



KRISHNA VOICE

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Sri Krishna Janmashtami

Aug 18 - 19, 2022



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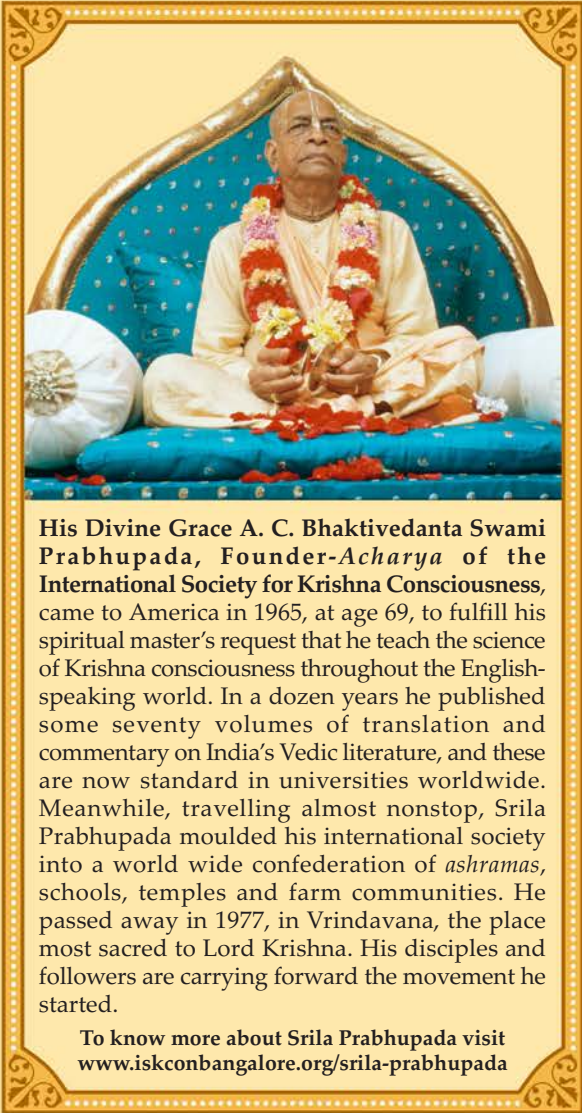
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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age 69, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the science of Krishna consciousness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

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

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Srimati Radharani—The Attractor of Krishna

To get Krishna to accept you, pray for the favour of His greatest devotee.

A lecture given on Radharani's Appearance Day in London, September 18, 1969

By His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Today is Radhastami, the appearance day of Srimati Radharani. Fifteen days after Krishna's birth Radharani appeared. Radharani is Krishna's pleasure potency. *Radha-Krishna-pranaya-vikrtir hladini-saktih*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has varieties of energy, as confirmed in the Vedic literature: *parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate*.

The Supreme Lord has nothing to do personally. *Na tasya karyam*. Here in the material world we find that a very big man—political head or business head—has nothing to do personally, because he has many assistants. Similarly, does the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full with six opulences, have to do anything personally? No. He has many assistants.

In the *Bhagavad-gita* Krishna says, *sarvatah pani-padam tat*: "The Lord has His hands and legs everywhere." You'll find that Krishna has nothing to do. He's simply enjoying with the *gopis* (cowherd girls) and Radharani. He's not killing the demons. The Krishna who kills the demons is Vasudeva Krishna; He's not the original Krishna. Krishna expands Himself. The first expansion is Baladeva. From Baladeva come Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, and Vasudeva. So in His Vasudeva feature Krishna acts in Mathura and Dvaraka. But Krishna in His original feature remains in Vrindavana.

One of the greatest fiction writers in Bengal, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, mistakenly thought that Krishna of Vrindavana, Krishna of Dvaraka, and Krishna of Mathura are different persons. Krishna is the same, but He can expand Himself in millions and trillions of forms. *Advaitam acyutam anadim ananta-rupam*. Although He has unlimited forms—*ananta-rupam*—He's *advaita*: There is no distinction between Krishna and His other forms.

When Krishna wants to enjoy, what kind of enjoyment will He have? That has been discussed by Srila Jiva Gosvami. Krishna is Param Brahman, the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth has three features: Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. *Jnanis*, those who try to understand the Absolute Truth by mental speculation, by dint of their own knowledge, realize the Absolute Truth as impersonal Brahman. And yogis, those who try to understand the Absolute Truth by meditation, realize the Absolute Truth as Paramatma.

Paramatma is the feature of the Supreme that is situated in everyone's heart. *Isvarah sarva-bhutanam hrd-dese 'rjuna tisthati*. And that Paramatma feature is an expansion of Bhagavan, Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gita* (10.42),

*atha va bahunaitena
kim jnatena tavarjuna
vistabyaham idam krtsnam
ekamsena sthito jagat*

Arjuna was trying to understand Krishna's potencies, so Krishna explained in the tenth chapter, "Among seasons I am spring, among rivers I am the Ganges, among beasts I am the lion, among men I am the king ... " And Krishna concluded, "How far shall I go on? Just try to understand that because of My entering the universe by only one plenary portion, the whole cosmic manifestation exists."

The material world exists on one plenary portion of Krishna. And Krishna Himself enters within the universe: *andantara-stha-paramanu-cayantara-stham*. Without His entering, the universe cannot exist, just as without the soul's entering within the body, the body cannot exist. As soon as the spirit soul leaves the body, the body is useless. The body may be that of a prime minister, but as soon as the soul leaves the body, the body is not worth even a farthing. Similarly, because Krishna enters within the universe, the universe has value. Otherwise it is simply a lump of matter.

So when Krishna wants to enjoy, what kind of enjoyment will He have? That has been discussed by Srila Jiva Gosvami. Krishna is the Supreme Great. God is great, everyone knows. So when the Great wants to enjoy, what quality of enjoyment will He have? That is to be understood.

Therefore Svarupa Damodara Gosvami has written, *radha-krishna-pranaya-vikrtih*. The loving affairs of Radha and Krishna are not ordinary, material loving affairs, although they appear like that. *Avajananti mam mudha*: rascals



and fools misunderstand Krishna to be an ordinary man. They do not know Krishna's *rasa-lila*, His dancing with the *gopis*. There are many such rascals.

To understand Krishna is very difficult:

*manusyanam sahasresu
kascid yatati siddhaye
yatatam api siddhanam
kascin mam veti tattvatah*

Out of millions of persons, one may try to make his life perfect. Nearly everyone is working like an animal, and for an animal there's no question of perfection. The animal propensities are eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. And unfortunately most human beings are engaged like animals. They have no other business. They are like hogs, who spend the whole day and night working—"Where is stool? Where is stool?" And as soon as the hogs get some stool to eat, they get fat. Then, "Where is sex? Where is sex?" The hog does not consider whether the mate is even his mother or sister. That is the hog's life. Human life is not meant for hog civilization. But modern civilization is a hog civilization, although it seems polished because the hogs wear shirts and coats.

The Krishna consciousness movement, in contrast, is for understanding Krishna. That requires a little labour, austerity, penance. *Tapasa brahmacharyena samena ca damena ca*. One has to undergo *tapasya* and *brahmacharya*—austerity and celibacy. *Brahmacharya* means stopping sex life or controlling sex life. Without becoming *brahmachari*, without controlling the impulse for sex, one cannot understand spiritual life. Formerly in Vedic civilization boys were trained from the very beginning to become *brahmachari*. It was not like the modern day, when boys and girls ten or twelve years old are enjoying together. Such enjoyment spoils the brain; the finer brain tissues are lost, so that one cannot understand higher things.

These are the processes of self-realization: *samena* (by control of the mind), *damena* (by control of the senses), *tyagena* (by giving in charity), *saucena* (by cleanliness). But in this age these processes are very difficult to undergo. Practically it is impossible. Therefore Lord Chaitanya, Krishna Himself, has made Himself easily available by one process:

*harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha*

This age, Kali-yuga, is considered the most fallen age. We think we are making much advancement, but it is the

most fallen age, because people are becoming like animals. As animals have no other interest than four bodily necessities—eating, sleeping, mating, and defending—so in this age people are interested in four principles of bodily want. They have no information of the soul, nor are they prepared to realize what the soul is. That is the defect of this age.

But the human form of life is especially meant for realizing oneself: “What am I?” That is the mission of human life. *Athato brahma-jijnasa*: This life is meant for inquiring about Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan.

Jijnasu means inquiry. We inquire every morning, “What is the news today?” Immediately we pick up a newspaper—inquisitiveness there—but we are inquiring about very base things only. We have no desire to inquire about the highest possibility, *brahma-jnana*, knowledge of the spirit.

