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VISHESHA DEEPOTSAVA
Oct - 16, 23, 29, 30, 31 Nov - 1, 6, 13

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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
"The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end; therefore, fight, O descendant of Bharata." (Bhagavad-gita 2.18)

Here Krishna is convincing Arjuna that the soul is different from the body. While the soul is eternal, this body will one day be finished. However you may try to preserve the body by applying cosmetics and other things, you cannot save it. That is not possible, because the body is antavanta, perishable. (Anta means "end," and vat means "possessing.")

So Krishna is saying to Arjuna, "Your duty is to fight, but you are lamenting that the bodies of your grandfather and teacher and kinsmen will be destroyed. You think this will make you unhappy. Certainly you'll be unhappy, but even if you do not fight, their bodies will be finished today or tomorrow or a few years later. So why should you not discharge your duty?" This is Krishna's argument here.

As for the souls of Arjuna's grandfather, teacher, and others, they are eternal. The words used are nityasya uktah. Now, it is significant that Krishna says uktah. Uktah means "it is said." It is not that Krishna dogmatically puts forward some theory. No. The fact that the soul is eternal is already settled; it is already ascertained. By whom? By the Vedic literature, and by previous authorities. This is the way of presenting evidence for spiritual statements. Even Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, does not theorize. He says, "It is said; it is authorized."

Then Krishna says the soul is anasin o'prameyasya. Anasinah means "immeasurable." Of course, in the Vedic literature the measurement of the soul is given, but it is so small that you cannot measure it.

Many things are described in the Vedic literature that are beyond our experience. You are so advanced in scientific knowledge, but when dealing with Vedic knowledge you cannot say whether or not it is factual. For example, the Padma Purana gives a count of the varieties of living entities: jalaja nava-laksani. "There are 900,000 aquatic animals." You cannot say, "No, there are not 900,000. There are more." It is not possible for you to see within the water and count how many varieties of living entities are there. The biologists might investigate, but it is not possible for them to see 900,000 forms. Then the Padma Purana says, sthavara laksa-vimsati: "There are 2,000,000 varieties of trees and plants." Then, krmayo rudra-sankhyayah: "There are 1,100,000 insects." It is a puzzling thing how the Vedic literature can state everything so precisely: "Nine hundred thousand aquatic animals, 2,000,000 plants and trees, 1,100,000 insects." This is realized knowledge. And we accept it. Because we accept Vedas as authority, knowledge is there, ready. If somebody asks you, "Can you say how many forms of living entities are within the water?" it would be very difficult for you to answer. Even the biologists cannot say, although they are very expert. But because we accept the Vedic authority, we can immediately say, "There are 900,000 aquatic." Although I have never seen these forms personally, because it is stated in the Vedic literature I can give you the correct answer. So, by Vedic authority we can know things beyond our direct experience.

Sometimes rascals come and challenge. "Can you show me God?" Yes, we can show you God—provided you have the eyes to see Him. God can be seen with a different type of eyes not with these ordinary eyes. That is stated in the shastra [scripture]: atah sri-krishna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyah. Indriyah means "with these material senses." With these material senses we cannot directly experience the form of the Lord or His qualities, or what He does. But the shastra describes the Lord's qualities, form and activities. So you can learn of these things from the shastra.

The Vedanta-sutra says. shastra-yonitvat. Yoni means "source." Thus shastra-yonitvat means that the shastra is the source of knowledge—about the Supreme Lord. As it is said one should be shastra-caksuh—the shastra should be one's eyes, not these blunt material eyes.

So, to know what is beyond our sense perception, we have to see through the authorized books. Acintyah khalu...
"By argument one cannot understand what is beyond sense perception."

So many things are beyond our direct experience. Daily we see many planets and stars in the sky, but we have no information about them. Now the scientists are sending men to see the moon planet, but hopelessly they are coming back. Then the scientists dogmatically declare, "There is no life on any planet except Earth." This is false.

We have information from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* that there are people on the moon who live for ten thousand years. And what is the measurement of their year? Our six months is equal to their twelve hours, so just imagine how long ten thousand of their years is!

Actually, everyone's year is calculated differently. A small ant lives for a hundred "years." but the ant's hundred years and our hundred years are different. Similarly, our hundred years and Brahma's hundred years are different. So time is relative according to the nature of your body.

Now, let us try to calculate the life span of Brahma by calculating his one day. Krishna says, *sahasra-yuga-paryantam ahar yad brahmano viduh:* "Brahma's day lasts for a thousand yuga cycles." In each cycle there are four yugas or ages—Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali—which last a total of 4,320,000 years. So one of Brahma's days (a day is morning to evening) lasts 4,320,000,000 of our years, and Brahma lives one hundred years composed of these days and equally long nights.

These things are to be understood through the shastra. Otherwise, we can have no knowledge of them. You cannot calculate on your own nor can you go to Brahma and ask him. You cannot even go to the moon planet what to speak of Brahmaloka. It is in the remotest part of this universe. Modern scientists estimate that to go to the topmost planet would require thousands of years if one travels at the speed of light. So by direct perception we cannot understand even this material world, what to speak of the spiritual world.

As Lord Brahma says, *panthas tu koti-sata-vatsara-sampragamyo vayor athapi manaso muni-pungavanam.* You can go on with your mental speculation for many hundreds and thousands of years, but still it is not possible to know of the soul and God in this way. You have to learn about these subject matters from the shastra: otherwise, it is not possible to understand them.

Therefore here, when Krishna says the soul is *nitya,* eternal. He also says *uktah,* "it is said." Krishna is not presenting some dogma, although He can do so since He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But He is teaching us that only when something is said by previous authorities, or acharyas, can you declare it. This is called *parampara,* the disciplic succession. You can try to understand the subject matter with your intelligence, but you cannot make any addition or alteration. That is not allowed. The science of the Absolute Truth is already settled: you cannot argue.

