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A Day of Kirtans & Bhajans

Sunday, November 15, 2015
(on the occasion of Srila Prabhupada’s Disappearance day)

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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 ashramas, 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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Rise Above Animal Consciousness

If we pursue only bodily happiness and fail to inquire into the cause of our suffering, are we any better than the animals?

Adapted from a lecture given in Buffalo, New York on April 23, 1969

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

rsabha uvaca

nayam deho deha-bhajam nrloke
kastan kaman arhate vid-bhujam ye
tapo divyam putraka yena sattvam
suddhyed yasmad brahma-saukhyam tv anantam

"Lord Rsabhadeva 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." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.5.1)

Rsabhadeva is accepted as an incarnation of Godhead. He appeared on earth long, long ago and was the father of King Bharata, from whose name this planet is called Bharata-varsha in the Vedic literature. Rsabhadeva had one hundred sons, of whom Bharata was the eldest. Bharata was very intelligent, so his father entrusted the kingdom to him. Before retirement, Rsabhadeva gave His sons spiritual instructions, which are recorded in the Srimad-Bhagavatam.

Rsabhadeva advises, "My dear sons, the human form of life is not meant for sense gratification."

Rsabhadeva uses the word deha-bhajam: "of those who have accepted a material body." This is very significant. According to Vedic literature, the material world is only one fourth of the complete creation of God. Three fourths of God's creation is the spiritual world. That information you will find in Bhagavad-gita. The material world is a fraction of the whole creation. As far as you can see in the sky, you see this universe. But this is only one universe. There are unlimited universes clustered together, and that cluster is called the material world.

Beyond that cluster is the spiritual sky. That fact is also mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita: paras tasmat tu bhavo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktat sanatanah. The Lord says, "Beyond this material world is another nature, which is eternal." There is no history of its beginning or end. That is eternal: no beginning, no end.

Untraceable History

Vedic religion is called sanatana-dharma, “eternal religion,” because no one can trace out when the Vedic religion began. Every religion in our present experience has a history. The Christian religion has a history—two thousand years old. The Buddhist religion has a history—2,600 years. The Muslim religion has a history—one thousand years. But if you trace the Vedic religion, you cannot find a starting date. There is no date. No historian can give one. Therefore it is called sanatana-dharma.

In the Bhagavad-gita Lord Krishna says, "There is another nature, which is eternal." The material creation is not eternal. We say, "God created." That means that before creation God existed. Therefore God is not under the creation. If God were under the creation, how could He create? He existed before the creation; therefore He is eternal.

Besides an eternal, spiritual God, there is also a spiritual nature, or sky, where there are innumerable spiritual planets. And there are innumerable spiritual living entities. Some of them, who are not fit to live in the spiritual world, are sent to the material world. The same idea is expressed in Milton's Paradise Lost. We conditioned souls are practically living in a place after "paradise lost." We should understand this point.

Here the specific instruction is deha-bhajam, which means that we have willingly accepted the material body. Actually, we are spirit souls; we should not have accepted the material body. But we have, and we cannot trace the history of when and why we did so.
There are 8,400,000 forms of living entities: 900,000 species in the water, 2,000,000 species of plants and vegetables, and so on. Unfortunately, this Vedic knowledge is not taught in any university, but these are facts. If people are interested in research, let them research why the Vedic knowledge says there are 8,400,000 species of life. Darwin's theory of the evolution of organic matter is very prominent in educational institutions. But the Padma Purana and other authoritative Vedic scriptures explain how the living entities have different forms of body, how they are evolving one after another—everything is there. Evolution is not a new idea. People are stressing only Darwin's theory. But in the Vedic literature we have immense information of the living condition in the material world.

Apart from that, here it is said, deha-bhajam: “those who have accepted this material body.” That means there are many who have not accepted the material body. But in the material world people have no experience of living entities who have not accepted a material body. People don't know that there is a spiritual world. The innumerable living entities in so many universes in the material world are only a fraction of all living entities. Those in the material world, with the material body, are condemned. For example, people in prison are condemned by the government. But their number is only a fraction of the whole population, not that the whole population of the state goes to prison. Some criminals, who disobey the laws of the state, are put into the prison. Similarly, the conditioned souls within the material world are only a fraction of the living entities in the creation of God. Because they have declined to obey or abide by the orders of Krishna, or God, they have been put into the material world.

Sensible Inquiry

One who is sensible, who is inquisitive and serious, should try to understand, “Why have I been put into material conditional life?” That should be the inquiry. That is called brahma-jijnasa. In the Vedanta-sutra this is the first inquiry. People should be educated to the standard of life where they will be inquisitive to know, “Why have I been put into conditional life? I do not wish to suffer.”

Animals are always suffering, but they do not mind it. Recently I was in Hawaii, and in front of my house was a man who kept animals and birds for slaughter. I was telling my students that we could say to the animals, “Oh, my dear animals, why are you standing here? Go away. You are going to be slaughtered.” But the animals don't have the intelligence to go. Even in the slaughterhouse they don't go away.

Suffering without knowledge, without remedy, means animal life. One who cannot understand his suffering, who thinks, "Oh, I am very well off. I am very well situated," is in animal consciousness. One should be cognizant of the miseries of his life. One should know that there is suffering in birth, there is suffering in death, there is suffering in old age, and there is suffering in disease.

And one should be inquisitive. That is the real research: how to avoid death, how to avoid birth. We have suffered during our birth. We have suffered as a child, as a baby. We remained within the abdomen of our mother, tightly placed in an airtight bag for nine months, bitten by worms, unable to move, unable to protest. But we have forgotten.

Our sufferings are there. The mother is taking so much care undoubtedly; still, the child is crying. Why does the child cry? Because it is suffering but cannot express itself. There are bugs biting or pains somewhere within, and the child is crying, crying, but the mother does not know how to pacify the child.

In this way our suffering begins from the womb of our mother. And then we do not wish to go to school, but we are forced to go to a school. We do not wish to study, but the teachers give us tasks. If you just analyze your life, you will see that it is full of suffering. But we make no inquiry into how to stop that suffering. That lack of inquiry is not education. Therefore the Brahma-sutra says, athato brahma-jijnasa: “Now you should inquire about why you are suffering. Is there any remedy for suffering? If there is, then you must take it. You must take advantage of the remedy.” But we are callous. We do not care for the remedy, and that is not good.

Therefore Rsabhadeva says to His sons, "My dear sons, now you have this opportunity. Out of 8,400,000 lives, take ..."

Forget Rsabhadeva's sons. I will speak to the American boys and girls gathered here. Now you have a very nice body, a very beautiful body, a very nice country. You have no poverty. In so many ways you have an advantage over other nations. So accept this instruction of Rsabhadeva to His sons. Rsabhadeva instructions were not meant only for His sons; they are meant for the whole human race.

The Pleasure of Hogs and Dogs

Rsabhadeva said, "My dear sons, the body is not meant for sense gratification like that of the cats and dogs and hogs. To spoil our life by hard work for sense gratification is not very good."
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Take that instruction into your life also. You are very nicely placed, but according to Rsabhadeva’s instruction, you should not spoil this beautiful life simply for sense gratification. Why? Rsabhadeva answered: “That sense gratification is available to the stool-eater, the hog. You should not imitate the hogs.” You see? I was surprised to hear from one of my principal disciples that some hippies have begun to worship hogs. Your beautiful life, beautiful education, beautiful situation should be used for a beautiful end, not for degrading yourself to the platform of hog worship.

Rsabhadeva says, "My dear boys, sense gratification after hard work day and night is available in the hog's life. That arrangement is not very important. The human form of life is meant for a different purpose." And Rsabhadeva explains that purpose: "The human form of life is meant for austerity and penance."