That is the lack in modern civilization. Today people are mainly inquiring about how to earn money. That propensity is there in every age, but in this age it has become the principal factor. Everyone is engaged simply for the bodily necessities. *Nidraya hriyate naktam*: at night people sleep very soundly, snoring. *Vyavayena ca va vayah*: or they engage in sex. In this way they’re wasting time. And during the daytime—*diva carthehaya rajan*: “Where is money? Where is money? Where is money?” And *kutumba-bharanena va*—as soon as one gets money, one thinks how to purchase things for the family, that’s all. Shopping, snoring—that is the engagement in materialistic life.

Out of many such foolish persons engaged in sleeping, mating, earning money, and providing the family with a nice apartment and food, one is inquisitive how to perfect the human form. This life is meant for perfection. What is perfection? Perfection means to get out of misery. Everyone is trying to get out of misery, but no one knows the ultimate goal by which to get out of it. *Na te viduh svartha-gatim hi vishnum*. One can be out of misery when one approaches Vishnu.

Here in the material world people are trying to go to the moon, but these foolish people do not know what they’ll gain even if they go there. The moon is one of the material planets. Krishna has already said in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *a-brahma-bhuvanal lokah ...* All the material planets are places of misery. The moon is very near, but even if you go to the topmost planet, which is known as Brahmaloaka, you’ll find misery.

You can see every night what a vast number of planets there are. But you cannot go to them. You are simply trying to go to the nearest planet, and you are failing. So what is your scientific improvement?

But you can go. Material scientists calculate that if one were to travel forty thousand years at the speed of light, then one might approach the topmost planet in the material world. So at least in the modern scientific calculations it is impossible to go there. But one can go; there is a process. That we have tried to explain in our small booklet *Easy Journey to Other Planets*. By the yogic process one can go to any planet one likes. That is a yogic perfection.

The living entity is called *sarva-gah*, “one who can go anywhere he likes.” For example, Narada Muni can travel anywhere he likes, either in the spiritual world or in the material world. So you can also do that. That is possible. Within one year the great yogi Durvasa Muni traveled all over the universe and went to Vishnuloka, the spiritual world, and came back. That is recorded in history.

So this is one of the perfections. And how can it be attained? By understanding Krishna. *Yasmin vijñate sarvam evam vijñatam bhavanti*. The *Mundaka Upanisad* says that if you simply understand Krishna, then everything else can be understood very easily. Krishna consciousness is such a nice thing.

This evening we are talking about Radhastami. We are trying to understand Radharani, the chief potency of Krishna, Krishna’s pleasure potency. As we learn from Vedic literature, Krishna has many varieties of potency: *parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate*. Just as a big man with many assistants and secretaries hasn’t got to do anything personally—simply by his will everything is done—so the Supreme Personality of Godhead has varieties of energy, and everything is being done so nicely.

The material world, where we are now living, is called *bahir-anga-sakti*, the external energy of Krishna. And just see how nicely everything is being done by the material energy. Krishna explains in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *mayadhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ suyate sa-caracaram*: “Under My superintendence the material energy is working.” The material energy is not blind. Krishna is in the background. And apart from the material, external energy, there is another energy—the internal energy. By the internal energy the spiritual world is being manifested. *Paras tasmāt tu bhavo ’nyah*. As the material world is manipulated under the external energy, the spiritual world is conducted by the internal potency. That internal potency is Radharani.

We should try to understand Radharani. Radharani is Krishna’s pleasure potency, *hladini-sakti*. In the *Vedanta-sutra* the Absolute Truth is described as *anandamaya*, always in the pleasure potency.

When you want *ananda*, pleasure, you cannot have it alone. Alone you cannot enjoy. When you are in a circle of friends or family or other associates, you feel pleasure. My speaking is very pleasing when there are many persons here. I cannot be happy speaking alone; that is not *ananda*. Although I could speak here in the dead of night when there is no one here, that is not *ananda*. *Ananda* means there must be others.

Because Krishna, the Absolute *anandamaya*, He has become many: *eko bahu syama*. We are also Krishna's parts and parcels, meant to give pleasure to Krishna. And the chief pleasure potency is Radharani.

*radha krishna-pranaya-vikrtir hladini saktir asmad
ekatmanav api bhuvī pura deha-bhedam gatau tau
chaitanyakhyam prakatam adhuna tad-dvayam caikyam aptam
radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam naumi krishna-svarupam*

Krishna is Param Brahman, the Supreme Absolute, as you know from the *Bhagavad-gita*. When Arjuna understood *Bhagavad-gita*, he affirmed to Krishna: *param brahma param dhama pavitram paramam bhavan*: "You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate abode, the purest, the Absolute Truth."

So Krishna is Param Brahman, the Supreme Absolute. In the material world we see that a great saintly person gives up everything of material enjoyment simply to enjoy *brahmananda*, the happiness of Brahman, the Absolute. He becomes a *sannyasi* just to understand that he is in Brahman. So if one has to give up everything material for Brahman realization, do you think that Param Brahman, the Supreme Brahman, can enjoy anything material? No. Krishna's enjoyment is nothing material. This point should be understood.

In the material world we have a little information of Brahman and Paramatma, but no one knows Param Brahman, or Bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore it is said, *manusyanam sahasresu kascid yatati siddhaye*. *Siddhaye* refers to understanding Brahman or Paramatma. But out of many persons who have realized Brahman and Paramatma, hardly one can know Krishna.

Without knowing Krishna, what can we understand about Krishna's pleasure potency? Without knowing a big man, how can I understand his internal affairs? Similarly, if we do not understand Krishna, how we can understand how Krishna is enjoying? That is not possible.

The Gosvamis are giving us information of the pleasure potency of Krishna, Srimati Radharani. We have described the loving affairs of Radha-Krishna in our *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*. If you have this book, you can read about the transcendental loving affairs of Radha Krishna.

So today we pray to Radharani because She is the pleasure potency of Krishna. Krishna means "all-attractive," but Radharani is so great that She attracts Krishna. So what is the position of Srimati Radharani? We should try to understand this today and offer our obeisances to Radharani.

*tapta-kancana-gaurangi
radhe vrindavanesvari
vrsabhanu-sute devi
pranamami hari-priye*

"Radharani, You are so dear to Krishna. So we offer our respectful obeisances unto You." Radharani is *hari-priya*, "very dear to Krishna." Through the mercy of Radharani we can easily approach Krishna. If Radharani recommends, "This devotee is very nice," then Krishna immediately accepts me, however great a fool I may be. Because I am recommended by Radharani, Krishna accepts me. Therefore in Vrindavana you'll find all the devotees chanting Radharani's name more than Krishna's. Wherever you'll go, you'll find the devotees greeting one another, "Jaya Radhe!" You'll find this still in Vrindavana. The devotees are glorifying Radharani. If you go by the speculative process to understand Krishna, it will take many, many lives. But if you take to devotional service and just try to please Radharani, Krishna will be gotten very easily.

Radharani can deliver Krishna. She is so great a devotee, the emblem of the *maha-bhagavata*. Even Krishna cannot understand the quality of Radharani's devotion. Although Krishna says *vedaham samatitani*—"I know everything"—He fails to understand Radharani. Radharani is so great.

Krishna knows everything, but to understand Radharani, Krishna accepted the position of Radharani.

Krishna thought, "I am full. I am complete in every respect, but still I want to understand Radharani. Why?" This question obliged Krishna to accept the propensities of Radharani to understand Himself. Such topics, of course, are part of a great transcendental science. One advanced in Krishna consciousness and

well conversant with the *shastras*, scriptures, can understand. When Krishna wanted to understand Himself, He took the tendency of Srimati Radharani. That is His appearance as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. *Radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam*.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Krishna, but He has accepted the propensities of Radharani. As Radharani is always in feelings of separation from Krishna, so Lord Chaitanya, in the position of Radharani, was feeling separation of Krishna. That is the teaching of Lord Chaitanya—to feel separation, not meeting. The process of devotional service taught by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His disciplic succession is how to feel separation from Krishna. That is Radharani's position—always feeling the separation.

The Gosvamis, also, when they were in Vrindavana, never said, "I have seen Krishna." Although they were the most perfect devotees, they never said, "I have seen Krishna." Their prayers were like this: *he radhe vraja-devike ... he nanda-suno kutah!*

Radharani does not remain alone. She stays always with Her friends (*vraja-devi*) Lalita or Vishakha and other damsels of Vrindavana. So the Gosvamis, in their mature stage when they were living at Vrindavana, were praying in this way: *he radhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-suno kutah*: "Radharani, where are You? Where are Your associates? Where are You, Krishna, Nanda-suno, son of Nanda Maharaja? Where are you all?" They were searching. They never said, "I have seen Krishna dancing with the *gopis*. Last night I saw." [*Laughter*.]

