did the same. Thus both Śrutadeva and the King attained the ultimate transcendental destination.

59O King, thus the Personality of Godhead, who is devoted to His own devotees, stayed for some time with His two great devotees Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva, teaching them the behavior of perfect saints. Then the Lord returned to Dvārakā.

SB 10.87: The Prayers of the Personified Vedas

This chapter presents the prayers by the personified *Vedas* glorifying the personal and impersonal aspects of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

King Parīkṣit asked Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī how the *Vedas* can directly refer to the Supreme Absolute Truth, Brahman, since the *Vedas* deal with the material realm governed by the three modes of nature and Brahman is completely transcendental to these modes. In reply, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described an ancient encounter between Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and Nārada Muni at Badarikāśrama. Traveling to that sacred hermitage, Nārada found the Lord surrounded by

exalted residents of the nearby village of Kalāpa. After bowing down to Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and His associates, Nārada submitted this same question to Him. In reply, Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi related an account of how this very question had been discussed long ago among the great sages living on Janaloka. Once these sages, feeling inquisitive about the nature of the Absolute Truth, chose Sanandana Kumāra to speak on the subject. Sanandana told them how the numerous personified *Vedas*, appearing as the first emanations from the breathing of Lord Nārāyaṇa, recited prayers for His glorification just before the creation. Sanandana then proceeded to recite these elaborate prayers.

The residents of Janaloka were perfectly satisfied upon hearing Sanandana recite the prayers of the personified *Vedas*, which enlightened them about the true nature of the Supreme Absolute Truth, and they honored Sanandana with their worship. Nārada Muni was equally satisfied to hear this account from Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi. Thus Nārada offered his obeisances to the Lord and then went to see his disciple Vedavyāsa, to whom he explained everything he had heard.

1Śrī Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, how can the Vedas directly describe the Supreme Absolute Truth, who cannot be described in words? The Vedas are limited to describing the qualities of material nature, but the Supreme is devoid of these qualities, being transcendental to all material manifestations and their causes.

2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Lord manifested the material intelligence, senses, mind and vital air of the living entities so that they could indulge their desires for sense gratification, take repeated births to engage in fruitive activities, become elevated in future lives and ultimately attain liberation.

3Those who came before even our ancient predecessors meditated upon this same confidential knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Indeed, anyone who faithfully concentrates on this knowledge will become free from material attachments and attain the final goal of life.

4In this connection I will relate to you a narration concerning the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa. It is about a conversation that once occurred between Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and Nārada Muni.

5Once, while traveling among the various planets of the universe, the Lord's beloved devotee Nārada went to visit the primeval sage Nārāyaṇa at His āśrama.

6From the very beginning of Brahmā's day Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi has been undergoing austere penances in this land of Bhārata while perfectly performing religious duties and exemplifying spiritual knowledge and self-control all for the benefit of human beings in both this world and the next.

7There Nārada approached Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who was sitting amidst sages of the village of Kalāpa. After bowing down to the Lord, O hero of the Kurus, Nārada asked Him the very same question you have asked me.

8As the sages listened, Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi related to Nārada an ancient discussion about the Absolute Truth that took place among the residents of Janaloka.

9The Personality of Godhead said: O son of self-born Brahmā, once long ago on Janaloka, wise sages who resided there performed a great sacrifice to the Absolute Truth by vibrating transcendental sounds. These sages, mental sons of Brahmā, were all perfect celibates.

10At that time you happened to be visiting the Lord on Śvetadvīpathat Supreme Lord in whom the Vedas lie down to rest during the period of universal annihilation. A lively discussion arose among the sages on Janaloka as to the nature of the Supreme Absolute Truth. Indeed, the same

question arose then that you are asking Me now.

11Although these sages were all equally qualified in terms of Vedic study and austerity, and although they all saw friends, enemies and neutral parties equally, they chose one of their number to be the speaker, and the rest became eager listeners.

12-13Śrī Sanandana replied: After the Supreme Lord withdrew the universe He had previously created, He lay for some time as if asleep, and all His energies rested dormant within Him. When the time came for the next creation, the personified Vedas awakened Him by chanting His glories, just as the poets serving a king approach him at dawn and awaken him by reciting his heroic deeds.

14The śrutis said: Victory, victory to You, O unconquerable one! By Your very nature You are perfectly full in all opulences; therefore please defeat the eternal power of illusion, who assumes control over the modes of nature to create difficulties for conditioned souls. O You who awaken all the energies of the moving and nonmoving embodied beings, sometimes the Vedas can recognize You as You sport with Your material and spiritual potencies.

15This perceivable world is identified with the Supreme because the Supreme Brahman is the ultimate foundation of all existence, remaining unchanged as all created things are generated from it and at last dissolved into it, just as clay remains unchanged by the products made from it and again merged with it. Thus it is toward You alone that the Vedic sages direct all their thoughts, words and acts. After all, how can the footsteps of men fail to touch the earth on which they live?

16Therefore, O master of the three worlds, the wise get rid of all misery by diving deep into the nectarean ocean of topics about You, which washes away all the contamination of the universe. Then what to speak of those who, having by spiritual strength rid their minds of bad habits and freed themselves from time, are able to worship Your true nature, O supreme one, finding within it uninterrupted bliss?

17Only if they become Your faithful followers are those who breathe actually alive, otherwise their breathing is like that of a bellows. It is by Your mercy alone that the elements, beginning with the mahat-tattva and false ego, created the egg of this universe. Among the manifestations known as anna-maya and so forth, You are the ultimate one, entering within the material coverings along with the living entity and assuming the same forms as those he takes. Distinct from the gross and subtle material manifestations, You are the reality underlying them all.

18Among the followers of the methods set forth by great sages, those with less refined vision worship the Supreme as present in the region of the abdomen, while the Āruṇis worship Him as present in the heart, in the subtle center from which all the prāṇic channels emanate. From there, O unlimited Lord, these worshipers raise their consciousness upward to the top of the head, where they can perceive You directly. Then, passing through the top of the head toward the supreme destination, they reach that place from which they will never again fall to this world, into the mouth of death.

19Apparently entering among the variegated species of living beings You have created, You inspire them to act, manifesting Yourself according to their higher and lower positions, just as fire manifests differently according to the shape of what it burns. Therefore those of spotless intelligence, who are altogether free from material attachments, realize Your undifferentiated, unchanging Self to be the permanent reality among all these impermanent life forms.

20The individual living entity, while inhabiting the material bodies he has created for himself by his karma, actually remains uncovered by either gross or subtle matter. This is so because,

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as the Vedas describe, he is part and parcel of You, the possessor of all potencies. Having determined this to be the status of the living entity, learned sages become imbued with faith and worship Your lotus feet, to which all Vedic sacrifices in this world are offered, and which are the source of liberation.

21My Lord, some fortunate souls have gotten relief from the fatigue of material life by diving into the vast nectar ocean of Your pastimes, which You enact when You manifest Your personal forms to propagate the unfathomable science of the self. These rare souls, indifferent even to liberation, renounce the happiness of home and family because of their association with devotees who are like flocks of swans enjoying at the lotus of Your feet.

22When this human body is used for Your devotional service, it acts as one's self, friend and beloved. But unfortunately, although You always show mercy to the conditioned souls and affectionately help them in every way, and although You are their true Self, people in general fail to delight in You. Instead they commit spiritual suicide by worshiping illusion. Alas, because they persistently hope for success in their devotion to the unreal, they continue to wander about this greatly fearful world, assuming various degraded bodies.

23Simply by constantly thinking of Him, the enemies of the Lord attained the same Supreme Truth whom sages fixed in yoga worship by controlling their breath, mind and senses. Similarly, we śrutis, who generally see You as all-pervading, will achieve the same nectar from Your lotus feet that Your consorts are able to relish because of their loving attraction to Your mighty, serpentine arms, for You look upon us and Your consorts in the same way.

24Everyone in this world has recently been born and will soon die. So how can anyone here know Him who existed prior to everything else and who gave rise to the first learned sage, Brahmā, and all subsequent demigods, both lesser and greater? When He lies down and withdraws everything within Himself, nothing else remains no gross or subtle matter or bodies composed of these, no force of time or revealed scripture.

25Supposed authorities who declare that matter is the origin of existence, that the permanent qualities of the soul can be destroyed, that the self is compounded of separate aspects of spirit and matter, or that material transactions constitute reality all such authorities base their teachings on mistaken ideas that hide the truth. The dualistic conception that the living entity is produced from the three modes of nature is simply a product of ignorance. Such a conception has no real basis in You, for You are transcendental to all illusion and always enjoy perfect, total awareness.

26The three modes of material nature comprise everything in this world from the simplest phenomena to the complex human body. Although these phenomena appear real, they are only a false reflection of the spiritual reality, being a superimposition of the mind upon You. Still, those who know the Supreme Self consider the entire material creation to be real inasmuch as it is nondifferent from the Self. Just as things made of gold are indeed not to be rejected, since their substance is actual gold, so this world is undoubtedly nondifferent from the Lord who created it and then entered within it.

27The devotees who worship You as the shelter of all beings disregard Death and place their feet on his head. But with the words of the Vedas You bind the nondevotees like animals, though they be vastly learned scholars. It is Your affectionate devotees who can purify themselves and others, not those who are inimical to You.

28Though You have no material senses, You are the self-effulgent sustainer of everyone's sensory powers. The demigods and material nature herself offer You tribute, while also enjoying the tribute offered them by their worshipers, just as subordinate rulers of various

districts in a kingdom offer tribute to their lord, the ultimate proprietor of the land, while also enjoying the tribute paid them by their own subjects. In this way the universal creators faithfully execute their assigned services out of fear of You.

29O eternally liberated, transcendental Lord, Your material energy causes the various moving and nonmoving species of life to appear by activating their material desires, but only when and if You sport with her by briefly glancing at her. You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, see no one as an intimate friend and no one as a stranger, just as the ethereal sky has no connection with perceptible qualities. In this sense You resemble a void.

30If the countless living entities were all-pervading and possessed forms that never changed, You could not possibly be their absolute ruler, O immutable one. But since they are Your localized expansions and their forms are subject to change, You do control them. Indeed, that which supplies the ingredients for the generation of something is necessarily its controller because a product never exists apart from its ingredient cause. It is simply illusion for someone to think that he knows the Supreme Lord, who is equally present in each of His expansions, since whatever knowledge one gains by material means must be imperfect.

31Neither material nature nor the soul who tries to enjoy her are ever born, yet living bodies come into being when these two combine, just as bubbles form where water meets the air. And just as rivers merge into the ocean or the nectar from many different flowers blends into honey, so all these conditioned beings eventually merge back into You, the Supreme, along with their various names and qualities.

32The wise souls who understand how Your Māyā deludes all human beings render potent loving service to You, who are the source of liberation from birth and death. How, indeed, can fear of material life affect Your faithful servants? On the other hand, Your furrowing eyebrows the triple-rimmed wheel of time repeatedly terrify those who refuse to take shelter of You.

33The mind is like an impetuous horse that even persons who have regulated their senses and breath cannot control. Those in this world who try to tame the uncontrolled mind, but who abandon the feet of their spiritual master, encounter hundreds of obstacles in their cultivation of various distressful practices. O unborn Lord, they are like merchants on a boat in the ocean who have failed to employ a helmsman.

34To those persons who take shelter of You, You reveal Yourself as the Supersoul, the embodiment of all transcendental pleasure. What further use have such devotees for their servants, children or bodies, their wives, money or houses, their land, good health or conveyances? And for those who fail to appreciate the truth about You and go on pursuing the pleasures of sex, what could there be in this entire world a place inherently doomed to destruction and devoid of significance that could give them real happiness?

35Sages free from false pride live on this earth by frequenting the sacred pilgrimage sites and those places where the Supreme Lord displayed His pastimes. Because such devotees keep Your lotus feet within their hearts, the water that washes their feet destroys all sins. Anyone who even once turns his mind toward You, the ever-blissful Soul of all existence, no longer dedicates himself to serving family life at home, which simply robs a man of his good qualities.

36It may be proposed that this world is permanently real because it is generated from the permanent reality, but such an argument is subject to logical refutation. Sometimes, indeed, the apparent nondifference of a cause and its effect fails to prove true, and at other times the product of something real is illusory. Furthermore, this world cannot be permanently real, for it partakes of the natures of not only the absolute reality but also the illusion disguising that

reality. Actually, the visible forms of this world are just an imaginary arrangement resorted to by a succession of ignorant persons in order to facilitate their material affairs. With their various meanings and implications, the learned words of Your Vedas bewilder all persons whose minds have been dulled by hearing the incantations of sacrificial rituals.

37 Since this universe did not exist prior to its creation and will no longer exist after its annihilation, we conclude that in the interim it is nothing more than a manifestation imagined to be visible within You, whose spiritual enjoyment never changes. We liken this universe to the transformation of various material substances into diverse forms. Certainly those who believe that this figment of the imagination is substantially real are less intelligent.

38 The illusory material nature attracts the minute living entity to embrace her, and as a result he assumes forms composed of her qualities. Subsequently, he loses all his spiritual qualities and must undergo repeated deaths. You, however, avoid the material energy in the same way that a snake abandons its old skin. Glorious in Your possession of eight mystic perfections, You enjoy unlimited opulences.

39 Members of the renounced order who fail to uproot the last traces of material desire in their hearts remain impure, and thus You do not allow them to understand You. Although You are present within their hearts, for them You are like a jewel worn around the neck of a man who has totally forgotten it is there. O Lord, those who practice yoga only for sense gratification must suffer punishment both in this life and the next: from death, who will not release them, and from You, whose kingdom they cannot reach.

40 When a person realizes You, he no longer cares about his good and bad fortune arising from past pious and sinful acts, since it is You alone who control this good and bad fortune. Such a realized devotee also disregards what ordinary living beings say about him. Every day he fills his ears with Your glories, which are recited in each age by the unbroken succession of Manu's descendants, and thus You become his ultimate salvation.

41 Because You are unlimited, neither the lords of heaven nor even You Yourself can ever reach the end of Your glories. The countless universes, each enveloped in its shell, are compelled by the wheel of time to wander within You, like particles of dust blowing about in the sky. The śrutis, following their method of eliminating everything separate from the Supreme, become successful by revealing You as their final conclusion.

42 The Supreme Lord, Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, said: Having heard these instructions about the Supreme Self, the Personality of Godhead, the sons of Brahmā now understood their final destination. They felt perfectly satisfied and honored Sanandana with their worship.

43 Thus the ancient saints who travel in the upper heavens distilled this nectarean and confidential essence of all the Vedas and Purāṇas.

44 And as you wander the earth at will, My dear son of Brahmā, you should faithfully meditate on these instructions concerning the science of the Self, which burn up the material desires of all men.

45 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi ordered him in this way, the self-possessed sage Nārada, whose vow is as heroic as a warrior's, accepted the command with firm faith. Now successful in all his purposes, he thought about what he had heard, O King, and replied to the Lord as follows.

46 Śrī Nārada said: I offer my obeisances to Him of spotless fame, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, who manifests His all-attractive personal expansions so that all living beings can achieve liberation.

47[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] After saying this, Nārada bowed down to Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, the foremost of sages, and also to His saintly disciples. He then returned to the hermitage of my father, Dvaipāyana Vyāsa.

48Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of the Personality of Godhead, respectfully greeted Nārada Muni and offered him a seat, which he accepted. Nārada then described to Vyāsa what he had heard from the mouth of Śrī Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi.

49Thus I have replied to the question you asked me, O King, concerning how the mind can have access to the Absolute Truth, which is indescribable by material words and devoid of material qualities.

50He is the Lord who eternally watches over this universe, who exists before, during and after its manifestation. He is the master of both the unmanifest material energy and the spirit soul. After sending forth the creation He enters within it, accompanying each living entity. There He creates the material bodies and then remains as their regulator. By surrendering to Him one can escape the embrace of illusion, just as a dreaming person forgets his own body. One who wants liberation from fear should constantly meditate upon Him, Lord Hari, who is always on the platform of perfection and thus never subject to material birth.

SB 10.88: Lord Śiva Saved from Vṛkāsura

This chapter describes how it is that the devotees of Viṣṇu obtain liberation, while the devotees of other deities obtain material opulences.

Lord Viṣṇu possesses all opulences, while Lord Śiva lives in poverty. Yet the devotees of Viṣṇu are generally poverty-stricken, while Śiva's attain abundant wealth. When Mahārāja Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī to explain this puzzling fact, the sage replied as follows: "Lord Śiva manifests as false ego in three varieties, according to the three modes of nature. From this false ego arise the five physical elements and the other transformations of material nature, totaling sixteen. When a devotee of Lord Śiva worships his manifestation in any of these elements, the devotee obtains all sorts of corresponding enjoyable opulences. But because Lord Śrī Hari is transcendental to the modes of material nature, His devotees also become transcendental."

At the end of the performance of his Aśvamedha sacrifices, King Yudhiṣṭhira had asked this same question of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who replied, "When I feel special compassion for someone, I gradually deprive him of his wealth. Then the poverty-stricken man's children, wife and other relations all abandon him. When he again tries to acquire wealth in order to win back his family's favor, I mercifully frustrate him so that he becomes disgusted with fruitive work and befriends My devotees. And at that time I bestow upon him My extraordinary grace; then he can become freed from the bondage of material life and attain to the kingdom of God, Vaikuṅṭha."

Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva can each bestow or withhold favors, but whereas Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are satisfied or angered very quickly, Lord Viṣṇu is not. In this regard the Vedic literature relates the following account: Once the demon Vṛka asked Nārada which god was most quickly pleased, and Nārada answered that Lord Śiva was. Thus Vṛkāsura went to the holy place of Kedāranātha and began worshipping Lord Śiva by offering pieces of his own flesh as oblations into the fire. But Śiva did not appear. So Vṛka decided to commit suicide by cutting off his head. Just at the critical moment, Lord Śiva appeared from the sacrificial fire and stopped him, offering the demon whatever boon he chose. Vṛka said, "May death come to whomever I touch upon the head with my hand." Lord Śiva was obliged to fulfill this request, and at once the wicked Vṛka tried to test the benediction by putting his hand on the lord's

head. Terrified, Śiva fled for his life, running as far as heaven and the outer limits of the mortal world. Finally the lord reached the planet of Śvetadvīpa, where Lord Viṣṇu resides. Seeing the desperate Śiva from afar, the Lord disguised Himself as a young student and went before Vṛkāśura. In a sweet voice he addressed the demon: “My dear Vṛka, please rest awhile and tell Us what you intend to do.” Vṛka was charmed by the Lord’s words and revealed everything that had happened. The Lord said, “Ever since Lord Śiva was cursed by Prajāpati Dakṣa, he has become just like a carnivorous hobgoblin. So you shouldn’t trust his word. Better to test his benediction by putting your hand on your own head.” Bewildered by these words, the foolish demon touched his own head, which immediately shattered and fell to the ground. Cries of “Victory!” “Obeisances!” and “Well done!” were heard from the sky, and the demigods, sages, celestial forefathers and Gandharvas all congratulated the Supreme Lord by raining down flowers upon Him.

1King Parīkṣit said: Those demigods, demons and humans who worship Lord Śiva, a strict renunciant, usually enjoy wealth and sense gratification, while the worshipers of the Supreme Lord Hari, the husband of the goddess of fortune, do not.

2We wish to properly understand this matter, which greatly puzzles us. Indeed, the results attained by the worshipers of these two lords of opposite characters are contrary to what one would expect.

3ŚrīŚukadeva said: Lord Śiva is always united with his personal energy, the material nature. Manifesting himself in three features in response to the entreaties of nature’s three modes, he thus embodies the threefold principle of material ego in goodness, passion and ignorance.

4The sixteen elements have evolved as transformations of that false ego. When a devotee of Lord Śiva worships his manifestation in any one of these elements, the devotee obtains all sorts of corresponding enjoyable opulences.

5Lord Hari, however, has no connection with the material modes. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the all-seeing eternal witness, who is transcendental to material nature. One who worships Him becomes similarly free from the material modes.

6Your grandfather, King Yudhiṣṭhira, after completing his Aśvamedha sacrifices, asked Lord Acyuta this very same question while hearing the Lord’s explanation of religious principles.

7This question pleased Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the King’s Lord and master, who had descended into the family of Yadu for the purpose of bestowing the highest good on all men. The Lord replied as follows as the King eagerly listened.

8The Personality of Godhead said: If I especially favor someone, I gradually deprive him of his wealth. Then the relatives and friends of such a poverty-stricken man abandon him. In this way he suffers one distress after another.

9When he becomes frustrated in his attempts to make money and instead befriends My devotees, I bestow My special mercy upon him.

10A person who has thus become sober fully realizes the Absolute as the highest truth, the most subtle and perfect manifestation of spirit, the transcendental existence without end. In this way realizing that the Supreme Truth is the foundation of his own existence, he is freed from the cycle of material life.

11Because I am difficult to worship, people generally avoid Me and instead worship other deities, who are quickly satisfied. When people receive kingly opulences from these deities,

they become arrogant, intoxicated with pride and neglectful of their duties. They dare to offend even the demigods who have bestowed benedictions upon them.

12Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Śiva and others are able to curse or bless one. Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are very quick to curse or bestow benedictions, my dear King, but the infallible Supreme Lord is not.

13In this connection, an ancient historical account is related concerning how the Lord of Kailāsa Mountain was put into danger by offering a choice of benedictions to the demon Vṛka.

14The demon named Vṛka, a son of Śakuni's, once met Nārada on the road. The wicked fellow asked him which of the three chief gods could be pleased most quickly.

15Nārada told him: Worship Lord Śiva and you will soon achieve success. He quickly becomes pleased by seeing his worshiper's slightest good qualities and quickly angered by seeing his slightest fault.

16He became pleased with ten-headed Rāvaṇa, and also with Bāṇa, when they each chanted his glories, like bards in a royal court. Lord Śiva then bestowed unprecedented power upon each of them, but in both cases he was consequently beset with great difficulty.

17[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus advised, the demon proceeded to worship Lord Śiva at Kedāranātha by taking pieces of flesh from his own body and offering them as oblations into the sacred fire, which is Lord Śiva's mouth.

18-19Vṛkāsura became frustrated after failing to obtain a vision of the lord. Finally, on the seventh day, after dipping his hair into the holy waters at Kedāranātha and leaving it wet, he took up a hatchet and prepared to cut off his head. But at that very moment the supremely merciful Lord Śiva rose up out of the sacrificial fire, looking like the god of fire himself, and grabbed both arms of the demon to stop him from killing himself, just as we would do. By Lord Śiva's touch, Vṛkāsura once again became whole.

20Lord Śiva said to him: My friend, please stop, stop! Ask from me whatever you want, and I will bestow that boon upon you. Alas, you have subjected your body to great torment for no reason, since I am pleased with a simple offering of water from those who approach me for shelter.

21[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] The benediction sinful Vṛka chose from the lord would terrify all living beings. Vṛka said, "May death come to whomever I touch upon the head with my hand."

22Upon hearing this, Lord Rudra seemed somewhat disturbed. Nonetheless, O descendant of Bharata, he vibrated om to signify his assent, granting Vṛka the benediction with an ironic smile, as if giving milk to a poisonous snake.

23To test Lord Śambhu's benediction, the demon then tried to put his hand on the Lord's head. Thus Śiva was frightened because of what he himself had done.

24As the demon pursued him, Lord Śiva fled swiftly from his abode in the north, shaking with terror. He ran as far as the limits of the earth, the sky and the corners of the universe.

25-26The great demigods could only remain silent, not knowing how to counteract the benediction. Then Lord Śiva reached the luminous realm of Vaikuṇṭha, beyond all darkness, where the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa is manifest. That realm is the destination of renunciants who

have attained peace and given up all violence against other creatures. Going there, one never returns.

27-28The Supreme Lord, who relieves His devotees' distress, had seen from afar that Lord Śiva was in danger. Thus by His mystic Yoga-māyā potency He assumed the form of a brahmacārī student, with the appropriate belt, deerskin, rod and prayer beads, and came before Vṛkāsura. The Lord's effulgence glowed brilliantly like fire. Holding kuśa grass in His hand, He humbly greeted the demon.

29The Supreme Lord said: My dear son of Śakuni, you appear tired. Why have you come such a great distance? Please rest for a minute. After all, it is one's body that fulfills all one's desires.

30O mighty one, please tell Us what you intend to do, if We are qualified to hear it. Usually one accomplishes his purposes by taking help from others.

31Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus questioned by the Personality of Godhead in language that poured down upon him like sweet nectar, Vṛka felt relieved of his fatigue. He described to the Lord everything he had done.

32The Supreme Lord said: If this is the case, We cannot believe what Śiva says. Śiva is the same lord of the Pretas and Piśācas whom Dakṣa cursed to become like a carnivorous hobgoblin.

33O best of the demons, if you have any faith in him because he is the spiritual master of the universe, then without delay put your hand on your head and see what happens.

34If the words of Lord Śambhu prove untrue in any way, O best of the demons, then kill the liar so he may never lie again.

35[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] Thus bewildered by the Personality of Godhead's enchanting, artful words, foolish Vṛka, without realizing what he was doing, placed his hand on his head.

36Instantly his head shattered as if struck by a lightning bolt, and the demon fell down dead. From the sky were heard cries of "Victory!" "Obeisances!" and "Well done!"

37The celestial sages, Pitās and Gandharvas rained down flowers to celebrate the killing of sinful Vṛkāsura. Now Lord Śiva was out of danger.

38-39The Supreme Personality of Godhead then addressed Lord Giriśa, who was now out of danger: "Just see, O Mahādeva, My lord, how this wicked man has been killed by his own sinful reactions. Indeed, what living being can hope for good fortune if he offends exalted saints, what to speak of offending the lord and spiritual master of the universe?"

40Lord Hari is the directly manifest Absolute Truth, the Supreme Soul and unlimited ocean of inconceivable energies. Anyone who recites or hears this pastime of His saving Lord Śiva will be freed from all enemies and the repetition of birth and death.

SB 10.89: Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna Retrieve a Brāhmaṇa's Sons

This chapter describes how Bhṛgu Muni proved the supremacy of Lord Viṣṇu, and how Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna recovered the dead sons of an aggrieved *brāhmaṇa* in Dvārakā.

Once, long ago, on the shore of the river Sarasvatī, a discussion arose among a group of sages as to which of the three chief lordsBrahmā, Viṣṇu or Śivais the greatest. They deputed Bhṛgu Muni to investigate the matter.

Bhṛgu decided to test the lords' tolerance, for that quality is a sure sign of greatness. First he entered the court of Lord Brahmā, his father, without offering him any respect. This enraged Brahmā, who suppressed his anger because Bhṛgu was his son. Next Bhṛgu went to Lord Śiva, his older brother, who rose from his seat to embrace him. But Bhṛgu rejected the embrace, calling Śiva a deviant heretic. Just as Śiva was about to kill Bhṛgu with his trident, Goddess Pārvatī interceded and pacified her husband. Next Bhṛgu went to Vaikuṅṭha to test Lord Nārāyaṇa. Going up to the Lord, who was lying with His head on the lap of the goddess of fortune, Bhṛgu kicked His chest. But instead of becoming angry, both the Lord and His consort stood up and offered Bhṛgu respects. "Welcome," said the Lord. "Please sit down and rest awhile. Kindly forgive us, dear master, for not noticing your arrival." When Bhṛgu went back to the assembly of sages and told them all that had happened, they concluded that Lord Viṣṇu is certainly supreme.

Once in Dvārakā a *brāhmaṇa*'s wife gave birth to a son who immediately died. The *brāhmaṇa* took his dead son to the court of King Ugrasena and berated the King: "This duplicitous, greedy enemy of *brāhmaṇas* has caused my son's death by failing to execute his duties properly!" The same misfortune continued to befall the *brāhmaṇa*, and each time he would bring his dead infant's body to the royal court and berate the King. When the ninth son died at birth, Arjuna happened to hear the *brāhmaṇa*'s complaint, and he said, "My lord, I will protect your progeny. And if I fail, I will enter fire to atone for my sin."

Some time later, the *brāhmaṇa*'s wife was about to give birth for the tenth time. When Arjuna learned of this, he went to the maternity house and enveloped it with a protective cage of arrows. Arjuna's efforts were to no avail, however, for as soon as the child was born and began to cry, it disappeared into the sky. As the *brāhmaṇa* profusely derided Arjuna, the warrior set off for the abode of Yamarāja, the king of death. But Arjuna did not find the *brāhmaṇa*'s son there, and even after searching throughout the fourteen worlds he could find no trace of the infant.

Having failed to protect the *brāhmaṇa*'s son, Arjuna was now intent on committing suicide by entering the sacred fire. But just as he was about to do so, Lord Kṛṣṇa stopped him and said, "I will show you the *brāhmaṇa*'s sons, so please don't despise yourself like this." Lord Kṛṣṇa then took Arjuna onto His transcendental chariot, and the two of them crossed over the seven universal islands with their seven oceans, passed over the Lokāloka mountain range and entered the region of dense darkness. Since the horses could not find their way, Kṛṣṇa sent His blazing Sudarśana disc ahead to pierce the gloom. Gradually they came to the water of the Causal Ocean, within which they found the city of Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu. There they saw the thousand-hooded serpent Ananta and upon Him lay Mahā-Viṣṇu. The great Lord greeted Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, saying "I brought the *brāhmaṇa*'s sons here simply because I wanted to see the two of you. Please continue to benefit the people in general by exemplifying religious behavior in your forms of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi."

Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna then took the *brāhmaṇa*'s sons, went back to Dvārakā and returned the infants to their father. Having directly experienced the greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna was amazed. He concluded that only by the Lord's mercy can a living being exhibit any power or opulence.

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Once, O King, as a group of sages were performing a Vedic sacrifice on the banks of the Sarasvatī River, a controversy arose among them as to which of the three chief deities is supreme.

2Eager to resolve this question, O King, the sages sent Lord Brahmā's son Bhṛgu to find the

answer. First he went to his father's court.

3To test how well Lord Brahmā was situated in the mode of goodness, Bhṛgu failed to bow down to him or glorify him with prayers. The lord became angry at him, inflamed into fury by his own passion.

4Though anger toward his son was now rising within his heart, Lord Brahmā was able to subdue it by applying his intelligence, in the same way that fire is extinguished by its own product, water.

5Bhṛgu then went to Mount Kailāsa. There Lord Śiva stood up and happily came forward to embrace his brother.

6-7But Bhṛgu refused his embrace, telling him, "You are a deviant heretic." At this Lord Śiva became angry, and his eyes burned ferociously. He raised his trident and was about to kill Bhṛgu when Goddess Devī fell at his feet and spoke some words to pacify him. Bhṛgu then left that place and went to Vaikuṅṭha, where Lord Janārdana resides.

8-9There he went up to the Supreme Lord, who was lying with His head on the lap of His consort, Śrī, and kicked Him on the chest. The Lord then rose, along with Goddess Lakṣmī, as a sign of respect. Coming down from His bedstead, that supreme goal of all pure devotees bowed His head to the floor before the sage and told him, 'Welcome, brāhmaṇa. Please sit in this chair and rest awhile. Kindly forgive us, dear master, for not noticing your arrival.'

10-11"Please purify Me, My realm and the realms of the universal rulers devoted to Me by giving us the water that has washed your feet. This holy water is indeed what makes all places of pilgrimage sacred. Today, my lord, I have become the exclusive shelter of the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī; she will consent to reside on My chest because your foot has rid it of sins."

12Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Bhṛgu felt satisfied and delighted to hear the solemn words spoken by Lord Vaikuṅṭha. Overwhelmed with devotional ecstasy, he remained silent, his eyes brimming with tears.

13O King, Bhṛgu then returned to the sacrificial arena of the wise Vedic authorities and described his entire experience to them.

14-17Amazed upon hearing Bhṛgu's account, the sages were freed from all doubts and became convinced that Viṣṇu is the greatest Lord. From Him come peace; fearlessness; the essential principles of religion; detachment with knowledge; the eightfold powers of mystic yoga; and His glorification, which cleanses the mind of all impurities. He is known as the supreme destination for those who are peaceful and equipoisedthe selfless, wise saints who have given up all violence. His most dear form is that of pure goodness, and the brāhmaṇas are His worshipable deities. Persons of keen intellect who have attained spiritual peace worship Him without selfish motives.

18The Lord expands into three kinds of manifest beings—the Rākṣasas, the demons and the demigods—all of whom are created by the Lord's material energy and conditioned by her modes. But among these three modes, it is the mode of goodness which is the means of attaining life's final success.

19Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The learned brāhmaṇas living along the river Sarasvatī came to this conclusion in order to dispel the doubts of all people. Thereafter they rendered devotional service to the Supreme Lord's lotus feet and attained His abode.

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20Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus did this fragrant nectar flow from the lotus mouth of Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of the sage Vyāsadeva. This wonderful glorification of the Supreme Person destroys all fear of material existence. A traveler who constantly drinks this nectar through his ear-holes will forget the fatigue brought on by wandering along the paths of worldly life.

21Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Once, in Dvārakā, a brāhmaṇa's wife gave birth to a son, but the newborn infant died as soon as he touched the ground, O Bhārata.

22The brāhmaṇa took the corpse and placed it at the door of King Ugrasena's court. Then, agitated and lamenting miserably, he spoke the following.

23[The brāhmaṇa said:] This duplicitous, greedy enemy of brāhmaṇas, this unqualified ruler addicted to sense pleasure, has caused my son's death by some discrepancies in the execution of his duties.

24Citizens serving such a wicked king, who takes pleasure in violence and cannot control his senses, are doomed to suffer poverty and constant misery.

25The wise brāhmaṇa suffered the same tragedy with his second and third child. Each time, he left the body of his dead son at the King's door and sang the same song of lamentation.

26-27When the ninth child died, Arjuna, who was near Lord Keśava, happened to overhear the brāhmaṇa lamenting. Thus Arjuna addressed the brāhmaṇa: "What is the matter, my dear brāhmaṇa? Isn't there some lowly member of the royal order here who can at least stand before your house with a bow in his hand? These kṣatriyas are behaving as if they were brāhmaṇas idly engaged in fire sacrifices.

28"The rulers of a kingdom in which brāhmaṇas lament over lost wealth, wives and children are merely imposters playing the role of kings just to earn their livelihood.

29"My lord, I will protect the progeny of you and your wife, who are in such distress. And if I fail to keep this promise, I will enter fire to atone for my sin."

30-31The brāhmaṇa said: Neither Saṅkarṣaṇa; Vāsudeva; Pradyumna, the best of bowmen; nor the unequalled warrior Aniruddha could save my sons. Then why do you naively attempt a feat that the almighty Lords of the universe could not perform? We cannot take you seriously.

32Śrī Arjuna said: I am neither Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, nor Lord Kṛṣṇa, nor even Kṛṣṇa's son. Rather, I am Arjuna, wielder of the Gāṇḍīva bow.

33Do not minimize my ability, which was good enough to satisfy Lord Śiva, O brāhmaṇa. I will bring back your sons, dear master, even if I have to defeat Death himself in battle.

34Thus convinced by Arjuna, O tormentor of enemies, the brāhmaṇa went home, satisfied by having heard Arjuna's declaration of his prowess.

35When the wife of the elevated brāhmaṇa was again about to give birth, he went to Arjuna in great anxiety and begged him, "Please, please protect my child from death!"

36After touching pure water, offering obeisances to Lord Maheśvara and recollecting the mantras for his celestial weapons, Arjuna strung his bow Gāṇḍīva.

37Arjuna fenced in the house where the birth was taking place by shooting arrows attached to various missiles. Thus the son of Prthā constructed a protective cage of arrows, covering the house upwards, downwards and sideways.

38The brāhmaṇa's wife then gave birth, but after the newborn infant had been crying for a short time, he suddenly vanished into the sky in his selfsame body.

39The brāhmaṇa then derided Arjuna in front of Lord Kṛṣṇa: "Just see how foolish I was to put my faith in the bragging of a eunuch!

40"When neither Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Rāma nor Keśava can save a person, who else can possibly protect him?"

41"To hell with that liar Arjuna! To hell with that braggart's bow! He is so foolish that he has deluded himself into thinking he can bring back a person whom destiny has taken away."

42While the wise brāhmaṇa continued to heap insults upon him, Arjuna employed a mystic incantation to go at once to Saṁyamanī, the city of heaven where Lord Yamarāja resides.

43-44Not seeing the brāhmaṇa's child there, Arjuna went to the cities of Indra, Agni, Nirṛti, Soma, Vāyu and Varuṇa. With weapons at the ready he searched through all the domains of the universe, from the bottom of the subterranean region to the roof of heaven. Finally, not having found the brāhmaṇa's son anywhere, Arjuna decided to enter the sacred fire, having failed to keep his promise. But just as he was about to do so, Lord Kṛṣṇa stopped him and spoke the following words.

45[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] I will show you the brāhmaṇa's sons, so please don't despise yourself like this. These same men who now criticize us will soon establish our spotless fame.

46Having thus advised Arjuna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead had Arjuna join Him on His divine chariot, and together they set off toward the west.

47The Lord's chariot passed over the seven islands of the middle universe, each with its ocean and its seven principal mountains. Then it crossed the Lokāloka boundary and entered the vast region of total darkness.

48-49In that darkness the chariot's horses Śaibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Balāhaka lost their way. Seeing them in this condition, O best of the Bhāratas, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme master of all masters of yoga, sent His Sudarśana disc before the chariot. That disc shone like thousands of suns.

50The Lord's Sudarśana disc penetrated the darkness with its blazing effulgence. Racing forward with the speed of the mind, it cut through the fearsome, dense oblivion expanded from primeval matter, as an arrow shot from Lord Rāma's bow cuts through His enemy's army.

51Following the Sudarśana disc, the chariot went beyond the darkness and reached the endless spiritual light of the all pervasive brahmajyoti. As Arjuna beheld this glaring effulgence, his eyes hurt, and so he shut them.

52From that region they entered a body of water resplendent with huge waves being churned by a mighty wind. Within that ocean Arjuna saw an amazing palace more radiant than anything he had ever seen before. Its beauty was enhanced by thousands of ornamental pillars bedecked with brilliant gems.

53In that palace was the huge, awe-inspiring serpent Ananta Śeṣa. He shone brilliantly with the radiance emanating from the gems on His thousands of hoods and reflecting from twice as many fearsome eyes. He resembled white Mount Kailāsa, and His necks and tongues were dark blue.

54-56 Arjuna then saw the omnipresent and omnipotent Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, sitting at ease on the serpent bed. His bluish complexion was the color of a dense rain cloud, He wore a beautiful yellow garment, His face looked charming, His broad eyes were most attractive, and He had eight long, handsome arms. His profuse locks of hair were bathed on all sides in the brilliance reflected from the clusters of precious jewels decorating His crown and earrings. He wore the Kaustubha gem, the mark of Śrīvatsa and a garland of forest flowers. Serving that topmost of all Lords were His personal attendants, headed by Sunanda and Nanda; His cakras and other weapons in their personified forms; His consort potencies Puṣṭi, Śrī, Kīrti and Ajā; and all His various mystic powers.

57 Lord Kṛṣṇa offered homage to Himself in this boundless form, and Arjuna, astonished at the sight of Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu, bowed down as well. Then, as the two of them stood before Him with joined palms, the almighty Mahā-Viṣṇu, supreme master of all rulers of the universe, smiled and spoke to them in a voice full of solemn authority.

58 [Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu said:] I brought the brāhmaṇa's sons here because I wanted to see the two of you, My expansions, who have descended to the earth to save the principles of religion. As soon as you finish killing the demons who burden the earth, quickly come back here to Me.

59 Although all your desires are completely fulfilled, O best of exalted personalities, for the benefit of the people in general you should continue to exemplify religious behavior as the sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

60-61 Thus instructed by the Supreme Lord of the topmost planet, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna assented by chanting om, and then they bowed down to almighty Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu. Taking the brāhmaṇa's sons with them, they returned with great delight to Dvārakā by the same path along which they had come. There they presented the brāhmaṇa with his sons, who were in the same infant bodies in which they had been lost.

62 Having seen the domain of Lord Viṣṇu, Arjuna was totally amazed. He concluded that whatever extraordinary power a person exhibits can only be a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

63 Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited many other, similar heroic pastimes in this world. He apparently enjoyed the pleasures of ordinary human life, and He performed greatly potent fire sacrifices.

64 The Lord having demonstrated His supremacy, at suitable times He showered down all desirable things upon the brāhmaṇas and His other subjects, just as Indra pours down his rain.

65 Now that He had killed many wicked kings and engaged devotees such as Arjuna in killing others, the Lord could easily assure the execution of religious principles through the agency of such pious rulers as Yudhiṣṭhira.

SB 10.90: Summary of Lord Kṛṣṇa's Glories

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoyed with His queens in the lakes of Dvārakā. It also relates the queens' ecstatic prayers in the mood of intense separation from Him, and summarizes the Lord's pastimes.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued to reside in His opulent capital of Dvārakā, together with the Yadus and His queens. He would enjoy sporting with His wives in the ponds on the palace grounds, squirting water on them with a syringe and being squirted in turn. With His graceful gestures,

loving words and sidelong glances, He would enchant their hearts. In this way the queens would become totally absorbed in thoughts of Him. Sometimes, after playing with the Lord in the water, they would address various creatures *skurañ* and *cakravāka* birds, the ocean, the moon, a cloud, a cuckoo, a mountain, a river and so on declaring their great attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the pretext of commiserating with these creatures.

Lord Kṛṣṇa begot ten sons in the womb of each of His queens. Among these sons, Pradyumna was foremost, being equal to His father in all transcendental qualities. Pradyumna married Rukmī's daughter, and from her womb Aniruddha was born. Aniruddha then married Rukmī's granddaughter and begot Vajra, who was the only Yadu prince to survive the battle of iron clubs at Prabhāsa. From Vajra descended the remainder of the Yadu dynasty, beginning with Pratibāhu. The members of the Yadu dynasty are virtually innumerable; indeed, just to educate their children the Yadus employed 38,800,000 teachers.

Before Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared, many demons took birth in human families to harass the people of the world and destroy brahminical culture. To subdue them, the Lord ordered the demigods to descend into the Yadu dynasty, which then expanded into 101 clans. All of the Yadus recognized Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and had unflinching faith in Him. While resting, eating, walking and so on, which they often did in His company, they would forget their own bodies in their transcendental happiness.

The Tenth Canto concludes with this promise of success for the sincere hearer: "By regularly hearing, chanting and meditating on the beautiful topics of Lord Mukunda with ever-increasing sincerity, a mortal being will attain the divine kingdom of the Lord, where the inviolable power of death holds no sway."

1-7 Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The master of the goddess of fortune resided happily in His capital city, Dvārakā, which was endowed with all opulences and populated by the most eminent Vṛṣṇis and their gorgeously dressed wives. When these beautiful women in the bloom of youth would play on the city's rooftops with balls and other toys, they shone like flashing lightning. The main streets of the city were always crowded with intoxicated elephants exuding mada, and also with cavalry, richly adorned infantrymen, and soldiers riding chariots brilliantly decorated with gold. Gracing the city were many gardens and parks with rows of flowering trees, where bees and birds would gather, filling all directions with their songs.

8-9 As Gandharvas joyfully sang His praises to the accompaniment of mṛdaṅga, paṇava and ānaka drums, and as professional reciters known as Sūtas, Māgadhas and Vandīs played vīṇās and recited poems praising Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa would play with His wives in the water. Laughing, the queens would squirt water on Him with syringes, and He would squirt them back. Thus Kṛṣṇa would sport with His queens in the same way that the lord of the Yakṣas sports with the Yakṣī nymphs.

10 Under the drenched clothing of the queens, their thighs and breasts would become visible. The flowers tied in their large braids would scatter as they sprayed water on their consort, and on the plea of trying to take away His syringe, they would embrace Him. By His touch their lusty feelings would increase, causing their faces to beam with smiles. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa's queens shone with resplendent beauty.

11 Lord Kṛṣṇa's flower garland would become smeared with kuṅkuma from their breasts, and His abundant locks of hair would become disheveled as a result of His absorption in the game. As the Lord repeatedly sprayed His young consorts and they sprayed Him in turn, He enjoyed Himself like the king of elephants enjoying in the company of his bevy of she-elephants.

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12Afterward, Lord Kṛṣṇa and His wives would give the ornaments and clothing they had worn during their water sports to the male and female performers, who earned their livelihood from singing and from playing instrumental music.

13In this way Lord Kṛṣṇa would sport with His queens, totally captivating their hearts with His gestures, talks, glances and smiles, and also with His jokes, playful exchanges and embraces.

14The queens would become stunned in ecstatic trance, their minds absorbed in Kṛṣṇa alone. Then, thinking of their lotus-eyed Lord, they would speak as if insane. Please hear these words from me as I relate them.

15The queens said: O kuraṁī bird, you are lamenting. Now it is night, and somewhere in this world the Supreme Lord is asleep in a hidden place. But you are wide awake, O friend, unable to fall asleep. Is it that, like us, you have had your heart pierced to the core by the lotus-eyed Lord's munificent, playful smiling glances?

16Poor cakravākī, even after closing your eyes, you continue to cry pitifully through the night for your unseen mate. Or is it that, like us, you have become the servant of Acyuta and hanker to wear in your braided hair the garland He has blessed with the touch of His feet?

17Dear ocean, you are always roaring, not sleeping at night. Are you suffering insomnia? Or is it that, as with us, Mukunda has taken your insignias and you are hopeless of retrieving them?

18My dear moon, having contracted a severe case of tuberculosis, you have become so emaciated that you fail to dispel the darkness with your rays. Or is it that you appear dumbstruck because, like us, you cannot remember the encouraging promises Mukunda once made to you?

19O Malayan breeze, what have we done to displease you, so that you stir up lust in our hearts, which have already been shattered by Govinda's sidelong glances?

20O revered cloud, you are indeed very dear to the chief of the Yādavas, who bears the mark of Śrīvatsa. Like us, you are bound to Him by love and are meditating upon Him. Your heart is distraught with great eagerness, as our hearts are, and as you remember Him again and again you shed a torrent of tears. Association with Kṛṣṇa brings such misery!

21O sweet-throated cuckoo, in a voice that could revive the dead you are vibrating the same sounds we once heard from our beloved, the most pleasing of speakers. Please tell me what I can do today to please you.

22O magnanimous mountain, you neither move nor speak. You must be pondering some matter of great importance. Or do you, like us, desire to hold on your breasts the feet of Vasudeva's darling son?

23O rivers, wives of the ocean, your pools have now dried up. Alas, you have shriveled to nothing, and your wealth of lotuses has vanished. Are you, then, like us, who are withering away because of not receiving the affectionate glance of our dear husband, the Lord of Madhu, who has cheated our hearts?

24Welcome, swan. Please sit here and drink some milk. Give us some news of the descendant of Śūra, dear one. We know you are His messenger. Is that invincible Lord doing well, and does that unreliable friend of ours still remember the words He spoke to us long ago? Why should we go and worship Him? O servant of a petty master, go tell Him who fulfills our desires to come here without the goddess of fortune. Is she the only woman exclusively devoted to Him?

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25Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: By thus speaking and acting with such ecstatic love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the master of all masters of mystic yoga, His loving wives attained the ultimate goal of life.

26The Lord, whom countless songs glorify in countless ways, forcibly attracts the minds of all women who simply hear about Him. What to speak, then, of those women who see Him directly?

27And how could one possibly describe the great austerities that had been performed by the women who perfectly served Him, the spiritual master of the universe, in pure ecstatic love? Thinking of Him as their husband, they rendered such intimate services as massaging His feet.

28Thus observing the principles of duty enunciated in the Vedas, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the goal of the saintly devotees, repeatedly demonstrated how one can achieve at home the objectives of religiosity, economic development and regulated sense gratification.

29While fulfilling the highest standards of religious householder life, Lord Kṛṣṇa maintained more than 16,100 wives.

30Among these jewellike women were eight principal queens, headed by Rukmiṇī. I have already described them one after another, O King, along with their sons.

31The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose endeavor never fails, begot ten sons in each of His many wives.

32Among these sons, all possessing unlimited valor, eighteen were mahā-rathas of great renown. Now hear their names from me.

33-34They were Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Dīptimān, Bhānu, Sāmba, Madhu, Bṛhadbhānu, Citrabhānu, Vṛka, Aruṇa, Puṣkara, Vedabāhu, Śrutadeva, Sunandana, Citrabāhu, Virūpa, Kavi and Nyagrodha.

35O best of kings, of these sons begotten by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Madhu, the most prominent was Rukmiṇī's son Pradyumna. He was just like His father.

36The great warrior Pradyumna married Rukmī's daughter [Rukmavatī], who gave birth to Aniruddha. He was as strong as ten thousand elephants.

37Rukmī's daughter's son [Aniruddha] married Rukmī's son's daughter [Rocana]. From her was born Vajra, who would remain among the few survivors of the Yadus' battle with clubs.

38From Vajra came Pratibāhu, whose son was Subāhu. Subāhu's son was Śāntasena, from whom Śatasena was born.

39No one born in this family was poor in wealth or progeny, short-lived, weak or neglectful of brahminical culture.

40The Yadu dynasty produced innumerable great men of famous deeds. Even in tens of thousands of years, O King, one could never count them all.

41I have heard from authoritative sources that the Yadu family employed 38,800,000 teachers just to educate their children.

42Who can count all the great Yādavas, when among them King Ugrasena alone was accompanied by an entourage of thirty trillion attendants?

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43The savage descendants of Diti who had been killed in past ages in battles between the demigods and demons took birth among human beings and arrogantly harassed the general populace.

44To subdue these demons, Lord Hari told the demigods to descend into the dynasty of Yadu. They comprised 101 clans, O King.

45Because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Yādavas accepted Him as their ultimate authority. And among them, all those who were His intimate associates especially flourished.

46The Vṛṣṇis were so absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that they forgot their own bodies while sleeping, sitting, walking, conversing, playing, bathing and so on.

47The heavenly Ganges is a holy place of pilgrimage because her waters wash Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet. But when the Lord descended among the Yadus, His glories eclipsed the Ganges as a holy place. Both those who hated Kṛṣṇa and those who loved Him attained eternal forms like His in the spiritual world. The unattainable and supremely self-satisfied goddess of fortune, for the sake of whose favor everyone else struggles, belongs to Him alone. His name destroys all inauspiciousness when heard or chanted. He alone has set forth the principles of the various disciplic successions of sages. What wonder is it that He, whose personal weapon is the wheel of time, relieved the burden of the earth?

48Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is He who is known as jana-nivāsa, the ultimate resort of all living entities, and who is also known as Devakīnandana or Yaśodā-nandana, the son of Devakī and Yaśodā. He is the guide of the Yadu dynasty, and with His mighty arms He kills everything inauspicious, as well as every man who is impious. By His presence He destroys all things inauspicious for all living entities, moving and inert. His blissful smiling face always increases the lusty desires of the gopīs of Vṛndāvana. May He be all glorious and happy!

49To protect the principles of devotional service to Himself, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the best of the Yadus, accepts the pastime forms that have been glorified here in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. One who desires to faithfully serve His lotus feet should hear of the activities He performs in each of these incarnationsactivities that suitably imitate those of the forms He assumes. Hearing narrations of these pastimes destroys the reactions to fruitive work.

50By regularly hearing, chanting and meditating on the beautiful topics of Lord Mukunda with ever-increasing sincerity, a mortal being will attain the divine kingdom of the Lord, where the inviolable power of death holds no sway. For this purpose, many persons, including great kings, abandoned their mundane homes and took to the forest.

Canto 11: General History

SB 11.1: The Curse upon the Yadu Dynasty

1ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by theYadu dynasty, executed the killing of many demons. Then, further to remove the burden of the earth, the Lord arranged for the great Battle of Kurukṣetra, which suddenly erupted in violence between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas.

2Because the sons of Pāṇḍu were enraged by the numerous offenses of their enemies, such as duplicitous gambling, verbal insults, the seizing of Draupadī's hair, and many other cruel transgressions, the Supreme Lord engaged those Pāṇḍavas as the immediate cause to execute His will. On the pretext of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for all the kings who

were burdening the earth to assemble with their armies on opposite sides of the battlefield, and when the Lord killed them through the agency of war, the earth was relieved of its burden.

3The Supreme Personality of Godhead used the Yadu dynasty, which was protected by His own arms, to eliminate the kings who with their armies had been the burden of this earth. Then the unfathomable Lord thought to Himself, “Although some may say that the earth’s burden is now gone, in My opinion it is not yet gone, because there still remains the Yādava dynasty itself, whose strength is unbearable for the earth.”

4Lord Kṛṣṇa thought, “No outside force could ever bring about the defeat of this family, the Yadu dynasty, whose members have always been fully surrendered to Me and are unrestricted in their opulence. But if I inspire a quarrel within the dynasty, that quarrel will act just like a fire created from the friction of bamboo in a grove, and then I shall achieve My real purpose and return to My eternal abode.”

5My dear King Parīkṣit, when the supreme almighty Lord, whose desire always comes to pass, had thus made up His mind, He withdrew His own family on the pretext of a curse spoken by an assembly of brāhmaṇas.

6-7The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the reservoir of all beauty. All beautiful things emanate from Him, and His personal form is so attractive that it steals the eyes away from all other objects, which then seem devoid of beauty in comparison to Him. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was on the earth, He attracted the eyes of all people. When Kṛṣṇa spoke, His words attracted the minds of all who remembered them. By seeing the footsteps of Lord Kṛṣṇa, people became attracted to Him, and thus they wanted to offer their bodily activities to the Lord as His followers. In this way Kṛṣṇa very easily spread His glories, which are sung throughout the world by the most sublime and essential Vedic verses. Lord Kṛṣṇa considered that simply by hearing and chanting those glories, conditioned souls born in the future would cross beyond the darkness of ignorance. Being satisfied with this arrangement, He left for His desired destination.

8King Parīkṣit inquired: How could the brāhmaṇas curse the Vṛṣṇis, who were always respectful to the brāhmaṇas, charitable, and inclined to serve senior and exalted personalities and whose minds were always fully absorbed in thought of Lord Kṛṣṇa?

9King Parīkṣit continued inquiring: What was the motive for this curse? What did it consist of, O purest of the twice-born? And how could such a disagreement have arisen among the Yadus, who all shared the same goal of life? Please tell me all these things.

10Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Lord, who bore His body as the amalgamation of everything beautiful, dutifully executed the most auspicious activities while on the earth, although He was, in fact, without any endeavor already satisfied in all desires. Residing in His abode and enjoying life, the Lord, whose glorification is in itself magnanimous, now wanted to annihilate His dynasty, as there still remained some small part of His duty to be carried out.

11-12The sages Viśvāmitra, Asita, Kaṇva, Durvāsā, Bhṛgu, Aṅgirā, Kaśyapa, Vāmadeva, Atri and Vasiṣṭha, along with Nārada and others, once performed fruitive rituals that award abundant pious results, bring great happiness and take away the sins of Kali-yuga for the whole world by merely being recounted. The sages duly executed these rituals in the home of the chief of the Yadus, Vasudeva, the father of Lord Kṛṣṇa. After Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was staying in Vasudeva’s house as time personified, respectfully sent the sages off at the conclusion of the ceremonies, they went to the holy place called Piṅḍāraka.

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13-15 To that holy place, the young boys of the Yadu dynasty had brought Sāmba, son of Jāmbavatī, dressed in woman's garb. Playfully approaching the great sages gathered there, the boys grabbed hold of the sages' feet and impudently asked them with feigned humility, "O learned brāhmaṇas, this black-eyed pregnant woman has something to ask you. She is too embarrassed to inquire for herself. She is just about to give birth and is very desirous of having a son. Since all of you are great sages with infallible vision, please tell us whether her child will be a boy or a girl."

16 Thus ridiculed by deceit, the sages became angry, O King, and told the boys, "Fools! She will bear you an iron club that will destroy your entire dynasty."

17 Upon hearing the curse of the sages, the terrified boys quickly uncovered the belly of Sāmba, and indeed they observed that therein was an iron club.

18 The young men of the Yadu dynasty said, "Oh, what have we done? We are so unfortunate! What will our family members say to us?" Speaking thus and being very disturbed, they returned to their homes, taking the club with them.

19 The Yadu boys, the luster of their faces completely faded, brought the club into the royal assembly, and in the presence of all the Yādavas they told King Ugrasena what had happened.

20 O King Parīkṣit, when the inhabitants of Dvārakā heard of the infallible curse of the brāhmaṇas and saw the club, they were astonished and distraught with fear.

21 After having the club ground to bits, King Āhuka [Ugrasena] of the Yadus personally threw the pieces, along with the remaining lump of iron, into the water of the ocean.

22 A certain fish swallowed the iron lump, and the bits of iron, carried back to the shore by the waves, implanted themselves there and grew into tall, sharp canes.

23 The fish was caught in the ocean along with other fish in a fishermen's net. The iron lump in the fish's stomach was taken by the hunter Jarā, who fixed it as an arrowhead at the end of his shaft.

24 Knowing fully the significance of all these events, the Supreme Lord, though capable of reversing the brāhmaṇas' curse, did not wish to do so. Rather, in His form of time, He gladly sanctioned the events.

SB 11.2: Mahārāja Nimi Meets the Nine Yogendras

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

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

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

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

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5The activities of demigods lead to both misery and happiness for living beings, but the activities of great saints like you, who have accepted the infallible Lord as their very soul, result only in the happiness of all beings.