You will find in the Vedic histories many, many exalted emperors and kings. They also practiced austerity and penance. Dhruta Maharaja, Prahlada Maharaja, Ambarisha Maharaja, Yudhisthira Maharaja—they were all kings. They were called rajarshi, which means that although they were most opulent kings, still they were great sages. Rsabhadeva advises that persons who have the opportunity of the human form of life—with facility for economic welfare and for giving everything very nicely—should use that opportunity for a better life. They should perform austerity to attain pure existence.

The austerity we perform in the Krishna consciousness movement is not at all troublesome. It is pleasant. You can ask our students who are practicing it. They are very pleased to practice this austerity. And if you practice it, your existence will be purified. The difference between animal life and human life is that human life is more purified. The human being has better consciousness than the animal. And if you purify your existence more, you are gradually elevated to the spiritual existence, which is completely pure life.

Rsabhadeva advises, "My dear boys, don't spoil your life simply for sense gratification, but voluntarily accept some austerity and penance so that your existence will be purified. You are seeking happiness. Whatever happiness you are inclined to in the material world is only limited. But if you purify your existence and some way or other become promoted to your spiritual existence, then you get the greatest pleasure." Brahma-saukhyam tv anantam.

Brahman means “the greatest” and refers to spiritual existence. There is Brahman life, and there is Brahman pleasure. In Brahman pleasure there is also dancing, there are young girls, young boys—everything. Whatever we find in the material world is a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. So if you want unlimited happiness, unlimited knowledge, and eternal life, you should not spoil this very nice opportunity simply for sense gratification, but adjust it to accept the life of austerity to promote yourself to the spiritual life. Then you will get unlimited happiness, unlimited life, unlimited pleasure. That is the sum and substance of this Krishna consciousness movement.

We have literature and magazines to explain all these points. We have our Bhagavad-gita As It Is, Teachings of Lord Chaitanya, Srimad-Bhagavatam, The Nectar of Devotion, Easy Journey to Other Planets. The Krishna consciousness movement is meant for giving a finishing touch to your present position. Don't take it otherwise. You are all educated. I request you, try to understand this Krishna consciousness movement and take it very seriously. You will be happy. And because people of other countries are following your progress, if you take the Krishna consciousness movement seriously and rightly, the whole face of the world will change. It will be turned into the spiritual world.

Of course, we do not expect that everyone will accept this philosophy, but even if one percent of the population of the world accepts it, the world will change. The Bhagavad-gita explains that if some principal man accepts some theory or philosophy, others follow.

We have our center here. I request you all to try to understand the Krishna consciousness movement and purify yourself. The process of purification is very simple. We are simply chanting Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. My fervent request to you all is this: You are very nicely placed. Please try to understand this philosophy. Make your life happy so that the people of the world will be happy by following your example.

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
You Can Pronounce Krishna In Any Way

This is an excerpt from an exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and the poet Allen Ginsberg. It took place on May 12, 1969, in Columbus, Ohio.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Your Divine Grace, my original question was, is the complicated ritual and the Sanskrit language—are they going to keep people from accepting what you're giving.

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, no. We are translating, presenting everything in the English language. All our books are being published in English. Our magazine is in English.

**Allen Ginsberg:** But the question is, Is the mode of life that you are proposing adaptable to many, many, many people?

**Srila Prabhupada:** To that I say that this Krishna culture is not something that many, many people can immediately accept.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Yeah. But there is a thirst felt by many, many people for an alternative answer, for a better alternative system.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes. So if people are actually thirsty—if they are actually thirst—then they can adopt this system given by the Supreme Lord. What is the difficulty there? There is no difficulty. So many American boys and girls have already adopted it, and they are not feeling any difficulty. They are feeling relief. In what respect is chanting Hare Krishna difficult? You are chanting.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Yes.

**Srila Prabhupada:** It is all in Sanskrit. What difficulty are you feeling?

**Allen Ginsberg:** I don't feel too much difficulty, except aesthetically I do feel a difficulty. Yes, there is. The difficulty I feel is that there should be some flower of the American language to communicate in.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Therefore, we are seeking your help.

**Allen Ginsberg:** Hm. Well, I haven't found another way. I still just stay chanting Hare Krishna.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is also my view. I have come to America with this view: that America is at the summit of material civilization—they are not poverty-stricken, you see?—and yet they are seeking after something. Therefore, I have come to offer, "You take this. You'll be happy." That is my mission.

And if the Americans take this Krishna consciousness seriously, then all other countries will take it, because America is leading at the present moment. So exalted persons like you should try to understand. What is the difficulty? There is no difficulty. Chanting Hare Krishna—anyone can chant. Even the little child is chanting. So, you were asking, How can this mode of living attract many people?

**Allen Ginsberg:** Well, mere chanting without the practice of a philosophy...
Srila Prabhupada: Philosophy is here. We are teaching *Bhagavad-gita*. We are talking on *Bhagavata* philosophy. We are talking on Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya’s philosophy.

Allen Ginsberg: And you have a daily ritual. So my question is this: Is the Chaitanya-Krishna ritual, as you have it here in this house and in the other ashrams—is this something that a large mass of people can enter into?

Srila Prabhupada: In time, yes. Why not?

Allen Ginsberg: In America?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. This we have already seen. Virtually all my students are Americans. And Krishna consciousness is spreading.

Allen Ginsberg: Yes, but what it requires is an adaptation to Indian dress and . . .

Srila Prabhupada: That is not very important.

Allen Ginsberg: And an adaptation to Indian food.

Srila Prabhupada: No, no. Indian food—it is not Indian food. Are you not eating fruits?

Allen Ginsberg: Yes, yes.

Srila Prabhupada: Then that is Indian food? Do you mean to say it is Indian food?

Allen Ginsberg: Well, the curried vegetable dishes.

Srila Prabhupada: Vegetables you may simply steam, if you like. That doesn't matter. It doesn't matter whether you take our specific taste. No. That is not the programme, that to become Krishna conscious you have to change your taste. No. We say what Krishna says in *Bhagavad-gita*. *Patram puspam phalam toyam yo me bhaktya prayacchati*: “Anyone who offers Me with devotion these vegetables, fruits, flowers, milk—I accept that.” So we are determined to satisfy Krishna, and therefore we are selecting foodstuffs from these groups.

And these foodstuffs you are already accepting. Don’t you take vegetables? Don’t you take fruits? Don’t you take grains? So where is the new item? Now, insofar as cooking is concerned, you can cook according to your own taste. But the food groups must be these. Not flesh. Because Krishna does not say, “Offer Me flesh.”

This, very simply, is our programme. And you are already eating grains, vegetables, and fruits, and you are drinking milk. So where is the difference? I don’t find any difference.

Allen Ginsberg: Well, I suppose not. You could say there is no difference, because the food is basically the same materially. It’s just a question of the style.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. My style and your style may be different. That’s all right. In any event, to maintain health and keep body and soul together, you require eating, you require sleeping, you require mating, you require defending. We don’t say that you don’t do this.

Arjuna wanted to be nonviolent and not engage in defending: “Oh, what is the use of fighting?” Krishna said, “No. It is required. You should.” Defending is part of this Krishna culture. So where is the difference? There is no difference. Simply we are adjusting things so that you may become truly happy. Any intelligent man will accept this cultural idea. We are not prohibiting things, but rather, we are adjusting things. So there is no difficulty. Intelligent persons like you should try to understand and take this idea and distribute it, because your country is in want of this.

Allen Ginsberg: But there is a limit to how much the pronunciation of Krishna will spread, I think. There’s a limit.


Allen Ginsberg: The limit is people’s prejudice.

