His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age 69, to fulfill his spiritual master’s request that he teach the science of Krishna consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India’s Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, travelling almost nonstop, Srila Prabhupada moulded his international society into a world-wide confederation of ashrams, schools, temples and farm communities. He passed away in 1977, in Vrindavana, the place most sacred to Lord Krishna. His disciples and followers are carrying forward the movement he started.

To know more about Srila Prabhupada visit www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada

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The Missing Technology

The Krishna consciousness movement teaches a science missing from the classrooms of even the world's best universities

By His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston—May 5, 1968

om ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurave namah

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.”

This prayer is offering respectful obeisances to the spiritual master. Why? Because the spiritual master is the person who opens our eyes, complicated in ignorance, with the torch of transcendental knowledge. Timirandhasya. Every one of us is born ignorant, and we require specific education and training for seeing things as they are.

Today I am very glad to meet you. You are all students of technology. This Krishna consciousness movement is another technology. In the modern state of civilization there are different departments of knowledge. There is a department for teaching medical science, there is a department for teaching engineering—so many other departments of knowledge. Unfortunately, there is no department for distributing knowledge of the science of the soul. But that is the most important thing, because the soul is the mainstay, the background of all our movements.

In the Bhagavad-gita [3.42] there is a nice verse:

\[\text{indriyani parany ahur indriyebhyah param manah}
\text{manasas tu para buddhir yo buddheh paratas tu sah}\]

The idea is that in the present consciousness I am thinking that I am the body, although actually I am not the body. This is ignorance. "Body" means the senses. When I am talking, I am using my tongue for vibration. So these bodily activities are sensual activities.

If you go deep into the matter, you'll find that the senses can act only when the mind is sound. A crazy man, or a madman, cannot use his senses properly. Therefore the technology of the mind is a higher science. First of all there is the technology of the senses, and then a higher technology of the mind, which is known as psychology and studies thinking, feeling, willing. Psychologists are trying to understand how these are working.

Above the mind, or mental science, is the science of intelligence. And above the science of intelligence, the background is the soul. Unfortunately, we have technology for the bodily senses, we have technology for psychology, but we have no technology for intelligence or the science of the soul. The Krishna consciousness movement is the technology of the science of soul.

The Boatman and the Student

There is a nice story. You'll appreciate it. In India, especially in Bengal, there are many rivers. One student of technology was going home, and he was on the boat.

The student asked the boatman, "Do you know what the stars are?"

The boatman said, "Sir, I'm an ordinary boatman. What do I know about these stars?"

"Oh. Then fifty percent of your life is wasted, useless."

Then he asked, "Do you know about these trees? Do you know any science of botany?"

The boatman said, "Sir, I'm an ordinary labourer. What do I know about botany?"

"Oh. Then seventy-five percent of your life is useless."

In this way the student of technology was asking the boatman, "Do you know this? Do you know that?" And the boatman was replying, "I'm an ordinary man. What do I know of all these things?"

Then all of a sudden there was a black cloud, and there was a storm, and the river began to well, and the boatman said, "My dear sir, do you know how to swim?"

"Oh," the student said, "no."
"Then your knowledge is a hundred percent spoiled. Now you have to go down into the river. Your life is finished."

They dropped into the river, and the technology student, because he did not know how to swim, was grabbed by the waves in the storm.

The idea is that we are making progress, certainly, in technology, in economics, in so many other departments of human necessities, but Bhagavad-gita points out the real problem of this world, or the real problem of our life. It is said in the Gita [13.9], janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi-dosanudarasanam. If you are intelligent enough, then you should see that the real problem is birth, death, old age, and disease. Janma means “birth,” mrtyu means “death,” jara means “old age,” and vyadhi means “disease.”

Our actual material problem is this: janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi. We have forgotten the precarious condition we were in while living in the abdomen of our mother. We can know from the descriptions of medical science how the child is packed up there and how much suffering is there. The worms bite the child, and he cannot express himself; he suffers. The mother eats something, and the pungent taste gives him suffering. These descriptions are there in the shastras, the scriptures and authentic Vedic literature, telling how the child suffers within the abdomen of mother.