6Those who worship the demigods receive reciprocation from the demigods in a way just corresponding to the offering. The demigods are attendants of karma, like a person's shadow, but sādhus are actually merciful to the fallen.

7O brāhmaṇa, although I am satisfied simply by seeing you, I still wish to inquire about those duties which give pleasure to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Any mortal who faithfully hears about them is freed from all kinds of fear.

8In a previous birth on this earth, I worshiped the Supreme Lord, Ananta, who alone can award liberation, but because I desired to have a child, I did not worship Him for liberation. Thus I was bewildered by the Lord's illusory energy.

9My dear lord, you are always true to your vow. Please instruct me clearly, so that by your mercy I may easily free myself from material existence, which is full of many dangers and keeps us constantly bound in fear.

10Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Devarṣi Nārada was pleased by the questions of the highly intelligent Vasudeva. Because they suggested the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they reminded Nārada of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus Nārada replied to Vasudeva as follows.

11Śrī Nārada said: O best of the Sātvatas, you have quite correctly asked about the eternal duty of the living entity toward the Supreme Lord. Such devotional service to the Lord is so potent that its performance can purify the entire universe.

12Pure devotional service rendered to the Supreme Lord is spiritually so potent that simply by hearing about such transcendental service, by chanting its glories in response, by meditating on it, by respectfully and faithfully accepting it, or by praising the devotional service of others, even persons who hate the demigods and all other living beings can be immediately purified.

13Today you have made me remember my Lord, the supremely blissful Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. The Supreme Lord is so auspicious that whoever hears and chants about Him becomes completely pious.

14To explain the devotional service of the Lord, sages have related the ancient history of the conversation between the great soul King Videha and the sons of Rṣabha.

15Svāyambhuva Manu had a son named Mahārāja Priyavrata, and among Priyavrata's sons was Āgnīdhra. From Āgnīdhra was born Nābhi, whose son was known as Rṣabhadeva.

16ŚrīRṣabhadeva is accepted as an expansion of the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva. He incarnated in this world to propagate those religious principles that lead living entities to ultimate liberation. He had one hundred sons, all perfect in Vedic knowledge.

17Of the one hundred sons of Lord Rṣabhadeva, the eldest, Bharata, was completely devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa. It is because of Bharata's fame that this planet is now celebrated as the great Bhārata-varṣa.

18King Bharata rejected this material world, considering all types of material pleasure temporary and useless. Leaving his beautiful young wife and family, he worshiped Lord Hari by severe austerities and attained the abode of the Lord after three lifetimes.

19Nine of the remaining sons of Ṛṣabhadeva became the rulers of the nine islands of Bhārata-varṣa, and they exercised complete sovereignty over this planet. Eighty-one sons became twice-born brāhmaṇas and helped initiate the Vedic path of fruitive sacrifices [karma-kāṇḍa].

20-21The nine remaining sons of Ṛṣabha were greatly fortunate sages who worked vigorously to spread knowledge of the Absolute Truth. They wandered about naked and were very well versed in spiritual science. Their names were Kavi, Havir, Antarīkṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana.

22These sages wandered the earth seeing the entire universe, with all its gross and subtle objects, as a manifestation of the Supreme Lord and as nondifferent from the self.

23The nine Yogendras are liberated souls who travel freely to the planets of the demigods, the perfected mystics, the Sādhyas, the heavenly musicians, the Yakṣas, the human beings, and the minor demigods such as the Kinnaras and the serpents. No mundane force can check their free movement, and exactly as they wish they can travel as well to the worlds of the sages, the angels, the ghostly followers of Lord Śiva, the Vidyādharas, the brāhmaṇas and the cows.

24Once in Ajanābha [the former name of the earth], they came upon the sacrificial performance of the great soul Mahārāja Nimi, which was being carried out under the direction of elevated sages.

25My dear King, seeing those pure devotees of the Lord, who rival the sun in brilliance, everyone present the performer of the sacrifice, the brāhmaṇas and even the sacrificial fire stood in respect.

26King Videha [Nimi] understood that the nine sages were exalted devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, overjoyed at their auspicious arrival, he offered them suitable sitting places and worshiped them in a proper way, just as one would worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

27Overwhelmed by transcendental joy, the King humbly bowed his head and then proceeded to question the nine sages. These nine great souls glowed with their own effulgence and thus appeared equal to the four Kumāras, the sons of Lord Brahmā.

28King Videha said: I think that you must be direct associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is famous as the enemy of the demon Madhu. Indeed, the pure devotees of Lord Viṣṇu wander throughout the universe not for their personal, selfish interest, but to purify all the conditioned souls.

29For the conditioned souls, the human body is most difficult to achieve, and it can be lost at any moment. But I think that even those who have achieved human life rarely gain the association of pure devotees, who are dear to the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha.

30Therefore, O completely sinless ones, I ask you to kindly tell me what the supreme good is. After all, even half a moment's association with pure devotees within this world of birth and death is a priceless treasure for any man.

31Please speak about how one engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, if you consider me capable of properly hearing these topics. When a living entity offers loving service to the Supreme Lord, the Lord is immediately satisfied, and in return He will give even His own self to the surrendered soul.

32Śrī Nārada said: O Vasudeva, when Mahārāja Nimi had thus inquired from the nine

Yogendras about devotional service to the Lord, those best of saintly persons sincerely thanked the King for his questions and spoke to him with affection in the presence of the members of the sacrificial assembly and the brāhmaṇa priests.

33Śrī Kavi said: I consider that one whose intelligence is constantly disturbed by his falsely identifying himself with the temporary material world can achieve real freedom from fear only by worshipping the lotus feet of the infallible Supreme Lord. In such devotional service, all fear ceases entirely.

34Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhāgavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

35O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall.

36In accordance with the particular nature one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence or purified consciousness one should offer to the Supreme, thinking, “This is for the pleasure of Lord Nārāyaṇa.”

37Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. This bewildering, fearful condition is effected by the potency for illusion, called māyā. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

38Although the duality of the material world does not ultimately exist, the conditioned soul experiences it as real under the influence of his own conditioned intelligence. This imaginary experience of a world separate from Kṛṣṇa can be compared to the acts of dreaming and desiring. When the conditioned soul dreams at night of something desirable or horrible, or when he daydreams of what he would like to have or avoid, he creates a reality that has no existence beyond his own imagination. The tendency of the mind is to accept and reject various activities based on sense gratification. Therefore an intelligent person should control the mind, restricting it from the illusion of seeing things separate from Kṛṣṇa, and when the mind is thus controlled he will experience actual fearlessness.

39An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Kṛṣṇa are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world.

40By chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord, one comes to the stage of love of Godhead. Then the devotee is fixed in his vow as an eternal servant of the Lord, and he gradually becomes very much attached to a particular name and form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As his heart melts with ecstatic love, he laughs very loudly or cries or shouts. Sometimes he sings and dances like a madman, for he is indifferent to public opinion.

41A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of

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Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord's body.

42 Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

51 Birth in an aristocratic family and the execution of austere and pious activities certainly cause one to take pride in himself. Similarly, if one enjoys a prestigious position within society because his parents are highly respected members of the varṇāśrama social system, one becomes even more infatuated with himself. But if despite these excellent material qualifications one does not feel even a tinge of pride within himself, he is to be considered the dearest servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

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

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

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

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

SB 11.3: Liberation from the Illusory Energy

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

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

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

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

gratification.

5The individual living being, the master of the material body, uses his material senses, which have been activated by the Supersoul, to try to enjoy sense objects composed of the three modes of nature. Thus he misidentifies the created material body with the unborn eternal self and becomes entangled in the illusory energy of the Lord.

6Impelled by deep-rooted material desires, the embodied living entity engages his active sense organs in fruitive activities. He then experiences the results of his material actions by wandering throughout this world in so-called happiness and distress.

7Thus the conditioned living entity is forced to experience repeated birth and death. Impelled by the reactions of his own activities, he helplessly wanders from one inauspicious situation to another, suffering from the moment of creation until the time of cosmic annihilation.

8When the annihilation of the material elements is imminent, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of eternal time withdraws the manifest cosmos, consisting of gross and subtle features, and the entire universe vanishes into nonmanifestation.

9As cosmic annihilation approaches, a terrible drought takes place on earth for one hundred years. For one hundred years the heat of the sun gradually increases, and its blazing heat begins to torment the three worlds.

10Beginning from Pātāla-loka, a fire grows, emanating from the mouth of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. Its flames shooting upward, driven by great winds, it scorches everything in all directions.

11Hordes of clouds called Saṁvartaka pour torrents of rain for one hundred years. Flooding down in raindrops as long as the trunk of an elephant, the deadly rainfall submerges the entire universe in water.

12Then Vairāja Brahmā, the soul of the universal form, gives up his universal body, O King, and enters into the subtle unmanifest nature, like a fire that has run out of fuel.

13Deprived of its quality of aroma by the wind, the element earth is transformed into water; and water, deprived of its taste by that same wind, is merged into fire.

14Fire, deprived of its form by darkness, dissolves into the element air. When the air loses its quality of touch by the influence of space, the air merges into that space. When space is deprived of its tangible quality by the Supreme Soul in the form of time, space merges into false ego in the mode of ignorance.

15My dear King, the material senses and intelligence merge into false ego in the mode of passion, from which they arose; and the mind, along with the demigods, merges into false ego in the mode of goodness. Then the total false ego, along with all of its qualities, merges into the mahat-tattva.

16I have now described māyā, the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This illusory potency, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is empowered by the Lord for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material universe. Now, what more do you wish to hear?

17King Nimi said: O great sage, please explain how even a foolish materialist can easily cross over the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, which is always insurmountable for those who are not self-controlled.

18Śrī Prabuddha said: Accepting the roles of male and female in human society, the conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Thus they constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure. But one should see that they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, their happiness inevitably vanishes, and as they grow older their material discomfort increases.

19Wealth is a perpetual source of distress, it is most difficult to acquire, and it is virtual death for the soul. What satisfaction does one actually gain from his wealth? Similarly, how can one gain ultimate or permanent happiness from one's so-called home, children, relatives and domestic animals, which are all maintained by one's hard-earned money?

20One cannot find permanent happiness even on the heavenly planets, which one can attain in the next life by ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices. Even in material heaven the living entity is disturbed by rivalry with his equals and envy of those superior to him. And since one's residence in heaven is finished with the exhaustion of pious fruitive activities, the denizens of heaven are afflicted by fear, anticipating the destruction of their heavenly life. Thus they resemble kings who, though enviously admired by ordinary citizens, are constantly harassed by enemy kings and who therefore never attain actual happiness.

21Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.

22Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favorable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple.

23A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material and positively cultivate association with his spiritual master and other saintly devotees. He should be merciful to those in an inferior position to him, cultivate friendship with those on an equal level and meekly serve those in a higher spiritual position. Thus he should learn to deal properly with all living beings.

24To serve the spiritual master the disciple should learn cleanliness, austerity, tolerance, silence, study of Vedic knowledge, simplicity, celibacy, nonviolence, and equanimity in the face of material dualities such as heat and cold, happiness and distress.

25One should practice meditation by constantly seeing oneself to be an eternal cognizant spirit soul and seeing the Lord to be the absolute controller of everything. To increase one's meditation, one should live in a secluded place and give up false attachment to one's home and household paraphernalia. Giving up the decorations of the temporary material body, one should dress himself with scraps of cloth found in rejected places, or with the bark of trees. In this way one should learn to be satisfied in any material situation.

26One should have firm faith that he will achieve all success in life by following those scriptures that describe the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān. At the same time, one should avoid blaspheming other scriptures. One should rigidly control his mind, speech and bodily activities, always speak the truth, and bring the mind and senses

under full control.

27-28 One should hear, glorify and meditate upon the wonderful transcendental activities of the Lord. One should specifically become absorbed in the appearance, activities, qualities and holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus inspired, one should perform all of one's daily activities as an offering to the Lord. One should perform sacrifice, charity and penance exclusively for the Lord's satisfaction. Similarly, one should chant only those mantras which glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And all one's religious activities should be performed as an offering to the Lord. Whatever one finds pleasing or enjoyable he should immediately offer to the Supreme Lord, and even his wife, children, home and very life air he should offer at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

29 One who desires his ultimate self-interest should cultivate friendship with those persons who have accepted Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of their life. One should further develop an attitude of service toward all living beings. One should especially try to help those in the human form of life and, among them, especially those who accept the principles of religious behavior. Among religious persons, one should especially render service to the pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

30 One should learn how to associate with the devotees of the Lord by gathering with them to chant the glories of the Lord. This process is most purifying. As devotees thus develop their loving friendship, they feel mutual happiness and satisfaction. And by thus encouraging one another they are able to give up material sense gratification, which is the cause of all suffering.

31 The devotees of the Lord constantly discuss the glories of the Personality of Godhead among themselves. Thus they constantly remember the Lord and remind one another of His qualities and pastimes. In this way, by their devotion to the principles of bhakti-yoga, the devotees please the Personality of Godhead, who takes away from them everything inauspicious. Being purified of all impediments, the devotees awaken to pure love of Godhead, and thus, even within this world, their spiritualized bodies exhibit symptoms of transcendental ecstasy, such as standing of the bodily hairs on end.

32 Having achieved love of Godhead, the devotees sometimes weep loudly, absorbed in thought of the infallible Lord. Sometimes they laugh, feel great pleasure, speak out loud to the Lord, dance or sing. Such devotees, having transcended material, conditioned life, sometimes imitate the unborn Supreme by acting out His pastimes. And sometimes, achieving His personal audience, they remain peaceful and silent.

33 Thus learning the science of devotional service and practically engaging in the devotional service of the Lord, the devotee comes to the stage of love of Godhead. And by complete devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, the devotee easily crosses over the illusory energy, māyā, which is extremely difficult to cross.

34 King Nimi inquired: Please explain to me the transcendental situation of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, who is Himself the Absolute Truth and the Supersoul of everyone. You can explain this to me, because you are all most expert in transcendental knowledge.

35 Śrī Pippalāyana said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe, yet He has no prior cause. He pervades the various states of wakefulness, dreaming and unconscious deep sleep and also exists beyond them. By entering the body of every living being as the Supersoul, He enlivens the body, senses, life airs and mental activities, and thus all the subtle and gross organs of the body begin their functions. My dear King, know that Personality of Godhead to be the Supreme.

36Neither the mind nor the faculties of speech, sight, intelligence, the life air or any of the senses are capable of penetrating that Supreme Truth, any more than small sparks can affect the original fire from which they are generated. Not even the authoritative language of the Vedas can perfectly describe the Supreme Truth, since the Vedas themselves disclaim the possibility that the Truth can be expressed by words. But through indirect reference the Vedic sound does serve as evidence of the Supreme Truth, since without the existence of that Supreme Truth the various restrictions found in the Vedas would have no ultimate purpose.

37Originally one, the Absolute, Brahman, comes to be known as threefold, manifesting itself as the three modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance. Brahman further expands its potency, and thus the power to act and the power of consciousness become manifest, along with the false ego, which covers the identity of the conditioned living being. Thus, by the expansion of the multipotencies of the Absolute, the demigods, as the embodiment of knowledge, become manifest, along with the material senses, their objects, and the results of material activity, namely happiness and distress. In this way the manifestation of the material world takes place as the subtle cause and as the material effect visible in the appearance of gross material objects. Brahman, which is the source of all subtle and gross manifestations, is simultaneously transcendental to them, being absolute.

38Brahman, the eternal soul, was never born and will never die, nor does it grow or decay. That spiritual soul is actually the knower of the youth, middle age and death of the material body. Thus the soul can be understood to be pure consciousness, existing everywhere at all times and never being destroyed. Just as the life air within the body, although one, becomes manifest as many in contact with the various material senses, the one soul appears to assume various material designations in contact with the material body.

39The spirit soul is born in many different species of life within the material world. Some species are born from eggs, others from embryos, others from the seeds of plants and trees, and others from perspiration. But in all species of life the *prāṇa*, or vital air, remains unchanging and follows the spirit soul from one body to another. Similarly, the spirit soul is eternally the same despite its material condition of life. We have practical experience of this. When we are absorbed in deep sleep without dreaming, the material senses become inactive, and even the mind and false ego are merged into a dormant condition. But although the senses, mind and false ego are inactive, one remembers upon waking that he, the soul, was peacefully sleeping.

40When one seriously engages in the devotional service of the Personality of Godhead, fixing the Lord's lotus feet within one's heart as the only goal of life, one can destroy the innumerable impure desires lodged within the heart as a result of one's previous fruitive work within the three modes of material nature. When the heart is thus purified one can directly perceive both the Supreme Lord and one's self as transcendental entities. Thus one becomes perfect in spiritual understanding through direct experience, just as one can directly experience the sunshine through normal, healthy vision.

41King Nimi said: O great sages, please speak to us about the process of karma-yoga. Purified by this process of dedicating one's practical work to the Supreme, a person can very quickly free himself from all material activities, even in this life, and thus enjoy pure life on the transcendental platform.

42Once in the past, in the presence of my father, Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, I placed a similar question before four great sages who were sons of Lord Brahmā. But they did not answer my question. Please explain the reason for this.

43ŚrīĀvirhotra replied: Prescribed duties, nonperformance of such duties, and forbidden activities are topics one can properly understand through authorized study of the Vedic literature. This difficult subject matter can never be understood by mundane speculation. The authorized Vedic literature is the sound incarnation of the Personality of Godhead Himself, and thus Vedic knowledge is perfect. Even the greatest learned scholars are bewildered in their attempts to understand the science of action if they neglect the authority of Vedic knowledge.

44Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine.

45If an ignorant person who has not conquered the material senses does not adhere to the Vedic injunctions, certainly he will engage in sinful and irreligious activities. Thus his reward will be repeated birth and death.

46By executing without attachment the regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas, offering the results of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the interest of the performer.

47One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spirit soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Keśava, by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras.

48Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive.

49After cleansing oneself, purifying the body by prāṇāyāma, bhūta-śuddhi and other processes, and marking the body with sacred tilaka for protection, one should sit in front of the Deity and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

50-51The devotee should gather whatever ingredients for worshipping the Deity are available, make ready the offerings, the ground, his mind and the Deity, sprinkle his sitting place with water for purification and prepare the bathing water and other paraphernalia. The devotee should then place the Deity in His proper place, both physically and within his own mind, concentrate his attention, and mark the Deity's heart and other parts of the body with tilaka. Then he should offer worship with the appropriate mantra.

52-53One should worship the Deity along with each of the limbs of His transcendental body, His weapons such as the Sudarśana cakra, His other bodily features and His personal associates. One should worship each of these transcendental aspects of the Lord by its own mantra and with offerings of water to wash the feet, scented water, water to wash the mouth, water for bathing, fine clothing and ornaments, fragrant oils, valuable necklaces, unbroken barleycorns, flower garlands, incense and lamps. Having thus completed the worship in all its aspects in accordance with the prescribed regulations, one should then honor the Deity of Lord Hari with prayers and offer obeisances to Him by bowing down.

54The worshiper should become fully absorbed in meditating upon himself as an eternal servant of the Lord and should thus perfectly worship the Deity, remembering that the Deity is also situated within his heart. Then he should take the remnants of the Deity's paraphernalia, such as flower garlands, upon his head and respectfully put the Deity back in His own place,

thus concluding the worship.

55 Thus the worshiper of the Supreme Lord should recognize that the Personality of Godhead is all-pervading and should worship Him through His presence in fire, the sun, water and other elements, in the heart of the guest one receives in one's home, and also in one's own heart. In this way the worshiper will very soon achieve liberation.

SB 11.4: Drumila Explains the Incarnations of Godhead to King Nimi

1 King Nimi said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead descends into the material world by His internal potency and according to His own desire. Therefore, please tell us about the various pastimes Lord Hari has performed in the past, is performing now and will perform in this world in the future in His various incarnations.

2 Śrī Drumila said: Anyone trying to enumerate or describe fully the unlimited qualities of the unlimited Supreme Lord has the intelligence of a foolish child. Even if a great genius could somehow or other, after a time-consuming endeavor, count all the particles of dust on the surface of the earth, such a genius could never count the attractive qualities of the Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of all potencies.

3 When the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa created His universal body out of the five elements produced from Himself and then entered within that universal body by His own plenary portion, He thus became known as the Puruṣa.

4 Within His body are elaborately arranged the three planetary systems of this universe. His transcendental senses generate the knowledge-acquiring and active senses of all embodied beings. His consciousness generates conditioned knowledge, and His powerful breathing produces the bodily strength, sensory power and conditioned activities of the embodied souls. He is the prime mover, through the agency of the material modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. And thus the universe is created, maintained and annihilated.

5 In the beginning, the original Supreme Personality manifested the form of Brahmā through the material mode of passion in order to create this universe. The Lord manifested His form as Viṣṇu, the Lord of sacrifice and protector of the twice-born brāhmaṇas and their religious duties, to maintain the universe. And when the universe is to be annihilated the same Supreme Lord employs the material mode of ignorance and manifests the form of Rudra. The created living beings are thus always subject to the forces of creation, maintenance and destruction.

6 Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who is perfectly peaceful and is the best of sages, was born as the son of Dharma and his wife Mūrti, the daughter of Dakṣa. Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi taught the devotional service of the Lord, by which material work ceases, and He Himself perfectly practiced this knowledge. He is living even today, His lotus feet served by the greatest of saintly persons.

7 King Indra became fearful, thinking that Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi would become very powerful by His severe penances and seize Indra's heavenly kingdom. Thus Indra, not knowing the transcendental glories of the incarnation of the Lord, sent Cupid and his associates to the Lord's residence in Badarikāśrama. As the charming breezes of spring created a most sensuous atmosphere, Cupid himself attacked the Lord with arrows in the form of the irresistible glances of beautiful women.

8 The primeval Lord, understanding the offense committed by Indra, did not become proud. Instead He spoke laughingly as follows to Cupid and his followers, who were trembling before Him: "Do not fear, O mighty Madana, O wind-god and wives of the demigods. Rather, please accept these gifts I am offering you and kindly sanctify My āśrama by your presence."

9My dear King Nimi, when Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi thus spoke, eradicating the fear of the demigods, they bowed their heads with shame and addressed the Lord as follows, to invoke His compassion: Our dear Lord, You are always transcendental, beyond the reach of illusion, and therefore You are forever changeless. Your causeless compassion toward us, despite our great offense, is not at all unusual in You, since innumerable great sages who are self-satisfied and free from anger and false pride bow down humbly at Your lotus feet.

10The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned shares in sacrificial performances encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the demigods place before him.

11Some men practice severe penances to cross beyond our influence, which is like an immeasurable ocean with endless waves of hunger, thirst, heat, cold and the other conditions brought about by the passing of time, such as the sensuous wind and the urges of the tongue and sex organs. Nevertheless, although crossing this ocean of sense gratification through severe penances, such persons foolishly drown in a cow's hoofprint when conquered by useless anger. Thus they exhaust the benefit of their difficult austerities in vain.

12While the demigods were thus praising the Supreme Lord, the all-powerful Lord suddenly manifested before their eyes many women, who were astonishingly gorgeous, decorated with fine clothes and ornaments, and all faithfully engaging in the Lord's service.

13When the followers of the demigods gazed upon the fascinating mystic beauty of the women created by Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and smelled the fragrance of their bodies, the minds of these followers became bewildered. Indeed, upon seeing the beauty and magnificence of such women, the representatives of the demigods were completely diminished in their own opulence.

14The Supreme Lord of lords then smiled slightly and told the representatives of heaven, who were bowing down before Him, "Please choose one of these women, whomever you find suitable for you. She will become the ornament of the heavenly planets."

15Vibrating the sacred syllable om, the servants of the demigods selected Urvaśī, the best of the Apsarās. Placing her in front of them out of respect, they returned to the heavenly planets.

16The servants of the demigods reached the assembly of Indra, and thus, while all the residents of the three heavens listened, they explained to Indra the supreme power of Nārāyaṇa. When Indra heard of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and became aware of his offense, he was both frightened and astonished.

17The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, has descended into this world by His various partial incarnations such as Lord Haṁsa [the swan], Dattātreya, the four Kumāras and our own father, the mighty Ṛṣabhadeva. By such incarnations, the Lord teaches the science of self-realization for the benefit of the whole universe. In His appearance as Hayagrīva He killed the demon Madhu and thus brought the Vedas back from the hellish planet Pātālaloka.

18In His appearance as a fish, the Lord protected Satyavrata Manu, the earth and her valuable herbs. He protected them from the waters of annihilation. As a boar, the Lord killed Hiraṇyākṣa, the son of Diti, while delivering the earth from the universal waters. And as a tortoise, He lifted Mandara Mountain on His back so that nectar could be churned from the ocean. The Lord saved the surrendered king of the elephants, Gajendra, who was suffering terrible distress from the grips of a crocodile.

19The Lord also delivered the tiny ascetic sages called the Vāḷakhilyas when they fell into the water in a cow's hoofprint and Indra was laughing at them. The Lord then saved Indra when Indra was covered by darkness due to the sinful reaction for killing Vṛtrāsura. When the wives of the demigods were trapped in the palace of the demons without any shelter, the Lord saved them. In His incarnation as Nṛsimha, the Lord killed Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of demons, to free the saintly devotees from fear.

20The Supreme Lord regularly takes advantage of the wars between the demons and demigods to kill the leaders of the demons. The Lord thus encourages the demigods by protecting the universe through His various incarnations during the reigns of each Manu. The Lord also appeared as Vāmana and took the earth away from Bali Mahārāja on the plea of begging three steps of land. The Lord then returned the entire world to the sons of Aditi.

21Lord Paraśurāma appeared in the family of Bhṛgu as a fire that burned to ashes the dynasty of Haihaya. Thus Lord Paraśurāma rid the earth of all kṣatriyas twenty-one times. The same Lord appeared as Rāmacandra, the husband of Sītādevī, and thus He killed the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, along with all the soldiers of Laṅkā. May that Śrī Rāma, whose glories destroy the contamination of the world, be always victorious.

22To diminish the burden of the earth, the unborn Lord will take birth in the Yadu dynasty and perform feats impossible even for the demigods. Propounding speculative philosophy, the Lord, as Buddha, will bewilder the unworthy performers of Vedic sacrifices. And as Kalki the Lord will kill all the low-class men posing as rulers at the end of the Age of Kali.

23O mighty-armed King, there are innumerable appearances and activities of the Supreme Lord of the universe similar to those I have already mentioned. In fact, the glories of the Supreme Lord are unlimited.

SB 11.5: Nārada Concludes His Teachings to Vasudeva

1King Nimi further inquired: My dear Yogendras, all of you are most perfect in knowledge of the science of the self. Therefore, kindly explain to me the destination of those who for the most part never worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who are unable to quench their material desires and who are not in control of their own selves.

2Śrī Camasa said: Each of the four social orders, headed by the brāhmaṇas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated.

3If any of the members of the four varṇas and four āśramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life.

4There are many persons who have little opportunity to take part in discussions about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, and thus it is difficult for them to chant His infallible glories. Persons such as women, śūdras and other fallen classes always deserve the mercy of great personalities like yourself.

5On the other hand, brāhmaṇas, members of the royal order and vaiśyas, even after being allowed to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Hari, by receiving the second birth of Vedic initiation, can become bewildered and adopt various materialistic philosophies.

6Ignorant of the art of work, such arrogantly proud fools, enchanted and enlivened by the sweet words of the Vedas, pose as learned authorities and offer flattering entreaties to the

demigods.

7Due to the influence of the mode of passion, the materialistic followers of the Vedas become subject to violent desires and are excessively lusty. Their anger is like that of a snake. Deceitful, overly proud, and sinful in their behavior, they mock the devotees who are dear to Lord Acyuta.

8The materialistic followers of Vedic rituals, giving up the worship of the Lord, instead practically worship their wives, and thus their homes become dedicated to sex life. Such materialistic householders encourage one another in such whimsical behavior. Understanding ritualistic sacrifice as a necessary item for bodily maintenance, they perform unauthorized ceremonies in which there is no distribution of foodstuffs or charity to the brāhmaṇas and other respectable persons. Instead, they cruelly slaughter animals such as goats without any understanding of the dark consequences of their activities.

9The intelligence of cruel-minded persons is blinded by false pride based on great wealth, opulence, prestigious family connections, education, renunciation, personal beauty, physical strength and successful performance of Vedic rituals. Being intoxicated with this false pride, such cruel persons blaspheme the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotees.

10The Personality of Godhead is eternally situated within the heart of every embodied being; still the Lord remains situated apart, just as the sky, which is all-pervading, does not mix with any material object. Thus the Lord is the supreme worshipable object and the absolute controller of everything. He is elaborately glorified in the Vedic literature, but those who are bereft of intelligence do not like to hear about Him. They prefer to waste their time discussing their own mental concoctions, which inevitably deal with gross material sense gratification such as sex life and meat-eating.

11In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never actually encourage such activities. Although the scriptural injunctions provide for sex through sacred marriage, for meat-eating through sacrificial offerings and for intoxication through the acceptance of ritual cups of wine, such ceremonies are meant for the ultimate purpose of renunciation.

12The only proper fruit of acquired wealth is religiosity, on the basis of which one can acquire a philosophical understanding of life that eventually matures into direct perception of the Absolute Truth and thus liberation from all suffering. Materialistic persons, however, utilize their wealth simply for the advancement of their family situation. They fail to see that insurmountable death will soon destroy the frail material body.

13According to the Vedic injunctions, when wine is offered in sacrificial ceremonies it is later to be consumed by smelling, and not by drinking. Similarly, the sacrificial offering of animals is permitted, but there is no provision for wide-scale animal slaughter. Religious sex life is also permitted, but only in marriage for begetting children, and not for sensuous exploitation of the body. Unfortunately, however, the less intelligent materialists cannot understand that their duties in life should be performed purely on the spiritual platform.

14Those sinful persons who are ignorant of actual religious principles, yet consider themselves to be completely pious, without compunction commit violence against innocent animals who are fully trusting in them. In their next lives, such sinful persons will be eaten by the same creatures they have killed in this world.

15The conditioned souls become completely bound in affection to their own corpse-like material bodies and their relatives and paraphernalia. In such a proud and foolish condition,

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the conditioned souls envy other living entities as well as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who resides in the heart of all beings. Thus enviously offending others, the conditioned souls gradually fall down into hell.

16Those who have not achieved knowledge of the Absolute Truth, yet who are still beyond the darkness of complete ignorance, generally follow the threefold path of pious material life, namely religiosity, economic development and sense gratification. Not having time to reflect on any higher purpose, they become the killers of their own soul.

17The killers of the soul are never peaceful, because they consider that human intelligence is ultimately meant for expanding material life. Thus neglecting their real, spiritual duties, they are always in distress. They are filled with great hopes and dreams, but unfortunately these are always destroyed by the inevitable march of time.

18Those who have turned away from the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, being under the spell of the Lord's illusory energy, are eventually forced to give up their so-called homes, children, friends, wives and lovers, which were all created by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, and enter against their will into the darkest regions of the universe.

19King Nimi inquired: In what colors and forms does the Supreme Personality of Godhead appear in each of the different ages, and with what names and by what types of regulative principles is the Lord worshiped in human society?

20Śrī Karabhājana replied: In each of the four yugas, or ages—Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali—Lord Keśava appears with various complexions, names and forms and is thus worshiped by various processes.

21In Satya-yuga the Lord is white and four-armed, has matted locks and wears a garment of tree bark. He carries a black deerskin, a sacred thread, prayer beads and the rod and waterpot of a brahmachārī.

22People in Satya-yuga are peaceful, nonenvious, friendly to every creature and steady in all situations. They worship the Supreme Personality by austere meditation and by internal and external sense control.

23In Satya-yuga the Lord is glorified by the names Haṁsa, Suparṇa, Vaikuṅṭha, Dharma, Yogeśvara, Amala, Īśvara, Puruṣa, Avyakta and Paramātmā.

24In Tretā-yuga the Lord appears with a red complexion. He has four arms, golden hair, and wears a triple belt representing initiation into each of the three Vedas. Embodying the knowledge of worship by sacrificial performance, which is contained in the Ṛg, Sāma and Yajur Vedas, His symbols are the ladle, spoon and other implements of sacrifice.

25In Tretā-yuga, those members of human society who are fixed in religiosity and are sincerely interested in achieving the Absolute Truth worship Lord Hari, who contains within Himself all the demigods. The Lord is worshiped by the rituals of sacrifice taught in the three Vedas.

26In Tretā-yuga the Lord is glorified by the names Viṣṇu, Yajña, Pṛṣṇigarbha, Sarvadeva, Urukrama, Vṛṣākapi, Jayanta and Urugāya.

27In Dvāpara-yuga the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears with a dark blue complexion, wearing yellow garments. The Lord's transcendental body is marked in this incarnation with Śrīvatsa and other distinctive ornaments, and He manifests His personal weapons.

28My dear King, in Dvāpara-yuga men who desire to know the Supreme Personality of

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Godhead, who is the supreme enjoyer, worship Him in the mood of honoring a great king, following the prescriptions of both the Vedas and tantras.

29-30“Obeisances to You, O Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, and to Your forms of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all obeisances unto You. O Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, O creator of the universe, best of personalities, master of this cosmos and original form of the universe, O Supersoul of all created entities, all homage unto You.”

31O King, in this way people in Dvāpara-yuga glorified the Lord of the universe. In Kali-yuga also people worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead by following various regulations of the revealed scriptures. Now kindly hear of this from me.

32In the Age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Kṛṣṇa. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions.

33My dear Lord, You are the Mahā-puruṣa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and I worship Your lotus feet, which are the only eternal object of meditation. Those feet destroy the embarrassing conditions of material life and freely award the greatest desire of the soul, the attainment of pure love of Godhead. My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the shelter of all holy places and of all saintly authorities in the line of devotional service and are honored by powerful demigods like Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. My Lord, You are so kind that You willingly protect all those who simply bow down to You with respect, and thus You mercifully relieve all the distress of Your servants. In conclusion, my Lord, Your lotus feet are actually the suitable boat for crossing over the ocean of birth and death, and therefore even Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva seek shelter at Your lotus feet.”

34O Mahā-puruṣa, I worship Your lotus feet. You gave up the association of the goddess of fortune and all her opulence, which is most difficult to renounce and is hankered after by even the great demigods. Being the most faithful follower of the path of religion, You thus left for the forest in obedience to a brāhmaṇa’s curse. Out of sheer mercifulness You chased after the fallen conditioned souls, who are always in pursuit of the false enjoyment of illusion, and at the same time engaged in searching out Your own desired object, Lord Śyāmasundara.

35Thus, O King, the Supreme Lord Hari is the giver of all desirable benefits of life. Intelligent human beings worship the particular forms and names that the Lord manifests in different ages.

36Those who are actually advanced in knowledge are able to appreciate the essential value of this Age of Kali. Such enlightened persons worship Kali-yuga because in this fallen age all perfection of life can easily be achieved by the performance of saṅkīrtana.

37Indeed, there is no higher possible gain for embodied souls forced to wander throughout the material world than the Supreme Lord’s saṅkīrtana movement, by which one can attain the supreme peace and free oneself from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

38-40My dear King, the inhabitants of Satya-yuga and other ages eagerly desire to take birth in this Age of Kali, since in this age there will be many devotees of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa. These devotees will appear in various places but will be especially numerous in South India. O master of men, in the Age of Kali those persons who drink the waters of the holy rivers of Draviḍa-deśa, such as the Tāmraparṇī, Krtamālā, Payasvinī, the extremely pious Kāverī and the Praticī Mahānadī, will almost all be purehearted devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva.

41O King, one who has given up all material duties and has taken full shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, who offers shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living beings, relatives, friends, mankind or even one's forefathers who have passed away. Since all such classes of living entities are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, one who has surrendered to the Lord's service has no need to serve such persons separately.

42One who has thus given up all other engagements and has taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to the Lord. Indeed, if such a surrendered soul accidentally commits some sinful activity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone's heart, immediately takes away the reaction to such sin.

43Nārada Muni said: Having thus heard the science of devotional service, Nimi, the King of Mithilā, felt extremely satisfied and, along with the sacrificial priests, offered respectful worship to the sagacious sons of Jayantī.

44The perfect sages then disappeared before the eyes of everyone present. King Nimi faithfully practiced the principles of spiritual life he had learned from them, and thus he achieved the supreme goal of life.

45O greatly fortunate Vasudeva, simply apply with faith these principles of devotional service which you have heard, and thus, being free from material association, you will attain the Supreme.

46Indeed, the whole world has become filled with the glories of you and your good wife because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, has taken the position of your son.

47My dear Vasudeva, you and your good wife Devakī have manifested great transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as your son. Indeed, you are always seeing the Lord, embracing Him, speaking with Him, resting with Him, sitting together with Him and taking your meals with Him. By such affectionate and intimate association with the Lord, undoubtedly both of you have completely purified your hearts. In other words, you are already perfect.

48Inimical kings like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka and Śālva were always thinking about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even while they were lying down, sitting or engaging in other activities, they enviously meditated upon the bodily movements of the Lord, His sporting pastimes, His loving glances upon His devotees, and other attractive features displayed by the Lord. Being thus always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they achieved spiritual liberation in the Lord's own abode. What then can be said of the benedictions offered to those who constantly fix their minds on Lord Kṛṣṇa in a favorable, loving mood?

49Do not think of Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary child, because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, inexhaustible and the Soul of all beings. The Lord has concealed His inconceivable opulences and is thus outwardly appearing to be an ordinary human being.

50The Supreme Personality of Godhead descended to kill the demoniac kings who were the burden of the earth and to protect the saintly devotees. However, both the demons and the devotees are awarded liberation by the Lord's mercy. Thus, His transcendental fame has spread throughout the universe.

51ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Having heard this narration, the greatly fortunate Vasudeva was completely struck with wonder. Thus he and his most blessed wife Devakī gave up all illusion and anxiety that had entered their hearts.

52 Anyone who meditates on this pious historical narration with fixed attention will purify himself of all contamination in this very life and thus achieve the highest spiritual perfection.

SB 11.6: The Yadu Dynasty Retires to Prabhāsa

1 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Brahmā then set off for Dvārakā, accompanied by his own sons as well as by the demigods and the great Prajāpatīs. Lord Śiva, the bestower of auspiciousness to all living beings, also went, surrounded by many ghostly creatures.

2-4 The powerful Lord Indra, along with the Maruts, Ādityas, Vasus, Aśvinīs, Ṛbhus, Aṅgirās, Rudras, Viśvedevas, Sādhyas, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Guhyakas, the great sages and forefathers and the Vidyādharas and Kinnaras, arrived at the city of Dvārakā, hoping to see Lord Kṛṣṇa. By His transcendental form, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, enchanted all human beings and spread His own fame throughout the worlds. The Lord's glories destroy all contamination within the universe.

5 In that resplendent city of Dvārakā, rich with all superior opulences, the demigods beheld with unsatiated eyes the wonderful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

6 The demigods covered the Supreme Lord of the universe with flower garlands brought from the gardens of heaven. Then they praised Him, the best of the Yadu dynasty, with statements containing charming words and ideas.

7 The demigods began to speak: Our dear Lord, advanced mystic yogīs, striving for liberation from the severe bondage of material work, meditate with great devotion upon Your lotus feet within their hearts. Dedicating our intelligence, senses, vital air, mind and power of speech to Your Lordship, we demigods bow down at Your lotus feet.

8 O unconquerable Lord, You engage Your illusory energy, composed of three modes, to unleash, maintain and devastate the inconceivable manifest cosmos, all within Your own self. As the supreme superintendent of māyā, You appear to be situated in the interaction of the modes of nature; however, You are never affected by material activities. In fact, You are directly engaged in Your own eternal, spiritual bliss, and thus You cannot be accused of any material infection.

9 O greatest of all, those whose consciousness is polluted by illusion cannot purify themselves merely by ordinary worship, study of the Vedas, charity, austerity and ritual activities. Our Lord, those pure souls who have developed a powerful transcendental faith in Your glories achieve a purified state of existence that can never be attained by those lacking such faith.

10 Great sages, desiring the highest benefit in life, always cherish Your lotus feet within their hearts, which are melted by love for You. Similarly, Your self-controlled devotees, desiring to cross beyond the material kingdom of heaven to achieve opulence equal to Yours, worship Your lotus feet in the morning, at noon and in the evening. Thus, they meditate upon Your Lordship in Your quadruple expansion. Your lotus feet are just like a blazing fire that burns to ashes all the inauspicious desires for material sense gratification.

11 Those about to offer oblations into the fire of sacrifice in accordance with the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas meditate on Your lotus feet. Similarly, the practitioners of transcendental yoga meditate upon Your lotus feet, hoping for knowledge about Your divine mystic potency, and the most elevated pure devotees perfectly worship Your lotus feet, desiring to cross beyond Your illusory potency.

12 O almighty Lord, You are so kind to Your servants that You have accepted the withered

flower garland that we have placed on Your chest. Since the goddess of fortune makes her abode on Your transcendental chest, she will undoubtedly become agitated, like a jealous co-wife, upon seeing our offering also dwelling there. Yet You are so merciful that You neglect Your eternal consort Lakṣmī and accept our offering as most excellent worship. O merciful Lord, may Your lotus feet always act as a blazing fire to consume the inauspicious desires within our hearts.

13O omnipotent Lord, in Your incarnation as Trivikrama, You raised Your leg like a flagpole to break the shell of the universe, allowing the holy Ganges to flow down, like a banner of victory, in three branches throughout the three planetary systems. By three mighty steps of Your lotus feet, Your Lordship captured Bali Mahārāja, along with his universal kingdom. Your lotus feet inspire fear in the demons by driving them down to hell and fearlessness among Your devotees by elevating them to the perfection of heavenly life. We are sincerely trying to worship You, our Lord; therefore may Your lotus feet kindly free us from all of our sinful reactions.

14You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the transcendental entity who is superior to both material nature and the enjoyer of nature. May Your lotus feet bestow transcendental pleasure upon us. All of the great demigods, beginning with Brahmā, are embodied living entities. Struggling painfully with one another under the strict control of Your time factor, they are just like bulls dragged by ropes tied through their pierced noses.

15You are the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe. As time, You regulate the subtle and manifest states of material nature and control every living being. As the threefold wheel of time You diminish all things by Your imperceptible actions, and thus You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

16My dear Lord, the original puruṣa-avatāra, Mahā-Viṣṇu, acquires His creative potency from You. Thus with infallible energy He impregnates material nature, producing the mahat-tattva. Then the mahat-tattva, the amalgamated material energy, endowed with the potency of the Lord, produces from itself the primeval golden egg of the universe, which is covered by various layers of material elements.

17O Lord, You are the supreme creator of this universe and the ultimate controller of all moving and nonmoving living entities. You are Hṛṣīkeśa, the supreme controller of all sensory activity, and thus You never become contaminated or entangled in the course of Your supervision of the infinite sensory activities within the material creation. On the other hand, other living entities, even yogīs and philosophers, are disturbed and frightened simply by remembering the material objects that they have supposedly renounced in their pursuit of enlightenment.

18My Lord, You are living with sixteen thousand exquisitely beautiful, aristocratic wives. By their irresistible coy and smiling glances and by their lovely arching eyebrows, they send You messages of eager conjugal love. But they are completely unable to disturb the mind and senses of Your Lordship.

19The nectar-bearing rivers of discussions about You, and also the holy rivers generated from the bathing of Your lotus feet, are able to destroy all contamination within the three worlds. Those who are striving for purification associate with the holy narrations of Your glories by hearing them with their ears, and they associate with the holy rivers flowing from Your lotus feet by physically bathing in them.

20ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After Brahmā, along with Lord Śiva and the other demigods, thus offered prayers to the Supreme Lord, Govinda, Lord Brahmā situated himself in

the sky and addressed the Lord as follows.

21 Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, previously we requested You to remove the burden of the earth. O unlimited Personality of Godhead, that request has certainly been fulfilled.

22 My Lord, You have reestablished the principles of religion among pious men who are always firmly bound to the truth. You have also distributed Your glories all over the world, and thus the whole world can be purified by hearing about You.

23 Descending into the dynasty of King Yadu, You have manifested Your unique transcendental form, and for the benefit of the entire universe You have executed magnanimous transcendental activities.

24 My dear Lord, those pious and saintly persons who in the Age of Kali hear about Your transcendental activities and also glorify them will easily cross over the darkness of the age.

25 O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O my Lord, You have descended into the Yadu dynasty, and thus You have spent one hundred twenty-five autumns with Your devotees.

26-27 My dear Lord, there is nothing remaining at this time for Your Lordship to do on behalf of the demigods. You have already withdrawn Your dynasty by the curse of the brāhmaṇas. O Lord, You are the basis of everything, and if You so desire, kindly return now to Your own abode in the spiritual world. At the same time, we humbly beg that You always protect us. We are Your humble servants, and on Your behalf we are managing the universal situation. We, along with our planets and followers, require Your constant protection.

28 The Supreme Lord said: O lord of the demigods, Brahmā, I understand your prayers and request. Having removed the burden of the earth, I have executed everything that was required on your behalf.

29 That very Yādava dynasty in which I appeared became greatly magnified in opulence, especially in their physical strength and courage, to the extent that they threatened to devour the whole world. Therefore I have stopped them, just as the shore holds back the great ocean.

30 If I were to leave this world without withdrawing the overly proud members of the Yadu dynasty, the whole world would be destroyed by the deluge of their unlimited expansion.

31 Now due to the brāhmaṇas' curse, the annihilation of My family has already begun. O sinless Brahmā, when this annihilation is finished and I am enroute to Vaikuṅṭha, I will pay a small visit to your abode.

32 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed by the Lord of the universe, the self-born Brahmā fell down in obeisances at the lotus feet of the Lord. Surrounded by all the demigods, the great Brahmā then returned to his personal abode.

33 Thereafter, the Personality of Godhead observed that tremendous disturbances were taking place in the holy city of Dvārakā. Thus the Lord spoke to the assembled senior members of the Yadu dynasty as follows.

34 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Our dynasty has been cursed by the brāhmaṇas. Such a curse is impossible to counteract, and thus great disturbances are appearing everywhere around us.

35 My dear respected elders, we must not remain any longer in this place if we wish to keep our lives intact. Let us go this very day to the most pious place Prabhāsa. We have no time to

delay.

36Once, the moon was afflicted with consumption because of the curse of Dakṣa, but just by taking bath at Prabhāsa-kṣetra, the moon was immediately freed from his sinful reaction and again resumed the waxing of his phases.

37-38By bathing at Prabhāsa-kṣetra, by offering sacrifice there to placate the forefathers and demigods, by feeding the worshipable brāhmaṇas with various delicious foodstuffs and by bestowing opulent gifts upon them as the most suitable candidates for charity, we will certainly cross over these terrible dangers through such acts of charity, just as one can cross over a great ocean in a suitable boat.

39Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O favorite son of the Kurus, thus advised by the Personality of Godhead, the Yādavas made up their minds to go to that holy place, Prabhāsa-kṣetra, and thus yoked their horses to their chariots.

40-41My dear King, Uddhava was a constantly faithful follower of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Upon seeing the imminent departure of the Yādavas, hearing from them of the Lord's instructions and taking note of the fearful omens, he approached the Personality of Godhead in a private place. He bowed down with his head at the lotus feet of the supreme controller of the universe and with folded hands addressed Him as follows.

42Śrī Uddhava said: O my Lord, O supreme God among all the demigods, real piety is invoked simply by hearing and chanting Your transcendental glories. My Lord, it appears that You will now withdraw Your dynasty, and thus You Yourself will finally give up Your pastimes within this universe. You are the supreme controller and the master of all mystic power. But although You are fully capable of counteracting the brāhmaṇas' curse against Your dynasty, You are not doing so, and Your disappearance is imminent.

43O Lord Keśava, my dear master, I cannot tolerate giving up Your lotus feet even for a fraction of a moment. I urge You to take me along with You to Your own abode.

44O my dear Kṛṣṇa, Your pastimes are supremely auspicious for mankind and are an intoxicating beverage for the ears. Tasting such pastimes, people forget their desires for other things.

45My dear Lord, You are the Supreme Soul, and thus You are most dear to us. We are Your devotees, and how can we possibly reject You or live without You even for a moment? Whether we are lying down, sitting, walking, standing, bathing, enjoying recreation, eating or doing anything else, we are constantly engaged in Your service.

46Simply by decorating ourselves with the garlands, fragrant oils, clothes and ornaments that You have already enjoyed, and by eating the remnants of Your meals, we, Your servants, will indeed conquer Your illusory energy.

47Naked sages who seriously endeavor in spiritual practice, who have raised their semen upward, who are peaceful and sinless members of the renounced order, attain the spiritual abode called Brahman.

48-49O greatest of mystics, although we are conditioned souls wandering on the path of fruitive work, we will certainly cross beyond the darkness of this material world simply by hearing about Your Lordship in the association of Your devotees. Thus we are always remembering and glorifying the wonderful things You do and the wonderful things You say. We ecstatically recall Your amorous pastimes with Your confidential conjugal devotees and

how You boldly smile and move about while engaged in such youthful pastimes. My dear Lord, Your loving pastimes are bewilderingly similar to the activities of ordinary people within this material world.

50Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, thus addressed, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, began to reply confidentially to His dear, unalloyed servant Uddhava.

SB 11.7: Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Uddhava

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O greatly fortunate Uddhava, you have accurately revealed My desire to withdraw the Yadu dynasty from the earth and return to My own abode in Vaikuṅṭha. Thus Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and all other planetary rulers are now praying for Me to resume My residence in Vaikuṅṭha.

2Answering the prayer of Lord Brahmā, I descended within this world along with My plenary portion, Lord Baladeva, and performed various activities on behalf of the demigods. I have now completed My mission here.

3Now due to the brāhmaṇas' curse the Yadu dynasty will certainly perish by fighting among themselves; and on the seventh day from today the ocean will rise up and inundate this city of Dvārakā.

4O saintly Uddhava, in the near future I will abandon this earth. Then, being overwhelmed by the Age of Kali, the earth will be bereft of all piety.

5My dear Uddhava, you should not remain here on the earth once I have abandoned this world. My dear devotee, you are sinless, but in Kali-yuga the people will be addicted to all types of sinful activities; therefore do not stay here.

6Now you should completely give up all attachment to your personal friends and relatives and fix your mind on Me. Thus being always conscious of Me, you should observe all things with equal vision and wander throughout the earth.

7My dear Uddhava, the material universe that you perceive through your mind, speech, eyes, ears and other senses is an illusory creation that one imagines to be real due to the influence of māyā. In fact, you should know that all of the objects of the material senses are temporary.

8One whose consciousness is bewildered by illusion perceives many differences in value and meaning among material objects. Thus one engages constantly on the platform of material good and evil and is bound by such conceptions. Absorbed in material duality, such a person contemplates the performance of compulsory duties, nonperformance of such duties and performance of forbidden activities.

9Therefore, bringing all your senses under control and thus subduing the mind, you should see the entire world as situated within the self, who is expanded everywhere, and you should also see this individual self within Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

10Being fully endowed with conclusive knowledge of the Vedas and having realized the ultimate purpose of such knowledge in practice, you will be able to perceive the pure self, and thus your mind will be satisfied. At that time you will become dear to all living beings, headed by the demigods, and you will never be hampered by any disturbance in life.

11One who has transcended material good and evil automatically acts in accordance with religious injunctions and avoids forbidden activities. The self-realized person does this

spontaneously, like an innocent child, and not because he is thinking in terms of material good and evil.

12One who is the kind well-wisher of all living beings, who is peaceful and firmly fixed in knowledge and realization, sees Me within all things. Such a person never again falls down into the cycle of birth and death.

13Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmi said: O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, thus instructed His pure devotee Uddhava, who was eager to receive knowledge from the Lord. Uddhava then offered obeisances to the Lord and spoke as follows.

14Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, You alone award the results of yoga practice, and You are so kind that by Your own influence You distribute the perfection of yoga to Your devotee. Thus You are the Supreme Soul who is realized through yoga, and it is You who are the origin of all mystic power. For my supreme benefit You have explained the procedure for giving up the material world through the process of sannyāsa, or renunciation.

15My dear Lord, O Supreme Soul, for those whose minds are attached to sense gratification, and especially for those bereft of devotion unto You, such renunciation of material enjoyment is most difficult to perform. That is my opinion.

16O my Lord, I myself am most foolish because my consciousness is merged in the material body and bodily relations, which are all manufactured by Your illusory energy. Thus I am thinking, “I am this body, and all of these relatives are mine.” Therefore, my Lord, please instruct Your poor servant. Please tell me how I can very easily carry out Your instructions.

17My dear Lord, You are the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and You reveal Yourself to Your devotees. Besides Your Lordship, I do not see anyone who can actually explain perfect knowledge to me. Such a perfect teacher is not to be found even among the demigods in heaven. Indeed, all of the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, are bewildered by Your illusory potency. They are conditioned souls who accept their own material bodies and bodily expansions to be the highest truth.

18Therefore, O Lord, feeling weary of material life and tormented by its distresses, I now surrender unto You because You are the perfect master. You are the unlimited, all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose spiritual abode in Vaikuṅṭha is free from all disturbances. In fact, You are known as Nārāyaṇa, the true friend of all living beings.

19The Supreme Lord replied: Generally those human beings who can expertly analyze the actual situation of the material world are able to raise themselves beyond the inauspicious life of gross material gratification.

20An intelligent person, expert in perceiving the world around him and in applying sound logic, can achieve real benefit through his own intelligence. Thus sometimes one acts as one’s own instructing spiritual master.

21In the human form of life, those who are self-controlled and expert in the spiritual science of Sāṅkhya can directly see Me along with all of My potencies.

22In this world there are many kinds of created bodiesome with one leg, others with two, three, four or more legs, and still others with no legsbut of all these, the human form is actually dear to Me.

23Although I, the Supreme Lord, can never be captured by ordinary sense perception, those situated in human life may use their intelligence and other faculties of perception to directly

search for Me through both apparent and indirectly ascertained symptoms.

24In this regard, sages cite a historical narration concerning the conversation between the greatly powerful King Yadu and an avadhūta.

25Mahārāja Yadu once observed a certain brāhmaṇa avadhūta, who appeared to be quite young and learned, wandering about fearlessly. Being himself most learned in spiritual science, the King took the opportunity and inquired from him as follows.

26Śrī Yadu said: O brāhmaṇa, I see that you are not engaged in any practical religious activity, and yet you have acquired a most expert understanding of all things and all people within this world. Kindly tell me, sir, how did you acquire this extraordinary intelligence, and why are you traveling freely throughout the world behaving as if you were a child?

27Generally human beings work hard to cultivate religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and also knowledge of the soul, and their usual motive is to increase the duration of their lives, acquire fame and enjoy material opulence.

28You, however, although capable, learned, expert, handsome and most eloquent, are not engaged in doing anything, nor do you desire anything; rather, you appear stupefied and maddened as if you were a ghostly creature.

29Although all people within the material world are burning in the great forest fire of lust and greed, you remain free and are not burned by that fire. You are just like an elephant who takes shelter from a forest fire by standing within the water of the Ganges River.

30O brāhmaṇa, we see that you are devoid of any contact with material enjoyment and that you are traveling alone, without any companions or family members. Therefore, because we are sincerely inquiring from you, please tell us the cause of the great ecstasy that you are feeling within yourself.

31Lord Kṛṣṇa continued: The intelligent King Yadu, always respectful to the brāhmaṇas, waited with bowed head as the brāhmaṇa, pleased with the King's attitude, began to reply.

32The brāhmaṇa said: My dear King, with my intelligence I have taken shelter of many spiritual masters. Having gained transcendental understanding from them, I now wander about the earth in a liberated condition. Please listen as I describe them to you.

33-35O King, I have taken shelter of twenty-four gurus, who are the following: the earth, air, sky, water, fire, moon, sun, pigeon and python; the sea, moth, honeybee, elephant and honey thief; the deer, the fish, the prostitute Piṅgalā, the kurara bird and the child; and the young girl, arrow maker, serpent, spider and wasp. My dear King, by studying their activities I have learned the science of the self.

36Please listen, O son of Mahārāja Yayāti, O tiger among men, as I explain to you what I have learned from each of these gurus.

37A sober person, even when harassed by other living beings, should understand that his aggressors are acting helplessly under the control of God, and thus he should never be distracted from progress on his own path. This rule I have learned from the earth.

38A saintly person should learn from the mountain to devote all his efforts to the service of others and to make the welfare of others the sole reason for his existence. Similarly, as the disciple of the tree, he should learn to dedicate himself to others.

39A learned sage should take his satisfaction in the simple maintenance of his existence and should not seek satisfaction through gratifying the material senses. In other words, one should care for the material body in such a way that one's higher knowledge is not destroyed and so that one's speech and mind are not deviated from self-realization.

40Even a transcendentalist is surrounded by innumerable material objects, which possess good and bad qualities. However, one who has transcended material good and evil should not become entangled even when in contact with the material objects; rather, he should act like the wind.

41Although a self-realized soul may live in various material bodies while in this world, experiencing their various qualities and functions, he is never entangled, just as the wind which carries various aromas does not actually mix with them.