Srila Prabhupada: We don’t say, “Why are you chanting Krishna like this?” We never say that. We simply say, “Please try to chant Krishna.”

Allen Ginsberg: Or let us say there would be a limit until the word Krishna became as common in English as any other English word.

Srila Prabhupada: It is already in the dictionary. In all dictionaries you will find Krishna. What more do you want?

Allen Ginsberg: Something that will not disturb truck drivers.

Disciple: They can say Christ. They can say Krishna. It is the same.

Allen Ginsberg: True. But they don't say Christ. *[Laughs]*

Srila Prabhupada: I have read one book, the *Aquarian Gospel*, wherein it is explained that Krist means love. Christ means love. And Krishna also means love. So from Krishna this word Krist has come. And in India sometimes people say Krishna. Instead of Krishna, they say Krishna. And in various regions has come the word Kestha. Generally, instead of pronouncing very precisely Krishna, if somebody’s name is Krishnachandra, they say, “Hey, Kesthara.”

Allen Ginsberg: Where is this?

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Nawab Hussain Shah,* (Full name: Alauddina Saiyada Hussain Shah Seripha Makka.) who ruled Bengal from A.D. 1509 to 1532, had two expert and trusted ministers in the brothers Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik. The Nawab had recruited the brothers from the aristocratic Karnatic brahmana community, given them Muslim names, and taken satisfaction in seeing them shed Hindu ways and adopt Muslim dress and customs. In taking charge of the government secretariat and freeing the Nawab from the more cumbersome duties of his administration, Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik became his confidantes and two of the wealthiest and most influential men in Bengal.

Bengal’s Hindu community took a dim view of the brothers’ achievements. Muslims were not merely low-caste or outcaste, Hindu leaders proclaimed; they were meat-eaters and cow-killers. Rubbing shoulders with them in the slightest, even accidentally, clearly called for censure and ostracism. Because Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik, as they now called themselves, had accepted employment from the Nawab, they practically demanded their own excommunication. No other punishment fit their crime.

Finding no way to placate their critics and regain their status as respectable Hindus, the brothers in great humility and distress wrote several confidential letters to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu at Jagannatha Puri, requesting His guidance. Lord Chaitanya promised to come resolve their spiritual difficulties, and in 1513, on His way to visit the holy land of Vrindavana, He arrived at Ramakeli, the brothers’ exquisite home village on the bank of the Ganges at the border of Bengal.

Great crowds of people joined Lord Chaitanya chanting Hare Krishna and dancing through the streets of Ramakeli, alarming Muslim and Hindu leaders alike and prompting them to wonder what had occasioned the Lord’s visit. Nawab Hussain Shah, while appreciating Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as a Hindu prophet and ordering local officials to leave Him alone, appeared to be on a short fuse. And to many Hindu leaders, Lord Chaitanya was a prophet only in the loosest sense, one fomenting a revolution against the brahminical caste system. There were Muslims and other untouchables chanting and dancing in those noisy crowds, and even the inner circle of the Lord’s Hare Krishna movement included at least one member, Haridasa Thakura, born

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*A Ruler's Quandary

_In the sixteenth century, the Muslim governor of Bengal loses two of his best men to the recently founded Hare Krishna movement._

_by Mathuresa Dasa_
in a family of cow-killing Muslims.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's devotees and friends in Ramakeli, sensing tension in the air, feared for His safety. Honouring their loving pleas, and appearing inconvenienced by the crowds that followed His every step, the Lord postponed His Vrindavana pilgrimage and returned to Puri, leaving both Nawab Hussain Shah and Hindu leaders to their sighs of relief as life returned to normal.

The Brothers Resign

Or apparently normal. For only a matter of months later news shook Bengal that Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik, the Nawab's right-hand men, had more or less vanished. Dabhir Kas had abruptly resigned his post, filled two large boats with his accumulated earnings in gold coins, and given away nearly all of it to relatives and religious charities at a place called Bakla Chandradvipa.

Sakara Mallik too had requested permission to resign, and when the Nawab refused, had instead submitted sick reports and stayed home. Because Hussain Shah was planning an invasion of the neighbouring state of Orissa, he was in no mood to allow Sakara Mallik to neglect the home front. Suspicious of the sick reports, the Nawab showed up at Sakara's house and found him in good health and happily studying the scripture Srimad-Bhagavatam, no doubt under the influence of the Hindu prophet Chaitanya.

The temperamental ruler first tried coaxing Sakara back to work with friendly words. When that failed, he slapped him in jail and marched off to conquer the feudal princes of Orissa. In the Shah’s absence Sakara escaped and, according to the jail keeper, drowned in the Ganges, dragged under by his prison chains.

But the drowning was a ruse. Sakara had bribed the jailkeeper with ten thousand gold coins Dabhir Kas had set aside for emergencies. The two brothers had slipped away to join Lord Chaitanya, who sent them to Vrindavana. Reliable sources confirmed too that during Lord Chaitanya's recent visit to Ramakeli, the brothers, disguising themselves and crossing town in the dead of night to avoid the Nawab's detection, had met with the Lord.

"Everyone is asking why I have come to this village of Ramakeli," the Lord had told them. "I have come just to see you two brothers."

Lord Chaitanya had initiated them into His Hare Krishna movement, changing their names to Rupa and Sanatana. So now Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik were known as Rupa Gosvami and Sanatana Gosvami. They had left wealth, family, friends, and practically unlimited spheres of influence in their homeland, and they had permanently set aside any thought of returning to regular Hindu
society, all to serve Lord Chaitanya in a remote holy place.

Reports filtered back from Vrindavana that the brothers had shaved their heads, marked their foreheads with tilaka clay, and discarded the silken, bejeweled finery of their government days to wear torn cloth. With no fixed residence, they were living beneath trees, one night under one tree and the next night under another. They were begging a little food, eating only some dry bread and chickpeas, and sleeping hardly at all. Through these willing hardships they happily chanted the holy names of Krishna, dancing in great jubilation throughout Vrindavana. Finding the opportunity to employ their considerable erudition to scrutinize the world's revealed scriptures (they were fluent in Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit), they were writing books to establish eternal, universal religious principles.

Back home, Muslim and Hindu alike wondered how the brothers could even talk of religion. Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik had first lost their status as Hindus, then offended Hussain Shah as well. Weren't they aware that no religious person would take them seriously? And how long could these wealthy, aristocratic gentlemen survive as humble mendicants after their lives of luxury and prestige? Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's cult might temporarily attract those shaken by the crises of youth or middle age, and certainly the brothers had been traumatized by losing their Hindu birthright, but nothing could ultimately replace the identity everyone centers on the traditions of home, family, country, and career. As time wore on, Dabhir and Sakara would inevitably return to lives as stable, upwardly mobile professionals.

Yet as the years passed, Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik stayed in Vrindavana, joyfully writing and preaching for Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. Competition for position at the Nawab's secretariat had begun at the first hint of the brothers' resignations, with Sakara Mallik's former post as head of the secretariat finally going to an undersecretary named Purandhara Khan. As further reminders of the brothers' absence, hundreds and thousands of followers of Lord Chaitanya were appearing in every town and village in Bengal and throughout India. Wherever Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had traveled, His devotees filled bustling marketplaces with their loud singing, greeted travelers at busy intersections and begged them to chant the holy names of Krishna, and in many ways reminiscent of Dabhir and Sakara, or Rupa and Sanatana, gave their lives to the Hare Krishna movement.