These are the sufferings of birth. A child has to remain in that condition at least for ten [lunar] months. Now just imagine if you are put into that air-packed condition for three minutes now—you will immediately die. But actually, we had that experience of remaining in the mother's womb in that air-packed condition for ten months. The suffering was there, but the child was incapable of expressing himself or his consciousness was not so elevated. He could not cry, but the suffering was there.

Similarly, at the time of death there is suffering. And there is suffering in old age. Because I am an old man, I have so many bodily complaints. The anatomical or physiological condition is deteriorating. The stomach is not digesting food as nicely as when I was young. So the sufferings are there.

And there is the suffering of disease. Who wants disease?

**Solution to the Real Problems**

Modern technology has no remedy for birth, death, old age, and disease. These are the real problems. But because these problems cannot be solved by modern scientific advancement of knowledge, they have practically been set aside.

But there is a solution. That solution is stated in the Bhagavad-gita [8.15]:

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mam upetya punar janma duhkhalayam asasvatam
napnuvanti mahatmanah samsiddhim paramam gatah
```

"My dear Arjuna, if somebody comes to Me . . ." ("Me" means the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna.) "If somebody comes to Me, then he hasn't got to take birth again in this miserable material condition."

Dukhhalayam means “the place of miseries.” We are thinking that we have made a paradise, but actually the place is miserable, because the threefold miseries are there. Either in America or in India or in any other country or any other planet, the material miseries are of three kinds: adhyatmika, adhibhautika, and adhidaivika. Adhyatmika means miseries pertaining to the body and the mind. Sometimes we are feeling headaches; sometimes we are feeling some other pains. For anything pertaining to the body and mind there is some pain. These pains are called adhyatmika.

Similarly, there are pains inflicted by other living entities. They are called adhibhautika.

And there are pains offered by nature. All of a sudden there is an earthquake, or all of a sudden there is famine or something else we have no control over.

These three kinds of miseries are always there. But under the spell of illusion we are thinking we are happy. The material energy is so illusory that however abominable a condition a living entity may be in, he thinks he is happy.

You take any animal. Just take the hog—that life is a most filthy life. Of course, you have no experience of seeing hogs here in the city. In India there are many hogs in the city, and they live in filthy places. They eat stool and live a most abominable life. But if you were to ask a hog, “You are living in such an abominable condition. Let me do something good for you,” he'd refuse to accept. If you give him some nice preparation—as we have got in India, halava—he'll not accept it. He will accept stool, because his body is meant for that purpose and he will not like any palatable food. He will like that stool. This is the spell of maya, illusion.

**The Right Question**

Krishna consciousness teaches that if we are actually educated, then we must question, “Why am I suffering?”
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This is called brahma-jijnasa. In the Vedanta-sutra the first aphorism is athato brahma jijnasa: We should inquire about our existence as soul, not as body or as mind, because we are neither body nor mind. Atha atah means that this is the time—this human form of life, with developed consciousness and greater intelligence than the animals—when one should inquire about his spiritual existence. That is real technology. Srimad-Bhagavatam [5.5.5] says, parabhavas tavad abodha-jato yavan na jijnasata atma-tattvam. As long as one does not inquire about his spiritual existence, he is defeated in his real mission of life. Every one of us is born ignorant because we do not know our real identity. Generally, we accept that “I am this body,” but actually we are not the body.

This can be understood very easily. Suppose you have been seeing a friend all along. All of a sudden he dies, and you say, “My friend is gone.” Well, your friend is lying there with all the body—hands, legs, everything. He’s lying there. Why do you say that your friend is gone? Because you have never seen your friend. You have seen only his bodily structure, that’s all.

Similarly, at the present moment humanitarian work is going on, but we do not know the basic principle of humanitarian work. The Bhagavatam [10.84.13] answers this: yasyatma-buddhih kunape tri-dhatuke sva-dhiih kalatradisu bhauma-ijya-dhiih... sa eva go-kharah. If a person thinks, “I am this body, my kinsmen will protect me, and the land where the body has grown is worshipable,” then he is considered to be like an animal.