Those who speak like that are called *sahajiyas*. Mature devotees do not speak like that. The *sahajiyas* take everything very cheap—Krishna very cheap, Radharani very cheap—as if they can see Radha and Krishna every night. No. The Gosvamis do not teach us like that. They were searching after Radha-Krishna. *He radhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-suno kutah/ sri-govardhana-kalpa-padapa-tale kalindi-vane kutah*: "Are you there at Govardhana Hill, or on the banks of the Yamuna?" *Ghosantav iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair maha-vihvalau*. Their business was to cry like this: "Where are You? Where are You, Radharani? Where are you, Lalita, Vishakha, the associates of Radharani? Where are You, Krishna? Are You near Govardhana Hill, or on the bank of the Yamuna?"

Ghosantav iti sarvato vraja-pure. Throughout the whole tract of Vrindavana they were crying and searching after Radha-Krishna—*khedair maha vihvalau*—as if madmen.

Vande rupa-sanatanau raghu-yugau sri-jiva-gopalakau. We have to follow the footprints of the Gosvamis and learn how to search out Krishna and Radharani, in Vrindavana or within our hearts. That is the process of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's *bhajana*, or worship: feelings of separation (*vipralambha-seva*).

Feeling separation from Krishna, Mahaprabhu would fall into the sea. He would go out of His bedroom in the dead of night. Nobody knew where He had gone. He was searching for Krishna.

That process of devotional service is taught by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. It is not that we can say very easily, "I have seen Krishna and Radharani in the *rasa-lila*." No, not like that. Feel the separation. The more you feel separation from Krishna, the more you should understand that you are advancing. Don't try to see Krishna artificially. Be advanced in feeling separation, and then your devotion will be perfect. That is the teaching of Lord Chaitanya.

Atah sri-krishna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih. With our material senses we cannot see Krishna or hear Krishna's name. We must engage ourselves in the service of the Lord. Where does the service begin? *Jihvadau*: from the tongue. Not from the legs, eyes, or ears. It begins from the tongue. How? Chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. And take Krishna-*prasadam*. The tongue has two businesses: to articulate sound, Hare Krishna, and take *prasadam*. By these processes you'll realize Krishna.

Don't try to see Krishna. You cannot see Krishna with your material eyes, nor can you hear about Him with your material ears, nor can you touch Him. But if you engage your tongue in the service of the Lord, then He'll reveal Himself to you: "Here I am." That is wanted.

So feel separation from Krishna just as Radharani does, as Lord Chaitanya teaches us, and engage your tongue in the service of the Lord. Then one day, when you are mature, you'll see Krishna face to face.

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



SRILA PRABHUPADA SPEAKS OUT

We Worship Everything

The following conversation took place in Los Angeles on May 14, 1973.

Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, if material nature is the absence of Krishna, then what is material?

Srila Prabhupada: Nothing is material. If you continue Krishna consciousness, there's nothing material. When we offer this flower in Krishna consciousness, is it material?

Devotee: No.

Srila Prabhupada: So how has it become spiritual? It was material in the tree and now it has become spiritual? No. It is spiritual. As long as I was thinking that it is meant for my enjoyment, it was material. As soon as I take it for Krishna's

enjoyment, it is spiritual.

Devotee: So actually this entire world is spiritual.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. That we want—to engage everything in Krishna's service. Then this world will be the spiritual world.

Devotee: So we can also appreciate Krishna's creation in that light? For example, this flower is very beautiful because it is Krishna's.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. We realize that. The Mayavada philosophy says *jagan mithya*: "This world is false." We don't say that. Krishna has created so many nice things for His enjoyment, why shall I say *mithya* [false]? Suppose you build a nice house and you call me, "Just see," and if I say, "It is all *mithya*."

Devotee: I'll be offended, because I can't enjoy it if it is false.

Srila Prabhupada [Laughing.]: How depressed you'll be!

The *Bhagavad-gita* explains that the demons say like this—*asatyam apratistham te jagad ahur anisvaram*. The rascals, the demons say that this world is *asatya*, untruth, and that there is no cause, no *isvara*.

This is the declaration of the demons.

But if Krishna is a fact, His creation is a fact. His energy is a fact. Why shall I say it is false? We don't say it is false. The Mayavadis say it is false.

Devotee: If someone looks at the Deity of Krishna and thinks it's only stone or wood, for him it's still material?

Srila Prabhupada: That is his ignorance. How can it be material? The stone is also Krishna's energy. For example, electricity is everywhere, and the electrician knows how to utilize it. Similarly, Krishna is everywhere, even in the stone, and the devotees know how to utilize stone to appreciate Krishna. The rascals do not know. The devotee knows because he has no other view than of Krishna. Why should the stone be without Krishna? "Here is Krishna." That is real oneness. The Mayavadi philosophers propose oneness, but they divide—this is stone, this is not Krishna. Why bring another thing?

Devotee: For a Krishna conscious person is Krishna as much in the stone as in the Deity?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

Devotee: Just as much?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Why not?

Devotee: But we order Deities all the way from India?

Srila Prabhupada: Krishna explains, "Everything is in Me, but I'm not everything." This is called *acintya-bhedabheda*—simultaneous oneness and difference. Everything is Krishna, but you cannot worship this bench as Krishna. That is rascaldom.

The sunshine is also sun. Is it not? But when the sunshine is in the room, you cannot say, "The sun is my room." This is called *acintya-bhedabheda*.

Devotee: But you said one can see Krishna within the stone.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Why not?


Devotee: And one can worship Him within the stone or within everything.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. We worship everything. We see Krishna everywhere. We don't see the tree; we see Krishna's energy. Therefore the tree is also worshipable because Krishna and Krishna's energy are both worshipable. Therefore we say, "Hare Krishna." *Hare* means Krishna's energy. We worship everything.

In our childhood we were taught by our parents that if a grain of rice falls on the floor, we must pick it up and touch it to our head to show respect. We were taught like this—how to see everything in relationship with Krishna. That is Krishna consciousness.

Therefore, we do not like to see anything wasted, anything misused. Why are we preaching? Because we see that so many rascals are misusing their life. We think, "Let us give them some enlightenment." This is our mission.

We could think, "Let them go to hell." Mayavadi *sannyasis* engage in meditation or go to the Himalayas, but we have come to Los Angeles. Why? This is our mission. "Oh, these people are being misused under maya. Let them gain some enlightenment."

We are teaching how to utilize everything for Krishna, how to understand Krishna in everything. That is our mission. See Krishna in everything. Krishna says, "Anyone who sees Me everywhere, and everything in Me, is perfect." 

Fasting		Festivals	
Aug 8	Ekadashi	Aug 2	Garuda Panchami (in ISKCON Bangalore)
Aug 9	<i>break fast</i>	Aug 8-12	Jhulan yatra
Aug 23	Ekadashi	Aug 12	Balarama Jayanti: Appearance of Lord Balarama
Aug 24	<i>break fast</i>		<i>Fasting till noon</i>
			Second month of Chaturmasya begins
			<i>Fasting from yogurt for one month)</i>
		Aug 18 & 19	Sri Krishna Janmashtami
			<i>Fasting till midnight on Aug 19</i>
		Aug 20	Sri Vyasa Puja: Appearance of Srila Prabhupada
			<i>Fasting till noon</i>

The Real Mother Earth

By Hare Krishna Devi Dasi

From the Srimad-Bhagavatam we learn that the earth is controlled by the goddess Bhumi Devi. The Bhagavatam's ancient Sanskrit texts give the history of her dealings with a king named Prithu Maharaja, an incarnation of the Supreme Lord's power to rule. When Mother Earth (Bhumi Devi) stopped feeding all the living entities on the planet, Prithu threatened her, and she assumed the form of a cow. Now the personality of Earth will reveal how she can be pleased if people use her resources properly.

The consciousness of the farmer while interacting with the earth not only affects productivity but also reveals the farmer's spiritual standing.

First we may ask, Who or what is the earth? Is the earth simply a mass of chemicals, or is it a person with feelings and desires? And if the earth is a person, how can we learn about and how should we relate to that person?

Although most traditional cultures have for centuries respected the earth as a person—Mother Earth—modern industrial agriculture has mostly treated the earth as simply an impersonal amalgamation of chemicals, to be pushed into productivity or subdued with other chemicals. So the growing popular movement to reestablish connections with Mother Earth as a person is sometimes viewed as a step backward. But is it really?