42A thoughtful sage, even while living within a material body, should understand himself to be pure spirit soul. Similarly, one should see that the spirit soul enters within all forms of life, both moving and nonmoving, and that the individual souls are thus all-pervading. The sage should further observe that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as the Supersoul, is simultaneously present within all things. Both the individual soul and the Supersoul can be understood by comparing them to the nature of the sky: although the sky extends everywhere and everything rests within the sky, the sky does not mix with anything, nor can it be divided by anything.

43Although the mighty wind blows clouds and storms across the sky, the sky is never implicated or affected by these activities. Similarly, the spirit soul is not actually changed or affected by contact with the material nature. Although the living entity enters within a body made of earth, water and fire, and although he is impelled by the three modes of nature created by eternal time, his eternal spiritual nature is never actually affected.

44O King, a saintly person is just like water because he is free from all contamination, gentle by nature, and by speaking creates a beautiful vibration like that of flowing water. Just by seeing, touching or hearing such a saintly person, the living entity is purified, just as one is cleansed by contact with pure water. Thus a saintly person, just like a holy place, purifies all those who contact him because he always chants the glories of the Lord.

45Saintly persons become powerful by execution of austerities. Their consciousness is unshakable because they do not try to enjoy anything within the material world. Such naturally liberated sages accept foodstuffs that are offered to them by destiny, and if by chance they happen to eat contaminated food, they are not affected, just like fire, which burns up contaminated substances that are offered to it.

46A saintly person, just like fire, sometimes appears in a concealed form and at other times reveals himself. For the welfare of the conditioned souls who desire real happiness, a saintly person may accept the worshipable position of spiritual master, and thus like fire he burns to ashes all the past and future sinful reactions of his worshipers by mercifully accepting their offerings.

47Just as fire manifests differently in pieces of wood of different sizes and qualities, the omnipotent Supreme Soul, having entered the bodies of higher and lower life forms created by His own potency, appears to assume the identity of each.

48The various phases of one's material life, beginning with birth and culminating in death, are all properties of the body and do not affect the soul, just as the apparent waxing and waning of the moon does not affect the moon itself. Such changes are enforced by the imperceptible movements of time.

49The flames of a fire appear and disappear at every moment, and yet this creation and destruction is not noticed by the ordinary observer. Similarly, the mighty waves of time flow constantly, like the powerful currents of a river, and imperceptibly cause the birth, growth and death of innumerable material bodies. And yet the soul, who is thus constantly forced to change his position, cannot perceive the actions of time.

50Just as the sun evaporates large quantities of water by its potent rays and later returns the water to the earth in the form of rain, similarly, a saintly person accepts all types of material objects with his material senses, and at the appropriate time, when the proper person has approached him to request them, he returns such material objects. Thus, both in accepting and giving up the objects of the senses, he is not entangled.

51Even when reflected in various objects, the sun is never divided, nor does it merge into its reflection. Only those with dull brains would consider the sun in this way. Similarly, although the soul is reflected through different material bodies, the soul remains undivided and nonmaterial.

52One should never indulge in excessive affection or concern for anyone or anything; otherwise one will have to experience great suffering, just like the foolish pigeon.

53There once was a pigeon who lived in the forest along with his wife. He had built a nest within a tree and lived there for several years in her company.

54The two pigeons were very much devoted to their household duties. Their hearts being tied together by sentimental affection, they were each attracted by the other's glances, bodily features and states of mind. Thus, they completely bound each other in affection.

55Naively trusting in the future, they carried out their acts of resting, sitting, walking, standing, conversing, playing, eating and so forth as a loving couple among the trees of the forest.

56Whenever she desired anything, O King, the she-pigeon would flatteringly cajole her husband, and he in turn would gratify her by faithfully doing whatever she wanted, even with great personal difficulty. Thus, he could not control his senses in her association.

57Then the female pigeon experienced her first pregnancy. When the time arrived, the chaste lady delivered a number of eggs within the nest in the presence of her husband.

58When the time was ripe, baby pigeons, with tender limbs and feathers created by the inconceivable potencies of the Lord, were born from those eggs.

59The two pigeons became most affectionate to their children and took great pleasure in listening to their awkward chirping, which sounded very sweet to the parents. Thus with love they began to raise the little birds who were born of them.

60The parent birds became very joyful by observing the soft wings of their children, their chirping, their lovely innocent movements around the nest and their attempts to jump up and fly. Seeing their children happy, the parents were also happy.

61Their hearts bound to each other by affection, the foolish birds, completely bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, continued to take care of the young offspring who had been born to them.

62One day the two heads of the family went out to find food for the children. Being very anxious to feed their offspring properly, they wandered all over the forest for a long time.

63At that time a certain hunter who happened to be wandering through the forest saw the young pigeons moving about near their nest. Spreading out his net he captured them all.

64The pigeon and his wife were always anxious for the maintenance of their children, and they were wandering in the forest for that purpose. Having obtained proper food, they now returned to their nest.

65When the lady pigeon caught sight of her own children trapped within the hunter's net, she was overwhelmed with anguish, and crying out, she rushed toward them as they cried out to her in return.

66The lady pigeon had always allowed herself to be bound by the ropes of intense material affection, and thus her mind was overwhelmed by anguish. Being in the grip of the illusory energy of the Lord, she completely forgot herself, and rushing forward to her helpless children, she was immediately bound in the hunter's net.

67Seeing his own children, who were more dear to him than life itself, fatally bound in the hunter's net along with his dearest wife, whom he considered equal in every way to himself, the poor male pigeon began to lament wretchedly.

68The male pigeon said: Alas, just see how I am now destroyed! I am obviously a great fool, for I did not properly execute pious activities. I could not satisfy myself, nor could I fulfill the purpose of life. My dear family, which was the basis of my religiosity, economic development and sense gratification, is now hopelessly ruined.

69My wife and I were an ideal match. She always faithfully obeyed me and in fact accepted me as her worshipable deity. But now, seeing her children lost and her home empty, she has left me behind and gone to heaven with our saintly children.

70Now I am a wretched person living in an empty home. My wife is dead; my children are dead. Why should I possibly want to live? My heart is so pained by separation from my family that life itself has become simply suffering.

71As the father pigeon wretchedly stared at his poor children trapped in the net and on the verge of death, pathetically struggling to free themselves, his mind went blank, and thus he himself fell into the hunter's net.

72The cruel hunter, having fulfilled his desire by capturing the head pigeon, his wife and all of their children, set off for his own home.

73In this way, one who is too attached to family life becomes disturbed at heart. Like the pigeon, he tries to find pleasure in mundane sex attraction. Busily engaged in maintaining his own family, the miserly person is fated to suffer greatly, along with all his family members.

74The doors of liberation are opened wide to one who has achieved human life. But if a human being simply devotes himself to family life like the foolish bird in this story, then he is to be considered as one who has climbed to a high place only to trip and fall down.

SB 11.8: The Story of Piṅgalā

1The saintly brāhmaṇa said: O King, the embodied living entity automatically experiences unhappiness in heaven or hell. Similarly, happiness will also be experienced, even without one's seeking it. Therefore a person of intelligent discrimination does not make any endeavor to obtain such material happiness.

2Following the example of the python, one should give up material endeavors and accept for one's maintenance food that comes of its own accord, whether such food be delicious or tasteless, ample or meager.

3If at any time food does not come, then a saintly person should fast for many days without making endeavor. He should understand that by God's arrangement he must fast. Thus, following the example of the python, he should remain peaceful and patient.

4A saintly person should remain peaceful and materially inactive, maintaining his body without much endeavor. Even though possessed of full sensual, mental and physical strength, a saintly person should not become active for material gain but rather should always remain alert to his actual self-interest.

5A saintly sage is happy and pleasing in his external behavior, whereas internally he is most grave and thoughtful. Because his knowledge is immeasurable and unlimited he is never disturbed, and thus in all respects he is like the tranquil waters of the unfathomable and unsurpassable ocean.

6During the rainy season the swollen rivers rush into the ocean, and during the dry summer the rivers, now shallow, severely reduce their supply of water; yet the ocean does not swell up during the rainy season, nor does it dry up in the hot summer. In the same way, a saintly devotee who has accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the goal of his life sometimes will receive by providence great material opulence, and sometimes he will find himself materially destitute. However, such a devotee of the Lord does not rejoice in a flourishing condition, nor is he morose when poverty-stricken.

7One who has failed to control his senses immediately feels attraction upon seeing a woman's form, which is created by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord. Indeed, when the woman speaks with enticing words, smiles coquettishly and moves her body sensuously, his mind is immediately captured, and thus he falls blindly into the darkness of material existence, just as the moth maddened by the fire rushes blindly into its flames.

8A foolish person with no intelligent discrimination is immediately aroused at the sight of a lusty woman beautifully decorated with golden ornaments, fine clothing and other cosmetic features. Being eager for sense gratification, such a fool loses all intelligence and is destroyed just like the moth who rushes into the blazing fire.

9A saintly person should accept only enough food to keep his body and soul together. He should go from door to door accepting just a little bit of food from each family. Thus he should practice the occupation of the honeybee.

10Just as the honeybee takes nectar from all flowers, big and small, an intelligent human being should take the essence from all religious scriptures.

11A saintly person should not think, "This food I will keep to eat tonight and this other food I can save for tomorrow." In other words, a saintly person should not store foodstuffs acquired by begging. Rather, he should use his own hands as his plate and eat whatever fits on them. His only storage container should be his belly, and whatever conveniently fits into his belly should be his stock of food. Thus one should not imitate the greedy honeybee who eagerly collects more and more honey.

12A saintly mendicant should not even collect foodstuffs to eat later in the same day or the next day. If he disregards this injunction and like the honeybee collects more and more delicious foodstuffs, that which he has collected will indeed ruin him.

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13A saintly person should never touch a young girl. In fact, he should not even let his foot touch a wooden doll in the shape of a woman. By bodily contact with a woman he will surely be captured by illusion, just as the elephant is captured by the she-elephant due to his desire to touch her body.

14A man possessing intelligent discrimination should not under any circumstances try to exploit the beautiful form of a woman for his sense gratification. Just as an elephant trying to enjoy a she-elephant is killed by other bull elephants also enjoying her company, one trying to enjoy a lady's company can at any moment be killed by her other lovers who are stronger than he.

15A greedy person accumulates a large quantity of money with great struggle and pain, but the person who has struggled so much to acquire this wealth is not always allowed to enjoy it himself or give it in charity to others. The greedy man is like the bee who struggles to produce a large quantity of honey, which is then stolen by a man who will enjoy it personally or sell it to others. No matter how carefully one hides his hard-earned wealth or tries to protect it, there are those who are expert in detecting the whereabouts of valuable things, and they will steal it.

16Just as a hunter takes away the honey laboriously produced by the honeybees, similarly, saintly mendicants such as brahmacārīs and sannyāsīs are entitled to enjoy the property painstakingly accumulated by householders dedicated to family enjoyment.

17A saintly person dwelling in the forest in the renounced order of life should never listen to songs or music promoting material enjoyment. Rather, a saintly person should carefully study the example of the deer, who is bewildered by the sweet music of the hunter's horn and is thus captured and killed.

18Becoming attracted to the worldly singing, dancing and musical entertainment of beautiful women, even the great sage R̥ṣyaśṛṅga, the son of a deer, fell totally under their control, just like a pet animal.

19Just as a fish, incited by the desire to enjoy his tongue, is fatally trapped on the fisherman's hook, similarly, a foolish person is bewildered by the extremely disturbing urges of the tongue and thus is ruined.

20By fasting, learned men quickly bring all of the senses except the tongue under control, because by abstaining from eating such men are afflicted with an increased desire to gratify the sense of taste.

21Although one may conquer all of the other senses, as long as the tongue is not conquered it cannot be said that one has controlled his senses. However, if one is able to control the tongue, then one is understood to be in full control of all the senses.

22O son of kings, previously in the city of Videha there dwelled a prostitute named Piṅgalā. Now please hear what I have learned from that lady.

23Once that prostitute, desiring to bring a lover into her house, stood outside in the doorway at night showing her beautiful form.

24O best among men, this prostitute was very anxious to get money, and as she stood on the street at night she studied all the men who were passing by, thinking, "Oh, this one surely has money. I know he can pay the price, and I am sure he would enjoy my company very much." Thus she thought about all the men on the street.

25-26As the prostitute Piṅgalā stood in the doorway, many men came and went, walking by her

house. Her only means of sustenance was prostitution, and therefore she anxiously thought, "Maybe this one who is coming now is very rich... Oh, he is not stopping, but I am sure someone else will come. Surely this man who is coming now will want to pay me for my love, and he will probably give lots of money." Thus, with vain hope, she remained leaning against the doorway, unable to finish her business and go to sleep. Out of anxiety she would sometimes walk out toward the street, and sometimes she went back into her house. In this way, the midnight hour gradually arrived.

27As the night wore on, the prostitute, who intensely desired money, gradually became morose, and her face dried up. Thus being filled with anxiety for money and most disappointed, she began to feel a great detachment from her situation, and happiness arose in her mind.

28The prostitute felt disgusted with her material situation and thus became indifferent to it. Indeed, detachment acts like a sword, cutting to pieces the binding network of material hopes and desires. Now please hear from me the song sung by the prostitute in that situation.

29O King, just as a human being who is bereft of spiritual knowledge never desires to give up his false sense of proprietorship over many material things, similarly, a person who has not developed detachment never desires to give up the bondage of the material body.

30The prostitute Piṅgalā said: Just see how greatly illusioned I am! Because I cannot control my mind, just like a fool I desire lusty pleasure from an insignificant man.

31I am such a fool that I have given up the service of that person who, being eternally situated within my heart, is actually most dear to me. That most dear one is the Lord of the universe, who is the bestower of real love and happiness and the source of all prosperity. Although He is in my own heart, I have completely neglected Him. Instead I have ignorantly served insignificant men who can never satisfy my real desires and who have simply brought me unhappiness, fear, anxiety, lamentation and illusion.

32Oh, how I have uselessly tortured my own soul! I have sold my body to lusty, greedy men who are themselves objects of pity. Thus practicing the most abominable profession of a prostitute, I hoped to get money and sex pleasure.

33This material body is like a house in which I, the soul, am living. The bones forming my spine, ribs, arms and legs are like the beams, crossbeams and pillars of the house, and the whole structure, which is full of stool and urine, is covered by skin, hair and nails. The nine doors leading into this body are constantly excreting foul substances. Besides me, what woman could be so foolish as to devote herself to this material body, thinking that she might find pleasure and love in this contraption?

34Certainly in this city of Videha I alone am completely foolish. I neglected the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards us everything, even our original spiritual form, and instead I desired to enjoy sense gratification with many men.

35The Supreme Personality of Godhead is absolutely the most dear one for all living beings because He is everyone's well-wisher and Lord. He is the Supreme Soul situated in everyone's heart. Therefore I will now pay the price of complete surrender, and thus purchasing the Lord I will enjoy with Him just like Lakṣmīdevī.

36Men provide sense gratification for women, but all these men, and even the demigods in heaven, have a beginning and an end. They are all temporary creations who will be dragged away by time. Therefore how much actual pleasure or happiness could any of them ever give

to their wives?

37Although I most stubbornly hoped to enjoy the material world, somehow or other detachment has arisen in my heart, and it is making me very happy. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, must be pleased with me. Without even knowing it, I must have performed some activity satisfying to Him.

38A person who has developed detachment can give up the bondage of material society, friendship and love, and a person who undergoes great suffering gradually becomes, out of hopelessness, detached and indifferent to the material world. Thus, due to my great suffering, such detachment awoke in my heart; yet how could I have undergone such merciful suffering if I were actually unfortunate? Therefore, I am in fact fortunate and have received the mercy of the Lord. He must somehow or other be pleased with me.

39With devotion I accept the great benefit that the Lord has bestowed upon me. Having given up my sinful desires for ordinary sense gratification, I now take shelter of Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

40I am now completely satisfied, and I have full faith in the Lord's mercy. Therefore I will maintain myself with whatever comes of its own accord. I shall enjoy life with only the Lord, because He is the real source of love and happiness.

41The intelligence of the living entity is stolen away by activities of sense gratification, and thus he falls into the dark well of material existence. Within that well he is then seized by the deadly serpent of time. Who else but the Supreme Personality of Godhead could save the poor living entity from such a hopeless condition?

42When the living entity sees that the entire universe has been seized by the serpent of time, he becomes sober and sane and at that time detaches himself from all material sense gratification. In that condition the living entity is qualified to be his own protector.

43The avadhūta said: Thus, her mind completely made up, Piṅgalā cut off all her sinful desires to enjoy sex pleasure with lovers, and she became situated in perfect peace. Then she sat down on her bed.

44Material desire is undoubtedly the cause of the greatest unhappiness, and freedom from such desire is the cause of the greatest happiness. Therefore, completely cutting off her desire to enjoy so-called lovers, Piṅgalā very happily went to sleep.

SB 11.9: Detachment from All that Is Material

1The saintly brāhmaṇa said: Everyone considers certain things within the material world to be most dear to him, and because of attachment to such things one eventually becomes miserable. One who understands this gives up material possessiveness and attachment and thus achieves unlimited happiness.

2Once a group of large hawks who were unable to find any prey attacked another, weaker hawk who was holding some meat. At that time, being in danger of his life, the hawk gave up his meat and experienced actual happiness.

3In family life, the parents are always in anxiety about their home, children and reputation. But I have nothing to do with these things. I do not worry at all about any family, and I do not care about honor and dishonor. I enjoy only the life of the soul, and I find love on the spiritual platform. Thus I wander the earth like a child.

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4In this world two types of people are free from all anxiety and merged in great happiness: one who is a retarded and childish fool and one who has approached the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the three modes of material nature.

5Once a marriageable young girl was alone in her house because her parents and relatives had gone that day to another place. At that time a few men arrived at the house, specifically desiring to marry her. She received them with all hospitality.

6The girl went to a private place and began to make preparations so that the unexpected male guests could eat. As she was beating the rice, the conchshell bracelets on her arms were colliding and making a loud noise.

7The young girl feared that the men would consider her family to be poor because their daughter was busily engaged in the menial task of husking rice. Being very intelligent, the shy girl broke the shell bracelets from her arms, leaving just two on each wrist.

8Thereafter, as the young girl continued to husk the rice, the two bracelets on each wrist continued to collide and make noise. Therefore she took one bracelet off each arm, and with only one left on each wrist there was no more noise.

9O subduer of the enemy, I travel throughout the surface of the earth learning constantly about the nature of this world, and thus I personally witnessed the lesson of the young girl.

10When many people live together in one place there will undoubtedly be quarreling. And even if only two people live together there will be frivolous conversation and disagreement. Therefore, to avoid conflict, one should live alone, as we learn from the example of the bracelet of the young girl.

11Having perfected the yoga sitting postures and conquered the breathing process, one should make the mind steady by detachment and the regulated practice of yoga. Thus one should carefully fix the mind on the single goal of yoga practice.

12The mind can be controlled when it is fixed on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Having achieved a stable situation, the mind becomes free from polluted desires to execute material activities; thus as the mode of goodness increases in strength, one can completely give up the modes of passion and ignorance, and gradually one transcends even the material mode of goodness. When the mind is freed from the fuel of the modes of nature, the fire of material existence is extinguished. Then one achieves the transcendental platform of direct relationship with the object of his meditation, the Supreme Lord.

13Thus, when one's consciousness is completely fixed on the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one no longer sees duality, or internal and external reality. The example is given of the arrow maker who was so absorbed in making a straight arrow that he did not even see or notice the king himself, who was passing right next to him.

14A saintly person should remain alone and constantly travel without any fixed residence. Being alert, he should remain secluded and should act in such a way that he is not recognized or noticed by others. Moving without companions, he should not speak more than required.

15When a person living in a temporary material body tries to construct a happy home, the result is fruitless and miserable. The snake, however, enters a home that has been built by others and prospers happily.

16The Lord of the universe, Nārāyaṇa, is the worshipable God of all living entities. Without extraneous assistance, the Lord creates this universe by His own potency, and at the time of

annihilation the Lord destroys the universe through His personal expansion of time and withdraws all of the cosmos, including all the conditioned living entities, within Himself. Thus, His unlimited Self is the shelter and reservoir of all potencies. The subtle pradhāna, the basis of all cosmic manifestation, is conserved within the Lord and is in this way not different from Him. In the aftermath of annihilation the Lord stands alone.

17-18 When the Supreme Personality of Godhead displays His own potency in the form of time and guides His material potencies, such as the mode of goodness, into a neutral condition of equilibrium, He remains as the supreme controller of that neutral state, called pradhāna, as well as of the living entities. He is also the supreme worshipable object for all beings, including liberated souls, demigods and ordinary conditioned souls. The Lord is eternally free from any material designation, and He constitutes the totality of spiritual bliss, which one experiences by seeing the Lord's spiritual form. The Lord thus exhibits the fullest meaning of the word "liberation."

19 O subduer of the enemies, at the time of creation the Personality of Godhead expands His own transcendental potency in the form of time, and agitating His material energy, māyā, composed of the three modes of material nature, He creates the mahat-tattva.

20 According to great sages, that which is the basis of the three modes of material nature and which manifests the variegated universe is called the sūtra or mahat-tattva. Indeed, this universe is resting within that mahat-tattva, and due to its potency the living entity undergoes material existence.

21 Just as from within himself the spider expands thread through his mouth, plays with it for some time and eventually swallows it, similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead expands His personal potency from within Himself. Thus, the Lord displays the network of cosmic manifestation, utilizes it according to His purpose and eventually withdraws it completely within Himself.

22 If out of love, hate or fear an embodied soul fixes his mind with intelligence and complete concentration upon a particular bodily form, he will certainly attain the form that he is meditating upon.

23 O King, once a wasp forced a weaker insect to enter his hive and kept him trapped there. In great fear the weak insect constantly meditated upon his captor, and without giving up his body, he gradually achieved the same state of existence as the wasp. Thus one achieves a state of existence according to one's constant concentration.

24 O King, from all these spiritual masters I have acquired great wisdom. Now please listen as I explain what I learned from my own body.

25 The material body is also my spiritual master because it teaches me detachment. Being subject to creation and destruction, it always comes to a painful end. Thus, although using my body to acquire knowledge, I always remember that it will ultimately be consumed by others, and remaining detached, I move about this world.

26 A man attached to the body accumulates money with great struggle to expand and protect the position of his wife, children, property, domestic animals, servants, homes, relatives, friends, and so on. He does all this for the gratification of his own body. As a tree before dying produces the seed of a future tree, the dying body manifests the seed of one's next material body in the form of one's accumulated karma. Thus assuring the continuation of material existence, the material body sinks down and dies.

27A man who has many wives is constantly harassed by them. He is responsible for their maintenance, and thus all the ladies constantly pull him in different directions, each struggling for her self-interest. Similarly, the material senses harass the conditioned soul, pulling him in many different directions at once. On one side the tongue is pulling him to arrange tasty food; then thirst drags him to get a suitable drink. Simultaneously the sex organs clamor for satisfaction, and the sense of touch demands soft, sensuous objects. The belly harasses him until it is filled, the ears demand to hear pleasing sounds, the sense of smell hankers for pleasant aromas, and the fickle eyes clamor for pleasing sights. Thus the senses, organs and limbs, all desiring satisfaction, pull the living entity in many directions.

28The Supreme Personality of Godhead, expanding His own potency, *māyā-śakti*, created innumerable species of life to house the conditioned souls. Yet by creating the forms of trees, reptiles, animals, birds, snakes and so on, the Lord was not satisfied within His heart. Then He created human life, which offers the conditioned soul sufficient intelligence to perceive the Absolute Truth, and became pleased.

29After many, many births and deaths one achieves the rare human form of life, which, although temporary, affords one the opportunity to attain the highest perfection. Thus a sober human being should quickly endeavor for the ultimate perfection of life as long as his body, which is always subject to death, has not fallen down and died. After all, sense gratification is available even in the most abominable species of life, whereas Kṛṣṇa consciousness is possible only for a human being.

30Having learned from my spiritual masters, I remain situated in realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and, fully renounced and enlightened by realized spiritual knowledge, wander the earth without attachment or false ego.

31Although the Absolute Truth is one without a second, the sages have described Him in many different ways. Therefore one may not be able to acquire very firm or complete knowledge from one spiritual master.

32The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having thus spoken to King Yadu, the wise *brāhmaṇa* accepted obeisances and worship from the King and felt pleased within himself. Then bidding farewell, he left exactly as he had come.

33O Uddhava, hearing the words of the *avadhūta*, the saintly King Yadu, who is the forefather of our own ancestors, became free from all material attachment, and thus his mind was evenly fixed on the spiritual platform.

SB 11.10: The Nature of Fruitive Activity

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Taking full shelter in Me, with the mind carefully fixed in the devotional service of the Lord as spoken by Me, one should live without personal desire and practice the social and occupational system called *varṇāśrama*.

2A purified soul should see that because the conditioned souls who are dedicated to sense gratification have falsely accepted the objects of sense pleasure as truth, all of their endeavors are doomed to failure.

3One who is sleeping may see many objects of sense gratification in a dream, but such pleasurable things are merely creations of the mind and are thus ultimately useless. Similarly, the living entity who is asleep to his spiritual identity also sees many sense objects, but these innumerable objects of temporary gratification are creations of the Lord's illusory potency and have no permanent existence. One who meditates upon them, impelled by the senses,

uselessly engages his intelligence.

4One who has fixed Me within his mind as the goal of life should give up activities based on sense gratification and should instead execute work governed by the regulative principles for advancement. When, however, one is fully engaged in searching out the ultimate truth of the soul, one should not accept the scriptural injunctions governing fruitive activities.

5One who has accepted Me as the supreme goal of life should strictly observe the scriptural injunctions forbidding sinful activities and, as far as possible, should execute the injunctions prescribing minor regulative duties such as cleanliness. Ultimately, however, one should approach a bona fide spiritual master who is full in knowledge of Me as I am, who is peaceful, and who by spiritual elevation is not different from Me.

6The servant or disciple of the spiritual master should be free from false prestige, never considering himself to be the doer. He should be active and never lazy and should give up all sense of proprietorship over the objects of the senses, including his wife, children, home and society. He should be endowed with feelings of loving friendship toward the spiritual master and should never become deviated or bewildered. The servant or disciple should always desire advancement in spiritual understanding, should not envy anyone and should always avoid useless conversation.

7One should see one's real self-interest in life in all circumstances and should therefore remain detached from wife, children, home, land, relatives, friends, wealth and so on.

8Just as fire, which burns and illuminates, is different from firewood, which is to be burned to give illumination, similarly the seer within the body, the self-enlightened spirit soul, is different from the material body, which is to be illuminated by consciousness. Thus the spirit soul and the body possess different characteristics and are separate entities.

9Just as fire may appear differently as dormant, manifest, weak, brilliant and so on, according to the condition of the fuel, similarly, the spirit soul enters a material body and accepts particular bodily characteristics.

10The subtle and gross material bodies are created by the material modes of nature, which expand from the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Material existence occurs when the living entity falsely accepts the qualities of the gross and subtle bodies as being his own factual nature. This illusory state, however, can be destroyed by real knowledge.

11Therefore, by the cultivation of knowledge one should approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead situated within oneself. By understanding the Lord's pure, transcendental existence, one should gradually give up the false vision of the material world as independent reality.

12The spiritual master can be compared to the lower kindling stick, the disciple to the upper kindling stick, and the instruction given by the guru to the third stick placed in between. The transcendental knowledge communicated from guru to disciple is compared to the fire arising from the contact of these, which burns the darkness of ignorance to ashes, bringing great happiness both to guru and disciple.

13By submissively hearing from an expert spiritual master, the expert disciple develops pure knowledge, which repels the onslaught of material illusion arising from the three modes of material nature. Finally this pure knowledge itself ceases, just as fire ceases when the stock of fuel has been consumed.

14-16My dear Uddhava, I have thus explained to you perfect knowledge. There are philosophers, however, who challenge My conclusion. They state that the natural position of

the living entity is to engage in fruitive activities, and they see him as the enjoyer of the happiness and unhappiness that accrue from his own work. According to this materialistic philosophy, the world, time, the revealed scriptures and the self are all variegated and eternal, existing as a perpetual flow of transformations. Knowledge, moreover, cannot be one or eternal, because it arises from the different and changing forms of objects; thus knowledge itself is always subject to change. Even if you accept such a philosophy, My dear Uddhava, there will still be perpetual birth, death, old age and disease, since all living entities must accept a material body subject to the influence of time.

17Although the performer of fruitive activities desires perpetual happiness, it is clearly observed that materialistic workers are often unhappy and only occasionally satisfied, thus proving that they are not independent or in control of their destiny. When a person is always under the superior control of another, how can he expect any valuable results from his own fruitive actions?

18It is observed within the material world that sometimes even an intelligent person is not happy. Similarly, sometimes even a great fool is happy. The concept of becoming happy through expertly performing material activities is simply a useless exhibition of false egotism.

19Even if people know how to achieve happiness and avoid unhappiness, they still do not know the process by which death will not be able to exert its power over them.

20Death is not at all pleasing, and since everyone is exactly like a condemned man being led to the place of execution, what possible happiness can people derive from material objects or the gratification they provide?

21That material happiness of which we hear, such as promotion to heavenly planets for celestial enjoyment, is just like that material happiness we have already experienced. Both are polluted by jealousy, envy, decay and death. Therefore, just as an attempt to raise crops becomes fruitless if there are many problems like crop disease, insect plague or drought, similarly, the attempt to attain material happiness, either on earth or on the heavenly planets, is always fruitless because of innumerable obstacles.

22If one performs Vedic sacrifices and fruitive rituals without any mistake or contamination, one will achieve a heavenly situation in the next life. But even this result, which is only achieved by perfect performance of fruitive rituals, will be vanquished by time. Now hear of this.

23If on earth one performs sacrifices for the satisfaction of the demigods, he goes to the heavenly planets, where, just like a demigod, he enjoys all of the heavenly pleasures he has earned by his performances.

24Having achieved the heavenly planets, the performer of ritualistic sacrifices travels in a glowing airplane, which he obtains as the result of his piety on earth. Being glorified by songs sung by the Gandharvas and dressed in wonderfully charming clothes, he enjoys life surrounded by heavenly goddesses.

25Accompanied by heavenly women, the enjoyer of the fruits of sacrifice goes on pleasure rides in a wonderful airplane, which is decorated with circles of tinkling bells and which flies wherever he desires. Being relaxed, comfortable and happy in the heavenly pleasure gardens, he does not consider that he is exhausting the fruits of his piety and will soon fall down to the mortal world.

26Until his pious results are used up, the performer of sacrifice enjoys life in the heavenly

planets. When the pious results are exhausted, however, he falls down from the pleasure gardens of heaven, being moved against his desire by the force of eternal time.

27-29 If a human being is engaged in sinful, irreligious activities, either because of bad association or because of his failure to control his senses, then such a person will certainly develop a personality full of material desires. He thus becomes miserly toward others, greedy and always anxious to exploit the bodies of women. When the mind is so polluted one becomes violent and aggressive and without the authority of Vedic injunctions slaughters innocent animals for sense gratification. Worshiping ghosts and spirits, the bewildered person falls fully into the grip of unauthorized activities and thus goes to hell, where he receives a material body infected by the darkest modes of nature. In such a degraded body, he unfortunately continues to perform inauspicious activities that greatly increase his future unhappiness, and therefore he again accepts a similar material body. What possible happiness can there be for one who engages in activities inevitably terminating in death?

30 In all the planetary systems, from the heavenly to the hellish, and for all of the great demigods who live for one thousand yuga cycles, there is fear of Me in My form of time. Even Brahmā, who possesses the supreme life span of 311,040,000,000,000 years, is also afraid of Me.

31 The material senses create material activities, either pious or sinful, and the modes of nature set the material senses into motion. The living entity, being fully engaged by the material senses and modes of nature, experiences the various results of fruitive work.

32 As long as the living entity thinks that the modes of material nature have separate existences, he will be obliged to take birth in many different forms and will experience varieties of material existence. Therefore, the living entity remains completely dependent on fruitive activities under the modes of nature.

33 The conditioned soul who remains dependent on fruitive activities under the material modes of nature will continue to fear Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, since I impose the results of one's fruitive activities. Those who accept the material concept of life, taking the variegatedness of the modes of nature to be factual, devote themselves to material enjoyment and are therefore always absorbed in lamentation and grief.

34 When there is agitation and interaction of the material modes of nature, the living entities then describe Me in various ways such as all-powerful time, the Self, Vedic knowledge, the universe, one's own nature, religious ceremonies and so on.

35 Śrī Uddhava said: O my Lord, a living entity situated within the material body is surrounded by the modes of nature and the happiness and distress that are born of activities caused by these modes. How is it possible that he is not bound by this material encirclement? It may also be said that the living entity is ultimately transcendental and has nothing to do with the material world. Then how is he ever bound by material nature?

36-37 O my Lord, Acyuta, the same living entity is sometimes described as eternally conditioned and at other times as eternally liberated. I am not able to understand, therefore, the actual situation of the living entity. You, my Lord, are the best of those who are expert in answering philosophical questions. Please explain to me the symptoms by which one can tell the difference between a living entity who is eternally liberated and one who is eternally conditioned. In what various ways would they remain situated, enjoy life, eat, evacuate, lie down, sit or move about?

SB 11.11: The Symptoms of Conditioned and Liberated Living Entities

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, due to the influence of the material modes of nature, which are under My control, the living entity is sometimes designated as conditioned and sometimes as liberated. In fact, however, the soul is never really bound up or liberated, and since I am the Supreme Lord of māyā, which is the cause of the modes of nature, I also am never to be considered liberated or in bondage.

2Just as a dream is merely a creation of one's intelligence but has no actual substance, similarly, material lamentation, illusion, happiness, distress and the acceptance of the material body under the influence of māyā are all creations of My illusory energy. In other words, material existence has no essential reality.

3O Uddhava, both knowledge and ignorance, being products of māyā, are expansions of My potency. Both knowledge and ignorance are beginningless and perpetually award liberation and bondage to embodied living beings.

4O most intelligent Uddhava, the living entity, called jīva, is part and parcel of Me, but due to ignorance he has been suffering in material bondage since time immemorial. By knowledge, however, he can be liberated.

5Thus, My dear Uddhava, in the same material body we find opposing characteristics, such as great happiness and misery. That is because both the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternally liberated, as well as the conditioned soul are within the body. I shall now speak to you about their different characteristics.

6By chance, two birds have made a nest together in the same tree. The two birds are friends and are of a similar nature. One of them, however, is eating the fruits of the tree, whereas the other, who does not eat the fruits, is in a superior position due to His potency.

7The bird who does not eat the fruits of the tree is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who by His omniscience perfectly understands His own position and that of the conditioned living entity, represented by the eating bird. That living entity, on the other hand, does not understand himself or the Lord. He is covered by ignorance and is thus called eternally conditioned, whereas the Personality of Godhead, being full of perfect knowledge, is eternally liberated.

8One who is enlightened in self-realization, although living within the material body, sees himself as transcendental to the body, just as one who has arisen from a dream gives up identification with the dream body. A foolish person, however, although not identical with his material body but transcendental to it, thinks himself to be situated in the body, just as one who is dreaming sees himself as situated in an imaginary body.

9An enlightened person who is free from the contamination of material desire does not consider himself to be the performer of bodily activities; rather, he knows that in all such activities it is only the senses, born of the modes of nature, that are contacting sense objects born of the same modes of nature.

10An unintelligent person situated within the body created by his previous fruitive activities thinks, "I am the performer of action." Bewildered by false ego, such a foolish person is therefore bound up by fruitive activities, which are in fact carried out by the modes of nature.

11An enlightened person fixed in detachment engages his body in lying down, sitting, walking, bathing, seeing, touching, smelling, eating, hearing and so on, but is never entangled by such activities. Indeed, remaining as a witness to all bodily functions, he merely engages his bodily

senses with their objects and does not become entangled like an unintelligent person.

12-13 Although the sky, or space, is the resting place of everything, the sky does not mix with anything, nor is it entangled. Similarly, the sun is not at all attached to the water in which it is reflected within innumerable reservoirs, and the mighty wind blowing everywhere is not affected by the innumerable aromas and atmospheres through which it passes. In the same way, a self-realized soul is completely detached from the material body and the material world around it. He is like a person who has awakened and arisen from a dream. With expert vision sharpened by detachment, the self-realized soul cuts all doubts to pieces through knowledge of the self and completely withdraws his consciousness from the expansion of material variety.

14 A person is considered to be completely liberated from the gross and subtle material bodies when all the functions of his vital energy, senses, mind and intelligence are performed without material desire. Such a person, although situated within the body, is not entangled.

15 Sometimes for no apparent reason one's body is attacked by cruel people or violent animals. At other times and in other places, one will suddenly be offered great respect or worship. One who becomes neither angry when attacked nor satisfied when worshiped is actually intelligent.

16 A saintly sage sees with equal vision and therefore is not affected by that which is materially good or bad. Indeed, although he observes others performing good and bad work and speaking properly and improperly, the sage does not praise or criticize anyone.

17 For the purpose of maintaining his body, a liberated sage should not act, speak or contemplate in terms of material good or bad. Rather, he should be detached in all material circumstances, and taking pleasure in self-realization, he should wander about engaged in this liberated lifestyle, appearing like a retarded person to outsiders.

18 If through meticulous study one becomes expert in reading Vedic literature but makes no endeavor to fix one's mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then one's endeavor is certainly like that of a man who works very hard to take care of a cow that gives no milk. In other words, the fruit of one's laborious study of Vedic knowledge will simply be the labor itself. There will be no other tangible result.

19 My dear Uddhava, that man is certainly most miserable who takes care of a cow that gives no milk, an unchaste wife, a body totally dependent on others, useless children or wealth not utilized for the right purpose. Similarly, one who studies Vedic knowledge devoid of My glories is also most miserable.

20 My dear Uddhava, an intelligent person should never take to literatures that do not contain descriptions of My activities, which purify the whole universe. Indeed, I create, maintain and annihilate the entire material manifestation. Among all My pastime incarnations, the most beloved are Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Any so-called knowledge that does not recognize these activities of Mine is simply barren and is not acceptable to those who are actually intelligent.

21 Coming to this conclusion of all knowledge, one should give up the false conception of material variety that one imposes upon the soul and thus cease one's material existence. The mind should be fixed on Me, since I am all-pervading.

22 My dear Uddhava, if you are not able to free your mind from all material disturbance and thus absorb it completely on the spiritual platform, then perform all your activities as an offering to Me, without trying to enjoy the fruits.

23-24 My dear Uddhava, narrations of My pastimes and qualities are all-auspicious and purify the entire universe. A faithful person who constantly hears, glorifies and remembers such

transcendental activities, who through dramatic performances relives My pastimes, beginning with My appearance, and who takes full shelter of Me, dedicating his religious, sensual and occupational activities for My satisfaction, certainly obtains unflinching devotional service to Me, the eternal Personality of Godhead.

25 One who has obtained pure devotional service by association with My devotees always engages in worshipping Me. Thus he very easily goes to My abode, which is revealed by My pure devotees.

26-27 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, what type of person do You consider to be a true devotee, and what type of devotional service is approved by great devotees as worthy of being offered to Your Lordship? My dear ruler of the universal controllers, O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha and almighty God of the universe, I am Your devotee, and because I love You I have no other shelter than You. Therefore please explain this to me.

28 My dear Lord, as the Absolute Truth You are transcendental to material nature, and like the sky You are never entangled in any way. Still, being controlled by Your devotees' love, You accept many different forms, incarnating according to Your devotees' desires.

29-32 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Uddhava, a saintly person is merciful and never injures others. Even if others are aggressive he is tolerant and forgiving toward all living entities. His strength and meaning in life come from the truth itself, he is free from all envy and jealousy, and his mind is equal in material happiness and distress. Thus, he dedicates his time to work for the welfare of all others. His intelligence is never bewildered by material desires, and he has controlled his senses. His behavior is always pleasing, never harsh and always exemplary, and he is free from possessiveness. He never endeavors in ordinary, worldly activities, and he strictly controls his eating. He therefore always remains peaceful and steady. A saintly person is thoughtful and accepts Me as his only shelter. Such a person is very cautious in the execution of his duties and is never subject to superficial transformations, because he is steady and noble, even in a distressing situation. He has conquered over the six material qualities—namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death. He is free from all desire for prestige and offers honor to others. He is expert in reviving the Kṛṣṇa consciousness of others and therefore never cheats anyone. Rather, he is a well-wishing friend to all, being most merciful. Such a saintly person must be considered the most learned of men. He perfectly understands that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures possess favorable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life. Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities.

33 My devotees may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am and how I exist, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees.

34-41 My dear Uddhava, one can give up false pride and prestige by engaging in the following devotional activities. One may purify oneself by seeing, touching, worshipping, serving, and offering prayers of glorification and obeisances to My form as the Deity and to My pure devotees. One should also glorify My transcendental qualities and activities, hear with love and faith the narrations of My glories and constantly meditate on Me. One should offer to Me whatever one acquires, and accepting oneself as My eternal servant, one should give oneself completely to Me. One should always discuss My birth and activities and enjoy life by participating in festivals, such as Janmāṣṭamī, which glorify My pastimes. In My temple, one should also participate in festivals and ceremonies by singing, dancing, playing musical instruments and discussing Me with other Vaiṣṇavas. One should observe all the regularly

celebrated annual festivals by attending ceremonies, pilgrimages and making offerings. One should also observe religious vows such as Ekādaśī and take initiation by the procedures mentioned in the Vedas, Paścaraṅtra and other, similar literatures. One should faithfully and lovingly support the installation of My Deity, and individually or in cooperation with others one should work for the construction of Kṛṣṇa conscious temples and cities as well as flower gardens, fruit gardens and special areas to celebrate My pastimes. One should consider oneself to be My humble servant, without duplicity, and thus should help to clean the temple, which is My home. First one should sweep and dust thoroughly, and then one should further cleanse with water and cow dung. Having dried the temple, one should sprinkle scented water and decorate the temple with maṇḍalas. One should thus act just like My servant. A devotee should never advertise his devotional activities; therefore his service will not be the cause of false pride. One should never use lamps that are offered to Me for other purposes simply because there is need of illumination, and similarly, one should never offer to Me anything that has been offered to or used by others. Whatever is most desired by one within this material world, and whatever is most dear to oneself one should offer that very thing to Me. Such an offering qualifies one for eternal life.

42O saintly Uddhava, please know that you may worship Me in the sun, fire, brāhmaṇas, cows, Vaiṣṇavas, sky, wind, water, earth, individual soul and all living entities.

43-45My dear Uddhava, one should worship Me within the sun by chanting selected Vedic mantras and by performing worship and offering obeisances. One may worship Me within fire by offering oblations of ghee, and one may worship Me among the brāhmaṇas by respectfully receiving them as guests, even when uninvited. I can be worshiped within the cows by offerings of grass and other suitable grains and paraphernalia for the pleasure and health of the cows, and one may worship Me within the Vaiṣṇavas by offering loving friendship to them and honoring them in all respects. Through steady meditation I am worshiped within the inner space of the heart, and within the air I can be worshiped by knowledge that prāṇa, the life air, is the chief among elements. I am worshiped within water by offerings of water itself, along with other elements such as flowers and tulasī leaves, and one may worship Me within the earth by proper application of confidential seed mantras. One may worship Me within the individual living entity by offering food and other enjoyable substances, and one may worship Me within all living entities by seeing the Supersoul within all of them, thus maintaining equal vision.

46Thus, in the previously mentioned places of worship and according to the processes I have described, one should meditate on My peaceful, transcendental form with four arms holding a conchshell, Sudarśana disc, club and lotus flower. In this way, one should worship Me with fixed attention.

47One who has executed sacrificial performances and pious works for My satisfaction, and who thus worships Me with fixed attention, obtains unflinching devotional service unto Me. By the excellent quality of his service such a worshiper obtains realized knowledge of Me.

48My dear Uddhava, I am personally the ultimate shelter and way of life for saintly liberated persons, and thus if one does not engage in My loving devotional service, which is made possible by associating with My devotees, then for all practical purposes, one possesses no effective means for escaping from material existence.

49My dear Uddhava, O beloved of the Yadu dynasty, because you are My servant, well-wisher and friend, I shall now speak to you the most confidential knowledge. Please hear as I explain these great mysteries to you.

SB 11.12: Beyond Renunciation and Knowledge

1-2The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the Vedas, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control.

3-6In every yuga many living entities entangled in the modes of passion and ignorance gained the association of My devotees. Thus, such living entities as the Daityas, Rākṣasas, birds, beasts, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Guhyakas and Vidyādharas, as well as such lower-class human beings as the vaiśyas, śūdras, women and others, were able to achieve My supreme abode. Vṛtāsura, Prahlāda Mahārāja and others like them also achieved My abode by association with My devotees, as did personalities such as Vṛṣaparvā, Bali Mahārāja, Bāṇāsura, Maya, Vibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān, Gajendra, Jaṭāyu, Tulādhāra, Dharma-vyādha, Kubjā, the gopīs in Vṛndāvana and the wives of the brāhmaṇas who were performing sacrifice.

7The persons I have mentioned did not undergo serious studies of the Vedic literature, nor did they worship great saintly persons, nor did they execute severe vows or austerities. Simply by association with Me and My devotees, they achieved Me.

8The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, including the gopīs, cows, unmoving creatures such as the twin arjuna trees, animals, living entities with stunted consciousness such as bushes and thickets, and snakes such as Kāliya, all achieved the perfection of life by unalloyed love for Me and thus very easily achieved Me.

9Even though one engages with great endeavor in the mystic yoga system, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, penances, ritualistic sacrifices, teaching of Vedic mantras to others, personal study of the Vedas, or the renounced order of life, still one cannot achieve Me.

10The residents of Vṛndāvana, headed by the gopīs, were always completely attached to Me with deepest love. Therefore, when My uncle Akrūra brought My brother Balarāma and Me to the city of Mathurā, the residents of Vṛndāvana suffered extreme mental distress because of separation from Me and could not find any other source of happiness.

11Dear Uddhava, all of those nights that the gopīs spent with Me, their most dearly beloved, in the land of Vṛndāvana seemed to them to pass in less than a moment. Bereft of My association, however, the gopīs felt that those same nights dragged on forever, as if each night were equal to a day of Brahmā.

12My dear Uddhava, just as great sages in yoga trance merge into self-realization, like rivers merging into the ocean, and are thus not aware of material names and forms, similarly, the gopīs of Vṛndāvana were so completely attached to Me within their minds that they could not think of their own bodies, or of this world, or of their future lives. Their entire consciousness was simply bound up in Me.

13All those hundreds of thousands of gopīs, understanding Me to be their most charming lover and ardently desiring Me in that way, were unaware of My actual position. Yet by intimately associating with Me, the gopīs attained Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

14-15Therefore, My dear Uddhava, abandon the Vedic mantras as well as the procedures of supplementary Vedic literatures and their positive and negative injunctions. Disregard that which has been heard and that which is to be heard. Simply take shelter of Me alone, for I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, situated within the heart of all conditioned souls. Take shelter of Me wholeheartedly, and by My grace be free from fear in all circumstances.

16Śrī Uddhava said: O Lord of all masters of mystic power, I have heard Your words, but the doubt in my heart does not go away; thus my mind is bewildered.

17The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, the Supreme Lord gives life to every living being and is situated within the heart along with the life air and primal sound vibration. The Lord can be perceived in His subtle form within the heart by one's mind, since the Lord controls the minds of everyone, even great demigods like Lord Śiva. The Supreme Lord also assumes a gross form as the various sounds of the Vedas, composed of short and long vowels and consonants of different intonations.

18When sticks of kindling wood are vigorously rubbed together, heat is produced by contact with air, and a spark of fire appears. Once the fire is kindled, ghee is added and the fire blazes. Similarly, I become manifest in the sound vibration of the Vedas.

19The functions of the working senses—the organ of speech, the hands, the legs, the genitals and the anus—and the functions of the knowledge-acquiring senses—the nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears—along with the functions of the subtle senses of mind, intelligence, consciousness and false ego, as well as the function of the subtle pradhāna and the interaction of the three modes of material nature—all these should be understood as My materially manifest form.

20When many seeds are placed in an agricultural field, innumerable manifestations of trees, bushes, vegetables and so on will arise from a single source, the soil. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gives life to all and is eternal, originally exists beyond the scope of the cosmic manifestation. In the course of time, however, the Lord, who is the resting place of the three modes of nature and the source of the universal lotus flower, in which the cosmic manifestation takes place, divides His material potencies and thus appears to be manifest in innumerable forms, although He is one.

21Just as woven cloth rests on the expansion of lengthwise and crosswise threads, similarly the entire universe is expanded on the lengthwise and crosswise potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is situated within Him. The conditioned soul has been accepting material bodies since time immemorial, and these bodies are like great trees sustaining one's material existence. Just as a tree first blossoms and then produces fruit, similarly the tree of material existence, one's material body, produces the various results of material existence.

22-23This tree of material existence has two seeds, hundreds of roots, three lower trunks and five upper trunks. It produces five flavors and has eleven branches and a nest made by two birds. The tree is covered by three types of bark, gives two fruits and extends up to the sun. Those lusty after material enjoyment and dedicated to family life enjoy one of the tree's fruits, and swanlike men in the renounced order of life enjoy the other fruit. One who with the help of the bona fide spiritual masters can understand this tree to be a manifestation of the potency of the one Supreme Truth appearing in many forms actually knows the meaning of the Vedic literature.

24With steady intelligence you should develop unalloyed devotional service by careful worship of the spiritual master, and with the sharpened ax of transcendental knowledge you should cut off the subtle material covering of the soul. Upon realizing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you should then give up that ax of analytic knowledge.

SB 11.13:

The Hamsa-avatāra Answers the Questions of the Sons of Brahmā

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The three modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance, pertain to material intelligence and not to the spirit soul. By development of material goodness one can conquer the modes of passion and ignorance, and by cultivation of transcendental goodness one may free oneself even from material goodness.

2When the living entity becomes strongly situated in the mode of goodness, then religious principles, characterized by devotional service to Me, become prominent. One can strengthen the mode of goodness by cultivation of those things that are already situated in goodness, and thus religious principles arise.

3Religious principles, strengthened by the mode of goodness, destroy the influence of passion and ignorance. When passion and ignorance are overcome, their original cause, irreligion, is quickly vanquished.

4According to the quality of religious scriptures, water, one's association with one's children or with people in general, the particular place, the time, activities, birth, meditation, chanting of mantras, and purificatory rituals, the modes of nature become differently prominent.

5Among the ten items I have just mentioned, the great sages who understand Vedic knowledge have praised and recommended those that are in the mode of goodness, criticized and rejected those in the mode of ignorance, and shown indifference to those in the mode of passion.

6Until one revives one's direct knowledge of the spirit soul and drives away the illusory identification with the material body and mind caused by the three modes of nature, one must cultivate those things in the mode of goodness. By increasing the mode of goodness, one automatically can understand and practice religious principles, and by such practice transcendental knowledge is awakened.

7In a bamboo forest the wind sometimes rubs the bamboo stalks together, and such friction generates a blazing fire that consumes the very source of its birth, the bamboo forest. Thus, the fire is automatically calmed by its own action. Similarly, by the competition and interaction of the material modes of nature, the subtle and gross material bodies are generated. If one uses his mind and body to cultivate knowledge, then such enlightenment destroys the influence of the modes of nature that generated one's body. Thus, like the fire, the body and mind are pacified by their own actions in destroying the source of their birth.

8Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, generally human beings know that material life brings great future unhappiness, and still they try to enjoy material life. My dear Lord, how can one in knowledge act just like a dog, an ass or a goat?

9-10The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, a person bereft of intelligence first falsely identifies himself with the material body and mind, and when such false knowledge arises within one's consciousness, material passion, the cause of great suffering, pervades the mind, which by nature is situated in goodness. Then the mind, contaminated by passion, becomes absorbed in making and changing many plans for material advancement. Thus, by constantly thinking of the modes of material nature, a foolish person is

afflicted with unbearable material desires.

11One who does not control the material senses comes under the control of material desires and is thus bewildered by the strong waves of the mode of passion. Such a person executes material activities, although clearly seeing that the result will be future unhappiness.

12Although the intelligence of a learned person may be bewildered by the modes of passion and ignorance, he should again carefully bring the mind under control. By clearly seeing the contamination of the modes of nature, he does not become attached.

13A person should be attentive and grave and never lazy or morose. Mastering the yoga procedures of breathing and sitting properly, one should practice fixing the mind on Me at dawn, noon and sunset, and thus gradually the mind should be completely absorbed in Me.

14The actual yoga system as taught by My devotees, headed by Sanaka-kumāra, is simply this: Having withdrawn the mind from all other objects, one should directly and appropriately absorb it in Me.

15Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Keśava, at what time and in what form did You instruct the science of yoga to Sanaka and his brothers? I now desire to know about these things.

16The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Once, the mental sons of Lord Brahmā, namely, the sages headed by Sanaka, inquired from their father about the difficult subject matter of the supreme goal of yoga.

17The sages headed by Sanaka said: O Lord, people's minds are naturally attracted to material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects in the form of desire enter within the mind. Therefore, how can a person who desires liberation, who desires to cross over activities of sense gratification, destroy this mutual relationship between the sense objects and the mind? Please explain this to us.

18The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, Brahmā himself, who is born directly from the body of the Lord and who is the creator of all living entities within the material world, being the best of the demigods, seriously contemplated the question of his sons headed by Sanaka. The intelligence of Brahmā, however, was affected by his own activities of creation, and thus he could not discover the essential answer to this question.

19Lord Brahmā desired to attain the answer to the question that was puzzling him, and thus he fixed his mind on Me, the Supreme Lord. At that time, in My form of Haṁsa, I became visible to Lord Brahmā.

20Thus seeing Me, the sages, placing Brahmā in the lead, came forward and worshiped My lotus feet. Then they frankly asked Me, "Who are You?"

21My dear Uddhava, the sages, being eager to understand the ultimate truth of the yoga system, thus inquired from Me. Now please hear as I explain that which I spoke unto the sages.

22My dear brāhmaṇas, if, when asking Me who I am, you believe that I am also a jīva soul and that there is no ultimate difference between us since all souls are ultimately one without individuality then how is your question possible or appropriate? Ultimately, what is the real situation or resting place both of yourselves and of Me?

23If by asking Me "Who are You?" you were referring to the material body, then I must point out that all material bodies are constituted of five elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether. Thus, you should have asked, "Who are you five?" If you consider that all material bodies

are ultimately one, being constituted essentially of the same elements, then your question is still meaningless, since there would be no deep purpose in distinguishing one body from another. Thus, it appears that in asking My identity, you are merely speaking words, without any real meaning or purpose.

24 Within this world, whatever is perceived by the mind, speech, eyes or other senses is Me alone and nothing besides Me. All of you please understand this by a straightforward analysis of the facts.

25 My dear sons, the mind has a natural proclivity to enter into the material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects enter into the mind; but both this material mind and the sense objects are merely designations that cover the spirit soul, who is part and parcel of Me.

26 A person who has thus achieved Me by understanding that he is not different from Me realizes that the material mind is lodged within the sense objects because of constant sense gratification, and that the material objects are existing prominently within the material mind. Having understood My transcendental nature, he gives up both the material mind and its objects.

27 Waking, sleeping and deep sleep are the three functions of the intelligence and are caused by the modes of material nature. The living entity within the body is ascertained to possess characteristics different from these three states and thus remains as a witness to them.

28 The spirit soul is trapped in the bondage of material intelligence, which awards him constant engagement in the illusory modes of nature. But I am the fourth stage of consciousness, beyond wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep. Becoming situated in Me, the soul should give up the bondage of material consciousness. At that time, the living entity will automatically renounce the material sense objects and the material mind.

29 The false ego of the living entity places him in bondage and awards him exactly the opposite of what he really desires. Therefore, an intelligent person should give up his constant anxiety to enjoy material life and remain situated in the Lord, who is beyond the functions of material consciousness.

30 According to My instructions, one should fix the mind on Me alone. If, however, one continues to see many different values and goals in life rather than seeing everything within Me, then although apparently awake, one is actually dreaming due to incomplete knowledge, just as one may dream that one has wakened from a dream.

31 Those states of existence that are conceived of as separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead have no actual existence, although they create a sense of separation from the Absolute Truth. Just as the seer of a dream imagines many different activities and rewards, similarly, because of the sense of an existence separate from the Lord's existence, the living entity falsely performs fruitive activities, thinking them to be the cause of future rewards and destinations.

32 While awake the living entity enjoys with all of his senses the fleeting characteristics of the material body and mind; while dreaming he enjoys similar experiences within the mind; and in deep dreamless sleep all such experiences merge into ignorance. By remembering and contemplating the succession of wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep, the living entity can understand that he is one throughout the three stages of consciousness and is transcendental. Thus, he becomes the lord of the senses.

33 You should consider how, by the influence of My illusory energy, these three states of the

mind, caused by the modes of nature, have been artificially imagined to exist in Me. Having definitely ascertained the truth of the soul, you should utilize the sharpened sword of knowledge, acquired by logical reflection and from the instructions of sages and Vedic literatures, to completely cut off the false ego, which is the breeding ground of all doubts. All of you should then worship Me, who am situated within the heart.