These instructions are there. Unfortunately, we have no time or desire to understand actually what I am, why I am suffering, what is this world, what is my relationship with this world, what is God, what is my relationship with God. These questions are very important, and there is technology to understand them. And the Srimad Bhagavad-gita, Srimad-Bhagavatam, Vedanta-sutra—all these literatures are there. If we look to these literatures, we’ll find the solution of the problems of life. But we are not interested. That is the difficulty. We are thinking we are happy, we have no problem, although there are so many problems and we are not happy.

That is called maya. Maya means what is not. Ma means “not.” Ya means “this.” We are thinking we are happy, but actually we are not happy. And even if we are happy, how long are we happy? Take, for example, you Americans, the richest nation of the world. Your material comforts and standard of living are greater than other countries. But just try to think how long you can remain as Americans. Say, for fifty years or a hundred years at most. We do not know what is going to happen in our next life, because we do not believe in the next life. But actually there is a next life.

We don’t take care for our next life and irresponsibly waste our valuable human form of life like ordinary animals. Ordinary animals demand something to eat, they want to sleep, they want to defend, and they want to mate. So similarly, if a human being is also busy with the four principles of bodily demands, namely eating, sleeping, mating, and defending, then, according to Vedic literature, he is not a human being. Dharmaena hina pasubhih samanah. If the human being does not understand his real spiritual identity and is simply busy with the four demands of bodily necessities, then pasubhih samanah—he’s equal to lower animals, cats and dogs.

Bhagavad-gita gives you the clue. It is not very difficult to understand this science. The Bhagavad-gita gives you the information of the spirit soul very simply. The Bhagavad-gita [2.13] says,

dehino 'smin yatha dehe kaumaram yauvanam jara
tatha dehantara-praptir dhisras tatra na muhyati

When you were a child you were within this body—not exactly this body, but another body, which was so small. Now where is that body? That body is gone. You have another body. Dehinah means the soul, the spirit soul, who is within this body. He is changing bodies from moment to moment. It is a fact, a medical fact, that you are changing your body every moment. The last change is called death. And then we have to accept another body. But we do not know what sort of body we are going to accept. That technology is wanting in modern civilization.

There are 8,400,000 different bodies, and after leaving this body you may enter any of such bodies. After leaving this body, you can become an American or you can become an Indian or you can become Chinaman. Or you can become a god in the moon planet or some other planet. Or you can become a dog, you can become hog, you can become a serpent—anything. That is under the control of material nature. That is not under your control.

But if you take to Krishna consciousness, it will be under your control. How is it possible? The Bhagavad-gita [9.25] answers:

yanti deva-vrata devan pitra yanti pitr-vrata
bhutani yanti bhuteya yanti mad-yajino 'pi mam

“Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods; those who worship the ancestors will go to the ancestors; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; and those who worship
Me will live with Me.”

There are innumerable planets. The ultimate, highest planet is called Brahmaloka. The advantage of going to Brahmaloka is stated in the Bhagavad-gita [8.17]: sahasra-yuga-paryantam ahar yad brahmano viduh. You can live there for millions and millions of years. But still, there is death and there is birth and there is old age and there is disease. But if somebody is transferred to the planet called Krishnaloka, Goloka Vrindavana, or Vaikuntha, then he hasn’t got to come back to this temporary existence.

This information is there, and it is very scientific. It is not dogmatic. If you accept it with reason and argument and with human consciousness, the solutions are there.

Not Bogus Propaganda

The Krishna consciousness movement is not a new movement. This movement has been current at least since five hundred years ago. Lord Chaitanya started this movement in the fifteenth century. This movement is current everywhere in India, but in your country, of course, it is new. But our request is that you kindly take this movement a little seriously. We do not ask you to stop your technological advance. You do it. There is a nice proverb in Bengal that says that a woman who is busy in household work also takes care to dress herself nicely. Similarly, you may be busy with all kinds of technology. That is not forbidden. But at the same time, try to understand this technology, the science of the soul. That is there. It is not bogus propaganda. It is factual. It is science.