In the *Bhagavad-gita* (17.4), Lord Krishna says that people in the mode of goodness worship the demigods and that people in the mode of passion adore demons. Thousands of modern farmers obediently follow researchers and agricultural agents who advise them to lace their fields with chemicals to grow more feed to fatten animals for slaughter. In the most practical sense, following such materialistic gurus is pretty close to worshiping demons. It's worship in the mode of passion.

And what is the result of such worship? Krishna says (Bg. 14.12) that the symptoms of the mode of passion are great attachment, fruitive activity, intense endeavour, and uncontrollable desire and hankering. From the mode of passion, greed develops. (Bg. 14.17) And happiness in the mode of passion is "just like nectar in the beginning and just like poison in the end." (Bg. 18.38)

These symptoms show up when farmers revere materialistic scientists and economists who preach the wonders of chemically based agribusiness. The lives of such farmers are full of greed, intense endeavour, and uncontrollable desire.

And what has been the outcome of this mentality? Modern agriculture seemed "just like nectar" in the beginning, when chemicals prodded the earth into turning out surplus crops. But now that farmland in so many places is eroded and stained by chemicals, modern agriculture often seems "just like poison."

Although worship of the personality of Earth may at first look like a step backward, compared with worship in the mode of passion it is a step in the right direction. Because the Earth is one of the demigods appointed by the Lord to control aspects of the affairs of the universe, earth worship can bring one from the mode of passion up to the mode of goodness. And Krishna says, "From the mode of goodness, real knowledge develops." (Bg. 14.17)

So it might seem that earth worshipers are on the right track. And to an extent they are. But for their efforts in spiritual life to succeed they need to go one step further, because elsewhere in the *Bhagavad-gita* (7.23) Krishna points out the shortcomings of demigod worship. "Men of small intelligence worship the demigods," Lord Krishna says, "and their fruits are limited and temporary."

Demigods such as Lord Brahma or Mother Earth live thousands of years, but eventually their life—and the material benedictions they award—must come to an end. Srila Prabhupada once said, "If you worship demigods you may get some temporary benefit, but at the end the benefit will be finished, you'll be finished, and the demigod who has given you the benediction will be also finished."

The problem is that demigod worship is spurred on by a desire for material gain, whether it be for tangible wealth or for a peaceful life. Krishna says, "Men in this world desire success in fruitive activities, and therefore they worship the demigods." (Bg. 4.12) And the desire to enjoy in the material world binds us to it.

So on one hand Krishna says that worship of the demigods is in the mode of goodness and that acts in goodness can lead to knowledge. But on the other hand He seems to condemn demigod worship. So how are demigod worshipers to attain lasting benefit?

The secret is that the demigods are great devotees of the Lord. So by submitting to higher authorities, the demigods,

thus acting in the mode of goodness, one prepares oneself to submit to the highest authority—the Supreme Lord. And in this way one transcends even the material mode of goodness.

In the *Chaitanya-charitamrita (Madhya-lila 24.124)* Lord Chaitanya tells Sanatana Gosvami, “If those who are attached to demigod worship fortunately associate with the devotees, their dormant devotional service and appreciation of the Lord’s qualities gradually awaken. In this way they also engage in Krishna’s devotional service and give up the desire for liberation and the desire to merge into the existence of impersonal Brahman.”

How is it that mixing with devotees can turn demigod worshipers into worshipers of the Supreme Lord? Here’s one way: By mixing with devotees, a demigod worshiper will hear of his demigod’s relation to the Lord.

For example, although some people may know prayers to Mother Earth, they may not know that she also prays to the Supreme Lord and has many interactions with Him. Several passages about Mother Earth—also known as Bhumi Devi—are found in the Vedic scriptures, such as the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. By studying these accounts, worshipers of Mother Earth will learn not only of her activities but of the Supreme Lord’s wisdom, power, and generosity, as shown in His pastimes with her. What’s more, they’ll learn that Mother Earth is most pleased not when we worship her directly but when we learn to use her bounty to worship the Lord, who is so kind to her.

When the divinely empowered Prithu Maharaja ascended to the throne with his wife, Queen Archi, an incarnation of the goddess of fortune, they were honoured not only by ordinary citizens but also by the demigods. The Fourth Canto of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* describes the wonderful gifts the demigods presented to Prithu Maharaja:

Lord Brahma, whom the Supreme Lord appoints to preside over the universe, gave King Prithu a protective garment made of spiritual knowledge. Lord Brahma’s wife, Sarasvati, the goddess of learning, offered Prithu a transcendental necklace. Lord Shiva, who is in charge of ultimately destroying the universe, presented Prithu Maharaja a sword within a sheath marked with ten moons. And Shiva’s wife, Durga, the goddess of the material energy, gave Prithu a shield marked with one hundred moons.

Varuna, the lord of the oceans, presented an umbrella, as brilliant as the moon, that constantly sprayed fine particles of water. Agnideva, the demigod of fire, gave Prithu Maharaja a bow made of the horns of goats and cows, and the sun-god gave him arrows as brilliant as sunshine. Our own Mother Earth, Bhumi Devi, gave Prithu Maharaja mystic slippers that could carry him instantly wherever he desired. Thus all the demigods honoured the reign of King Prithu and Queen Archi, and the relationship between Mother Earth and Prithu Maharaja seemed to start out well.

Being an incarnation of the Lord’s ruling potency, Prithu Maharaja was an ideal leader. Today we can hardly imagine his qualities. He was pious, equitable, and magnanimous, and his citizens loved him. Prithu was like the ideal well-wishing father, his beautiful face always smiling with affectionate glances, enhancing the peaceful life of the citizens.

But although Prithu Maharaja was kind and equitable, he formidably chastised criminals who tried to intimidate his citizens. His popularity came from his expert management of his kingdom, not from simply smiling and speaking platitudes. He satisfied everyone by his practical deeds, and his citizens were thankful to have a ruler both kind and qualified.

So it seems that life in Prithu’s kingdom should have been completely happy. But soon after Prithu was installed on the throne, citizens came before him to complain of a scarcity of grains. The people had become so emaciated they were on the verge of starvation. “Although we are willing to work,” the citizens said, “we are unemployed and hungry. You alone can give us work. Please arrange for the proper distribution of food grains and save us from starving to death.”

Prithu analyzed the crisis and determined its cause: Mother Earth, Bhumi Devi, was withholding grains.

As an incarnation of the Lord, Prithu was ready to use his immense potencies to save the citizens. He took up his transcendental bow and arrows and threatened to kill the personified Earth. Frightened, she transformed herself into a cow and ran for her life.

As Maharaja Prithu angrily chased her, she ran here and there in outer space and between the heavenly planets and the earth. But wherever she ran, Prithu Maharaja chased her. At last, fearful and exhausted, she fell to the ground, pleading for mercy.

“Please save me. You are the king of the planet and the protector of all living entities. You are supposed to be the maintainer of religious principles. Why are you so angry with me that you are ready to kill me, a woman?”

Bhumi Devi’s bewilderment at Prithu’s hostility is understandable. Many modern rulers sexually harass women or treat them with disdain, but Prithu’s treatment of women was exemplary. He treated his queen as half his body,



and he respected other women as if each were his own mother. How then could he now be threatening to kill Mother Earth, especially when she had taken the form of a cow?

Mother Earth continued, “King Prithu, I am just like a strong boat. Everything in the world stands upon me. If you break me to pieces, how can you protect yourself and your subjects from drowning?”

Today’s leaders, who sometimes seem willing to sacrifice everything for economic development, should ask the same question: If in their greed they destroy the earth, how can they save themselves and their citizens from destruction?

(Prithu, of course, as a partial incarnation of the Lord, had potencies far beyond those of today’s leaders. And he was not acting out of greed, as we shall see.)

Prithu replied, “Goddess Bhumi, you are trying to cheat us by disobeying my orders. In the form of a demigod you accepted your share of the sacrifice we performed, but in return you have not produced enough grain.

“Although you eat green grass every day, you do not fill your udder with milk for us. Since you are treating my citizens so callously, merely having assumed the form of a cow does not exempt you from punishment. In spite of my orders, you withhold the seeds of herbs and grains. Therefore, I shall cut you to pieces with my arrows. I shall feed your flesh to the starving people and satisfy the crying citizens of my kingdom!”

Srila Prabhupada explains Prithu's threat: In the rare circumstance when there is no supply of grain, the government can arrange for the eating of cow flesh, using dried-up cows to feed the hungry masses of people. Krishna consciousness is not a fanatical philosophy. In an emergency, qualified authorities can do what's needed.

But Prabhupada stresses that such an emergency is extremely rare. Most often, supposed emergencies are created by our own mismanagement. For example, recently even when thousands of people in Ethiopia were starving, Ethiopia was still exporting thousands of tons of grain to fatten animals abroad for slaughter. Today we misuse grain to fatten beef cows, and we slaughter dairy cows when they're still giving enough milk to feed at least twenty people a day. We do these things for money, not for emergency. This kind of killing cannot be condoned.

