



# KRISHNA VOICE

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Dec 25 & 26 - 2021

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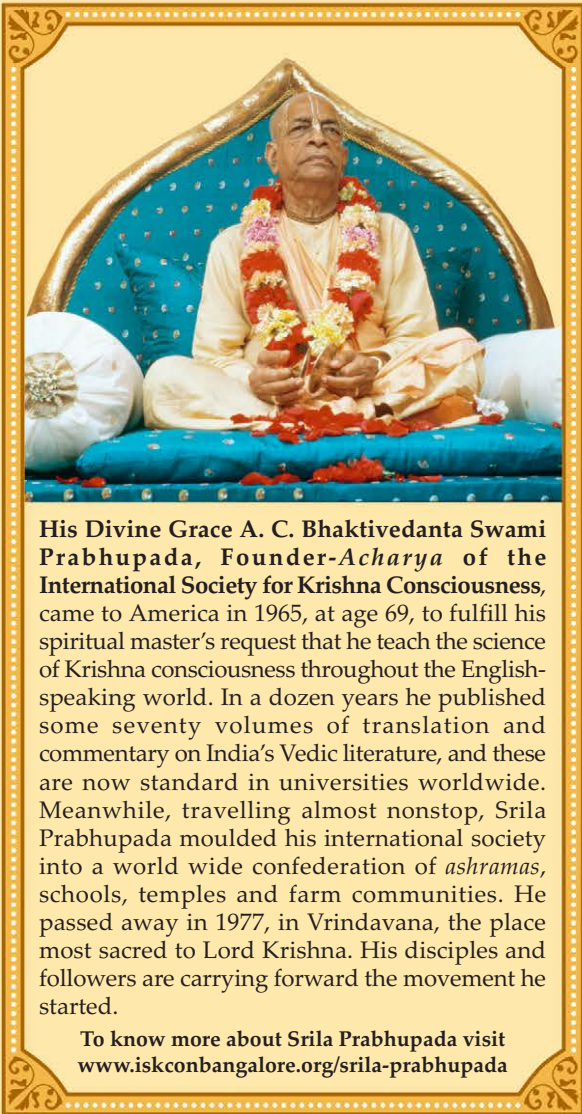


/ ISKCON BANGALORE

# KRISHNA VOICE



Vol 22, No.12 December 2021




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](http://www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada)

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## CONTENTS

Who Needs A Guru?	4
Srila Prabhupada Speaks Out	10
Restoring Our Respect for Sadhus	12
Chozhasimhapuram Thirukkadigal Kovil - Part 4	15

### Pages-26

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# Who Needs A Guru?

*The Vedic literature reveals the essential qualification  
of a person ready to accept a spiritual master.*

A lecture given in New York, August 15, 1966

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

*tad viddhi pranipatena  
pariprasnena sevaya  
upadeksyanti te jnanam  
jnaninas tattva-darsinah*

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth."—*Bhagavad-gita* 4.34

Lord Sri Krishna has concluded that of all the sacrifices we are expected to do, the best sacrifice is to acquire knowledge. Our material conditioned life is due to ignorance. Therefore the purpose of sacrifice, penance, yoga, and philosophical discussion is to acquire knowledge.

Transcendental knowledge is viewed from three angles of vision: knowledge of Brahman, or the impersonal Absolute Truth; knowledge of Paramatma, the localized Supersoul; and knowledge of Bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The first stage in the development of knowledge is that we must understand, "I am not this body. I am spirit soul, and my aim of life should be to get out of material entanglement."

From the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* we learn that the *tattva*, the Absolute Truth, is realized in three visions, *brahmeti paramatmeti bhagavan iti sadyate*: Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. And after a description of different manifestations of Vishnu, or God, the *Bhagavatam* states, *krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*: Bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is Krishna.

God expands Himself in various ways. We living entities are also expansions of God. There are degrees of expansion, and the central point, or the primal Lord, is Sri Krishna. There are many thousands of incarnations of Godhead. After the list of incarnations in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the conclusion is given: *ete camsa-kalah pumsah krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*. The author of the *Bhagavatam* concludes that all the incarnations of Godhead are either plenary manifestations of Krishna or manifestations of the plenary manifestations. Just as the incarnations appeared, Krishna Himself also appeared. And He proclaimed that He comes whenever there is a rise of irreligion. So He is accepted as the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the *Brahma-samhita*, another Vedic literature, Krishna's position is also confirmed:

*isvarah paramah krishnah  
sac-cid-ananda-vigraha  
anadir adir govindah  
sarva-karana-karanam*

There are many gods. In one sense we are also god. The literal meaning of "god" is controller, *isvara*. Every one of us has some controlling capacity. We control the family, or the office, or the state, or the municipality. Everyone is a controller. But none of us is the supreme controller.

Brahma is the controller of the whole universe. There are innumerable universes and innumerable Brahmas. And their controller is Garbhodakashayi Vishnu. Garbhodakashayi Vishnu is controlled by Maha-Vishnu. Maha-Vishnu is controlled by Sankarshana. Sankarshana is controlled by Narayana. Narayana is controlled by Vasudeva. Vasudeva is controlled by Baladeva. And Baladeva is controlled by Krishna. Therefore in the *Bhagavad-gita* Krishna says, *mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti dhananjaya*: "My dear Arjuna, there is no one greater than Me." And Arjuna accepts: "You are *asamordhva*—no one is equal to You, and no one is greater than You."

In our spiritual line, the six Gosvamis of Vrindavana were very good scholars, especially Jiva Gosvami. They analyzed the characteristics of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, and they established that Krishna has all the transcendental qualities of Godhead. Narayana has ninety-four percent of the transcendental qualities of the Absolute Truth, Lord Shiva has eighty-four percent, and we living beings have seventy-eight percent. And



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we have those qualities only partially, not in full.

Now, Krishna says that to acquire knowledge is the best kind of sacrifice. There are different kinds of sacrifice, or *yajna*, mentioned in the *Gita*: *dravya-yajna* (sacrifice of one's possessions), *jnana-yajna* (sacrifice in knowledge), *yoga-yajna* (sacrifice in yoga). But here Krishna concludes that all sacrifices are just steps to come to the point of real knowledge. Here in New York you have your Empire State Building. So you can go up to the twenty-fifth floor, the fiftieth floor, the seventieth, seventy-fifth, eightieth. But unless you reach the 102nd storey, you have not made perfect progress. Lord Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *bahunam janmanam ante jnanavan mam prapadyate*. After many, many births of culturing knowledge, when one comes to the real knowledge he surrenders unto the Supreme Lord, Krishna. That is the highest stage of knowledge. Krishna advises Arjuna, *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*: "Because you are My very confidential friend, I am telling you not to bother with anything else. Just surrender unto Me." This is the most confidential knowledge.

If you make an analytical study of the Vedic literature, you'll find that the ultimate knowledge is to surrender unto Krishna. What kind of surrender? Surrender in full knowledge. After scrutinizingly studying all the processes of self-realization, or transcendental realization, when one comes to the point of perfection he understands, *vasudevah sarvam iti*: "Vasudeva, Krishna, is everything." This is confirmed in the *Brahma-samhita*:

*isvarah paramah krishnah  
sac-cid-ananda-vigraha  
anadir adir govindah  
sarva-karana-karanam*

*Sarva-karana-karanam* means "the cause of all causes." I have my body, and the cause of it was my father. And his father was the cause of my father's body. You go on searching—father, father's father, his father, grandfather, great-grandfather ... Don't think that because you cannot see your great-grandfather there was no father of your grandfather. Don't think, "Anything out of my sight does not exist." No. That is not a very intelligent conclusion. That I cannot see what is happening beyond this wall does not mean there is nothing beyond this wall.