34 One should see that the material world is a distinct illusion appearing in the mind, because material objects have an extremely flickering existence and are here today and gone tomorrow. They can be compared to the streaking red line created by whirling a fiery stick. The spirit soul by nature exists in the single state of pure consciousness. However, in this world he appears in many different forms and stages of existence. The modes of nature divide the soul's consciousness into normal wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep. All such varieties of perception, however, are actually *māyā* and exist only like a dream.

35 Having understood the temporary illusory nature of material things, and thus having pulled one's vision away from illusion, one should remain without material desires. By experiencing the happiness of the soul, one should give up material speaking and activities. If sometimes one must observe the material world, one should remember that it is not ultimate reality and therefore one has given it up. By such constant remembrance up till the time of death, one will not again fall into illusion.

36 Just as a drunken man does not notice if he is wearing his coat or shirt, similarly, one who is perfect in self-realization and who has thus achieved his eternal identity does not notice whether the temporary body is sitting or standing. Indeed, if by God's will the body is finished or if by God's will he obtains a new body, a self-realized soul does not notice, just as a drunken man does not notice the situation of his outward dress.

37 The material body certainly moves under the control of supreme destiny and therefore must continue to live along with the senses and vital air as long as one's karma is in effect. A self-realized soul, however, who is awakened to the absolute reality and who is thus highly situated in the perfect stage of yoga, will never again surrender to the material body and its manifold manifestations, knowing it to be just like a body visualized in a dream.

38 My dear *brāhmaṇas*, I have now explained to you the confidential knowledge of *Sāṅkhya*, by which one philosophically distinguishes matter from spirit, and of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, by which one links up with the Supreme. Please understand that I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *Viṣṇu*, and that I have appeared before you desiring to explain your actual religious duties.

39 O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, please know that I am the supreme shelter of the yoga system, analytic philosophy, virtuous action, truthful religious principles, power, beauty, fame and self-control.

40 All superior transcendental qualities, such as being beyond the modes of nature, detached, the well-wisher, the most dear, the Supersoul, equally situated everywhere, and free from material entanglement—all such qualities, free from the transformations of material qualities, find their shelter and worshipable object in Me.

41 [Lord *Kṛṣṇa* continued:] My dear *Uddhava*, thus all of the doubts of the sages headed by *Sanaka* were destroyed by My words. Fully worshiping Me with transcendental love and devotion, they chanted My glories with excellent hymns.

42 The greatest of sages, headed by *Sanaka Ṛṣi*, thus perfectly worshiped and glorified Me, and as Lord *Brahmā* looked on, I returned to My own abode.

SB 11.14: Lord Kṛṣṇa Explains the Yoga System to Śrī Uddhava

1ŚrīUddhava said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, the learned sages who explain Vedic literature recommend various processes for perfecting one's life. Considering these varieties of viewpoint, my Lord, please tell me whether all these processes are equally important, or whether one of them is supreme.

2My dear Lord, You have clearly explained the process of unalloyed devotional service, by which a devotee removes all material association from his life, enabling him to fix his mind on You.

3The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahmā because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas.

4Lord Brahmā spoke this Vedic knowledge to his eldest son, Manu, and the seven great sages headed by Bhṛgu Muni then accepted the same knowledge from Manu.

5-7From the forefathers headed by Bhṛgu Muni and other sons of Brahmā appeared many children and descendants, who assumed different forms as demigods, demons, human beings, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādhars, Cāraṇas, Kindevas, Kinnaras, Nāgas, Kimpuruṣas, and so on. All of the many universal species, along with their respective leaders, appeared with different natures and desires generated from the three modes of material nature. Therefore, because of the different characteristics of the living entities within the universe, there are a great many Vedic rituals, mantras and rewards.

8Thus, due to the great variety of desires and natures among human beings, there are many different theistic philosophies of life, which are handed down through tradition, custom and disciplic succession. There are other teachers who directly support atheistic viewpoints.

9O best among men, the intelligence of human beings is bewildered by My illusory potency, and thus, according to their own activities and whims, they speak in innumerable ways about what is actually good for people.

10Some say that people will be happy by performing pious religious activities. Others say that happiness is attained through fame, sense gratification, truthfulness, self-control, peace, self-interest, political influence, opulence, renunciation, consumption, sacrifice, penance, charity, vows, regulated duties or strict disciplinary regulation. Each process has its proponents.

11All the persons I have just mentioned obtain temporary fruits from their material work. Indeed, the meager and miserable situations they achieve bring future unhappiness and are based on ignorance. Even while enjoying the fruits of their work, such persons are filled with lamentation.

12O learned Uddhava, those who fix their consciousness on Me, giving up all material desires, share with Me a happiness that cannot possibly be experienced by those engaged in sense gratification.

13One who does not desire anything within this world, who has achieved peace by controlling his senses, whose consciousness is equal in all conditions and whose mind is completely satisfied in Me finds only happiness wherever he goes.

14One who has fixed his consciousness on Me desires neither the position or abode of Lord Brahmā or Lord Indra, nor an empire on the earth, nor sovereignty in the lower planetary

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systems, nor the eightfold perfection of yoga, nor liberation from birth and death. Such a person desires Me alone.

15My dear Uddhava, neither Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, the goddess of fortune nor indeed My own self are as dear to Me as you are.

16With the dust of My devotees' lotus feet I desire to purify the material worlds, which are situated within Me. Thus, I always follow the footsteps of My pure devotees, who are free from all personal desire, rapt in thought of My pastimes, peaceful, without any feelings of enmity, and of equal disposition everywhere.

17Those who are without any desire for personal gratification, whose minds are always attached to Me, who are peaceful, without false ego and merciful to all living entities, and whose consciousness is never affected by opportunities for sense gratificationsuch persons enjoy in Me a happiness that cannot be known or achieved by those lacking such detachment from the material world.

18My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his senses, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification.

19My dear Uddhava, just as a blazing fire turns firewood into ashes, similarly, devotion unto Me completely burns to ashes sins committed by My devotees.

20My dear Uddhava, the unalloyed devotional service rendered to Me by My devotees brings Me under their control. I cannot be thus controlled by those engaged in mystic yoga, Sāṅkhya philosophy, pious work, Vedic study, austerity or renunciation.

21Only by practicing unalloyed devotional service with full faith in Me can one obtain Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am naturally dear to My devotees, who take Me as the only goal of their loving service. By engaging in such pure devotional service, even the dog-eaters can purify themselves from the contamination of their low birth.

22Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one's consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me.

23If one's hairs do not stand on end, how can the heart melt? And if the heart does not melt, how can tears of love flow from the eyes? If one does not cry in spiritual happiness, how can one render loving service to the Lord? And without such service, how can the consciousness be purified?

24A devotee whose speech is sometimes choked up, whose heart melts, who cries continually and sometimes laughs, who feels ashamed and cries out loudly and then dancesa devotee thus fixed in loving service to Me purifies the entire universe.

25Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities and returns to its pure brilliant state, similarly, the spirit soul, absorbed in the fire of bhakti-yoga, is purified of all contamination caused by previous fruitive activities and returns to its original position of serving Me in the spiritual world.

26When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form.

27The mind of one meditating upon the objects of sense gratification is certainly entangled in such objects, but if one constantly remembers Me, then the mind is absorbed in Me.

28Therefore, one should reject all material processes of elevation, which are like the mental creations of a dream, and should completely absorb one's mind in Me. By constantly thinking of Me, one becomes purified.

29Being conscious of the eternal self, one should give up association with women and those intimately associated with women. Sitting fearlessly in a solitary place, one should concentrate the mind on Me with great attention.

30Of all kinds of suffering and bondage arising from various attachments, none is greater than the suffering and bondage arising from attachment to women and intimate contact with those attached to women.

31Śrī Uddhava said: My dear lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, by what process should one who desires liberation meditate upon You, of what specific nature should his meditation be, and upon which form should he meditate? Kindly explain to me this topic of meditation.

32-33The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Sitting on a level seat that is not too high or too low, keeping the body straight and erect yet comfortable, placing the two hands on one's lap and focusing the eyes on the tip of one's nose, one should purify the pathways of breathing by practicing the mechanical exercises of pūraka, kumbhaka and recaka, and then one should reverse the procedure (recaka, kumbhaka, pūraka). Having fully controlled the senses, one may thus practice prāṇāyāma step by step.

34Beginning from the mūlādhāra-cakra, one should move the life air continuously upward like the fibers in the lotus stalk until one reaches the heart, where the sacred syllable om is situated like the sound of a bell. One should thus continue raising the sacred syllable upward the distance of twelve aṅgulas, and there the omkāra should be joined together with the fifteen vibrations produced with anuvāra.

35Being fixed in the omkāra, one should carefully practice the prāṇāyāma system ten times at each sunrise, noon and sunset. Thus, after one month one will have conquered the life air.

36-42Keeping the eyes half closed and fixed on the tip of one's nose, being enlivened and alert, one should meditate on the lotus flower situated within the heart. This lotus has eight petals and is situated on an erect lotus stalk. One should meditate on the sun, moon and fire, placing them one after the other within the whorl of that lotus flower. Placing My transcendental form within the fire, one should meditate upon it as the auspicious goal of all meditation. That form is perfectly proportioned, gentle and cheerful. It possesses four beautiful long arms, a charming, beautiful neck, a handsome forehead, a pure smile and glowing, shark-shaped earrings suspended from two identical ears. That spiritual form is the color of a dark rain cloud and is garbed in golden-yellowish silk. The chest of that form is the abode of Śrīvatsa and the goddess of fortune, and that form is also decorated with a conchshell, disc, club, lotus flower and garland of forest flowers. The two brilliant lotus feet are decorated with ankle bells and bracelets, and that form exhibits the Kaustubha gem along with an effulgent crown. The upper hips are beautified by a golden belt, and the arms are decorated with valuable bracelets. All of the limbs of that beautiful form capture the heart, and the face is beautified by merciful glancing. Pulling the senses back from the sense objects, one should be grave and self-controlled and should use the intelligence to strongly fix the mind upon all of the limbs of My transcendental body. Thus one should meditate upon that most delicate transcendental form of Mine.

43One should then pull the consciousness back from all the limbs of that transcendental body. At that time, one should meditate only on the wonderfully smiling face of the Lord.

44Being established in meditation on the Lord's face, one should then withdraw the consciousness and fix it in the sky. Then giving up such meditation, one should become established in Me and give up the process of meditation altogether.

45One who has completely fixed his mind on Me should see Me within his own soul and should see the individual soul within Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, he sees the individual souls united with the Supreme Soul, just as one sees the sun's rays completely united with the sun.

46When the yogī thus controls his mind by intensely concentrated meditation, his illusory identification with material objects, knowledge and activities is very quickly extinguished.

SB 11.15: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Description of Mystic Yoga Perfections

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, the mystic perfections of yoga are acquired by a yogī who has conquered his senses, steadied his mind, conquered the breathing process and fixed his mind on Me.

2Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Acyuta, by what process can mystic perfection be achieved, and what is the nature of such perfection? How many mystic perfections are there? Please explain these things to me. Indeed, You are the bestower of all mystic perfections.

3The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The masters of the yoga system have declared that there are eighteen types of mystic perfection and meditation, of which eight are primary, having their shelter in Me, and ten are secondary, appearing from the material mode of goodness.

4-5Among the eight primary mystic perfections, the three by which one transforms one's own body are aṇimā, becoming smaller than the smallest; mahimā, becoming greater than the greatest; and laghimā, becoming lighter than the lightest. Through the perfection of prāpti one acquires whatever one desires, and through prākāmya-siddhi one experiences any enjoyable object, either in this world or the next. Through īśitā-siddhi one can manipulate the subpotencies of māyā, and through the controlling potency called vaśitā-siddhi one is unimpeded by the three modes of nature. One who has acquired kāmāvasāyitā-siddhi can obtain anything from anywhere, to the highest possible limit. My dear gentle Uddhava, these eight mystic perfections are considered to be naturally existing and unexcelled within this world.

6-7The ten secondary mystic perfections arising from the modes of nature are the powers of freeing oneself from hunger and thirst and other bodily disturbances, hearing and seeing things far away, moving the body at the speed of the mind, assuming any form one desires, entering the bodies of others, dying when one desires, witnessing the pastimes between the demigods and the celestial girls called Apsarās, completely executing one's determination and giving orders whose fulfillment is unimpeded.

8-9The power to know past, present and future; tolerance of heat, cold and other dualities; knowing the minds of others; checking the influence of fire, sun, water, poison, and so on; and remaining unconquered by othersthese constitute five perfections of the mystic process of yoga and meditation. I am simply listing these here according to their names and characteristics. Now please learn from Me how specific mystic perfections arise from specific meditations and also of the particular processes involved.

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10One who worships Me in My atomic form pervading all subtle elements, fixing his mind on that alone, obtains the mystic perfection called *aṇimā*.

11One who absorbs his mind in the particular form of the mahat-tattva and thus meditates upon Me as the Supreme Soul of the total material existence achieves the mystic perfection called *mahimā*. By further absorbing the mind in the situation of each individual element such as the sky, air, fire, and so on, one progressively acquires the greatness of each material element.

12I exist within everything, and I am therefore the essence of the atomic constituents of material elements. By attaching his mind to Me in this form, the yogī may achieve the perfection called *laghimā*, by which he realizes the subtle atomic substance of time.

13Fixing his mind completely in Me within the element of false ego generated from the mode of goodness, the yogī obtains the power of mystic acquisition, by which he becomes the proprietor of the senses of all living entities. He obtains such perfection because his mind is absorbed in Me.

14One who concentrates all mental activities in Me as the Supersoul of that phase of the mahat-tattva which manifests the chain of fruitive activities obtains from Me, whose appearance is beyond material perception, the most excellent mystic perfection called *prākāmya*.

15One who places his consciousness on Viṣṇu, the Supersoul, the prime mover and Supreme Lord of the external energy consisting of three modes, obtains the mystic perfection of controlling other conditioned souls, their material bodies and their bodily designations.

16The yogī who places his mind in My form of Nārāyaṇa, known as the fourth factor, full of all opulences, becomes endowed with My nature and thus obtains the mystic perfection called *vaśitā*.

17One who fixes his pure mind on Me in My manifestation as the impersonal Brahman obtains the greatest happiness, wherein all his desires are completely fulfilled.

18A human being who concentrates on Me as the upholder of religious principles, the personification of purity and the Lord of Śvetadvīpa obtains the pure existence in which he is freed from the six waves of material disturbance, namely hunger, thirst, decay, death, grief and illusion.

19That purified living entity who fixes his mind on the extraordinary sound vibrations occurring within Me as the personified sky and total life air is then able to perceive within the sky the speaking of all living entities.

20Merging one's sight into the sun planet and then the sun planet into one's eyes, one should meditate on Me as existing within the combination of sun and vision; thus one acquires the power to see any distant thing.

21The yogī who completely absorbs his mind in Me, and who then makes use of the wind that follows the mind to absorb the material body in Me, obtains through the potency of meditation on Me the mystic perfection by which his body immediately follows his mind wherever it goes.

22When the yogī, applying his mind in a certain way, desires to assume a particular form, that very form immediately appears. Such perfection is possible by absorbing the mind in the shelter of My inconceivable mystic potency, by which I assume innumerable forms.

23When a perfect yogī desires to enter another's body, he should meditate upon himself within

the other body, and then, giving up his own gross body, he should enter the other's body through the pathways of air, as easily as a bee leaves one flower and flies into another.

24The yogī who has achieved the mystic perfection called svacchanda-mṛtyu blocks the anus with the heel of the foot and then lifts the soul from the heart to the chest, to the neck and finally to the head. Situated within the brahma-randhra, the yogī then gives up his material body and guides the spirit soul to the selected destination.

25The yogī who desires to enjoy in the pleasure gardens of the demigods should meditate on the purified mode of goodness, which is situated within Me, and then the heavenly women, generated from the mode of goodness, will approach him in airplanes.

26A yogī who has faith in Me, absorbing his mind in Me and knowing that My purpose is always fulfilled, will always achieve his purpose by the very means he has determined to follow.

27A person who perfectly meditates on Me acquires My nature of being the supreme ruler and controller. His order, like Mine, can never be frustrated by any means.

28A yogī who has purified his existence by devotion to Me and who thus expertly knows the process of meditation obtains knowledge of past, present and future. He can therefore see the birth and death of himself and others.

29Just as the bodies of aquatics cannot be injured by water, similarly, the body of a yogī whose consciousness is pacified by devotion to Me and who is fully developed in yoga science cannot be injured by fire, sun, water, poison, and so forth.

30My devotee becomes unconquerable by meditating on My opulent incarnations, which are decorated with Śrīvatsa and various weapons and are endowed with imperial paraphernalia such as flags, ornamental umbrellas and fans.

31A learned devotee who worships Me through yoga meditation certainly obtains in all respects the mystic perfections that I have described.

32For a sage who has conquered his senses, breathing and mind, who is self-controlled and always absorbed in meditation on Me, what mystic perfection could possibly be difficult to achieve?

33Learned experts in devotional service state that the mystic perfections of yoga that I have mentioned are actually impediments and are a waste of time for one who is practicing the supreme yoga, by which one achieves all perfection in life directly from Me.

34Whatever mystic perfections can be achieved by good birth, herbs, austerities and mantras can all be achieved by devotional service to Me; indeed, one cannot achieve the actual perfection of yoga by any other means.

35My dear Uddhava, I am the cause, the protector and the Lord of all mystic perfections, of the yoga system, of analytic knowledge, of pure activity and of the community of learned Vedic teachers.

36Just as the same material elements exist within and outside of all material bodies, similarly, I cannot be covered by anything else. I exist within everything as the Supersoul and outside of everything in My all-pervading feature.

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1Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, You are beginningless and endless, the Absolute Truth Himself, unlimited by anything else. You are the protector and life-giver, the destruction and creation of all things that exist.

2My dear Lord, although it is difficult for the impious to understand that You are situated in all superior and inferior creations, those brāhmaṇas who are actual knowers of the Vedic conclusion worship You in truth.

3Please tell me of the perfections that great sages achieve by worshiping You with devotion. Also, kindly explain which of Your different forms they worship.

4O my Lord, maintainer of all, although You are the Supersoul of the living entities, You remain hidden. Thus being bewildered by You, the living entities cannot see You, although You are seeing them.

5O supremely potent Lord, please explain to me Your innumerable potencies, which You manifest on the earth, in heaven, in hell and indeed in all directions. I offer my humble obeisances at Your lotus feet, which are the shelter of all holy places.

6The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best of those who know how to inquire, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Arjuna, desiring to fight with his rivals, asked Me the same question that you are now posing.

7On the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra Arjuna thought that killing his relatives would be an abominable, irreligious activity, motivated only by his desire to acquire a kingdom. He therefore desisted from the battle, thinking, “I would be the killer of my relatives. They would be destroyed.” Thus Arjuna was afflicted with mundane consciousness.

8At that time I enlightened Arjuna, the tiger among men, with logical arguments, and thus in the front of the battle Arjuna addressed Me with questions in the same way that you are now inquiring.

9My dear Uddhava, I am the Supersoul of all living entities, and therefore I am naturally their well-wisher and supreme controller. Being the creator, maintainer and annihilator of all entities, I am not different from them.

10I am the ultimate goal of all those seeking progress, and I am time among those who exert control. I am the equilibrium of the modes of material nature, and I am natural virtue among the pious.

11Among things possessing qualities I am the primary manifestation of nature, and among great things I am the total material creation. Among subtle things I am the spirit soul, and of things that are difficult to conquer I am the mind.

12Among the Vedas I am their original teacher, Lord Brahmā, and of all mantras I am the three-lettered omkāra. Among letters I am the first letter, “a,” and among sacred meters I am the Gāyatrī mantra.

13Among the demigods I am Indra, and among the Vasus I am Agni, the god of fire. I am Viṣṇu among the sons of Aditi, and among the Rudras I am Lord Śiva.

14Among saintly brāhmaṇas I am Bhṛgu Muni, and I am Manu among saintly kings. I am Nārada Muni among saintly demigods, and I am Kāmadhenu among cows.

15I am Lord Kapila among perfected beings and Garuḍa among birds. I am Dakṣa among the

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progenitors of mankind, and I am Aryamā among the forefathers.

16My dear Uddhava, among the demoniac sons of Diti know Me to be Prahlāda Mahārāja, the saintly lord of the asuras. Among the stars and herbs I am their lord, Candra (the moon), and among Yakṣas and Rākṣasas I am the lord of wealth, Kuvera.

17I am Airāvata among lordly elephants, and among aquatics I am Varuṇa, the lord of the seas. Among all things that heat and illuminate I am the sun, and among human beings I am the king.

18Among horses I am Uccaiḥśravā, and I am gold among metals. I am Yamarāja among those who suppress and punish, and among serpents I am Vāsuki.

19O sinless Uddhava, among the best of snakes I am Anantadeva, and among those animals with sharp horns or teeth I am the lion. Among the social orders I am the fourth, or the renounced order of life, and among the occupational divisions I am the first, the brāhmaṇas.

20Among sacred and flowing things I am the holy Ganges, and among steady bodies of water I am the ocean. Among weapons I am the bow, and of the wielders of weapons I am Lord Śiva.

21Among residences I am Mount Sumeru, and of impervious places I am the Himālayas. Among trees I am the holy fig tree, and among plants I am those that bear grains.

22Among priests I am Vasiṣṭha Muni, and among those highly situated in Vedic culture I am Bṛhaspati. I am Kārtikeya among great military leaders, and among those advancing in superior ways of life I am the great personality Lord Brahmā.

23Among sacrifices I am study of the Veda, and I am nonviolence among vows. Among all things that purify I am the wind, fire, the sun, water and speech.

24Among the eight progressive states of yoga I am the final stage, samādhi, in which the soul is completely separated from illusion. Among those desiring victory I am prudent political counsel, and among processes of expert discrimination I am the science of the soul, by which one distinguishes spirit from matter. Among all speculative philosophers I am diversity of perception.

25Among ladies I am Śatarūpā, and among male personalities I am her husband, Svāyambhuva Manu. I am Nārāyaṇa among the sages and Sanat-kumāra among brahmacārīs.

26Among religious principles I am renunciation, and of all types of security I am consciousness of the eternal soul within. Of secrets I am pleasant speech and silence, and among sexual pairs I am Brahmā.

27Among the vigilant cycles of time I am the year, and among seasons I am spring. Among months I am Mārgaśīrṣa, and among lunar houses I am the auspicious Abhijit.

28Among ages I am the Satya-yuga, the age of truth, and among steady sages I am Devala and Asita. Among those who have divided the Vedas I am Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa, and among learned scholars I am Śukrācārya, the knower of spiritual science.

29Among those entitled to the name Bhagavān I am Vāsudeva, and indeed, you, Uddhava, represent Me among the devotees. I am Hanumān among the Kimpuruṣas, and among the Vidyādharas I am Sudarśana.

30Among jewels I am the ruby, and among beautiful things I am the lotus cup. Among all types

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of grass I am the sacred kuśa, and of oblations I am ghee and other ingredients obtained from the cow.

31Among the enterprising I am fortune, and among the cheaters I am gambling. I am the forgiveness of the tolerant and the good qualities of those in the mode of goodness.

32Of the powerful I am bodily and mental strength, and I am the devotional activities of My devotees. My devotees worship Me in nine different forms, among which I am the original and primary Vāsudeva.

33Among the Gandharvas I am Viśvāvasu, and I am Pūrvacitti among the heavenly Apsaras. I am the steadiness of mountains and the fragrant aroma of the earth.

34I am the sweet taste of water, and among brilliant things I am the sun. I am the effulgence of the sun, moon and stars, and I am the transcendental sound that vibrates in the sky.

35Among those dedicated to brahminical culture I am Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana, and I am Arjuna among heroes. Indeed, I am the creation, maintenance and annihilation of all living entities.

36I am the functions of the five working senses—the legs, speech, anus, hands and sex organs—as well as those of the five knowledge-acquiring senses—touch, sight, taste, hearing and smell. I am also the potency by which each of the senses experiences its particular sense object.

37I am form, taste, aroma, touch and sound; false ego; the mahat-tattva; earth, water, fire, air and sky; the living entity; material nature; the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance; and the transcendental Lord. All these items, along with knowledge of their individual symptoms and the steady conviction that results from this knowledge, represent Me.

38As the Supreme Lord I am the basis of the living entity, of the modes of nature and of the mahat-tattva. Thus I am everything, and nothing whatsoever can exist without Me.

39Even though over a period of time I might count all the atoms of the universe, I could not count all of My opulences which I manifest within innumerable universes.

40Whatever power, beauty, fame, opulence, humility, renunciation, mental pleasure, fortune, strength, tolerance or spiritual knowledge there may be is simply an expansion of My opulence.

41I have briefly described to you all My spiritual opulences and also the extraordinary material features of My creation, which are perceived by the mind and defined in different ways according to circumstances.

42Therefore, control your speaking, subdue the mind, conquer the life air, regulate the senses and through purified intelligence bring your rational faculties under control. In this way you will never again fall onto the path of material existence.

43A transcendentalist who does not completely control his words and mind by superior intelligence will find that his spiritual vows, austerities and charity flow away just as water flows out of an unbaked clay pot.

44Being surrendered to Me, one should control the speech, mind and life air, and then through loving devotional intelligence one will completely fulfill the mission of life.

SB 11.17: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Description of the Varṇāśrama System

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1-2Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, previously You described the principles of devotional service that are to be practiced by followers of the varṇāśrama system and even ordinary, unregulated human beings. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, now please explain to me how all human beings can achieve loving service unto You by the execution of their prescribed duties.

3-4My dear Lord, O mighty-armed one, previously in Your form of Lord Haṁsa You spoke to Lord Brahmā those religious principles that bring supreme happiness to the practitioner. My dear Mādhava, now much time has passed, and that which You previously instructed will soon practically cease to exist, O subduer of the enemy.

5-6My dear Lord Acyuta, there is no speaker, creator and protector of supreme religious principles other than Your Lordship, either on the earth or even in the assembly of Lord Brahmā, where the personified Vedas reside. Thus, my dear Lord Madhusūdana, when You, who are the very creator, protector and speaker of spiritual knowledge, abandon the earth, who will again speak this lost knowledge?

7Therefore, my Lord, since You are the knower of all religious principles, please describe to me the human beings who may execute the path of loving service to You and how such service is to be rendered.

8ŚrīŚukadeva Gosvāmī said: Śrī Uddhava, the best of devotees, thus inquired from the Lord. Hearing his question, the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was pleased and for the welfare of all conditioned souls spoke those religious principles that are eternal.

9The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, your question is faithful to religious principles and thus gives rise to the highest perfection in life, pure devotional service, for both ordinary human beings and the followers of the varṇāśrama system. Now please learn from Me those supreme religious principles.

10In the beginning, in Satya-yuga, there is only one social class, called haṁsa, to which all human beings belong. In that age all people are unalloyed devotees of the Lord from birth, and thus learned scholars call this first age Kṛta-yuga, or the age in which all religious duties are perfectly fulfilled.

11In Satya-yuga the undivided Veda is expressed by the syllable om, and I am the only object of mental activities. I become manifest as the four-legged bull of religion, and thus the inhabitants of Satya-yuga, fixed in austerity and free from all sins, worship Me as Lord Haṁsa.

12O greatly fortunate one, at the beginning of Tretā-yuga Vedic knowledge appeared from My heart, which is the abode of the air of life, in three divisions as Ṛg, Sāma and Yajur. Then from that knowledge I appeared as threefold sacrifice.

13In Tretā-yuga the four social orders were manifested from the universal form of the Personality of Godhead. The brāhmaṇas appeared from the Lord's face, the kṣatriyas from the Lord's arms, the vaiśyas from the Lord's thighs and the śūdras from the legs of that mighty form. Each social division was recognized by its particular duties and behavior.

14The married order of life appeared from the loins of My universal form, and the celibate students came from My heart. The forest-dwelling retired order of life appeared from My chest, and the renounced order of life was situated within the head of My universal form.

15The various occupational and social divisions of human society appeared according to inferior and superior natures manifest in the situation of the individual's birth.

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16Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, cleanliness, satisfaction, tolerance, simple straightforwardness, devotion to Me, mercy and truthfulness are the natural qualities of the brāhmaṇas.

17Dynamic power, bodily strength, determination, heroism, tolerance, generosity, great endeavor, steadiness, devotion to the brāhmaṇas and leadership are the natural qualities of the kṣatriyas.

18Faith in Vedic civilization, dedication to charity, freedom from hypocrisy, service to the brāhmaṇas and perpetually desiring to accumulate more money are the natural qualities of the vaiśyas.

19Service without duplicity to the brāhmaṇas, cows, demigods and other worshipable personalities, and complete satisfaction with whatever income is obtained in such service, are the natural qualities of śūdras.

20Dirtiness, dishonesty, thievery, faithlessness, useless quarrel, lust, anger and hankering constitute the nature of those in the lowest position outside the varṇāśrama system.

21Nonviolence, truthfulness, honesty, desire for the happiness and welfare of all others and freedom from lust, anger and greed constitute duties for all members of society.

22The twice-born member of society achieves second birth through the sequence of purificatory ceremonies culminating in Gāyatrī initiation. Being summoned by the spiritual master, he should reside within the guru's āśrama and with a self-controlled mind carefully study the Vedic literature.

23The brahmacārī should regularly dress with a belt of straw and deerskin garments. He should wear matted hair, carry a rod and waterpot and be decorated with akṣa beads and a sacred thread. Carrying pure kuśa grass in his hand, he should never accept a luxurious or sensuous sitting place. He should not unnecessarily polish his teeth, nor should he bleach and iron his clothes.

24A brahmacārī should always remain silent while bathing, eating, attending sacrificial performances, chanting japa or passing stool and urine. He should not cut his nails and hair, including the armpit and pubic hair.

25One observing the vow of celibate brahmacārī life should never pass semen. If the semen by chance spills out by itself, the brahmacārī should immediately take bath in water, control his breath by prāṇāyāma and chant the Gāyatrī mantra.

26Purified and fixed in consciousness, the brahmacārī should worship the fire-god, sun, ācārya, cows, brāhmaṇas, guru, elderly respectable persons and demigods. He should perform such worship at sunrise and sunset, without speaking but by silently chanting or murmuring the appropriate mantras.

27One should know the ācārya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.

28In the morning and evening one should collect foodstuffs and other articles and deliver them to the spiritual master. Then, being self-controlled, one should accept for oneself that which is allotted by the ācārya.

29While engaged in serving the spiritual master one should remain as a humble servant, and

thus when the guru is walking the servant should humbly walk behind. When the guru lies down to sleep, the servant should also lie down nearby, and when the guru has awakened, the servant should sit near him, massaging his lotus feet and rendering other, similar services. When the guru is sitting down on his āsana, the servant should stand nearby with folded hands, awaiting the guru's order. In this way one should always worship the spiritual master.

30 Until the student has completed his Vedic education he should remain engaged in the āśrama of the spiritual master, should remain completely free of material sense gratification and should not break his vow of celibacy [brahmacarya].

31 If the brahmacārī student desires to ascend to the Maharloka or Brahmaloaka planets, then he should completely surrender his activities to the spiritual master and, observing the powerful vow of perpetual celibacy, dedicate himself to superior Vedic studies.

32 Thus enlightened in Vedic knowledge by service to the spiritual master, freed from all sins and duality, one should worship Me as the Supersoul, as I appear within fire, the spiritual master, one's own self and all living entities.

33 Those who are not married sannyāsīs, vānaprasthas and brahmacārīs should never associate with women by glancing, touching, conversing, joking or sporting. Neither should they ever associate with any living entity engaged in sexual activities.

34-35 My dear Uddhava, general cleanliness, washing the hands, bathing, performing religious services at sunrise, noon and sunset, worshiping Me, visiting holy places, chanting japa, avoiding that which is untouchable, uneatable or not to be discussed, and remembering My existence within all living entities as the Supersoul these principles should be followed by all members of society through regulation of the mind, words and body.

36 A brāhmaṇa observing the great vow of celibacy becomes brilliant like fire and by serious austerity burns to ashes the propensity to perform material activities. Free from the contamination of material desire, he becomes My devotee.

37 A brahmacārī who has completed his Vedic education and desires to enter household life should offer proper remuneration to the spiritual master, bathe, cut his hair, put on proper clothes, and so on. Then, taking permission from the guru, he should go back to his home.

38 A brahmacārī desiring to fulfill his material desires should live at home with his family, and a householder who is eager to purify his consciousness should enter the forest, whereas a purified brāhmaṇa should accept the renounced order of life. One who is not surrendered to Me should move progressively from one āśrama to another, never acting otherwise.

39 One who desires to establish family life should marry a wife of his own caste, who is beyond reproach and younger in age. If one desires to accept many wives he must marry them after the first marriage, and each wife should be of a successively lower caste.

40 All twice-born men brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas must perform sacrifice, study the Vedic literature and give charity. Only the brāhmaṇas, however, accept charity, teach the Vedic knowledge and perform sacrifice on behalf of others.

41 A brāhmaṇa who considers that accepting charity from others will destroy his austerity, spiritual influence and fame should maintain himself by the other two brahminical occupations, namely teaching Vedic knowledge and performing sacrifice. If the brāhmaṇa considers that those two occupations also compromise his spiritual position, then he should collect rejected grains in agricultural fields and live without any dependence on others.

42The body of a brāhmaṇa is not intended to enjoy insignificant material sense gratification; rather, by accepting difficult austerities in his life, a brāhmaṇa will enjoy unlimited happiness after death.

43A brāhmaṇa householder should remain satisfied in mind by gleaning rejected grains from agricultural fields and marketplaces. Keeping himself free of personal desire, he should practice magnanimous religious principles, with consciousness absorbed in Me. In this way a brāhmaṇa may stay at home as a householder without very much attachment and thus achieve liberation.

44Just as a ship rescues those who have fallen into the ocean, similarly, I very quickly rescue from all calamities those persons who uplift brāhmaṇas and devotees suffering in a poverty-stricken condition.

45Just as the chief bull elephant protects all other elephants in his herd and defends himself as well, similarly, a fearless king, just like a father, must save all of the citizens from difficulty and also protect himself.

46An earthly king who protects himself and all citizens by removing all sins from his kingdom will certainly enjoy with Lord Indra in airplanes as brilliant as the sun.

47If a brāhmaṇa cannot support himself through his regular duties and is thus suffering, he may adopt the occupation of a merchant and overcome his destitute condition by buying and selling material things. If he continues to suffer extreme poverty even as a merchant, then he may adopt the occupation of a kṣatriya, taking sword in hand. But he cannot in any circumstances become like a dog, accepting an ordinary master.

48A king or other member of the royal order who cannot maintain himself by his normal occupation may act as a vaiśya, may live by hunting or may act as a brāhmaṇa by teaching others Vedic knowledge. But he may not under any circumstances adopt the profession of a śūdra.

49A vaiśya, or mercantile man, who cannot maintain himself may adopt the occupation of a śūdra, and a śūdra who cannot find a master can engage in simple activities like making baskets and mats of straw. However, all members of society who have adopted inferior occupations in emergency situations must give up those substitute occupations when the difficulties have passed.

50One in the grhastha order of life should daily worship the sages by Vedic study, the forefathers by offering the mantra svadhā, the demigods by chanting svāhā, all living entities by offering shares of one's meals, and human beings by offering grains and water. Thus considering the demigods, sages, forefathers, living entities and human beings to be manifestations of My potency, one should daily perform these five sacrifices.

51A householder should comfortably maintain his dependents either with money that comes of its own accord or with that gathered by honest execution of one's duties. According to one's means, one should perform sacrifices and other religious ceremonies.

52A householder taking care of many dependent family members should not become materially attached to them, nor should he become mentally unbalanced, considering himself to be the lord. An intelligent householder should see that all possible future happiness, just like that which he has already experienced, is temporary.

53The association of children, wife, relatives and friends is just like the brief meeting of

travelers. With each change of body one is separated from all such associates, just as one loses the objects one possesses in a dream when the dream is over.

54 Deeply considering the actual situation, a liberated soul should live at home just like a guest, without any sense of proprietorship or false ego. In this way he will not be bound or entangled by domestic affairs.

55 A householder devotee who worships Me by execution of his family duties may remain at home, go to a holy place or, if he has a responsible son, take sannyāsa.

56 But a householder whose mind is attached to his home and who is thus disturbed by ardent desires to enjoy his money and children, who is lusty after women, who is possessed of a miserly mentality and who unintelligently thinks, “Everything is mine and I am everything,” is certainly bound in illusion.

57 “O my poor elderly parents, and my wife with a mere infant in her arms, and my other young children! Without me they have absolutely no one to protect them and will suffer unbearably. How can my poor relatives possibly live without me?”

58 Thus, because of his foolish mentality, a householder whose heart is overwhelmed by family attachment is never satisfied. Constantly meditating on his relatives, he dies and enters into the darkness of ignorance.

SB 11.18: Description of Varṇāśrama-dharma

1 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One who desires to adopt the third order of life, vānaprastha, should enter the forest with a peaceful mind, leaving his wife with his mature sons, or else taking her along with him.

2 Having adopted the vānaprastha order of life, one should arrange one’s sustenance by eating uncontaminated bulbs, roots and fruits that grow in the forest. One may dress oneself with tree bark, grass, leaves or animal skins.

3 The vānaprastha should not groom the hair on his head, body or face, should not manicure his nails, should not pass stool and urine at irregular times and should not make a special endeavor for dental hygiene. He should be content to take bath in water three times daily and should sleep on the ground.

4 Thus engaged as a vānaprastha, one should execute penance during the hottest summer days by subjecting oneself to burning fires on four sides and the blazing sun overhead; during the rainy season one should remain outside, subjecting oneself to torrents of rain; and in the freezing winter one should remain submerged in water up to one’s neck.

5 One may eat foodstuffs prepared with fire, such as grains, or fruits ripened by time. One may grind one’s food with mortar and stone or with one’s own teeth.

6 The vānaprastha should personally collect whatever he requires for his bodily maintenance, carefully considering the time, place and his own capacity. He should never collect provisions for the future.

7 One who has accepted the vānaprastha order of life should perform seasonal sacrifices by offering oblations of caru and sacrificial cakes prepared from rice and other grains found in the forest. The vānaprastha, however, may never offer animal sacrifices to Me, even those sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas.

8The vānaprastha should perform the agnihotra, darśa and paurṇamāsa sacrifices, as he did while in the gr̥hastha-āśrama. He should also perform the vows and sacrifices of cāturmāsya, since all of these rituals are enjoined for the vānaprastha-āśrama by expert knowers of the Vedas.

9The saintly vānaprastha, practicing severe penances and accepting only the bare necessities of life, becomes so emaciated that he appears to be mere skin and bones. Thus worshiping Me through severe penances, he goes to the Maharloka planet and then directly achieves Me.

10One who with long endeavor executes this painful but exalted penance, which awards ultimate liberation, simply to achieve insignificant sense gratification must be considered the greatest fool.

11If the vānaprastha is overtaken by old age and because of his trembling body is no longer able to execute his prescribed duties, he should place the sacrificial fire within his heart by meditation. Then, fixing his mind on Me, he should enter into the fire and give up his body.

12If the vānaprastha, understanding that even promotion to Brahmaloaka is a miserable situation, develops complete detachment from all possible results of fruitive activities, then he may take the sannyāsa order of life.

13Having worshiped Me according to scriptural injunctions and having given all one's property to the sacrificial priest, one should place the fire sacrifice within oneself. Thus, with the mind completely detached, one should enter the sannyāsa order of life.

14“This man taking sannyāsa is going to surpass us and go back home, back to Godhead.” Thus thinking, the demigods create stumbling blocks on the path of the sannyāsī by appearing before him in the shape of his former wife or other women and attractive objects. But the sannyāsī should pay the demigods and their manifestations no heed.

15If the sannyāsī desires to wear something besides a mere kaupīna, he may use another cloth around his waist and hips to cover the kaupīna. Otherwise, if there is no emergency, he should not accept anything besides his daṇḍa and waterpot.

16A saintly person should step or place his foot on the ground only after verifying with his eyes that there are no living creatures, such as insects, who might be injured by his foot. He should drink water only after filtering it through a portion of his cloth, and he should speak only words that possess the purity of truth. Similarly, he should perform only those activities his mind has carefully ascertained to be pure.

17One who has not accepted the three internal disciplines of avoiding useless speech, avoiding useless activities and controlling the life air can never be considered a sannyāsī merely because of his carrying bamboo rods.

18Rejecting those houses that are polluted and untouchable, one should approach without previous calculation seven houses and be satisfied with that which is obtained there by begging. According to necessity, one may approach each of the four occupational orders of society.

19Taking the food gathered through begging, one should leave the populated areas and go to a reservoir of water in a secluded place. There, having taken a bath and washed one's hands thoroughly, one should distribute portions of the food to others who may request it. One should do this without speaking. Then, having thoroughly cleansed the remnants, one should eat everything on one's plate, leaving nothing for future consumption.

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20 Without any material attachment, with senses fully controlled, remaining enthusiastic, and satisfied in realization of the Supreme Lord and his own self, the saintly person should travel about the earth alone. Having equal vision everywhere, he should be steady on the spiritual platform.

21 Dwelling in a safe and solitary place, his mind purified by constant thought of Me, the sage should concentrate on the soul alone, realizing it to be nondifferent from Me.

22 By steady knowledge a sage should clearly ascertain the nature of the soul's bondage and liberation. Bondage occurs when the senses are deviated to sense gratification, and complete control of the senses constitutes liberation.

23 Therefore, completely controlling the five senses and the mind by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a sage, having experienced spiritual bliss within the self, should live detached from insignificant material sense gratification.

24 The sage should travel in sanctified places, by flowing rivers and within the solitude of mountains and forests. He should enter the cities, towns and pasturing grounds and approach ordinary working men only to beg his bare sustenance.

25 One in the vānaprastha order of life should always practice taking charity from others, for one is thereby freed from illusion and quickly becomes perfect in spiritual life. Indeed, one who subsists on food grains obtained in such a humble manner purifies his existence.

26 One should never see as ultimate reality those material things which obviously will perish. With consciousness free from material attachment, one should retire from all activities meant for material progress in this life and the next.

27 One should logically consider the universe, which is situated within the Lord, and one's own material body, which is composed of mind, speech and life air, to be ultimately products of the Lord's illusory energy. Thus situated in the self, one should give up one's faith in these things and should never again make them the object of one's meditation.

28 A learned transcendentalist dedicated to the cultivation of knowledge and thus detached from external objects, or My devotee who is detached even from desire for liberation both neglect those duties based on external rituals or paraphernalia. Thus their conduct is beyond the range of rules and regulations.

29 Although most wise, the paramahansa should enjoy life like a child, oblivious to honor and dishonor; although most expert, he should behave like a stunted, incompetent person; although most learned, he should speak like an insane person; and although a scholar learned in Vedic regulations, he should behave in an unrestricted manner.

30 A devotee should never engage in the fruitive rituals mentioned in the karma-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas, nor should he become atheistic, acting or speaking in opposition to Vedic injunctions. Similarly, he should never speak like a mere logician or skeptic or take any side whatsoever in useless arguments.

31 A saintly person should never let others frighten or disturb him and, similarly, should never frighten or disturb other people. He should tolerate the insults of others and should never himself belittle anyone. He should never create hostility with anyone for the sake of the material body, for he would thus be no better than an animal.

32 The one Supreme Lord is situated within all material bodies and within everyone's soul. Just as the moon is reflected in innumerable reservoirs of water, the Supreme Lord, although one, is

present within everyone. Thus every material body is ultimately composed of the energy of the one Supreme Lord.

33If at times one does not obtain proper food one should not be depressed, and when one obtains sumptuous food one should not rejoice. Being fixed in determination, one should understand both situations to be under the control of God.

34If required, one should endeavor to get sufficient foodstuffs, because it is always necessary and proper to maintain one's health. When the senses, mind and life air are fit, one can contemplate spiritual truth, and by understanding the truth one is liberated.

35A sage should accept the food, clothing and bedding be they of excellent or inferior quality that come of their own accord.

36Just as I, the Supreme Lord, execute regulative duties by My own free will, similarly, one who has realized knowledge of Me should maintain general cleanliness, purify his hands with water, take bath and execute other regulative duties not by force but by his own free will.

37A realized soul no longer sees anything as separate from Me, for his realized knowledge of Me has destroyed such illusory perception. Since the material body and mind were previously accustomed to this kind of perception, it may sometimes appear to recur; but at the time of death the self-realized soul achieves opulences equal to Mine.

38One who is detached from sense gratification, knowing its result to be miserable, and who desires spiritual perfection, but who has not seriously analyzed the process for obtaining Me, should approach a bona fide and learned spiritual master.

39Until a devotee has clearly realized spiritual knowledge, he should continue with great faith and respect and without envy to render personal service to the guru, who is nondifferent from Me.

40-41One who has not controlled the six forms of illusion [lust, anger, greed, excitement, false pride and intoxication], whose intelligence, the leader of the senses, is extremely attached to material things, who is bereft of knowledge and detachment, who adopts the sannyāsa order of life to make a living, who denies the worshipable demigods, his own self and the Supreme Lord within himself, thus ruining all religious principles, and who is still infected by material contamination, is deviated and lost both in this life and the next.

42The main religious duties of a sannyāsī are equanimity and nonviolence, whereas for the vānaprastha austerity and philosophical understanding of the difference between the body and soul are prominent. The main duties of a householder are to give shelter to all living entities and perform sacrifices, and the brahmachārī is mainly engaged in serving the spiritual master.

43A householder may approach his wife for sex only at the time prescribed for begetting children. Otherwise, the householder should practice celibacy, austerity, cleanliness of mind and body, satisfaction in his natural position, and friendship toward all living entities. Worship of Me is to be practiced by all human beings, regardless of social or occupational divisions.

44One who worships Me by his prescribed duty, having no other object of worship, and who remains conscious of Me as present in all living entities, achieves unflinching devotional service unto Me.

45My dear Uddhava, I am the Supreme Lord of all worlds, and I create and destroy this universe, being its ultimate cause. I am thus the Absolute Truth, and one who worships Me with unflinching devotional service comes to Me.

46Thus, one who has purified his existence by execution of his prescribed duties, who fully understands My supreme position and who is endowed with scriptural and realized knowledge, very soon achieves Me.

47Those who are followers of this varṇāśrama system accept religious principles according to authorized traditions of proper conduct. When such varṇāśrama duties are dedicated to Me in loving service, they award the supreme perfection of life.

48My dear saintly Uddhava, I have now described to you, just as you inquired, the means by which My devotee, perfectly engaged in his prescribed duty, can come back to Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

SB 11.19: The Perfection of Spiritual Knowledge

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: A self-realized person who has cultivated scriptural knowledge up to the point of enlightenment and who is free from impersonal speculation, understanding the material universe to be simply illusion, should surrender unto Me both that knowledge and the means by which he achieved it.

2For learned, self-realized philosophers I am the only object of worship, the desired goal of life, the means for achieving that goal, and the settled conclusion of all knowledge. Indeed, because I am the cause of their happiness and their freedom from unhappiness, such learned souls have no effective purpose or dear object in life except Me.

3Those who have achieved complete perfection through philosophical and realized knowledge recognize My lotus feet to be the supreme transcendental object. Thus the learned transcendentalist is most dear to Me, and by his perfect knowledge he maintains Me in happiness.

4That perfection which is produced by a small fraction of spiritual knowledge cannot be duplicated by performing austerities, visiting holy places, chanting silent prayers, giving in charity or engaging in other pious activities.

5Therefore, My dear Uddhava, through knowledge you should understand your actual self. Then, advancing by clear realization of Vedic knowledge, you should worship Me in the mood of loving devotion.

6Formerly, great sages, through the sacrifice of Vedic knowledge and spiritual enlightenment, worshiped Me within themselves, knowing Me to be the Supreme Lord of all sacrifice and the Supersoul in everyone's heart. Thus coming to Me, these sages achieved the supreme perfection.

7My dear Uddhava, the material body and mind, composed of the three modes of material nature, attach themselves to you, but they are actually illusion, since they appear only at the present, having no original or ultimate existence. How is it possible, therefore, that the various stages of the body, namely birth, growth, reproduction, maintenance, dwindling and death, can have any relation to your eternal self? These phases relate only to the material body, which previously did not exist and ultimately will not exist. The body exists merely at the present moment.

8Śrī Uddhava said: O Lord of the universe! O form of the universe! Please explain to me that process of knowledge which automatically brings detachment and direct perception of the truth, which is transcendental, and which is traditional among great spiritual philosophers. This knowledge, sought by elevated personalities, describes loving devotional service unto Your Lordship.

9My dear Lord, for one who is being tormented on the terrible path of birth and death and is constantly overwhelmed by the threefold miseries, I do not see any possible shelter other than Your two lotus feet, which are just like a refreshing umbrella that pours down showers of delicious nectar.

10O almighty Lord, please be merciful and uplift this hopeless living entity who has fallen into the dark hole of material existence, where the snake of time has bitten him. In spite of such abominable conditions, this poor living entity has tremendous desire to relish the most insignificant material happiness. Please save me, my Lord, by pouring down the nectar of Your instructions, which awaken one to spiritual freedom.

11The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, just as you are now inquiring from Me, similarly, in the past King Yudhiṣṭhira, who considered no one his enemy, inquired from the greatest of the upholders of religious principles, Bhīṣma, while all of us were carefully listening.

12When the great Battle of Kurukṣetra had ended, King Yudhiṣṭhira was overwhelmed by the death of many beloved well-wishers, and thus, after listening to instructions about many religious principles, he finally inquired about the path of liberation.

13I will now speak unto you those religious principles of Vedic knowledge, detachment, self-realization, faith and devotional service that were heard directly from the mouth of Bhīṣmadeva.

14I personally approve of that knowledge by which one sees the combination of nine, eleven, five and three elements in all living entities, and ultimately one element within those twenty-eight.

15When one no longer sees the twenty-eight separated material elements, which arise from a single cause, but rather sees the cause itself, the Personality of Godhead at that time one's direct experience is called vijñana, or self-realization.

16Commencement, termination and maintenance are the stages of material causation. That which consistently accompanies all these material phases from one creation to another and remains alone when all material phases are annihilated is the one eternal.

17From the four types of evidence—Vedic knowledge, direct experience, traditional wisdom and logical induction—one can understand the temporary, insubstantial situation of the material world, by which one becomes detached from the duality of this world.

18An intelligent person should see that any material activity is subject to constant transformation and that even on the planet of Lord Brahmā there is thus simply unhappiness. Indeed, a wise man can understand that just as all that he has seen is temporary, similarly, all things within the universe have a beginning and an end.

19O sinless Uddhava, because you love Me, I previously explained to you the process of devotional service. Now I will again explain the supreme process for achieving loving service unto Me.

20-24Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of My glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, use of words to describe My qualities,

offering the mind to Me, rejection of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for My devotee?

25 When one's peaceful consciousness, strengthened by the mode of goodness, is fixed on the Personality of Godhead, one achieves religiosity, knowledge, detachment and opulence.

26 When consciousness is fixed on the material body, home and other, similar objects of sense gratification, one spends one's life chasing after material objects with the help of the senses. Consciousness, thus powerfully affected by the mode of passion, becomes dedicated to impermanent things, and in this way irreligion, ignorance, attachment and wretchedness arise.

27 Actual religious principles are stated to be those that lead one to My devotional service. Real knowledge is the awareness that reveals My all-pervading presence. Detachment is complete disinterest in the objects of material sense gratification, and opulence is the eight mystic perfections, such as *añimā-siddhi*.

28-32 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, O chastiser of the enemies, please tell me how many types of disciplinary regulations and regular daily duties there are. Also, my Lord, tell me what is mental equilibrium, what is self-control, and what is the actual meaning of tolerance and steadfastness. What are charity, austerity and heroism, and how are reality and truth to be described? What is renunciation, and what is wealth? What is desirable, what is sacrifice, and what is religious remuneration? My dear Keśava, O most fortunate one, how am I to understand the strength, opulence and profit of a particular person? What is the best education, what is actual humility, and what is real beauty? What are happiness and unhappiness? Who is learned, and who is a fool? What are the true and the false paths in life, and what are heaven and hell? Who is indeed a true friend, and what is one's real home? Who is a rich man, and who is a poor man? Who is wretched, and who is an actual controller? O Lord of the devotees, kindly explain these matters to me, along with their opposites.

33-35 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Nonviolence, truthfulness, not coveting or stealing the property of others, detachment, humility, freedom from possessiveness, trust in the principles of religion, celibacy, silence, steadiness, forgiveness and fearlessness are the twelve primary disciplinary principles. Internal cleanliness, external cleanliness, chanting the holy names of the Lord, austerity, sacrifice, faith, hospitality, worship of Me, visiting holy places, acting and desiring only for the supreme interest, satisfaction, and service to the spiritual master are the twelve elements of regular prescribed duties. These twenty-four elements bestow all desired benedictions upon those persons who devotedly cultivate them.

36-39 Absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium, and complete discipline of the senses is self-control. Tolerance means patiently enduring unhappiness, and steadfastness occurs when one conquers the tongue and genitals. The greatest charity is to give up all aggression toward others, and renunciation of lust is understood to be real austerity. Real heroism is to conquer one's natural tendency to enjoy material life, and reality is seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead everywhere. Truthfulness means to speak the truth in a pleasing way, as declared by great sages. Cleanliness is detachment in fruitive activities, whereas renunciation is the *sannyāsa* order of life. The true desirable wealth for human beings is religiousness, and I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, am sacrifice. Religious remuneration is devotion to the *ācārya* with the purpose of acquiring spiritual instruction, and the greatest strength is the *prāṇāyāma* system of breath control.

40-45 Actual opulence is My own nature as the Personality of Godhead, through which I exhibit the six unlimited opulences. The supreme gain in life is devotional service to Me, and actual education is nullifying the false perception of duality within the soul. Real modesty is to be disgusted with improper activities, and beauty is to possess good qualities such as detachment. Real happiness is to transcend material happiness and unhappiness, and real misery is to be implicated in searching for sex pleasure. A wise man is one who knows the process of freedom from bondage, and a fool is one who identifies with his material body and mind. The real path in life is that which leads to Me, and the wrong path is sense gratification, by which consciousness is bewildered. Actual heaven is the predominance of the mode of goodness, whereas hell is the predominance of ignorance. I am everyone's true friend, acting as the spiritual master of the entire universe, and one's home is the human body. My dear friend Uddhava, one who is enriched with good qualities is actually said to be rich, and one who is unsatisfied in life is actually poor. A wretched person is one who cannot control his senses, whereas one who is not attached to sense gratification is a real controller. One who attaches himself to sense gratification is the opposite, a slave. Thus, Uddhava, I have elucidated all of the matters about which you inquired. There is no need for a more elaborate description of these good and bad qualities, since to constantly see good and bad is itself a bad quality. The best quality is to transcend material good and evil.

SB 11.20: Pure Devotional Service Surpasses Knowledge and Detachment

1 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, You are the Supreme Lord, and thus the Vedic literatures, consisting of positive and negative injunctions, constitute Your order. Such literatures focus upon the good and bad qualities of work.

2 According to Vedic literature, the superior and inferior varieties found in the human social system, varṇāśrama, are due to pious and sinful modes of family planning. Thus piety and sin are constant points of reference in the Vedic analysis of the components of a given situation—namely the material ingredients, place, age and time. Indeed, the Vedas reveal the existence of material heaven and hell, which are certainly based on piety and sin.

3 Without seeing the difference between piety and sin, how can one understand Your own instructions in the form of Vedic literatures, which order one to act piously and forbid one to act sinfully? Furthermore, without such authorized Vedic literatures, which ultimately award liberation, how can human beings achieve the perfection of life?

4 My dear Lord, to understand those things beyond direct experiences—such as spiritual liberation or the attainment of heaven and similar material enjoyments—and in general to understand the means and end of all things, it is imperative that the forefathers, demigods and human beings consult the Vedic literatures, for these literatures, being Your own laws, constitute the highest evidence and revelation.

5 My dear Lord, the distinction observed between piety and sin comes from Your own Vedic knowledge and does not arise by itself. If the same Vedic literature subsequently nullifies such distinction between piety and sin, there will certainly be confusion.

6 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, because I desire that human beings may achieve perfection, I have presented three paths of advancement—the path of knowledge, the path of work and the path of devotion. Besides these three there is absolutely no other means of elevation.

7 Among these three paths, Jnana-yoga, the path of philosophical speculation, is recommended for those who are disgusted with material life and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities. Those who are not disgusted with material life, having many desires yet to fulfill,

should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga.

8If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither disgusted with nor very much attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me.

9As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.

10My dear Uddhava, a person who is situated in his prescribed duty, properly worshipping by Vedic sacrifices but not desiring the fruitive result of such worship, will not go to the heavenly planets; similarly, by not performing forbidden activities he will not go to hell.

11One who is situated in his prescribed duty, free from sinful activities and cleansed of material contamination, in this very life obtains transcendental knowledge or, by fortune, devotional service unto Me.