Prabhupada notes that Mother Earth gives so much grain that it's sometimes dumped into the sea. "Consequently, in some places there is scarcity of grain and in others profuse production." Our problems come because of mismanagement, not because the earth is failing to give enough to feed her children.

After threatening Mother Earth, Maharaja Prithu told her, "Any cruel person—man or woman—who is interested only in his or her maintenance and has no compassion for other living entities may be killed by the king. Such killing can never be considered actual killing. Your duty is to provide food for all living entities. And even though you are quite capable of feeding everyone, you heartlessly allow the living entities to starve.

"You have become so insane with pride that you claim you are indispensable to the survival of my citizens. You are mistaken—I shall cut you into small pieces like grain, and I shall uphold the entire population by my mystic powers."

As Prithu Maharaja aimed his arrow at Bhumi Devi, she trembled in fear and pleaded with folded hands, "My dear Lord, I know that you are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You have created the complete cosmic manifestation, and thus you have also created me, the planet Earth, the resting place of all living entities. But now you stand before me threatening to kill me with your weapons. Tell me, where can I take shelter? Who will protect me?"

"In the past You were my protector. Once, in the form of a transcendental boar, with your tusks you rescued me from the water at the bottom of the universe. You became famous as Dharadhara, He who holds the planet earth. But now, in the form of a great king, You threaten me with Your sharp arrows. I cannot understand Your actions."

Still poised to shoot, and unmoved by Mother Earth's flattery, Prithu Maharaja glared at her angrily.

Mother Earth was frightened, but she was determined to state her full case to Prithu Maharaja. Her words give an important message to leaders of nations today:

"Great sages say that human society can prosper by offering in sacrifice to the Supreme Lord the grains and herbs I produce. That's why I have provided these things abundantly in the past. But now, my dear King, all the seeds, roots, herbs, and grains I have produced for sacrifice are being used by exploitive atheists opposed to spiritual life.

"Not only are my grains and herbs being wasted for sense gratification, but I am not being properly maintained. The leaders of the world don't care about the pain they are causing me. They stand by indifferently, refusing to punish the rascals who steal the gifts I have offered my human children for their spiritual welfare. The negligence of the leaders fosters greed and destruction. Such leaders encourage thieves to use my offerings for their own pleasure and indulgence. That is why I have hidden all the seeds."

Someone may wonder why grains were not being properly used for sacrifice in a kingdom ruled by such an ideal leader as Prithu Maharaja, a plenary incarnation of the Lord. The answer is that Prithu Maharaja succeeded the reign of the demoniac king Vena, who had stomped out all religious activities, especially sacrifices to the Lord. Since Prithu Maharaja had just taken the throne, he had not yet fully re-established the principles of religion in his kingdom.

In the present day we can see that Bhumi Devi's statement is quite appropriate. For a long time Mother Earth has produced massive amounts of grain. But as the world has become more demoniac, people have stopped offering grains in sacrifice and have stopped receiving food with thanksgiving to the Supreme Lord. Instead, with chemicals they whip Mother Earth into producing grain for profit—producing grain to fatten animals for slaughter.

Mother Earth provides grains for sacrifice so that her human children can make spiritual progress and all her children can live peacefully together. But we've practically obliterated spiritual life, and we've devastated the earth's environment through commercial cattle raising and large-scale agriculture. Nor are Bhumi Devi's human and animal children living peacefully together. And the highest offense to Mother Earth? Although the cow represents Mother Earth herself, the crops Mother Earth provides for spiritual advancement are used to expand cow slaughter.

So it is not surprising that Bhumi Devi has begun to check the grain and food production by drought, floods, earthquakes, and erosion, especially in areas that support the production of meat. For example, along the Mississippi River several hundred thousand acres of prime farmland—an important source of cattle feed—are now covered with two to five feet of sand from the floods of the summer of 1993.

Those who take crops intended for sacrifice to God and use them for their own profit and sense gratification are considered thieves. “Because people are without Krishna consciousness,” Srila Prabhupada explains, “they have become thieves, and consequently they are being punished by the laws of material nature. No one can check this, not even by introducing so many relief funds and humanitarian institutions. Unless the people of the world take to Krishna consciousness, there will be a scarcity of food and much suffering.”

Prithu Maharaja listened as Mother Earth defended her actions. She then suggested what the king should do:

“O great hero, protector of all living entities, if You want to relieve the living entities by supplying them with grain, and if You desire to nourish them by taking milk from me, You should arrange to bring a suitable calf and a pot for the milk, as well as a milkman to do the work. Since I will feel affectionate toward my calf, Your desire to take milk from me will be fulfilled.”

After hearing the pleasing and auspicious words of Bhumi Devi, Maharaja Prithu set aside his bow and agreed to her suggestion. He transformed Svayambhuva Manu, the lawgiver of mankind, into a calf and milked all the herbs and grains from her udder, cupping his hands to catch them to offer in sacrifice.

Following the example of King Prithu, other living beings also took the essence out of the earth. Bhumi Devi is a loving mother not only to humans but to all living entities. Under the reconciliation begun by Prithu Maharaja, she began to supply nourishment for all of them.

The great sages transformed Brihaspati, the priest of the demigods, into a calf, made the senses into a pot, and milked all kinds of Vedic knowledge to purify words, mind, and hearing. The demigods made Indra, the king of heaven, into a calf, and from Mother Earth they milked the *soma-rasa* beverage. Nourished by drinking that nectar, the demigods became mentally and physically powerful. The demons extracted various kinds of beer and liquor, which they put into an iron pot.

The inhabitants of the heavenly planets of Gandharvaloka and Apsaraloka drew the milk into a lotus-flower pot. The milk took the shape of beauty and sweet musical art. The snakes and scorpions took poison from Mother Earth as their milk, and they kept the poison in their holes.

Four-legged animals like the cows made a calf out of Nandi, Lord Shiva’s bull, and made a milking pot out of the forest. Thus they got fresh green grasses to eat. Ferocious animals like tigers transformed a lion into a calf and were able to get flesh as their milk. The birds made a calf out of Garuda, Lord Vishnu’s eagle. They took milk from Mother Earth in the form of moving insects and nonmoving plants and grasses.

One after another, all forms of living entities received their own kind of nourishment from Mother Earth. From then on, King Prithu was very much satisfied with Bhumi Devi because she supplied food for all the living entities. He developed an affection for the planet Earth, just as if she were his own daughter.

In that way, Prithu Maharaja demonstrated the ideal example of how a leader should maintain Mother Earth and teach the citizens how to use the things she provides. Srila Prabhupada explains, “Just as a cow cannot deliver sufficient milk without being affectionate to her calf, the Earth cannot produce sufficient necessities without feeling affection for those who are Krishna conscious.... If human beings are well-behaved, animals will also receive sufficient food and be happy.”

Today the lessons from the dealings of Prithu Maharaja and Bhumi Devi are more crucial than ever. How can we best please Mother Earth? She is pleased when she sees her human children making spiritual advancement. That means they are happy. She is pleased to see them worshiping the Lord with the food she has provided and then taking the remnants as nourishing *prasadam*. She is happy when people chant Hare Krishna and dance in glorification of the Lord.

In some ways she is like a human mother. Usually no one wants to be kicked, yet a pregnant young mother feels great happiness when she gets kicked by the baby in her belly. She knows the baby is developing nicely. Similarly, though usually no one wants to be jumped on, when Mother Earth feels her human children jumping and dancing in ecstasy as they chant Hare Krishna, she becomes happy. As the devotees of the Lord carefully graze her representatives, the cows, and gently plough her soil with the oxen to produce food to offer the Lord, she feels more happiness. Content that her children are developing nicely, she becomes satisfied and productive. These are the real ways to please Mother Earth. 🌸

The Lord of Vaikunta

Sri Vaikuntanathan Perumal Temple, Srivaikuntam - Part 2

by Sampatkumara Ramanuja Dasan (Adv. Ashwin.S)

(Continued from previous issue)

Taking the form of a celestial 'Matsya,' Lord Narayana killed the demon Somuka who stole the knowledge of the Vedas and restored the Vedas to Brahma.

This very Matsya or fish form of the Lord wished to set His abode as Srivaikuntam, and resided there as Vaikuntanatha or the Lord of Vaikunta.

