



# KRISHNA VOICE

Vol 24, No.12, December 2023



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# Vaikuntha Ekadashi

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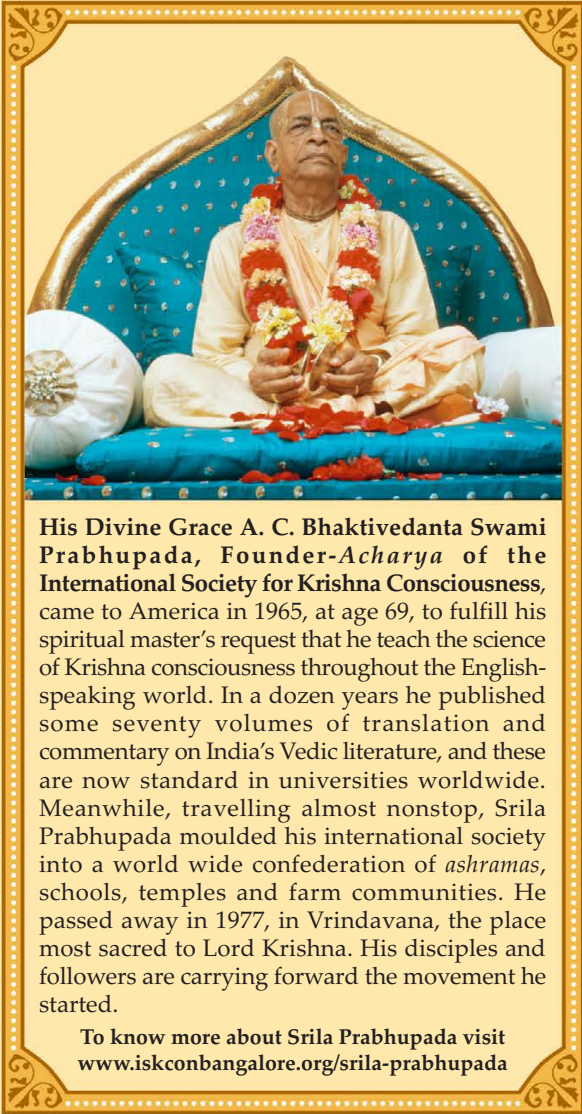
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# KRISHNA VOICE



Vol 24, No.12

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

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# Liberation By Knowing Krishna

**Lord Krishna directs us in how to see Him at every moment and  
thus end our material existence.**

A lecture given in Bombay, India, on April 1, 1971

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

*mattah parataram nanyat  
kincid asti dhananjaya  
mayi sarvam idam protam  
sutre mani-gana iva*

“O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.”—*Bhagavad-gita* 7.7

Krishna is present everywhere, because everything is resting on His energies. In a big factory the proprietor may be out of the factory, but every worker is aware, “This factory belongs to such-and-such person.” As it is possible for a factory worker to be always conscious of the proprietor of the factory, it is possible for everyone to become Krishna conscious in every activity. That is the philosophy we are preaching all over the world. That is the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gita*.

Lord Krishna says, *mam anusmara yudhya ca*: “Think of Me and fight.” This world is so made that everyone has to work. Without working, no one can even keep the body and soul together. We cannot avoid working. But at the same time, we can remember Krishna. That depends only on practice and pure understanding.

Here Krishna says, “There is no one greater than Me.” That is the verdict of all ancient Vedic scriptures. In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* the same thing is confirmed by the statement *krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*: “Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

That statement appears at the end of a list of incarnations of God. The list contains Lord Buddha’s name: *buddho namanjana-sutah kikatesu bhavisyati*. Lord Buddha is mentioned as a future incarnation. *Bhavisyati* means “will appear,” and *kikatesu* means “in the province of Gaya.”

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* was composed five thousand years ago, and Lord Buddha appeared 2,600 years ago. Therefore it is said *bhavisyati*: “He will appear.” The writers of the *shastra*, Vedic scripture, were not ordinary men. Here in the *Bhagavad-gita*, for example, Krishna is speaking. He is not an ordinary man. No one would be interested in the *Bhagavad-gita* if it had been written by an ordinary man. It was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it was recorded by His incarnation Vyasadeva. So it is transcendental literature.

Ordinary literature cannot be perfect, because the authors are subject to the four defects of all conditioned souls: *bhrama-pramada-karanapatava-vipralipsa*. *Bhrama* means “to commit mistakes.” *Pramada* means “illusion,” *vipralipsa* means “cheating,” and *karanapatava* means “inefficiency of the senses.” *Shastra* is above these defects.

Five thousand years ago the *shastra* predicted Lord Buddha’s appearance. Similarly, there is a prediction about Kalki-avatara, who will come after 427,000 years. Kalki-avatara’s name, His father’s name, and where He will appear—everything is there. That is the standard of *shastra*.

We have to understand Krishna from the *shastra*. Krishna Himself says, *mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti dhananjaya*: “There is no one greater than Me.” And when Arjuna understood *Bhagavad-gita*, he also accepted Krishna like that. *Param brahma param dhama pavitram paramam bhavan*: “You are Parabrahman. . . .”

## Expansions from Krishna

Krishna is Parabrahman. We are all *brahman*, spirit, because we are part of Parabrahman, the supreme spirit, but we are not Parabrahman. We are subordinate *brahman*. *Eko bahunam yo vidadhati kaman*. We are supported by Krishna, God. God is one, and the supported *brahmans*, or living entities, are innumerable. No one can count how many living entities there are, but God is one.

From the ancient literature we learn *krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*: “Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” There are many incarnations and expansions of Krishna. Some of the expansions are direct personal expansions (*svamsa*), such as Lord Rama, Nrsimhadeva, Varaha. There are many in this category. *Ramadi-murtisu*



*kala-niyamena tisthan*. Krishna is existing and expanding Himself in various forms. There are different kinds of incarnations, or *avataras*—*saktyavesa-avatara*, *guna-avatara*, *manvantara-avatara*, *yuga-avatara*. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* concludes that the Lord's incarnations are so numerous that you cannot count them. If you sit down on the bank of a river, you cannot keep an account of how many waves are passing. Similarly, there is no account of how many incarnations are coming out from Lord Krishna.

Krishna is above all. Here Krishna personally says so, and it is confirmed by the previous sages and authorities. Formerly it was confirmed by great sages like Narada Muni, Vyasadeva, Asita, and Devala, and in the modern age by Shankaracharya, Madhvacharya, Ramanujacharya, Vishnusvami, and many other *acharyas*, or spiritual authorities. Everyone of them accepts that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So how can we deny it? We have to be guided by the *acharyas*. *Acharyavan puruso veda*: "One who follows the principles of the *acharyas* knows things as they are." That is the verdict.