12The residents of both heaven and hell desire human birth on the earth planet because human life facilitates the achievement of transcendental knowledge and love of Godhead, whereas neither heavenly nor hellish bodies efficiently provide such opportunities.

13A human being who is wise should never desire promotion to heavenly planets or residence in hell. Indeed, a human being should also never desire permanent residence on the earth, for by such absorption in the material body one becomes foolishly negligent of one's actual self-interest.

14A wise person, knowing that although the material body is subject to death it can still award the perfection of one's life, should not foolishly neglect to take advantage of this opportunity before death arrives.

15Without attachment, a bird gives up the tree in which his nest was constructed when that tree is cut down by cruel men who are like death personified, and thus the bird achieves happiness in another place.

16Knowing that one's duration of life is being similarly cut down by the passing of days and nights, one should be shaken by fear. In this way, giving up all material attachment and desire, one understands the Supreme Lord and achieves perfect peace.

17The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul.

18A transcendentalist, having become disgusted and hopeless in all endeavors for material happiness, completely controls the senses and develops detachment. By spiritual practice he should then fix the mind on the spiritual platform without deviation.

19Whenever the mind, being concentrated on the spiritual platform, is suddenly deviated from its spiritual position, one should carefully bring it under the control of the self by following the prescribed means.

20One should never lose sight of the actual goal of mental activities, but rather, conquering the

life air and senses and utilizing intelligence strengthened by the mode of goodness, one should bring the mind under the control of the self.

21An expert horseman, desiring to tame a headstrong horse, first lets the horse have his way for a moment and then, pulling the reins, gradually places the horse on the desired path. Similarly, the supreme yoga process is that by which one carefully observes the movements and desires of the mind and gradually brings them under full control.

22Until one's mind is fixed in spiritual satisfaction, one should analytically study the temporary nature of all material objects, whether cosmic, earthly or atomic. One should constantly observe the process of creation through the natural progressive function and the process of annihilation through the regressive function.

23When a person is disgusted with the temporary, illusory nature of this world and is thus detached from it, his mind, guided by the instructions of his spiritual master, considers again and again the nature of this world and eventually gives up the false identification with matter.

24Through the various disciplinary regulations and the purificatory procedures of the yoga system, through logic and spiritual education or through worship and adoration of Me, one should constantly engage his mind in remembering the Personality of Godhead, the goal of yoga. No other means should be employed for this purpose.

25If, because of momentary inattention, a yogī accidentally commits an abominable activity, then by the very practice of yoga he should burn to ashes the sinful reaction, without at any time employing any other procedure.

26It is firmly declared that the steady adherence of transcendentalists to their respective spiritual positions constitutes real piety and that sin occurs when a transcendentalist neglects his prescribed duty. One who adopts this standard of piety and sin, sincerely desiring to give up all past association with sense gratification, is able to subdue materialistic activities, which are by nature impure.

27-28Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.

29When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed.

30The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

31Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world.

32-33Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions.

34Because My devotees possess saintly behavior and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it.

35It is said that complete detachment is the highest stage of freedom. Therefore, one who has no personal desire and does not pursue personal rewards can achieve loving devotional service unto Me.

36Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist within My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence.

37Persons who seriously follow these methods of achieving Me, which I have personally taught, attain freedom from illusion, and upon reaching My personal abode they perfectly understand the Absolute Truth.

SB 11.21: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Explanation of the Vedic Path

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who give up these methods for achieving Me, which consist of devotional service, analytic philosophy and regulated execution of prescribed duties, and instead, being moved by the material senses, cultivate insignificant sense gratification, certainly undergo the continual cycle of material existence.

2Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained.

3O sinless Uddhava, in order to understand what is proper in life one must evaluate a given object within its particular category. Thus, in analyzing religious principles one must consider purity and impurity. Similarly, in one's ordinary dealings one must distinguish between good and bad, and to insure one's physical survival one must recognize that which is auspicious and inauspicious.

4I have revealed this way of life for those bearing the burden of mundane religious principles.

5Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five basic elements that constitute the bodies of all conditioned souls, from Lord Brahmā himself down to the nonmoving creatures. These elements all emanate from the one Personality of Godhead.

6My dear Uddhava, although all material bodies are composed of the same five elements and are thus equal, the Vedic literatures conceive of different names and forms in relation to such bodies so that the living entities may achieve their goal of life.

7O saintly Uddhava, in order to restrict materialistic activities, I have established that which is proper and improper among all material things, including time, space and all physical objects.

8Among places, those bereft of the spotted antelope, those devoid of devotion to the brāhmaṇas, those possessing spotted antelopes but bereft of respectable men, provinces like Kīkaṭa and places where cleanliness and purificatory rites are neglected, where meat-eaters are prominent or where the earth is barren, are all considered to be contaminated lands.

9A specific time is considered pure when it is appropriate, either by its own nature or through achievement of suitable paraphernalia, for the performance of one's prescribed duty. That time which impedes the performance of one's duty is considered impure.

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10An object's purity or impurity is established by application of another object, by words, by rituals, by the effects of time or according to relative magnitude.

11Impure things may or may not impose sinful reactions upon a person, depending on that person's strength or weakness, intelligence, wealth, location and physical condition.

12Various objects such as grains, wooden utensils, things made of bone, thread, liquids, objects derived from fire, skins and earthy objects are all purified by time, by the wind, by fire, by earth and by water, either separately or in combination.

13A particular purifying agent is considered appropriate when its application removes the bad odor or dirty covering of some contaminated object and makes it resume its original nature.

14The self can be cleansed by bathing, charity, austerity, age, personal strength, purificatory rituals, prescribed duties and, above all, by remembrance of Me. The brāhmaṇa and other twice-born men should be duly purified before performing their specific activities.

15A mantra is purified when chanted with proper knowledge, and one's work is purified when offered to Me. Thus by purification of the place, time, substance, doer, mantras and work, one becomes religious, and by negligence of these six items one is considered irreligious.

16Sometimes piety becomes sin, and sometimes what is ordinarily sin becomes piety on the strength of Vedic injunctions. Such special rules in effect eradicate the clear distinction between piety and sin.

17The same activities that would degrade an elevated person do not cause falldown for those who are already fallen. Indeed, one who is lying on the ground cannot possibly fall further. The material association that is dictated by one's own nature is considered a good quality.

18By refraining from a particular sinful or materialistic activity, one becomes freed from its bondage. Such renunciation is the basis of religious and auspicious life for human beings and drives away all suffering, illusion and fear.

19One who accepts material sense objects as desirable certainly becomes attached to them. From such attachment lust arises, and this lust creates quarrel among men.

20From quarrel arises intolerable anger, followed by the darkness of ignorance. This ignorance quickly overtakes a man's broad intelligence.

21O saintly Uddhava, a person bereft of real intelligence is considered to have lost everything. Deviated from the actual purpose of his life, he becomes dull, just like a dead person.

22Because of absorption in sense gratification, one cannot recognize himself or others. Living uselessly in ignorance like a tree, one is merely breathing just like a bellows.

23Those statements of scripture promising fruitive rewards do not prescribe the ultimate good for men but are merely enticements for executing beneficial religious duties, like promises of candy spoken to induce a child to take beneficial medicine.

24Simply by material birth, human beings become attached within their minds to personal sense gratification, long duration of life, sense activities, bodily strength, sexual potency and friends and family. Their minds are thus absorbed in that which defeats their actual self-interest.

25Those ignorant of their real self-interest are wandering on the path of material existence, gradually heading toward darkness. Why would the Vedas further encourage them in sense

gratification if they, although foolish, submissively pay heed to Vedic injunctions?

26Persons with perverted intelligence do not understand this actual purpose of Vedic knowledge and instead propagate as the highest Vedic truth the flowery statements of the Vedas that promise material rewards. Those in actual knowledge of the Vedas never speak in that way.

27Those who are full of lust, avarice and greed mistake mere flowers to be the actual fruit of life. Bewildered by the glare of fire and suffocated by its smoke, they cannot recognize their own true identity.

28My dear Uddhava, persons dedicated to sense gratification obtained through honoring the Vedic rituals cannot understand that I am situated in everyone's heart and that the entire universe is nondifferent from Me and emanates from Me. Indeed, they are just like persons whose eyes are covered by fog.

29-30Those who are sworn to sense gratification cannot understand the confidential conclusion of Vedic knowledge as explained by Me. Taking pleasure in violence, they cruelly slaughter innocent animals in sacrifice for their own sense gratification and thus worship demigods, forefathers and leaders among ghostly creatures. Such passion for violence, however, is never encouraged within the process of Vedic sacrifice.

31Just as a foolish businessman gives up his real wealth in useless business speculation, foolish persons give up all that is actually valuable in life and instead pursue promotion to material heaven, which although pleasing to hear about is actually unreal, like a dream. Such bewildered persons imagine within their hearts that they will achieve all material blessings.

32Those established in material passion, goodness and ignorance worship the particular demigods and other deities, headed by Indra, who manifest the same modes of passion, goodness or ignorance. They fail, however, to properly worship Me.

33-34The worshipers of demigods think, "We shall worship the demigods in this life, and by our sacrifices we shall go to heaven and enjoy there. When that enjoyment is finished we shall return to this world and take birth as great householders in aristocratic families." Being excessively proud and greedy, such persons are bewildered by the flowery words of the Vedas. They are not attracted to topics about Me, the Supreme Lord.

35The Vedas, divided into three divisions, ultimately reveal the living entity as pure spirit soul. The Vedic seers and mantras, however, deal in esoteric terms, and I also am pleased by such confidential descriptions.

36The transcendental sound of the Vedas is very difficult to comprehend and manifests on different levels within the *prāṇa*, senses and mind. This Vedic sound is unlimited, very deep and unfathomable, just like the ocean.

37As the unlimited, unchanging and omnipotent Personality of Godhead dwelling within all living beings, I personally establish the Vedic sound vibration in the form of *omkāra* within all living entities. It is thus perceived subtly, just like a single strand of fiber on a lotus stalk.

38-40Just as a spider brings forth from its heart its web and emits it through its mouth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifests Himself as the reverberating primeval vital air, comprising all sacred Vedic meters and full of transcendental pleasure. Thus the Lord, from the ethereal sky of His heart, creates the great and limitless Vedic sound by the agency of His mind, which conceives of variegated sounds such as the *sparśas*. The Vedic sound branches out in thousands of directions, adorned with the different letters expanded from the syllable

om: the consonants, vowels, sibilants and semivowels. The Veda is then elaborated by many verbal varieties, expressed in different meters, each having four more syllables than the previous one. Ultimately the Lord again withdraws His manifestation of Vedic sound within Himself.

41The Vedic meters are Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik, Anuṣṭup, Bṛhatī, Pañkti, Triṣṭup, Jagatī, Aticchanda, Atyaṣṭi, Atijagatī and Ativirāṭ.

42In the entire world no one but Me actually understands the confidential purpose of Vedic knowledge. Thus people do not know what the Vedas are actually prescribing in the ritualistic injunctions of karma-kāṇḍa, or what object is actually being indicated in the formulas of worship found in the upāsanā-kāṇḍa, or that which is elaborately discussed through various hypotheses in the Jnana-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas.

43I am the ritualistic sacrifice enjoined by the Vedas, and I am the worshipable Deity. It is I who am presented as various philosophical hypotheses, and it is I alone who am then refuted by philosophical analysis. The transcendental sound vibration thus establishes Me as the essential meaning of all Vedic knowledge. The Vedas, elaborately analyzing all material duality as nothing but My illusory potency, ultimately completely negate this duality and achieve their own satisfaction.

SB 11.22: Enumeration of the Elements of Material Creation

1-3Uddhava inquired: My dear Lord, O master of the universe, how many different elements of creation have been enumerated by the great sages? I have heard You personally describe a total of twenty-eightGod, the jīva soul, the mahat-tattva, false ego, the five gross elements, the ten senses, the mind, the five subtle objects of perception and the three modes of nature. But some authorities say that there are twenty-six elements, while others cite twenty-five or else seven, nine, six, four or eleven, and even others say that there are seventeen, sixteen or thirteen. What did each of these sages have in mind when he calculated the creative elements in such different ways? O supreme eternal, kindly explain this to me.

4Lord Kṛṣṇa replied: Because all material elements are present everywhere, it is reasonable that different learned brāhmaṇas have analyzed them in different ways. All such philosophers spoke under the shelter of My mystic potency, and thus they could say anything without contradicting the truth.

5When philosophers argue, “I don’t choose to analyze this particular case in the same way that you have,” it is simply My own insurmountable energies that are motivating their analytic disagreements.

6By interaction of My energies different opinions arise. But for those who have fixed their intelligence on Me and controlled their senses, differences of perception disappear, and consequently the very cause for argument is removed.

7O best among men, because subtle and gross elements mutually enter into one another, philosophers may calculate the number of basic material elements in different ways, according to their personal desire.

8All subtle material elements are actually present within their gross effects; similarly, all gross elements are present within their subtle causes, since material creation takes place by progressive manifestation of elements from subtle to gross. Thus we can find all material

elements within any single element.

9Therefore, no matter which of these thinkers is speaking, and regardless of whether in their calculations they include material elements within their previous subtle causes or else within their subsequent manifest products, I accept their conclusions as authoritative, because a logical explanation can always be given for each of the different theories.

10Because a person who has been covered by ignorance since time immemorial is not capable of effecting his own self-realization, there must be some other personality who is in factual knowledge of the Absolute Truth and can impart this knowledge to him.

11According to knowledge in the material mode of goodness, there is no qualitative difference between the living entity and the supreme controller. The imagination of qualitative difference between them is useless speculation.

12Nature exists originally as the equilibrium of the three material modes, which pertain only to nature, not to the transcendental spirit soul. These modes—goodness, passion and ignorance—are the effective causes of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe.

13In this world the mode of goodness is recognized as knowledge, the mode of passion as fruitive work, and the mode of darkness as ignorance. Time is perceived as the agitated interaction of the material modes, and the totality of functional propensity is embodied by the primeval sūtra, or mahat-tattva.

14I have described the nine basic elements as the enjoying soul, nature, nature's primeval manifestation of the mahat-tattva, false ego, ether, air, fire, water and earth.

15Hearing, touch, sight, smell and taste are the five knowledge-acquiring senses, My dear Uddhava, and speech, the hands, the genitals, the anus and the legs constitute the five working senses. The mind belongs to both these categories.

16Sound, touch, taste, smell and form are the objects of the knowledge-acquiring senses, and movement, speech, excretion and manufacture are functions of the working senses.

17In the beginning of creation nature assumes, by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, its form as the embodiment of all subtle causes and gross manifestations within the universe. The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not enter the interaction of material manifestation but merely glances upon nature.

18As the material elements, headed by the mahat-tattva, are transformed, they receive their specific potencies from the glance of the Supreme Lord, and being amalgamated by the power of nature, they create the universal egg.

19According to some philosophers there are seven elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether, along with the conscious spirit soul and the Supreme Soul, who is the basis of both the material elements and the ordinary spirit soul. According to this theory, the body, senses, life air and all material phenomena are produced from these seven elements.

20Other philosophers state that there are six elements—the five physical elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) and the sixth element, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That Supreme Lord, endowed with the elements that He has brought forth from Himself, creates this universe and then personally enters within it.

21Some philosophers propose the existence of four basic elements, of which three—fire, water and earth—emanate from the fourth, the Self. Once existing, these elements produce the cosmic

manifestation, in which all material creation takes place.

22Some calculate the existence of seventeen basic elements, namely the five gross elements, the five objects of perception, the five sensory organs, the mind, and the soul as the seventeenth element.

23According to the calculation of sixteen elements, the only difference from the previous theory is that the soul is identified with the mind. If we think in terms of five physical elements, five senses, the mind, the individual soul and the Supreme Lord, there are thirteen elements.

24Counting eleven, there are the soul, the gross elements and the senses. Eight gross and subtle elements plus the Supreme Lord would make nine.

25Thus great philosophers have analyzed the material elements in many different ways. All of their proposals are reasonable, since they are all presented with ample logic. Indeed, such philosophical brilliance is expected of the truly learned.

26Śrī Uddhava inquired: Although nature and the living entity are constitutionally distinct, O Lord Kṛṣṇa, there appears to be no difference between them, because they are found residing within one another. Thus the soul appears to be within nature and nature within the soul.

27O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, O omniscient Lord, kindly cut this great doubt out of my heart with Your own words, which exhibit Your great skill in reasoning.

28From You alone the knowledge of the living beings arises, and by Your potency that knowledge is stolen away. Indeed, no one but Yourself can understand the real nature of Your illusory potency.

29The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best among men, material nature and its enjoyer are clearly distinct. This manifest creation undergoes constant transformation, being founded upon the agitation of the modes of nature.

30My dear Uddhava, My material energy, comprising three modes and acting through them, manifests the varieties of creation along with varieties of consciousness for perceiving them. The manifest result of material transformation is understood in three aspects: adhyātmic, adhidaivic and adhibhautic.

31Sight, visible form and the reflected image of the sun within the aperture of the eye all work together to reveal one another. But the original sun standing in the sky is self-manifested. Similarly, the Supreme Soul, the original cause of all entities, who is thus separate from all of them, acts by the illumination of His own transcendental experience as the ultimate source of manifestation of all mutually manifesting objects.

32Similarly, the sense organs, namely the skin, ears, eyes, tongue and nose as well as the functions of the subtle body, namely conditioned consciousness, mind, intelligence and false ego can all be analyzed in terms of the threefold distinction of sense, object of perception and presiding deity.

33When the three modes of nature are agitated, the resultant transformation appears as the element false ego in three phases—goodness, passion and ignorance. Generated from the mahat-tattva, which is itself produced from the unmanifest pradhāna, this false ego becomes the cause of all material illusion and duality.

34The speculative argument of philosophers—“This world is real,” “No, it is not real”—is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding

material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, are unable to give it up.

35-36Śrī Uddhava said: O supreme master, the intelligence of those dedicated to fruitive activities is certainly deviated from You. Please explain to me how such persons accept superior and inferior bodies by their materialistic activities and then give up such bodies. O Govinda, this topic is very difficult for foolish persons to understand. Being cheated by illusion in this world, they generally do not become aware of these facts.

37Lord Kṛṣṇa said: The material mind of men is shaped by the reactions of fruitive work. Along with the five senses, it travels from one material body to another. The spirit soul, although different from this mind, follows it.

38The mind, bound to the reactions of fruitive work, always meditates on the objects of the senses, both those that are seen in this world and those that are heard about from Vedic authority. Consequently, the mind appears to come into being and to suffer annihilation along with its objects of perception, and thus its ability to distinguish past and future is lost.

39When the living entity passes from the present body to the next body, which is created by his own karma, he becomes absorbed in the pleasurable and painful sensations of the new body and completely forgets the experience of the previous body. This total forgetfulness of one's previous material identity, which comes about for one reason or another, is called death.

40O most charitable Uddhava, what is called birth is simply a person's total identification with a new body. One accepts the new body just as one completely accepts the experience of a dream or a fantasy as reality.

41Just as a person experiencing a dream or daydream does not remember his previous dreams or daydreams, a person situated in his present body, although having existed prior to it, thinks that he has only recently come into being.

42Because the mind, which is the resting place of the senses, has created the identification with a new body, the threefold material variety of high, middle and low class appears as if present within the reality of the soul. Thus the self creates external and internal duality, just as a man might give birth to a bad son.

43My dear Uddhava, material bodies are constantly undergoing creation and destruction by the force of time, whose swiftness is imperceptible. But because of the subtle nature of time, no one sees this.

44The different stages of transformation of all material bodies occur just like those of the flame of a candle, the current of a river, or the fruits of a tree.

45Although the illumination of a lamp consists of innumerable rays of light undergoing constant creation, transformation and destruction, a person with illusory intelligence who sees the light for a moment will speak falsely, saying, "This is the light of the lamp." As one observes a flowing river, ever-new water passes by and goes far away, yet a foolish person, observing one point in the river, falsely states, "This is the water of the river." Similarly, although the material body of a human being is constantly undergoing transformation, those who are simply wasting their lives falsely think and say that each particular stage of the body is the person's real identity.

46A person does not actually take birth out of the seed of past activities, nor, being immortal, does he die. By illusion the living being appears to be born and to die, just as fire in connection with firewood appears to begin and then cease to exist.

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47Impregnation, gestation, birth, infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, old age and death are the nine ages of the body.

48Although the material body is different from the self, because of the ignorance due to material association one falsely identifies oneself with the superior and inferior bodily conditions. Sometimes a fortunate person is able to give up such mental concoction.

49By the death of one's father or grandfather one can surmise one's own death, and by the birth of one's son one can understand the condition of one's own birth. A person who thus realistically understands the creation and destruction of material bodies is no longer subject to these dualities.

50One who observes the birth of a tree from its seed and the ultimate death of the tree after maturity certainly remains a distinct observer separate from the tree. In the same way, the witness of the birth and death of the material body remains separate from it.

51An unintelligent man, failing to distinguish himself from material nature, thinks nature to be real. By contact with it he becomes completely bewildered and enters into the cycle of material existence.

52Made to wander because of his fruitive work, the conditioned soul, by contact with the mode of goodness, takes birth among the sages or demigods. By contact with the mode of passion he becomes a demon or human being, and by association with the mode of ignorance he takes birth as a ghost or in the animal kingdom.

53Just as one may imitate persons whom one sees dancing and singing, similarly the soul, although never the doer of material activities, becomes captivated by material intelligence and is thus forced to imitate its qualities.

54-55The soul's material life, his experience of sense gratification, is actually false, O descendant of Daśārha, just like trees' appearance of quivering when the trees are reflected in agitated water, or like the earth's appearance of spinning due to one's spinning his eyes around, or like the world of a fantasy or dream.

56For one who is meditating on sense gratification, material life, although lacking factual existence, does not go away, just as the unpleasant experiences of a dream do not.

57Therefore, O Uddhava, do not try to enjoy sense gratification with the material senses. See how illusion based on material dualities prevents one from realizing the self.

58-59Even though neglected, insulted, ridiculed or envied by bad men, or even though repeatedly agitated by being beaten, tied up or deprived of one's occupation, spat upon or polluted with urine by ignorant people, one who desires the highest goal in life should in spite of all these difficulties use his intelligence to keep himself safe on the spiritual platform.

60Śrī Uddhava said: O best of all speakers, please explain to me how I may properly understand this.

61O soul of the universe, the conditioning of one's personality in material life is very strong, and therefore it is very difficult even for learned men to tolerate the offenses committed against them by ignorant people. Only Your devotees, who are fixed in Your loving service and who have achieved peace by residing at Your lotus feet, are able to tolerate such offenses.

SB 11.23: The Song of the Avantī Brāhmaṇa

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1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Mukunda, the chief of the Dāśārhas, having thus been respectfully requested by the best of His devotees, Śrī Uddhava, first acknowledged the fitness of his servant's statements. Then the Lord, whose glorious exploits are most worthy of being heard, began to reply to him.

2Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O disciple of Bṛhaspati, there is virtually no saintly man in this world capable of resettling his own mind after it has been disturbed by the insulting words of uncivilized men.

3Sharp arrows which pierce one's chest and reach the heart do not cause as much suffering as the arrows of harsh, insulting words that become lodged within the heart when spoken by uncivilized men.

4My dear Uddhava, in this regard a most pious story is told, and I shall now describe it to you. Please listen with careful attention.

5Once a certain sannyāsī was insulted in many ways by impious men. However, with determination he remembered that he was suffering the fruit of his own previous karma. I will narrate to you his story and that which he spoke.

6In the country of Avantī there once lived a certain brāhmaṇa who was very rich and gifted with all opulences, and who was engaged in the occupation of commerce. But he was a miserly person, lusty, greedy and very prone to anger.

7In his home, devoid of religiosity and lawful sense gratification, the family members and guests were never properly respected, even with words. He would not even allow sufficient gratification for his own body at the suitable times.

8Since he was so hardhearted and miserly, his sons, in-laws, wife, daughters and servants began to feel inimical toward him. Becoming disgusted, they would never treat him with affection.

9In this way the presiding deities of the five family sacrifices became angry at the brāhmaṇa, who, being niggardly, guarded his wealth like a Yakṣa, who had no good destination either in this world or the next, and who was totally deprived of religiosity and sense enjoyment.

10O magnanimous Uddhava, by his neglect of these demigods he depleted his stock of piety and all his wealth. The accumulation of his repeated exhaustive endeavors was totally lost.

11Some of the wealth of this so-called brāhmaṇa was taken away by his relatives, My dear Uddhava, some by thieves, some by the whims of providence, some by the effects of time, some by ordinary men and some by government authorities.

12Finally, when his property was completely lost, he who never engaged in religiosity or sense enjoyment became ignored by his family members. Thus he began to feel unbearable anxiety.

13Having lost all his wealth, he felt great pain and lamentation. His throat choked up with tears, and he meditated for a long time on his fortune. Then a powerful feeling of renunciation came over him.

14The brāhmaṇa spoke as follows: O what great misfortune! I have simply tormented myself uselessly, struggling so hard for money that was not even intended for religiosity or material enjoyment.

15Generally, the wealth of misers never allows them any happiness. In this life it causes their

self-torment, and when they die it sends them to hell.

16 Whatever pure fame is possessed by the famous and whatever praiseworthy qualities are found in the virtuous are destroyed by even a small amount of greed, just as one's attractive physical beauty is ruined by a trace of white leprosy.

17 In the earning, attainment, increase, protection, expense, loss and enjoyment of wealth, all men experience great labor, fear, anxiety and delusion.

18-19 Theft, violence, speaking lies, duplicity, lust, anger, perplexity, pride, quarreling, enmity, faithlessness, envy and the dangers caused by women, gambling and intoxication are the fifteen undesirable qualities that contaminate men because of greed for wealth. Although these qualities are undesirable, men falsely ascribe value to them. One desiring to achieve the real benefit of life should therefore remain aloof from undesirable material wealth.

20 Even a man's brothers, wife, parents and friends united with him in love will immediately break off their affectionate relationships and become enemies over a single coin.

21 For even a small amount of money these relatives and friends become very agitated and their anger is inflamed. Acting as rivals, they quickly give up all sentiments of goodwill and will reject one at a moment's notice, even to the point of committing murder.

22 Those who obtain human life, which is prayed for even by the demigods, and in that human birth become situated as first-class brāhmaṇas, are extremely fortunate. If they disregard this important opportunity, they are certainly killing their own self-interest and thus achieve a most unfortunate end.

23 What mortal man, having achieved this human life, which is the very gateway to both heaven and liberation, would willingly become attached to that abode of worthlessness, material property?

24 One who fails to distribute his wealth to the proper shareholder—the demigods, sages, forefathers and ordinary living entities, as well as his immediate relatives, in-laws and own self—is maintaining his wealth simply like a Yakṣa and will fall down.

25 Discriminating persons are able to utilize their money, youth and strength to achieve perfection. But I have feverishly squandered these in the useless endeavor for further wealth. Now that I am an old man, what can I achieve?

26 Why must an intelligent man suffer by his constant vain efforts to get wealth? Indeed, this whole world is most bewildered by someone's illusory potency.

27 For one who is in the grips of death, what is the use of wealth or those who offer it, sense gratification or those who offer it, or, for that matter, any type of fruitive activity, which simply causes one to again take birth in the material world?

28 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, who contains within Himself all the demigods, must be satisfied with me. Indeed, He has brought me to this suffering condition and forced me to experience detachment, which is the boat to carry me over this ocean of material life.

29 If there is any time remaining in my life, I will perform austerities and force my body to subsist on the bare necessities. Without further confusion I shall pursue that which constitutes my entire self-interest in life, and I shall remain satisfied within the self.

30Thus may the presiding demigods of these three worlds kindly show their mercy upon me. Indeed, Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga was able to achieve the spiritual world in a single moment.

31Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued: His mind thus determined, that most excellent Avantī brāhmaṇa was able to untie the knots of desire within his heart. He then assumed the role of a peaceful and silent sannyāsī mendicant.

32He wandered about the earth, keeping his intelligence, senses and life air under control. To beg charity he traveled alone to various cities and villages. He did not advertise his advanced spiritual position and thus was not recognized by others.

33O kind Uddhava, seeing him as an old, dirty beggar, rowdy persons would dishonor him with many insults.

34Some of these persons would take away his sannyāsī rod, and some the waterpot which he was using as a begging bowl. Some took his deerskin seat, some his chanting beads, and some would steal his torn, ragged clothing. Displaying these things before him, they would pretend to offer them back but would then hide them again.

35When he was sitting on the bank of a river about to partake of the food that he had collected by his begging, such sinful rascals would come and pass urine on it, and they would dare to spit on his head.

36Although he had taken a vow of silence, they would try to make him speak, and if he did not speak they would beat him with sticks. Others would chastise him, saying, “This man is just a thief.” And others would bind him up with rope, shouting, “Tie him up! Tie him up!”

37They would criticize and insult him, saying, “This man is just a hypocrite and a cheat. He makes a business of religion simply because he lost all his wealth and his family threw him out.”

38-39Some would ridicule him by saying, “Just see this greatly powerful sage! He is as steadfast as the Himālaya Mountains. By practice of silence he strives for his goal with great determination, just like a heron.” Other persons would pass foul air upon him, and sometimes others would bind this twice-born brāhmaṇa in chains and keep him captive like a pet animal.

40The brāhmaṇa understood that all his suffering from other living beings, from the higher forces of nature and from his own body was unavoidable, being allotted to him by providence.

41Even while being insulted by these low-class men who were trying to effect his downfall, he remained steady in his spiritual duties. Fixing his resolution in the mode of goodness, he began to chant the following song.

42The brāhmaṇa said: These people are not the cause of my happiness and distress. Neither are the demigods, my own body, the planets, my past work, or time. Rather, it is the mind alone that causes happiness and distress and perpetuates the rotation of material life.

43The powerful mind actuates the functions of the material modes, from which evolve the different kinds of material activities in the modes of goodness, ignorance and passion. From the activities in each of these modes develop the corresponding statuses of life.

44Although present along with the struggling mind within the material body, the Supersoul is not endeavoring, because He is already endowed with transcendental enlightenment. Acting as my friend, He simply witnesses from His transcendental position. I, the infinitesimal spirit soul, on the other hand, have embraced this mind, which is the mirror reflecting the image of the

material world. Thus I have become engaged in enjoying objects of desire and am entangled due to contact with the modes of nature.

45Charity, prescribed duties, observance of major and minor regulative principles, hearing from scripture, pious works and purifying vows all have as their final aim the subduing of the mind. Indeed, concentration of the mind on the Supreme is the highest yoga.

46If one's mind is perfectly fixed and pacified, then tell me what need does one have to perform ritualistic charity and other pious rituals? And if one's mind remains uncontrolled, lost in ignorance, then of what use are these engagements for him?

47All the senses have been under the control of the mind since time immemorial, and the mind himself never comes under the sway of any other. He is stronger than the strongest, and his godlike power is fearsome. Therefore, anyone who can bring the mind under control becomes the master of all the senses.

48Failing to conquer this irrepressible enemy, the mind, whose urges are intolerable and who torments the heart, many people are completely bewildered and create useless quarrel with others. Thus they conclude that other people are either their friends, their enemies or parties indifferent to them.

49Persons who identify with this body, which is simply the product of the material mind, are blinded in their intelligence, thinking in terms of "I" and "mine." Because of their illusion of "this is I, but that is someone else," they wander in endless darkness.

50If you say that these people are the cause of my happiness and distress, then where is the place of the soul in such a conception? This happiness and distress pertain not to the soul but to the interactions of material bodies. If someone bites his tongue with his own teeth, at whom can he become angry in his suffering?

51If you say that the demigods who rule the bodily senses cause suffering, still, how can such suffering apply to the spirit soul? This acting and being acted upon are merely interactions of the changeable senses and their presiding deities. When one limb of the body attacks another, with whom can the person in that body be angry?

52If the soul himself were the cause of happiness and distress, then we could not blame others, since happiness and distress would be simply the nature of the soul. According to this theory, nothing except the soul actually exists, and if we were to perceive something besides the soul, that would be illusion. Therefore, since happiness and distress do not actually exist in this concept, why become angry at oneself or others?

53And if we examine the hypothesis that the planets are the immediate cause of suffering and happiness, then also where is the relationship with the soul, who is eternal? After all, the effect of the planets applies only to things that have taken birth. Expert astrologers have moreover explained how the planets are only causing pain to each other. Therefore, since the living entity is distinct from these planets and from the material body, against whom should he vent his anger?

54If we assume that fruitive work is the cause of happiness and distress, we still are not dealing with the soul. The idea of material work arises when there is a spiritual actor who is conscious and a material body that undergoes the transformation of happiness and distress as a reaction to such work. Since the body has no life, it cannot be the actual recipient of happiness and distress, nor can the soul, who is ultimately completely spiritual and aloof from the material body. Since karma thus has no ultimate basis in either the body or the soul, at whom can one

become angry?

55If we accept time as the cause of happiness and distress, that experience still cannot apply to the spirit soul, since time is a manifestation of the Lord's spiritual potency and the living entities are also expansions of the Lord's spiritual potency manifesting through time. Certainly a fire does not burn its own flames or sparks, nor does the cold harm its own snowflakes or hail. In fact, the spirit soul is transcendental and beyond the experience of material happiness and distress. At whom, therefore, should one become angry?

56The false ego gives shape to illusory material existence and thus experiences material happiness and distress. The spirit soul, however, is transcendental to material nature; he can never actually be affected by material happiness and distress in any place, under any circumstance or by the agency of any person. A person who understands this has nothing whatsoever to fear from the material creation.

57I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the previous ācāryas, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

58Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Thus becoming detached upon the loss of his property, this sage gave up his moroseness. He left home, taking sannyāsa, and began to travel about the earth. Even when insulted by foolish rascals he remained unswerved from his duty and chanted this song.

59No other force besides his own mental confusion makes the soul experience happiness and distress. His perception of friends, neutral parties and enemies and the whole material life he builds around this perception are simply created out of ignorance.

60My dear Uddhava, fixing your intelligence on Me, you should thus completely control the mind. This is the essence of the science of yoga.

61Anyone who listens to or recites to others this song of the sannyāsī, which presents scientific knowledge of the Absolute, and who thus meditates upon it with full attention, will never again be overwhelmed by the dualities of material happiness and distress.

SB 11.24: The Philosophy of Sāṅkhya

1Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Now I shall describe to you the science of Sāṅkhya, which has been perfectly established by ancient authorities. By understanding this science a person can immediately give up the illusion of material duality.

2Originally, during the Kṛta-yuga, when all men were very expert in spiritual discrimination, and also previous to that, during the period of annihilation, the seer existed alone, nondifferent from the seen object.

3That one Absolute Truth, remaining free from material dualities and inaccessible to ordinary speech and mind, divided Himself into two categories—the material nature and the living entities who are trying to enjoy the manifestations of that nature.

4Of these two categories of manifestation, one is material nature, which embodies both the subtle causes and manifest products of matter. The other is the conscious living entity, designated as the enjoyer.

5When material nature was agitated by My glance, the three material modes—goodness, passion and ignorance—became manifest to fulfill the pending desires of the conditioned souls.

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6From these modes arose the primeval sūtra, along with the mahat-tattva. By the transformation of the mahat-tattva was generated the false ego, the cause of the living entities' bewilderment.

7False ego, which is the cause of physical sensation, the senses and the mind, encompasses both spirit and matter and manifests in three varieties: in the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance.

8From false ego in the mode of ignorance came the subtle physical perceptions, from which the gross elements were generated. From false ego in the mode of passion came the senses, and from false ego in the mode of goodness arose the eleven demigods.

9Impelled by Me, all these elements combined to function in an orderly fashion and together gave birth to the universal egg, which is My excellent place of residence.

10I Myself appeared within that egg, which was floating on the causal water, and from My navel arose the universal lotus, the birthplace of self-born Brahmā.

11Lord Brahmā, the soul of the universe, being endowed with the mode of passion, performed great austerities by My mercy and thus created the three planetary divisions, called Bhūr, Bhuvar and Svar, along with their presiding deities.

12Heaven was established as the residence of the demigods, Bhuvarloka as that of the ghostly spirits, and the earth system as the place of human beings and other mortal creatures. Those mystics who strive for liberation are promoted beyond these three divisions.

13Lord Brahmā created the region below the earth for the demons and the Nāga snakes. In this way the destinations of the three worlds were arranged as the corresponding reactions for different kinds of work performed within the three modes of nature.

14By mystic yoga, great austerities and the renounced order of life, the pure destinations of Maharloka, Janoloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka are attained. But by devotional yoga, one achieves My transcendental abode.

15All results of fruitive work have been arranged within this world by Me, the supreme creator acting as the force of time. Thus one sometimes rises up toward the surface of this mighty river of the modes of nature and sometimes again submerges.

16Whatever features visibly exist within this worldsmall or great, thin or stoutcertainly contain both the material nature and its enjoyer, the spirit soul.

17Gold and earth are originally existing as ingredients. From gold one may fashion golden ornaments such as bracelets and earrings, and from earth one may fashion clay pots and saucers. The original ingredients gold and earth exist before the products made from them, and when the products are eventually destroyed, the original ingredients, gold and earth, will remain. Thus, since the ingredients are present in the beginning and at the end, they must also be present in the middle phase, taking the form of a particular product to which we assign for convenience a particular name, such as bracelet, earring, pot or saucer. We can therefore understand that since the ingredient cause exists before the creation of a product and after the product's destruction, the same ingredient cause must be present during the manifest phase, supporting the product as the basis of its reality.

18A material object, itself composed of an essential ingredient, creates another material object through transformation. Thus one created object becomes the cause and basis of another created object. A particular thing may thus be called real in that it possesses the basic nature of

another object that constitutes its origin and final state.

19The material universe may be considered real, having nature as its original ingredient and final state. Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu is the resting place of nature, which becomes manifest by the power of time. Thus nature, the almighty Viṣṇu and time are not different from Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

20As long as the Supreme Personality of Godhead continues to glance upon nature, the material world continues to exist, perpetually manifesting through procreation the great and variegated flow of universal creation.

21I am the basis of the universal form, which displays endless variety through the repeated creation, maintenance and destruction of the planetary systems. Originally containing within itself all planets in their dormant state, My universal form manifests the varieties of created existence by arranging the coordinated combination of the five elements.

22-27At the time of annihilation, the mortal body of the living being becomes merged into food. Food merges into the grains, and the grains merge back into the earth. The earth merges into its subtle sensation, fragrance. Fragrance merges into water, and water further merges into its own quality, taste. That taste merges into fire, which merges into form. Form merges into touch, and touch merges into ether. Ether finally merges into the sensation of sound. The senses all merge into their own origins, the presiding demigods, and they, O gentle Uddhava, merge into the controlling mind, which itself merges into false ego in the mode of goodness. Sound becomes one with false ego in the mode of ignorance, and all-powerful false ego, the first of all the physical elements, merges into the total nature. The total material nature, the primary repository of the three basic modes, dissolves into the modes. These modes of nature then merge into the unmanifest form of nature, and that unmanifest form merges into time. Time merges into the Supreme Lord, present in the form of the omniscient Mahā-puruṣa, the original activator of all living beings. That origin of all life merges into Me, the unborn Supreme Soul, who remains alone, established within Himself. It is from Him that all creation and annihilation are manifested.

28Just as the rising sun removes the darkness of the sky, similarly, this scientific knowledge of cosmic annihilation removes all illusory duality from the mind of a serious student. Even if illusion somehow enters his heart, it cannot remain there.

29Thus I, the perfect seer of everything material and spiritual, have spoken this knowledge of Sāṅkhya, which destroys the illusion of doubt by scientific analysis of creation and annihilation.

SB 11.25: The Three Modes of Nature and Beyond

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best among men, please listen as I describe to you how the living entity attains a particular nature by association with individual material modes.

2-5Mind and sense control, tolerance, discrimination, sticking to one's prescribed duty, truthfulness, mercy, careful study of the past and future, satisfaction in any condition, generosity, renunciation of sense gratification, faith in the spiritual master, being embarrassed at improper action, charity, simplicity, humbleness and satisfaction within oneself are qualities of the mode of goodness. Material desire, great endeavor, audacity, dissatisfaction even in gain, false pride, praying for material advancement, considering oneself different and better than others, sense gratification, rash eagerness to fight, a fondness for hearing oneself praised, the

tendency to ridicule others, advertising one's own prowess and justifying one's actions by one's strength are qualities of the mode of passion. Intolerant anger, stinginess, speaking without scriptural authority, violent hatred, living as a parasite, hypocrisy, chronic fatigue, quarrel, lamentation, delusion, unhappiness, depression, sleeping too much, false expectations, fear and laziness constitute the major qualities of the mode of ignorance. Now please hear about the combination of these three modes.

6My dear Uddhava, the combination of all three modes is present in the mentality of "I" and "mine." The ordinary transactions of this world, which are carried out through the agency of the mind, the objects of perception, the senses and the vital airs of the physical body, are also based on the combination of the modes.

7When a person devotes himself to religiosity, economic development and sense gratification, the faith, wealth and sensual enjoyment obtained by his endeavors display the interaction of the three modes of nature.

8When a man desires sense gratification, being attached to family life, and when he consequently becomes established in religious and occupational duties, the combination of the modes of nature is manifest.

9A person exhibiting qualities such as self-control is understood to be predominantly in the mode of goodness. Similarly, a passionate person is recognized by his lust, and one in ignorance is recognized by qualities such as anger.

10Any person, whether man or woman, who worships Me with loving devotion, offering his or her prescribed duties unto Me without material attachment, is understood to be situated in goodness.

11When a person worships Me by his prescribed duties with the hope of gaining material benefit, his nature should be understood to be in passion, and one who worships Me with the desire to commit violence against others is in ignorance.

12The three modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—influence the living entity but not Me. Manifesting within his mind, they induce the living entity to become attached to material bodies and other created objects. In this way the living entity is bound up.

13When the mode of goodness, which is luminous, pure and auspicious, predominates over passion and ignorance, a man becomes endowed with happiness, virtue, knowledge and other good qualities.

14When the mode of passion, which causes attachment, separatism and activity, conquers ignorance and goodness, a man begins to work hard to acquire prestige and fortune. Thus in the mode of passion he experiences anxiety and struggle.

15When the mode of ignorance conquers passion and goodness, it covers one's consciousness and makes one foolish and dull. Falling into lamentation and illusion, a person in the mode of ignorance sleeps excessively, indulges in false hopes, and displays violence toward others.

16When consciousness becomes clear and the senses are detached from matter, one experiences fearlessness within the material body and detachment from the material mind. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of goodness, in which one has the opportunity to realize Me.

17You should discern the mode of passion by its symptoms—the distortion of the intelligence because of too much activity, the inability of the perceiving senses to disentangle themselves

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from mundane objects, an unhealthy condition of the working physical organs, and the unsteady perplexity of the mind.

18When one's higher awareness fails and finally disappears and one is thus unable to concentrate his attention, his mind is ruined and manifests ignorance and depression. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of ignorance.

19With the increase of the mode of goodness, the strength of the demigods similarly increases. When passion increases, the demoniac become strong. And with the rise of ignorance, O Uddhava, the strength of the most wicked increases.

20It should be understood that alert wakefulness comes from the mode of goodness, sleep with dreaming from the mode of passion, and deep, dreamless sleep from the mode of ignorance. The fourth state of consciousness pervades these three and is transcendental.

21Learned persons dedicated to Vedic culture are elevated by the mode of goodness to higher and higher positions. The mode of ignorance, on the other hand, forces one to fall headfirst into lower and lower births. And by the mode of passion one continues transmigrating through human bodies.

22Those who leave this world in the mode of goodness go to the heavenly planets, those who pass away in the mode of passion remain in the world of human beings, and those dying in the mode of ignorance must go to hell. But those who are free from the influence of all modes of nature come to Me.

23Work performed as an offering to Me, without consideration of the fruit, is considered to be in the mode of goodness. Work performed with a desire to enjoy the results is in the mode of passion. And work impelled by violence and envy is in the mode of ignorance.

24Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental.

25Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where I reside is transcendental.

26A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness, a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature.

27Faith directed toward spiritual life is in the mode of goodness, faith rooted in fruitive work is in the mode of passion, faith residing in irreligious activities is in the mode of ignorance, but faith in My devotional service is purely transcendental.

28Food that is wholesome, pure and obtained without difficulty is in the mode of goodness, food that gives immediate pleasure to the senses is in the mode of passion, and food that is unclean and causes distress is in the mode of ignorance.

29Happiness derived from the self is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental.

30Therefore material substance, place, result of activity, time, knowledge, work, the performer

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of work, faith, state of consciousness, species of life and destination after death are all based on the three modes of material nature.

31O best of human beings, all states of material being are related to the interaction of the enjoying soul and material nature. Whether seen, heard of or only conceived within the mind, they are without exception constituted of the modes of nature.

32O gentle Uddhava, all these different phases of conditioned life arise from work born of the modes of material nature. The living entity who conquers these modes, manifested from the mind, can dedicate himself to Me by the process of devotional service and thus attain pure love for Me.

33Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in loving service to Me.

34A wise sage, free from all material association and unbewildered, should subdue his senses and worship Me. He should conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by engaging himself only with things in the mode of goodness.

35Then, being fixed in devotional service, the sage should also conquer the material mode of goodness by indifference toward the modes. Thus pacified within his mind, the spirit soul, freed from the modes of nature, gives up the very cause of his conditioned life and attains Me.

36Freed from the subtle conditioning of the mind and from the modes of nature born of material consciousness, the living entity becomes completely satisfied by experiencing My transcendental form. He no longer searches for enjoyment in the external energy, nor does he contemplate or remember such enjoyment within himself.

SB 11.26: The Aila-gītā

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having achieved this human form of life, which affords one the opportunity to realize Me, and being situated in My devotional service, one can achieve Me, the reservoir of all pleasure and the Supreme Soul of all existence, residing within the heart of every living being.

2A person fixed in transcendental knowledge is freed from conditioned life by giving up his false identification with the products of the material modes of nature. Seeing these products as simply illusion, he avoids entanglement with the modes of nature, although constantly among them. Because the modes of nature and their products are simply not real, he does not accept them.

3One should never associate with materialists, those dedicated to gratifying their genitals and bellies. By following them one falls into the deepest pit of darkness, just like a blind man who follows another blind man.

4The following song was sung by the famous emperor Purūravā. When deprived of his wife, Urvaśī, he was at first bewildered, but by controlling his lamentation he began to feel detachment.

5When she was leaving him, even though he was naked he ran after her just like a madman and called out in great distress, “O my wife, O terrible lady! Please stop!”

6Although for many years Purūravā had enjoyed sex pleasure in the evening hours, still he was not satisfied by such insignificant enjoyment. His mind was so attracted to Urvaśī that he did

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not notice how the nights were coming and going.

7King Aila said: Alas, just see the extent of my delusion! This goddess was embracing me and held my neck in her grip. My heart was so polluted by lust that I had no idea how my life was passing.

8That lady cheated me so much that I did not even see the rising or setting of the sun. Alas, for so many years I passed my days in vain!

9Alas, although I am supposed to be a mighty emperor, the crown jewel of all kings on this earth, just see how my bewilderment has rendered me a toy animal in the hands of women!

10Although I was a powerful lord with great opulence, that woman gave me up as if I were no more than an insignificant blade of grass. And still, naked and without shame, I followed her, crying out to her like a madman.

11Where are my so-called great influence, power and sovereignty? Just like an ass being kicked in the face by his she-ass, I ran after that woman, who had already given me up.

12What is the use of a big education or the practice of austerities and renunciation, and what is the use of studying religious scriptures, of living in solitude and silence, if, after all that, one's mind is stolen by a woman?

13To hell with me! I am such a fool that I didn't even know what was good for me, although I arrogantly thought I was highly intelligent. Although I achieved the exalted position of a lord, I allowed myself to be conquered by women as if I were a bullock or a jackass.

14Even after I had served the so-called nectar of the lips of Urvaṣī for many years, my lusty desires kept rising again and again within my heart and were never satisfied, just like a fire that can never be extinguished by the oblations of ghee poured into its flames.

15Who but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lies beyond material perception and is the Lord of self-satisfied sages, can possibly save my consciousness, which has been stolen by a prostitute?

16Because I allowed my intelligence to become dull and because I failed to control my senses, the great confusion in my mind did not go away, even though Urvaṣī herself gave me wise counsel with well-spoken words.

17How can I blame her for my trouble when I myself am ignorant of my real, spiritual nature? I did not control my senses, and so I am like a person who mistakenly sees a harmless rope as a snake.

18What is this polluted body anyway so filthy and full of bad odors? I was attracted by the fragrance and beauty of a woman's body, but what are those so-called attractive features? They are simply a false covering created by illusion.

19-20One can never decide whose property the body actually is. Does it belong to one's parents, who have given birth to it, to one's wife, who gives it pleasure, or to one's employer, who orders the body around? Is it the property of the funeral fire or of the dogs and jackals who may ultimately devour it? Is it the property of the indwelling soul, who partakes in its happiness and distress, or does the body belong to intimate friends who encourage and help it? Although a man never definitely ascertains the proprietor of the body, he becomes most attached to it. The material body is a polluted material form heading toward a lowly destination, yet when a man stares at the face of a woman he thinks, "What a good-looking

lady! What a charming nose she's got, and see her beautiful smile!"

21What difference is there between ordinary worms and persons who try to enjoy this material body composed of skin, flesh, blood, muscle, fat, marrow, bone, stool, urine and pus?

22Yet even one who theoretically understands the actual nature of the body should never associate with women or with men attached to women. After all, the contact of the senses with their objects inevitably agitates the mind.

23Because the mind is not disturbed by that which is neither seen nor heard, the mind of a person who restricts the material senses will automatically be checked in its material activities and become pacified.

24Therefore one should never let his senses associate freely with women or with men attached to women. Even those who are highly learned cannot trust the six enemies of the mind; what to speak, then, of foolish persons like me.

25The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having thus chanted this song, Mahārāja Purūravā, eminent among the demigods and human beings, gave up the position he had achieved in the planet of Urvaśī. His illusion cleansed away by transcendental knowledge, he understood Me to be the Supreme Soul within his heart and so at last achieved peace.

26An intelligent person should therefore reject all bad association and instead take up the association of saintly devotees, whose words cut off the excessive attachment of one's mind.

27My devotees fix their minds on Me and do not depend upon anything material. They are always peaceful, endowed with equal vision, and free from possessiveness, false ego, duality and greed.

28O greatly fortunate Uddhava, in the association of such saintly devotees there is constant discussion of Me, and those partaking in this chanting and hearing of My glories are certainly purified of all sins.

29Whoever hears, chants and respectfully takes to heart these topics about Me becomes faithfully dedicated to Me and thus achieves My devotional service.

30What more remains to be accomplished for the perfect devotee after achieving devotional service unto Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth, whose qualities are innumerable and who am the embodiment of all ecstatic experience?

31Just as cold, fear and darkness are eradicated for one who has approached the sacrificial fire, so dullness, fear and ignorance are destroyed for one engaged in serving the devotees of the Lord.

32The devotees of the Lord, peacefully fixed in absolute knowledge, are the ultimate shelter for those who are repeatedly rising and falling within the fearful ocean of material life. Such devotees are just like a strong boat that comes to rescue persons who are at the point of drowning.

33Just as food is the life of all creatures, just as I am the ultimate shelter for the distressed, and just as religion is the wealth of those who are passing away from this world, so My devotees are the only refuge of persons fearful of falling into a miserable condition of life.

34My devotees bestow divine eyes, whereas the sun allows only external sight, and that only when it is risen in the sky. My devotees are one's real worshipable deities and real family; they

are one's own self, and ultimately they are nondifferent from Me.

35 Thus losing his desire to be on the same planet as Urvaśī, Mahārāja Purūravā began to wander the earth free of all material association and completely satisfied within the self.

SB 11.27: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Instructions on the Process of Deity Worship

1 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, O master of the devotees, please explain to me the prescribed method of worshiping You in Your Deity form. What are the qualifications of those devotees who worship the Deity, on what basis is such worship established, and what is the specific method of worship?

2 All the great sages repeatedly declare that such worship brings the greatest benefit possible in human life. This is the opinion of Nārada Muni, the great Vyāsadeva and my own spiritual master, Bṛhaspati.

3-4 O most magnanimous Lord, the instructions on this process of Deity worship first emanated from Your lotus mouth. Then they were spoken by the great Lord Brahmā to his sons, headed by Bhṛgu, and by Lord Śiva to his wife, Pārvatī. This process is accepted by and appropriate for all the occupational and spiritual orders of society. Therefore I consider worship of You in Your Deity form to be the most beneficial of all spiritual practices, even for women and śūdras.

5 O lotus-eyed one, O Supreme Lord of all lords of the universe, please explain to Your devoted servant this means of liberation from the bondage of work.

6 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, there is no end to the innumerable Vedic prescriptions for executing Deity worship; so I shall explain this topic to you briefly, one step at a time.

7 One should carefully worship Me by selecting one of the three methods by which I receive sacrifice: Vedic, tantric or mixed.

8 Now please listen faithfully as I explain exactly how a person who has achieved twice-born status through the relevant Vedic prescriptions should worship Me with devotion.

9 A twice-born person should worship Me, his worshipable Lord, without duplicity, offering appropriate paraphernalia in loving devotion to My Deity form or to a form of Me appearing upon the ground, in fire, in the sun, in water or within the worshiper's own heart.

10 One should first purify his body by cleansing his teeth and bathing. Then one should perform a second cleansing by smearing the body with earth and chanting both Vedic and tantric mantras.

11 Fixing the mind on Me, one should worship Me by his various prescribed duties, such as chanting the Gāyatrī mantra at the three junctures of the day. Such performances are enjoined by the Vedas and purify the worshiper of reactions to fruitive activities.

12 The Deity form of the Lord is said to appear in eight varieties: stone, wood, metal, earth, paint, sand, the mind or jewels.

13 The Deity form of the Lord, who is the shelter of all living entities, can be established in two ways: temporarily or permanently. But a permanent Deity, having been called, can never be sent away, My dear Uddhava.

14 The Deity that is temporarily established can optionally be called forth and sent away, but

these two rituals should always be performed when the Deity is traced upon the ground. Bathing should be done with water except if the Deity is made of clay, paint or wood, in which cases a thorough cleansing without water is enjoined.

15 One should worship Me in My Deity forms by offering the most excellent paraphernalia. But a devotee completely freed from material desire may worship Me with whatever he is able to obtain, and may even worship Me within his heart with mental paraphernalia.

16-17 In worshipping the temple Deity, my dear Uddhava, bathing and decoration are the most pleasing offerings. For the Deity traced on sacred ground, the process of tattva-vinyāsa is most dear. Oblations of sesame and barley soaked in ghee are the preferred offering to the sacrificial fire, whereas worship consisting of upasthāna and arghya is preferred for the sun. One should worship Me in the form of water by offering water itself. Actually, whatever is offered to Me with faith by My devotee even if only a little water is most dear to Me.

18 Even very opulent presentations do not satisfy Me if they are offered by nondevotees. But I am pleased by any insignificant offering made by My loving devotees, and I am certainly most pleased when nice presentations of fragrant oil, incense, flowers and palatable foods are offered with love.

19 After cleansing himself and collecting all the paraphernalia, the worshiper should arrange his own seat with blades of kuśa grass whose tips point eastward. He should then sit facing either east or north, or else, if the Deity is fixed in one place, he should sit directly facing the Deity.

20 The devotee should sanctify the various parts of his body by touching them and chanting mantras. He should do the same for My Deity form, and then with his hands he should clean the Deity of old flowers and the remnants of previous offerings. He should properly prepare the sacred pot and the vessel containing water for sprinkling.

21 Then, with the water of that prokṣaṇīya vessel he should sprinkle the area where the Deity is being worshiped, the offerings that are going to be presented, and his own body. Next he should decorate with various auspicious substances three vessels filled with water.

22 The worshiper should then purify those three vessels. He should sanctify the vessel holding water for washing the Lord's feet by chanting hṛdayāya namaḥ, the vessel containing water for arghya by chanting śirase svāhā, and the vessel containing water for washing the Lord's mouth by chanting śikhāyai vaṣaṭ. Also, the Gāyatrī mantra should be chanted for all three vessels.

23 The worshiper should meditate upon My subtle form which is situated within the worshiper's own body, now purified by air and fire as the source of all living entities. This form of the Lord is experienced by self-realized sages in the last part of the vibration of the sacred syllable om.

24 The devotee conceives of the Supersoul, whose presence surcharges the devotee's body, in the form corresponding to his realization. Thus the devotee worships the Lord to his full capacity and becomes fully absorbed in Him. By touching the various limbs of the Deity and chanting appropriate mantras, the devotee should invite the Supersoul to join the Deity's form, and then the devotee should worship Me.

25-26 The worshiper should first imagine My seat as decorated with the personified deities of religion, knowledge, renunciation and opulence and with My nine spiritual energies. He should think of the Lord's sitting place as an eight-petaled lotus, effulgent on account of the saffron filaments within its whorl. Then, following the regulations of both the Vedas and the tantras, he should offer Me water for washing the feet, water for washing the mouth, arghya and other items of worship. By this process he achieves both material enjoyment and

liberation.