As science is not bogus propaganda, this Krishna consciousness is also not bogus propaganda. As science means two plus two equals four, Krishna consciousness means mitigating all the problems of life. And the process is very easy. Lord Chaitanya recommends that for self-realization in this age, one must simply chant the names of God. He says that in this age, our life is very short, we are not very enlightened in spiritual matters, we are very lazy, and we are unfortunate. Under these conditions people are recommended simply to chant Hare Krishna. Harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam.

The Missing Technology

Now, you may say, “This ‘Krishna’ is an Indian name or a Hindu name. Why should we chant ‘Krishna’?” But if you have any name of God, you can chant that also. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says that God has millions and billions of names. So any name of God is as good as “Krishna.” It doesn’t matter.

Then why do we chant Hare Krishna? Because we are following the footsteps of Lord Chaitanya, and He chanted this holy name.

So we request you most humbly: There is no loss on your part, but the gain is immense. If you take to chanting Hare Krishna, then gradually your misconception of this life will be cleared off. You will understand your real identity, and you will act in that way. And the technology is so nice that you may remain in your business. That doesn’t matter. You simply have to chant Hare Krishna. Suppose you are walking on the street. If you chant Hare Krishna, nobody will tax you, nobody will bother you. But if by chanting Hare Krishna you derive some benefit, why do you neglect it? That is our submission.

This movement is for solving the problems of life, and it can be easily done. Anyone can accept it. It doesn’t matter whether one is Indian or American or Hindu or Muslim or Christian. It doesn’t matter. Simply chant this vibration: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. I shall thank you if you join us in kirtana and at least for a few minutes chant this Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Srila Prabhupada, the founder-acharya of ISKCON, has delivered more than 1500 lectures on Vedic scriptures like Bhagavad-gita, Srimad-Bhagavatam and Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita. The audio recording of his lectures are available in ISKCON centers. You can also hear some of these lectures in www.iskconbangalore.org/lectures-and-conversations.
Here we continue a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and Professor John Mize. It took place in Los Angeles on June 23, 1975.

**Srila Prabhupada:** [To a disciple:] Find this verse: brahma-bhutah prasannatma na socati na kanksati.

**Disciple:** Okay, Srila Prabhupada. Let’s see. That will be Bhagavad-gita, fifty-fourth verse in the Eighteenth Chapter. Should I read?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes.

**Disciple:** Brahma-bhutah prasannatma na socati na kanksati/ samah sarvesu bhutesu mad-bhaktim labhate param.

“One who is thus transcendentally situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.”

**Srila Prabhupada:** That means one has to come to the platform of brahma. Then he can enter into devotional service. Samah sarvesu bhutesu mad-bhaktim labhate param: in that brahminical state, he sees every living entity as part and parcel of God. That is samah, equality. He does not see like this: that the human being has a soul and the cow has no soul. He does not see like that. He sees the cow has a soul, the ant has a soul, the elephant has a soul, the tree has a soul, the human being has a soul. That is samah sarvesu bhutesu.

By ignorance, one thinks, “The tree has no soul, the cow has no soul, the other animals have no soul—simply we have got a soul.” That is ignorance, base quality. But when you come to the purity of goodness, samah sarvesu bhutesu, this qualification will arise. A devotee is not willing to kill even an ant, because he knows, “He is also a soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Soul. By his karma he has become an ant, while I have become a human being. So I have the same quality of soul as he; he has the same quality of soul as I. He has a different body from mine. He is suffering in that way. I have got a different body from his. I am also suffering—but I am thinking I am enjoying.” That is samah sarvesu bhutesu.

([To a disciple:]

Find this verse: catur-