Now, in the previous verse Krishna said, *avinasi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idam tatam:* "The power of the indestructible soul is spread all over the body." What is that power? Consciousness. This power of the soul you can perceive, but not the soul itself. The soul is so small that it is not even possible to measure it. We have no means to measure it because our material senses are too blunt. We can simply understand the presence of the soul by seeing the presence of consciousness.

When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fainted in the Jagannatha temple, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya examined Him and concluded that there was no consciousness because His abdomen was not moving. When you have consciousness, you breathe, and thus your abdomen moves. But because Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's abdomen was not moving, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya thought, "This sannyasi might have died." But when the Bhattacharya brought a cotton swab and put it before the Lord's nostrils, he saw that the fibers of the swab moved a little, and in this way he saw that Lord Chaitanya was living.

So, everything material has a specific measurement, but as far as the soul is concerned it is *aprameya,* immeasurable. That is why the materialistic scientists say there is no soul. They cannot detect it with their instruments.

But we have proof that there is a soul. What is that proof? The existence of consciousness. This is the proof. And in the shastra the place of the soul is also given: the heart. *Isvarah sarva-bhutanam hrd-dese 'rjuna tisthati.* The soul is in the heart, and Krishna is also in the heart. They remain together.

So, you can perceive the presence of the soul by the presence of consciousness, but if you want to measure the soul that is not possible. Therefore Krishna says it is *aprameya,* immeasurable. Now you may say, "Why should I believe Krishna when He says the soul is immeasurable?" The answer is that He says *uktah.* "It is already settled by previous authorities." In other words, there is Vedic evidence that the soul is immeasurable. Where is the Vedic evidence? In the *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* (5.9):
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“The measurement of the living entity is one hundredth of one hundredth part of the tip of a hair.” In the Srimad-Bhagavatam [11.16.11] there is also evidence: suksmanam apy aham jivah. Krishna Himself says, “Of minute particles, I am the jiva.” These are some of the evidences in the Vedic literature that the soul is immeasurable and we have to accept them.

So, from the Vedic literature we get evidence for the size of the soul and from our experience of consciousness we can understand the presence of the soul. Therefore how can anyone say there is no soul? This is foolishness. The whole world is going on under this foolishness. Not only now but in ancient times also. For example, Charvaka Muni was an atheist; he did not believe in God or the soul. Lord Buddha also said there is no soul. He knew everything because he is an incarnation of God but he had to teach the people in that way because they were not intelligent enough to understand anything of God or the soul. Why? Because they were killers of animals.

The brains of animal-killers are as dull as stone. Such people cannot understand subtle things. Therefore meat-eating should be stopped. In order to revive the finer tissues of the brain so that one can understand subtle things, one must give up meat-eating. This is the statement of Maharaja Parikshit. He said that God consciousness, Krishna consciousness, cannot be understood by animal-killers (vina pasughnat).

You'll find that those who are animal-killers, even if they claim to be very religious cannot understand the soul. They are simply fanatics. They cannot understand what is the soul or what is God. They have some theories and they think they are religious, but what is actually sin, what are pious activities—these things they cannot understand because they are animal-killers. It is not possible.

Therefore Lord Buddha propagated ahimsa nonviolence. He saw that the whole human race was going to hell by this animal-killing. He thought, “Let Me stop them so that in the future they may become sober.” He was compassionate in two ways: First, He was very compassionate toward the poor animals who were being killed. And He was also compassionately toward the people. He thought, “The whole human race is going to hell. So let Me do something.” He was an incarnation of God, but because the people's brains could not tolerate the existence of the soul He had to deny it. Thus He did not say anything about the soul or God. He said, “Never mind that animals have no soul. Just stop killing them. When I pinch you, you feel pain so why should you give pain to others?”

Lord Buddha also denied the authority of the Vedas, because the Vedas sometimes recommend killing animals in sacrifice. Actually, the animals are rejuvenated, given a new body, but still Lord Buddha did not accept animal-killing in sacrifice. Therefore it is said, nindasi yajna-vidher ahaha sruti-jatam: “Lord Buddha criticized the sacrifices described in the Vedas.” Why? Sadaya-hrdaya darsita pasughatam: “Because He was so kind and compassionate toward the animals who were being killed.” That is Krishna consciousness.

God is very kind, very compassionate. He does not like to see any living entity suffer. But when there is a necessity, He can kill. His killing and our killing are different however, because He is all good. Anyone killed by Krishna immediately gets salvation.

So, here Krishna is encouraging Arjuna to fight on the basis of the eternal existence of the soul. Krishna says, “You cannot measure the soul, but the soul is there, and it is imperishable. On the other hand the body is perishable. Even if you do not fight you cannot save the bodies of your grandfather and teacher and others. Today or tomorrow they will die. So discharge your duty and fight.”

The main point Krishna wants Arjuna to understand is that he must fight that he must discharge his duty as a kshatriya [warrior] and not be overwhelmed by lamentation because of bodily destruction. In summary, Krishna tells Arjuna, “The body is different from the soul. So don't think that the soul will be killed. Just stand up and fight.” This is Krishna’s instruction.

Thank you very much.
Advanced in Foolishness

This exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and some of his disciples took place in Mayapur, India, on January 16, 1976.

Srila Prabhupada: If a man does not read the Srimad-Bhagavatam, then he remains a rascal.

Disciple: So, Srila Prabhupada, in the ultimate sense, anything apart from the Vedas is not really knowledge.

Srila Prabhupada: No. It may be some fragmental knowledge, but if one wants full knowledge in life, then he must read Bhagavatam—the pastimes, the dealings, of the Lord and His devotees. The Bhagavad-gita is the preliminary knowledge—ABCD—so that you can distinguish between matter and spirit. And then you should read Srimad-Bhagavatam.