Everyone wants to see God immediately. But you can see God only when you are perfectly qualified. When you are in perfect knowledge, you can see God face to face just as you are seeing me and I am seeing you. But that requires a qualification. That qualification is Krishna consciousness.

Krishna consciousness begins with *sravanam kirtanam*, hearing and chanting. We have to hear about Krishna. The *Bhagavad-gita* is the preliminary study of understanding or hearing about Krishna.

I came to your country, the United States of America, after hearing about it. In my childhood I had heard of it in school when I read history or geography. I heard first of all. I did not come first of all. So by hearing I understood, "Oh, that's a wonderful country, and it is far away, and if I go there ..." Similarly, you might first of all hear about India and then think about going there.

If we want to see God, first we have to hear about Him. That is the process. The Krishna consciousness process begins with hearing, *sravanam*. Then *kirtanam*. *Kirtanam* means to chant about Krishna's glories, His holy name, His form, His qualities. This is association with Krishna, because Krishna, or God, is absolute. He is not different from His name, His qualities, His form, His pastimes. So hearing and chanting of the qualities or form or name of the Supreme, of the Absolute, means associating with the Supreme. That is direct transcendental association. As we go on associating with Krishna, He helps us understand Him.

In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* we find this verse:

*srnvatam sva-kathah krishnah  
punya-sravana-kirtanah  
hrdy antah stho hy abhadrani  
vidhunoti suhrt satam*

Krishna is sitting within your heart. He is acting as your spiritual master, *caitya-guru*. Hearing *krishna-katha*, topics about Krishna, is *punya-sravana-kirtanah*: even if you do not understand, it will increase your virtue. By so many years of association with matter, we have accumulated many dirty things within our heart. By hearing about Krishna, the heart gradually becomes cleansed.

Sri Krishna is the friend of everyone, but He's a special friend to the devotee. That you will find in the *Bhagavad-gita*. *Samo 'ham sarva-bhutesu na me dvesyo 'sti na priyah*: "I am the friend of everyone. Actually, no one is My enemy and no one is My friend, because I am equal to everyone." *Sama* means "equal." *Ye bhajanti tu mam bhaktya mayi te tesu*: "But I give special attention to a person devoted to Me and engaged in My devotional service."

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Therefore one of Krishna's names is *suhrt satam*. *Suhrt* means "friend." And *satam* means "those who are trying for eternal life."

In the material world we don't get anything eternal; everything is temporary. Therefore the material world is called *asat*. The Vedic injunction is *asato ma sad gamah*: "Don't remain in the temporary world. Try to go to the eternal world." *Tamasi ma jyotir gamah*: "Don't remain in darkness. Go to the kingdom of light." These are Vedic injunctions.

Krishna is within our heart. Therefore, as soon as we become a little inclined toward Krishna, from within our heart He gives us favourable instruction so that we can gradually progress. Krishna is the first spiritual master, and when we become more interested we have to go to a physical spiritual master. That is enjoined in today's verse. Krishna advises, "If you want to know the transcendental science, just try to approach someone who knows it."

Krishna mentions *pranipatena*, *pariprasnena*, and *sevaya*. *Pranipata* means surrender. You must select a person to whom you can surrender yourself. No one likes to surrender to anyone. We are puffed up with whatever knowledge we have—"Oh, who can give me knowledge?" There is regular propaganda that for spiritual realization there is no need of a spiritual master. But the Vedic literature—*Bhagavad-gita*, the *Bhagavatam*, the *Upanishads*—does not say that. It says that there is need of a spiritual master.

Take, for example, the *Upanishads*. In the Vedic *Upanishads* it is said, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet ... srotriyam brahma-nistham*: "If you want to learn the transcendental subject, you must approach a guru."

In the material world also, if I want to learn music I have to find a musician. Without having the association of a musician, no one can learn music.

Suppose you want to become an engineer. You have to enroll yourself in an engineering or technical college and learn there. And no one can become a medical practitioner simply by purchasing books from the market and reading at home. That is not possible. You have to admit yourself into a medical college and undergo training and practical examination. Similarly, if you want to learn the *Bhagavad-gita* or any transcendental subject matter, you have to do it as instructed here by Lord Krishna Himself. He is the speaker of the *Gita*, and He says, *tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*: "You must go to a person to whom you can surrender yourself."

That means you have to determine, "Who is the real person who can give me instruction on the *Bhagavad-gita*?"



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You must not search for someone whimsically. You have to seriously search for a person who is actually in knowledge. Otherwise, why surrender? There would be no need to surrender. But here it is said clearly, "You have to surrender to a person." That means you have to find a person to whom you can voluntarily surrender. Without finding that person, your mission will not be fulfilled.

In the beginning, Arjuna was talking with Krishna as a friend. Krishna was saying, "Oh, you are a *kshatriya*, a military man. How can you give up fighting?" They were having friendly talks. But when Arjuna realized, "Our friendly talks will not make a solution," he surrendered unto Krishna. *Sisyas te 'ham sadhi mam tvam prapannam*: "I am a disciple surrendered unto You. Please tell me what is my duty."

That is the process. Here also, Krishna advises, "If you want to learn *Bhagavad-gita*, you have to go to a person to whom you can surrender." And not blindly surrender. You must be able to inquire. The next qualification is *pariprasna*, inquiry. Without inquiry, you cannot advance. A student in school who inquires from the teacher is intelligent. Even a child is intelligent when he inquires from his father, "Oh, father, what is this? What is this?"

Inquiry is required. One should not think, "Oh, I have found a good spiritual master. He's learned. All right, I have surrendered. Now my business is finished." No, that is not right. You may have a very good spiritual master, but if you have no power to inquire from him, you cannot progress.

How should you inquire? Without challenge. You should not think, "Oh, I shall see what kind of spiritual master he is. Let me challenge him and put some irrelevant questions and talk nonsensically." That will not help you. Inquire on the point. *Pariprasna* means inquiry on the point, and that inquiry should be *sevaya*, with service. One should not think, "I have inquired so many things from such and such person, and I have not rendered any payment or any service, so I have gained." No. Without service your inquiry will be futile.

So three things are mentioned in this verse: *pranipata*, *pariprasna*, and *seva*. *Pranipata* (surrender) implies that you must at least have the qualification to find a person who is actually fit to give you real instruction. That remains on you. Suppose you have to purchase some gold or jewels. If you do not know where to purchase—if you go to a grocery shop to purchase a jewel—then you'll be cheated.

If you go to a grocer and ask, "Can you sell me a diamond?" he will understand, "Here is a fool. Let me sell him something else for a diamond." He can charge anything.

When you come home, your relatives will ask, "What have you brought?"

"This is a diamond. I bought it at the grocery shop."

Trying to find a spiritual master in that way will not do. You have to become a little intelligent, because without being intelligent no one can make any spiritual progress. The *Vedanta-sutra* states, *athato brahma-jijnasa*. *Brahma-jijnasa* means to inquire about the supreme subject matter, Brahman. That requires a qualification. That qualification is explained by the word *atha*. *Atha* refers to those who have become experienced of the miserable life of the material world. They can inquire about the Absolute Truth, about spiritual life.