**Disciple:** Samah means “equally disposed”; sarvesu means “all”; bhutesu means “living entities.” “He is equally disposed to every living entity.”

**Srila Prabhupada:** So you can see on an equal level when you become a brahmana. Brahma-bhutah, the spiritual platform, is not understood in the United Nations. There they are passing resolutions, and yet fighting is going on outside, because they have no spiritual vision—samah sarvesu bhutesu. So the politicians should be guided by the brahmanas. That is the proper social structure—guided by those who are first-class men in spiritual understanding. Or to put it another way, the politicians, the administrators—they should take instruction from the brahmanas first and then take part in politics. Then they will be also first-class men. You won’t have to drag them down after electing them.

This business of first elect and then drag them down—this is a mistake. Just like you elected Nixon president, then dragged him down because you made a mistake. You do not know whom to elect, because you are not guided by brahmanas. This is the fault. The whole society is being guided by shudras and some portion vaishyas. Mostly shudras, or workers, and a certain percentage of vaishyas, mercantile men.

But at the present moment no guidance is being given by kshatriyas or brahmanas, properly trained administrators and intellectuals. Therefore, for peaceful life in human society, there must be four divisions.

([To a disciple:]

Find this verse: catur-

**Disciple:** ...
Disciple: That's also going to be in Bhagavad-gita, thirteenth verse in the Fourth Chapter. Catur-varnyam maya srstam guna-karma-vibhagasah/ tasya kartaram api mam viddhy akartaram avayyam: “According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the nondoer, being unchangeable.”

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, Krishna created these four divisions—brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya, shudra—but He does not belong to any one of them. He is neither brahmana nor kshatriya nor vaishya nor shudra. He is transcendent, only looking toward human society’s best interest. Similarly, our philosophy—just to make the human society very peaceful and progressive, we wish to establish this system. A first-class group of men, brahmanas—they will guide the kshatriyas. And the kshatriyas, the administrators—they will guide the vaishyas. Vaishyas are those who engage in agriculture and cow protection and trade. And shudras are those who are neither brahmana nor kshatriya nor vaishyas. They are simply workers, assistants.

So there must be divisions like this. The brahmanas should guide the kshatriyas, the kshatriyas will administer the state, the vaishyas will produce foodstuffs, and the shudras will help. Cooperation for common benefit—and the aim is spiritual realization. That is perfect society. If everyone is a shudra, without any aim of life, then there will be chaos. Just like in your country—in spite of so much facility for education, the students being produced are hippies, useless for all purposes. Why is this happening? I have gone to so many universities. I have seen the students—hippies. And if you say, “If you act like cats and dogs, you will become cats and dogs in your next life,” they say, “What is the wrong if I become a dog?” [Laughter.]

This is the result of your so-called modern education. The student is prepared to become a dog. The student does not learn what is the distinction between a dog and a human being. As a result, he is seeking after the dog’s facility—that the dog can have sex on the street. The student is thinking the dog’s life is advantageous. A dog never inquires. A dog knows that the dog’s father will never ask the dog, “Child, go to school.” A dog never inquires. A dog can do something wrong—how to control his mind? That is a dog. A dog cannot do that. A human being can ask, “People hate me when I do something wrong—how to control my mind?” That is a human being. That is the difference between him and the dog. He remains a dog. He has got this opportunity of human life. He should take advantage of understanding what is and what not keep himself in the dog status—simply eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. That is the distinction between a dog and a human being. If he does not become inquisitive how to control the mind, he is not even a human being. A dog never inquires. A dog knows that “When I bark, people become disturbed.” But he’ll never ask, “How to control this barking habit?” Because he is a dog, he cannot do that.

A human being can ask, “People hate me when I do something wrong—how to control my mind?” That is a human being. That is the difference between a human being and a dog. Therefore, the Vedas is “Go and inquire. You have got this human form of life.” Athato brahma-jijnasa: “Now, this is the time for inquiring about the soul.” Tad vijnanartham sa brahma-jijnasa: “Now, this is the time for inquiring about the soul.” That requires education. A dog cannot take this education, but a human being can take it. Therefore, it is the duty of the human being to learn how to control the mind, not to act like cats and dogs. That is a real human being. He should be inquisitive—“Why is this happening? Why is that happening?” And he should take education. That is human life. And if he does not inquire, if he does not take education, then what is the difference between him and the dog? He remains a dog. He has got this opportunity of human life. He should take advantage of understanding what is and what not keep himself in the dog status—simply eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. That is the distinction between a dog and a human being. A dog never inquires. A dog knows that “When I bark, people become disturbed.” But he’ll never ask, “How to control this barking habit?” Because he is a dog, he cannot do that.