27One should worship, in order, the Lord's Sudarśana disc, His Pāṣcajanya conchshell, His club, sword, bow, arrows and plow, His muṣala weapon, His Kaustubha gem, His flower garland and the Śrīvatsa curl of hair on His chest.

28One should worship the Lord's associates Nanda and Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracanda and Caṇḍa, Mahābala and Bala, and Kumuda and Kumudekṣaṇa.

29With offerings such as prokṣaṇa one should worship Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viṣvaksena, the spiritual masters and the various demigods. All these personalities should be in their proper places facing the Deity of the Lord.

30-31The worshiper should bathe the Deity every day, as opulently as his assets permit, using waters scented with sandalwood, uśīra root, camphor, kuṅkuma and aguru. He should also chant various Vedic hymns, such as the anuvāka known as Svarṇa-gharma, the Mahāpuruṣa-vidyā, the Puruṣa-sūkta and various songs of the Sāma Veda, such as the Rājana and the Rohiṇya.

32My devotee should then lovingly decorate Me with clothing, a brāhmaṇa thread, various ornaments, marks of tilaka and garlands, and he should anoint My body with fragrant oils, all in the prescribed manner.

33The worshiper should faithfully present Me with water for washing My feet and mouth, fragrant oils, flowers and unbroken grains, along with incense, lamps and other offerings.

34Within his means, the devotee should arrange to offer Me sugar candy, sweet rice, ghee, śaṣkulī [rice-flour cakes], āpūpa [various sweet cakes], modaka [steamed rice-flour dumplings filled with sweet coconut and sugar], saṁyāva [wheat cakes made with ghee and milk and covered with sugar and spices], yogurt, vegetable soups and other palatable foods.

35On special occasions, and daily if possible, the Deity should be massaged with ointment, shown a mirror, offered a eucalyptus stick for brushing His teeth, bathed with the five kinds of nectar, offered all kinds of opulent foods, and entertained with singing and dancing.

36In an arena constructed according to scriptural injunctions, the devotee should perform a fire sacrifice, utilizing the sacred belt, the sacrificial pit and the altar mound. When igniting the sacrificial fire, the devotee should bring it to a blaze with wood piled up by his own hands.

37After spreading kuśa grass on the ground and sprinkling it with water, one should perform the anvādhāna ritual according to the prescribed rules. Then one should arrange the items to be offered as oblations and should sanctify them with water from the sprinkling vessel. The worshiper should next meditate upon Me within the fire.

38-41The intelligent devotee should meditate upon that form of the Lord whose color is like molten gold, whose four arms are resplendent with the conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower, and who is always peaceful and dressed in a garment colored like the filaments within a lotus flower. His helmet, bracelets, belt and fine arm ornaments shine brilliantly. The symbol of Śrīvatsa is on His chest, along with the glowing Kaustubha gem and a garland of forest flowers. The devotee should then worship that Lord by taking pieces of firewood soaked in the sacrificial ghee and throwing them into the fire. He should perform the ritual of āghāra, presenting into the fire the various items of oblation drenched in ghee. He should then offer to sixteen demigods, beginning with Yamarāja, the oblation called sviṣṭi-kṛt, reciting the basic mantras of each deity and the sixteen-line Puruṣa-sūkta hymn. Pouring one oblation after each

line of the Puruṣa-sūkta, he should utter the particular mantra naming each deity.

42Having thus worshiped the Lord in the sacrificial fire, the devotee should offer his obeisances to the Lord's personal associates by bowing down and should then present offerings to them. He should then chant quietly the mūla-mantra of the Deity of the Lord, remembering the Absolute Truth as the Supreme Personality, Nārāyaṇa.

43Once again he should offer the Deity water for washing His mouth, and he should give the remnants of the Lord's food to Viṣvaksena. Then he should present the Deity with fragrant perfume for the mouth and prepared betel nut.

44Singing along with others, chanting loudly and dancing, acting out My transcendental pastimes, and hearing and telling stories about Me, the devotee should for some time absorb himself in such festivity.

45The devotee should offer homage to the Lord with all kinds of hymns and prayers, both from the Purāṇas and from other ancient scriptures, and also from ordinary traditions. Praying, "O Lord, please be merciful to me!" he should fall down flat like a rod to offer his obeisances.

46Placing his head at the feet of the Deity, he should then stand with folded hands before the Lord and pray, "O my Lord, please protect me, who am surrendered unto You. I am most fearful of this ocean of material existence, standing as I am in the mouth of death."

47Praying in this way, the devotee should respectfully place upon his head the remnants I offer to him. And if the particular Deity is meant to be sent away at the end of the worship, then this should be performed, the devotee once again placing the light of the Deity's presence inside the light of the lotus within his own heart.

48Whenever one develops faith in Mein My form as the Deity or in other bona fide manifestations one should worship Me in that form. I certainly exist both within all created beings and also separately in My original form, since I am the Supreme Soul of all.

49By worshipping Me through the various methods prescribed in the Vedas and tantras, one will gain from Me his desired perfection in both this life and the next.

50The devotee should more fully establish My Deity by solidly constructing a temple, along with beautiful gardens. These gardens should be set aside to provide flowers for the regular daily worship, special Deity processions and holiday observances.

51One who offers the Deity gifts of land, markets, cities and villages so that the regular daily worship and special festivals of the Deity may go on continually will achieve opulence equal to My own.

52By installing the Deity of the Lord one becomes king of the entire earth, by building a temple for the Lord one becomes ruler of the three worlds, by worshiping and serving the Deity one goes to the planet of Lord Brahmā, and by performing all three of these activities one achieves a transcendental form like My own.

53But one who simply engages in devotional service with no consideration of fruitive results attains Me. Thus whoever worships Me according to the process I have described will ultimately attain pure devotional service unto Me.

54Anyone who steals the property of the demigods or the brāhmaṇas, whether originally given to them by himself or someone else, must live as a worm in stool for one hundred million years.

55Not only the performer of the theft but also anyone who assists him, instigates the crime, or simply approves of it must also share the reaction in the next life. According to their degree of participation, they each must suffer a proportionate consequence.

SB 11.28: Jnana-yoga

1The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One should neither praise nor criticize the conditioned nature and activities of other persons. Rather, one should see this world as simply the combination of material nature and the enjoying souls, all based on the one Absolute Truth.

2Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing the qualities and behavior of others will quickly become deviated from his own best interest by his entanglement in illusory dualities.

3Just as the embodied spirit soul loses external consciousness when his senses are overcome by the illusion of dreaming or the deathlike state of deep sleep, so a person experiencing material duality must encounter illusion and death.

4That which is expressed by material words or meditated upon by the material mind is not ultimate truth. What, therefore, is actually good or bad within this insubstantial world of duality, and how can the extent of such good and bad be measured?

5Although shadows, echoes and mirages are only illusory reflections of real things, such reflections do cause a semblance of meaningful or comprehensible perception. In the same way, although the identification of the conditioned soul with the material body, mind and ego is illusory, this identification generates fear within him even up to the moment of death.

6-7The Supersoul alone is the ultimate controller and creator of this world, and thus He alone is also the created. Similarly, the Soul of all existence Himself both maintains and is maintained, withdraws and is withdrawn. No other entity can be properly ascertained as separate from Him, the Supreme Soul, who nonetheless is distinct from everything and everyone else. The appearance of the threefold material nature, which is perceived within Him, has no actual basis. Rather, you should understand that this material nature, composed of the three modes, is simply the product of His illusory potency.

8One who has properly understood the process of becoming firmly fixed in theoretical and realized knowledge, as described herein by Me, does not indulge in material criticism or praise. Like the sun, he wanders freely throughout this world.

9By direct perception, logical deduction, scriptural testimony and personal realization, one should know that this world has a beginning and an end and so is not the ultimate reality. Thus one should live in this world without attachment.

10Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, it is not possible for this material existence to be the experience of either the soul, who is the seer, or of the body, which is the seen object. On the one hand, the spirit soul is innately endowed with perfect knowledge, and on the other hand, the material body is not a conscious, living entity. To whom, then, does this experience of material existence pertain?

11The spirit soul is inexhaustible, transcendental, pure, self-luminous and never covered by anything material. It is like fire. But the nonliving material body, like firewood, is dull and unaware. So in this world, who is it that actually undergoes the experience of material life?

12The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: As long as the foolish spirit soul remains attracted to the material body, senses and vital force, his material existence continues to flourish, although it is ultimately meaningless.

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13Actually, the living entity is transcendental to material existence. But because of his mentality of lording it over material nature, his material existential condition does not cease, and, just as in a dream, he is affected by all sorts of disadvantages.

14Although while dreaming a person experiences many undesirable things, upon awakening he is no longer confused by the dream experiences.

15Lamentation, elation, fear, anger, greed, confusion and hankering, as well as birth and death, are experiences of the false ego and not of the pure soul.

16The living entity who falsely identifies with his body, senses, life air and mind, and who dwells within these coverings, assumes the form of his own materially conditioned qualities and work. He is designated variously in relation to the total material energy, and thus, under the strict control of supreme time, he is forced to run here and there within material existence.

17Although the false ego has no factual basis, it is perceived in many forms as the functions of the mind, speech, life air and bodily faculties. But with the sword of transcendental knowledge, sharpened by worship of a bona fide spiritual master, a sober sage will cut off this false identification and live in this world free from all material attachment.

18Real spiritual knowledge is based on the discrimination of spirit from matter, and it is cultivated by scriptural evidence, austerity, direct perception, reception of the Purāṇas' historical narrations, and logical inference. The Absolute Truth, which alone was present before the creation of the universe and which alone will remain after its destruction, is also the time factor and the ultimate cause. Even in the middle stage of this creation's existence, the Absolute Truth alone is the actual reality.

19Gold alone is present before its manufacture into gold products, the gold alone remains after the products' destruction, and the gold alone is the essential reality while it is being utilized under various designations. Similarly, I alone exist before the creation of this universe, after its destruction and during its maintenance.

20The material mind manifests in three phases of consciousness: wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep, which are products of the three modes of nature. The mind further appears in three different roles: the perceiver, the perceived and the regulator of perception. Thus the mind is manifested variously throughout these threefold designations. But it is the fourth factor, existing separately from all this, that alone constitutes the Absolute Truth.

21That which did not exist in the past and will not exist in the future also has no existence of its own for the period of its duration, but is only a superficial designation. In My opinion, whatever is created and revealed by something else is ultimately only that other thing.

22Although thus not existing in reality, this manifestation of transformations created from the mode of passion appears real because the self-manifested, self-luminous Absolute Truth exhibits Himself in the form of the material variety of the senses, the sense objects, the mind and the elements of physical nature.

23Thus clearly understanding by discriminating logic the unique position of the Absolute Truth, one should expertly refute one's misidentification with matter and cut to pieces all doubts about the identity of the self. Becoming satisfied in the soul's natural ecstasy, one should desist from all lusty engagements of the material senses.

24The material body made of earth is not the true self; nor are the senses, their presiding demigods or the air of life; nor is the external air, water or fire or one's mind. All these are simply matter. Similarly, neither one's intelligence, material consciousness nor ego, nor the

elements of ether or earth, nor the objects of sense perception, nor even the primeval state of material equilibrium can be considered the actual identity of the soul.

25 For one who has properly realized My personal identity as the Supreme Godhead, what credit is there if his senses mere products of the material modes are perfectly concentrated in meditation? And on the other hand, what blame is incurred if his senses happen to become agitated? Indeed, what does it mean to the sun if the clouds come and go?

26 The sky may display the various qualities of the air, fire, water and earth that pass through it, as well as such qualities as heat and cold, which continually come and go with the seasons. Yet the sky is never entangled with any of these qualities. Similarly, the Supreme Absolute Truth is never entangled with the contaminations of goodness, passion and ignorance, which cause the material transformations of the false ego.

27 Nevertheless, until by firmly practicing devotional service to Me one has completely eliminated from his mind all contamination of material passion, one must very carefully avoid associating with the material modes, which are produced by My illusory energy.

28 Just as an improperly treated disease recurs and gives repeated distress to the patient, the mind that is not completely purified of its perverted tendencies will remain attached to material things and repeatedly torment the imperfect yogī.

29 Sometimes the progress of imperfect transcendentalists is checked by attachment to family members, disciples or others, who are sent by envious demigods for that purpose. But on the strength of their accumulated advancement, such imperfect transcendentalists will resume their practice of yoga in the next life. They will never again be trapped in the network of fruitive work.

30 An ordinary living entity performs material work and is transformed by the reaction to such work. Thus he is driven by various desires to continue working fruitively up to the very moment of his death. A wise person, however, having experienced his own constitutional bliss, gives up all material desires and does not engage in fruitive work.

31 The wise man, whose consciousness is fixed in the self, does not even notice his own bodily activities. While standing, sitting, walking, lying down, urinating, eating or performing other bodily functions, he understands that the body is acting according to its own nature.

32 Although a self-realized soul may sometimes see an impure object or activity, he does not accept it as real. By logically understanding impure sense objects to be based on illusory material duality, the intelligent person sees them to be contrary to and distinct from reality, in the same way that a man awakening from sleep views his fading dream.

33 Material nescience, which expands into many varieties by the activities of the modes of nature, is wrongly accepted by the conditioned soul to be identical with the self. But through the cultivation of spiritual knowledge, My dear Uddhava, this same nescience fades away at the time of liberation. The eternal self, on the other hand, is never assumed and never abandoned.

34 When the sun rises it destroys the darkness covering men's eyes, but it does not create the objects they then see before them, which in fact were existing all along. Similarly, potent and factual realization of Me will destroy the darkness covering a person's true consciousness.

35 The Supreme Lord is self-luminous, unborn and immeasurable. He is pure transcendental consciousness and perceives everything. One without a second, He is realized only after ordinary words cease. By Him the power of speech and the life airs are set into motion.

36 Whatever apparent duality is perceived in the self is simply the confusion of the mind. Indeed, such supposed duality has no basis to rest upon apart from one's own soul.

37 The duality of the five material elements is perceived only in terms of names and forms. Those who say this duality is real are pseudoscholars vainly proposing fanciful theories without basis in fact.

38 The physical body of the endeavoring yogī who is not yet mature in his practice may sometimes be overcome by various disturbances. Therefore the following process is recommended.

39 Some of these obstructions may be counteracted by yogic meditation or by sitting postures, practiced together with concentration on controlled breathing, and others may be counteracted by special austerities, mantras or medicinal herbs.

40 These inauspicious disturbances can be gradually removed by constant remembrance of Me, by congregational hearing and chanting of My holy names, or by following in the footsteps of the great masters of yoga.

41 By various methods, some yogīs free the body from disease and old age and keep it perpetually youthful. Thus they engage in yoga for the purpose of achieving material mystic perfections.

42 This mystic bodily perfection is not valued very highly by those expert in transcendental knowledge. Indeed, they consider endeavor for such perfection useless, since the soul, like a tree, is permanent, but the body, like a tree's fruit, is subject to destruction.

43 Although the physical body may be improved by various processes of yoga, an intelligent person who has dedicated his life to Me does not place his faith in the prospect of perfecting his physical body through yoga, and in fact he gives up such procedures.

44 The yogī who has taken shelter of Me remains free from hankering because he experiences the happiness of the soul within. Thus while executing this process of yoga, he is never defeated by obstacles.

SB 11.29: Bhakti-yoga

1 Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Acyuta, I fear that the method of yoga described by You is very difficult for one who cannot control his mind. Therefore please explain to me in simple terms how someone can more easily execute it.

2 O lotus-eyed Lord, generally those yogīs who try to steady the mind experience frustration because of their inability to perfect the state of trance. Thus they weary in their attempt to bring the mind under control.

3 Therefore, O lotus-eyed Lord of the universe, swanlike men happily take shelter of Your lotus feet, the source of all transcendental ecstasy. But those who take pride in their accomplishments in yoga and karma fail to take shelter of You and are defeated by Your illusory energy.

4 My dear infallible Lord, it is not very astonishing that You intimately approach Your servants who have taken exclusive shelter of You. After all, during Your appearance as Lord Rāmacandra, even while great demigods like Brahmā were vying to place the effulgent tips of their helmets upon the cushion where Your lotus feet rested, You displayed special affection for monkeys such as Hanumān because they had taken exclusive shelter of You.

5Who, then, could dare reject You, the very Soul, the most dear object of worship, and the Supreme Lord of allYou who give all possible perfections to the devotees who take shelter of You? Who could be so ungrateful, knowing the benefits You bestow? Who would reject You and accept something for the sake of material enjoyment, which simply leads to forgetfulness of You? And what lack is there for us who are engaged in the service of the dust of Your lotus feet?

6O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You, even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahmā, for You appear in two featuresexternally as the ācārya and internally as the Supersoulto deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You.

7Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus questioned by the most affectionate Uddhava, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller of all controllers, who takes the entire universe as His plaything and assumes the three forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, began to reply, lovingly displaying His all-attractive smile.

8The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Yes, I shall describe to you the principles of devotion to Me, by executing which a mortal human being will conquer unconquerable death.

9Always remembering Me, one should perform all his duties for Me without becoming impetuous. With mind and intelligence offered to Me, one should fix his mind in attraction to My devotional service.

10One should take shelter of holy places where My saintly devotees reside, and one should be guided by the exemplary activities of My devotees, who appear among the demigods, demons and human beings.

11Either alone or in public gatherings, with singing, dancing and other exhibitions of royal opulence, one should arrange to celebrate those holy days, ceremonies and festivals set aside specially for My worship.

12With a pure heart one should see Me, the Supreme Soul within all beings and also within oneself, to be both unblemished by anything material and also present everywhere, both externally and internally, just like the omnipresent sky.

13-14O brilliant Uddhava, one who thus views all living entities with the idea that I am present within each of them, and who by taking shelter of this divine knowledge offers due respect to everyone, is considered actually wise. Such a man sees equally the brāhmaṇa and the outcaste, the thief and the charitable promoter of brahminical culture, the sun and the tiny sparks of fire, the gentle and the cruel.

15For him who constantly meditates upon My presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed.

16Disregarding the ridicule of one's companions, one should give up the bodily conception and its accompanying embarrassment. One should offer obeisances before alleven the dogs, outcastes, cows and assesfalling flat upon the ground like a rod.

17Until one has fully developed the ability to see Me within all living beings, one must continue to worship Me by this process with the activities of his speech, mind and body.

18By such transcendental knowledge of the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, one is able to see the Absolute Truth everywhere. Freed thus from all doubts, one gives up fruitive activities.

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19Indeed, I consider this process using one's mind, words and bodily functions for realizing Me within all living beings to be the best possible method of spiritual enlightenment.

20My dear Uddhava, because I have personally established it, this process of devotional service unto Me is transcendental and free from any material motivation. Certainly a devotee never suffers even the slightest loss by adopting this process.

21O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion.

22This process is the supreme intelligence of the intelligent and the cleverness of the most clever, for by following it one can in this very life make use of the temporary and unreal to achieve Me, the eternal reality.

23Thus have I related to you both in brief and in detail a complete survey of the science of the Absolute Truth. Even for the demigods, this science is very difficult to comprehend.

24I have repeatedly spoken this knowledge to you with clear reasoning. Anyone who properly understands it will become free from all doubts and attain liberation.

25Anyone who fixes his attention on these clear answers to your questions will attain to the eternal, confidential goal of the Vedas the Supreme Absolute Truth.

26One who liberally disseminates this knowledge among My devotees is the bestower of the Absolute Truth, and to him I give My very own self.

27He who loudly recites this supreme knowledge, which is the most lucid and purifying, becomes purified day by day, for he reveals Me to others with the lamp of transcendental knowledge.

28Anyone who regularly listens to this knowledge with faith and attention, all the while engaging in My pure devotional service, will never become bound by the reactions of material work.

29My dear friend Uddhava, have you now completely understood this transcendental knowledge? Are the confusion and lamentation that arose in your mind now dispelled?

30You should not share this instruction with anyone who is hypocritical, atheistic or dishonest, or with anyone who will not listen faithfully, who is not a devotee, or who is simply not humble.

31This knowledge should be taught to one who is free from these bad qualities, who is dedicated to the welfare of the brāhmaṇas, and who is kindly disposed, saintly and pure. And if common workers and women are found to have devotion for the Supreme Lord, they are also to be accepted as qualified hearers.

32When an inquisitive person comes to understand this knowledge, he has nothing further to know. After all, one who has drunk the most palatable nectar cannot remain thirsty.

33Through analytic knowledge, ritualistic work, mystic yoga, mundane business and political rule, people seek to advance in religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But because you are My devotee, whatever men can accomplish in these multifarious ways you will very easily find within Me.

34A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service unto Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences.

35Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing these words spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa, and having thus been shown the entire path of yoga, Uddhava folded his hands to offer obeisances. But his throat choked up with love and his eyes overflowed with tears; so he could say nothing.

36Steadying his mind, which had become overwhelmed with love, Uddhava felt extremely grateful to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the greatest hero of the Yadu dynasty. My dear King Parīkṣit, Uddhava bowed down to touch the Lord's lotus feet with his head and then spoke with folded hands.

37Śrī Uddhava said: O unborn, primeval Lord, although I had fallen into the great darkness of illusion, my ignorance has now been dispelled by Your merciful association. Indeed, how can cold, darkness and fear exert their power over one who has approached the brilliant sun?

38In return for my insignificant surrender, You have mercifully bestowed upon me, Your servant, the torchlight of transcendental knowledge. Therefore, what devotee of Yours who has any gratitude could ever give up Your lotus feet and take shelter of another master?

39The firmly binding rope of my affection for the families of the Dāsārhas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Sātvatasa rope You originally cast over me by Your illusory energy for the purpose of developing Your creation is now cut off by the weapon of transcendental knowledge of the self.

40Obeisances unto You, O greatest of yogīs. Please instruct me, who am surrendered unto You, how I may have undeviating attachment to Your lotus feet.

41-44The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, take My order and go to My āśrama called Badarikā. Purify yourself by both touching and also bathing in the holy waters there, which have emanated from My lotus feet. Rid yourself of all sinful reactions with the sight of the sacred Alakanandā River. Dress yourself in bark and eat whatever is naturally available in the forest. Thus you should remain content and free from desire, tolerant of all dualities, good-natured, self-controlled, peaceful and endowed with transcendental knowledge and realization. With fixed attention, meditate constantly upon these instructions I have imparted to you and assimilate their essence. Fix your words and thoughts upon Me, and always endeavor to increase your realization of My transcendental qualities. In this way you will cross beyond the destinations of the three modes of nature and finally come back to Me.

45Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose intelligence destroys all the suffering of material life, Śrī Uddhava circumambulated the Lord and then fell down, placing his head upon the Lord's feet. Although Uddhava was free from the influence of all material dualities, his heart was breaking, and at this time of departure he drenched the Lord's lotus feet with his tears.

46Greatly fearing separation from Him for whom he felt such indestructible affection, Uddhava was distraught, and he could not give up the Lord's company. Finally, feeling great pain, he bowed down to the Lord again and again, placed the slippers of his master upon his head, and departed.

47Thereupon, placing the Lord deeply within his heart, the great devotee Uddhava went to Badarikāśrama. By engaging there in austerities, he attained to the Lord's personal abode, which had been described to him by the only friend of the universe, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

48Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose lotus feet are served by all great yoga masters, spoke to His devotee this nectarean knowledge, which comprises the entire ocean of spiritual bliss. Anyone within this universe who receives this narration with great faith is assured of liberation.

49I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original and greatest of all beings, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the author of the Vedas, and just to destroy His devotees' fear of material existence, like a bee He has collected this nectarean essence of all knowledge and self-realization. Thus He has awarded to His many devotees this nectar from the ocean of bliss, and by His mercy they have drunk it.

SB 11.30: The Disappearance of the Yadu Dynasty

1King Parīkṣit said: After the great devotee Uddhava left for the forest, what did the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the protector of all living beings, do in the city of Dvārakā?

2After His own dynasty met destruction from the curse of the brāhmaṇas, how could the best of the Yadus give up His body, the dearest object of all eyes?

3Once their eyes were fixed upon His transcendental form, women were unable to withdraw them, and once that form had entered the ears of the sages and become fixed in their hearts, it would never depart. What to speak of acquiring fame, the great poets who described the beauty of the Lord's form would have their words invested with transcendently pleasing attraction. And by seeing that form on Arjuna's chariot, all the warriors on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained the liberation of gaining a spiritual body similar to the Lord's.

4Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having observed many disturbing signs in the sky, on the earth and in outer space, Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed the Yadus assembled in the Sudharmā council hall as follows.

5The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O leaders of the Yadu dynasty, please note all these terrible omens that have appeared in Dvārakā just like the flags of death. We should not remain here a moment longer.

6The women, children and old men should leave this city and go to Śaṅkhoddhāra. We shall go to Prabhāsa-kṣetra, where the river Sarasvatī flows toward the west.

7There we should bathe for purification, fast, and fix our minds in meditation. We should then worship the demigods by bathing their images, anointing them with sandalwood pulp, and presenting them various offerings.

8After performing the expiatory rituals with the help of greatly fortunate brāhmaṇas, we will worship those brāhmaṇas by offering them cows, land, gold, clothing, elephants, horses, chariots and dwelling places.

9This is indeed the appropriate process for counteracting our imminent adversity, and it is sure to bring about the highest good fortune. Such worship of the demigods, brāhmaṇas and cows can earn the highest birth for all living entities.

10Having heard these words from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Madhu, the elders of the Yadu dynasty gave their assent, saying, "So be it." After crossing over the ocean in boats, they proceeded on chariots to Prabhāsa.

11There, with great devotion, the Yādavas performed the religious ceremonies according to the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, their personal Lord. They also performed

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various other auspicious rituals.

12Then, their intelligence covered by Providence, they liberally indulged in drinking the sweet maireya beverage, which can completely intoxicate the mind.

13The heroes of the Yadu dynasty became intoxicated from their extravagant drinking and began to feel arrogant. When they were thus bewildered by the personal potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa, a terrible quarrel arose among them.

14Infuriated, they seized their bows and arrows, swords, bhallas, clubs, lances and spears and attacked one another on the shore of the ocean.

15Riding on elephants and chariots with flags flying, and also on donkeys, camels, bulls, buffalos, mules and even human beings, the extremely enraged warriors came together and violently attacked one another with arrows, just as elephants in the forest attack one another with their tusks.

16Their mutual enmity aroused, Pradyumna fought fiercely against Sāmba, Akrūra against Kuntibhoja, Aniruddha against Sātyaki, Subhadra against Saṅgrāmajit, Sumitra against Suratha, and the two Gadas against each other.

17Others also, such as Niśaṭha, Ulmuka, Sahasrajit, Śatajit and Bhānu, confronted and killed one another, being blinded by intoxication and thus completely bewildered by Lord Mukunda Himself.

18Completely abandoning their natural friendship, the members of the various Yadu clan—the Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas, the Bhojas, Sātvatas, Madhus and Arbudas, the Māthuras, Śūrasenas, Visarjanas, Kukuras and Kuntis—all slaughtered one another.

19Thus bewildered, sons fought with fathers, brothers with brothers, nephews with paternal and maternal uncles, and grandsons with grandfathers. Friends fought with friends, and well-wishers with well-wishers. In this way intimate friends and relatives all killed one another.

20When all their bows had been broken and their arrows and other missiles spent, they seized the tall stalks of cane with their bare hands.

21As soon as they took these cane stalks in their fists, the stalks changed into iron rods as hard as thunderbolts. With these weapons the warriors began attacking one another again and again, and when Lord Kṛṣṇa tried to stop them they attacked Him as well.

22In their confused state, O King, they also mistook Lord Balarāma for an enemy. Weapons in hand, they ran toward Him with the intention of killing Him.

23O son of the Kurus, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then became very angry. Picking up cane stalks, they moved about within the battle and began to kill with these clubs.

24The violent anger of these warriors, who were overcome by the brāhmaṇas' curse and bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency, now led them to their annihilation, just as a fire that starts in a bamboo grove destroys the entire forest.

25When all the members of His own dynasty were thus destroyed, Lord Kṛṣṇa thought to Himself that at last the burden of the earth had been removed.

26Lord Balarāma then sat down on the shore of the ocean and fixed Himself in meditation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Merging Himself within Himself, He gave up this

mortal world.

27 Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, having seen the departure of Lord Rāma, sat down silently on the ground under a nearby pippala tree.

28-32 The Lord was exhibiting His brilliantly effulgent four-armed form, the radiance of which, just like a smokeless fire, dissipated the darkness in all directions. His complexion was the color of a dark blue cloud and His effulgence the color of molten gold, and His all-auspicious form bore the mark of Śrīvatsa. A beautiful smile graced His lotus face, locks of dark blue hair adorned His head, His lotus eyes were very attractive, and His shark-shaped earrings glittered. He wore a pair of silken garments, an ornamental belt, the sacred thread, bracelets and arm ornaments, along with a helmet, the Kaustubha jewel, necklaces, anklets and other royal emblems. Encircling His body were flower garlands and His personal weapons in their embodied forms. As He sat He held His left foot, with its lotus-red sole, upon His right thigh.

33 Just then a hunter named Jarā, who had approached the place, mistook the Lord's foot for a deer's face. Thinking he had found his prey, Jarā pierced the foot with his arrow, which he had fashioned from the remaining iron fragment of Sāmba's club.

34 Then, seeing that four-armed personality, the hunter became terrified of the offense he had committed, and he fell down, placing his head upon the feet of the enemy of the demons.

35 Jarā said: O Lord Madhusūdana, I am a most sinful person. I have committed this act out of ignorance. O purest Lord, O Uttamaḥśloka, please forgive this sinner.

36 O Lord Viṣṇu, the learned say that for any man, constant remembrance of You will destroy the darkness of ignorance. O master, I have wronged You!

37 Therefore, O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, please kill this sinful hunter of animals immediately so he may not again commit such offenses against saintly persons.

38 Neither Brahmā nor his sons, headed by Rudra, nor any of the great sages who are masters of the Vedic mantras can understand the function of Your mystic power. Because Your illusory potency has covered their sight, they remain ignorant of how Your mystic power works. Therefore, what can I, such a low-born person, possibly say?

39 The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Jarā, do not fear. Please get up. What has been done is actually My own desire. With My permission, go now to the abode of the pious, the spiritual world.

40 So instructed by the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, who assumes His transcendental body by His own will, the hunter circumambulated the Lord three times and bowed down to Him. Then the hunter departed in an airplane that had appeared just to carry him to the spiritual sky.

41 At that time Dāruka was searching for his master, Kṛṣṇa. As he neared the place where the Lord was sitting, he perceived the aroma of tulasī flowers in the breeze and went in its direction.

42 Upon seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa resting at the foot of a banyan tree, surrounded by His shining weapons, Dāruka could not control the affection he felt in his heart. His eyes filled with tears as he rushed down from the chariot and fell at the Lord's feet.

43 Dāruka said: Just as on a moonless night people are merged into darkness and cannot find their way, now that I have lost sight of Your lotus feet, my Lord, I have lost my vision and am

wandering blindly in darkness. I cannot tell my direction, nor can I find any peace.

44[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O foremost of kings, while the chariot driver was still speaking, before his very eyes the Lord's chariot rose up into the sky along with its horses and its flag, which was marked with the emblem of Garuḍa.

45All the divine weapons of Viṣṇu rose up and followed the chariot. The Lord, Janārdana, then spoke to His chariot driver, who was most astonished to see all this.

46O driver, go to Dvārakā and tell Our family members how their loved ones destroyed one another. Also tell them of the disappearance of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and of My present condition.

47You and your relatives should not remain in Dvārakā, the capital of the Yadus, because once I have abandoned that city it will be inundated by the ocean.

48You should all take your own families, together with My parents, and under Arjuna's protection go to Indraprastha.

49You, Dāruka, should be firmly situated in devotion to Me, remaining fixed in spiritual knowledge and unattached to material considerations. Understanding these pastimes to be a display of My illusory potency, you should remain peaceful.

50Thus ordered, Dāruka circumambulated the Lord and offered obeisances to Him again and again. He placed Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet upon his head and then with a sad heart went back to the city.

SB 11.31: The Disappearance of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then Lord Brahmā arrived at Prabhāsa along with Lord Śiva and his consort, the sages, the Prajāpatis and all the demigods, headed by Indra.

2-3The forefathers, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and great serpents also came, along with the Cāraṇas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Apsarās and relatives of Garuḍa, greatly eager to witness the departure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As they were coming, all these personalities variously chanted and glorified the birth and activities of Lord Śauri [Kṛṣṇa].

4O King, crowding the sky with their many airplanes, they showered down flowers with great devotion.

5Seeing before Him Brahmā, the grandfather of the universe, along with the other demigods, who are all His personal and powerful expansions, the Almighty Lord closed His lotus eyes, fixing His mind within Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

6Without employing the mystic āgneyī meditation to burn up His transcendental body, which is the all-attractive resting place of all the worlds and the object of all contemplation and meditation, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered into His own abode.

7As soon as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa left the earth, Truth, Religion, Faithfulness, Glory and Beauty immediately followed Him. Kettledrums resounded in the heavens and flowers showered from the sky.

8Most of the demigods and other higher beings led by Brahmā could not see Lord Kṛṣṇa as He was entering His own abode, since He did not reveal His movements. But some of them did catch sight of Him, and they were extremely amazed.

9Just as ordinary men cannot ascertain the path of a lightning bolt as it leaves a cloud, the demigods could not trace out the movements of Lord Kṛṣṇa as He returned to His abode.

10A few of the demigods, however notably Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva could ascertain how the Lord's mystic power was working, and thus they became astonished. All the demigods praised the Lord's mystic power and then returned to their own planets.

11My dear King, you should understand that the Supreme Lord's appearance and disappearance, which resemble those of embodied conditioned souls, are actually a show enacted by His illusory energy, just like the performance of an actor. After creating this universe He enters into it, plays within it for some time, and at last winds it up. Then the Lord remains situated in His own transcendental glory, having ceased from the functions of cosmic manifestation.

12Lord Kṛṣṇa brought the son of His guru back from the planet of the lord of death in the boy's selfsame body, and as the ultimate giver of protection He saved you also when you were burned by the brahmāstra of Aśvatthāmā. He conquered in battle even Lord Śiva, who deals death to the agents of death, and He sent the hunter Jarā directly to Vaikuṅṭha in his human body. How could such a personality be unable to protect His own Self?

13Although Lord Kṛṣṇa, being the possessor of infinite powers, is the only cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of innumerable living beings, He simply did not desire to keep His body in this world any longer. Thus He revealed the destination of those fixed in the self and demonstrated that this mortal world is of no intrinsic value.

14Anyone who regularly rises early in the morning and carefully chants with devotion the glories of Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa's transcendental disappearance and His return to His own abode will certainly achieve that same supreme destination.

15As soon as Dāruka reached Dvārakā, he threw himself at the feet of Vasudeva and Ugrasena and drenched their feet with his tears, lamenting the loss of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

16-17Dāruka delivered the account of the total destruction of the Vṛṣṇis, and upon hearing this, O Parīkṣit, the people became deeply distraught in their hearts and stunned with sorrow. Feeling the overwhelming pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa, they struck their own faces while hurrying to the place where their relatives lay dead.

18When Devakī, Rohiṇī and Vasudeva could not find their sons, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, they lost consciousness out of anguish.

19Tormented by separation from the Lord, His parents gave up their lives at that very spot. My dear Parīkṣit, the wives of the Yādavas then climbed onto the funeral pyres, embracing their dead husbands.

20The wives of Lord Balarāma also entered the fire and embraced His body, and Vasudeva's wives entered his fire and embraced his body. The daughters-in-law of Lord Hari entered the funeral fires of their respective husbands, headed by Pradyumna. And Rukmiṇī and the other wives of Lord Kṛṣṇa whose hearts were completely absorbed in Him entered His fire.

21Arjuna felt great distress over separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa, his dearest friend. But he consoled himself by remembering the transcendental words the Lord had sung to him.

22Arjuna then saw to it that the funeral rites were properly carried out for the dead, who had no remaining male family members. He executed the required ceremonies for each of the

Yadus, one after another.

23As soon as Dvārakā was abandoned by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ocean flooded it on all sides, O King, sparing only His palace.

24Lord Madhusūdana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is eternally present in Dvārakā. It is the most auspicious of all auspicious places, and merely remembering it destroys all contamination.

25Arjuna took the survivors of the Yadu dynasty—the women, children and old men to Indraprastha, where he installed Vajra as ruler of the Yadus.

26Hearing from Arjuna of the death of their friend, my dear King, your grandfathers established you as the maintainer of the dynasty and left to prepare for their departure from this world.

27A person who with faith engages in chanting the glories of these various pastimes and incarnations of Viṣṇu, the Lord of lords, will gain liberation from all sins.

28The all-auspicious exploits of the all-attractive incarnations of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and also the pastimes He performed as a child, are described in this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and in other scriptures. Anyone who clearly chants these descriptions of His pastimes will attain transcendental loving service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the goal of all perfect sages.

Canto 12: The Age of Deterioration

SB 12.1: The Degraded Dynasties of Kali-yuga

1-2Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The last king mentioned in our previous enumeration of the future rulers of the Māgadha dynasty was Puraṣjaya, who will take birth as the descendant of Bṛhadratha. Puraṣjaya's minister Śunaka will assassinate the king and install his own son, Pradyota, on the throne. The son of Pradyota will be Pālaka, his son will be Viśākhayūpa, and his son will be Rājaka.

3The son of Rājaka will be Nandivardhana, and thus in the Pradyotana dynasty there will be five kings, who will enjoy the earth for 138 years.

4Nandivardhana will have a son named Śīsunāga, and his son will be known as Kākavarṇa. The son of Kākavarṇa will be Kṣemadharmā, and the son of Kṣemadharmā will be Kṣetrajaṣa.

5The son of Kṣetrajaṣa will be Vidhisāra, and his son will be Ajātaśatru. Ajātaśatru will have a son named Darbhaka, and his son will be Ajaya.

6-8Ajaya will father a second Nandivardhana, whose son will be Mahānandi. O best of the Kurus, these ten kings of the Śīsunāga dynasty will rule the earth for a total of 360 years during the Age of Kali. My dear Parīkṣit, King Mahānandi will father a very powerful son in the womb of a sūdra woman. He will be known as Nanda and will be the master of millions of soldiers and fabulous wealth. He will wreak havoc among the kṣatriyas, and from that time onward virtually all kings will be irreligious sūdras.

9That lord of Mahāpadma, King Nanda, will rule over the entire earth just like a second Paraśurāma, and no one will challenge his authority.

10He will have eight sons, headed by Sumālya, who will control the earth as powerful kings for

one hundred years.

11A certain brāhmaṇa [Cāṇakya] will betray the trust of King Nanda and his eight sons and will destroy their dynasty. In their absence the Mauryas will rule the world as the Age of Kali continues.

12This brāhmaṇa will enthrone Candragupta, whose son will be named Vārisāra. The son of Vārisāra will be Aśokavardhana.

13Aśokavardhana will be followed by Suyaśā, whose son will be Saṅgata. His son will be Śāliśūka, Śāliśūka's son will be Somaśarmā, and Somaśarmā's son will be Śatadhanvā. His son will be known as Bṛhadratha.

14O best of the Kurus, these ten Maurya kings will rule the earth for 137 years of the Kali-yuga.

15-17My dear King Parīkṣit, Agnimitra will follow as king, and then Sujyeṣṭha. Sujyeṣṭha will be followed by Vasumitra, Bhadraka, and the son of Bhadraka, Pulinda. Then the son of Pulinda, named Ghoṣa, will rule, followed by Vajramitra, Bhāgavata and Devabhūti. In this way, O most eminent of the Kuru heroes, ten Śuṅga kings will rule over the earth for more than one hundred years. Then the earth will come under the subjugation of the kings of the Kāṇva dynasty, who will manifest very few good qualities.

18Vasudeva, an intelligent minister coming from the Kāṇva family, will kill the last of the Śuṅga kings, a lusty debauchee named Devabhūti, and assume rulership himself.

19The son of Vasudeva will be Bhūmitra, and his son will be Nārāyaṇa. These kings of the Kāṇva dynasty will rule the earth for 345 more years of the Kali-yuga.

20The last of the Kāṇvas, Suśarmā, will be murdered by his own servant, Balī, a low-class śūdra of the Andhra race. This most degraded Mahārāja Balī will have control over the earth for some time.

21-26The brother of Balī, named Kṛṣṇa, will become the next ruler of the earth. His son will be Śāntakarma, and his son will be Paurṇamāsa. The son of Paurṇamāsa will be Lambodara, who will father Mahārāja Cibilaka. From Cibilaka will come Meghasvāti, whose son will be Aṭamāna. The son of Aṭamāna will be Anīṣṭakarmā. His son will be Hāleya, and his son will be Talaka. The son of Talaka will be Purīṣabhīru, and following him Sunandana will become king. Sunandana will be followed by Cakora and the eight Bahus, among whom Śivasvāti will be a great subduer of enemies. The son of Śivasvāti will be Gomatī. His son will be Purīmān, whose son will be Medaśirā. His son will be Śivaskanda, and his son will be Yajṣaśrī. The son of Yajṣaśrī will be Vijaya, who will have two sons, Candravijṣa and Lomadhi. These thirty kings will enjoy sovereignty over the earth for a total of 456 years, O favorite son of the Kurus.

27Then will follow seven kings of the Ābhīra race from the city of Avabhṛti, and then ten Gardabhīs. After them, sixteen kings of the Kaṅkas will rule and will be known for their excessive greed.

28Eight Yavanas will then take power, followed by fourteen Turuṣkas, ten Guruṇḍas and eleven kings of the Maula dynasty.

29-31These Ābhīras, Gardabhīs and Kaṅkas will enjoy the earth for 1,099 years, and the Maulas will rule for 300 years. When all of them have died off there will appear in the city of Kilakilā a dynasty of kings consisting of Bhūtananda, Vaṅgiri, Śīsunandi, Śīsunandi's brother Yaśonandi,

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and Pravāraka. These kings of Kilakilā will hold sway for a total of 106 years.

32-33The Kilakilās will be followed by their thirteen sons, the Bāhlikas, and after them King Puṣpamitra, his son Durmitra, seven Andhras, seven Kauśalas and also kings of the Vidūra and Niṣadha provinces will separately rule in different parts of the world.

34There will then appear a king of the Māgadhās named Viśvasphūrji, who will be like another Puraṣjaya. He will turn all the civilized classes into low-class, uncivilized men in the same category as the Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas.

35Foolish King Viśvasphūrji will maintain all the citizens in ungodliness and will use his power to completely disrupt the kṣatriya order. From his capital of Padmavatī he will rule that part of the earth extending from the source of the Gaṅgā to Prayāga.

36At that time the brāhmaṇas of such provinces as Śaurāṣṭra, Avantī, Ābhīra, Śūra, Arbuda and Mālava will forget all their regulative principles, and the members of the royal order in these places will become no better than śūdras.

37The land along the Sindhu River, as well as the districts of Candrabhāgā, Kauntī and Kāśmīra, will be ruled by śūdras, fallen brāhmaṇas and meat-eaters. Having given up the path of Vedic civilization, they will have lost all spiritual strength.

38There will be many such uncivilized kings ruling at the same time, O King Parīkṣit, and they will all be uncharitable, possessed of fierce tempers, and great devotees of irreligion and falsity.

39-40These barbarians in the guise of kings will devour the citizenry, murdering innocent women, children, cows and brāhmaṇas and coveting the wives and property of other men. They will be erratic in their moods, have little strength of character and be very short-lived. Indeed, not purified by any Vedic rituals and lacking in the practice of regulative principles, they will be completely covered by the modes of passion and ignorance.

41The citizens governed by these low-class kings will imitate the character, behavior and speech of their rulers. Harassed by their leaders and by each other, they will all suffer ruination.

SB 12.2: The Symptoms of Kali-yuga

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then, O King, religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, tolerance, mercy, duration of life, physical strength and memory will all diminish day by day because of the powerful influence of the Age of Kali.

2In Kali-yuga, wealth alone will be considered the sign of a man's good birth, proper behavior and fine qualities. And law and justice will be applied only on the basis of one's power.

3Men and women will live together merely because of superficial attraction, and success in business will depend on deceit. Womanliness and manliness will be judged according to one's expertise in sex, and a man will be known as a brāhmaṇa just by his wearing a thread.

4A person's spiritual position will be ascertained merely according to external symbols, and on that same basis people will change from one spiritual order to the next. A person's propriety will be seriously questioned if he does not earn a good living. And one who is very clever at juggling words will be considered a learned scholar.

5A person will be judged unholy if he does not have money, and hypocrisy will be accepted as virtue. Marriage will be arranged simply by verbal agreement, and a person will think he is fit

to appear in public if he has merely taken a bath.

6A sacred place will be taken to consist of no more than a reservoir of water located at a distance, and beauty will be thought to depend on one's hairstyle. Filling the belly will become the goal of life, and one who is audacious will be accepted as truthful. He who can maintain a family will be regarded as an expert man, and the principles of religion will be observed only for the sake of reputation.

7As the earth thus becomes crowded with a corrupt population, whoever among any of the social classes shows himself to be the strongest will gain political power.

8Losing their wives and properties to such avaricious and merciless rulers, who will behave no better than ordinary thieves, the citizens will flee to the mountains and forests.

9Harassed by famine and excessive taxes, people will resort to eating leaves, roots, flesh, wild honey, fruits, flowers and seeds. Struck by drought, they will become completely ruined.

10The citizens will suffer greatly from cold, wind, heat, rain and snow. They will be further tormented by quarrels, hunger, thirst, disease and severe anxiety.

11The maximum duration of life for human beings in Kali-yuga will become fifty years.

12-16By the time the Age of Kali ends, the bodies of all creatures will be greatly reduced in size, and the religious principles of followers of varṇāśrama will be ruined. The path of the Vedas will be completely forgotten in human society, and so-called religion will be mostly atheistic. The kings will mostly be thieves, the occupations of men will be stealing, lying and needless violence, and all the social classes will be reduced to the lowest level of śūdras. Cows will be like goats, spiritual hermitages will be no different from mundane houses, and family ties will extend no further than the immediate bonds of marriage. Most plants and herbs will be tiny, and all trees will appear like dwarf śamī trees. Clouds will be full of lightning, homes will be devoid of piety, and all human beings will have become like asses. At that time, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear on the earth. Acting with the power of pure spiritual goodness, He will rescue eternal religion.

17Lord Viṣṇu the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the spiritual master of all moving and nonmoving living beings, and the Supreme Soul of all takes birth to protect the principles of religion and to relieve His saintly devotees from the reactions of material work.

18Lord Kalki will appear in the home of the most eminent brāhmaṇa of Śambhala village, the great soul Viṣṇuyaśā.

19-20Lord Kalki, the Lord of the universe, will mount His swift horse Devadatta and, sword in hand, travel over the earth exhibiting His eight mystic opulences and eight special qualities of Godhead. Displaying His unequalled effulgence and riding with great speed, He will kill by the millions those thieves who have dared dress as kings.

21After all the impostor kings have been killed, the residents of the cities and towns will feel the breezes carrying the most sacred fragrance of the sandalwood paste and other decorations of Lord Vāsudeva, and their minds will thereby become transcendently pure.

22When Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears in their hearts in His transcendental form of goodness, the remaining citizens will abundantly repopulate the earth.

23When the Supreme Lord has appeared on earth as Kalki, the maintainer of religion, Satya-yuga will begin, and human society will bring forth progeny in the mode of goodness.

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24When the moon, the sun and Bṛhaspatī are together in the constellation Karkaṭa, and all three enter simultaneously into the lunar mansion Puṣyāat that exact moment the age of Satya, or Kṛta, will begin.

25Thus I have described all the kingspast, present and futurewho belong to the dynasties of the sun and the moon.

26From your birth up to the coronation of King Nanda, 1,150 years will pass.

27-28Of the seven stars forming the constellation of the seven sages, Pulaha and Kratu are the first to rise in the night sky. If a line running north and south were drawn through their midpoint, whichever of the lunar mansions this line passes through is said to be the ruling asterism of the constellation for that time. The Seven Sages will remain connected with that particular lunar mansion for one hundred human years. Currently, during your lifetime, they are situated in the nakṣatra called Maghā.

29The Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, is brilliant like the sun and is known as Kṛṣṇa. When He returned to the spiritual sky, Kali entered this world, and people then began to take pleasure in sinful activities.

30As long as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, touched the earth with His lotus feet, Kali was powerless to subdue this planet.

31When the constellation of the seven sages is passing through the lunar mansion Maghā, the Age of Kali begins. It comprises twelve hundred years of the demigods.

32When the great sages of the Saptarṣi constellation pass from Maghā to Pūrvāsāḍhā, Kali will have his full strength, beginning from King Nanda and his dynasty.

33Those who scientifically understand the past declare that on the very day that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa departed for the spiritual world, the influence of the Age of Kali began.

34After the one thousand celestial years of Kali-yuga, the Satya-yuga will manifest again. At that time the minds of all men will become self-effulgent.

35Thus I have described the royal dynasty of Manu, as it is known on this earth. One can similarly study the history of the vaiśyas, śūdras and brāhmaṇas living in the various ages.

36These personalities, who were great souls, are now known only by their names. They exist only in accounts from the past, and only their fame remains on the earth.

37Devāpi, the brother of Mahārāja Śāntanu, and Maru, the descendant of Ikṣvāku, both possess great mystic strength and are living even now in the village of Kalāpa.

38At the end of the Age of Kali, these two kings, having received instruction directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, will return to human society and reestablish the eternal religion of man, characterized by the divisions of varṇa and āśrama, just as it was before.

39The cycle of four agesSatya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kalicontinues perpetually among living beings on this earth, repeating the same general sequence of events.

40My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings I have described, as well as all other human beings, come to this earth and stake their claims, but ultimately they all must give up this world and meet their destruction.

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41Even though a person's body may now have the designation "king," in the end its name will be "worms," "stool" or "ashes." What can a person who injures other living beings for the sake of his body know about his own self-interest, since his activities are simply leading him to hell?

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

43Although the foolish accept the body made of earth, water and fire as "me" and this earth as "mine," in every case they have ultimately abandoned both their body and the earth and passed away into oblivion.

44My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings who tried to enjoy the earth by their strength were reduced by the force of time to nothing more than historical accounts.

SB 12.3: The Bhūmi-gītā

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Seeing the kings of this earth busy trying to conquer her, the earth herself laughed. She said: "Just see how these kings, who are actually playthings in the hands of death, are desiring to conquer me.

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

3-4"Kings and politicians imagine: 'First I will conquer my senses and mind; then I will subdue my chief ministers and rid myself of the thorn-pricks of my advisors, citizens, friends and relatives, as well as the keepers of my elephants. In this way I will gradually conquer the entire earth.' Because the hearts of these leaders are bound by great expectations, they fail to see death waiting nearby.

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

6O best of the Kurus, the earth continued as follows: "Although in the past great men and their descendants have left me, departing from this world in the same helpless way they came into it, even today foolish men are trying to conquer me.

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

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

9-13"Such kings as Pṛthu, Purūravā, Gādhi, Nahuṣa, Bharata, Kārtavīrya Arjuna, Māndhātā, Sagara, Rāma, Khaṭvāṅga, Dhundhuhā, Raghu, Tṛṇabindu, Yayāti, Śaryāti, Śantanu, Gaya, Bhagīratha, Kuvalayāśva, Kakutsha, Naiṣadha, Nṛga, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Vṛtra, Rāvaṇa, who made the whole world lament, Namuci, Śambara, Bhauma, Hiraṇyākṣa and Tāraka, as well as many other demons and kings who possessed great powers of control over others, were all full of knowledge, heroic, all-conquering and unconquerable. Nevertheless, O almighty Lord, although they lived their lives intensely trying to possess me, these kings were subject to the passage of time, which reduced them all to mere historical accounts. None of them could permanently establish their rule."

14Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O mighty Parīkṣit, I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge.

15The person who desires pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa should hear the narrations of Lord Uttamaḥśloka's glorious qualities, the constant chanting of which destroys everything inauspicious. The devotee should engage in such listening in regular daily assemblies and should also continue his hearing throughout the day.

16King Parīkṣit said: My lord, how can persons living in the Age of Kali rid themselves of the cumulative contamination of this age? O great sage, please explain this to me.

17Please explain the different ages of universal history, the special qualities of each age, the duration of cosmic maintenance and destruction, and the movement of time, which is the direct representation of the Supreme Soul, the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu.

18Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, in the beginning, during Satya-yuga, the age of truth, religion is present with all four of its legs intact and is carefully maintained by the people of that age. These four legs of powerful religion are truthfulness, mercy, austerity and charity.

19The people of Satya-yuga are for the most part self-satisfied, merciful, friendly to all, peaceful, sober and tolerant. They take their pleasure from within, see all things equally and always endeavor diligently for spiritual perfection.

20In Tretā-yuga each leg of religion is gradually reduced by one quarter by the influence of the four pillars of irreligion—lying, violence, dissatisfaction and quarrel.

21In the Tretā age people are devoted to ritual performances and severe austerities. They are not excessively violent or very lusty after sensual pleasure. Their interest lies primarily in religiosity, economic development and regulated sense gratification, and they achieve prosperity by following the prescriptions of the three Vedas. Although in this age society evolves into four separate classes, O King, most people are brāhmaṇas.

22In Dvāpara-yuga the religious qualities of austerity, truth, mercy and charity are reduced to one half by their irreligious counterparts—dissatisfaction, untruth, violence and enmity.

23In the Dvāpara age people are interested in glory and are very noble. They devote themselves to the study of the Vedas, possess great opulence, support large families and enjoy life with vigor. Of the four classes, the kṣatriyas and brāhmaṇas are most numerous.

24In the Age of Kali only one fourth of the religious principles remains. That last remnant will continuously be decreased by the ever-increasing principles of irreligion and will finally be destroyed.

25In the Kali age people tend to be greedy, ill-behaved and merciless, and they fight one another without good reason. Unfortunate and obsessed with material desires, the people of Kali-yuga are almost all śūdras and barbarians.

26The material modes—goodness, passion and ignorance—whose permutations are observed within a person's mind, are set into motion by the power of time.

27When the mind, intelligence and senses are solidly fixed in the mode of goodness, that time should be understood as Satya-yuga, the age of truth. People then take pleasure in knowledge

and austerity.

28O most intelligent one, when the conditioned souls are devoted to their duties but have ulterior motives and seek personal prestige, you should understand such a situation to be the age of Tretā, in which the functions of passion are prominent.

29When greed, dissatisfaction, false pride, hypocrisy and envy become prominent, along with attraction for selfish activities, such a time is the age of Dvāpara, dominated by the mixed modes of passion and ignorance.

30When there is a predominance of cheating, lying, sloth, sleepiness, violence, depression, lamentation, bewilderment, fear and poverty, that age is Kali, the age of the mode of ignorance.

31Because of the bad qualities of the Age of Kali, human beings will become shortsighted, unfortunate, gluttonous, lustful and poverty-stricken. The women, becoming unchaste, will freely wander from one man to the next.

32Cities will be dominated by thieves, the Vedas will be contaminated by speculative interpretations of atheists, political leaders will virtually consume the citizens, and the so-called priests and intellectuals will be devotees of their bellies and genitals.

33The brahmacārīs will fail to execute their vows and become generally unclean, the householders will become beggars, the vānaprasthas will live in the villages, and the sannyāsīs will become greedy for wealth.

34Women will become much smaller in size, and they will eat too much, have more children than they can properly take care of, and lose all shyness. They will always speak harshly and will exhibit qualities of thievery, deceit and unrestrained audacity.

35Businessmen will engage in petty commerce and earn their money by cheating. Even when there is no emergency, people will consider any degraded occupation quite acceptable.

36Servants will abandon a master who has lost his wealth, even if that master is a saintly person of exemplary character. Masters will abandon an incapacitated servant, even if that servant has been in the family for generations. Cows will be abandoned or killed when they stop giving milk.

37In Kali-yuga men will be wretched and controlled by women. They will reject their fathers, brothers, other relatives and friends and will instead associate with the sisters and brothers of their wives. Thus their conception of friendship will be based exclusively on sexual ties.

38Uncultured men will accept charity on behalf of the Lord and will earn their livelihood by making a show of austerity and wearing a mendicant's dress. Those who know nothing about religion will mount a high seat and presume to speak on religious principles.

39-40In the Age of Kali, people's minds will always be agitated. They will become emaciated by famine and taxation, my dear King, and will always be disturbed by fear of drought. They will lack adequate clothing, food and drink, will be unable to properly rest, have sex or bathe themselves, and will have no ornaments to decorate their bodies. In fact, the people of Kali-yuga will gradually come to appear like ghostly, haunted creatures.

41In Kali-yuga men will develop hatred for each other even over a few coins. Giving up all friendly relations, they will be ready to lose their own lives and kill even their own relatives.

42Men will no longer protect their elderly parents, their children or their respectable wives. Thoroughly degraded, they will care only to satisfy their own bellies and genitals.

43O King, in the Age of Kali people's intelligence will be diverted by atheism, and they will almost never offer sacrifice to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme spiritual master of the universe. Although the great personalities who control the three worlds all bow down to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, the petty and miserable human beings of this age will not do so.