Ask these Hare Krishna devotees how Rupa and Sanatana were doing, and they would have the latest word on the brothers' activities in Vrindavana. "Rupa and Sanatana Gosvamis have received the causeless mercy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu," these nonenvious
followers might typically say with pride. "Deeply attracted by the transcendental qualities of the Lord, the brothers are exact replicas of Lord Chaitanya and are very, very dear to Him. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has empowered them to spread the transcendental news of Krishna’s pastimes. Rupa and Sanatana very carefully follow the principles enunciated by the Lord, constantly thinking of Lord Chaitanya and His mission. Srila Rupa Gosvami, Sanatana Gosvami, and their nephew Jiva Gosvami, as well as practically all of their family members, live in Vrindavana and publish important books on devotional service to Krishna. What is impossible for persons who have been granted the Lord’s mercy?"

Rupa and Sanatana, once the pride of the Nawab’s cabinet, the envy of their Muslim under-workers, and the objects of scorn from caste-conscious Hindus, were now leaders in the Hare Krishna movement. Because true spiritual life is without envy, their leadership made them the objects of love and honour for all the great stalwart devotees of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The Nawab’s Realization

Nawab Hussain Shah had to resign himself at last to the loss of his two talented ministers. Watching with wonder and apprehension as the Hare Krishna movement spread to every corner of his realm, he had occasion to remember his days with Rupa and Sanatana. In Ramakeli during Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s visit, the Nawab had privately questioned Dabhir Kas, the future Rupa Gosvami, about the Lord. Dabhir Kas had replied, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gave you this kingdom and whom you accept as a prophet, has taken birth in your country. By His blessings, you will attain victory everywhere."

"But why are you questioning me?" he had continued. "As king, you are the representative of God. What does your heart tell you about Lord Chaitanya?"

"I consider Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to be the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead," the Nawab had answered. "There is no doubt about it."

But Hussain Shah had mixed feelings. He had acknowledged Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu both as the Supreme Lord and as a troublesome holy man. Hussain Shah was after all a ruler and a politician, and Lord Chaitanya, Personality of Godhead or not, had created a significant upheaval in his kingdom. What had the Lord said to cause two talented ministers to leave their lucrative posts and join the Hare Krishna movement? What had caused so many others to follow the brothers’ example, chanting the holy names of Krishna and dancing in the streets?

What, in short, had been the teachings of Lord Chaitanya to Rupa and Sanatana?
In many places in his books Srila Prabhupada describes the wonders of prasadam, food prepared with devotion and offered to Krishna. Prabhupada discusses such merits of prasadam as how it effectively immunizes one against the contamination of the material nature, how it frees one from becoming a ghost after death, and even how it is considered ecstatic nectar from the lips of Lord Krishna. In the Chaitanya-charitamrita (Madhya-lila, 4.93, purport) Srila Prabhupada writes: “The Krishna consciousness movement vigorously approves this practice of preparing food, offering it to the Deity, and distributing it to the general population. This activity should be extended universally to stop sinful eating habits as well as other behaviour befitting only demons. A demonic civilization will never bring peace to the world. . . . When the people take to eating only prasadam offered to the Deity, all the demons will be turned into Vaishnavas . . . It is then and then only that a peaceful condition can prevail in society. Because prasadam is sanctified food and should be eaten with respect, we speak of eating prasadam as “honouring” or “respecting” it. Srila Prabhupada relished respecting the Lord’s prasadam and enjoyed seeing others do so. In early ISKCON days he cooked and distributed the Sunday “love feast.” And he kept a jar of syrupy gulab jamuns on hand for any of his spiritual children who might feel peckish. The sweets became known as “ISKCON bullets”—tasty weapons against maya. Prabhupada once popped a gulab jamun into his mouth and exclaimed, “We are eating our way back to Godhead!” Even in 1977 in Vrindavana, after months of fasting because of what would prove a fatal illness, Prabhupada called for his senior leaders, and in a faint, concerned voice he inquired, “Are the devotees getting enough prasadam?” Once, after a festival in Mayapur, West Bengal, Prabhupada looked out from his veranda and saw some women and children licking used banana-leaf plates thrown on the rubbish heap. With compassionate intensity he said that no one within ten miles of an ISKCON temple should ever go hungry.

Bhakti-yoga at Home

Wonderful Prasadam

By Rohininandana Dasa

Madhavendra Puri offers Lord Gopala a massive feast - Annakoota.
Preparation Prasadam

The *Chaitanya-charitamrita* offers detailed lists of preparations cooked for Krishna and then relished as Krishna-prasadam by Lord Chaitanya and His devotees. Lord Chaitanya was concerned that prasadam should be served as nicely as possible, and He often served the devotees Himself. Of course, no one would eat until the Lord had begun, and so after serving everyone for a while He had to sit down and begin eating, as some of His senior followers continued serving.

With this background the members of the Krishna consciousness movement have been busy for the last fifty years cooking and distributing large amounts of prasadam, and therefore the movement has sometimes been referred to as "the kitchen religion."

*Prasadam*, which literally means "mercy," nourishes the body, mind, and soul. It can liberate anyone from material bondage and bestow Krishna-prema, love of Godhead. *Prasadam* is so powerful because food offered to the Lord becomes transformed into a spiritual substance nondifferent from Him. In a purport to *Bhagavad-gita* (4.24) Srila Prabhupada explains how this is so: "The Absolute Truth covered by maya is called matter. Matter dovetailed for the cause of the Absolute Truth regains its spiritual quality."

From this quotation we can see how the concept of prasadam extends beyond food to anything with a connection to Krishna. As soon as something or someone is connected to Krishna, it, she, or he becomes spiritualized—Krishna-ized.

The secret of this conversion is love. Krishna is attracted by the humility and love of His devotee. The spice of love is the tasty ingredient that induces the Lord to eat an offering. Devotees therefore try to do everything with love. Their words, thoughts, and actions are heartfelt.

Offering with Love

The *Chaitanya-charitamrita* relates that the great devotee Madhavendra Puri saw His Deity, Gopala, eat a large offering of food and yet the food quantity of remained as it was, while it was spiritually transformed into prasadam.

Srila Prabhupada says that to achieve the same result is very easy. "Even the poorest of the poor, without any kind of qualification," can offer Krishna something, he says. If anyone offers even a leaf or a little fruit or water in "genuine love," the Lord will be pleased to accept it.

We can develop the required love for Krishna in the company of those who already love Him. We get that company in two ways: by physical proximity to a pure devotee and, more important, by associating with a pure devotee's instructions. So in the absence of the physical association of a devotee, when we, for instance, cook something at home under his direction, we are in his company. And when, with whatever love to which we have access, we make our offering to Krishna through such a pure devotee, we can be confident he will offer it to the Lord on our behalf and the Lord will accept it.

Eating Our Way Home

Our position is therefore bright with the hope that we will be able to "eat our way" home to the spiritual world, where at lunch time Krishna and His cowherd-boy friends sit together on the sandy bank of the Yamuna River, where they have transcendental fun discovering the delicious sweets in their lunch boxes, where they feed one another, steal from one another, pretend to steal from one another, play all kinds of childish pranks, and laugh.