Similarly, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* says, *tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya uttamam*. *Uttamam* means *udgata-tamam*: transcendental. *Tama* means darkness. Anything of this material world is in darkness because this material world is dark. The whole world, the whole universe, is dark. Therefore we need sunlight, moonlight, electricity. *Uttamam* means transcendental subjects, which are beyond the darkness. In the spiritual world there is no darkness.

If anyone wants to inquire about the spiritual world, he has to find a spiritual master. Otherwise, there is no need for a spiritual master. Suppose I want a spiritual master or I want to study *Bhagavad-gita* or *Vedanta-sutra* so that I may make some material improvement. That is not required. For material improvement you can work just as so many people are working—in industry or something like that. That is prescribed. But if you are at all interested in the subject of Brahman, the spiritual subject, you require a spiritual master. That is clearly stated: *tasmad gurum prapadyeta*. *Tasmad* means "therefore." "Therefore one has to surrender unto the spiritual master." Who has to surrender? One who is *jijnasuh sreya uttamam*, very much eager to understand the transcendental subject matter.

You'll find the same instruction in any Vedic literature. For example, today's verse from the *Bhagavad-gita* says, *jnaninas tattva-darsinah*. *Jnani* means a man in perfect knowledge. Perfect knowledge means one has perfect vision—not theoretical, but actual vision of the spiritual subject matter. *Tattva* means the Absolute Truth. You'll find in the *Gita* that Krishna is the supreme *tattva*, the supreme Absolute Truth.

Krishna says, *manusyanam sahasresu kascid yatati siddhaye*: "Out of many, many thousands of people, a few may try to get spiritual salvation." Not everyone is expected to hanker after spiritual salvation. To qualify for that





hankering takes many, many years. Out of many, many thousands of people, one is anxious for spiritual realization. And out of many perfected spiritualists, someone may know Krishna. So the subject matter of Krishna is not so easy to understand. It is very difficult. But one can understand it easily by the process prescribed in the *Bhagavad-gita*:

*bhaktya mam abhijanati  
yavan yas casmi tattvatah  
tato mam tattvato jnatva  
visate tad-anantaram*

If you accept *bhakti*, devotional service, you can understand the difficult subject matter of Krishna very easily. *Abhijanati* means you can understand perfectly. *Tattvatah* means the Absolute Truth as it is. You can understand that. *Tato mam tattvato jnatva*: after understanding the science of Krishna perfectly, one becomes eligible to enter the spiritual kingdom.

Now, if after many, many births, when I am perfect in knowledge, I have to surrender to Krishna, why not surrender to Him at once? Why should I wait for many, many births? That is the intelligent proposal. If surrender to Krishna is the end of perfection, why not accept that perfection immediately?

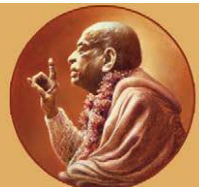
But people are doubtful. Someone asked me, "How long will it take to be perfect in Krishna consciousness?" I replied that Krishna consciousness can be had in one second, or it may not be had in thousands of births and deaths.

But if we understand that after attaining full knowledge I have to ultimately surrender to Krishna—and that I become a great soul by doing that—why not surrender to Krishna at once? Why not become a great soul at once?

But we are not prepared to immediately accept Krishna as the Supreme. We have many doubts. Therefore, to drive away all our doubts, the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* are there. If we scrutinizingly study these two books, we can understand the science of Krishna very nicely, and our progress in Krishna consciousness will be definite.

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/srila-prabhupada-lectures](http://www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada-lectures)



# SRILA PRABHUPADA SPEAKS OUT

## Nonsense Commentary on *Bhagavad-gita*

*This conversation took place in Allahabad, India, on January 18, 1971.*

**Guest (1):** We believe in an incorporeal God.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Who says, "incorporeal"? Who says?

**Guest (1):** It is scripture—*dyotir linga*, "incorporeal."

**Srila Prabhupada:** You are bringing in something else besides *Bhagavad-gita*. You should know that we are preaching *Bhagavad-gita*. So this *dyotir linga*—all these theories—they are not in *Bhagavad-gita*. They may be in other literature, but we are particularly interested in preaching *Bhagavad-gita*. Because *Bhagavad-gita* has been wrongly preached all over the world by nonsense commentary, we want to rectify that. Therefore our society is specifically named "Krishna conscious."

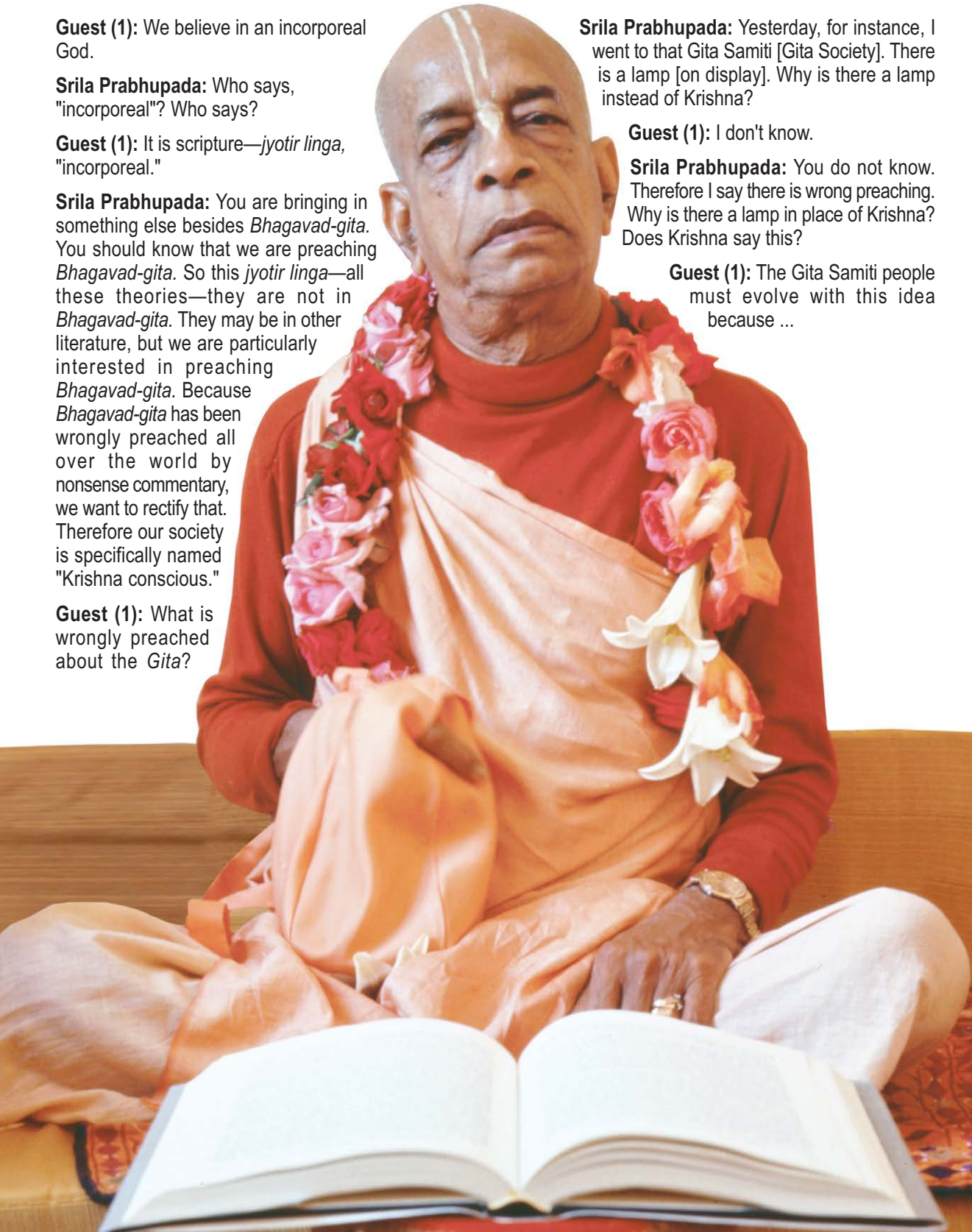
**Guest (1):** What is wrongly preached about the *Gita*?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yesterday, for instance, I went to that Gita Samiti [Gita Society]. There is a lamp [on display]. Why is there a lamp instead of Krishna?