Formerly all the great leaders of society knew all these things. Everyone was taught like that. But now, andha yathandhaih: some big bombastic blind man is leading all the small blind men directly into the ditch. Someone is passing as a great leader—great for giving people wrong direction, so that they can spoil their lives. The great leader cannot even save himself. He can spoil himself—and others—very nicely.

Disciple: These blind leaders have created such chaos, Srila Prabhupada. People’s minds have become terribly disturbed.

Srila Prabhupada: But from Bhagavatam we can offer the science of transcendental peace and tranquility. First we can show everyone, scientifically, how they have left the spiritual world and how they have become covered by matter. The materially affected mind is the first creation for material enjoyment. From the mind the material senses are created: five senses for knowledge-gathering and five senses for working, along with five airs within the body. And then pancha-maha-bhuta, the five basic material elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Then materially affected intelligence, and finally ahankara, or false ego, the power to misidentify one’s actual, spiritual self with all these material coverings.
Disciple: They don't really have an argument.

Sri La Prabhupada: Just see. All dogmatic. All dogmatic foolishness that they are propagating. And this is going on in the name of vijnana, science. Real vijnana should be enunciated.

Vijnana: vi- and jnana. Actually, vijnana has two meanings. One is visista-jnana, or genuine knowledge, fully realized and articulated, or enunciated. You can take this meaning. And the other meaning of vijnana is vigata-jnana, or pseudo-knowledge, knowledge lost or stolen by illusion.

So these “scientists” their “vijnana,” or “science,” is vigata-jnana, knowledge stolen by illusion, so-called knowledge bereft of all real knowledge. That sense is given in Bhagavad-gita: mayayapahrtajnanahmaya, or illusion, has utterly taken away these people's knowledge, and yet their so-called knowledge is going on as vijnana, science. Maya has made these people rascals, but they are presenting themselves as men of advanced knowledge. That is the defect of Kali-yuga, this age of hypocrisy.

Disciple: Advanced demoniac knowledge.

Sri La Prabhupada: Yes. Advanced demons. Actually, they are advanced demons. Asuras. Asuram-bhavam asrīta —they are infected with the contamination of atheism, godlessness.

Disciple: Of course, Sri La Prabhupada, one thing you can say for these so-called scientists: They know the science of avoiding the real issues. In that sense, they really are expert.

Sri La Prabhupada: A child can also avoid the real issues. That is not expert. A child without guidance can also advance very nicely in foolishness. And when the foolish child touches the fire and burns his hand, some other fool may say, “Oh, this is advancement of knowledge.”

Similarly, in this material world all these rascals are endeavouring for the advancement of their foolish knowledge. They are following in the footsteps of that ancient demon Hiranyakasipu. He also tried to ignore the soul and the Supreme Soul and tried to immortalize his material body, which is impossible. But just like Hiranyakasipu, today's rascals have become very advanced in that foolishness.

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### Fasting

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1 Ekadashi
2 Ekadashi

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Nov 1 Oct 27 break fast
Nov 2 fast from urad dal for one month
Nov 3 Govardhana Puja, Go Puja
Nov 4 Srla Prabhupada - Disappearance fasting till noon
Nov 5 Srla Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji - Disappearance fasting till noon
Nov 6 Srila Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji - Disappearance fasting till noon
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PART II: At this point we will answer some frequently-asked questions about karma.

Q: What is the practical effect of believing in karma?
A: Simply believing in karma without changing one's life so as to avoid undesirable reactions has no real effect. It's about as useful as believing in healthy living without changing one's bad dietary habits. In other words, believing is not enough. One should have a clear understanding of the science of karma and apply that understanding to one's life. Then one can live happily.

Q: What about people who don't believe in karma?
A: Karma is a fundamental mechanism of our existence. It applies to everyone, regardless of belief. Anyone can understand the reasonableness of karma, and all great spiritual authorities have taught the principle of karma: that there are reactions to our actions. In the Bible, for example, we find the statement of Jesus Christ: “As you sow, so shall you reap.”

Q: I'm quite happy the way I am. Why do I need to understand karma?
A: You may have a good life now, but if, being ignorant of the laws of karma, you act improperly, there is no guarantee that your next life will also be a happy one. For example, you might have to take birth in a poor country where you and your fellow countrymen can't even get enough to eat.

Q: How do I avoid bad karma?
A: The first thing is to give up the four basic sinful activities: meat-eating, gambling, intoxication, and illicit sex life.

Q: Is there any way of knowing how long good karma lasts?
A: Imagine you have a bank account. You are spending and spending, but you never get to see the balance sheet. One day there is no money left—and you're in trouble. That's what happens with good karma. If you're not accruing more good reactions, one day your good karma will run out.

In the material world everything is temporary. Both good and bad things end. In the Bhagavad-gita (5.22) it is stated:

> The pleasures which are due to contact with the material senses are sources of misery. O son of Kunti such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them.

Q: How is it possible that bad and sinful people are enjoying life without any apparent effects of bad karma?
A: You could compare karma to a contagious disease. Sometimes there are symptoms right away, and other times there is a long incubation period. But once you are infected, it's just a question of time until the symptoms catch up with you.

Q: Is there any way to know the length of time before the effects of karma will show up?
A: Imagine you have a bank account. You are spending and spending, but you never get to see the balance sheet. One day there is no money left—and you're in trouble. That's what happens with good karma. If you're not accruing more good reactions, one day your good karma will run out.

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for it, and you don't have to go anywhere for it. Spiritual enjoyment is within you; it is part of your spiritual nature. And once you have it, not only can you keep it permanently, but it increases all the time.

Q: What is the relationship between the soul, the body, and karma?

A: The Bhagavad-gita (3.27) explains:

The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature.

The soul in ignorance of his relationship with Krishna identifies with the body, its activities, and its karmic reactions. But when the spirit soul becomes aware of his actual position, he can see that he is distinct from the body and its activities. Then karma does not affect him anymore.