A human being can ask, “People hate me when I do something wrong—how to control my mind?” That is a human being. That is the difference between a human being and a dog. Therefore, the Vedas is “Go and inquire. You have got this human form of life.” Athato brahma-jijnasa: “Now, this is the time for inquiring about the soul.” Tad vijnanartham sa guru eva abhigacchet: “If you want to understand this science, then go to a proper guru and take lessons from him.” This is the same thing as we instruct our children: “If you want to be educated to reach a higher status of life, go to school, go to college, take lessons.” That is human society. The dog’s father will never ask the dog, “Child, go to school.” No. They are dogs.

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Fasting from urad dal for one month

Karthika month begins

Deepotsava begins (in Bangalore)
The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, appears in this material world millennium after millennium, to destroy the evil forces and give His transcendental association to His devotees. Janmashtami celebrates His appearance five thousand years ago as the son of Devaki and Vasudeva. At the Sri Radha Krishna Temple on Hare Krishna Hill, devotees thronged to have darshana of the Lord, honoured prasadam, witnessed the various abhisheka and participated in different sevas to celebrate the auspicious festival. Their Lordships received a feast of 108 delicacies on this occasion.

The three day festival concluded with the Vyasa Puja celebrations (birth anniversary) of ISKCON Founder Acharya, His Divine Grace A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.
Jhulan seva

Decorations in the Main Temple Hall
Midnight abhisheka

108 food offerings
Sri Krishna Gana Vaibhava by Sri Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma & party

Visitors honour prasadam

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Abhisheka

Vyasa Puja 2014 book is offered to Srila Prabhupada

Food offerings made by devotees

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Located two miles north of Thiruvayaru is the serene temple of Gajendra Varada Perumal in Kapisthalam.

The Pastime

The eighth canto of the Srimad Bhagavatam narrates the spectacular event of Gajendra moksha. Shukamuni narrates this historical event to Parikshit Maharaja.

King Indradyumna was a pious king in the Pandya dynasty which traces back its lineage to Svayambhuva Manu. Once, Sage Agasthya, who was very fond of the Tamil speaking country, came to visit King Indradyumna. The king was in deep meditation on Lord Vishnu and failed to notice the arrival of Agasthya. Agasthya took this as an insult and cursed King Indradyumna to become an elephant and wander in the forests.

Another event which occurred in a pond named Kapila Theertham in Kapisthalam is contemporary to the curse of King Indradyumna. Once, a Gandharva king named Huhu and the great sage Devala were taking a tour in this sacred spot. It was dusk so they took a bath and performed their evening prayers. While they were taking a dip in the Kapila Theertham, Huhu pulled the legs of Sage Devala for fun. Enraged by this activity, Sage Devala cursed the Gandharva to become a crocodile. Huhu begged for pardon and cried at the lotus feet of the sage. Taking pity on the Gandharva, Sage Devala instructed Huhu on the glories of Vishnu and told him that Lord Vishnu Himself would relieve Huhu of the curse.

King Indradyumna was wandering in the forests as an elephant. Owing to his majesty and bravery, soon he earned the name Gajendra or the king of elephants. He became proud and very ferocious. The strong smell emanating from the elephants kept all the animals away from them, and even tigers and other carnivorous animals would not dare to come near the herd of elephants. One hot summer day, he Gajendra walked in the forests along with his numerous wives and calves, breaking trees, bamboos and canes. The summer sun was scorching high and the herd needed a bath and a drink of fresh water. Along with their calves, the elephants steadily approached Kapila Theertham. Their weight seemed to cause tremors in the mountains. The elephants plunged into the holy lake and drank to their hearts’ content, the sweet blessed waters flavoured by lilies and lotuses. Gajendra showered some water on his body as well. With his fatigue gone, Gajendra began to offer water showers to his female companions and calves. Little did he know of the impending peril.

Alas! A powerful crocodile caught the leg of
Gajendra. He tugged with all his strength to resist the pull of the crocodile. The female elephants tried their best to relieve their beloved Gajendra of this distress. But all they could do was to trumpet in sorrow, unable to pull him out of this danger.