In the *Bhagavad-gita* we find the word *acharyopasanam*, which means that we have to follow in the footsteps of the *acharyas*, because they can give us right direction. And one who does not follow the *acharyas* and creates his own mental concoction will not be accepted. There are many commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gita*, but not all of them are according to the direction of the *acharyas*. You have to accept *Bhagavad-gita* as it is, under the direction of the *acharyas*. They do not make any changes. They explain how Krishna is the greatest. They don't comment in a different way and divert you by saying that Krishna is an ordinary man.

From Krishna, the next expansion is Baladeva, in the category of *svayam-prakasa*. From Baladeva comes the *catu-vyuha*: Vasudeva, Shankarsana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. From Shankarsana comes Narayana. From Narayana comes another *chatur-vyuha*. And from the Shankarsana of that *chatur-vyuha* comes the first *purus-avatara*: Maha-Vishnu. From Maha-Vishnu comes Garbhodakashayi Vishnu. From Garbhodakasayi Vishnu comes Kshirodakashayi Vishnu. Kshirodakashayi Vishnu is situated in everyone's heart: *isvarah sarva-bhutanam hrd-dese'juna tisthati*.

Krishna expands in so many ways—by personal expansion, by the expansion of His energy, by the expansion of His differentiated parts. We living entities are differentiated parts, *vibhinnamsa*. We are also expansions of Krishna. He expands Himself in so many ways. He also has categories of energy, or *sakti*: *tatastha-sakti*, *cit-sakti*, *antaranga-sakti*, *bahiranga-sakti*. We have to understand Krishna through these categories.

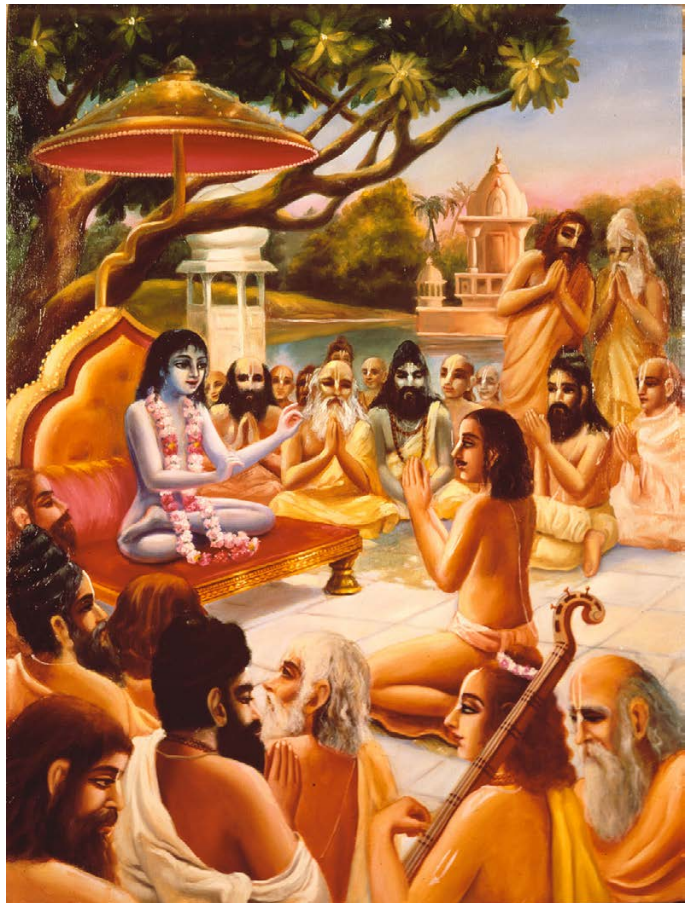
If we scrutinizingly study the Vedic literature, we shall come to the conclusion that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And if there is any name for God, it is perfectly given in the word *Krishna*, "all-attractive." There are many diverse meanings of *Krishna* given by the *acharyas*, but on the whole, Krishna is the actual name of God.

### Understanding Krishna by His Direction

How can one understand that Krishna is all-pervading? That direction is given by Krishna Himself. If we follow His direction on how to appreciate Him, then naturally and surely we shall come to the point of understanding Krishna, although He is all-expansive. Krishna says,

*raso 'ham apsu kaunteya  
prabhasmi sasi-suryayoh  
pranavah sarva-vedesu  
sabdah khe paurusam nrsu*

"O son of Kunti, I am the taste of water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable *om* in the Vedic mantras; I am the sound in ether and ability in man." Just try to understand Krishna by your daily experiences. Krishna says, "When you drink water and quench your thirst—when you experience the nice taste of water—I am that





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taste.” So you can understand Krishna daily as soon as you drink water. Why should anyone say that there is no God? Just try to appreciate God according to the prescription given by God. Then you’ll understand.

A doctor gives you medicine, and he gives you directions: “Drink this medicine. Take two drops.” Then gradually you understand that by taking the medicine, you are being cured, you are feeling healthy. Similarly, Krishna gives us a prescription for seeing Him. When we meditate upon the taste of the water, we are meditating on Krishna.

Similarly, Krishna says *prabhasmi sasi-suryayoh*: “I am the sunshine and the moonshine.” Who has not seen the sunshine? If you have seen sunshine and if you follow the prescription given by Krishna, then early in the morning you’ll see Krishna. Why do you say, “I have not seen Krishna. Krishna is not present before Me”? Follow Krishna’s instruction, and He will be present. He *is* present; we simply have to purify our eyes and senses to understand Him. That is required.

Suppose you have a beloved friend. As soon as you hear his voice on the telephone you immediately see him. Why? Because you love him. Similarly, if you develop your dormant love of Krishna, you’ll see Krishna at every moment.

It is not at all difficult to see Krishna. Why do you say, “Can you show me God?” Why are you not seeing God? Here is God. Krishna says, *raso ’ham apsu kaunteya prabhasmi sasi-suryayoh*. Who has not seen sunshine? Who has not seen moonshine? One simply has to understand that sunshine is the reflection of Krishna’s bodily effulgence. Just as moonshine is the reflection of the sunshine, the sun is a reflection of the *brahmajyoti*. And what is the *brahmajyoti*? Krishna’s bodily effulgence. Then why do you say that you have not seen Krishna?