Q: But I see that devotees of Krishna still get sick. So how can they be free from karma?

A: When one is fully engaged in serving Krishna under the guidance of the spiritual master, he does not incur karmic reaction. The results of his previous actions are still coming to him to some extent, but they are running out. We give the example of turning off a fan. When the switch is turned off, the fan will still run for a while, but because there is no more power, it's just a matter of time before it stands still.

Of course, the material body will always be subjected to miseries. It's not that because you are a devotee, the mosquitoes won't bite you any more, or that you can enter a tiger's cage without being eaten.

The difference is that the devotee does not identify with the body and its unavoidable problems. And at the time of death he goes back to Godhead, never to return in a material covering.

If you practice Krishna consciousness, the soul stays aloof from all material turbulence and all material problems greatly diminish because you have pulled the plug on the fan. There is an instructive verse in Bhagavad-gita (2.70):

A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires—desires that enter like rivers into the ocean, which is ever being filled but is always still—can alone achieve peace, and not the man who strives to satisfy such desires.

Q: How would the activities of a person who does not incur karma differ from the activities of a materialist?

A: A devotee acts to please Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus he incurs no karma. A materialist on the other hand, because he falsely identifies with his body, acts only to please himself or extensions of himself, such as his family or community. He doesn't know that he is actually not satisfying himself, but only his body.

The Vedic literature explains that by pleasing Krishna, the source of all existence, you benefit too just as all the branches and leaves of a tree are nourished if you water its root. But if you try to gratify your own senses, that is like watering the leaves of the tree: it won't work.
Some examples of activities that incur no karma are studying books like the Bhagavad-gita, chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, and eating only food that has first been offered to Krishna. As Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita (3.13).

The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food which is first offered for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.

Q: What is the right attitude for someone who does not want to get entangled in the cycle of karma?

A: The right attitude is the willingness to give up sinful activities and seek the guidance of a self-realized, saintly person. From him one can learn how to organize one’s life in a spiritual way. This is not so much a change of activities, but rather a change of attitude or consciousness. In the Bhagavad-gita (2.47), Lord Krishna says,

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

Now let’s review our two-part lesson on karma.

Knowing the law of karma, we can understand that no one is really innocent. Although we appear innocent at birth, the consequences of our past deeds reveal themselves in time. In fact, the material body itself is a symptom of the living entity’s entanglement in karmic reactions, just as fever is a symptom of disease.

Yet there is always a chance to break free from the cycle of birth and death, which is propelled by karma. There is no eternal hell. We come to the material world to exercise our independence from God, but He has given us the Vedic literature, an instruction manual explaining how to return back to Godhead.

Rabbi Kushner couldn't reconcile the suffering of an apparently good person with the existence of an all-powerful and all-merciful God. Well, life is like a long movie of hundreds of thousands of individual pictures. In one scene the hero is laughing, and in another one he is crying. But the spectators know the movie is not real. After the movie, only the screen remains.

Similarly, the only real, permanent factor in the drama of our existence is the soul, which passes through the various scenes of different bodies. Rabbi Kushner couldn’t see beyond the scene of one lifetime and therefore didn’t know that the “good” person had received ample opportunity to cause his own suffering.

Without knowledge of karma, we become more and more entangled in the network of actions and reactions, like a fly caught in a spider’s web. But the practice of Krishna consciousness can bring our material existence to a happy end.

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogis in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection. (Bhagavad-gita 8.15)

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By Ajitananda Dasa

The desire for friendship is universal. It is based on our propensity to love someone. This propensity is thoughtfully explained by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in The Nectar of Devotion, one of the philosophical cornerstones of the Krishna consciousness movement. In his Preface, Srila Prabhupada writes, the basic principle of the living condition is that we have a general propensity to love someone. No one can live without loving someone else. This propensity is present in every living being. Even an animal like a tiger has this loving propensity, at least in a dormant stage, and it is certainly present in the human beings. The missing point, however, is where to repose our love so that everyone can become happy.....That missing point is Krishna, and The Nectar of Devotion teaches us how to stimulate our original love for Krishna and how to be situated in that position where we can enjoy our blissful life.

The Vedic literature tells us that our original friend is Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the material world, we mistakenly try to re-create our blissful, primeval relationship with Him through various temporal relationships, all of which fail to satisfy our perpetual longing for perfect friendship. Krishna, or God, is the divine fountainhead of the loving sentiment that can be seen in all living beings. The Vedas explain that God created us out of His inexhaustible desire for loving exchanges. Thus friendship with Him is the original state of the soul. Since we are eternally part of Krishna, there is a natural intimacy between Him and us. In the Bhagavad-gita we learn that He is residing within our hearts as the Supersoul, graciously accompanying us as we wander throughout the universe, life after life, in search of lasting happiness. Unlike us, God possesses a spiritual vision that is never dimmed by material contact, and thus He is perfectly aware of our folly. As our true friend, He exhibits His kindness upon us by allowing us to learn through our own experience the futility of our efforts, and He lovingly deflects our attention back to Himself, the abode of all happiness.

Because Lord Krishna is supremely pure, His friendship is never contaminated with the selfish motives that stain material relationships. In the material world, everyone is ultimately concerned with his or her own interest. Even our friendships are part of our plan for our own enjoyment.

Lord Krishna, by contrast, is always anxious for our ultimate well-being. Although we have turned away from Him, driven by our envy of His position as the supreme enjoyer, He continues to provide all our necessities. The air, the sun, our inherent abilities, and countless other gifts are all clear indications of His good will. And Krishna’s greatest expression of friendship is His association, which He generously offers us through the revealed scriptures, saints, and spiritual masters, who regularly appear throughout the millennia to invite us back to the spiritual world.

The attractive, dynamic qualities of the soul tend to remain static in the material world because of the soul’s marriage with inert matter. As a result, the thrill of material relationships diminishes quickly. We grow bored seeing the same faces day in and day out. But Krishna is never boring, for His transcendental qualities are ever fresh and ever expanding.