And one day, like these ever young boys and all other inhabitants of the spiritual world, we'll have no need to eat to live. Our eating will be a way of relishing loving feelings. We will be so fully immersed in and saturated by pure love that we will have no use or need for anything else. Our bodies, composed of pure spiritual essence nondifferent from ourselves, will express our love for Lord Krishna and for one another. We will then know what it means to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

Until such a time, we can continue with confidence with our Krishna conscious practices and as often as possible respect prasadam in the company of family and friends. To help us honour Krishna's prasadam with devotion, before we sit down to eat we can recite the following prayer by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in Bengali, English, or both:

```
sarira avidya-jal
jodendiya taho kal
ta'ra madhye jivha ati
jive phele visaya-sagore
lobhamoy sudurmati
take jeta kathina samsare
krishna baro doyamoy
koribare jivha joy
sva-prasad-anna dillo bhai
sei annamata pao
radha-krishna-guna gao
preme dako caitanya-nitai
```

"O Lord, this material body is a lump of ignorance, and the senses are a network of paths leading to death. Somehow or other we have fallen into the ocean of material sense enjoyment, and of all the senses the tongue is the most voracious and uncontrollable. It is very difficult to conquer the tongue in this world. But You, dear Lord Krishna, are very kind to us. You have given us this nice prasadam just to control the tongue. So now let us take this prasadam to our full satisfaction and glorify Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha and Krishna, and in love call for the help of Lord Chaitanya and Prabhu Nityananda."
Two temples north of Thirunangur, and within a km of each other, Thiruvali and Thirunagari, make up one divya desam.

The Legend

The temple is connected to the wonderful life of Thirumangai Alwar, one of the Alwars of Sri Vaishnavism.

Thirumangai Alwar was born in a place called Kuraiyalur which is 3 km from Thirunagari in what was called Alinadu in the Chola kingdom. At birth he was named Nallan. He was born in the month of Karthika under the Krithika asterism. His father, Alinathan, was a local military commander serving the Chola Empire. Nallan grew up learning the martial arts such as archery and sword fighting and the Tamil and Sanskrit languages.

When his father grew old, the king appointed Nallan as successor to his father as a general, besides bestowing on him the title of king for the territory called Thirumangai, after Nallan conquered enemy territories for the Cholas. Thus the name King Thirumangai was affiliated with him. Thereafter he sought sensual pleasures and lived a very mundane life until he met a damsel in a nearby village, who turned his life towards pure devotional service.

At that time in Svargaloka there lived a virgin by name Sumangali who was the head of the damsels of the heavens. Once Sumangali wanted to visit Earth and along with other damsels, she descended to this planet. Here, she first visited the Himalaya Mountain. At that time, Sage Kapila was explaining about the beauty and greatness of Lord Narayana to a gathering of ascetics and other people. One among the mendicants was ugly and his face and body were deformed. On seeing him, Sumangali and her associates commented on him and laughed at him. Sage Kapila was enraged at the girls’ misconduct and cursed Sumangali to be born as a human being and live as the wife of a man on earth. Realizing her mistake, Sumangali begged forgiveness from Sage Kapila and pleaded that the curse be removed. But Sage Kapila told her that the
Temple gopuram
curse could not be taken back. However, the sage explained, the curse given to her was due to her past karma and she would be married to a great warrior and an intelligent person, who is said to be the incarnation of the sacred bow of Lord Narayana. He also told her that this man would be king of Thirumangai in the Chola Empire, whose mind was very focused on war and fighting and that Sumangali would have to divert his mind towards pure devotional service to Lord Narayana. Sage Kapila assured her that she would return to Vaikuntha after she fulfilled this mission. On hearing this, Sumangali was extremely happy.

After this, Sumangali went to Thirunangur along with other damsels. There, they were attracted by a pond filled with *kumudha* or lotus flowers. Much attracted by the beauty of the flowers, they all got into the pond and took bath in the crystal clear waters. Realizing it was a long time since they had left their heavenly abode, all the other damsels left Sumangali. Later, Sumangali searched for her friends and recalled that whatever was happening was according to her destiny. She changed into a newborn baby and was found near the lotus flowers in the pond.

Near the pond, there lived an excellent Ayurvedic physician. He and his wife were childless. Accidentally, he came upon the baby in the pond and was very happy, thinking that Lord Narayana had gifted him with this child. He took the baby home and his wife was also thrilled to see the child. They named her Kumudhavalli and took good care of her.

Years passed and Kumudhavalli was of marriageable age. Her father asked her what kind of a husband she wanted. Kumudhavalli explained her birth secret and said that she would marry King Thirumangai. She was sure that the king would come and ask for her hand in marriage.

Sure enough, King Thirumangai had heard about the beauty of Kumudhavalli and wanted to meet her and propose to her. He sent a message to her father that he would come to meet him to ask for his daughter’s hand in marriage.

Thus, Kumudhavalli met King Thirumangai and both of them were instantly attracted to each other. But Kumudhavalli made a condition that if Thirumangai dedicate his life to Lord Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he should also dedicate himself to the service of the devotees of Lord Narayana
after their wedding. King Thirumangai transformed himself. He changed his royal appearance by smearing Vaishnava tilaka on his body in the temple of Nachiyarkovil before Thiru Naraiyoonambi (the Lord of Nachiyarkovil, refer KV: 2014.

Kumudhavalli then elaborated her condition: After they were married, Thirumangai would have to feed 1008 Vaishnavas every day and wash their feet. He would then have to sprinkle that water over his head and also Kumudhavalli’s. If he agreed to fulfil these conditions, Kumudhavalli was prepared to marry Thirumangai. The king agreed to these conditions and after consulting Vedic scholars, he fixed a suitable date for their marriage.

It is said in Padma Purana:

\[
\text{aradanam sarvesham}
\]
\[
\text{vishnur aradhanam param}
\]
\[
\text{tasmat parataram devi}
\]
\[
\text{tadiyanam samarchanam}
\]

“Of all types of worship, worship of the Lord is best, and better than the worship of Lord is the worship of His devotee.”

Kumudhavalli and Thirumangai were married on a very auspicious day.

King Thirumangai kept his word and fed 1008 Vaishnavas every day. But as time went by since he had to spend a lot of money for the food, his wealth started to decrease. As a result of this, he could not pay the subsidiary tax (money that has to be paid by the small kings to the emperor) to the Chola emperor.

The Chola emperor was angry and sent some of his soldiers to ask for the amount due in taxes. But, Nallan (King Thirumangai) said he could not pay the money to the Chola Empire. At last, the Chola emperor sent a huge troop to Thirumangai to engage in a battle. But, since he was a very brave man and had enough soldiers, Thirumangai could not be defeated. The king then

Thirumangai Alwar and Kumudhavalli Nachiyar in the temple
warned Thirumangai that if he did not pay the tax at least as a gesture in gratitude for receiving his high office, his kingship would be removed.

Rendezvous with the Lord

In his desperation to keep his promise to serve the Vaishnavas, Thirumangai resorted to highway robbery, justifying to himself that he was doing this only to serve the devotees of the Lord. He would waylay rich travelers on lonely roads and force them to hand over all their wealth to him.

One day, Thirumangai saw a wedding party approaching, with the bride and groom bedecked in all kinds of invaluable jewellery. They both shone like luminous stars in the darkness of the night. They chatted and moved on through the forest in a happy mood of the festivities, when suddenly a dark, imposing figure jumped on to the middle of the road. Holding his hands up he revealed that he wielded a sword that could kill them all if they raised an alarm or tried to escape. No one could make out who the lone thief was, as a hood covered his face. His eyes were piercing and his voice was threatening. Knowing that their assailter was an experienced and strong man, all the members of the wedding party, including the bride and groom, surrendered their ornaments to Thirumangai.

King Thirumangai checked each of the members to see if they had given up all their jewellery. He found that the bridegroom still had some rings on his feet. When asked to remove them, the groom said that they would not come off, but the thief could have them if he could get them off. Thirumangai tried to get the rings off, even using his teeth, but in vain. Thirumangai then gave up trying to take these last jewels from the groom and tied up the jewels in his sack to load them onto his horse.

In a fit of anger, Thirumangai abused the groom, saying that he must have cast a spell on the ornaments so that they would not be lifted. The groom then drew close to Thirumangai to reveal the magic words of the spell, so that he might use them to break the spell. The groom chanted the eight syllable mantra Om Namo Narayanaya and revealed to the shocked Thirumangai that He was none other than Lord Vishnu, and His bride, Mother Lakshmi.