There are many other examples. Krishna is giving some of them. If you study, if you meditate upon them, then gradually you will see Krishna. He will be revealed. He’ll be present. It is all revelation. Not that by your eyes you can see. But if you follow the prescription, the direction, you will see Krishna daily, always, twenty-four hours.

So when one is an elevated devotee—a *maha-bhagavata*—he does not see anything but Krishna. Everywhere he sees Krishna. The *maha-bhagavata* may be standing on the shore of a great sea, but he is not seeing the sea; he is seeing Krishna. He’s seeing Krishna’s energy: how Krishna’s energy is working and producing such a vast sea. He is thinking like that. That is meditation. Anywhere he goes, he simply thinks of Krishna. *Sthavara-jangama dekhe, na dekhe tara murti*. He does not see the material form of anything. *Sarvatra haya nija ista-deva-sphurti*. Everywhere he sees Krishna. That is called Krishna consciousness.

So one has to develop. How can one develop? This is the process: *sravanadi-suddha-citte*. You have to hear. And as you go on hearing, the dirty things in your heart become clean. The process of hearing is so nice.

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

“To hear about Krishna from Vedic literature, or to hear from Him directly through *Bhagavad-gita*, is itself righteous activity. And Lord Krishna, who is dwelling in everyone’s heart, acts as a best-wishing friend and purifies the devotee who constantly engages in hearing of Him.”

Simply hear about Krishna. We are speaking about Krishna from the *Gita*. If you try to understand Krishna as directed by Krishna, then Krishna will also cooperate with you. When a teacher sees that a student is very intelligent, that he is following directions, the teacher takes more interest in that student. That is natural. If the teacher says, “My dear child, write in this way,” and the child tries, then the teacher takes more interest. Similarly, as soon as you try to understand Krishna according to His direction, Krishna, who is within you, will help you more and more. *Dadami buddhi-yogam tam*. Lord Krishna says, “I give him special intelligence to understand.”

Our duty is to follow the instruction of Krishna. Krishna says, *pranavah sarva-vedesu*. *Om* *karā*, or *pranava*, is Krishna. When anyone chants Vedic hymns and vibrates this transcendental sound, *om*, Krishna is there.

### **Purify the Senses**

So how you can avoid Krishna? You simply have to know how to see Him. You have to purify your eyes. You have to purify your ears. You have to purify your hands. You have to purify your legs. When your senses are purified, you will see Krishna—nothing but Krishna—at every moment.

You can purify your eyes by seeing the deity of Krishna. Krishna is present before you as the deity, known as *arca-murti* or *arca-avatara*. He has been nicely dressed by the devotees. It is the duty of the devotee to decorate the transcendental form of Krishna very nicely so that thousands of people may come into the temple and see Krishna.



And as you go on seeing Krishna and your eyes become purified, then you will see how nice Krishna is. When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu entered the Jagannatha temple, as soon as He saw Krishna He fainted, because His eyes were prepared to see Krishna.

We have to prepare our eyes to see. We have to prepare our ears to hear about Krishna. In these ways we can see Krishna. We can also use our tongue to see Krishna. Krishna says, *raso 'ham apsu kaunteya*: "I am the taste in water." Everyone drinks water. So as soon as you relish the taste of the water, by following the directions of the *Bhagavad-gita* you can see Krishna. Similarly, with the tongue you can eat *bhagavat-prasadam*, food offered to Krishna. And as soon as you taste the food offered to Krishna, you can remember Krishna. You can think how Krishna has kindly eaten the food.



So you can begin your purification with the tongue. Without reading any Vedic literature, without reading even the *Bhagavad-gita*, simply by eating *Krishna-prasadam* you become Krishna conscious if you think, "How nicely Krishna has tasted this food."

To become Krishna conscious is not very difficult. You just have to follow the directions. That's all. But if you manufacture your own meaning, your own commentary on *Bhagavad-gita*, then you have deviated. You are lost. Such reading of the *Bhagavad-gita* is simply a waste of time and energy.

Therefore those who are not Krishna conscious, who are not hearing from Krishna conscious persons, are simply wasting time. The so-called reading of the *Bhagavad-gita*, the lecture on the *Bhagavad-gita*—without Krishna they are a waste of time. It is like trying to have the kingdom of God without God. We want the kingdom of God—peace and prosperity—but without God. That is the position of our secular governments. But this is not possible. If you give up God or the relationship with God, there is no question of having the kingdom of God or peace and prosperity.

### **Krishna's Mercy**

Krishna says, *paurusam nrsu*: "I am the ability in man." Anything extraordinary comes from Krishna. Krishna is the most extraordinary person, but even within this world, if you find some great leader, a great politician, a great scientist, a great businessman, you should know that that person's name and fame are due to Krishna's mercy. No one can be greater than others unless Krishna has specially bestowed His mercy on him. A little portion of Krishna's mercy must be there. Krishna is most opulent. You can claim, "I am the proprietor of ten million rupees," someone can claim, "I am proprietor of fifty million rupees," and someone else can claim, "I am the proprietor of a hundred million rupees." But no one can claim, "I am the proprietor of all the money in the material world." No one can say that. Even Brahma, the greatest created being, cannot say that. But of Krishna it is said, *aisvaryasya samagrasya*: "He is the proprietor of all conceivable wealth."

You should understand that any wealthy person you see within the material world he has taken a portion of Krishna's money. That's all. No one can claim, "I am the proprietor of all the money in the material world." That is not possible.

We should think, "Whatever money I have is Krishna's money, or Krishna's mercy. Krishna has mercifully given me this money." Then what is our duty? We should spend it for Krishna. That is the proper use of money. Similarly, if one is famous he should use his fame for Krishna's service. I am trying to spread this Krishna consciousness movement, but if a very famous man tries, it will spread very quickly. That is the proper use of his fame. Similarly, if a scientist proves Krishna's supremacy by scientific laws, his scientific knowledge is perfect.

If we know that anything we possess is a gift from Krishna and should be used for Krishna, then our life is successful. *Samsiddhir hari-tosanam*. It doesn't matter what you are. You may be an engineer, you may be a lawyer, you may be a businessman. Whatever you are, it doesn't matter. But try to satisfy Krishna by your profession, by your occupation. Then you are successful. *Samsiddhi*. It doesn't matter what you are doing. You don't have to give up your profession as a lawyer and join us as a *sannyasi* and dance. If you cannot do that . . . Everyone can do that, but if you think that you cannot, use your profession for Krishna's service. Then you become perfect.