In the Vedas it is stated that even if the scientists could count all the grains of sand on a beach or all the atoms in the universe, they could never estimate even one drop of God’s blissful, all-attractive features. The Nectar of Devotion offers an illuminating summary of Lord Krishna’s spiritual qualities. By studying this great work in a spirit of devotion, we can enhance our appreciation for the Lord and thus develop the desire to know His sublime friendship.

For example. The Nectar of Devotion explains that no one is more appreciative or reciprocative than Lord Krishna, as shown in His dealings with His friends. Once, a poor brahmana named Sudama offered Krishna a few grains of rice. Because Sudama was penniless, he was unable to present his Lord with a valuable gift, as was his desire,
but because his humble offering was saturated with love, Krishna eagerly accepted it and ate it with great delight. Out of deep gratitude, Krishna reciprocated with Sudama by giving him more opulence than can be imagined even by the wealthiest person in this world, and in the end Sudama was granted entrance into Krishna's spiritual abode. Hearing of Krishna's limitless capacity for appreciating and reciprocating the love of His devotees can inspire us to rekindle our friendship with Him.

Lord Krishna is also the most faithful and considerate friend. He will never abandon us or allow us to feel neglected. Although His propensity to love is so great that He desires to interact with countless living beings simultaneously. He can do so without neglecting even one of them. When Krishna was in Dvaraka, He expanded Himself, by His supreme mystic power, into many Krishnas, giving spiritual bliss to each one of His sixteen thousand queens, each of whom thought that Krishna was residing with her alone.

Another reason that God's friendship is the most desirable relationship is that it is eternal. In the material world we may sometimes form a relationship with another person that seems to be of sterling quality, but even that soon fades like a dream. At the time of death, the karma of both friends carries them far apart from one another, as strands of seaweed, meeting momentarily on the crest of a wave, are separated forever when the wave breaks to shore.

Happily, this is not the case if we befriend Krishna. The exchange between God and the living entity is never checked. Even if one begins the attempt to realize Krishna in this life and is not completely successful in his spiritual development, he begins in his next life from where he left off, until at last he achieves perfection.

Since we are all Krishna's servants, it is important for us to remember that any attempt to approach Him must be attended by a serving attitude. Just as the Lord, out of His kindness, is always busy making arrangements for His devotees' happiness, we must also try to act for His pleasure. This is the beginning of real love. And there is no loss for us if we agree to cultivate our devotional sentiments. In fact, serving Krishna is so relishable that Krishna Himself appeared in the form of a devotee, as Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, to taste this pleasure and to show us, by practical example, that there is no greater aspiration for the living being than to achieve Lord Krishna's friendship.

The Krishna consciousness movement is in the direct line descending from Lord Chaitanya. It was established by Srila Prabhupada to assist those seriously interested in reviving their dormant love for God. Its doors are open to everyone. Persons who aspire for perfect friendship will certainly embrace this rare and wonderful opportunity to find lasting spiritual happiness in the eternal company of Lord Krishna, the perfect friend. ☺
Rajagopuram blessed with Sri Rama and His brothers because of which Dasharatha was Rama, was initiated into the mantra for Emperor Dasharatha, the father of Lord Thiru Pullani is also the place where Thiru Pullani.

The place of appearance of the Lord as peepal tree and Jagannatha. The sages were truly immersed in Supreme Personality of Godhead revealed Himself as they wanted the grace of the Supreme Lord in His original bodhi tree. The three sages were extremely happy but pleased with the devotion of the sages, the Supreme Personality of Godhead revealed Himself as Lord Adi Jagannatha. The sages were truly immersed in ecstasy to see the original form of the Lord as Adi Jagannatha.

The place of appearance of the Lord as peepal tree and later as Lord Adi Jagannatha is now known as Thiru Pullani.

Thiru Pullani is also the place where Emperor Dasharatha, the father of Lord Rama, was initiated into the mantra for child boon by Sage Rishyashringa, because of which Dasharatha was blessed with Sri Rama and His brothers as his sons.

Rajagopuram

Sage Rishyashringa who had married Princess Shantha was staying with Shantha’s father King Romapada in the kingdom of Anga. Rishyashringa had obtained immense powers due to penance he had undertaken, and by his knowledge and power the kingdom of Anga prospered.

However things were different in the kingdom of Ayodhya. King Dasharatha, Shantha’s biological father, who had given his only daughter in adoption to King Romapada, was having a problem. Dasharatha had three wives – Kausalya, Kaiksey and Sumitra, but he had no children to succeed him as the King of Ayodhya.

King Dasharatha was worried. He could not concentrate on the affairs of the kingdom. Sumantra, his minister, realized that King Dasharatha was sad and enquired after the reason for his sadness. King Dasharatha who had nothing to hide from his minister Sumantra shared his worry, of the problem of not having a child to ascend the throne after him.

But Sumantra knew a solution to solve the issues of King Dasharatha. Sumantra said that Princess Shantha, Dasharatha’s daughter, could help solve King Dasharatha’s predicament. King Dasharatha was confused as he had already given his daughter in adoption to King Romapada. It was then that Sumantra said that Sage Rishyashringa who was the husband of Shantha had immense knowledge and could help King Dasharatha have children by performing the Putrakamesi Yagna (sacrifice). Sumantra reminded Dasharatha about how Sage Rishyashringa had saved the kingdom of Anga from famine by performing various yagnas. Putrakamesi Yagna is a sacrifice performed to beget children. But this sacrifice can only be performed by learned sages like Sage Rishyashringa.

King Dasharatha was immensely happy and immediately went to the kingdom of Anga to request his friend King Romapada to send Shantha and Rishyashringa with him to Ayodhya to perform the yagna. But Sage Rishyashringa was out in the forest to perform a penance. Hence King Dasharatha went out into the forest near Thiru Pullani where Sage Rishyashringa was performing penance, to request the sage to come home with him to Ayodhya to perform the yagna.