The Supreme Lord explained the importance of the eight syllable mantra.

The Narada Purana states:

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sarvavedantara sararthas
samsararnava tharaka
gathir ashtaksharo nrunam
apunarbhavakangkshinam
```

“For the one who desires to attain salvation, the eight syllable mantra is the essence of all Vedas, and is one that can help cross the ocean of material world. It is the only refuge.”

Narayana Upanishad states:

```
om ithyagre vyahareth, nama ithi
pachchath
narayanayethuparisthath, om
ithyekaksharam
nama ithi dhve akshare,
narayanayethi panyakshkarani
```

“Om should be recited first, followed by namah and Narayanaya; om has one syllable, namah is made of two syllables and Narayanaya is made of five syllables (thus this mantra contains eight syllables and is called ashtakshara). Thus shastra gives the exact structure of ashtakshara and how it should be recited without any doubt.”
Narada Purana also states:

\[
\text{manthranam paramo manthro guhyanam guhyamuththamam pavithranycha pavithranam mulamanthras sanathana}
\]

Ashtakakshara mantra is the greatest mantra among all mantras, most confidential one amongst the confidential mantras, the purest one among the pure mantras and is the eternal, ancient one.

From then, King Thirumangai was popularly called Thirumangai Alwar. After chanting the mantra into Thirumangai’s ears, Lord Narayana revealed His eternal form along with Sri Lakshmi, both riding Garuda whose body shines like beautiful gold. He also blessed Thirumangai with divine knowledge out of His causeless mercy.

Thirumangai Alwar’s deity is found in the Thirunagari temple. In one hand he holds a spear that is supported by the shoulder. His hands are worshipping Lord Narayana. His face is adorned with a beautiful Vaishnava tilaka. His mouth is rounded as if he is chanting “Om.” He has a sharp, slightly raised nose, broad eyes, blackish hair which is beautifully curled, ears which are perfectly shaped and are slightly bent (to hear the eight syllable mantra from Lord Narayana), well rounded neck, broad chest, strong shoulders, well-shaped upper back, narrow waist, beautiful garlands, wonderful anklets, knees which reflect his valour, slightly slanting divine lotus feet and the sword which will destroy all enemies. We can easily declare that King Thirumangai's deity in Thiruvali-Thirunagari is the most beautiful one in the entire creation.

**Thiruvali temple**

It is said that after killing Hiranyakashipu, Lord Narasimha was still furious. Seeing this the devatas and munis sent the Lord’s consort Lakshmi who sat on the Lord’s lap. The Lord embraced Her and calmed down. As He gives darshana in this posture, the place attained the name Thirumalai. Here the Lord married Thirumagal (Lakshmi) who was brought up by Poorna Muni. After giving darshana as mentioned earlier, the Lord left for Thirunagari in the same newlywed state. On the way, Thirumangai Alwar intercepted Him to rob Him and the Lord Himself bestowed the king with the *manthra upadesha*.

**Pancha Narasimha Kshetra**

With five Narasimha temples in and around Thiruvali-Thirunagari, this divya desam is called a Pancha Narasimha Kshetram

At Kuraiyalur, the birth place of Thirumangai Alwar, one finds Ugra Narasimha. At Mangai Mutt, where Mangai Manan fed 1008 Vaishnavas as per the wishes of Kumudhavalli, there is Veera Narasimha.

At Thirunagari, there are two Narasimha Deities- Yoga Narasimha and Hiranya Narasimha and at Thiruvali, one sees Lakshmi Narasimha with the Goddess on His right lap.

*(The next issue will contain more pastimes Thirumangai Alwar and Thirunagari temple)*

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam

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To read online visit: [www.goo.gl/SDhrwE](http://www.goo.gl/SDhrwE)
Is God Partial?

With so much fighting going on in the name of God, one might wonder, "Whose side is God on?"

By Mathuresa Dasa

A quick worldwide poll of assorted fundamentalists as to whether or not God is partial would no doubt indicate that He is—extremely. The only question would be, Partial to whom? In Northern Ireland He sides exclusively with either the Catholics or the Protestants, depending on whom you talk to. In India He is adamant to have built in His honour either a Muslim mosque or a Hindu temple, again depending on whom you ask.

And on street corners just about anywhere, preachers inform passersby that He is sending most of them to hell.

To all these claims on His favour and disfavour, Lord Krishna replies that He is partial to no one.

samo 'ham sarva-bhutesu
na me dvesyo 'sti na priyah

Lord Krishna welcomes His brahmana friend Sudhama in the manner befitting a worshipable guest (above). Krishna hurls His disc to sever the envious Sishupala's head from his body (right).
"I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all." *(Bhagavad-gita 9.29)*

This doesn't mean that there aren't some perks for piety. There are. But those perks are only the results of our own past deeds under the three modes of nature—goodness, passion, and ignorance—in this and previous lives. The *Gita* clearly explains (14.18) that the pious, conducted by goodness, rise to higher planes of material enjoyment, earning future advantages such as prosperity and knowledge. Those of passionate natures occupy the middle of the road, getting a mixture of persistent misery and the fleeting pleasures of sense gratification. And those addicted to intoxicants, sleeping, meat-eating, and other acts in ignorance descend to madness and illusion, in human and lower forms of life.

We choose our mode or mixture of modes, we get the results of our choices, and the Supreme Lord, though the creator of nature and its modes, takes no sides. Krishna designs nature's laws to act like fire. Touch fire and get burnt; meddle with the modes and, whatever your religious ties or philosophical outlook, get your reaction. This is impartial. From hellish conditions to heavenly ones, living entities are only living out the results of their previous actions. Krishna has no need even to act as judge, since the impartial workings of the modes proceed merely by His will, leaving Him eternally free to enjoy transcendental exchanges with His pure devotees.

As the father of all living things, Krishna further shows His impartiality by arranging for material nature to supply the needs of life to everyone, whatever their modes. Even the animals are His children and so get what they
need. Without offering so much as a prayer, the elephant receives its tons of edibles and the ant its tiny grain. In human society too, both theist and atheist get sunlight, air, water, food, and shelter. God is like a rain cloud that pours water everywhere, even on rocks and oceans. Shortages of essentials may occur, but they show no preference for the denominations of their victims. The shortages are reactions to our dipping into the grossly ignorant mode of nature, not signs of the Lord’s direct hand. Krishna, the supreme enjoyer, has better things to do than punish and reward us for our escapades. He assigns such duties to the material nature and remains aloof.

Yet God’s impartiality is only half the story, or half of the Gita verse quoted above. The full verse says:

\[
\text{samo 'ham sarva-bhutesu} \\
\text{na me dvesyo 'sti na priyah} \\
\text{ye bhajanti tu mam bhaktya} \\
\text{mayi te tesu capy aham}
\]

"I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him."

While asserting that He is impartial, Krishna also proclaims Himself an intimate friend, or in other words very partial, to His devotees. This contradiction appears to take us back to square one, since most everyone has a valid claim on being devoted to God. Protestant and Catholic, Hindu and Muslim, could all, if so inclined, quote the Bhagavad-gita, or similar lines from other scriptures, and go on feuding. ("God says He’s a friend to His devotee—me.")

But Krishna’s partiality is transcendental, or confidential. The samo ‘ham verse occurs in a chapter of the Gita entitled "The Most Confidential Knowledge." In the beginning, the first two chapters of the Gita, confidential knowledge means understanding the difference between your self and your body: the body is perishable and the soul is not. More confidential still is knowledge of the Supreme Soul and how to attain Him, as described in the seventh and eighth chapters. And most confidential of all is understanding that the kinship and love we now repose in our bodily relations is but a dim reflection of our eternal kinship with God.

If the very beginning of confidential knowledge is understanding that we are not these bodies—not Hindu, Catholic, Muslim, or any other bodily designation—then how can Lord Krishna’s partiality have anything to do with our material bodies? It can’t. Krishna doesn’t say He is partial to His Hindu devotee or His Protestant devotee. He says He is partial to anyone who renders Him service with devotion. With His partiality too, then, He is impartial.