Krishna consciousness is not a necessity for the members of this Krishna consciousness society only; it is the necessity of everyone throughout the whole world, without any discrimination. One has to take this opportunity to become Krishna conscious, to understand Krishna in these ways. Then the result will be sublime.

Understand that the taste of water is Krishna's energy, the sunshine is His energy, the moonshine is His energy. The Vedic mantras are meant to please Krishna. Sound is Krishna. The energy—or the name, fame, and opulence—of big persons of this world is also Krishna. If we study Krishna in these ways, we will gradually know Him. And Krishna says,

*janma karma ca me divyam  
evam yo vetti tattvatah  
tyaktva deham punar janma  
naiti mam eti so 'rjuna*

“One who understands Me in truth becomes liberated. After quitting this body, he comes to Me.”

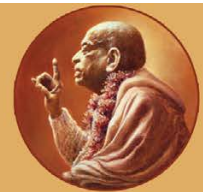
So what is the difficulty? Even in your ordinary life you can study Krishna, you can understand Krishna. And Krishna will help you. As soon as you begin studying Krishna, trying to understand Krishna, Krishna will help you from within. Krishna is with you. Krishna is not far away. He is so kind that He is sitting in your heart as your friend just to help you become liberated from material contamination. Why not take advantage? Every sane man should take advantage of the instructions of the *Bhagavad-gita*. Then anywhere he may be, he is a liberated person.

*iha yasya harer dasye  
karmana manasa gira  
nikhilasv apy avasthasu  
jivan-muktah sa ucyate*

Anyone who is trying to become Krishna conscious and trying to serve Krishna sincerely is liberated. He may be situated anywhere. It does not matter whether he is Indian or Hindu or Muslim or Christian or this or that. If he simply thinks of Krishna always, in the process as described here, he becomes liberated. You can become liberated at home. You simply have to think of Krishna.

Thank you very much. 🙏

Srila Prabhupada, the founder-*acharya* of ISKCON, has delivered more than 1500 lectures on Vedic scriptures like *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita*. The audio recording of his lectures are available in ISKCON centers. You can also hear some of these lectures in [www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada-lectures](http://www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada-lectures)



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## So Easily Cheated and Befooled

*This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and some of his disciples took place during a morning walk in Denver, Colorado, on June 28, 1975.*

**Srila Prabhupada:** Wherever my books are distributed profusely, our work is successful. People are in gross ignorance, taking this temporary material body and temporary life as everything. A very horrible situation. But these books give scientific self-knowledge from the *Vedas*, knowledge of our actual, spiritual self and our eternal life.

**Disciple:** But sometimes, Srila Prabhupada, troublemakers come along. In Denver we have to deal with several bogus groups that have made their world headquarters here. One group is led by a chubby self-styled guru who claims he's God. You've seen their magazine, I think, with this fat man dressing like Krishna and even sporting a peacock feather and a flute.

Anyway, these groups put out tons of propaganda. All impersonalism, atheism. "God isn't really a separate person—God is simply everything and everyone. You are God. We are God. And mainly, our leader is God."

**Srila Prabhupada:** So make propaganda against them very vigorously. These Vedic texts and this disciplic succession both come from Lord Krishna Himself. We have got sound footing. What do these nonsensical rogues have? Show that they are all nonsense, bogus. This fat rogue is God, and his rascal followers are worshiping him as God? This rascaldom is going on in such a cultured, sophisticated city? This rogue is being worshiped as God?

**Disciple:** Well, to be fair, the local people are disgusted with him. They don't like him at all.

**Srila Prabhupada:** I'll issue a challenge: "I shall kick this rascal in the face, and if he is God, let him punish me." I am prepared. Let this rascal come out and meet me in public. I shall kick him squarely in the face. Let him do whatever he likes—I am prepared. If he is God, let him kill me by his mantra or by his will. Only then shall I accept him as God. This is my challenge. "I shall kick him in the face in public, and if he is God, let him punish me."

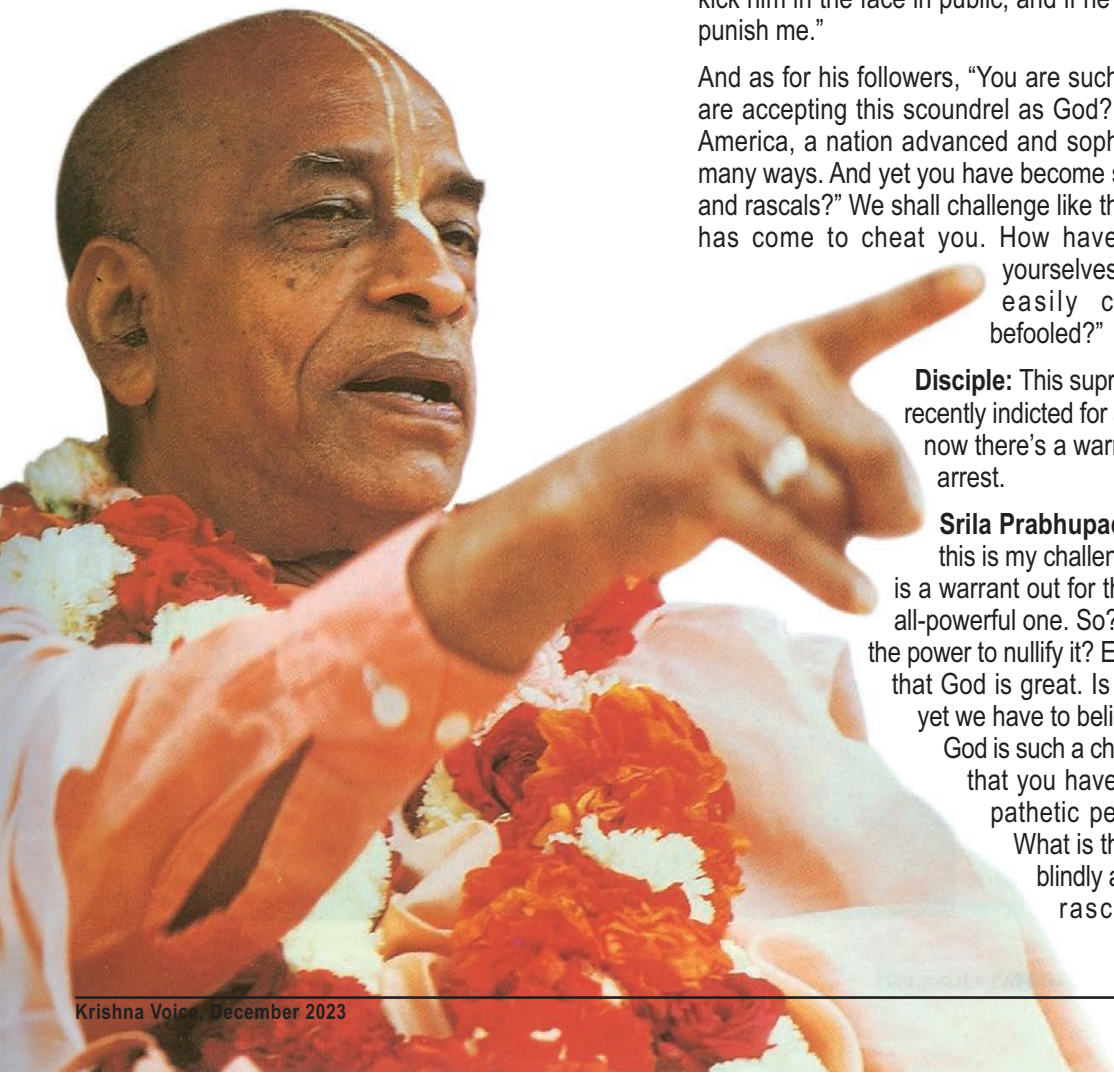
And as for his followers, "You are such fools that you are accepting this scoundrel as God? You belong to America, a nation advanced and sophisticated in so many ways. And yet you have become such utter fools and rascals?" We shall challenge like that. "This rogue has come to cheat you. How have you allowed yourselves to become so easily cheated and befooled?"