One thousand years lapsed as the elephant pulled from land and crocodile from water. Since the elephant is a land animal, his fighting in the water for such a long time diminished his strength. But the crocodile's strength only increased, as he was in his natural habitat. Thus the elephant was in great despair and having no other alternative he called to Lord Vishnu, petitioning His help by chanting His holy names. Hearing His devotee’s desperate cries Lord Vishnu came on His eagle carrier. Even in this distressed condition, Gajendra reached out slowly and managed to pluck a lotus from nearby and extended it as an offering to honour the Lord who had come before him. The Lord released His Sudarshana Chakra at the crocodile and by killing him, the Gandharva king Huhu was relieved of his curse. Gajendra was liberated and attained the spiritual abode.

This historical event occurred in Kapisthalam and the Lord who granted darshana to the crocodile and elephant came to be known as Gajendra Varada, one who blessed the king of elephants.

This episode offers us some important lessons in life. Gajendra was leading quite a valuable and ideal form of life in his years as an elephant. At least that was what he presumed. He had terrific power, prestige, leadership, a large family, friends, no enemies and so on. In short, even as an elephant, he had all the comforts of that species. But suddenly he found himself entangled in the jaws of a crocodile. Similarly, the material world is full of misery, ready to trap us, like the crocodile in the pastime. The calamities of the material world may appear in the form of natural disasters, accidents, etc. Therefore danger in this material form of life is so eminent that there is no escape from it. One may think that he has got all riches, luxuries in life, but one “bite” of material contamination will take all that away. But even when there are such problems and crises, one must take the advanced in spiritual knowledge are not subject to the regulative principles directed in the Vedic literature.

Because such advanced souls are transcendental, You personally appear in their pure minds. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisance unto You.”

“Since an animal such as I 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 Paramatma, You are situated in the hearts of all embodied beings. You are celebrated as direct transcendental knowledge, and You are unlimited. I offer my respectful obeisance unto You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

This episode offers us some important lessons in life. Gajendra was leading quite a valuable and ideal form of life in his years as an elephant. At least that was what he presumed. He had terrific power, prestige, leadership, a large family, friends, no enemies and so on. In short, even as an elephant, he had all the comforts of that species. But suddenly he found himself entangled in the jaws of a crocodile. Similarly, the material world is full of misery, ready to trap us, like the crocodile in the pastime. The calamities of the material world may appear in the form of natural disasters, accidents, etc. Therefore danger in this material form of life is so eminent that there is no escape from it. One may think that he has got all riches, luxuries in life, but one “bite” of material contamination will take all that away. But even when there are such problems and crises, one must take the reverence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

This historical event occurred in Kapisthalam and the Lord who granted darshana to the crocodile and elephant came to be known as Gajendra Varada, one who blessed the king of elephants.
example of Gajendra and pray hard to the Lord. One must not expect the Lord to appear magically and relieve one instantly. But certainly He will send some help in some form for sure. For the Lord is so loving and caring to His devotees. He is suhrdam sarva bhutanam, the friend of everyone and just waiting for us to call Him, i.e. take up devotional service. The holy name of the Lord is the only hope, the only saviour which protects us from the calamities of the material world. In one sense, the dangers which come to us are blessings in disguise. It actually is a call to call out for the Supreme Lord. One has to take sufficient realisation from this episode of history and use the opportunity to cry out for the Lord.

There is yet another interesting event which happened in Kapisthalam. Lord Hanuman who is an ardent devotee of the Supreme Lord was given the Chiranjeevi status here - He lives eternally on this earth. Since in Sanskrit kapi means monkey, the place where the great monkey devotee Hanuman got Chiranjeevi status came to be known as Kapisthalam.