The devotee’s kinship with Krishna is not figurative. God is the original master, friend, lover, and child and thus the natural object of our every thought and action. Material friendship and love now absorb our minds and motivate our actions—and yield as their counterpart our material enmities, including religious ones. But such friendship and love are but passing reflections of eternal spiritual templates. Krishna therefore encourages us, a few verses after the partiality verse, “Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.”

With the constantly devoted souls, Krishna reciprocates as a friend. He does not merely reward them, from a great distance, through the agency of His material energy. He directly returns their love, because their pure devotional service, like His supreme self, is above the three modes of material nature, beyond ordinary goodness and piety.

The pure devotee of God, while not inattentive to routine familial and religious duties, knows that they are born of material friendship and love. So he rejects all bodily designations and identities and identifies himself exclusively as an eternal servant of the Supreme Person. Upon such devotees Krishna bestows His intimate and eternal friendship. That is His partiality.

So when that quick worldwide poll reaches your doorstep, asking whether or not God is partial, tell the pollster that this is the most confidential knowledge but that, yes, He’s partial to those who are impartial, who see no difference between Catholics and Protestants, between street preacher and passersby, and who practice and promote transcendental loving service to Him. ☺

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The hospital room smells strongly of antiseptic as I walk in. Chris sits on his bed, immersed in rapidly pushing buttons with his thumbs.

"Nintendo?" I ask nonchalantly, breaking his concentration.

"Play Station," he replies, continuing to madly push buttons.

I sit in a chair next to his bed, observing his strategy for blowing things up.

After a couple of minutes, Chris slams the game paddle to the floor.

"I hate this game," he snarls, with a few expletives thrown in.

Instinctively I reply, "Hmm, sounds like you're really angry."

My statement of the obvious sounds ludicrous to both of us. Chris ignores me. He covers his head with the bed sheet and mumbles to himself.

I feel uncomfortable and don't know what to say to draw him out. Chris is an eleven-year-old boy I've been working with in mental-health therapy for the past year. He has a history of explosive, raging outbursts. Recently he kicked a brick wall so hard he broke the femur in his right leg. Now he's confined to a hospital bed with pins in his leg.

I make another feeble attempt to connect to him.

"Anger is a powerful feeling. Looks like we need to explore new ways for you to control it, rather than it control you."

After enduring a few more minutes of silence, I decide to try a different approach.

"I brought you some cookies," I say with as much enthusiasm as I can muster.

At this, he peers out from under the sheet and asks, "What kind?"

Relieved to hear some response, I reply "Peanut butter."

He puts his hand out, and I place the cookies in it. Both he and the cookies disappear under the sheet. The muted sound of his munching fills the sterile room.

Losing Control

Since Chris and I began working on his anger, he has learned to identify things that trigger it. Getting teased at school makes him furious and inspired him to kick the brick wall. He has also learned to recognize that when he loses control, his fists and teeth clench and he feels flushed. He has developed a repertoire of positive ways to deal with his anger: walking away, positive self-talk, running around the block, visualizing a peaceful place. Despite this arsenal of anger-management skills, he still fails to control his anger in real-life situations.

Because I'm a long-time student of Bhagavad-gita, Chris's problem reminds me of the verse in which Lord Krishna tells His friend and disciple Arjuna that anger comes from lust. People generally think of lust as sexual longing. But Lord Krishna's definition of lust extends to any ungodly desire to gratify the senses.

Lord Krishna further explains that although the senses require a certain amount of satisfaction, unless regulated they become like wild horses, forcing one to obey their whims. Craving the objects of their satisfaction, the senses take control of the mind and intelligence, leading to frustration and anger when their impossible demands go unmet. From this anger, Krishna continues, delusion arises, and from delusion, bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, human intelligence is lost, leaving one in a hell of irrational behaviour.

Anger in Littleton

Modern society is full of people plagued with sensual addictions. When such people can't satisfy their urges, they become frustrated and anger takes control. As a result, we are currently witnessing unprecedented acts of violence throughout society. Even our middle-class suburban schools have been victimized by a rash of killings perpetrated by children from their own communities.

On April 20, 1999, two students of Columbine High School in affluent Littleton, Colorado, opened fire on their fellow students, killing eleven and injuring many more. For the climax of their orchestrated massacre, the boys shot and killed themselves.

Like my client Chris, the Littleton boys had experienced peer rejection. One of them had graduated from an anger-management class. Still, rather than seek out ways to be accepted, they chose to retaliate with vengeance. They identified with hate groups and then planned a diabolical scheme to persecute those they imagined had smitten them.

This is a modern illustration of the Gita's timeless words: a thwarted desire for adoration and distinction emotionally evolves from lust to anger, then to delusion, and finally to insanity.
Graduates of the study of the Bhagavad-gita go on to the Srimad-Bhagavatam. The Bhagavatam narrates several accounts of how anger bewildered the intelligence of even great personalities. Once Durvasa Muni, a powerful yogi, approached the palace of Ambarisha Maharaja, a saintly king and exalted devotee of the Lord. Ambarisha prepared a reception with sumptuous food for Durvasa. As was the custom, before accepting his meal Durvasa went to bathe in the river. While bathing, the mystic Durvasa entered a yogic trance and stayed in the water for some time.

King Ambarisha had been observing a religious fast, and the proper time to break his fast was approaching. Not wanting to offend Durvasa by accepting his own meal before feeding his guest, Ambarisha Maharaja drank a little water—an action that simultaneously breaks and does not break one's fast.

By his yogic abilities, Durvasa came to know of this perceived transgression. Thinking the king's action disrespectful, Durvasa became insulted, and to retaliate he went before Ambarisha with angry words. He then invoked a fiery demon meant to destroy the king. But Lord Krishna protected His devotee Ambarisha and released His razor-sharp disc weapon towards Durvasa. After fleeing for his life, Durvasa came to his senses and realized how his pride and lust for adoration and distinction had provoked his needless wrath.

Understanding the ramifications of his anger, Durvasa Muni fell at the feet of Maharaja Ambarisha and received forgiveness.

**Anger as a Symptom**

There are rare instances where anger is spiritually appropriate, provoked by injustices against the Lord and His devotees. Most anger, however, is a negative emotion manifested from frustrated attempts to enjoy sensually in the material world. Such anger must be checked and controlled. Teaching people anger-management skills can help. Chris sometimes successfully avoided confrontation by remembering to use them.

But as fever is a symptom of some disease in the body, anger is a symptom of ongoing material hankerings. Just as treating fever alone will not cure the disease, treating anger without understanding it to be a symptom of lust will not extinguish the unwanted behaviour. To conquer anger, we must first ask how we shall conquer lust.

The Srimad-Bhagavatam describes many persons who conquered lust and were unaffected by anger. Foremost among them is Prahlada Maharaja. At the age of five, Prahlada, a self-realized devotee, had no interest in worldly gain—just the opposite of his lusty, atheistic father, Hiranyakashipu. In time, the godless Hiranyakashipu began to look upon his saintly son as

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an enemy and plotted to kill him.