**Disciple:** This supreme being was recently indicted for smuggling, and now there's a warrant out for his arrest.

**Srila Prabhupada:** All right, so this is my challenge: "Now there is a warrant out for the arrest of the all-powerful one. So? Does he have the power to nullify it? Everyone knows that God is great. Is *he* great? And yet we have to believe he is God?"

God is such a cheap commodity that you have accepted this pathetic person as God?

What is this nonsense—blindly accepting some rascal as God?



“At the same time, we give you people some credit, since at least you are inquiring about God. But inquire about God through His authorized channels of education, this Brahma-Madhva-Gaudiya disciplic succession and this Vedic literature.”

[On seeing a museum of natural history in the park:] This is a nice park, but what is this natural history exhibition? “Natural history” means Darwin’s bogus theory of evolution. People have become captured by this evolution propaganda. That’s all. The whole modern civilization is based on Darwin’s bogus theory of evolution.

But common sense dictates, How far back can we trace history with any accuracy? Can we trace the history of the sun—when it was created, when it came into existence? Can Darwin give us the history of the sun, of the moon, of the sky?

Where is the history? There *is* such a history, in the Vedic literature. But where is your history? You simply imagine, “There was a chunk, and it exploded and somehow became manifested as the sun and moon and so on and so forth. And gradually these dull material ingredients developed consciousness and ultimately produced living, conscious beings like us. No need for the soul or the Supreme Soul, the creator.” What is this nonsense? How, actually, did this cosmic manifestation come into existence? “There was a chunk.” What other nonsense do you want us to believe?

[*Chuckling.*] You will find a nice example in one of the texts I have translated today from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*: Just as a prostitute tries to befool people by changing her appearance, so the material nature changes her appearance to befool us. Bogus gurus, pseudo scientists. And we are so foolish that we are trying to establish a long-term relationship with this prostitute. We are trying to become her husband. Has anyone ever become happy by becoming the husband of a prostitute?

Therefore, Chanakya Pandita says, *dusta bharya satham mitram bhryas cottara-dayakah/ sa-sarpe ca grhe vaso mrtiyur eva na samsayah*: “If one has a wife who is a prostitute, a friend who is a hypocrite, a servant who is an upstart, or a home with a snake in it, he will die.” He will die; there is no doubt about it. His life will be spoiled. This is Chanakya Pandita’s verdict.

Chanakya also says, *mata yasya grhe nasti bharya capriya-vadini/ aranyam tena gantavyam yatharanyam tatha grham*: “If at home a man does not have an affectionate mother or a wife who speaks sweetly—if, rather, his wife speaks very hotly—then he should give up that home at once and go to the forest. Actually, for him, home is no different than the forest.” [*Chuckles.*] How intelligent.

Formerly, at least one expected love from one’s mother. That is also being finished. This is the advancement of civilization. Even one’s mother is not reliable—what to

speak of others. A small child sleeps soundly on the lap of his mother, because he thinks, “Now I am safe.” But today the mother may kill the child, often with the help of her rascal doctor. This is our modern civilization’s so-called advancement.

**Disciple:** Srila Prabhupada, in the neighbourhood of our temple, doctors and other supposedly high-class men live.

**Srila Prabhupada:** The real doctor is he who can cure this material disease of repeated birth and death. What do you think? But you modern people want to be cheated by some pseudo doctor or some pseudo yogi or meditator who is inimical to your real well-being. Therefore, these rascals have gained prominence, by popular support. Only a select group of people have come to me. Otherwise, the mass of people do not understand this Krishna consciousness movement as yet.

**Disciple:** Well, lots of people just won’t listen to any philosophy.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is why they are being cheated so easily by these various scoundrels.

And now people have become so foolish that they cannot understand even the simplest philosophical idea. Not even Krishna’s basic instruction in *Bhagavad-gita*—that just as the baby has his future and the child has his future and the young man his future, so why not the old man? Within this one lifetime, the soul has many little lifetimes, many bodies—as a baby, a child, and so on and so forth—and yet the soul keeps his sense that “After all these changes of body and all these little lifetimes, I am the same person.” So after this life, when the old-man body becomes finished, why not a next life?

Such a dull head these modern people have! If a child says, “No, no, in the future I shall have no new body—I shall remain a child,” is that sensible? And similarly, is it sensible for you to say, “No, no, in the future, after my elderly body is finished, everything will be finished—I shall have no new body”?

So people have become very dull-headed. The simple truth they cannot understand. *Dehino ‘smin yatha dehe kaumaram yauvanam jara/ tatha dehantara praptir*: “As the embodied soul passes, within this lifetime, from one body into another and yet another, so after this lifetime, the soul passes into still another body.” That is the actual situation. The example Krishna gives is so nice and so simple, and yet people cannot understand. What kind of brain do they have? Animal brain.