**Guest (1):** I don't know.

**Srila Prabhupada:** You do not know. Therefore I say there is wrong preaching. Why is there a lamp in place of Krishna? Does Krishna say this?

**Guest (1):** The Gita Samiti people must evolve with this idea because ...



**Srila Prabhupada:** No, no. The *Gita* is spoken by Krishna. So why is there no picture of Krishna?

**Guest (1):** They didn't put the picture.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes. That means they have not understood Krishna. Therefore, this so-called Gita Society is not bona fide. Suppose there is a political meeting. You keep Gandhi's photo or Jawaharlal Nehru's photo, because they are political leaders. Yet in this Gita Samiti they are preaching *Bhagavad-gita*, and there is not a single picture of Krishna. This is misguided. They are wrongly representing *Bhagavad-gita*. So our position is to rectify that wrong propoganda about *Bhagavad-gita*.

**Guest (2):** What is that wrong propoganda?

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is one instance. And there are many other instances. In the Ninth Chapter there is the verse *man-mana bhava mad-bhaktō mad-yajī mam namaskuru*. [Krishna says to Arjuna: "Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me, and worship Me."] One respected scholar says, "It is not to the person Krishna [but to the unborn within Krishna that one must surrender]." Where does the scholar get this nonsense idea?

**Guest (1):** V—has also said that ...

**Srila Prabhupada:** They are all nonsense. Anyone who deviates from the original text of the *Gita* is nonsense.

**Guest (2):** Swamiji, by declaring other interpretations nonsense ...

**Srila Prabhupada:** You cannot interpret! First of all, my proposal is that you cannot interpret.

**Guest (2):** We'll come to that. But if I say that you are not interpreting correctly, that does not make me correct. I must be correct also.

**Srila Prabhupada:** I am correct as long as I present the correct thing. If I present Krishna as He is, then I am correct.

**Guest (2):** Swamiji, most respectfully, how do you judge that "I am correct"?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Because I am presenting what Krishna says. First of all, you answer this: What is the standard of correctness? You cannot create correctness. When Krishna says *man-mana bhava mad-bhaktah*—"Just surrender unto Me, become My *bhakta* [devotee]—how can you say, "It is not to Krishna [one must surrender]?" Is this not nonsense? If I say, "Give me a glass of water" and you say, "It is not to Swamiji [that the glass of water should be given]," isn't that an interpretation?

**Guest (1):** But surrender is what Jesus Christ says, Mohammed says, everyone says.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Let others surrender to Christ. But why don't you surrender to Krishna?

**Guest (1):** That is true, but ...

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is true, but you do not know how.

**Guest (1):** Your way of thinking and your purpose is that Lord Krishna should be the Lord of the whole universe, so ...

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, Lord Krishna is the Lord of the universe.

**Guest (1):** So that is what you want to say to me?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes. 🙏

Fasting		Festivals	
Dec 14	Ekadashi	Dec 5	Srila Prabhupada Book Distribution Festival Inauguration (in ISKCON Bangalore)
Dec 15	<i>break fast</i>		
Dec 30	Ekadashi	Dec 14	Gita Jayanti
Dec 31	<i>break fast</i>	Dec 23	Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura - Disappearance <i>Fasting till noon</i>
		Dec 25-26	Kirtan Mela (in ISKCON Bangalore)

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# Restoring Our Respect for Sadhus

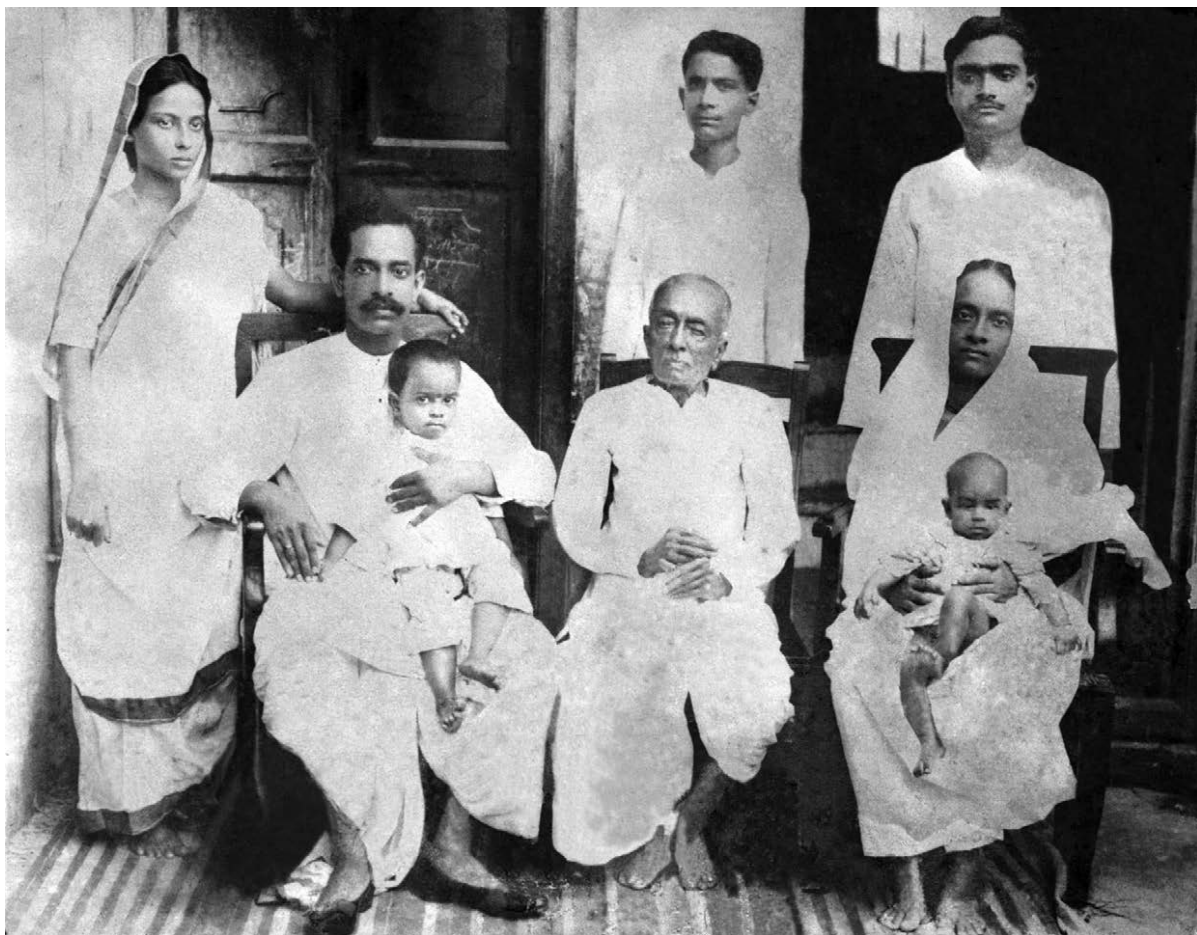
By Ravi Gupta

When my father was born, my grandmother took him to the feet of her guru and asked for the guru's blessings. When Srila Prabhupada was a child, his father would invite *sadhus* (holy persons) and ask them to bless his son to grow up to be a devotee of Srimati Radharani, Lord Krishna's eternal consort. The Vedic scriptures stress that even a moment's audience with a pure devotee can change a person's entire life and transform a sinner into a devotee.