Sage Rishyashringa agreed to perform the Putrakamesi Yagna at Ayodhya and gave mantra initiation to King Dasharatha in the sacred groves of Thiru Pullani. Then they set off for the kingdom of Ayodhya to perform Putrakamesi Yagna. On reaching Ayodhya, Sage Rishyashringa started preparing for the yagna earnestly. He was able to perform the difficult yagna with ease. At the end of the yagna, Agni, the god of the fire emerged from the sacrificial fire and handed the king a golden pot. Agnideva asked King Dasharatha to divide the kheer (sweet porridge) in the pot amongst his wives to beget children.

After the deva had vanished, Dasharatha sincerely thanked Rishyashringa and Shantha for their help. Sage Rishyashringa left for Thiru Pullani to continue the performance of penance. It was after eating the kheer obtained from Putrakamesi Yagna, the mantra initiation of which was given by Sage Rishyashringa to King Dasharatha at Thiru Pullani, that Dasharatha had four sons - Ramachandra, Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrughana.

Following the legend, childless couples perform a worship called jagapratishtha (installing a deity of snake god) in the temple of Thiru Pullani. It is believed that Adi Jagannatha bestows a child who is like Rama when such worship is performed.

Thiru Pullani is closely associated with the Ramayana especially with the incidents in the latter part of Rama’s life, when He went in search of Sita. Here, Vibheeshana made his sharanagati (surrender) to Lord Rama. On his counseling, Lord Rama performed a penance, reposing on the darbha grass for three days, the act of which is described in Sanskrit as darbhashayanam (yoga posture of lying on darbha/kusha grass), and requested the Samudra Raja (emperor of the oceans) to give way to Him to go to Lanka. The Samudra Raja did not concede to His request and infuriated the Lord. The furious Lord Rama took His bow and warned the Samudra Raja that

He would dry up the entire ocean. Frightened, Samudra Raja surrendered, with his wives, to the lotus feet of Lord Ramachandra. Because of the surrender made here by Vibheeshana and the Samudra Raja, the place is rightly called Sharanagati Kshetram (temple of surrender unto Lord Narayana). And since the Lord reposes on the darbha grass, He is named Darbhashayana Rama.

The Temple

The temple was constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture. The temple is glorified in the Divya Prabandha, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Alvar saints from the 8th–9th centuries. In this temple the Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshipped as Adi Jagannatha or the original Lord of the Universe and His consort, Mahalakshmi, as Padmasini or the one who is seated on a lotus.

Of the 18 divya desams of the Pandya region (region previously ruled by Pandya Dynasty), Thiru Pullani is the most ancient and important sacred temple town. The place is also hailed as Pullarany, Pullanai, Thiruvanai, Adhi Sethu, Darbhashayanam, Rathnakara Kshetra, Narasimha, Sharanagati Kshetram and Pullangadu.

The temple has a five-tiered rajagopuram (gateway tower) facing east. The shrine of Adi Jagannatha houses the Deity of Adi Jagannatha, Bhudevi and Sri Devi in sitting posture. The prime Deity of Adi Jagannatha is also known as Dakshina Jagannatha, installed as a shalagrama by the demigods during the Swayambhuva Manvantara. Manvantara is a Sanskrit word, a compound of Manu and antara, manu-antara or manvantara, literally meaning the duration of a Manu, or his life span. In a kalpa there are 14 manvantara of which Swayambhuva Manvantara is the first and we are currently in Vaivashvata Manvantara.
or Swetha Varaha Kalpa. A kalpa is equal to 4.32 billion years, a day of Brahma or one thousand maha-yugas/chatur-yugas, measuring the duration of the world. The shrine of Lord Adi Jagannatha predates all the other subsidiary shrines in the temple.

The consort of Lord Adi Jagannatha is Mother Padmasini, housed in a separate shrine, who renders Her blessings to the devotees. She is seen in sitting posture on a lotus with her hands in blessing posture and holding lotus buds.

There is a separate shrine called the Pushpaka Vimana for Darbhashayana Rama (yoga posture of Lord Ramachandra lying on darbha/kusha grass) in a reclining posture. The gatekeepers Jaya and Vijaya, installed at the doorstep of the sanctum sanctorum, are majestic in appearance with domineering moustaches on their faces. Such imposing figures cannot be seen in any other temple. Their hands hold ahvana mudra (inviting sign) as if inviting the devotees into this unique sanctum, where the majestic Ramachandra reposes with His sword beside Him. The Lord presents Himself as the Lord of the milk ocean. From His navel arise three lotus-stems, the center lotus with Lord Brahma flanked by the sun and moon. Along with them, the wall is filled with sculptures of the demons Madhu-Kaitaba, Mother Lakshmi, the sacred Kausthuba jewel and demon King Sundapasunda etc. On the side of Lord Ramachandra’s lotus face are Garuda and Markandeya, depicted as worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At His feet are the Ramayana personages, Shukha and Sharana, and also devotee Hanuman enjoying the feet of Rama in a humble pose. At the southern side of the mantapa in front of the sanctum sanctorum stands the demon devotee king of Srilanka, Vibheeshana, holding a mace. On the northern side are the deities of Samudra raj, the ocean king and his wives, in surrender to Lord Ramachandra. Lakshmana is depicted symbolically as the serpent-bed Adisesha on whom the Supreme Personality of Godhead reclines. The festival Deity is lovingly called as Kodandarama (the Lord who holds the kodanda bow) with Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman. The entire sanctum is a splendid piece, a superb sculpted tableau representing a few scenes from Ramayana. This magnificent treat of murals and sculptures is something which is exclusive to Pullani and cannot be seen anywhere else.