The only hope is that you continue distributing my books as much as possible, throughout Europe and America and the rest of the world. Some day, people will realize their value. Some day, people will realize what valuable books I have left for the study of the whole world. That day will come. 🙏

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# Q & A on the Gita, Part 1

Compiled by Krishan B. Lal

(The compiler has applied a question-and-answer format to the Introduction to Bhagavad-gita As It Is, by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Most of the answers are taken verbatim from that Introduction.—Editors)

## What is *Bhagavad-gita*?

*Bhagavad-gita* ("The Song of God"), also known as *Gitopanishad*, is the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important *Upanishads* in Vedic literature. It was spoken five thousand years ago by Lord Sri Krishna to the prince Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukshetra (located about 130 miles north of modern New Delhi). The sage Vyasadeva recorded the conversation, spoken in Sanskrit, and included it in his epic *Mahabharata*.

## Are all commentaries on *Bhagavad-gita* of equal value?

There are many English commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gita*, but none of them can be strictly said to be authoritative, because in almost every one of them the commentator has expressed his own opinions without touching the spirit of *Bhagavad-gita*. To be bona fide, the translator must be a recognized devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna, and his views must be corroborated by evidence from other Vedic scriptures and spiritual masters in the line of disciplic succession.

## What is the spirit of *Bhagavad-gita*?

The spirit of *Bhagavad-gita* is mentioned in *Bhagavad-gita* itself. It is just like this: If we want to take a particular medicine, we have to follow the directions on the label. We cannot take the medicine according to our own whim or the directions of a friend. It must be taken according to the directions on the label or the directions given by a physician. Similarly, *Bhagavad-gita* should be taken or accepted as it is directed by the speaker Himself. The speaker of *Bhagavad-gita* is Lord Sri Krishna. He is mentioned on every page of the *Gita* as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavan.

## What is the significance of the word *bhagavan*?

Sometimes the word *bhagavan* is applied to any powerful person or any powerful demigod, and certainly in *Bhagavad-gita*, *bhagavan* designates Lord Sri Krishna as a great personality, but at the same time we should know that Lord Sri Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as confirmed by all great *acharyas* (spiritual masters) like Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Nimbarka Svami, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and many other authorities of Vedic knowledge in India.

The Lord Himself also establishes Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the *Bhagavad-gita*, and He is accepted as such in the *Brahma-samhita* and all the *Puranas*, especially the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, known as the *Bhagavata Purana* (*krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*). Therefore we should take *Bhagavad-gita* as it is directed by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

## To whom was *Bhagavad-gita* first spoken?

In the Fourth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gita* (4.1-3) the Lord informs Arjuna that this system of yoga, the *Bhagavad-gita*, was first spoken to the sun-god, and the sun-god explained it to Manu, and Manu explained it to Ikshvaku, and in that way, by disciplic succession, one speaker after another, this yoga system has been coming down. But in the course of time it has become lost. Consequently the Lord has to speak it again, this time to Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukshetra.

## Why did Krishna choose Arjuna as the recipient of *Bhagavad-gita*?

The Lord tells Arjuna that He is relating this supreme secret to him because Arjuna is His devotee and His friend. *Bhagavad-gita* is a treatise of the most confidential spiritual knowledge and is especially meant for the devotee of the Lord. Krishna tells Arjuna that because the old succession was broken, He is making him the first receiver of a new *parampara* (disciplic succession).

## Who is fit to understand *Bhagavad-gita*?

There are three classes of transcendentalists, namely the *jnani*, the yogi, and the *bhakta*, or the impersonalist, the meditator, and the devotee. The Lord taught *Bhagavad-gita* to Arjuna because Arjuna was a devotee of the Lord, a direct student, and His intimate friend. Therefore a person with qualities similar to Arjuna's is best qualified to understand the *Gita*. That is to say one must be a devotee in a direct relationship with the Lord. Arjuna was in a relationship with the Lord as friend. Of course, there is a gulf of difference between this friendship and the friendship found in the material world. This is transcendental friendship, which cannot be had by everyone.



*Bhagavad-gita* should be taken up in a spirit of devotion. We should not think ourselves equal to Krishna, nor should we think that Krishna is an ordinary person or even a very great person. Lord Sri Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So according to the statements of *Bhagavad-gita* or the statements of Arjuna, who is trying to understand *Bhagavad-gita*, we should at least theoretically accept Sri Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and with that submissive spirit we can understand *Bhagavad-gita*. For the nondevotee it is very difficult to understand *Bhagavad-gita*, because it is a great mystery.

### Why is Vedic knowledge received through disciplic succession?

Vedic knowledge is not a question of research, nor is it imparted by defective living entities. Our research work is imperfect because we are researching things with imperfect senses. We have to accept perfect knowledge that comes down, as stated in *Bhagavad-gita*, by the *parampara* (disciplic succession). We have to receive knowledge from the proper source in disciplic succession beginning with the supreme spiritual master, the Lord Himself, and handed down to a succession of spiritual masters. Arjuna, the student who took lessons from Lord Sri Krishna, accepts everything that Krishna says without contradicting Him. One is not allowed to accept one portion of *Bhagavad-gita* and not another. We must accept *Bhagavad-gita* without interpretation, without deletion, and without our own whimsical participation in the matter. The *Gita* should be taken as the most perfect presentation of Vedic knowledge. It was imparted unto the heart of Brahma, the first created living being, and Brahma in turn disseminated the knowledge to his sons and disciples.

### What makes Vedic knowledge infallible and human knowledge imperfect?

Vedic knowledge is received from transcendental sources, and the first words were spoken by the Lord Himself. The words spoken by the Lord are called *apauruseya*, meaning that they are different from words spoken by a person of the mundane world who is infected with four defects. A mundaner

Is sure to commit mistakes

Is invariably illusioned

Has the tendency to cheat others

Is limited by imperfect senses.

With these four imperfections, one cannot deliver perfect information of all-pervading knowledge.

Consequently, the followers of the *Vedas* accept Vedic knowledge to be complete and infallible. For example, cow dung is the stool of an animal, and according to *smṛti*, or Vedic injunction, if one touches the stool of an animal he has to take a bath to purify himself. But in the Vedic scriptures cow dung is considered a purifying agent. One might consider this to be contradictory, but it is accepted because it is a Vedic injunction, and indeed by accepting this, one will not commit a mistake; subsequently it has been proved by modern science that cow dung contains antiseptic properties. So Vedic knowledge is complete because it is above all doubts and mistakes, and *Bhagavad-gita* is the essence of all Vedic knowledge.