The Vedic tradition is full of examples showing the importance of respecting and associating with *sadhus*. The great sage Valmiki, author of the *Ramayana*, was formerly a hunter who took pleasure in killing animals. By meeting the saint Narada, Valmiki became a *trikala-darsi*, one who can see the past, present, and future. Valmiki then documented the pastimes of the incarnation Lord Ramachandra. Narada Muni himself had been the son of a maidservant who served saints and sages in an *ashrama*. By their contact Narada obtained the *darshana* (audience) of Lord Krishna.

For many people today, however, including people from India, *sadhus* are to be mocked. Sages or *sannyasis* are often thought to be beggars, making a living by religion.

Our family recently conducted a Krishna conscious programme at a home in Moscow, Idaho. We chanted Hare Krishna and spoke on the philosophy of Krishna consciousness. Afterwards a boy from a family originally from India asked his father to explain the meaning of *sadhu*. His father replied that *sadhus* are people who go around making some propaganda for money.



A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada with his family (1924), from left his wife Radharani (standing), Srila Prabhupada (sitting with his son Prayag Raj), his father Gaur Mohan De (sitting), His nephew Tulsi (standing, backside of Gaur Mohan De), his sister Rajeshvari with his daughter Sulakshman (sitting), his brother Krishna Charan (standing)

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Unfortunately, today's so-called *sadhus* sometimes do collect money in the name of worshiping the Lord and then use it for their own sense gratification. Mystics and yogis who make a show of spiritual realization while thinking of enjoying the senses are cheating the public. Such people have corrupted the word *sadhu*. Their so-called knowledge has no value. People in India are often skeptical when they see anyone in saffron robes or even with *tilaka*, the clay mark on the forehead. They think the person must not have found any occupation and so has become a "saint." A couple once refused to come to our Boise temple if there were to be any *sannyasis* or *sadhus* present. The couple had lost faith in such persons.

Those of us who look for "saints" who will condone our materialistic way of life must share the blame for the rash of so-called *sadhus*. We may not want to perform austerities and follow the regulative principles, so we try to find *sadhus* who will allow us to do whatever we want. The tendency to cheat is one of the main defects of human nature. Srila Prabhupada says that if we want to be cheated, Krishna, knowing our desire, will send us a cheater. But if we sincerely try to understand Krishna and perform devotional service, He will send us His genuine devotee. "Naturally, if you are cheated, you become suspicious," Prabhupada said. "But this does not mean that if you are cheated once you will always be cheated. You should find someone genuine." If there is darkness, there is also light. If there are fake saints, there must also be genuine ones.

Someone once asked Srila Prabhupada the mark a genuine saintly person. Srila Prabhupada replied, "Just find out the one who is most addicted to Krishna. He is genuine." The person who is fully Krishna conscious is the true *sadhu*. The *sadhu* is surrendered to the instructions of the spiritual master and simply repeats the words of Krishna. He gives the Lord's holy name freely. He leads and inspires people on the path of spiritual life. The real *sadhu* lives only to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If the real *sadhu* accepts money, he uses it only in the service of Krishna. He is a friend to everyone and is devoid of false prestige. He is equipoised in happiness and distress and is self-controlled. He lives only to teach others about Krishna.

Without the mercy of the pure devotees, or *sadhus*, we cannot advance in spiritual life. The *sadhus*, like expert guides, show us the path to Krishna. Krishna is like a powerhouse, and we are like light bulbs. If plugged directly into the powerhouse, the bulb will blow out. To reach Krishna we need the help of transformers who change the great voltage of the powerhouse into a level of power we can take. Because Krishna is pure and we are impure, we cannot approach Him directly. We need the help of saintly persons who are pure. Because they are experienced in devotional service, we must learn from them, sitting at their feet. Thus we will shine. The great devotee Prahlada Maharaja taught, "Unless human society accepts the dust of the lotus feet of great *mahatmas*—devotees who have nothing to do with material possessions—mankind cannot turn its attention to the lotus feet of Krishna." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7.5.32)

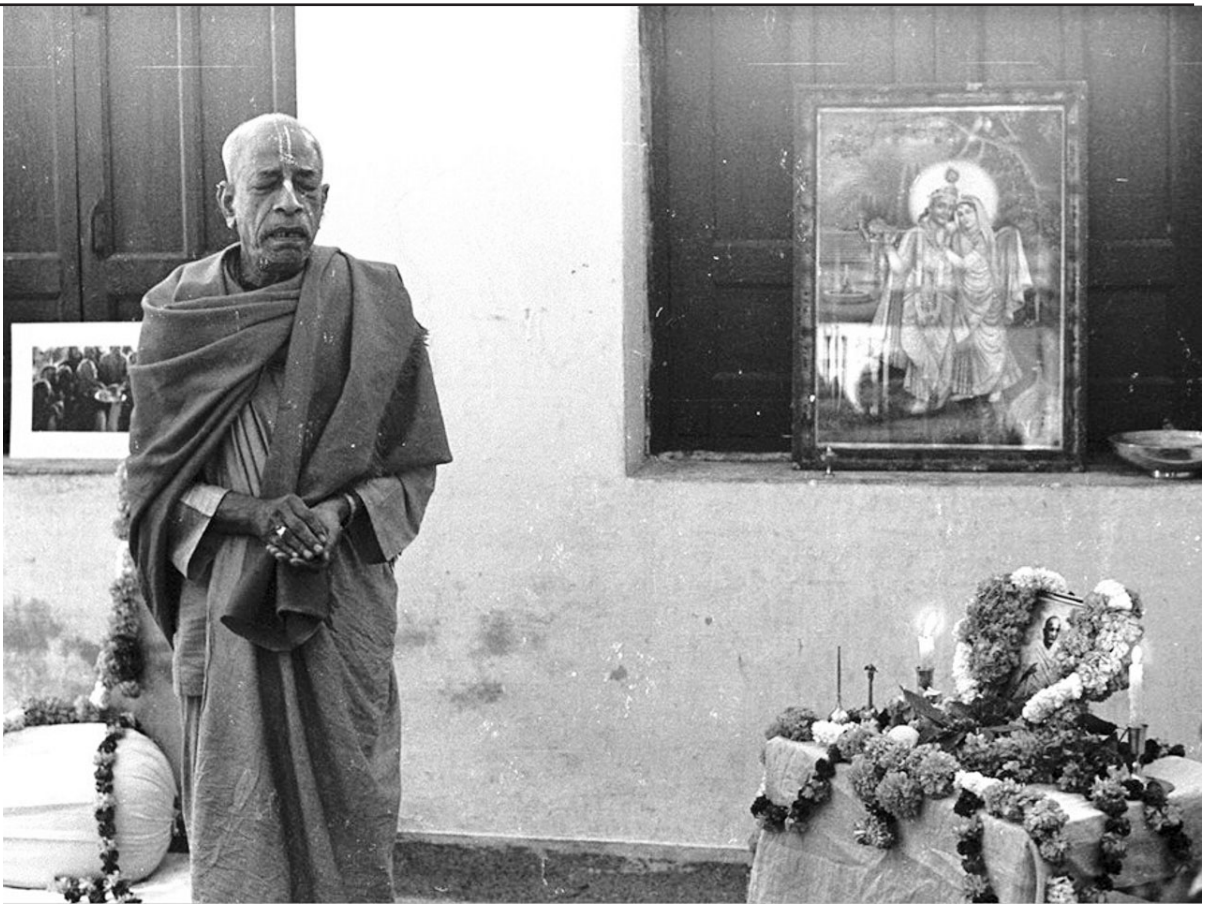
Prahlada was born in a demonic family. His father, teachers, friends, and family were all teaching him to be an atheist. But while Prahlada was in the womb of his mother she was staying at the *ashrama* of Sri Narada Muni. Narada taught Prahlada's mother the science of Krishna consciousness, and Prahlada heard it all. By Narada's association, Prahlada grew up to be a Vaishnava, a devotee, for whose protection the Lord appeared as Nrsimhadeva, the half-man, half-lion incarnation.