According to another legend, the most beautiful Deity of Vaikuntanatha, over the period of several ages, had no patrons, and was left submerged under the earth. A cow from a herd of the king, which used to graze at the place, let down her milk where the Vaikuntanatha Deity lay buried. The king was displeased to see that a particular cow alone was not yielding milk and thought it might have been the trick of the herdsman. He deployed his men to monitor the cow, and they reported the events to the king. The king realised that the cow would lead him to divinity and he dug up the region around the place. He reinstated the Deity of Vaikuntanatha and expanded the temple.

The name Kallapiran

Kaladushana was the head of robbers in the region. The ruling Pandya king wanted to arrest him, but his attempts



The rajagopuram of the temple



Sri Vaikuntanatha Perumal in Garuda seva

were futile. During one of the encounters, he could arrest everyone except Kaladushana. Kaladushana prayed to Sri Vaikuntanatha to save him and his band of thieves from the king. Vaikuntanatha appeared as Kaladushana and surrendered before the king. Later, He appeared in the dream of the king to narrate the events, and also informed him that He wanted the king and the people to learn that large accumulation of ill-gotten wealth would be stolen and would reach the right hands. The king was enlightened and he released Kaladushana and his band. Since Vaikuntanatha appeared for thieves (called *kalla* in Tamil), He came to be known as Kallapiran.

The above story has been supported with a lot of inscriptional evidence found on the walls of this temple. The kings Sundara Pandya, Vira Pandya and Kulasekhara Pandya patronized this temple, expanding and renovating it during their time. Apart from this, they also made various donations to the temple: grant of tax free land in Nallur for the construction of Sundara Pandya *thirugopuram* (entrance gateway), *thirumathil* (wall), and another land in Shivalla Valanadu for the construction of Kulasekharan *thirumandapam* (hall) made by King Andita. It is also mentioned that these lands should be called as *thirupanipuram* (lands donated for temple renovation).

Apart from the above, there are several land donations made for different purposes: lighting of a perpetual lamp, feeding *brahmanas*, conducting festivals in the month of *Vaikasi* and *Masi* (Tamil months), Sundara Pandyan *Sandhi* and Vira Pandyan *sandhi* for Lord Kallapiran, for the regular offerings of Goddess Vaikuntavalli Thayar and garland and food offerings to the all smaller shrines.

The king donated his personal land for a sacred garden which supplied flowers to the temple and it has been mentioned as *thirunandavanapuram*. Inscriptional records of individual donations are also seen in this temple. Ramaraja, a chieftain, donated 250 *pon* (gold coin) for repairs in the temple of Kallapiran. A commander, Perumal Thirumalai Nambi who called himself Vaikuntanatha Dasan, donated his land and two *achchus* (oil mill) to burning perpetual lamps in the temple. Since this temple was situated in a fertile ambience, it received more attention and royal patronage. The Madurai Nayak rulers, appointed as feudatories by the Vijayanagar dynasty, contributed much towards the architectural development of this temple. They added several aspects to the temple earlier constructed by the Pandyan kings. Prominent among these are *gopurams*, doorways and *mantapas* which are exquisitely carved with the sculptures of gods, goddesses, saints, royal patrons, mythical figures and many more. This huge temple complex has two enclosures.



The mantapa is full of magnificent sculptures of various devatas

The *rajagopuram* on top of the main entrance gate way is tall and decorated with stories related to the *Puranas*. The inner enclosure also has a *gopuram* on top of its entrance gate. The inner and outer gateways are connected



The unique posture of Dwarapalakas in the temple

by a pillared hall. The inner enclosure has a *mahamantapa*, *ardamantapa* and *garbhagriha* (sanctum). The inner circumambulatory passage is also covered with pillared *mantapas* on all four sides. It also houses several smaller shrines of *Azhwars*, *Acharyas* and incarnations of the Supreme Lord. In the *sanctum*, Lord *Vaikuntanatha* stands with four hands. Above His head we see *Adishesha*, the divine serpent, spreading His hoods as a parasol. It is believed that the main Deity is made of *Shaligrama*. He receives regular *abhishekam* with milk. The *utsava* Deity of *Kallapiran* with His consorts, *Sridevi* and *Bhudevi*, on either side, is in the *ardamantapa*, the hall which precedes the sanctum.

The inner enclosure houses the shrines of *Vaikunta Nayaki* and *Choranatha Nayaki* on either side of the main shrine. There are several small shrines situated in the *prakara*, dedicated to *Garuda*, *Vishvakshena*, *Venugopala*, *Yoga Narasimha* and *Manavalamamunigal*. A small enclosure on the left of the inner entrance houses the Deities of the ten incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Here, we also find beautiful *utsava vigraha* of *Lakshmi Narasimha* and *Yoga Narasimha*. The inner *prakara* walls are painted with 108 *divya desams* of Lord *Narayana*, but only a few are in good condition. The style of these paintings belongs to the late *Vijayanagar* period. The painters used yellow, green, blue and brown prominently. On the ceiling of the four pillared



The stucco depicting various lilas of the Supreme Lord



Rama Ravana yudha carvings on the temple walls

mantapa in the outer *prakara*, there are paintings of Sriman Narayana as seen in Navathirupathi. Each painting carries descriptions above it, in Tamil and Telugu.

The wooden doors of the main shrine are beautifully carved with various forms of Sriman Narayana and other deities. The deities of *Dikpalas* found on the *gopuram* are also noteworthy. There is a big *kalyana mantapa* on the outer *prakara*, which is a salient feature of Vijayanagar and Nayak kings found in this temple, known as Thiruvencadamudayan *mantapam*. Temple records say this *mantapa* was built by Vadamalayapa Pillai, an official in the court of the Madurai Nayak rulers. On either side of the entrance of this pillared *mantapa* are life size sculptures of Lord Rama and Vijayanagar warriors. On the right pillar, at the entrance, is a beautiful carving of Lord Rama embracing the monkey king Sugriva, with Sita standing next to Him. On the left pillar, Lord Rama is seen hugging His monkey devotee Hanuman with Angada standing next to Him. There are friezes of monkey warriors below both these scenes. These scenes of Rama stand prominently at the entrance, suggesting that this *mantapa* may have been used for preaching *Ramayana*.



The long corridor of the temple

There is a small shrine of Lord Venkatesha inside this *mantapa*. The huge pillars that hold up the ceiling of the *mantapa* were carved out beautifully with *yalis*, elephants, birds, *gandharvas* and saints. This temple stands as an example of the artistic glory of the Madurai Nayak kingdom. The life size deities of these rulers stand in *Anjali mudra* at the Thirumozhi mantapa in the same temple complex.

Festivals

The Garuda Sevai Utsavam (festival) in the month of Vaikasi (May-Jun) witnesses nine Garudasevai, a spectacular event during which festival Deities from the Navathirupathi temples in the area are brought on Garuda Vahana. A deity of Nammazhvar is also brought here on Anna Vahanam (swan palanquin) and his songs (verses) dedicated to each of these nine temples are recited. The *utsavar* of Nammazhvar is taken in a palanquin to each of these nine temples through the paddy fields in the area. The *paasuram* (poems) dedicated to each of the nine *divya desams* are chanted in the respective shrines. This is the most important festival in this area, and draws thousands of visitors.

fortnightly rituals performed in the temple.

Nammazhvar sings:

My heart hankers night and day for one vision of Vaikunta where the Lord dwells. He tore the wide chest of the asura with His nails! 🙏

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam

Jhulan Utsav

the transcendental swing festival



Aug 8 - 12, 2022

Celebrations: 7.45 pm onwards

at ISKCON Radha Krishna Temple
Hare Krishna Hill, Chord Road, Bangalore-10

Srila Prabhupada's
ISKCON
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Watch celebrations LIVE on