### Do we have to love the Supreme Personality of Godhead only as the Supreme Father?

Everyone has a particular relationship with the Lord, and that relationship is evoked by the perfection of devotional service. But in our present status, not only have we forgotten the Supreme Lord, but we have also forgotten our eternal relationship with Him. As soon as one becomes a devotee of the Lord, one also has a direct relationship with the Lord. That is a very elaborate subject matter, but briefly it can be stated that a devotee is in a relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in one of five ways:

1. In a passive state (awe without service)
2. In an active state (as a servant)
3. As a friend
4. As a parent
5. As a conjugal lover 🌹

Fasting		Festivals	
Dec 9	Ekadashi	Dec 5	Srila Prabhupada Diksha Diwasa
Dec 10	break fast	Dec 16-17	Kirtan Mela (in ISKCON Bangalore)
Dec 23	Ekadashi	Dec 23	Gita Jayanthi
Dec 24	break fast		Sri Vaikuntha Ekadashi
		Dec 31	Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura - Disappearance Fasting till noon

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*The seat of victory*

# Thiruvaragunamangai Vijayasana Perumal Temple

by Sampatkumara Ramanuja Dasan (Adv. Ashwin.S)

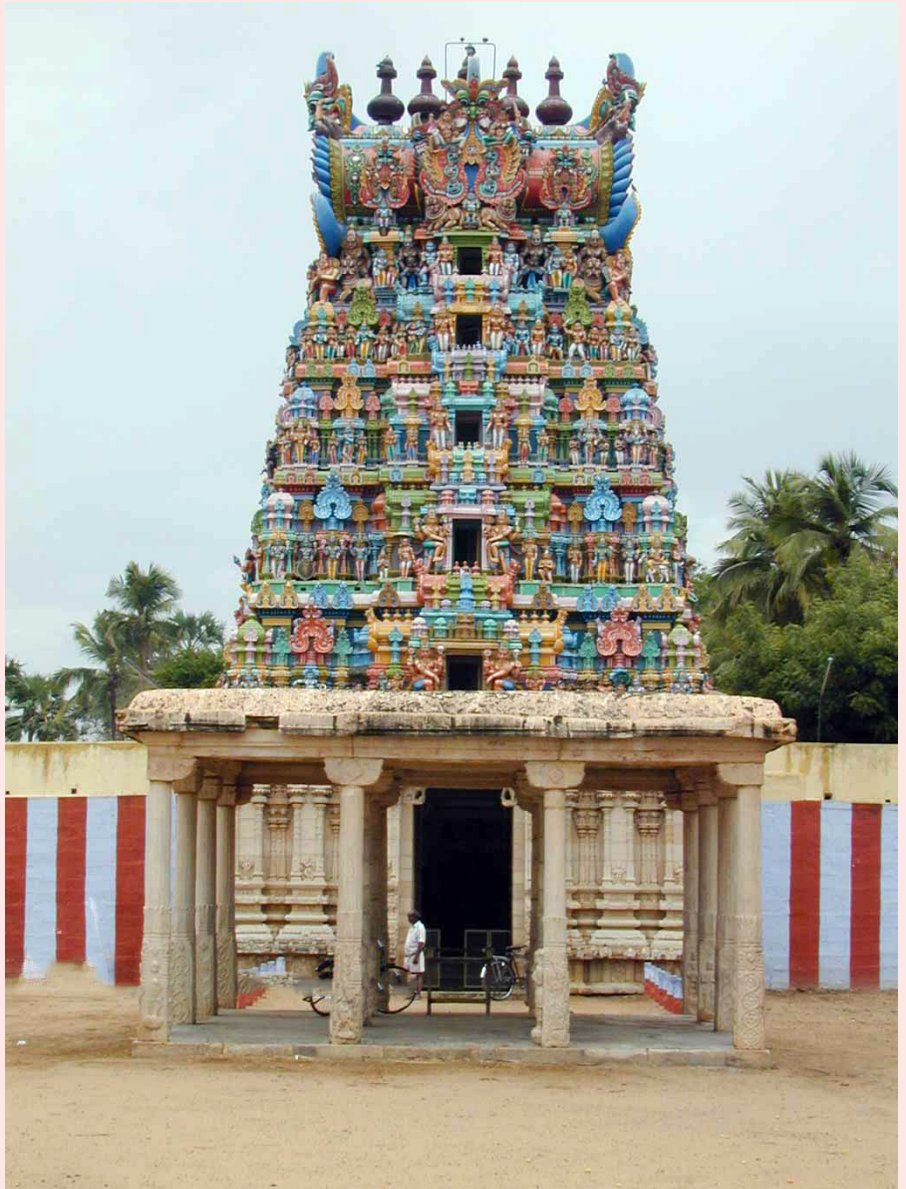
## The Temple

Thiruvaragunamangai Perumal Temple (known as Vijayasana Perumal) is situated on the banks of the Thamiraparani River in Tamil Nadu, India, along the Thiruchendur-Thirunelveli road.

## The Pastime

The pastime of this temple is associated with Sage Romaharshana.

Once upon a time, Lord Balarama became aware of a plan that was being devised to engage in a conflict between two opposing factions within the Kuru dynasty. One of these factions was led by Duryodhana, while the other was led by the Pandavas. He did not appreciate that He was merely supposed to act as a mediator in order to put an end to the conflict. After determining that it was intolerable to refrain from actively participating on behalf of any of the parties, Lord Balarama departed from Dvaraka with the intention of travelling to a number of holy sites of pilgrimage. Initially, He made a trip to the holy spot known as Prabhaskshetra. There, that He took a bath, and in line with the Vedic ceremonial procedures, He presented oblations to the demigods, *pitras*, great sages, and mankind in general. He also pacified the local *brahmanas*. Visiting sacred locations in this manner is a Vedic custom. Lord Balarama then decided to go to several pilgrim places along the banks of the River Sarasvati, accompanied by a group of highly regarded *brahmanas*. He slowly made His way to several locations, including Prthudaka, Bindusara,



*The rajagopuram*



*Garudaseva in Varagunamangai*

Tritakupa, Sudarshanathirtha, Vialathirtha, Brahmathirtha, and Chakrathirtha. He also traveled to all of the sacred locations that were located along the Sarasvati River, which flows in an easterly direction. Following this, He made a trip to all of the most important holy sites located on the banks of the Yamuna and the Ganges rivers. This is how He arrived at the sacred location that is often referred to as Naimisharanya.