Pure devotees purify our hearts, our homes, and the places of pilgrimage. Therefore, people in India traditionally invite saintly persons into their homes to glorify Krishna and chant His holy names. When Maharaja Parikshit first met Srila Sukadeva Gosvami on the bank of the Ganges, Parikshit said, "Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified. And what to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your holy feet, and offering you a seat in our home?" Srila Prabhupada comments, "Therefore, the holy saints actually have no self-interest with householders. The only aim of such saints is to sanctify the houses of the householders, and the householders therefore should feel grateful when such saints and sages appear at their doors. A householder who dishonours such holy orders is a great offender." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.19.33)

To advance in spiritual life we must serve the devotees and get their mercy. In the *Adi Purana*, Krishna says to Arjuna:

*ye me bhakta-janah partha  
na me bhaktas ca te janah  
mad-bhaktanam ca ye bhaktas  
te me bhaktatama matah*

"My dear Partha, one who claims to be My devotee is not so. Only a person who claims to be the devotee of My devotee is actually My devotee." So rather than lose faith in *sadhus*, we must find the pure devotee of Krishna and run after him, for by his mercy alone we can attain Krishna.



Srila Prabhupada was a genuine *sadhu* who changed "hippies into happies." Through his association and instructions, thousands of people have become devotees, addicted to serving Krishna.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings:

*krishna se tomara, krishna dite paro,  
tomara sakati ache  
ami to' kangala, 'krishna' 'krishna' boli',  
dhai tava pache pache*

"O venerable Vaishnava! Krishna is yours; you have the power to give Him to me. I am indeed wretched and simply running after you shouting, 'Krishna! Krishna!'"

The Vaishnava not only possesses the name of Krishna but also freely distributes it. We are all *kangala*, destitute. So the next time a *sadhu* knocks on our door, we should run after him and let him fill our empty coffers with the treasures of the holy name. Such an opportunity is indeed our heritage and good fortune. 🌸

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*Ghatikachalam, the city of Narasimha*

# Chozhasimhapuram Thirukkadigai Kovil - Part 4

by Sampatkumara Ramanuja Dasan (Adv. Ashwin.S)

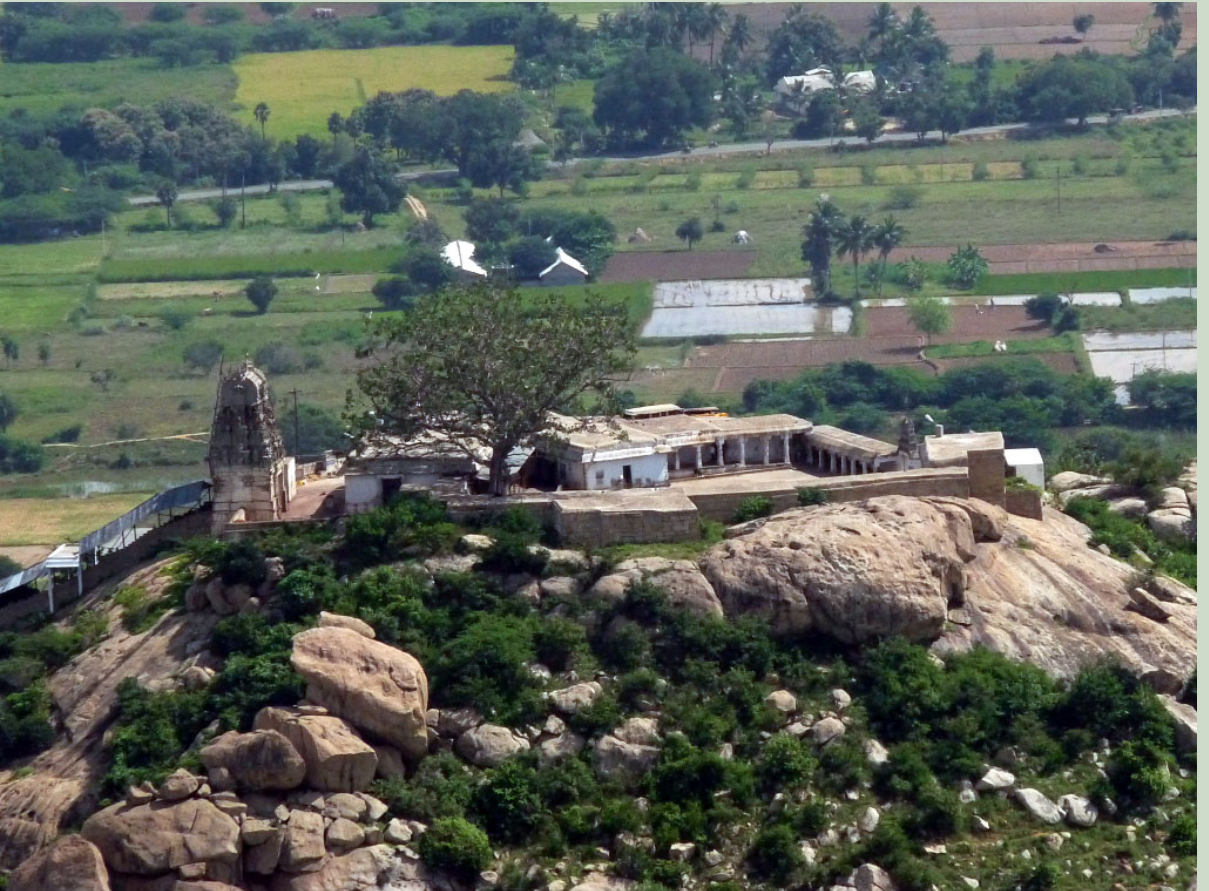
Thirukkadigai or Sholingapuram is located in Sholinghur, a village in Vellore district of the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, and houses the amazing temple of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Srīman Narayana.

**The story continues from Part 3**

## **Doddacharya and Sholinghur**

According to legends, Lord Narasimha would not only take several reincarnations in this world to reform people, but also send His messengers as preceptors to perform this function. One such preceptor was Doddacharya of Chozhasingapuram, who lived nearly 470 years ago, performing service to Lord Yoga Narasimha.