44Terrified, about to die, a man collapses on his bed. Although his voice is faltering and he is hardly conscious of what he is saying, if he utters the holy name of the Supreme Lord he can be freed from the reaction of his fruitive work and achieve the supreme destination. But still people in the Age of Kali will not worship the Supreme Lord.

45In the Kali-yuga, objects, places and even individual personalities are all polluted. The almighty Personality of Godhead, however, can remove all such contamination from the life of one who fixes the Lord within his mind.

46If a person hears about, glorifies, meditates upon, worships or simply offers great respect to the Supreme Lord, who is situated within the heart, the Lord will remove from his mind the contamination accumulated during many thousands of lifetimes.

47Just as fire applied to gold removes any discoloration caused by traces of other metals, Lord Viṣṇu within the heart purifies the minds of the yogīs.

48By one's engaging in the processes of demigod worship, austerities, breath control, compassion, bathing in holy places, strict vows, charity and chanting of various mantras, one's mind cannot attain the same absolute purification as that achieved when the unlimited Personality of Godhead appears within one's heart.

49Therefore, O King, endeavor with all your might to fix the Supreme Lord Keśava within your heart. Maintain this concentration upon the Lord, and at the time of death you will certainly attain the supreme destination.

50My dear King, the Personality of Godhead is the ultimate controller. He is the Supreme Soul and the supreme shelter of all beings. When meditated upon by those about to die, He reveals to them their own eternal spiritual identity.

51My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

52Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Viṣṇu, in Tretā-yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvāpara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

SB 12.4: The Four Categories of Universal Annihilation

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, I have already described to you the measurements of time, beginning from the smallest fraction measured by the movement of a single atom up to the total life span of Lord Brahmā. I have also discussed the measurement of the different millennia of universal history. Now hear about the time of Brahmā's day and the process of annihilation.

2One thousand cycles of four ages constitute a single day of Brahmā, known as a kalpa. In that

period, O King, fourteen Manus come and go.

3After one day of Brahmā, annihilation occurs during his night, which is of the same duration. At that time all the three planetary systems are subject to destruction.

4This is called the naimittika, or occasional, annihilation, during which the original creator, Lord Nārāyaṇa, lies down upon the bed of Ananta Śeṣa and absorbs the entire universe within Himself while Lord Brahmā sleeps.

5When the two halves of the lifetime of Lord Brahmā, the most elevated created being, are complete, the seven basic elements of creation are annihilated.

6O King, upon the annihilation of the material elements, the universal egg, comprising the elemental amalgamation of creation, is confronted with destruction.

7As annihilation approaches, O King, there will be no rain upon the earth for one hundred years. Drought will lead to famine, and the starving populace will literally consume one another. The inhabitants of the earth, bewildered by the force of time, will gradually be destroyed.

8The sun in its annihilating form will drink up with its terrible rays all the water of the ocean, of living bodies and of the earth itself. But the devastating sun will not give any rain in return.

9Next the great fire of annihilation will flare up from the mouth of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. Carried by the mighty force of the wind, this fire will burn throughout the universe, scorching the lifeless cosmic shell.

10Burned from all sides from above by the blazing sun and from below by the fire of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa the universal sphere will glow like a burning ball of cow dung.

11A great and terrible wind of destruction will begin to blow for more than one hundred years, and the sky, covered with dust, will turn gray.

12After that, O King, groups of multicolored clouds will gather, roaring terribly with thunder, and will pour down floods of rain for one hundred years.

13At that time, the shell of the universe will fill up with water, forming a single cosmic ocean.

14As the entire universe is flooded, the water will rob the earth of its unique quality of fragrance, and the element earth, deprived of its distinguishing quality, will be dissolved.

15-19The element fire then seizes the taste from the element water, which, deprived of its unique quality, taste, merges into fire. Air seizes the form inherent in fire, and then fire, deprived of form, merges into air. The element ether seizes the quality of air, namely touch, and that air enters into ether. Then, O King, false ego in ignorance seizes sound, the quality of ether, after which ether merges into false ego. False ego in the mode of passion takes hold of the senses, and false ego in the mode of goodness absorbs the demigods. Then the total mahat-tattva seizes false ego along with its various functions, and that mahat is seized by the three basic modes of nature—goodness, passion and ignorance. My dear King Parīkṣit, these modes are further overtaken by the original unmanifest form of nature, impelled by time. That unmanifest nature is not subject to the six kinds of transformation caused by the influence of time. Rather, it has no beginning and no end. It is the unmanifest, eternal and infallible cause of creation.

20-21In the unmanifest stage of material nature, called pradhāna, there is no expression of words, no mind and no manifestation of the subtle elements beginning from the mahat, nor are

there the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There is no life air or intelligence, nor any senses or demigods. There is no definite arrangement of planetary systems, nor are there present the different stages of consciousness—sleep, wakefulness and deep sleep. There is no ether, water, earth, air, fire or sun. The situation is just like that of complete sleep, or of voidness. Indeed, it is indescribable. Authorities in spiritual science explain, however, that since *pradhāna* is the original substance, it is the actual basis of material creation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

32 Although a cloud is a product of the sun and is also made visible by the sun, it nevertheless creates darkness for the viewing eye, which is another partial expansion of the sun. Similarly, material false ego, a particular product of the Absolute Truth made visible by the Absolute

Truth, obstructs the individual soul, another partial expansion of the Absolute Truth, from realizing the Absolute Truth.

33When the cloud originally produced from the sun is torn apart, the eye can see the actual form of the sun. Similarly, when the spirit soul destroys his material covering of false ego by inquiring into the transcendental science, he regains his original spiritual awareness.

34My dear Parīkṣit, when the illusory false ego that binds the soul has been cut off with the sword of discriminating knowledge and one has developed realization of Lord Acyuta, the Supreme Soul, this is called the ātyantika, or ultimate, annihilation of material existence.

35Experts in the subtle workings of nature, O subduer of the enemy, have declared that there are continuous processes of creation and annihilation that all created beings, beginning with Brahmā, constantly undergo.

36All material entities undergo transformation and are constantly and swiftly eroded by the mighty currents of time. The various stages of existence that material things exhibit are the perpetual causes of their generation and annihilation.

37These stages of existence created by beginningless and endless time, the impersonal representative of the Supreme Lord, are not visible, just as the infinitesimal momentary changes of position of the planets in the sky cannot be directly seen.

38In this way the progress of time is described in terms of the four kinds of annihilation—continuous, occasional, elemental and final.

39O best of the Kurus, I have related to you these narrations of the pastimes of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the creator of this world and the ultimate reservoir of all existence, presenting them to you only in brief summary. Even Lord Brahmā himself would be incapable of describing them entirely.

40For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes.

41Long ago this essential anthology of all the Purāṇas was spoken by the infallible Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi to Nārada, who then repeated it to Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa.

42My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, that great personality Śrīla Vyāsadeva taught me this same scripture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is equal in stature to the four Vedas.

43O best of the Kurus, the same Sūta Gosvāmī who is sitting before us will speak this Bhāgavatam to the sages assembled in the great sacrifice at Naimiṣāraṇya. This he will do when questioned by the members of the assembly, headed by Śaunaka.

SB 12.5: Śukadeva Gosvāmī's Final Instructions to Mahārāja Parīkṣit

1Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: This Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam has elaborately described in various narrations the Supreme Soul of all that bethe Personality of Godhead, Hari from whose satisfaction Brahmā is born and from whose anger Rudra takes birth.

2O King, give up the animalistic mentality of thinking, "I am going to die." Unlike the body, you have not taken birth. There was not a time in the past when you did not exist, and you are not about to be destroyed.

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3You will not take birth again in the form of your sons and grandsons, like a sprout taking birth from a seed and then generating a new seed. Rather, you are entirely distinct from the material body and its paraphernalia, in the same way that fire is distinct from its fuel.

4In a dream one can see his own head being cut off and thus understand that his actual self is standing apart from the dream experience. Similarly, while awake one can see that his body is a product of the five material elements. Therefore it is to be understood that the actual self, the soul, is distinct from the body it observes and is unborn and immortal.

5When a pot is broken, the portion of sky within the pot remains as the element sky, just as before. In the same way, when the gross and subtle bodies die, the living entity within resumes his spiritual identity.

6The material bodies, qualities and activities of the spirit soul are created by the material mind. That mind is itself created by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, and thus the soul assumes material existence.

7A lamp functions as such only by the combination of its fuel, vessel, wick and fire. Similarly, material life, based on the soul's identification with the body, is developed and destroyed by the workings of material goodness, passion and ignorance, which are the constituent elements of the body.

8The soul within the body is self-luminous and is separate from the visible gross body and invisible subtle body. It remains as the fixed basis of changing bodily existence, just as the ethereal sky is the unchanging background of material transformation. Therefore the soul is endless and without material comparison.

9My dear King, by constantly meditating upon the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, and by applying clear and logical intelligence, you should carefully consider your true self and how it is situated within the material body.

10The snake-bird Takṣaka, sent by the curse of the brāhmaṇa, will not burn your true self. The agents of death will never burn such a master of the self as you, for you have already conquered all dangers on your path back to Godhead.

11-12You should consider, "I am nondifferent from the Absolute Truth, the supreme abode, and that Absolute Truth, the supreme destination, is nondifferent from me." Thus resigning yourself to the Supreme Soul, who is free from all material misidentifications, you will not even notice the snake-bird Takṣaka when he approaches with his poison-filled fangs and bites your foot. Nor will you see your dying body or the material world around you, because you will have realized yourself to be separate from them.

13Beloved King Parīkṣit, I have narrated to you the topics you originally inquired about the pastimes of Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul of the universe. Now, what more do you wish to hear?

SB 12.6: Mahārāja Parīkṣit Passes Away

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing all that was narrated to him by the self-realized and equipoised Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsadeva, Mahārāja Parīkṣit humbly approached his lotus feet. Bowing his head down upon the sage's feet, the King, who had lived his entire life under the protection of Lord Viṣṇu, folded his hands in supplication and spoke as follows.

2Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: I have now achieved the purpose of my life, because a great and merciful soul like you has shown such kindness to me. You have personally spoken to me this narration of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is without beginning or end.

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3I do not consider it at all amazing that great souls such as yourself, whose minds are always absorbed in the infallible Personality of Godhead, show mercy to the foolish conditioned souls, tormented as we are by the problems of material life.

4I have heard from you this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the perfect summary of all the Purāṇas and which perfectly describes the Supreme Lord, Uttamaḥśloka.

5My lord, I now have no fear of Takṣaka or any other living being, or even of repeated deaths, because I have absorbed myself in that purely spiritual Absolute Truth, which you have revealed and which destroys all fear.

6O brāhmaṇa, please give me permission to resign my speech and the functions of all my senses unto Lord Adhokṣaja. Allow me to absorb my mind, purified of lusty desires, within Him and to thus give up my life.

7You have revealed to me that which is most auspicious, the supreme personal feature of the Lord. I am now fixed in knowledge and self-realization, and my ignorance has been eradicated.

8Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus requested, the saintly son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva gave his permission to King Parīkṣit. Then, after being worshiped by the King and all the sages present, Śukadeva departed from that place.

9-10Mahārāja Parīkṣit then sat down on the bank of the Ganges, upon a seat made of darbha grass with the tips of its stalks facing east, and turned himself toward the north. Having attained the perfection of yoga, he experienced full self-realization and was free of material attachment and doubt. The saintly King settled his mind within his spiritual self by pure intelligence and proceeded to meditate upon the Supreme Absolute Truth. His life air ceased to move, and he became as stationary as a tree.

11O learned brāhmaṇas, the snake-bird Takṣaka, who had been sent by the angry son of a brāhmaṇa, was going toward the King to kill him when he saw Kaśyapa Muni on the path.

12Takṣaka flattered Kaśyapa by presenting him with valuable offerings and thereby stopped the sage, who was expert in counteracting poison, from protecting Mahārāja Parīkṣit. Then the snake-bird, who could assume any form he wished, disguised himself as a brāhmaṇa, approached the King and bit him.

13While living beings all over the universe looked on, the body of the great self-realized saint among kings was immediately burned to ashes by the fire of the snake's poison.

14There arose a terrible cry of lamentation in all directions on the earth and in the heavens, and all the demigods, demons, human beings and other creatures were astonished.

15Kettledrums sounded in the regions of the demigods, and the celestial Gandharvas and Apsarās sang. The demigods showered flowers and spoke words of praise.

16Hearing that his father had been fatally bitten by the snake-bird, Mahārāja Janamejaya became extremely angry and had brāhmaṇas perform a mighty sacrifice in which he offered all the snakes in the world into the sacrificial fire.

17When Takṣaka saw even the most powerful serpents being burned in the blazing fire of that snake sacrifice, he was overwhelmed with fear and approached Lord Indra for shelter.

18When King Janamejaya did not see Takṣaka entering his sacrificial fire, he said to the brāhmaṇas: Why is not Takṣaka, the lowest of all serpents, burning in this fire?

19The brāhmaṇas replied: O best of kings, the snake Takṣaka has not fallen into the fire because he is being protected by Indra, whom he has approached for shelter. Indra is holding him back from the fire.

20The intelligent King Janamejaya, hearing these words, replied to the priests: Then, my dear brāhmaṇas, why not make Takṣaka fall into the fire, along with his protector, Indra?

21Hearing this, the priests then chanted this mantra for offering Takṣaka together with Indra as an oblation into the sacrificial fire: O Takṣaka, fall immediately into this fire, together with Indra and his entire host of demigods!

22When Lord Indra, along with his airplane and Takṣaka, was suddenly thrown from his position by these insulting words of the brāhmaṇas, he became very disturbed.

23Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgirā Muni, seeing Indra falling from the sky in his airplane along with Takṣaka, approached King Janamejaya and spoke to him as follows.

24O King among men, it is not fitting that this king of snakes meet death at your hands, for he has drunk the nectar of the immortal demigods. Consequently he is not subject to the ordinary symptoms of old age and death.

25The life and death of an embodied soul and his destination in the next life are all caused by himself through his own activity. Therefore, O King, no other agent is actually responsible for creating one's happiness and distress.

26When a conditioned soul is killed by snakes, thieves, fire, lightning, hunger, disease or anything else, he is experiencing the reaction to his own past work.

27Therefore, my dear King, please stop this sacrificial performance, which was initiated with the intent of doing harm to others. Many innocent snakes have already been burned to death. Indeed, all persons must suffer the unforeseen consequences of their past activities.

28Sūta Gosvāmī continued: Advised in this manner, Mahārāja Janamejaya replied, "So be it." Honoring the words of the great sage, he desisted from performing the snake sacrifice and worshiped Bṛhaspati, the most eloquent of sages.

29This is indeed the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu's illusory energy, which is unstoppable and difficult to perceive. Although the individual spirit souls are part and parcel of the Lord, through the influence of this illusory energy they are bewildered by their identification with various material bodies.

30-31But there exists a supreme reality, in which the illusory energy cannot fearlessly dominate, thinking, "I can control this person because he is deceitful." In that highest reality there are no illusory argumentative philosophies. Rather, there the true students of spiritual science constantly engage in authorized spiritual investigation. In that supreme reality there is no manifestation of the material mind, which functions in terms of alternating decision and doubt. Created material products, their subtle causes and the goals of enjoyment attained by their utilization do not exist there. Furthermore, in that supreme reality there is no conditioned spirit, covered by false ego and the three modes of nature. That reality excludes everything limited or limiting. One who is wise should therefore stop the waves of material life and enjoy within that Supreme Truth.

32Those who desire to give up all that is not essentially real move systematically, by negative discrimination of the extraneous, to the supreme position of Lord Viṣṇu. Giving up petty

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materialism, they offer their love exclusively to the Absolute Truth within their hearts and embrace that highest truth in fixed meditation.

33Such devotees come to understand the supreme transcendental situation of the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, because they are no longer polluted by the concepts of “I” and “my,” which are based on body and home.

34One should tolerate all insults and never fail to show proper respect to any person. Avoiding identification with the material body, one should not create enmity with anyone.

35I offer my obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the invincible Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Simply by meditating upon His lotus feet I have been able to study and appreciate this great literature.

36Śaunaka Ṛṣi said: O gentle Sūta, please narrate to us how Paila and the other greatly intelligent disciples of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who are known as the standard authorities of Vedic wisdom, spoke and edited the Vedas.

37Sūta Gosvāmī said: O brāhmaṇa, first the subtle vibration of transcendental sound appeared from the sky of the heart of the most elevated Lord Brahmā, whose mind was perfectly fixed in spiritual realization. One can perceive this subtle vibration when one stops all external hearing.

38By worship of this subtle form of the Vedas, O brāhmaṇa, mystic sages cleanse their hearts of all contamination caused by impurity of substance, activity and doer, and thus they attain freedom from repeated birth and death.

39From that transcendental subtle vibration arose the omkāra composed of three sounds. The omkāra has unseen potencies and manifests automatically within a purified heart. It is the representation of the Absolute Truth in all three of His phases—the Supreme Personality, the Supreme Soul and the supreme impersonal truth.

40-41This omkāra, ultimately nonmaterial and imperceptible, is heard by the Supersoul without His possessing material ears or any other material senses. The entire expanse of Vedic sound is elaborated from omkāra, which appears from the soul, within the sky of the heart. It is the direct designation of the self-originating Absolute Truth, the Supersoul, and is the secret essence and eternal seed of all Vedic hymns.

42Omkāra exhibited the three original sounds of the alphabet, A, U and M. These three, O most eminent descendant of Bhṛgu, sustain all the different threefold aspects of material existence, including the three modes of nature, the names of the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas, the goals known as the Bhūr, Bhuvar and Svar planetary systems, and the three functional platforms called waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep.

43From that omkāra Lord Brahmā created all the sounds of the alphabet—the vowels, consonants, semivowels, sibilants and others—distinguished by such features as long and short measure.

44All-powerful Brahmā made use of this collection of sounds to produce from his four faces the four Vedas, which appeared together with the sacred omkāra and the seven vyāhṛti invocations. His intention was to propagate the process of Vedic sacrifice according to the different functions performed by the priests of each of the four Vedas.

45Brahmā taught these Vedas to his sons, who were great sages among the brāhmaṇas and experts in the art of Vedic recitation. They in turn took the role of ācāryas and imparted the

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Vedas to their own sons.

46In this way, throughout the cycles of four ages, generation after generation of disciples all firmly fixed in their spiritual vow have received these Vedas by disciplic succession. At the end of each Dvāpara-yuga the Vedas are edited into separate divisions by eminent sages.

47Observing that people in general were diminished in their life span, strength and intelligence by the influence of time, great sages took inspiration from the Personality of Godhead sitting within their hearts and systematically divided the Vedas.

48-49O brāhmaṇa, in the present age of Vaivasvata Manu, the leaders of the universe, led by Brahmā and Śiva, requested the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the protector of all the worlds, to save the principles of religion. O most fortunate Śaunaka, the almighty Lord, exhibiting a divine spark of a portion of His plenary portion, then appeared in the womb of Satyavatī as the son of Parāśara. In this form, named Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, he divided the one Veda into four.

50Śrīla Vyāsadeva separated the mantras of the Ṛg, Atharva, Yajur and Sāma Vedas into four divisions, just as one sorts out a mixed collection of jewels into piles. Thus he composed four distinct Vedic literatures.

51The most powerful and intelligent Vyāsadeva called four of his disciples, O brāhmaṇa, and entrusted to each of them one of these four saṁhitās.

52-53Śrīla Vyāsadeva taught the first saṁhitā, the Ṛg Veda, to Paila and gave this collection the name Bahvṛca. To the sage Vaiśampāyana he spoke the collection of Yajur mantras named Nigada. He taught the Sāma Veda mantras, designated as the Chandoga-saṁhitā, to Jaimini, and he spoke the Atharva Veda to his dear disciple Sumantu.

54-56After dividing his saṁhitā into two parts, the wise Paila spoke it to Indrapramiti and Bāṣkala. Bāṣkala further divided his collection into four parts, O Bhārgava, and instructed them to his disciples Bodhya, Yāṣavalkya, Parāśara and Agnimitra. Indrapramiti, the self-controlled sage, taught his saṁhitā to the learned mystic Māṇḍūkeya, whose disciple Devamitra later passed down the divisions of the Ṛg Veda to Saubhari and others.

57The son of Māṇḍūkeya, named Śākalya, divided his own collection into five, entrusting one subdivision each to Vātsya, Mudgala, Śālīya, Gokhalya and Śiśira.

58The sage Jātūkarnya was also a disciple of Śākalya, and after dividing the saṁhitā he received from Śākalya into three parts, he added a fourth section, a Vedic glossary. He taught one of these parts to each of four disciples Balāka, the second Paila, Jābāla and Viraja.

59Bāṣkali assembled the Vālakhilya-saṁhitā, a collection from all the branches of the Ṛg Veda. This collection was received by Vālāyani, Bhajya and Kāśāra.

60Thus these various saṁhitās of the Ṛg Veda were maintained through disciplic succession by these saintly brāhmaṇas. Simply by hearing of this distribution of the Vedic hymns, one will be freed from all sins.

61The disciples of Vaiśampāyana became authorities in the Atharva Veda. They were known as the Carakas because they executed strict vows to free their guru from his sin of killing a brāhmaṇa.

62Once Yāṣavalkya, one of the disciples of Vaiśampāyana, said: O master, how much benefit

will be derived from the feeble endeavors of these weak disciples of yours? I will personally perform some outstanding penance.

63Addressed thus, the spiritual master Vaiṣampāyana became angry and said: Go away from here! Enough of you, O disciple who insults brāhmaṇas! Furthermore, you must immediately give back everything I have taught you.

64-65Yāṣavalkya, the son of Devarāta, then vomited the mantras of the Yajur Veda and went away from there. The assembled disciples, looking greedily upon these yajur hymns, assumed the form of partridges and picked them all up. These divisions of the Yajur Veda therefore became known as the most beautiful Taittirīya-saṁhitā, the hymns collected by partridges [tittirāḥ].

66My dear brāhmaṇa Śaunaka, Yāṣavalkya then desired to find out new yajur-mantras unknown to even his spiritual master. With this in mind he offered attentive worship to the powerful lord of the sun.

67Śrī Yāṣavalkya said: I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the sun. You are present as the controller of the four kinds of living entities, beginning from Brahmā and extending down to the blades of grass. Just as the sky is present both inside and outside every living being, you exist both within the hearts of all as the Supersoul and externally in the form of time. Just as the sky cannot be covered by the clouds present within it, you are never covered by any false material designation. By the flow of years, which are made up of the tiny fragments of time called kṣaṇas, lavas and nimeṣas, you alone maintain this world, drying up the waters and giving them back as rain.

68O glowing one, O powerful lord of the sun, you are the chief of all the demigods. I meditate with careful attention on your fiery globe, because for those who offer prayers to you three times daily according to the Vedic method passed down through authorized disciplic succession, you burn away all sinful activities, all consequent suffering and even the original seed of desire.

69You are personally present as the indwelling lord in the hearts of all moving and nonmoving beings, who depend completely on your shelter. Indeed, you animate their material minds, senses and vital airs to act.

70The world has been seized and swallowed by the python of darkness in its horrible mouth and has become unconscious, as if dead. But mercifully glancing upon the sleeping people of the world, you raise them up with the gift of sight. Thus you are most magnanimous. At the three sacred junctures of each day, you engage the pious in the path of ultimate good, inducing them to perform religious duties that situate them in their spiritual position.

71Just like an earthly king, you travel about everywhere spreading fear among the unholy as the powerful deities of the directions offer you in their folded palms lotus flowers and other respectful presentations.

72Therefore, my lord, I am prayerfully approaching your lotus feet, which are honored by the spiritual masters of the three worlds, because I hope to receive from you mantras of the Yajur Veda unknown to anyone else.

73Sūta Gosvāmī said: Satisfied by such glorification, the powerful sun-god assumed the form of a horse and presented to the sage Yāṣavalkya yajur-mantras previously unknown in human society.

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74From these countless hundreds of mantras of the Yajur Veda, the powerful sage compiled fifteen new branches of Vedic literature. These became known as the Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā because they were produced from the hairs of the horse's mane, and they were accepted in disciplic succession by the followers of Kāṇva, Mādhyandina and other ṛṣis.

75Jaimini Ṛṣi, the authority of the Sāma Veda, had a son named Sumantu, and the son of Sumantu was Sutvān. The sage Jaimini spoke to each of them a different part of the Sāma-veda-saṁhitā.

76-77Sukarmā, another disciple of Jaimini, was a great scholar. He divided the mighty tree of the Sāma Veda into one thousand saṁhitās. Then, O brāhmaṇa, three disciples of SukarmāHiraṇyanābha, the son of Kuśala; Pauṣyaṣji; and Āvantya, who was very advanced in spiritual realizationtook charge of the sāma-mantras.

78The five hundred disciples of Pauṣyaṣji and Āvantya became known as the northern singers of the Sāma Veda, and in later times some of them also became known as eastern singers.

79Five other disciples of Pauṣyaṣji, namely Laugākṣi, Māṅgali, Kulya, Kuśīda and Kukṣi, each received one hundred saṁhitās.

80Kṛta, the disciple of Hiraṇyanābha, spoke twenty-four saṁhitās to his own disciples, and the remaining collections were passed down by the self-realized sage Āvantya.

SB 12.7: The Purāṇic Literatures

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Sumantu Ṛṣi, the authority on the Atharva Veda, taught his saṁhitā to his disciple Kabandha, who in turn spoke it to Pathya and Vedadarśa.

2Śauklāyani, Brahmabali, Modoṣa and Pippalāyani were disciples of Vedadarśa. Hear from me also the names of the disciples of Pathya. My dear brāhmaṇa, they are Kumuda, Śunaka and Jājali, all of whom knew the Atharva Veda very well.

3Babhru and Saindhavāyana, disciples of Śunaka, studied the two divisions of their spiritual master's compilation of the Atharva Veda. Saindhavāyana's disciple Sāvarna and disciples of other great sages also studied this edition of the Atharva Veda.

4Nakṣatrakalpa, Śāntikalpa, Kaśyapa, Āṅgīrasa and others were also among the ācāryas of the Atharva Veda. Now, O sage, listen as I name the authorities on Purāṇic literature.

5Trayyārūṇi, Kaśyapa, Sāvarni, Akṛtavraṇa, Vaiśampāyana and Hārīta are the six masters of the Purāṇas.

6Each of them studied one of the six anthologies of the Purāṇas from my father, Romaharṣaṇa, who was a disciple of Śrīla Vyāsadeva. I became the disciple of these six authorities and thoroughly learned all their presentations of Purāṇic wisdom.

7Romaharṣaṇa, a disciple of Vedavyāsa, divided the Purāṇas into four basic compilations. The sage Kaśyapa and I, along with Sāvarni and Akṛtavraṇa, a disciple of Rāma, learned these four divisions.

8O Śaunaka, please hear with attention the characteristics of a Purāṇa, which have been defined by the most eminent learned brāhmaṇas in accordance with Vedic literature.

9-10O brāhmaṇa, authorities on the matter understand a Purāṇa to contain ten characteristic

topics: the creation of this universe, the subsequent creation of worlds and beings, the maintenance of all living beings, their sustenance, the rule of various Manus, the dynasties of great kings, the activities of such kings, annihilation, motivation and the supreme shelter. Other scholars state that the great Purāṇas deal with these ten topics, while lesser Purāṇas may deal with five.

11From the agitation of the original modes within the unmanifest material nature, the mahat-tattva arises. From the mahat-tattva comes the element false ego, which divides into three aspects. This threefold false ego further manifests as the subtle forms of perception, as the senses and as the gross sense objects. The generation of all these is called creation.

12The secondary creation, which exists by the mercy of the Lord, is the manifest amalgamation of the desires of the living entities. Just as a seed produces additional seeds, activities that promote material desires in the performer produce moving and nonmoving life forms.

13Vṛtti means the process of sustenance, by which the moving beings live upon the nonmoving. For a human, vṛtti specifically means acting for one's livelihood in a manner suited to his personal nature. Such action may be carried out either in pursuit of selfish desire or in accordance with the law of God.

14In each age, the infallible Lord appears in this world among the animals, human beings, sages and demigods. By His activities in these incarnations He protects the universe and kills the enemies of Vedic culture.

15In each reign of Manu, six types of personalities appear as manifestations of Lord Hari: the ruling Manu, the chief demigods, the sons of Manu, Indra, the great sages and the partial incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

16Dynasties are lines of kings originating with Lord Brahmā and extending continuously through past, present and future. The accounts of such dynasties, especially of their most prominent members, constitute the subject of dynastic history.

17There are four types of cosmic annihilation: occasional, elemental, continuous and ultimate, all of which are effected by the inherent potency of the Supreme Lord. Learned scholars have designated this topic dissolution.

18Out of ignorance the living being performs material activities and thereby becomes in one sense the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. Some authorities call the living being the personality underlying the material creation, while others say he is the unmanifest self.

19The Supreme Absolute Truth is present throughout all the stages of awareness: waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep throughout all the phenomena manifested by the illusory energy, and within the functions of all living entities, and He also exists separate from all these. Thus situated in His own transcendence, He is the ultimate and unique shelter.

20Although a material object may assume various forms and names, its essential ingredient is always present as the basis of its existence. Similarly, both conjointly and separately, the Supreme Absolute Truth is always present with the created material body throughout its phases of existence, beginning with conception and ending with death.

21Either automatically or because of one's regulated spiritual practice, one's mind may stop functioning on the material platform of waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep. Then one understands the Supreme Soul and withdraws from material endeavor.

22Sages expert in ancient histories have declared that the Purāṇas, according to their various characteristics, can be divided into eighteen major Purāṇas and eighteen secondary Purāṇas.

23-24The eighteen major Purāṇas are the Brahma, Padma, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Liṅga, Garuḍa, Nārada, Bhāgavata, Agni, Skanda, Bhaviṣya, Brahma-vaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Vāmana, Varāha, Matsya, Kūrma and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas.

25I have thoroughly described to you, O brāhmaṇa, the expansion of the branches of the Vedas by the great sage Vyāsadeva, his disciples and the disciples of his disciples. One who listens to this narration will increase in spiritual strength.

SB 12.8: Mārkaṇḍeya's Prayers to Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi

1ŚrīŚaunaka said: O Sūta, may you live a long life! O saintly one, best of speakers, please continue speaking to us. Indeed, only you can show men the path out of the ignorance in which they are wandering.

2-5Authorities say that Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the son of Mrkaṇḍu, was an exceptionally long-lived sage who was the only survivor at the end of Brahmā's day, when the entire universe was merged in the flood of annihilation. But this same Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the foremost descendant of Bhṛgu, took birth in my own family during the current day of Brahmā, and we have not yet seen any total annihilation in this day of Brahmā. Also, it is well known that Mārkaṇḍeya, while wandering helplessly in the great ocean of annihilation, saw in those fearful waters a wonderful personalityan infant boy lying alone within the fold of a banyan leaf. O Sūta, I am most bewildered and curious about this great sage, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi. O great yogī, you are universally accepted as the authority on all the Purāṇas. Therefore kindly dispel my confusion.

6Sūta Gosvāmī said: O great sage Śaunaka, your very question will help remove everyone's illusion, for it leads to the topics of Lord Nārāyaṇa, which cleanse away the contamination of this Kali age.

7-11After being purified by his father's performance of the prescribed rituals leading to Mārkaṇḍeya's brahminical initiation, Mārkaṇḍeya studied the Vedic hymns and strictly observed the regulative principles. He became advanced in austerity and Vedic knowledge and remained a lifelong celibate. Appearing most peaceful with his matted hair and his clothing made of bark, he furthered his spiritual progress by carrying the mendicant's waterpot, staff, sacred thread, brahmacārī belt, black deerskin, lotus-seed prayer beads and bundles of kuśa grass. At the sacred junctures of the day he regularly worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead in five forms—the sacrificial fire, the sun, his spiritual master, the brāhmaṇas and the Supersoul within his heart. Morning and evening he would go out begging, and upon returning he would present all the food he had collected to his spiritual master. Only when his spiritual master invited him would he silently take his one meal of the day; otherwise he would fast. Thus devoted to austerity and Vedic study, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi worshiped the supreme master of the senses, the Personality of Godhead, for countless millions of years, and in this way he conquered unconquerable death.

12Lord Brahmā, Bhṛgu Muni, Lord Śiva, Prajāpati Dakṣa, the great sons of Brahmā, and many others among the human beings, demigods, forefathers and ghostly spiritsall were astonished by the achievement of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi.

13In this way the devotional mystic Mārkaṇḍeya maintained rigid celibacy through penance, study of the Vedas and self-discipline. With his mind thus free of all disturbances, he turned it inward and meditated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lies beyond the material

senses.

14While the mystic sage thus concentrated his mind by powerful yoga practice, the tremendous period of six lifetimes of Manu passed by.

15O brāhmaṇa, during the seventh reign of Manu, the current age, Lord Indra came to know of Mārkaṇḍeya's austerities and became fearful of his growing mystic potency. Thus he tried to impede the sage's penance.

16To ruin the sage's spiritual practice, Lord Indra sent Cupid, beautiful celestial singers, dancing girls, the season of spring and the sandalwood-scented breeze from the Malaya Hills, along with greed and intoxication personified.

17O most powerful Śaunaka, they went to Mārkaṇḍeya's hermitage, on the northern side of the Himālaya Mountains where the Puṣpabhadṛā River passes by the famous peak Citṛā.

18-20Groves of pious trees decorated the holy āśrama of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, and many saintly brāhmaṇas lived there, enjoying the abundant pure, sacred ponds. The āśrama resounded with the buzzing of intoxicated bees and the cooing of excited cuckoos, while jubilant peacocks danced about. Indeed, many families of maddened birds crowded that hermitage. The springtime breeze sent by Lord Indra entered there, carrying cooling drops of spray from nearby waterfalls. Fragrant from the embrace of forest flowers, that breeze entered the hermitage and began evoking the lusty spirit of Cupid.

21Springtime then appeared in Mārkaṇḍeya's āśrama. Indeed, the evening sky, glowing with the light of the rising moon, became the very face of spring, and sprouts and fresh blossoms virtually covered the multitude of trees and creepers.

22Cupid, the master of many heavenly women, then came there holding his bow and arrows. He was followed by groups of Gandharvas playing musical instruments and singing.

23These servants of Indra found the sage sitting in meditation, having just offered his prescribed oblations into the sacrificial fire. His eyes closed in trance, he seemed invincible, like fire personified.

24The women danced before the sage, and the celestial singers sang to the charming accompaniment of drums, cymbals and vīṇās.

25While the son of passion [greed personified], spring and the other servants of Indra all tried to agitate Mārkaṇḍeya's mind, Cupid drew his five-headed arrow and fixed it upon his bow.

26-27The Apsarā Puṣjikasthalī made a show of playing with a number of toy balls. Her waist seemed weighed down by her heavy breasts, and the wreath of flowers in her hair became disheveled. As she ran about after the balls, glancing here and there, the belt of her thin garment loosened, and suddenly the wind blew her clothes away.

28Cupid, thinking he had conquered the sage, then shot his arrow. But all these attempts to seduce Mārkaṇḍeya proved futile, just like the useless endeavors of an atheist.

29O learned Śaunaka, while Cupid and his followers tried to harm the sage, they felt themselves being burned alive by his potency. Thus they stopped their mischief, just like children who have aroused a sleeping snake.

30O brāhmaṇa, the followers of Lord Indra had impudently attacked the saintly Mārkaṇḍeya, yet he did not succumb to any influence of false ego. For great souls such tolerance is not at all

surprising.

31The mighty King Indra was most astonished when he heard of the mystic prowess of the exalted sage Mārkaṇḍeya and saw how Cupid and his associates had become powerless in his presence.

32Desiring to bestow His mercy upon the saintly Mārkaṇḍeya, who had perfectly fixed his mind in self-realization through penance, Vedic study and observance of regulative principles, the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally appeared before the sage in the forms of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

33-34One of Them was of a whitish complexion, the other blackish, and They both had four arms. Their eyes resembled the petals of blooming lotuses, and They wore garments of black deerskin and bark, along with the three-stranded sacred thread. In Their hands, which were most purifying, They carried the mendicant's waterpot, straight bamboo staff and lotus-seed prayer beads, as well as the all-purifying Vedas in the symbolic form of bundles of darbha grass. Their bearing was tall and Their yellow effulgence the color of radiant lightning. Appearing as austerity personified, They were being worshiped by the foremost demigods.

35These two sages, Nara and Nārāyaṇa, were the direct personal forms of the Supreme Lord. When Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi saw Them, he immediately stood up and then with great respect offered Them obeisances by falling down flat on the ground like a stick.

36The ecstasy of seeing Them completely satisfied Mārkaṇḍeya's body, mind and senses and caused the hairs on his body to stand on end and his eyes to fill with tears. Overwhelmed, Mārkaṇḍeya found it difficult to look at Them.

37Standing with his hands folded in supplication and his head bowed in humility, Mārkaṇḍeya felt such eagerness that he imagined he was embracing the two Lords. In a voice choked with ecstasy, he repeatedly said, "I offer You my humble obeisances."

38He gave Them sitting places and washed Their feet, and then he worshiped Them with presentations of arghya, sandalwood pulp, fragrant oils, incense and flower garlands.

39Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi once again bowed down at the lotus feet of those two most worshipable sages, who were sitting at ease, ready to bestow all mercy upon him. He then addressed Them as follows.

40Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: O Almighty Lord, how can I possibly describe You? You awaken the vital air, which then impels the mind, senses and power of speech to act. This is true for all ordinary conditioned souls and even for great demigods like Brahmā and Śiva. So it is certainly true for me. Nevertheless, You become the intimate friend of those who worship You.

41O Supreme Personality of Godhead, these two personal forms of Yours have appeared to bestow the ultimate benefit for the three worldsthe cessation of material misery and the conquest of death. My Lord, although You create this universe and then assume many transcendental forms to protect it, You also swallow it up, just like a spider who spins and later withdraws its web.

42Because You are the protector and the supreme controller of all moving and nonmoving beings, anyone who takes shelter of Your lotus feet can never be touched by the contamination of material work, material qualities or time. Great sages who have assimilated the essential meaning of the Vedas offer their prayers to You. To gain Your association, they bow down to You at every opportunity and constantly worship You and meditate upon You.

43My dear Lord, even Lord Brahmā, who enjoys his exalted position for the entire duration of the universe, fears the passage of time. Then what to speak of those whom Brahmā creates, the conditioned souls. They encounter fearful dangers at every step of their lives. I do not know of any relief from this fear except shelter at Your lotus feet, which are the very form of liberation.

44Therefore I worship Your lotus feet, having renounced my identification with the material body and everything else that covers my true self. These useless, insubstantial and temporary coverings are merely presumed to be separate from You, whose intelligence encompasses all truth. By attaining You the Supreme Godhead and the master of the soul one attains everything desirable.

45O my Lord, O supreme friend of the conditioned soul, although for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this world You accept the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, which constitute Your illusory potency, You specifically employ the mode of goodness to liberate the conditioned souls. The other two modes simply bring them suffering, illusion and fear.

46O Lord, because fearlessness, spiritual happiness and the kingdom of God are all achieved through the mode of pure goodness, Your devotees consider this mode, but never passion and ignorance, to be a direct manifestation of You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Intelligent persons thus worship Your beloved transcendental form, composed of pure goodness, along with the spiritual forms of Your pure devotees.

47I offer my humble obeisances to Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the all-pervading and all-inclusive form of the universe, as well as its spiritual master. I bow down to Lord Nārāyaṇa, the supremely worshipable Deity appearing as a sage, and also to the saintly Nara, the best of human beings, who is fixed in perfect goodness, fully in control of his speech, and the propagator of the Vedic literatures.

48A materialist, his intelligence perverted by the action of his deceptive senses, cannot recognize You at all, although You are always present within his own senses and heart and also among the objects of his perception. Yet even though one's understanding has been covered by Your illusory potency, if one obtains Vedic knowledge from You, the supreme spiritual master of all, he can directly understand You.

49My dear Lord, the Vedic literatures alone reveal confidential knowledge of Your supreme personality, and thus even such great scholars as Lord Brahmā himself are bewildered in their attempt to understand You through empirical methods. Each philosopher understands You according to his particular speculative conclusions. I worship that Supreme Person, knowledge of whom is hidden by the bodily designations covering the conditioned soul's spiritual identity.

SB 12.9: Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi Sees the Illusory Potency of the Lord

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, the friend of Nara, was satisfied by the proper glorification offered by the intelligent sage Mārkaṇḍeya. Thus the Lord addressed that excellent descendant of Bhṛgu.

2The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Mārkaṇḍeya, you are indeed the best of all learned brāhmaṇas. You have perfected your life by practicing fixed meditation upon the Supreme Soul, as well as by focusing upon Me your undeviating devotional service, your austerities, your study of the Vedas and your strict adherence to regulative principles.

3We are perfectly satisfied with your practice of lifelong celibacy. Please choose whatever benediction you desire, since I can grant your wish. May you enjoy all good fortune.

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4The sage said: O Lord of lords, all glories to You! O Lord Acyuta, You remove all distress for the devotees who surrender unto You. That you have allowed me to see You is all the benediction I want.

5Such demigods as Lord Brahmā achieved their exalted positions simply by seeing Your beautiful lotus feet after their minds had become mature in yoga practice. And now, my Lord, You have personally appeared before me.

6O lotus-eyed Lord, O crest jewel of renowned personalities, although I am satisfied simply by seeing You, I do wish to see Your illusory potency, by whose influence the entire world, together with its ruling demigods, considers reality to be materially variegated.

7Sūta Gosvāmī said: O wise Śaunaka, thus satisfied by Mārkaṇḍeya's praise and worship, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, smiling, replied, "So be it," and then departed for His hermitage at Badarikāśrama.

8-9Thinking always of his desire to see the Lord's illusory energy, the sage remained in his āśrama, meditating constantly upon the Lord within fire, the sun, the moon, water, the earth, air, lightning and his own heart and worshiping Him with paraphernalia conceived in his mind. But sometimes, overwhelmed by waves of love for the Lord, Mārkaṇḍeya would forget to perform his regular worship.

10O brāhmaṇa Śaunaka, best of the Bhṛguṣ, one day while Mārkaṇḍeya was performing his evening worship on the bank of the Puṣpabhadrā, a great wind suddenly arose.

11That wind created a terrible sound and brought in its wake fearsome clouds that were accompanied by lightning and roaring thunder and that poured down on all sides torrents of rain as heavy as wagon wheels.

12Then the four great oceans appeared on all sides, swallowing up the surface of the earth with their wind-tossed waves. In these oceans were terrible sea monsters, fearful whirlpools and ominous rumblings.

13The sage saw all the inhabitants of the universe, including himself, tormented within and without by the harsh winds, the bolts of lightning, and the great waves rising beyond the sky. As the whole earth flooded, he grew perplexed and fearful.

14Even as Mārkaṇḍeya looked on, the rain pouring down from the clouds filled the ocean more and more until that great sea, its waters violently whipped into terrifying waves by hurricanes, covered up all the earth's islands, mountains and continents.

15The water inundated the earth, outer space, heaven and the celestial region. Indeed, the entire expanse of the universe was flooded in all directions, and out of all its inhabitants only Mārkaṇḍeya remained. His matted hair scattered, the great sage wandered about alone in the water as if dumb and blind.

16Tormented by hunger and thirst, attacked by monstrous makaras and timiṅgila fish and battered by the wind and waves, he moved aimlessly through the infinite darkness into which he had fallen. As he grew increasingly exhausted, he lost all sense of direction and could not tell the sky from the earth.

17-18At times he was engulfed by the great whirlpools, sometimes he was beaten by the mighty waves, and at other times the aquatic monsters threatened to devour him as they attacked one another. Sometimes he felt lamentation, bewilderment, misery, happiness or fear,

and at other times he experienced such terrible illness and pain that he felt himself dying.

19Countless millions of years passed as Mārkaṇḍeya wandered about in that deluge, his mind bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

20Once, while wandering in the water, the brāhmaṇa Mārkaṇḍeya discovered a small island, upon which stood a young banyan tree bearing blossoms and fruits.

21Upon a branch of the northeast portion of that tree he saw an infant boy lying within a leaf. The child's effulgence was swallowing up the darkness.

22-25The infant's dark-blue complexion was the color of a flawless emerald, His lotus face shone with a wealth of beauty, and His throat bore marks like the lines on a conchshell. He had a broad chest, a finely shaped nose, beautiful eyebrows, and lovely ears that resembled pomegranate flowers and that had inner folds like a conchshell's spirals. The corners of His eyes were reddish like the whorl of a lotus, and the effulgence of His corallike lips slightly reddened the nectarean, enchanting smile on His face. As He breathed, His splendid hair trembled and His deep navel became distorted by the moving folds of skin on His abdomen, which resembled a banyan leaf. The exalted brāhmaṇa watched with amazement as the infant took hold of one of His lotus feet with His graceful fingers, placed a toe within His mouth and began to suck.

26As Mārkaṇḍeya beheld the child, all his weariness vanished. Indeed, so great was his pleasure that the lotus of his heart, along with his lotus eyes, fully blossomed and the hairs on his body stood on end. Confused as to the identity of the wonderful infant, the sage approached Him.

27Just then the child inhaled, drawing Mārkaṇḍeya within His body like a mosquito. There the sage found the entire universe arrayed as it had been before its dissolution. Seeing this, Mārkaṇḍeya was most astonished and perplexed.

28-29The sage saw the entire universe: the sky, heavens and earth, the stars, mountains, oceans, great islands and continents, the expanses in every direction, the saintly and demoniac living beings, the forests, countries, rivers, cities and mines, the agricultural villages and cow pastures, and the occupational and spiritual activities of the various social divisions. He also saw the basic elements of creation along with all their by-products, as well as time itself, which regulates the progression of countless ages within the days of Brahmā. In addition, he saw everything else created for use in material life. All this he saw manifested before him as if it were real.

30He saw before him the Himālaya Mountains, the Puṣpabhadrā River, and his own hermitage, where he had had the audience of the sages Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Then, as Mārkaṇḍeya beheld the entire universe, the infant exhaled, expelling the sage from His body and casting him back into the ocean of dissolution.

31-32In that vast sea he again saw the banyan tree growing on the tiny island and the infant boy lying within the leaf. The child glanced at him from the corner of His eyes with a smile imbued with the nectar of love, and Mārkaṇḍeya took Him into his heart through his eyes. Greatly agitated, the sage ran to embrace the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

33At that moment the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the original master of all mysticism and who is hidden within everyone's heart, became invisible to the sage, just as the achievements of an incompetent person can suddenly vanish.

34After the Lord disappeared, O brāhmaṇa, the banyan tree, the great water and the dissolution of the universe all vanished as well, and in an instant Mārkaṇḍeya found himself back in his own hermitage, just as before.

SB 12.10: Lord Śiva and Umā Glorify Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa had arranged this opulent display of His bewildering potency. Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, having experienced it, took shelter of the Lord.

2Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: O Lord Hari, I take shelter of the soles of Your lotus feet, which bestow fearlessness upon all who surrender to them. Even the great demigods are bewildered by Your illusory energy, which appears to them in the guise of knowledge.

3Sūta Gosvāmī said: Lord Rudra, traveling in the sky on his bull and accompanied by his consort, Rudrāṇī, as well as his personal associates, observed Mārkaṇḍeya in trance.

4Goddess Umā, seeing the sage, addressed Lord Giriśa: My lord, just see this learned brāhmaṇa, his body, mind and senses motionless in trance.

5He is as calm as the waters of the ocean when the wind has ceased and the fish remain still. Therefore, my lord, since you bestow perfection on the performers of austerity, please award this sage the perfection that is obviously due him.

6Lord Śiva replied: Surely this saintly brāhmaṇa does not desire any benediction, not even liberation itself, for he has attained pure devotional service unto the inexhaustible Personality of Godhead.

7Still, my dear Bhavānī, let us talk with this saintly personality. After all, association with saintly devotees is man's highest achievement.

8Sūta Gosvāmī said: Having spoken thus, Lord Śaṅkarathe shelter of pure souls, master of all spiritual sciences and controller of all embodied living beingsapproached the sage.

9Because Mārkaṇḍeya's material mind had stopped functioning, the sage failed to notice that Lord Śiva and his wife, the controllers of the universe, had personally come to see him. Mārkaṇḍeya was so absorbed in meditation that he was unaware of either himself or the external world.

10Understanding the situation very well, the powerful Lord Śiva employed his mystic power to enter within the sky of Mārkaṇḍeya's heart, just as the wind passes through an opening.

11-13Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya saw Lord Śiva suddenly appear within his heart. Lord Śiva's golden hair resembled lightning, and he had three eyes, ten arms and a tall body that shone like the rising sun. He wore a tiger skin, and he carried a trident, a bow, arrows, a sword and a shield, along with prayer beads, a ḍamaru drum, a skull and an ax. Astonished, the sage came out of his trance and thought, "Who is this, and where has he come from?"

14Opening his eyes, the sage saw Lord Rudra, the spiritual master of the three worlds, together with Umā and Rudra's followers. Mārkaṇḍeya then offered his respectful obeisances by bowing his head.

15Mārkaṇḍeya worshiped Lord Śiva, along with Umā and Śiva's associates, by offering them words of welcome, sitting places, water for washing their feet, scented drinking water, fragrant oils, flower garlands and āraṭi lamps.

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16Mārkaṇḍeya said: O mighty lord, what can I possibly do for you, who are fully satisfied by your own ecstasy? Indeed, by your mercy you satisfy this entire world.

17Again and again I offer my obeisances unto you, O all-auspicious transcendental personality. As the lord of goodness you give pleasure, in contact with the mode of passion you appear most fearful, and you also associate with the mode of ignorance.

18Sūta Gosvāmī said: Lord Śiva, the foremost demigod and the shelter of the saintly devotees, was satisfied by Mārkaṇḍeya's praise. Pleased, he smiled and addressed the sage.

19Lord Śiva said: Please ask me for some benediction, since among all givers of benedictions, we three Brahmā, Viṣṇu and I are the best. Seeing us never goes in vain, because simply by seeing us a mortal achieves immortality.

20-21The inhabitants and ruling demigods of all planets, along with Lord Brahmā, the Supreme Lord Hari and I, glorify, worship and assist those brāhmaṇas who are saintly, always peaceful, free of material attachment, compassionate to all living beings, purely devoted to us, devoid of hatred and endowed with equal vision.

22These devotees do not differentiate between Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā and me, nor do they differentiate between themselves and other living beings. Therefore, because you are this kind of saintly devotee, we worship you.

23Mere bodies of water do not constitute holy places, nor are lifeless statues of the demigods actual worshipable deities. Because external vision fails to appreciate the higher essence of the holy rivers and the demigods, these purify only after a considerable time. But devotees like you purify immediately, just by being seen.

24By meditating upon the Supreme Soul, performing austerities, engaging in Vedic study and following regulative principles, the brāhmaṇas sustain within themselves the three Vedas, which are nondifferent from Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā and me. Therefore I offer my obeisances unto the brāhmaṇas.

25Even the worst sinners and social outcasts are purified just by hearing about or seeing personalities like you. Imagine, then, how purified they become by directly speaking with you.

26Sūta Gosvāmī said: Drinking with his ears Lord Śiva's nectarean words, full of the confidential essence of religion, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi could not be satiated.

27Mārkaṇḍeya, having been forced by Lord Viṣṇu's illusory energy to wander about for a long time in the water of dissolution, had become extremely exhausted. But Lord Śiva's words of nectar vanquished his accumulated suffering. Thus he addressed Lord Śiva.

28Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: It is indeed most difficult for embodied souls to understand the pastimes of the universal controllers, for such lords bow down to and offer praise to the very living beings they rule.

29Generally it is to induce embodied souls to accept religious principles that the authorized teachers of religion exhibit ideal behavior while encouraging and praising the proper behavior of others.

30This apparent humility is simply a show of mercy. Such behavior of the Supreme Lord and His personal associates, which the Lord effects by His own bewildering potency, does not spoil His power any more than a magician's powers are diminished by his exhibition of tricks.

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31-32I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has created this entire universe simply by His desire and then entered into it as the Supersoul. By making the modes of nature act, He seems to be the direct creator of this world, just as a dreamer seems to be acting within his dream. He is the owner and ultimate controller of the three modes of nature, yet He remains alone and pure, without any equal. He is the supreme spiritual master of all, the original personal form of the Absolute Truth.

33O all-pervading lord, since I have received the benediction of seeing you, what other benediction can I ask for? Simply by seeing you, a person fulfills all his desires and can achieve anything imaginable.

34But I do request one benediction from you, who are full of all perfection and able to shower down the fulfillment of all desires. I ask to have unfailing devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead and for His dedicated devotees, especially you.

35Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus worshiped and glorified by the eloquent statements of the sage Mārkaṇḍeya, Lord Śarva [Śiva], encouraged by his consort, replied to him as follows.

36O great sage, because you are devoted to Lord Adhokṣaja, all your desires will be fulfilled. Until the very end of this creation cycle, you will enjoy pious fame and freedom from old age and death.

37O brāhmaṇa, may you have perfect knowledge of past, present and future, along with transcendental realization of the Supreme, enriched by renunciation. You have the brilliance of an ideal brāhmaṇa, and thus may you achieve the post of spiritual master of the Purāṇas.

38Sūta Gosvāmī said: Having thus granted Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi benedictions, Lord Śiva went on his way, continuing to describe to goddess Devī the accomplishments of the sage and the direct exhibition of the Lord's illusory power that he had experienced.

39Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the best of the descendants of Bhṛgu, is glorious because of his achievement of perfection in mystic yoga. Even today he travels about this world, fully absorbed in unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

40I have thus narrated to you the activities of the highly intelligent sage Mārkaṇḍeya, especially how he experienced the amazing power of the Supreme Lord's illusory energy.

41Although this event was unique and unprecedented, some unintelligent persons compare it to the cycle of illusory material existence the Supreme Lord has created for the conditioned souls an endless cycle that has been continuing since time immemorial.

42O best of the Bhṛgus, this account concerning Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi conveys the transcendental potency of the Supreme Lord. Anyone who properly narrates or hears it will never again undergo material existence, which is based on the desire to perform fruitive activities.

SB 12.11: Summary Description of the Mahāpuruṣa

1ŚrīŚaunaka said: O Sūta, you are the best of learned men and a great devotee of the Supreme Lord. Therefore we now inquire from you about the definitive conclusion of all tantra scriptures.

2-3All good fortune to you! Please explain to us, who are very eager to learn, the process of kṛiyā-yoga practiced through regulated worship of the transcendental Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune. Please also explain how the Lord's devotees conceive of His limbs, associates, weapons and ornaments in terms of particular material representations. By expertly

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worshiping the Supreme Lord, a mortal can attain immortality.

4Sūta Gosvāmī said: Offering obeisances to my spiritual masters, I shall repeat to you the description of the opulences of Lord Viṣṇu given in the Vedas and tantras by great authorities, beginning from lotus-born Brahmā.

5The universal form [virāṭ] of the Personality of Godhead includes the nine basic elements of creation, starting with the unmanifest nature, and their subsequent transformations. Once this universal form is instilled with consciousness, the three planetary systems become visible within it.

6-8This is the representation of the Supreme Lord as the universal person, in which the earth is His feet, the sky His navel, the sun His eyes, the wind His nostrils, the demigod of procreation His genitals, death His anus and the moon His mind. The heavenly planets are His head, the directions His ears, and the demigods protecting the various planets His many arms. The god of death is His eyebrows, shame His lower lip, greed His upper lip, delusion His smile, and moonshine His teeth, while the trees are the almighty Puruṣa's bodily hairs, and the clouds the hair on His head.

9Just as one can determine the dimensions of an ordinary person of this world by measuring his various limbs, one can determine the dimensions of the Mahāpuruṣa by measuring the arrangement of the planetary systems within His universal form.

10Upon His chest the almighty, unborn Personality of Godhead bears the Kaustubha gem, which represents the pure spirit soul, along with the Śrīvatsa mark, which is the direct manifestation of this gem's expansive effulgence.

11-12His flower garland is His material energy, comprising various combinations of the modes of nature. His yellow garment is the Vedic meters, and His sacred thread the syllable om composed of three sounds. In the form of His two shark-shaped earrings, the Lord carries the processes of Sāṅkhya and yoga, and His crown, bestowing fearlessness on the inhabitants of all the worlds, is the supreme position of Brahmāloka.

13Ananta, the Lord's sitting place, is the unmanifest phase of material nature, and the Lord's lotus throne is the mode of goodness, endowed with religion and knowledge.

14-15The club the Lord carries is the chief element, prāṇa, incorporating the potencies of sensory, mental and physical strength. His excellent conchshell is the element water, His Sudarśana disc the element fire, and His sword, pure as the sky, the element ether. His shield embodies the mode of ignorance, His bow, named Śārṅga, time, and His arrow-filled quiver the working sensory organs.

16His arrows are said to be the senses, and His chariot is the active, forceful mind. His external appearance is the subtle objects of perception, and the gestures of His hands are the essence of all purposeful activity.

17The sun globe is the place where the Supreme Lord is worshiped, spiritual initiation is the means of purification for the spirit soul, and rendering devotional service to the Personality of Godhead is the process for eradicating all one's sinful reactions.