There is a panchaloha (a term for traditional alloy of five-metals of sacred significance used to make Hindu temple deities) Deity of Lord Krishna from the 13th century Pandya period. The Deity is in the posture of Lord Krishna dancing on a snake, a rare historical depiction of Krishna’s pastime with the serpent Kaliya in the deity form.

Near the shrine of Goddess Padmasini is the age-old peepal tree or the sacred fig or the bodhi tree which is considered to be the incarnation of Aswatha-Narayan or the Supreme Personality of Godhead who appeared as ashwatha or peepal tree to the three sages, Pullava, Kanuva, and Kalava.
There is also a shrine of Pattabhirama (Lord Rama after His coronation as the King of Ayodhya) which has a separate flag-pole, altar, gatekeepers and set of mantapas. The victorious Rama, after killing Ravana, returned to Ayodhya with Sita in the Pushpaka Vimana. He rested for a while in the Pushpaka Vimana, and recounted to Sita the events that had occurred during Their separation. This is the bhava of Lord Pattabhirama at Thiru Pullani. The belief is that devotees are bestowed with tremendous spiritual knowledge when they worship Lord Pattabhirama after taking a bath in the Sethu Samudra (bridge-ocean, the sea near Thiru Pullani where the bridge to Lanka was constructed).

On the outer mantapa of the Darbhashayana Ramachandra shrine is a small shrine on a mantapa called Naagar Mantapa Santhana Krishna Mandapam, dedicated to Santhana Gopala (the Lord who blesses the childless couple with children). It is a lovely sculptural wonder. Lord Krishna sits on Adishesha who rests on a tortoise surrounded by eight elephants and eight serpents. It is believed that childless couples will be blessed with a child if they worship this Deity by offering kheer.

Another very important sacred place is the Sethukarai/Adi Sethu, the seashore about 3 kilometers from Thiru Pullani. This is also called Adhisethu or Ratnakara. Sethu means bridge. This is the place where Lord Rama built the bridge to cross over the ocean to reach Lanka, to retrieve Mother Sita. Even today, we can see on the eastern side within the sea, a long stone-way. A satellite photograph has proved the existence of such a causeway under the sea. This bridge was built by Nala, the monkey-architect, and hence the name Nala Sethu. On the shore, there is a small shrine for Hanuman with folded palms facing south. He is a Deity loved and worshipped by the devotees here.

Another landmark is a small temple, Chinnakovil, situated about 3 furlongs from the seashore. There resides the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Lord Srinivasa Govinda. There are beautiful sculptures on its walls and prakara. On the northern side there is a unique Deity of Swetha Madhava (the Supreme Personality of Godhead as white Krishna), believed to be found in the sea. The Deity is of enchanting beauty and bewitches devotees. He is lauded by the Archeological Survey of India. Another interesting deity in this temple is of Sage Agasthya, who is believed to have emerged from the sea. There are water-eroded marks on the knees of the deity which confirms the same.

**Architectural Timeline of the Temple**

The antiquity of the temple cannot be measured by any means as the temple dates back to 72 Chatur yugas. The present structure of the temple is believed to have been rebuilt during the late 8th century, with later contributions from medieval Cholas, then Pandyas, Sethupathi kings of Ramanad. The Chola king Parantaka I who named himself Sangrama Raghava after his conquest of Sri Lanka, is said to have contributed a lot to the construction of the temple, as he owed his victory to the Lord of Thiru Pullani. His son, Prince Aditya I,
who was called as Kodandarama, has also contributed a lot to this temple. Some later Pandya kings also made contributions to the temple.

A mutilated inscription in the temple made during the 37th year of Maravarma Sundara Pandya in 1305 records order of a minister by name Arya Chakravarthi. Historians believe some portions of the temple tower might also have been built by Jaffna kings, who were friends of the Pandya Empire and also rulers of Rameswaram. There is one damaged record from 1518 from the period of Mahabali Vanadaraya Nayakkar and another made in 1528 during the reign of Sundarattuludaiyvar Mahabali Vanadarayar. There are inscriptions in the temple indicating Arab traders visiting the Pandyan Empire and making offerings in the temple for their success in trade and commerce. The temple received a lot of contributions from the Vijayanagara period, along with other Vishnu temples in the region, as the Vijayanagara kings were great patrons of Vaishnava temples.

Today, the temple is maintained and administered by the Ramanathapuram Samasthan Devasthanam, a trust under the control of the Ramanad King Sethupathi’s successors and the accounts are audited by the Hindu Religious and Endowment Board of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The temple of Thiru Pullani is also described by Tamil poet Kamban in his work Kamba Ramayana (Tamil version of Ramayana).

Festivals
The temple priests perform the puja (rituals) during festivals and on a daily basis. Like other Vishnu temples of Tamil Nadu, the priests belong to the Sri Vaishnava community of the southern school. The temple rituals are performed six times a day, beginning at 7am, with the second offering at 8am and the noon offering. The temple reopens in the evening, followed by offering at 6pm and 7pm, and the Supreme Lord Ramachandra retires for the day to His chambers at 10 pm. During the last ritual, nagaswaram (pipe instrument) and tavil (percussion instrument) are played in a unique raga or melody called as Nilambari, sacred hymns of the Vedas and other sacred texts are recited by priests, and devotees prostrate themselves in front of the temple mast. There are weekly, monthly and fortnightly rituals performed in the temple.

One of the major festivals celebrated in the temple is the Panguni Brahmotsava for Adi Jagannatha, during which the Supreme Lord is carried on various vahanas in and around the streets of Thiru Pullani. Another major festival is Rama Navami for Darbhashayana Ramachandra, to commemorate the appearance day of Lord Ramachandra during the Tamil month of Chittira. Other festivals celebrated in Vishnu temples in South India, like Vaikunta Ekadashi, Krishna Jayanthi, Pongal and Diwali, are also celebrated in Thiru Pullani with much pomp and grandeur.