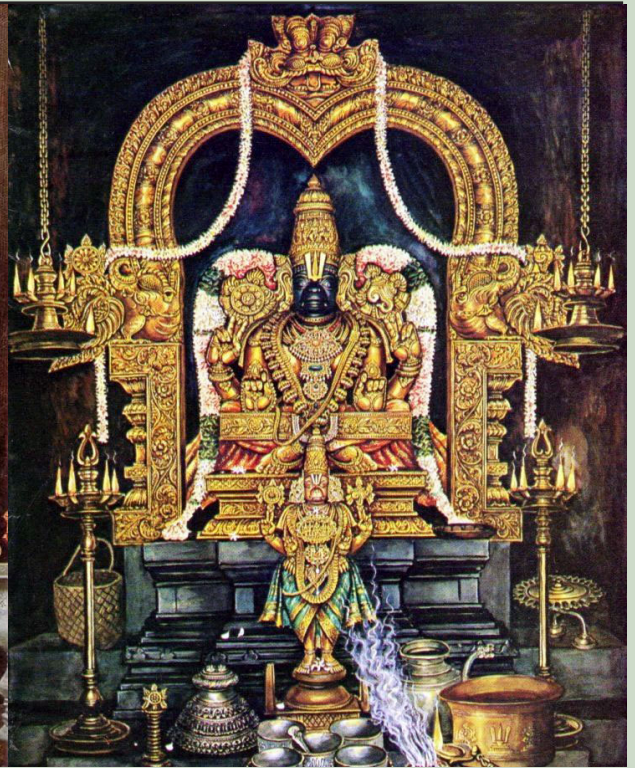
Doddacharya used to visit Kanchipuram Varadaraja Perumal temple every year during Brahmotsavam. In one particular year, he fell sick and was not able to visit the Kanchipuram temple. Sitting on the banks of present-day Thakkan pond, he prayed to Lord Varadaraja Perumal. Heeding to his prayers, Lord Varadaraja Perumal appeared before him for a few seconds. At the same time, the Varadaraja Perumal Deity disappeared in Kanchipuram. As a result of this incident, a temple dedicated to Varadaraja Perumal was built on the banks of Thakkan pond, next to the Hanuman temple in Sholinghur. This Varadaraja Perumal Temple at Sholinghur is open only during the Brahmotsavam festival days in Kanchipuram. Even today during Brahmotsavam at Kanchipuram, the Varadaraja Perumal *darshan* is closed with a screen for a few seconds and then opened to mark the disappearance of the Deity.



*Anjaneya temple of Sholinghur*



*Lord Narasimha of Sholinghur*



*Yoga Anjaneya of Sholinghur*

### **The Temple**

The name Chozhasingapuram was later shortened to Sholingapuram in common usage. During the late twentieth century, the name of the town was further shortened to Sholinghur, which is currently its official name. During the days of Cholas and Nawabs, the name Thirukkadigai was not much in use and the name Chozhasingapuram



*The Lord of Sholinghur in female form*



*The Mahalakshmi of Sholinghur*





The festival Deity of the temple with all His consorts: Mahalakshmi, Andal, Sidevi and Bhudevi

acquired prominence.

Reference is made to a *ghatika* in the Thiruvallam inscription of King Nandivarman Pallavamalla, dated in his 61st year. Again, an arbitrator having the title *Trairjyua ghatika madhyasthan* is mentioned in three inscriptions of Parthivendradhipathi from Brahmadesam in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. This *ghatika* was presumably a different one from the famous one at the Pallava capital of Kanchipuram. It was probably the Ghatikachala at the Sholinghur hill. This place is referred to as Kadigai in the *Siriya Thirumadal* and *Periya Thirumoli* of Sri Vaishnava saint Thirumangai Azhwar, a contemporary of King Nandivaraman Pallavamalla. During the Pallava period, it was a well-known centre of Sanskrit learning and stronghold of Vaishnavism. The early Vaishnava saint Periazhwar refers to this temple as Pungatikai in his *Iyarp* third *Andadi*.

Pallava influences are traceable in the neighbourhood of this place. A cave temple belonging to Mahendravarman I, who reigned early in the seventh century from Kanchipuram, bearing the name King Mahendravishnugraha, is found in Mahendravadi. It is not unlikely that a *ghatika* was founded there by the successors of Mahendravarman and the place was named Ghatikachalam. The *ghatika* in Sholinghur hill consisted of Vaishnava *brahmanas* who carried on a programme of higher studies in the Vedas and *shastras*. The institution presumably attracted students from several places around Ghatikachalam. The *ghatika* was probably located at the hill temple itself dedicated to Narasimha. Sholinghur which was a *ghatika* was a seat of great learning in the later Pallava age and continued to be an educational centre subsequently during the Chola age. Even to this day there is a Sanskrit College at this place. The temple is in the midst of the town with a tank and car *mantapam*. From the records, it is known that the temple was renovated during 1588.

There is an inscription of the 14th century on the Big Hill and another of the 17th century on the Small Hill and also an inscription in the Telugu language. There is a small window opposite to Lord Narasimha's shrine at the Big Hill, through which the Lord gives *darshan* to Yoga Anjaneya at the Small Hill. Yoga Narasimha faces east and the Small Hill is at the eastern side of the Big Hill.

Yoga Narasimha Swamy temple, popularly known as the Big Hill temple is situated in Kondapalayam village. Sholinghur Brahma Theertham is found en-route to the hills. It is said that 108 *theerthams* are present in Ghatikachalam. The most important one among all these *theerthams* is Brahma Theertham alias Thakkan Pushkarani. The length of the tank is 300 feet and breadth 200 feet. It has 25 steps. Sri Varadaraja Swamy temple is on the banks of this tank. The Float Festival and Theerthavari to Perumal are celebrated here.

The length of the Big Hill Temple is 200 feet and breadth 150 feet covering an area approximately one acre and 1305 steps. There are seven *mantapams* between the foothill and the entrance of the temple. The North facing *rjagopuram* consists of 5 storeys and 7 *kalashas*. We can see a big *bali peetam* and *dwajastamba* mast at the northern side. The town temple where the Utsava Deity is kept, has no separate flag mast. A four-pillared Dhuvatha Sarathana Mantapam is at the outer corridor of the Perumal shrine. We worship at Amrithavalli Thayar's shrine first and then at Perumal's shrine.

Goddess Amrithavalli faces east. After offering our prayers to Mahalakshmi, if we move north, we can see 2 majestic Jaya Vijaya deities guarding the Lord. After worshipping them, we enter Lord Narasimha's shrine through a front hall. Garuda deva is standing in front of Perumal. There is a small window behind Garuda deva. Through this window, we can see the Small Hill and the temple of Yoga Anjaneya. It is said that the eyes of Yoga Anjaneya on the Small Hill are fixed at the feet of Yoga Narasimha on the Big Hill.

There is a small Unjal Swing Mantapam in the Big Hill. The shrine of Yoga Narasimha Swamy is called Hemakodi *vimanam*. A *vimanam* with one *kalasha* is on the shrine of Devi Amrithavalli.