For more details of the festival visit:
www.iskconbangalore.org/jhulan-utsava

Sri Balarama Jayanti

Friday - August 12 - 2022



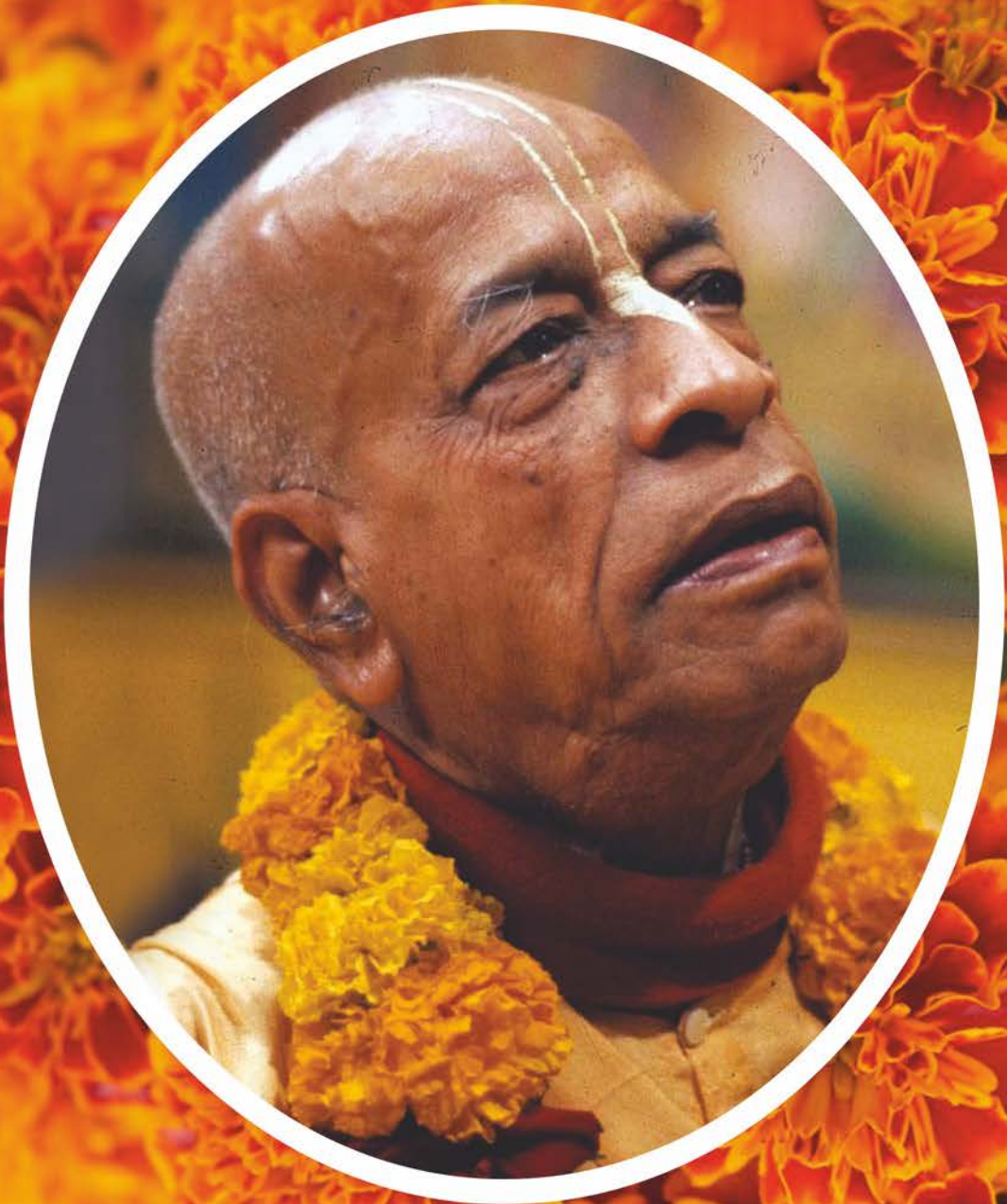
Celebrations 6 pm onwards
at Hare Krishna Hill, Bangalore

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Vyasa Puja

SAT - AUG 20 - 2022



The Glorious 126th Appearance Day of
our beloved Spiritual Master
HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA

Celebrations: 6:30 pm onwards
at ISKCON, Hare Krishna Hill, Bangalore-10

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sri Narendra Modi Inaugurates Akshaya Patra's New Kitchen in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

The new kitchen is Akshaya Patra's 62nd unit in the country and will enable the Foundation to serve over 1,00,000 children in 282 schools.

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi inaugurated The Akshaya Patra Foundation's new kitchen at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, on July 7, 2022, in the presence of Hon'ble Governor, Smt. Anandiben Patel, and Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sri Yogi Adityanath. The event was presided by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, Chairman and Sri Chanchalpathi Dasa, Vice-Chairman.

The inauguration event was followed by a tour of the kitchen facility and a symbolic serving of meals to the children. The dignitaries present unequivocally commended Akshaya Patra's efforts to address hunger and malnutrition in the country through the feeding programme and pledged their support to the organisation's endeavours.

Akshaya Patra has been an implementing partner of the Government of Uttar Pradesh for the school lunch programme since 2004. With the launch of the new kitchen, the Foundation will be implementing the programme in Varanasi.

The new unit will follow world-class manufacturing practices and the highest standards of hygiene, food safety and quality to ensure that nutritious mid-day meals are cooked and delivered to children in the region. Its salient features include a roti machine with 40k rotis/hr capacity, a 700-ltr capacity rice cauldron with a hydraulic system, 1,200-ltr capacity dal cauldron with automatic motors and an RO plant for water purification.

In order to further its efforts to integrate sustainability into its policy, Akshaya Patra will use solar panels for electricity production with a heat pump and solar water heater to boil water which is to be used in production.

In adherence to the MDM Guidelines and as per the practice of serving food in accordance with the local palate, Akshaya Patra's menu for Varanasi will include mixed veg soya masala, chole masala, rajma masala, roti, jeera rice, plain rice, veg pulao, masala bhaji pulao, kheer and a fruit.



Sing, Dance and Pray – Book on Srila Prabhupada Launched

Bangalore, July 10, 2022: The book *'Sing, Dance and Pray: The Inspirational Story of Srila Prabhupada'*, Founder Acharya of ISKCON was launched at ISKCON Bangalore in commemoration of his 125th birth anniversary. This book is authored by Dr. Hindol Sengupta and published by Penguin Random House India.

The guests of honour for the book launch were Smt. Sudha Murty, Renowned Author, Philanthropist and Chairperson, Murty Foundation; Sri S. Somanath, Chairman ISRO, Sri Ricky Kej, 2X Grammy Award Winner; Milee Aishwarya, Publisher, Penguin Random House India and Dr Hindol Sengupta, author of the book. The event was presided by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, President, ISKCON Bangalore, Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sri Chanchalpathi Dasa, Senior Vice-President, ISKCON-Bangalore, Vice-Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation.

'Sing, Dance and Pray' provides a unique insight into the life of Srila Prabhupada, the Founder-Acharya of ISKCON and the greatest ambassador of India's spiritual culture and heritage, to the contemporary audience. He also established a worldwide confederation of more than 100 temples, ashrams and cultural centres.

A panel discussion followed the launch, where the dignitaries shared their thoughts on the biography.

Praising this biography, **Smt. Sudha Murty** expressed, "I want to congratulate Hindol for vividly writing about a monk, his difficulties, and why he became successful. When I went through the book, it was so clear who Srila Prabhupada was as a person. So, I like this book, it is very well-written, of a good standard and logically very convincing."

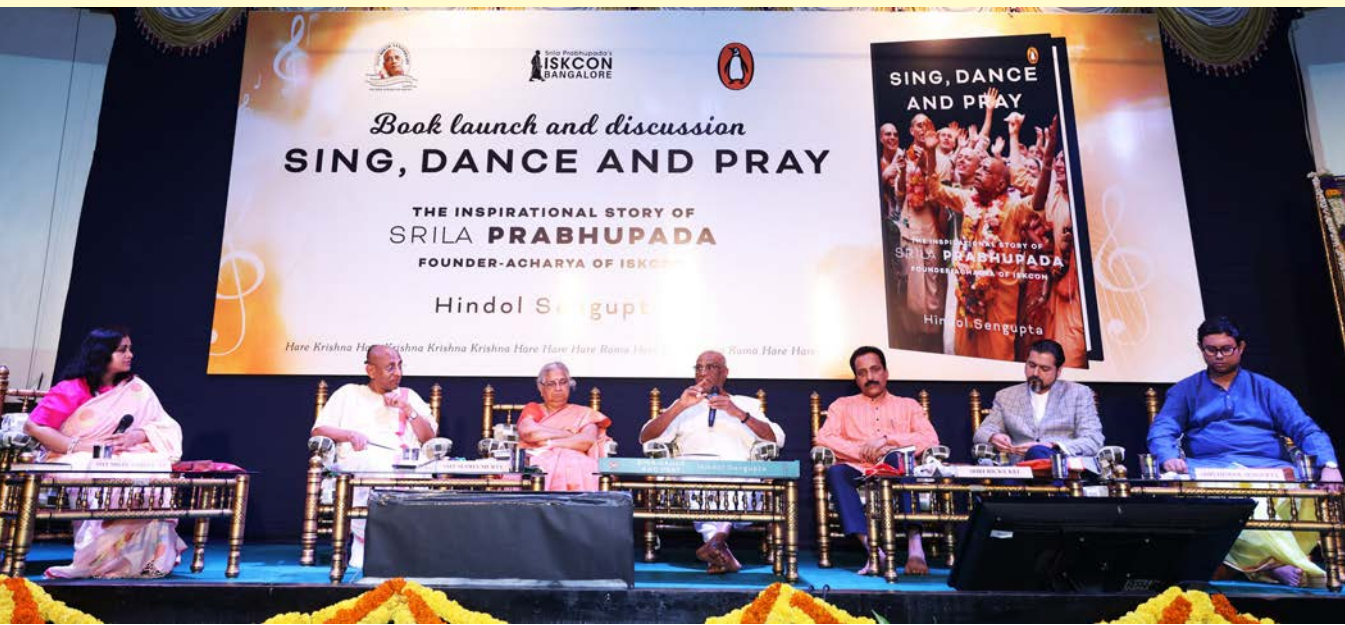
Sri S. Somnath also participated in the discussion and expressed his appreciation for the biography.