To read online visit: www.goo.gl/7rOvi5
In the following pages we give you a glimpse of the festival’s highlights in Bangalore (VK Hill & Whitefield), Bellary, Mangalore, Mysore, Vrindavana, Jaipur, Bhilai, Chennai, Mumbai, Coimbatore, Guwahati, Visakhapatnam, Sunnyvale (USA) and Malaysia.
Sri Krishna Janmashtami

Mumbai

Coimbatore

Guwahati
Sri Radhashtami

Special Alankara (above) and Abhisheka (below)
Monday, Oct 31
Celebrations 6 pm onwards

Go-puja
Pravachana
Govardhana-arati
Govardhana-parikrama
Vishesha Deepotsava
Prasadam

krṣṇa-prasādana samasta-śaila-sāmrājyam āparotī ca vairino 'pi śakrasya yah prāpa balim sa sākṣād govardhano me disatām abhiṣṭam
May Govardhana Hill fulfill my deepest desire—to get darsana of Śrī Rādhā and Krṣṇa's lilās. By Krṣṇa's mercy Govardhana became the emperor of all mountains and was worshiped by his arch-enemy Indra in front of everyone.

Be blessed with darshana of the Lord in Giridhari alankara, and partake of the grand annakuta offered to Him.

For more details visit
www.iskconbangalore.org/govardhana-puja
During Krishna Pushkaralu (South India Kumbh Mela, Krishna River) on the request of Government of Andhra Pradesh, HKM Vijayawada and Akshaya Patra Foundation-Vijayawada branch fed around 20 lakh pilgrims in 12 days, reaching 1.5 lakh pilgrims every day.

The team had set up a mega kitchen with 8 sambar cauldrons and 10 rice cauldrons (above). The Government felicitated the local team lead by HG Maha Vishnu Dasa, President of Vijayawada Centre.

Honourable Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri Chandrababu Naidu, samples the food cooked at the kitchen (left).
ISKCON Bangalore conducted a Ritvik initiation ceremony on August 29, 2016. Twenty-one qualified devotees aspiring to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada were initiated on this occasion. The ceremony was conducted in accordance with the Ritvik system of initiation set up by Srila Prabhupada. Read more: https://goo.gl/6adPAU

The Akshaya Patra Foundation has decided to spice up the mid-day meal by introducing a snack too. Children studying in Karnataka state government schools will soon get to munch on their favourite nippattu or chakkil along with their mid-day meal every day. Over six lakh children are covered under this mid-day meal scheme. Read More: https://goo.gl/KYZ3j8

Srimati Radharani is the dear most devotee of Sri Krishna and ISKCON temples around the world celebrated Her appearance day. It falls exactly a fortnight after Sri Krishna Janmashtami and as such the festive mood continues in all the Krishna temples. She was bedecked with flowers in every temple. Read More: https://goo.gl/C4q7jL

Srila Prabhupada was an expert cook. “I learned just by watching,” he used to tell us. I remember once he was staying at his Bombay temple, and I was helping another girl, Palika, to cook for him. This was in December of 1976. Every day Srila Prabhupada would take his main meal at one-thirty in the afternoon. Read More: https://goo.gl/fY6FK

Reviews from tripadvisor®

Clean and imposing, well managed temple: We Indians are used to seeing dozens of temples in every city, but only a few are well designed, efficiently administered and expansive. Almost like a private commercial enterprise, the ISKCON temple in Bangalore can change your perspective of what a modern Indian temple can be. I have visited ISKCON in San Francisco, Phoenix, and Boston... This one has to be a mile above and beyond any of them. It also houses the world famous Akshaya Patra free meal kitchen, which has been featured in National Geographic's TV series. Banjaara129

ISKCON: ISKCON Bangalore provides free food to those in need. The Akshaya Patra Foundation is one of the initiatives started by members of the temple, which has received praise from United States President Barack Obama for feeding and educating children across India. Rencydouza

Anytime you can visit: Good and peaceful place to visit at any point of time all around 365 days. You can go with family, friends and solo too.....in one hour you can finish the visit but I don’t think anyone will go there and come back in one hour. You will feel like to be there itself... Niladri_chakrabarty

Very mesmerizing: ISKCON temple takes you to a spiritual realm that you can feel nowhere else. There are temples and then there is ISKCON. If you visit Bangalore, make it a point to visit ISKCON, Bangalore. Manjunath S

Majestic: The place is majestic and nice for evening outing. The inside of the temple is mesmerizing, and the facilities are also commendable. Omkar R

Amazing Lord Krishna's empire: You feel the world of peace. Rejuvenate with energy all time on your every visit. This place you can’t miss at any cost. Amazing aesthetics and environment. Class of its management. You will wonder to watch the classy result of blend of mythology and professionalism. Somasekhar2016

Top YouTube Picks

Krishna Costume Contest 2016

Hare Krishna Kirtan by Sachin Bhardwaj and team

For more videos visit youtube.com/iskconworld
The Krishna Costume Contest is an epic fancy dress competition conducted by ISKCON Bangalore as part of Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations. This year 818 children from 216 cities spread across eight countries participated in the contest. The prize winners have been selected based on the number of votes they received.

Apart from these winners, our panel of judges have selected Cute-16 based on parameters like: the child being dressed as per the description of Radha and Krishna given in the shastras, the cuteness of the child, presentation and background (not modernized), the creativity and effort that went into it.

**Top 3 Prizes**

1. Sanvi Khamitkar
   Bengaluru

2. Shashwat Panwar
   Bengaluru

3. V Chinmay
   Bengaluru

**Consolation Prizes**

Varshith
Bengaluru

Krish
Bengaluru

Drishay Goyal
Haryana

Pranamya H R
Hassan

V Shaurya
Visakhapatnam

Adhya A Rao
Bengaluru

Akshta Jain
Bengaluru

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