**The Temple**

Kapisthalam Gajendra Varada Perumal temple is one among the pancha Krishna temples (refer previous KV for the other 4 temples). The village of Kapisthalam is located in a small island between the rivers Cauvery and Kollidam. The temple which was built during the times of Gajendra fell into ruins and was renovated by the medieval Cholas in the eighth century. Vijaynagar kings and the Madurai Nayaks contributed to its construction in the later period. A huge brick wall surrounds the temple and its pond Kapila Theertham. The huge copper flag post of this temple is perhaps the largest in this belt. It soars in height and on festival days a white cloth in which Garuda is invoked is hoisted. The temple has a single less ornate rajagopuram. Inside the sanctum sanctorum the Lord Gajendra Varada Perumal is seen in reclining posture as bhujanga shayana. Facing east, the Lord is smiling blissfully with His consorts Sridevi and Bhoodevi at His lotus feet. The festival Deities are seen on the elevated platform and are enchanting beauties! There is a Gangakruthi vimana atop the sanctum sanctorum. There are separate shrines for Yoga Narasimha, Sudarshana, Garuda and the Alwars and acharyas of the Sri sampradaya. The consort of Gajendra Varada Perumal is Ramamani Valli Thayar or the gentle Mahalakshmi who emerged from the lotus flower. There are two ponds in the temple. One is known as Gajendra Pushkarani and other is the Kapila Theertham. There is a beautiful Deity of the Lord giving shelter to Gajendra and liberation to the crocodile in the main sanctum sanctorum. The same pastime is seen as a huge painting outside the prakaram.

**Festivals**

Apart from the five scheduled regular daily pujas and offerings, there are many festivals in the temple which attract much public participation. The most important is the Gajendra moksha festival celebrated in the Tamil month of Adi, when the historical episode of Gajendra’s liberation is reenacted. A huge chariot festival is held in the month of Vaikasi. A ten day Brahmotsava is celebrated with much pomp in this temple. Pavitrotsavam is another significant festival of Kapisthalam Gajendra Varada Perumal temple.

Thirumazhisai Alwar has sung about this temple in one of his works:

“I bow to the blissful Lord who gave liberation to the elephant and who reclines on the banks of Cauvery.”

*Photo Courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam*
Krishna Costume Contest is an epic fancy dress competition conducted by ISKCON Bangalore as part of Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations. This year 636 children took part from 121 cities spread across 15 countries. Based on the votes polled, the top 3 contestants have received the top 3 awards. In addition there are 7 consolation prizes.

Apart from the Facebook Fan Choice Awards, Cute-16 Awards are given to 16 entries which qualify based on various judging parameters like: whether the child is dressed as per description of Krishna and Radha in the shastras, the cuteness of the kid, presentation and background (not modernized) and the creativity & effort that went into dressing the child.

**Top 3 Prizes**

- Om Kela, Hyderabad (1301 Votes)
- Jaanavee Jha, Hyderabad (1077 Votes)
- Vedang Rakesh, Mumbai (958 Votes)

**Consolation Prizes**

- Madhava S. H, Bangalore (823 Votes)
- Aakarsh Bekal, Bangalore (688 Votes)
- Manasa S. K, Hyderabad (642 Votes)
- Namith Rao, Bangalore (529 Votes)
- Adwaita Priya Dasi, Chennai (496 Votes)
- Sree Pranavi, Hyderabad (404 Votes)
- Prerana Nayak, Bangalore (387 Votes)
We take pleasure in announcing that we have launched the ISKCON News site as well as the Blog site on Sri Krishna Janmashtami. Our task is to be a dependable and timely source of news of interest to devotees, friends, donors and others interested in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Towards that end, we endeavor to deliver visitors with thought-provoking news and opinion through quality writing, photographs, audio, and video media. It is our conviction that such a resource will go a long way in creating a well-informed and connected audience within ISKCON, and thereby certainly influence ISKCON Bangalore’s property in carrying out its mission.

ISKCON News has five sections: Inside ISKCON, World Review, Vedic Observer, In the Media and Announcements. ISKCON Blog has the following five sections: Krishna Katha, Upadeshamrita, Sadhana, Parshada and Krishna Darshana.

Visit us at www.iskconbangalore.org/news and www.iskconbangalore.org/blog

**Vrindavana Chandrodaya Mandir Website Launch**

The official website of the Vrindavana Chandrodaya Mandir was launched on August 18, 2014. The Vrindavana Chandrodaya Mandir project was conceived by the devotees of ISKCON Bangalore to broadcast the glories of Sri Krishna and His transcendental abode Vrindavana all over the world in a manner that the contemporary world can appreciate. It will be the world’s tallest temple and is estimated to cost Rs. 300 crores, making it one of the most expensively built temples in the world. The Vrindavana Chandrodaya Mandir will not only house a temple for the worship of Lord Krishna, but will also become a center for disseminating the profound message of the Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam.

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