Although harassed in various ways by his father, Prahlada never became angry with him. The Lord, however, appeared as Narasimhadeva and killed Hiranyakashipu. Afterwards, He offered a benediction to Prahlada, who, being self-satisfied in love of God, asked only that his evil father be liberated from his sins.

To be free of any negative emotions towards a person who tries to kill you may seem impossible. Yet a pure soul sees things differently. Pure devotees of God know they are spiritual beings, separate from the material body, and they see others in the same way. They understand how karma forces everyone to act according to a particular conditioned nature. They have full faith that the Lord is orchestrating everything and that He will protect them. Self-realized souls such as Prahlada are satisfied, so they don't need to exploit anything or anyone.

While this portrait of a pure soul may seem foreign, it is nevertheless our actual nature. Layers of dirt may cover gold, but when thoroughly cleansed the gold resumes its brilliance. Similarly, those who become cleansed of material desire again exhibit their original purity. Such purification is possible by engaging the demanding senses in serving the Lord. Without using the senses in God's service, trying to control them will end in frustration and failure.

Helping Chris
I realize that Chris's success hinges on his turning to God, Krishna. Chris can now go in a direction that will elevate or degrade his consciousness. He can allow his anger to consume him and follow the teenage murderers of Columbine. Or he can follow in the footsteps of Prahlada and Ambarisha.

Right now I can't imagine Chris sitting down to chant the Hare Krishna mantra on beads. But I can introduce prayer to get him started.

When Chris finally emerges from under the sheets, I suggest a new tactic: praying to God for help with his anger. Together we formulate the prayer: “My dear Lord, please help me to stay in control of my anger. Help me to be calm and peaceful even when I'm being teased.”

Chris repeats the prayer several times out loud and gives me an approving nod.

"Maybe this will help," he says with a new confidence.

"I'm sure it will," I respond, getting up to leave. He waves enthusiastically.

"Come again," he says, "and bring more cookies!"

I make a mental note to bring cookies offered to Krishna so Chris can be purified. I’d hate for him to be angry with me.
Governor of Karnataka releases biography on Srila Prabhupada

His Excellency Sri Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala, Governor of Karnataka, released *Mahasadhaka*, a book in Kannada—a biography on the sublime life of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, on September 27, at Hare Krishna Hill, Bengaluru.

Governor Vajubhai Vala attributed the deterioration in societal values to the lack of religious feelings among people. He pointed out that our heart can be transformed by reading books like *Mahasadhaka* and associating with saintly persons.

His Holiness Sri Sri Vishwesha Tirtha Swamiji of Pejawar Math and Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, President, ISKCON Bangalore graced the occasion. Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara, a well-known writer and Jnanpith awardee was the Guest of Honour.

The book release event was held to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Srila Prabhupada’s travelling to the West on the order of his spiritual master to propagate the teachings and glories of Lord Krishna.

This book is written in an interesting manner by Dr. Babu Krishnamurthy, eminent author of several Kannada books. *Mahasadhaka* gives us glimpses of Srila Prabhupada’s life in India before his voyage to the West, on his mission and the years he spent all over the world spreading the teachings of Krishna and the practice of devotional service. It is the story of one of the greatest spiritual leaders of our time.

In his welcome address Sri Stoka Krishna Dasa, Vice President of the temple, gave a brief introduction of Srila Prabhupada and his accomplishments.

Speaking on the occasion, the author, Dr. Babu Krishnamurthy, expressed his great happiness at having worked on the biography of Srila Prabhupada, saying that it was the greatest and most marvellous time in his life.

Dr. Chandrashekhara Kambara recounted the times when he interacted with Allen Ginsberg in Calcutta. Allen was one among the hippies who came in touch with Srila Prabhupada. He said that Srila Prabhupada brought a transformation to their lives.

Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa spoke about the humility of Srila Prabhupada. He read out the English translation of Srila Prabhupada’s poem, written at the time of his arrival in America, expressing his heartfelt desire to change the consciousness of the Americans. He said that Srila Prabhupada is truly an ambassador of Lord Krishna from the spiritual world.

His Holiness Sri Sri Vishwesha Tirtha Swamiji quoted a verse by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on the qualities of being humble, tolerant and devoid of false prestige. He glorified Srila Prabhupada as a great saint who caused a revolution in bhakti.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by the temple Vice President Sri Vasudeva Keshava Dasa.

Featured Article: India’s Celebration of Krishna

The appearance of Lord Krishna 5000 years ago on this planet, is woven into the historical and cultural fabric of every state in India. Here, Krishna is the favourite subject of different aspects of culture: music, dance and literature. Sri Krishna appeared in His original form in Vrindavan, His transcendental abode, which descended with Him 5000 years ago. Though Krishna spent only the first ten years of His life in Vrindavan, it is the most sacred place on earth. Let us now follow the different states of India where Lord Krishna appeared in His archa form to benefit the people of that region.

Read More: [https://goo.gl/L100yk](https://goo.gl/L100yk)

Celebrating the glories of Srimati Radharani

The auspicious Radhashtami which is the appearance day of Srimati Radharani was celebrated on September 21 at our temple.

Read More: [https://goo.gl/DOoa7kD](https://goo.gl/DOoa7kD)

Remembering Srimati Radharani's sannaya diksha

Srimati Radharani was celebrated at our temple on September 27 in commemoration of His acceptance of sannaya diksha.

Read More: [https://goo.gl/UyN1BO](https://goo.gl/UyN1BO)

Mohandas Pai: Spare 2% of your wealth to wipe out hunger...

CNBC-TV18 hosted a talk show on 5th October in support of Daan Utsav celebration and it featured the Akshaya Patra midday meal programme.

Read More: [https://goo.gl/OLdoOC](https://goo.gl/OLdoOC)

Getting the dust of Krishna’s lotus feet

Those who are blessed with the dust of Lord Krishna’s lotus feet become pure devotees. They don’t have a desire to occupy even the post of Brahma.

Read More: [https://goo.gl/Gaf1tC](https://goo.gl/Gaf1tC)

Download November 2015 e-Calendar at [www.iskconbangalore.org/desktop-calendar](http://www.iskconbangalore.org/desktop-calendar)

Reviews from Trip Advisor

Chandra Traveeller

"Nicce Experience"

I am not a guy who loves to go to temples. But this is something different than a typical Hindu temple. One must visit this place to experience the grandeur and different temple experience, it has a food-court also with reasonable pricing to taste local food varieties, and also donates, pastries, etc.

Prashant K

"Massive and serene"

ISKCON Bangalore truly represents the expansion this community has managed over last fifty years. The temple is imposing and calming at the same time. Visit the place during aarti early morning or evening and the chants will take you to another world.

B Cutchuredi

"Jai Shri Krishna"

Beautiful location and blissful. Be at the time of aarti in the evening. Enjoy your favourite prasad and forget all worries.

SUNU

"Holy and divine place to visit"

Neat clean and very peaceful, filled with all divine thoughts as you enter the premises of the temple. Well-managed and cooperative staff are always there to help you out with any problem that you might be facing. Food is also hygienic and you can get everything inside.

BalaMaheshwaram

"Divine place to go in the evening"

Though it takes more time to reach the place because of traffic, once you enter the place you feel relaxed and happy. Late evening is the best time to visit the place, chant mantras and immerse yourself with divine feelings.

pmy

"Good place for worship"

Extremely peaceful, full of devotion, peace of mind, loveable place, extremely devotional. Good Praasadam. Lectures were inspiring. We can get our peace of mind within 5 minutes of visit. Holy world.

Top You Tube Picks

First ever Hare Krishna Kirtan flash mob

[https://youtu.be/ON37D7a8r6A](https://youtu.be/ON37D7a8r6A)

The Power of the Holy Name by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa

[https://youtu.be/Fa3AQSO6g1w](https://youtu.be/Fa3AQSO6g1w)

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