18Playfully carrying a lotus, which represents the various opulences designated by the word bhaga, the Supreme Lord accepts service from a pair of cāmara fans, which are religion and fame.

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19O brāhmaṇas, the Lord's umbrella is His spiritual abode, Vaikuṅṭha, where there is no fear, and Garuḍa, who carries the Lord of sacrifice, is the threefold Veda.

20The goddess of fortune, Śrī, who never leaves the Lord's side, appears with Him in this world as the representation of His internal potency. Viṣvaksena, the chief among His personal associates, is known to be the personification of the Paṣcarātra and other tantras. And the Lord's eight doorkeepers, headed by Nanda, are His mystic perfections, beginning with aṇimā.

21Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are the names of the direct personal expansions of the Supreme Godhead, O brāhmaṇa Śaunaka.

22One can conceive of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in terms of awakened consciousness, sleep and deep sleep which function respectively through external objects, the mind and material intelligence and also in terms of the fourth, transcendental level of consciousness, which is characterized by pure knowledge.

23The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, thus appears in four personal expansions, each exhibiting major limbs, minor limbs, weapons and ornaments. Through these distinct features, the Lord maintains the four phases of existence.

24O best of brāhmaṇas, He alone is the self-luminous, original source of the Vedas, perfect and complete in His own glory. By His material energy He creates, destroys and maintains this entire universe. Because He is the performer of various material functions, He is sometimes described as materially divided, yet He always remains transcendently situated in pure knowledge. Those who are dedicated to Him in devotion can realize Him to be their true Soul.

25O Kṛṣṇa, O friend of Arjuna, O chief among the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, You are the destroyer of those political parties that are disturbing elements on this earth. Your prowess never deteriorates. You are the proprietor of the transcendental abode, and Your most sacred glories, which are sung by Vṛndāvana's cowherd men and women and their servants, bestow all auspiciousness just by being heard. O Lord, please protect Your devotees.

26Anyone who rises early in the morning and, with a purified mind fixed upon the Mahāpuruṣa, quietly chants this description of His characteristics will realize Him as the Supreme Absolute Truth residing within the heart.

27-28Śrī Śaunaka said: Please describe to us, who have great faith in your words, the different sets of seven personal features and associates the sun-god exhibits during each month, along with their names and activities. The associates of the sun-god, who serve their lord, are personal expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari in His feature as the presiding deity of the sun.

29Sūta Gosvāmī said: The sun travels among all the planets and thus regulates their movements. It has been created by Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Soul of all embodied beings, through His beginningless material energy.

30The sun-god, being nondifferent from Lord Hari, is the one soul of all the worlds and their original creator. He is the source of all the ritualistic activities prescribed in the Vedas and has been given many names by the Vedic sages.

31Being the source of the material energy, the Personality of Godhead Lord Hari in His expansion as the sun-god is described in nine aspects, O Śaunaka: the time, the place, the endeavor, the performer, the instrument, the specific ritual, the scripture, the paraphernalia of worship and the result to be achieved.

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32The Supreme Personality of Godhead, manifesting His potency of time as the sun-god, travels about in each of the twelve months, beginning with Madhu, to regulate planetary motion within the universe. Traveling with the sun-god in each of the twelve months is a different set of six associates.

33My dear sage, Dhātā as the sun-god, Kṛtasthalī as the Apsarā, Heti as the Rākṣasa, Vāsuki as the Nāga, Rathakṛt as the Yakṣa, Pulastya as the sage and Tumburu as the Gandharva rule the month of Madhu.

34Aryamā as the sun-god, Pulaha as the sage, Athaujā as the Yakṣa, Praheti as the Rākṣasa, Puṣjikasthalī as the Apsarā, Nārada as the Gandharva and Kacchanīra as the Nāga rule the month of Mādhava.

35Mitra as the sun-god, Atri as the sage, Pauruṣeya as the Rākṣasa, Takṣaka as the Nāga, Menakā as the Apsarā, Hāhā as the Gandharva and Rathasvana as the Yakṣa rule the month of Śukra.

36Vasiṣṭha as the sage, Varuṇa as the sun-god, Rambhā as the Apsarā, Sahajanya as the Rākṣasa, Hūhū as the Gandharva, Śukra as the Nāga and Citrasvana as the Yakṣa rule the month of Śuci.

37Indra as the sun-god, Viśvāvasu as the Gandharva, Śrotā as the Yakṣa, Elāpatra as the Nāga, Aṅgirā as the sage, Pramlocā as the Apsarā and Varya as the Rākṣasa rule the month of Nabhas.

38Vivasvān as the sun-god, Ugrasena as the Gandharva, Vyāghra as the Rākṣasa, Āsāraṇa as the Yakṣa, Bhṛgu as the sage, Anumlocā as the Apsarā and Śaṅkhapāla as the Nāga rule the month of Nabhasya.

39Pūṣā as the sun-god, Dhanaṣṭya as the Nāga, Vāta as the Rākṣasa, Suṣeṇa as the Gandharva, Suruci as the Yakṣa, Ghṛtācī as the Apsarā and Gautama as the sage rule the month of Tapas.

40Ṛtu as the Yakṣa, Varcā as the Rākṣasa, Bharadvāja as the sage, Parjanya as the sun-god, Senajit as the Apsarā, Viśva as the Gandharva and Airāvata as the Nāga rule the month known as Tapasya.

41Amśu as the sun-god, Kaśyapa as the sage, Tārksya as the Yakṣa, Ṛtasena as the Gandharva, Urvaśī as the Apsarā, Vidyucchatru as the Rākṣasa and Mahāśaṅkha as the Nāga rule the month of Sahas.

42Bhaga as the sun-god, Sphūrja as the Rākṣasa, Ariṣṭanemi as the Gandharva, Ūṛṇa as the Yakṣa, Āyur as the sage, Karkoṭaka as the Nāga and Pūrvacitti as the Apsarā rule the month of Puṣya.

43Tvaṣṭā as the sun-god; Jamadagni, the son of Ṛcīka, as the sage; Kambalāśva as the Nāga; Tilottamā as the Apsarā; Brahmāpeta as the Rākṣasa; Śatajit as the Yakṣa; and Dhṛtarāṣṭra as the Gandharva maintain the month of Iṣa.

44Viṣṇu as the sun-god, Aśvatara as the Nāga, Rambhā as the Apsarā, Sūryavarcā as the Gandharva, Satyajit as the Yakṣa, Viśvāmitra as the sage and Makhāpeta as the Rākṣasa rule the month of Ūrja.

45All these personalities are the opulent expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, in the form of the sun-god. These deities take away all the sinful reactions of those who remember them each day at dawn and sunset.

46Thus, throughout the twelve months, the lord of the sun travels in all directions with his six types of associates, disseminating among the inhabitants of this universe purity of consciousness for both this life and the next.

47-48While the sages glorify the sun-god with the hymns of the Sāma, R̥g and Yajur Vedas, which reveal his identity, the Gandharvas also sing his praises and the Apsarās dance before his chariot. The Nāgas arrange the chariot ropes and the Yakṣas harness the horses to the chariot, while the powerful Rākṣasas push from behind.

49Facing the chariot, the sixty thousand brāhmaṇa sages known as Vālakhilyas travel in front and offer prayers to the almighty sun-god with Vedic mantras.

50For the protection of all the worlds, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who is unborn and without beginning or end, thus expands Himself during each day of Brahmā into these specific categories of His personal representations.

SB 12.12: The Topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Summarized

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Offering my obeisances to the supreme religious principle, devotional service; to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme creator; and to all the brāhmaṇas, I shall now describe the eternal principles of religion.

2O great sages, I have narrated to you the wonderful pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, as you inquired about them from me. Hearing such narrations is the suitable engagement for a person who is actually a human being.

3This literature fully glorifies the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who removes all His devotees' sinful reactions. The Lord is glorified as Nārāyaṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa and the Lord of the Sātvatas.

4This literature describes the mystery of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the source of the creation and annihilation of this universe. Also presented are divine knowledge of Him together with the process of its cultivation, and the transcendental realization one achieves.

5The following topics are also narrated: the process of devotional service together with its subsidiary feature of renunciation, and the histories of Mahārāja Parīkṣit and the sage Nārada.

6Also described are saintly King Parīkṣit's sitting down to fast until death in response to the curse of a brāhmaṇa's son, and the conversations between Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is the best of all brāhmaṇas.

7The Bhāgavatam explains how one can attain liberation at the time of death by practicing fixed meditation in yoga. It also contains a discussion between Nārada and Brahmā, an enumeration of the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and a description of how the universe was created in progressive sequence, beginning from the unmanifest stage of material nature.

8This scripture also relates the discussions Vidura had with Uddhava and with Maitreya, inquiries about the subject matter of this Purāṇa, and the winding up of creation within the body of the Supreme Lord at the time of annihilation.

9The creation effected by the agitation of the modes of material nature, the seven stages of evolution by elemental transformation, and the construction of the universal egg, from which arises the universal form of the Supreme Lord—all these are thoroughly described.

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10Other topics include the subtle and gross movements of time, the generation of the lotus from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the killing of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa when the earth was delivered from the Garbhodaka Ocean.

11The Bhāgavatam also describes the creation of demigods, animals and demoniac species of life; the birth of Lord Rudra; and the appearance of Svāyambhuva Manu from the half-man, half-woman Īśvara.

12Also related are the appearance of the first woman, Śatarūpā, who was the excellent consort of Manu, and the offspring of the pious wives of Prajāpati Kardama.

13The Bhāgavatam describes the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the exalted sage Kapila and records the conversation between that greatly learned soul and His mother, Devahūti.

14-15Also described are the progeny of the nine great brāhmaṇas, the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice, and the history of Dhruva Mahārāja, followed by the histories of King Pṛthu and King Prācīnabarhi, the discussion between Prācīnabarhi and Nārada, and the life of Mahārāja Priyavrata. Then, O brāhmaṇas, the Bhāgavatam tells of the character and activities of King Nābhi, Lord Rṣabha and King Bharata.

16The Bhāgavatam gives an elaborate description of the earth's continents, regions, oceans, mountains and rivers. Also described are the arrangement of the celestial sphere and the conditions found in the subterranean regions and in hell.

17The rebirth of Prajāpati Dakṣa as the son of the Pracetās, and the progeny of Dakṣa's daughters, who initiated the races of demigods, demons, human beings, animals, serpents, birds and so on all this is described.

18O brāhmaṇas, also recounted are the births and deaths of Vṛtrāsura and of Diti's sons Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu, as well as the history of the greatest of Diti's descendants, the exalted soul Prahlāda.

19The reign of each Manu, the liberation of Gajendra, and the special incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu in each manvantara, such as Lord Hayaśīrṣā, are described as well.

20The Bhāgavatam also tells of the appearances of the Lord of the universe as Kūrma, Matsya, Narasimha and Vāmana, and of the demigods' churning of the Milk Ocean to obtain nectar.

21An account of the great battle fought between the demigods and the demons, a systematic description of the dynasties of various kings, and narrations concerning Ikṣvāku's birth, his dynasty and the dynasty of the pious Sudyumna all are presented within this literature.

22Also related are the histories of Ilā and Tārā, and the description of the descendants of the sun-god, including such kings as Śaśāda and Nṛga.

23The histories of Sukanyā, Śaryāti, the intelligent Kakutstha, Khaṭvāṅga, Māndhātā, Saubhari and Sagara are narrated.

24The Bhāgavatam narrates the sanctifying pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, the King of Kośala, and also explains how King Nimi abandoned his material body. The appearance of the descendants of King Janaka is also mentioned.

25-26The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes how Lord Paraśurāma, the greatest descendant of

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Bhṛgu, annihilated all the kṣatriyas on the face of the earth. It further recounts the lives of glorious kings who appeared in the dynasty of the moon-godkings such as Aila, Yayāti, Nahuṣa, Duṣmanta's son Bharata, Śāntanu and Śāntanu's son Bhīṣma. Also described is the great dynasty founded by King Yadu, the eldest son of Yayāti.

27How Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Lord of the universe, descended into this Yadu dynasty, how He took birth in the home of Vasudeva, and how He then grew up in Gokulaall this is described in detail.

28-29Also glorified are the innumerable pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the demons, including His childhood pastimes of sucking out Pūtanā's life air along with her breast milk, breaking the cart, trampling down Tṛṇāvarta, killing Bakāsura, Vatsāsura and Aghāsura, and the pastimes He enacted when Lord Brahmā hid His calves and cowherd boyfriends in a cave.

30The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam tells how Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma killed the demon Dhenukāsura and his companions, how Lord Balarāma destroyed Pralambāsura, and also how Kṛṣṇa saved the cowherd boys from a raging forest fire that had encircled them.

31-33The chastisement of the serpent Kāliya; the rescue of Nanda Mahārāja from a great snake; the severe vows performed by the young gopīs, who thus satisfied Lord Kṛṣṇa; the mercy He showed the wives of the Vedic brāhmaṇas, who felt remorse; the lifting of Govardhana Hill followed by the worship and bathing ceremony performed by Indra and the Surabhi cow; Lord Kṛṣṇa's nocturnal pastimes with the cowherd girls; and the killing of the foolish demons Śaṅkhacūḍa, Ariṣṭa and Keśīall these pastimes are elaborately recounted.

34The Bhāgavatam describes the arrival of Akrūra, the subsequent departure of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the lamentation of the gopīs and the touring of Mathurā.

35Also narrated are how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, the wrestlers Muṣṭika and Cāṇūra, and Kaṁsa and other demons, as well as how Kṛṣṇa brought back the dead son of His spiritual master, Sāndīpani Muni.

36Then, O brāhmaṇas, this scripture recounts how Lord Hari, while residing in Mathurā in the company of Uddhava and Balarāma, performed pastimes for the satisfaction of the Yadu dynasty.

37Also described are the annihilation of each of the many armies brought by Jarāsandha, the killing of the barbarian king Kālayavana and the establishment of Dvārakā City.

38This work also describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa brought from heaven the pārijāta tree and the Sudharmā assembly hall, and how He kidnapped Rukmiṇī by defeating all His rivals in battle.

39Also narrated are how Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the battle with Bāṇāsura, defeated Lord Śiva by making him yawn, how the Lord cut off Bāṇāsura's arms, and how He killed the master of Prāgiyotiṣapura and then rescued the young princesses held captive in that city.

40-41There are descriptions of the powers and the deaths of the King of Cedi, Pauṇḍraka, Śālva, the foolish Dantavakra, Śambara, Dvividya, Pīṭha, Mura, Paṣcajana and other demons, along with a description of how Vārāṇasī was burned to the ground. The Bhāgavatam also recounts how Lord Kṛṣṇa relieved the earth's burden by engaging the Pāṇḍavas in the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

42-43How the Lord withdrew His own dynasty on the pretext of the brāhmaṇas' curse;

Vasudeva's conversation with Nārada; the extraordinary conversation between Uddhava and Kṛṣṇa, which reveals the science of the self in complete detail and elucidates the religious principles of human society; and then how Lord Kṛṣṇa gave up this mortal world by His own mystic power the Bhāgavatam narrates all these events.

44 This work also describes people's characteristics and behavior in the different ages, the chaos men experience in the Age of Kali, the four kinds of annihilation and the three kinds of creation.

45 There are also an account of the passing away of the wise and saintly King Viṣṇurāta [Parīkṣit], an explanation of how Śrīla Vyāsadeva disseminated the branches of the Vedas, a pious narration concerning Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, and a description of the detailed arrangement of the Lord's universal form and His form as the sun, the soul of the universe.

46 Thus, O best of the brāhmaṇas, I have explained herein what you have inquired from me. This literature has glorified in full detail the activities of the Lord's pastime incarnations.

47 If when falling, slipping, feeling pain or sneezing one involuntarily cries out in a loud voice, "Obeisances to Lord Hari!" one will be automatically freed from all his sinful reactions.

48 When people properly glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead or simply hear about His power, the Lord personally enters their hearts and cleanses away every trace of misfortune, just as the sun removes the darkness or as a powerful wind drives away the clouds.

49 Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless. Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord are actually truthful, auspicious and pious.

50 Those words describing the glories of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are attractive, relishable and ever fresh. Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind, and they dry up the ocean of misery.

51 Those words that do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows, and are never resorted to by those situated in transcendental knowledge. The pure and saintly devotees take interest only in topics glorifying the infallible Supreme Lord.

52 On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes and so on of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.

53 Knowledge of self-realization, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible [God]. What, then, is the use of even the most properly performed fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilized for the devotional service of the Lord?

54 The great endeavor one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the varṇāśrama system, in performing austerities, and in hearing from the Vedas culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. But by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet.

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55 Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and awards the greatest good fortune. It purifies the heart and bestows devotion for the Supreme Soul, along with knowledge enriched with realization and renunciation.

56 O most eminent of brāhmaṇas, you are all indeed extremely fortunate, since you have already placed within your hearts Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller and the ultimate Soul of all existence beyond whom there is no other god. You have undeviating love for Him, and thus I request you to worship Him.

57 I also have now been fully reminded of the science of God, which I previously heard from the mouth of the great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī. I was present in the assembly of great sages who heard him speak to King Parīkṣit as the monarch sat fasting until death.

58 O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described to you the glories of the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, whose extraordinary activities are most worthy of glorification. This narration destroys all that is inauspicious.

59 One who with undeviating attention constantly recites this literature at every moment of every hour, as well as one who faithfully hears even one verse or half a verse or a single line or even half a line, certainly purifies his very self.

60 One who hears this Bhāgavatam on the Ekādaśī or Dvādaśī day is assured of long life, and one who recites it with careful attention while fasting is purified of all sinful reactions.

61 One who controls his mind, fasts at the holy places Puṣkara, Mathurā or Dvārakā, and studies this scripture will be freed from all fear.

62 Upon the person who glorifies this Purāṇa by chanting or hearing it, the demigods, sages, Siddhas, Pitās, Manus and kings of the earth bestow all desirable things.

63 By studying this Bhāgavatam, a brāhmaṇa can enjoy the same rivers of honey, ghee and milk he enjoys by studying the hymns of the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas.

64 A brāhmaṇa who diligently reads this essential compilation of all the Purāṇas will go to the supreme destination, which the Supreme Lord Himself has herein described.

65 A brāhmaṇa who studies the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam achieves firm intelligence in devotional service, a king who studies it gains sovereignty over the earth, a vaiśya acquires great treasure and a śūdra is freed from sinful reactions.

66 Lord Hari, the supreme controller of all beings, annihilates the accumulated sins of the Kali age, yet other literatures do not constantly glorify Him. But that Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing in His innumerable personal expansions, is abundantly and constantly described throughout the various narrations of this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

67 I bow down to that unborn and infinite Supreme Soul, whose personal energies effect the creation, maintenance and destruction of the material universe. Even Brahmā, Indra, Śaṅkara and the other lords of the heavenly planets cannot fathom the glories of that infallible Personality of Godhead.

68 I offer my obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the eternal Lord and the leader of all other deities, who by evolving His nine material energies has arranged within Himself the abode of all moving and nonmoving creatures, and who is always situated in pure, transcendental consciousness.

69Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the son of Vyāsadeva, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. It is he who defeats all inauspicious things within this universe. Although in the beginning he was absorbed in the happiness of Brahman realization and was living in a secluded place, giving up all other types of consciousness, he became attracted by the pleasing, most melodious pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He therefore mercifully spoke this supreme Purāṇa, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the bright light of the Absolute Truth and which describes the activities of the Lord.

SB 12.13: The Glories of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

1Sūta Gosvāmī said: Unto that personality whom Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise by chanting transcendental hymns and reciting the Vedas with all their corollaries, pada-kramas and Upaniṣads, to whom the chanters of the Sāma Veda always sing, whom the perfected yogīs see within their minds after fixing themselves in trance and absorbing themselves within Him, and whose limit can never be found by any demigod or demon unto that Supreme Personality of Godhead I offer my humble obeisances.

2When the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as Lord Kūrma, a tortoise, His back was scratched by the sharp-edged stones lying on massive, whirling Mount Mandara, and this scratching made the Lord sleepy. May you all be protected by the winds caused by the Lord's breathing in this sleepy condition. Ever since that time, even up to the present day, the ocean tides have imitated the Lord's inhalation and exhalation by piously coming in and going out.

3Now please hear a summation of the verse length of each of the Purāṇas. Then hear of the prime subject and purpose of this Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the proper method of giving it as a gift, the glories of such gift-giving, and finally the glories of hearing and chanting this literature.

4-9The Brahma Purāṇa consists of ten thousand verses, the Padma Purāṇa of fifty-five thousand, Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa of twenty-three thousand, the Śiva Purāṇa of twenty-four thousand and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam of eighteen thousand. The Nārada Purāṇa has twenty-five thousand verses, the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa nine thousand, the Agni Purāṇa fifteen thousand four hundred, the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa fourteen thousand five hundred, the Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa eighteen thousand and the Liṅga Purāṇa eleven thousand. The Varāha Purāṇa contains twenty-four thousand verses, the Skanda Purāṇa eighty-one thousand one hundred, the Vāmana Purāṇa ten thousand, the Kūrma Purāṇa seventeen thousand, the Matsya Purāṇa fourteen thousand, the Garuḍa Purāṇa nineteen thousand and the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa twelve thousand. Thus the total number of verses in all the Purāṇas is four hundred thousand. Eighteen thousand of these, once again, belong to the beautiful Bhāgavatam.

10It was to Lord Brahmā that the Supreme Personality of Godhead first revealed the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in full. At the time, Brahmā, frightened by material existence, was sitting on the lotus flower that had grown from the Lord's navel.

11-12From beginning to end, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is full of narrations that encourage renunciation of material life, as well as nectarean accounts of Lord Hari's transcendental pastimes, which give ecstasy to the saintly devotees and demigods. This Bhāgavatam is the essence of all Vedānta philosophy because its subject matter is the Absolute Truth, which, while nondifferent from the spirit soul, is the ultimate reality, one without a second. The goal of this literature is exclusive devotional service unto that Supreme Truth.

13If on the full moon day of the month of Bhādra one places Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam on a golden throne and gives it as a gift, he will attain the supreme transcendental destination.

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14 All other Purāṇic scriptures shine forth in the assembly of saintly devotees only as long as that great ocean of nectar, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, is not heard.

15 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is declared to be the essence of all Vedānta philosophy. One who has felt satisfaction from its nectarean mellow will never be attracted to any other literature.

16 Just as the Gaṅgā is the greatest of all rivers, Lord Acyuta the supreme among deities and Lord Śambhu [Śiva] the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas, so Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the greatest of all Purāṇas.

17 O brāhmaṇas, in the same way that the city of Kāśī is unexcelled among holy places, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is supreme among all the Purāṇas.

18 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the spotless Purāṇa. It is most dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it describes the pure and supreme knowledge of the paramahamsas. This Bhāgavatam reveals the means for becoming free from all material work, together with the processes of transcendental knowledge, renunciation and devotion. Anyone who seriously tries to understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, who properly hears and chants it with devotion, becomes completely liberated.

19 I meditate upon that pure and spotless Supreme Absolute Truth, who is free from suffering and death and who in the beginning personally revealed this incomparable torchlight of knowledge to Brahmā. Brahmā then spoke it to the sage Nārada, who narrated it to Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa. Śrīla Vyāsa revealed this Bhāgavatam to the greatest of sages, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and Śukadeva mercifully spoke it to Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

20 We offer our obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vāsudeva, the all-pervading witness, who mercifully explained this science to Brahmā when he anxiously desired salvation.

21 I offer my humble obeisances to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the best of mystic sages and a personal manifestation of the Absolute Truth. He saved Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was bitten by the snake of material existence.

22 O Lord of lords, O master, please grant us pure devotional service at Your lotus feet, life after life.

23 I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, Hari, the congregational chanting of whose holy names destroys all sinful reactions, and the offering of obeisances unto whom relieves all material suffering.

Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana

Srimad Bhagavata Mahatmya

Uddhav speaking Srimad Bhagavatam to Queens of Lord Krishna

Chapter One

Śāṅḍilya Muni Describes Vrajabhūmi

Śrī Vyāsadeva said: In order to relish the mellows of devotional service, we continually offer our obeisances unto Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose eternal form is full of knowledge and bliss. He is supremely enchanting and the essence of all that is beautiful. He always showers unlimited happiness on the living entities by attracting them with the qualities of His beauty and sweetness. He is the cause of the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of innumerable universes.

The sages of Naimiṣāraṇya headed by Śaunaka, who are expert in relishing the nectarean topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, offered obeisances and asked the following question to Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī, who possesses all knowledge.

Śaunaka said: O best of the sages, after the great King Yudhiṣṭhira installed Śrī Vajranābha (the grandson of Pradyumna) at Mathurā, and Parīkṣit (his own grandson) at Hastināpura and then left to go back to Godhead, what did King Vajranābha and Mahārāja Parīkṣit do?

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: Before reciting this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the very means of conquest, one should offer respectful obeisances unto the Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, unto Nara-nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, the supermost human being, unto mother Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, and unto Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the author.

O great sages headed by Śaunaka, after Yudhiṣṭhira went back to Godhead, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, desiring to see Vajranābha, went to Mathurā one day.

Vajranābha's heart was filled with affection when he heard that Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was equal to his own father, was coming to see him. He went out of the city, fell at Mahārāja Parīkṣit's feet, and then brought him to his palace.

The great hero Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was always absorbed in thoughts of Lord Kṛṣṇa, lovingly embraced Vajranābha. They entered the inner palace and offered obeisances to Rohiṇī, the chief of Lord Kṛṣṇa's one hundred and eight wives.

The wives welcomed the King according to custom. Mahārāja Parīkṣit then happily sat on a comfortable seat, and after resting a while he spoke to Vajranābha.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: Dear Vajranābha! Your father and grandfather saved my father and grandfather from great dangers. I was also fully protected by your great-grandfather, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even if I wanted to repay their kindness, I would never be able to. Therefore I humbly request you to happily engage your subordinates in the affairs of the state. You should never worry about protecting your treasury, expanding your army, or subduing your enemies. Simply engage yourself in the service of your mothers.

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Please tell me what is the cause of your distress and rest assured that I will dispel all your troubles.

Hearing Mahārāja Parīkṣit's words, Vajranābha was greatly pleased and he replied:

Mahārāja! Whatever you have told me is quite proper. Your father has greatly obliged me by instructing me in the science of archery. Therefore I have not even the slightest worry. By his mercy I have become expert in the military science of the kṣatriyas. I have only one problem. Please consider it.

Although I've been installed as the King of Mathurā, I feel like I am living in a secluded forest. The happiness of a kingdom is due to the people that live there, and I have no idea where the residents of this place have gone.

Hearing Vajranābha's words, Mahārāja Parīkṣit called for Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi in order to clear Vajranābha's doubts. Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi had previously acted as the priest for Nanda Mahārāja and the cowherd men. When Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi received the message from Parīkṣit Mahārāja, he left his āśrama and came before the kings. Vajranābha welcomed the best of sages with the proper ceremonies and had sit him on an elevated seat. Parīkṣit Mahārāja told Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi everything that Vajranābha had just said. The sage affectionately comforted them with the following words.

Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi said: Dear Parīkṣit and Vajranābha! I will tell you the secret of Vrajabhūmi. Listen carefully. The meaning of the word “Vraja” is all-pervasive. According to ancient opinions, this land is named Vraja because it is all-pervasive. This land is an all-pervasive spiritual manifestation, situated beyond the three modes of material nature. Therefore this is called Vraja. This land is ever-blissful, effulgent, indestructible, and the abode of liberated souls. Dear kings, in this land of Vraja the self-realized souls and devotees, who relish love of God, constantly experience Kṛṣṇa, whose form is sac-cid-ānanda. Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the daughter of Mahārāja Vṛṣabhanu, is like the ātmā of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja. She eternally enjoys pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, and therefore the devotees expert in enjoying transcendental mellows call Kṛṣṇa ātmārāma. The meaning of the word kāma is desire. In Vraja, Kṛṣṇa's only desire is to engage in pastimes with the cows, and the cowherd boys and girls. Because He always achieves the fulfillment of this desire, He is called āptakāma. These pastimes of the Lord are beyond material nature. Whenever the Lord enjoys His pastimes in this world, even ordinary people are benefited. The creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the material world are carried out respectively by the qualities of passion, goodness, and ignorance. In this way, two types of pastimes of Govinda—transcendental and ordinary—are manifested. His transcendental pastimes are self-evident. This means that these pastimes are relished in Vraja by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the topmost expert in loving exchanges. The ordinary pastimes consist of delivering the fallen souls and minimizing the burden of the earth in Vraja, Mathurā, and Dvārakā. There cannot be ordinary pastimes without transcendental pastimes. Ordinary pastimes have no entrance into the transcendental pastimes. The pastimes experienced by the two of you are ordinary pastimes. The jurisdiction of the ordinary pastimes stretches from this planet up to the heavenly planets, and Mathurā-maṅḍala is situated within this planet. The famous Vrajabhūmi is situated in this area, and the Lord's confidential pastimes are enacted here. Sometimes these pastimes are manifest to the devotees whose hearts are filled with

devotion. At the end of the Dvāpara-yuga in the twenty-eighth yuga cycle, when the Lord's associates who are qualified in the conjugal relationship assemble together, the Lord and His intimate associates descend, just as He recently enacted here. In this way the Lord incarnates who He desires to relish His pastimes with His intimate associates. At that time all the demigods and other devotees also incarnate with the Lord.

In these pastimes there were three kinds of devotees present. There is no doubt about it. Of these three kinds of devotees, the first are the Lord's intimate eternal associates, the second are those aspiring to become eternal associates, and the third are the demigods and their expansions whom the Lord has previously already sent to Dvārakā.

Now the demigods who had appeared as Yādavas have been sent by the Lord back to their duties in the heavenly planets through the brāhmaṇa's curse in the Lord's mausala-līlā. And the Lord awarded spiritual forms to the devotees who aspired to become His eternal associates. The Lord then brought these devotees together with His intimate eternal associates of the vāstavī, spiritual pastimes and they thus disappeared from the vision of the ordinary people.

Therefore, common people, who are situated in the vyavaharika pastimes, are unqualified to enter the Lord's eternal pastimes and see the eternal associates of the vāstavī pastimes. That is why this place appears to be devoid of people.

Therefore Vajranābha, you should not worry in the least. By following my instructions and establishing many towns here, you will fulfill all your desires. Wherever Lord Kṛṣṇa has performed His pastimes you should establish towns named after the particular pastime that was performed at that place. In this way you can render very nice service to the transcendental land of Vraja.

Establish your domain at Govardhana, Dirghapura (Deeg), Mathurā, Mahāvana, Nandagrāma (Nandagaon), and Bṛhatsanu (Varṣāṇā). Reside in these pastime sites of Lord Kṛṣṇa and engage in the service of the rivers, mountains, kuṇḍas, lakes, and kuñjas of Vraja, for by doing so you will be happy and the citizens of your kingdom will prosper. This eternal, cognizant, blissful land of Vraja should be served by you by all efforts. By my blessings you will properly identify all of the places of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. O Vajranābha, by continually serving Vraja in this way, one day you will meet Śrī Uddhava. Then he will instruct you and your mothers in the mysteries of Vraja and the pastimes of the Lord.”

After instructing Vajranābha and Parīkṣit in this way, Śaṅḍilya, the best of the ṛṣis, returned to his āśrama while remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa. Parīkṣit and Vajranābha felt great ecstasy after hearing his instructions.

Chapter Two **Parīkṣit and Kṛṣṇa's Wives, While Chanting the Glories** **Of the Lord, Met Uddhava**

The sages said: O Sūta Gosvāmī, please tell us what Mahārāja Parīkṣit and King Vajranābha did after the best of the munis, Śaṅḍilya, returned to his āśrama.

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Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parīkṣit brought thousands of prominent brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas from Indraprastha and repopulated Mathurā.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit gave respect to the brāhmaṇas and monkeys who were already residing there because he understood they are dear to the Lord. With the help of Mahārāja Parīkṣit and by the mercy of Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi, Vajranābha gradually searched out the sites where Kṛṣṇa had enjoyed pastimes with His beloved cowherd boyfriends and girlfriends. After properly ascertaining the pastime site, he named the site according to the pastime that was performed there. He thus established and named various towns, kuṇḍas, wells, kuñjas, and gardens, and he established many Śiva temples. He established Deities of the Lord such as Govindadeva and Harideva, and his entire kingdom became blissful because devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa was preached everywhere. The citizens always engaged in glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus merged in an ocean of bliss, they praised the rule of King Vajranābha.

One day, Lord Kṛṣṇa's sixteen thousand queens, who were suffering due to separation, inquired without envy from their fellow wife, Kālindī, who they saw was happy.

Kṛṣṇa's Queens said: O beautiful Kālindī! Just as we are all Kṛṣṇa's wives, so are you. We are all continually burning in the fire of separation and our hearts are distressed with unhappiness due to His absence. But you are not in this condition, you are happy. Why is this? Please tell us the reason.

After understanding the pain of separation felt by her co-wives, Kālindī, with great compassion, smiled and spoke as follows:

Kālindī said: Śrī Rādhikā is the soul of Kṛṣṇa, who is known as ātmārāma. I am always engaged in Her service. Due to the influence of this service, the pain of separation could not touch me. All of Kṛṣṇa's consorts are expansions of Śrī Rādhikā. And because Kṛṣṇa is always engaged in enjoying with Śrī Rādhikā, all of Kṛṣṇa's other consorts are automatically being enjoyed by Him. Kṛṣṇa is nondifferent from Śrī Rādhikā, and Śrī Rādhikā is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. Their love is manifest in the form of Kṛṣṇa's flute. Śrī Candrāvalī Sakhi is a manifestation of the moonlike nails of Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra. Due to an excessive greed to serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Candrāvalī has not accepted any other form. But I have seen Śrī Rukmiṇī and other sakhis situated in Śrī Rādhikā. And you also have never been separated from Kṛṣṇa, but you are overwhelmed because this mystery is unknown to you. Previously, when Akrūra came to Vṛndāvana, the gopīs experienced similar feelings of separation, although actually that was not separation, it was simply a reflection of separation. But when Uddhava came and consoled them, their pain of separation was destroyed. Now if you are able to get the association of Uddhava, then you will also achieve the happiness of eternal pastimes with your beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: O sages! When Kṛṣṇa's queens were instructed in this way, they again addressed the ever-blissful Kālindī. At that time they all hankered for some way to meet Uddhava, so that they could all achieve the great fortune of eternal association with their beloved.

Kṛṣṇa's Queens said: O Sakhi, your life is glorious, because you have never experienced the distress of separation from the Lord of your life. We would also like to become Rādhā's

maidservants, just like you. But, O Kālindī, you have told us that all our desires would be fulfilled by meeting Uddhava, so please tell us how we can meet him.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing the words of her co-wives, Kālindī remembered Kṛṣṇa, who possesses sixty-four qualities in full. Just before Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to His supreme abode, He told His minister Uddhava that Badarikāśrama is a suitable place to engage in spiritual activities. Following that instruction, Uddhava stays there and instructs those who visit him in the same knowledge that was taught to him by the Lord. The Lord taught Uddhava about the mysteries of Vraja, where the fruits of spiritual practice are obtained. But since the personification of the fruits of spiritual practice, Lord Kṛṣṇa, has apparently left this place, Uddhava is also no longer seen here. Being desirous to associate with the dust of Vraja, however, Uddhava is certainly residing near Govardhana at Sakhīsthalī in the form of a creeper. Uddhava is the personification of Lord Kṛṣṇa's festivals. Therefore go to Kusuma-sarovara with Vajranābha and organize a festival there. Assemble the Lord's devotees and start a big festival by chanting the Lord's holy names and pastimes accompanied by vīṇās, flutes, and mṛdaṅgas.

In this way when the festival expands, Uddhava will certainly appear there. And by his mercy all your desires will be fulfilled.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing Kālindī speak these words Lord Kṛṣṇa's queens were greatly pleased. After they offered their respects to Kālindī they went and told Vajranābha and Parīkṣit everything that they had heard.

After hearing their narration, Mahārāja Parīkṣit was greatly pleased and accompanied them to Kusuma-sarovara and began organizing a festival there. They began a festival of nama sankīrtana at Sakhīsthalī, a short distance from Govardhana. As they glorified Lord Kṛṣṇa at that place where He always enjoys pastimes with His beloved, the daughter of Vṛṣabhanu, the place was transformed into an extraordinary scene. They became fully absorbed in glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa.

At that time, from amidst the grass, vines, and creepers Śrī Uddhava appeared before everyone. His complexion was bluish, and he wore yellow garments. He was decorated with a garland of forest flowers and guñjā, and he repeatedly glorified Kṛṣṇa, the lover of the gopīs. Then the beauty of the sankīrtana festival increased many times over just as when the moonshine falls on a crystal house. Similarly everyone was merged in an ocean of bliss by his appearance there, and they forgot what they were doing. When they regained their external consciousness, they saw Uddhava, who resembles Lord Kṛṣṇa, and by worshiping him, they fulfilled all their desires.

Chapter Three The Glories of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, The Speaker and the Hearer's Attainment of the Supreme Abode.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: Seeing everyone engaged in glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Uddhava offered his respects and embraced them. He spoke with Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

Śrī Uddhava said: O King, you are certainly glorious. Your desire has been fulfilled by your undivided devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, because your mind is absorbed in this saṅkīrtana festival. It is your great fortune that you have such incomparable affection for Vajranābha and Kṛṣṇa's queens. This is quite proper because Lord Kṛṣṇa has given you this body and power. Among the residents of Dvārakā, they are the most glorious. There is no doubt about it. Lord Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna to escort them to Vraja so that they could reside there. Illuminated by the effulgence of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's face, the moonlike mind of Lord Kṛṣṇa constantly illuminates Śrī Vṛndāvana, the site of Rādhā's pastimes. Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra is eternally complete. Thousands of spiritual sparks oscillate in all directions from His sixty-four qualities. The full moonlike Kṛṣṇa, who possesses sixty-four prominent qualities, is constantly illuminating this land of Vraja. O King, the right foot of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the residence of Vajranābha, who destroys the fear of his subordinates. In this incarnation, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has bewildered everyone through Yogamāyā. By her influence, they have forgotten their constitutional position and they appear miserable. There is no doubt about it. Without Kṛṣṇa manifesting in one's heart, no one can realise his constitutional position. Kṛṣṇa's manifestation within the hearts of the living entities has been covered by Māyā. When Lord Hari personally appears at the end of Dvāpara-yuga in the twenty-eighth yuga cycle and lifts the covering of Māyā, then He becomes manifest. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the time of those manifest pastimes has recently ended. Therefore I will now tell you the means of having Kṛṣṇa manifest within one's heart. When Lord Kṛṣṇa is unmanifest, He will appear from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Whenever and wherever the devotee Bhāgavata hears and recites the book Bhāgavata, at that time and at that place Lord Kṛṣṇa personally appears. Wherever a verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, or even a half-verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, is recited, Lord Kṛṣṇa and His beloved gopīs manifest there. After attaining a human birth in the land of Bharata, those who do not hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam due to sinful activities are committing suicide. A person who regularly hears or recites Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam delivers the forefathers of his wife, mother, and father.

By studying and hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, brāhmaṇas are enlightened with knowledge, kṣatriyas achieve victory over their enemies, vaiśyas acquire wealth, and śūdras are freed from disease. Women and lower class people all achieve the fulfillment of their desires. Therefore what fortunate person will not regularly hear and chant the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam?

After many lifetimes of performing pious activities, when a person achieves full perfection then he obtains the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. By reading Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam one's devotional sentiments are awakened and Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests within the heart.

Long ago, Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods, heard the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by the mercy of Sāṅkhyāyana Ṛṣi, and Bṛhaspati has narrated the same to me. I was therefore able to become the dear friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Bṛhaspati has told me one story. Please hear it from me. From this story one can know the method of hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from the proper authorities.

Bṛhaspati said: O Uddhava, when Lord Kṛṣṇa accepted the puruṣa incarnations and glanced over material nature to create, then the three personalities—Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva—appeared along with the three modes of material nature—sattva, raja, and tama. Lord Kṛṣṇa then assigned the work of creation, maintenance, and destruction to the three predominating deities. Lord Brahmā appeared from the lotus sprouted from the navel of the Lord.

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Lord Brahmā said: O Lord! I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. Because You lie in the transcendental water known as nāra, You are known as Nārāyaṇa. And as the original cause of everything You are ādi-puruṣa, the original person. O Lord, although I am sinful and full of the mode of passion, You have engaged me in the work of creation. But I pray for Your blessing that my engagement in the activities of creation will not be an impediment in my remembering Your lotus feet.

Bṛhaspati said: After Brahmā offered these prayers to Lord Nārāyaṇa, at that time, long ago, the Lord gave Brahmā the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and told him: “To achieve fulfillment of your desires, always serve this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.” On receiving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Brahmā was greatly pleased. In order to attain Lord Kṛṣṇa and penetrate the seven coverings, he recited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for seven days. All Brahmā's desires were fulfilled by serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for that seven day sacrifice. Since then he has always been engaged in expanding the creation and repeatedly reciting the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. As done by Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu also prayed for the fulfillment of His desires so that He could engage in maintaining the creation.

Lord Viṣṇu said: O Lord, I will accept the paths of pravṛtti and nirvṛtti due to the need for fruitive activities and philosophical knowledge. Following Your order, I will duly maintain the living entities. In due course of time, whenever there is a decline in religious principles, I will accept various incarnations in order to reestablish the principles of religion. I will certainly award the fruits of their sacrifice to those who desire material enjoyment, and I will award five kinds of liberation, beginning with sālōkya, to those who are renounced and desirous to achieve liberation. But please tell Me how to maintain My dear Lakṣmī and those who have no desire for the five kinds of liberation.

After hearing Viṣṇu's prayers, the primeval Lord, Nārāyaṇa, told Him: “In order to achieve the fulfillment of all Your desires, just recite Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.” Lord Viṣṇu was very pleased to receive this instruction from Lord Nārāyaṇa. He engaged every month along with Lakṣmīdevī in the recitation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Thus He was able to maintain the creation. Whenever Lord Viṣṇu recites Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lakṣmīdevī listens. This takes one full month. And whenever Lakṣmīdevī speaks Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and Viṣṇu listens, it takes two months to relish the mellows of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. At that time the taste of those topics become extremely palatable. The reason for this is that Viṣṇu is engaged in maintaining the creation, therefore He is preoccupied with many thoughts. But this is not the case with Lakṣmīdevī, who is fully peaceful. The topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are therefore more elaborately manifested in her heart.

Thereafter the Lord engaged Śiva in the work of annihilation. In order to expand his own ability, Śiva also prayed to the Lord.

Śrī Rudra said: O Lord of lords, I have the power to engage in three types of destruction—perpetual, occasional, and partial. But, O Lord, I have no power at all for the final destruction. For this reason I am very unhappy. I am therefore praying to You.

Bṛhaspati said: Hearing the prayers of Rudra, Lord Nārāyaṇa also instructed him on the topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Śrī Rudradeva then conquered the mode of ignorance just by serving

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Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Sadāśiva Rudra then recited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam over a period of one year. He thus attained the power of final destruction.

Śrī Uddhava said: I have heard these glories of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from the mouth of Śrī Bṛhaspati, my spiritual master. Now I offer my respectful obeisances to him for I have become happy by hearing the instructions of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. According to the Vaiṣṇava tradition, I served Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for just one month. Due to the influence of this service, I have become the dear friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and He therefore sent me to Vṛndāvana to serve his beloved gopīs. Although Kṛṣṇa eternally enjoys pastimes in Vṛndāvana, His beloved gopīs were afflicted by feelings of separation. He therefore sent me here to impart the teachings of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to the gopīs. The gopīs of Vraja were thus freed from the pains of separation by accepting the teachings of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam according to their own intelligence. Even though I do not understand the mystery of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, still I have experienced the wonder of this great literature. When the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa that He shall return to His own abode, at that time, under a banyan tree, the Lord personally taught me the mystery of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. As a result of that instruction my intelligence became fixed and I proceeded to Badarikāśrama and attained perfection. Since then I am living here in Vraja as a creeper.

O Parīkṣit, I am therefore living here at Nārada-kuṇḍa. The devotees will realise Lord Kṛṣṇa by serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Therefore I will explain Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for the benefit of the devotees of the Lord. This will be possible only with your help.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing this, Mahārāja Parīkṣit offered his obeisances to Uddhava and said to him: O Uddhava, servant of Lord Hari! You should certainly narrate Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Whatever is necessary for me to do in this regard, please order me.

Uddhava was most pleased on hearing Parīkṣit Mahārāja speak in this way and said: O King! Since Lord Kṛṣṇa has left this world, the influence of Kali-yuga has become very prominent. Whenever auspicious activities are being performed Kali certainly creates disturbances. Therefore you should go out and subdue the influence of Kali everywhere. I will remain here by your arrangement and recite Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for one month according to Vaiṣṇava tradition. The audience will thus relish the mellows of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and attain the Lord's eternal abode.

Hearing Śrī Uddhava's instructions, Mahārāja Parīkṣit was pleased by the thought of subduing Kali, but somewhat in anxiety he disclosed his mind to Uddhava.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O Prabhu! I am eager to bring Kali-yuga under my control as you have instructed, but then how will I hear the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam? I have also come to take shelter at your feet, so you should also be merciful to me.

Hearing the king's words, Uddhava said: O King, there is no need for you to be worried, for you are the most eligible candidate to receive the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. People in this world are always engaged in various kinds of fruitive activities and they do not even know the importance of hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. O King, by your mercy many people in this land of Bharata-varsa will achieve eternal happiness by hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The great sage Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is the representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja,

will recite Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to you. There is no doubt about it. O King, you will attain the eternal abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the king of Vraja, by hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam will then later be propagated throughout the world.

Therefore, O King, prepare yourself to subdue Kali.

After Uddhava spoke in this way, Mahārāja Parīkṣit offered obeisances to Uddhava and circumambulated him, and he then left to eradicate Kali's influence in all directions.

Vajranābha then installed his son, Pratibāhu, as the king of Mathurā. He stayed with his grandmothers simply for the purpose of hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Then at that place near Govardhana, Śrī Uddhava recited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for one month. While relishing the topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the listeners saw Kṛṣṇa manifest everywhere along with His transcendental pastimes. The listeners could see themselves taking part in those transcendental pastimes. Vajranābha saw himself situated at the right lotus foot of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus felt relief from the pains of separation and pleased with the beauty of that scene. All his grandmothers, headed by Rohiṇī, were most surprised to see themselves situated as the effulgence and portion of the moonlike Kṛṣṇa, who inaugurates the night of the rasa dance. Being cured of the disease of separation from their beloved life and soul, they entered their supreme destination.

Other people who were present there also disappeared and entered the Lord's eternal pastimes. They all enjoy pastimes with Kṛṣṇa in the kuñjas of Govardhana, the pasturing grounds and forest of Vṛndāvana. The devotees who are greedy for attaining the mellows of transcendental love can always see these pastimes.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: Whoever chants or hears these pastimes of attaining the Lord's lotus feet will certainly attain those lotus feet, and all his miseries from time immemorial will be destroyed forever.

Chapter Four The Characteristics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, The Symptoms of the Speaker And the Listener, and Establishing The Procedure for Hearing

The sages headed by Śaunaka said: O Sūta, may you live a long life and continue instructing us. Today we have heard the wonderful glories of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from your mouth. O Sūta, now please mercifully describe for us the characteristics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, its authenticity, the procedure for hearing, and the symptoms of the speaker and the listener.

Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said: The characteristics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and the Personality of Godhead are both eternal, full of knowledge and bliss.

You should know that whatever transcendental, sweet words come from the mouths of those whose hearts are attached to Kṛṣṇa, those statements are Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. You should also know that Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam consists of knowledge, realized knowledge, and the four limbs

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of devotional service, such as hearing and chanting. It is expert in eradicating the influence of *māyā*, the illusory energy.

Who can understand the authenticity of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the unlimited sound representation of the Lord? In the beginning of creation, Lord Hari spoke four verses to Lord Brahmā. O brāhmaṇas, only personalities such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are able to attain their desired goal by merging into the ocean of the unlimited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, others are able.

Whatever Śrīla Vedavyāsa has described in the conversation between Parīkṣit Mahārāja and Śukadeva Gosvāmī for the benefit of the less intelligent, that is known as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam consists of 18,000 verses, and it is the only shelter for those who are captured by the crocodile of Kali.

Now I will describe those who listen to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. There are two types of listeners—superior and inferior. The superior listeners are of four kinds—namely, *cātaka* bird, swan, parrot, and fish. And the inferior listeners are also of four kinds—wolf, *bhurunda* bird, bull, and camel.

Just as the *cātaka* bird does not take water from any source other than the raincloud, one who does not hear any scripture or book other than those related with Lord Kṛṣṇa is called a *cātaka* listener.

Just as the swan can extract milk from a mixture of milk and water, one who can extract the essential topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa while listening to various topics is called a swan listener.

Just as a parrot can recite to its master and others whatever it is taught, one who can nicely repeat the topics he has heard from the scriptures to his guru and other listeners is called a parrot listener.

Just as the fish that is situated in an ocean of condensed milk quietly drinks milk without blinking its eyes, one who quietly hears Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam while relishing the topics and staring unblinking at the speaker is called a fish listener.

Just as the cry of the wolf frightens the deer which is attracted by the sweet sound of a flute in the forest, the foolish listener whose loud noises create pain to the devotees engaged in hearing the sweet topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is called a wolf listener.

Just as the *bhurunda* bird that lives in the Himalayas tells others whatever instruction it has heard without practicing himself, one who teaches others but does not follow those instructions is called a *bhurunda* listener.

Just as the bull does not distinguish between eating sweet grapes or pungent oilcakes, the blind person who listens to everything but has no intelligence to discriminate between good and bad is called a bull listener.

Just as the camel rejects the sweet mango leaves and chews instead the bitter neem leaves, one who rejects the sweet narrations about the Lord and hears instead mundane topics is called a camel listener.

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Apart from these two categories of listeners, there are many further sub classifications such as bumblebees and asses which one should understand by the symptoms of their normal behavior.

Speakers say the topmost listener is he who comes before the speaker, offers due obeisances, and is eager and expert in hearing the pastimes of Lord Hari, after rejecting all types of mundane topics. He humbly engages in hearing with folded hands like a disciple, he has full faith in the Lord, he is attached to asking questions, and he always contemplates the subject he has heard. He is a dear friend of the Lord's devotees.

The topmost speakers, who are respected by all sages, are those whose hearts are attached to the Lord without hankering for anything else. They are the well-wishers of all, they are merciful to the fallen, and they are expert in learning the truth by various arguments.

Now, O brāhmaṇas, please hear the procedure for hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the land of Bharata. Simply by hearing these rules one enjoys everlasting happiness.

There are four kinds of service to the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—sattvic, rajasic, tamasic, and nirguṇa.

Enthusiastic service which is joyfully performed in seven days, like a pompous sacrifice with various types of worshipable ingredients and hard labor, is called rajasic bhāgavata-sevā.

Service which is peacefully performed over a month or two, while relishing the topics and thus increasing one's ecstasy, is called sattvic bhāgavata-sevā.

Service which continues for one year, which is performed lazily yet faithfully, which gives happiness, and in which both remembrance and forgetfulness are present, is called tamasic bhāgavata-sevā.

Service in which there is no consideration of time factor but continues on with love and devotion, is called nirguṇa bhāgavata-sevā.

Please know for certain that Mahārāja Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī performed nirguṇa bhāgavata-sevā. Although the hearing continued for only seven days, that was because Mahārāja Parīkṣit's life continued for that duration only.

One should hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in any place or in any way one desires—whether sattvic, rajasic, tamasic, or nirguṇa.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the only wealth of those who are completely devoid of material desires, and greedy to relish hearing and chanting the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the medicine to cure the material disease of those who are indifferent to the miseries of material existence and desire liberation. Therefore everyone should carefully serve Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

The karmīs, who are greedy for material enjoyment and advancement in material life, will attain everything they desire just by serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in Kali-yuga.

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In Kali-yuga it is extremely rare to attain perfection on the path of karma due to a lack of physical ability, wealth, and knowledge. Therefore those who wish auspiciousness should serve Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in all respects.

The topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are able to give one wealth, children, wife, elephants, horses, fame, palatial residences, and a kingdom without rivals.

By serving the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam one with material desires can enjoy all his desired results in this world and attain the abode of the Supreme Lord after giving up his body.

One should serve anyone absorbed in discussing the topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with one's body and wealth.

By serving those who are absorbed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, one can attain the results of serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

There are two types of reciters and listeners of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Some desire Kṛṣṇa and some desire material prosperity. Material prosperity refers to anything not related to Kṛṣṇa. So if the reciter and listener are of the same category, then the happiness from serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam increases.

If the reciter and the listener are not of the same category, then there is a contradiction and no result is attained. Such a situation is called *rasābhāsa*, or overlapping of mellows. But a person who desires Kṛṣṇa—whether as a speaker or listener—will certainly attain his goal, even if delayed.

The speaker and listener who desire wealth will attain their desired goal if they act under rules and regulations. But those transcendental speakers and listeners who desire Kṛṣṇa will undoubtedly attain their goal even if they do not follow the rules and regulations, because love of God is the only rule for such persons.

A person with material desires must rigidly follow all the rules through to completion. He should regularly take bath in the morning, and after performing his daily worship he should accept the *caraṇāmṛtā* of Lord Hari.

Thereafter the speaker or listener should worship their spiritual master and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with proper ingredients. They should hear and chant Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in a joyful mood.

One should take a vow of silence, and eat only milk or sweet rice. He should sleep on the ground, give up all anger and greed, and practice the vow of *brahmācārya*.

After finishing the recitation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, one should constantly chant the holy name of the Lord, and on the last day he should remain awake at night and then feed the *brāhmaṇas* and satisfy them with charity.

One should then worship his spiritual master after offering him cloth, ornaments, and cows. Anyone who renders service to the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam according to these regulations will surely achieve the fulfillment of all his desires.

A person with material desires can obtain a beautiful wife, children, kingdom, or wealth if he so desires. But such desires are a mockery to the stature of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the ripened fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literature. It has been bestowed to the world in this age of Kali by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī and has become more nectarean by the touch of his lips. It is the direct means of attaining Lord Kṛṣṇa, and it eternally bestows love of God.

Chapter Five Description of the Results of Hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and the Condition Of Those Who are Averse to Such Hearing

The Supreme Lord said: O Grandfather Brahmā, one should regularly hear the famous Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with faith. Know for certain that such hearing is the only means of satisfying Me.

One who daily reads Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam will attain with every syllable the results of giving a brown cow in charity.

One who daily reads or hears even a half or a quarter of a verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam attains the results of giving one thousand cows in charity.

My dear son, one who daily reads Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with full concentration attains the results of studying the eighteen Purāṇas.

Vaiṣṇavas like Prahlāda Mahārāja are always present wherever the topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are discussed. Those who worship Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are beyond the jurisdiction of Kali.

Those persons who worship the Vaiṣṇava literature Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in their house are freed from all sins and they become worshipable by even the demigods.

In the age of Kali, I become very pleased with those who regularly worship Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in their house and dance without fear.

O My dear son, as long as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is present in one's house, for that long his forefathers consume milk, ghee, honey, and water.

One who with devotion gives the gift of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to a Vaiṣṇava resides in My abode for millions of kalpas.

One who always worships Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in his house satisfies the demigods for the duration of one kalpa.

If even a half or a quarter of a verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is kept in one's house that is glorious. For what is the need of accumulating thousands of other literatures?

In Kali-yuga, one who does not keep Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in his house can never be delivered from the control of Yamarāja.

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In Kali-yuga, how can one be considered a Vaiṣṇava who does not keep Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in his house? He is more abominable than a caṇḍāla.

My dear son, lord of the universe. For My pleasure and the pleasure of the Vaiṣṇavas one should keep Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam with devotion.

In Kali-yuga, wherever the auspicious Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is recited, I reside, along with all the demigods.

My dear son, all the holy rivers, kuṇḍas, and lakes, all sacrifices, the seven sacred cities—Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā (Haridvāra), Kāśī, Kāñci, Avantī (Ujjain), and Dvārakā—and all the holy mountains are present where Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is discussed.

O lord of the universe, one should hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in order to attain fame, religiosity, victory, freedom from sin, or liberation.

By hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam one becomes religious and he lives a long life, free from disease and all sinful reactions.

O lord of the universe, I speak the truth: those who do not hear the topmost literature, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, or do not express happiness after hearing it are kept under Yamarāja's jurisdiction.

O My dear son, there is no one more sinful than one who does not go anywhere to hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, especially on the day of Ekādaśī.

I reside in the house of one who has kept there a verse, a half verse, or even a quarter of a verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

The purity one attains by hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam cannot be attained by visiting Badarikāśrama or taking bath in the confluence at Prayāga.

O four-headed Brahmā, I go wherever the topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are discussed, just as a cow spontaneously follows her calf.

I never leave one who enjoys speaking or hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. One who does not offer respects after seeing the auspicious Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam loses the pious credits he accumulated over the past year.

I am unlimitedly pleased with one who stands in respect and then offers obeisances upon seeing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

A person who circumambulates Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam achieves the results of an aśvamedha-yajña with every step. Of this there is no doubt.

!!All Glories to Sri Guru and Sri Gauranga!!