Sri Ricky Kej stated, "Sing, Dance and Pray portrays a 360-degree approach to life. Swami Prabhupada's life was completely about breaking cultural barriers. He was the greatest cultural and traditional ambassador of India. As a cultural pioneer, he made Indian culture accessible and mainstream through his endeavours all over the world."

Dr. Hindol Sengupta expressed his happiness about the release of his 10th book and said, "This book is truly special and it has become possible by divine grace. One of the greatest qualities of Srila Prabhupada was his ability to take his message and transcend history. His eternal message is not confined to a particular time, space or geography. I think that is a really interesting trait of Srila Prabhupada."

Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa thanked all the dignitaries for their gracious presence at the event. Speaking on the occasion, he said, "I would like to congratulate Dr. Hindol Sengupta for this really amazing work where he has brought out the exemplary personality of Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada transplanted the vibration of India into the midst of Western Culture, and that has been captured very well in this book. Srila Prabhupada's movement was a scientific movement, a science without boundaries."

This book has received unanimous praise from erudite international scholars like Dr. John Stratton Hawley (Claire Tow Professor of Religion, Columbia University) and Francis X. Clooney (Parkman Professor of Divinity, Harvard University), to eminent personalities like Shashi Tharoor (Member of Parliament and Author), Swapan Dasgupta (Journalist and Thinker) and Karan Singh (Politician and Philosopher).





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ISKCON PILGRIMAGES



Tirupathi Pilgrimage

Travel dates:
August 12 (8pm) to August 15 (6am)

Places of visit:
Tirupathi-Tirumala, Alamelu Mangapuram, Sri Kalahasti

Amount:
₹7,500/-

Places of visit:

Badrinath,
Kedarnath,
Gangotri,
Yamunotri,
Rishikesh,
Haridwar,
Devprayag,
Rudraprayag,
Joshimutt & more



CHARDHAM Pilgrimage

Chardham Land Route Package

Sept. 15 - 25, 2022

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Chardham Helicopter Package

Sept. 25 - 30, 2022

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Oct. 1 - 6, 2022

₹1,75,000/- onwards
(with flights & helicopter & ISKCON devotee guide)



Nepal Muktinath Pilgrimage

Travel dates:
Nov 10-20, 2022

Places of visit:

Kathmandu, Pashupatinath, Budha-Nilakanth Jala Narayan, Changu Narayan, Pokhara, Manakamana, Muktinath, Damauli, Bhaktapur, Lumbini, Janakpur, Sita Devi Birthplace, Ganga Gandaki Sangam & more

Amount:

₹65,000/-
Muktinath

₹85,000/-
Muktinath,
Lumbini & Janakpur

₹75,000/-
Muktinath &
Lumbini



Dwaraka Gujarat Pilgrimage

Travel dates:

Batch 1 - Oct 30 to Nov 7
Batch 2 - Jan 21 to Jan 29

Amount:
Rs. 25,000/-
onwards

Places of visit:

Matrugaya, Ambaji, Modhera, Kutch, Narayan Sarovar, Dwaraka, Bet Dwaraka, Mula Dwaraka, Somnath, Porbandar, Nageshwar Jyotirlinga, Jambavan cave, Rukmini-Krishna Vivahakshetra, Junagadh, Girnar, Bhavnagar, Dakor



Uttar Bharat Pilgrimage

Travel dates:
Sept. 5-12, 2022

Amount
₹30,000/-
(+flight charges ₹15,000/-)

Places of visit:

Ayodhya, Gaya, Kashi/Varanasi, Naimisharanya, Chitrakoot, Prayagraj, Sita Samahit Sthal & more



Sri Lanka Ramayana Pilgrimage

Places of visit:

Colombo, Jaffna, Mannar Rama Setu, Ashoka Vatika, Trincomalee Trikoneshwara & Shaktipeeth, Sita Kotuwa, Ramboda, Nuwareliya, Kataragrama, Ella Ravana cave, Ussangoda Ravana Airport, Rummasala Sanjeevani mountain, Sripada & more

Travel dates:
Dec 1 - 10, 2022

Amount:
₹60,000/-

+flight charges: ₹10,000 extra for Sripada Trek & Darshan

Kerala Divyadesam Pilgrimage

Travel dates:
Dec 22 - 30, 2022

Places of visit:
Trivandrum, Guruvayur, Kerala Divyadesams, Kalady, Nalambalam Yatra, Anantapura Crocodile lake temple & more

Amount
₹27,000/-
+optional flight charges

Tamilnadu Divyadesam Part 1

(Pandiy Nadu, Kanyakumari, Rameshwaram & more)

Travel Dates:
Sep 1 (8 pm) to Sep 8, (5 am)

Places of visit:
Madurai, Thirukoodalazhgar, Thirumogur, Thirukkoshtiyur, Thirumeyam and Meenakshi amman, Srivilliputtur, Thiruthangal, Thirupullani, Rameshwaram Dhanushkodi, Kanyakumari, Nagarkoil, Tirunelveli, Navatirupati temples Nanguneri and more

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Amount: ₹25,000/-
(All inclusive)

Tamilnadu Divyadesam Part 2

(Cholanadu, Srirangam, Kumbhakonam & more)

Travel Dates:
Aug 23 (7 pm) to Aug 28, (5 am)

Places of visit:
Srirangam, Kaveri snan, Thiruvellaral, Thiru Anbil, Koviladi, Uralayur, Thirukarambur, Thirukandiyur, Thiru Tanjal, Kumbakonam, Sarangapani, Uppilappan, Nachiyar kol, Nandipuram, Thirucherai, Thirukanamangai, Sundaryaraja Perumal, Thirukanangudi, Thirukannapuram, Sirupuliyur, Govindaraja Perumal, Seerkazhi, Thiruvellakulam, Thiruvalli, Thirunagari, Thirudevanar, Thirunagur, Thiruvannamalai, Thiru vaikuntavinagar, Thiruterambalam, Thiru arimeyavinagar, Thiru manikudam, Thiru paartanpalli, Thiru thalachangudi, Thiru manimada kol, Thirunagur, Thiruvazhundur, Tiruindhalur, Mangalamatt, Sirkazhi, Thirukadalor, Kapisthalam, Thirupullamboothangudi, Tiruadanoor, Tiruvillyankudi

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Tamilnadu Divyadesam Part 3

(Tondainadu, Kanchipuram, Sholingur, Sriperumbudur & more)

Travel Dates:
Nov 22 (7 pm) to Nov 26, (10 pm)

Places of visit:
Kanchipuram, Sholingur, Sriperumbudur, Thiruneermalai, Mahabalipuram, Nitya alyan Perumal, Thirukadalmalai, Singa Perumal, Sthala shayana Perumal temple, Thiruvahindrapuram

Special Features:
Ecstatic Kirtans & Bhajans, Spiritual Talks & Association, Delicious Krishna Prasadam, Facing Challenges – The Bhagavad Gita Way, Optional – Personal Care Taker

Amount: ₹18,000/-
(All inclusive)

Ahobilam Nava-Narasimha Pilgrimage

Travel Dates:
Batch 1: July 22, 7pm to July 24, 10pm
Batch 2: August 5, 7pm to August 7, 10pm
Batch 3: September 2, 7pm to September 4, 10pm
Batch 4: September 30, 7pm to October 2, 10pm
Batch 5: November 11, 7pm to November 13, 10pm
Batch 6: December 16, 7pm to December 18, 10pm
Batch 7: January 6, 7pm to January 8, 10pm
Batch 8: February 10, 7pm to February 12, 10pm

Places of visit:
Nava Narasimha Temples, Bhavanasini river, Prahlada school

Amount:
₹6,500/- onwards

Thank you so much ISKCON....for a wonderful and memorable trip to Muktinath.. A heavenly experience Lovely Keertans..Great devotional knowledge shared by devotees...Great leadership..All these made it a very pleasurable & heavenly trip. JAI Srila Prabhupada

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