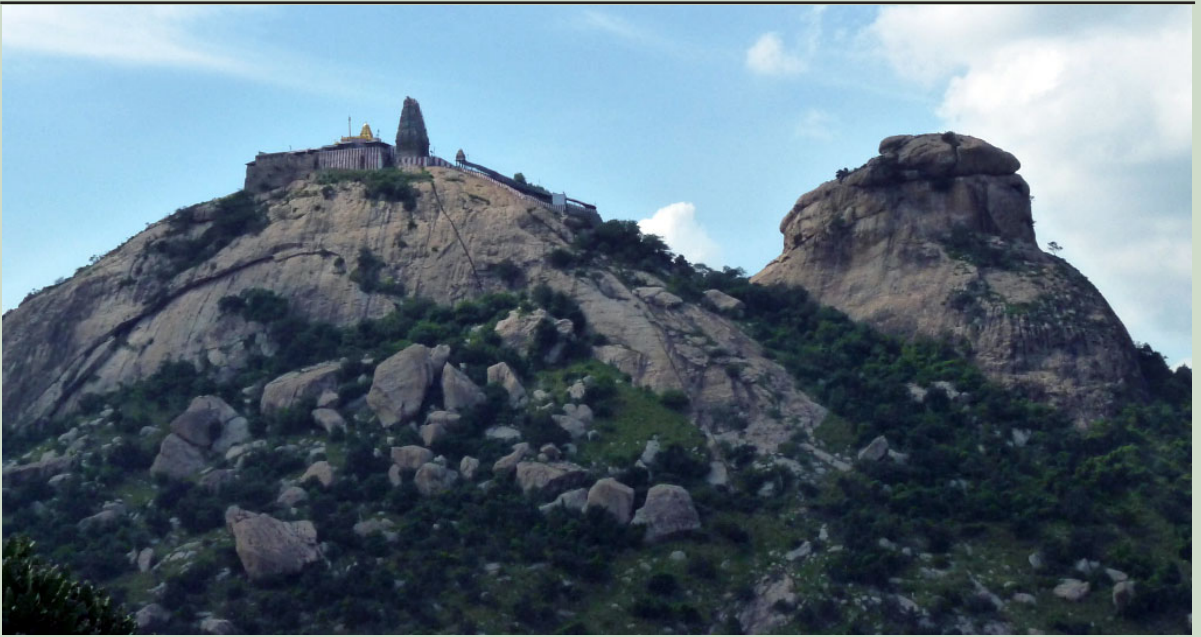
## Festivals

The temple follows worship based on Vaikanasa Agamic tradition. The temple is open from 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The temple priests are the descendants of Doddacharya and follow the hereditary practises. The temple rituals are performed four times a day. There are weekly, monthly and fortnightly rituals performed in the temple. Various festivals are celebrated here, with the Chittirai Brahmotsavam during the Tamil month of Chittirai (during April - May), Karthigai Utsavam during November-December and Narasimha Jayanthi during Vaikasi (May - June), being the most prominent. During Brahmotsavam, the temple car housing the festival Deities of Narasimhar and Amirtavalli is drawn around the streets of the town.

Thirumangai Azhwar has sung in praise of the Lord thus:



*Bhaktavatsala Perumal, the festival Deity of Sholinghur*      *Akkarakani Perumal is another name of the Lord of this temple*



*Narasimha temple of Sholinghur*



*The festival Deity of the temple*

*He is the transcendent one, the body of light who becomes manifest as the Vedas. He is the Lord in my heart. He is the celebrated resplendent golden mountain. He is benevolent. He is the sweet fruit who resides on the hill of Kadigai. I have attained Him and found elevation of spirit.*

*The Lord resides in beautiful Kannapuram, Kadigai, and the cool fragrant lotus-filled westerly Talaichangam Nanmadiyam, extolled by celestials as the fresh Moon and the rising Sun. Oh! When will I see them all together here and enjoy them to my heart's content?*

Periazwar has sung in praise of the Lord thus:

*From times of yore the Lord has been residing in the Ocean of Milk and in Venkatam, considering both as equal to His permanent home in Vaikunta. Now the youthful Lord has found a new home in Kadigai, surrounded by bee-humming flower groves. ☺*

# Govardhana Puja 2021



*Govardhana cake was offered to the Lord, with decoration of cookies and sweets*



*Utsava vigraha of Sri Sri Radha Krishnachandra in special Giridhari alankara*



*Cake distribution*

It was during the auspicious month of Karthika that Lord Krishna saved the Vrajavasis from the wrath of Indra. The Vrajavasis were preparing to offer Indra his annual worship and sacrifice, when Lord Krishna told them to direct their offerings to Govardhana Hill instead, as the hill provided the villagers with all that they needed - fresh green grasses for their cows, water from lakes and streams, fruits and flowers from the groves and forests that covered the hill. While the Vrajavasis circumambulated the hill after their worship, keeping their cows in front of them in procession, Lord Krishna appeared from the hill in a gigantic form to accept all the offerings, thus revealing that Govardhana Hill is non-different from Himself. Soon after, when he heard the news of this worship of Govardhana Hill, Indra was furious and sent torrential rainfall to inundate Vrindavana and destroy the villages and people. The Vrajavasis sought Krishna's protection and He saved them by easily lifting Govardhana Hill on the little finger of His left hand, and holding it up as an umbrella from the storms. Indra's pride was defeated and he surrendered in submission to Lord Krishna, realizing that the little boy whose instructions the Vrajavasis had followed was none other than his own Supreme Master.

Devotees celebrate Govardhana Puja every year to commemorate this amazing pastime of Lord Krishna. In ISKCON temples around the world, devotees offer a mound of foodstuffs or *annakoota* to the Lord and also perform *go-puja* on this auspicious day.

*Go Puja*



# Deepotsava 2021



Offering lamps to the Lord during the month of Karthika to commemorate His Damodara *lila*



# *Distinguished guests during Deepotsava*

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Sri K Gopalaiah  
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Smt. Shashikala Annasaheb Jolle  
Honourable Minister of Muzarai, Haj & Wakf  
Government of Karnataka



Kum. Maithili Thakur  
Indian playback singer



# ISKCON PILGRIMAGES



## Dhanurmasa Tri-Ranga Darshana Pilgrimage

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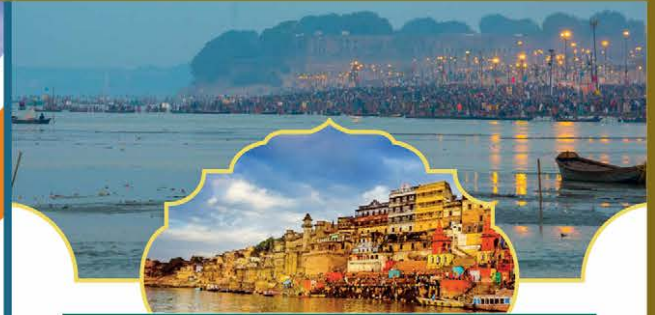
Batch 1: Dec 18 (4am) -19 (9pm)  
Batch 2: Dec 25 (4am) - 26 (9pm)  
Batch 3: Dec 31 (4am) - Jan 1 (9pm)

### Amount:

Rs. 7,000/-  
(Rs. 12,022/- for Batch 3)

Places of visit: Adi Ranga, Madhya Ranga,

Sri Rangam darshan in 1 day, Sri Rangam, Nammakkal & more



## Sankranti Magha Mela Pilgrimage

### Travel dates:

Jan 13 - 16, 2022

### Amount:

Rs.16000/-  
(Rs.25000 incl.flights)

### Places of visit:

Prayag Triveni Sangam, Veni Madhava,  
Akshaya Vat, Kashi / Varanasi & more



## Namma Bengaluru Krishna Darshan Pilgrimage

(For children, corporates & everyone)

Places of visit: Regular- ISKCON temples, Srinathji temple, Jagannath temple, Kailasa Vaikuntha temple, Gavi Gangadhareshwara temple, Bull temple, Hanuman temple, Rukmini Vitthala temple, & more

Outskirts: ISKCON Temples, Devarayana Durga, Savanadurga & more

Nature & Krishna: ISKCON temples, Lalbagh & Cubbon Park with Sankirtana, Hanuman temple, Ulsoor lake/Sankey tank, Jagannath temple & more

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