This sacred location, known as Naimisharanya, is still present in India. During ancient times, it was specifically used for gatherings of great sages and saintly individuals, with the purpose of gaining an awareness of spiritual life and achieving self-realisation. During the time when Lord Balarama was present at that location, a significant sacrifice was being carried out by a large gathering of transcendentalists. It was regarded that these gatherings would continue for thousands of years. Upon the arrival of Lord Balarama, all the individuals who were present at the gathering, including the most esteemed sages, ascetics, *brahmanas*, and knowledgeable academics, promptly rose from their seats and extended a warm greeting to Him, displaying a profound sense of reverence and esteem. There were individuals who presented Him with polite obeisances. Those who were aged great sages and *brahmanas* rose up and offered Him their blessings. Lord Balarama was presented with an appropriate seat, and all those who were present worshipped Him, as they were all aware that Balarama was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Education or learning is the process of gaining an understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, despite the fact that Lord Balarama manifested Himself on earth as a *kshatriya*, all the *brahmanas* and sages rose up because they were aware of who Lord Balarama really is.

Unfortunately, after being adored and seated, Lord Balarama saw Romaharshana Suta, the student of Vyasadeva (the literary incarnation of Godhead), continuing to sit on the Vyasasana. It was clear that he had not bothered to rise from his seat or to show Lord Balarama any respect. Due to the fact that he was situated on the Vyasasana, Romaharshana Suta erroneously believed that he was superior to the Lord. As a result, he did not rise from his seat nor pay his respects to the Lord. Lord Balarama contemplated the history of Romaharshana Suta, who was born into a *suta* family, sometimes known as a mixed family, consisting of a *brahmana* lady and a *kshatriya* man. Consequently, despite the fact that Romaharshana Suta deemed Balarama to be a *kshatriya*, he should not have continued to be on a higher seat. According to Lord Balarama's perspective, Romaharshana Suta should not have taken the higher seating position, since there were several erudite *brahmanas* and sages there, and his status by birth prevented him from accepting the position. In addition, the Lord made the observation that Romaharshana Suta not only remained seated in his elevated position, but he did not even rise to his feet and show his respects when Balaramaji joined the assembly. The boldness shown by Romaharshana Suta was not to Lord Balarama's liking, and as a result, He grew quite furious with him.

Usually, when a person is seated on the Vyasasana, he is not required to rise up in order to welcome a specific individual who is joining the assembly. However, in this particular instance, the circumstance was different, due to the fact that Lord Baladeva is not a typical human being. Therefore, despite the fact that Romaharshana Suta was elected to the Vyasasana by every single *brahmana*, he ought to have adhered to the conduct of other educated sages and *brahmanas* present, and should have been aware that Lord Balarama is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is always deserving of respect. In particular, the manifestations of Krishna and Balarama are intended to serve the purpose of reestablishing the principles that govern religious practices. According to the instructions found in the *Bhagavad-gita*, the most important religious concept is to submit oneself to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In addition, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* provides further confirmation that the highest level of religiousness is achieved by actively participating in the devotional service of the Lord.

When Lord Balarama saw that Romaharshana Suta, although having read all the Vedas, could not comprehend the most fundamental concept of spirituality, it was without a doubt that he was unable to provide evidence for his argument. It should be noted that the concept of caste, as described by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad-gita*, is not based on one's birth alone, as misconstrued presently, but primarily on one's *guna* or qualities. Therefore, although one may be born into a particular caste, one may not possess the qualities attributed to it. For example, a person born in a shudra family could possess spiritually elevated qualities that are attributed to a *brahmana* and vice versa. The opportunity to become a flawless *brahmana* had been given to Romaharshana Suta. However, due to his unsatisfactory conduct in his connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his inferior birth was quickly recognised. The rank of a *brahmana* had been bestowed to Romaharshana Suta, despite the fact that he had not been born into the family of a *brahmana*. Instead, he had been born into a *pratiloma* household. In accordance with the Vedic notion, there are two distinct types of blended familial ancestry. The names for these are *anuloma* and *pratiloma*. *Anuloma* is the name given to the child that results from a male union with a female of a lower caste. *Pratiloma*, on the other hand, is the name given to the offspring that results from a male union with a woman of a higher caste. The reason why Romaharshana Suta was a member of the *pratiloma* family, was due to the fact that his father was a *kshatriya* and his mother was a *brahmana*. As a result of the imperfect nature of Romaharshana Suta's behaviour, Lord Balarama recalled his *pratiloma* ancestry. A man may be given the opportunity to become a *brahmana*, but if he incorrectly utilises the position of a *brahmana* without truly realising it, then his elevation to the brahminical status is not genuine. This is the premise behind the concept.

As soon as Lord Balarama saw that Romaharshana Suta lacked the capacity for self-awareness, he made the decision to provide him with a reprimand for his excessive optimism. Lord Balarama therefore said, "This man is liable to be awarded the death punishment because, although he has the good qualification of being a disciple of Lord Vyasadeva and although he has studied all the Vedic literature from this exalted personality, he is not submissive in the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." According to the *Bhagavad-gita*, one who is really a *brahmana* and has a great deal of knowledge, is obligated to naturally develop a great deal of gentleness as well. When it came to Romaharshana Suta, despite the fact that he had a great deal of knowledge and had been presented with the opportunity to become a *brahmana*, he did not develop this kind disposition. From this, we may deduce that when an individual is inflated by the accumulation of worldly possessions, they are unable to develop the kind and compassionate demeanour that is appropriate for a *brahmana*. The knowledge that such a person has, is comparable to a priceless gem that is used to embellish the hood of a snake. In spite of the



The temple rajagopuram and mantapam

The beautiful prakarams



Moola vigraha of Vijayasana Perumal

Utsava vigraha of Vijayasana Perumal

priceless diamond that may be found on its hood, a snake is still a serpent, and it is just as terrifying as any other serpent. All of a person's studies of the Vedas and *Puranas*, as well as his extensive knowledge of the *shastras*, will be nothing more than an outer attire if he does not develop a sense of meekness and humility. It is like the mere costume that a theatrical artist wears when performing on stage. Lord Balarama started to contemplate the following: "I have made My appearance in order to chastise false individuals who are internally impure but externally present themselves as being very learned and religious. It is appropriate for Me to destroy such individuals in order to prevent them from engaging in future immoral behaviour."

Lord Balarama had refrained from taking part in the Battle of Kurukshetra, but, due to His position, the reestablishment of religious values was His primary responsibility. He was able to slay Romaharshana Suta by merely hitting him with a *kusha* straw, which was little larger than a blade of grass. When someone inquires about the manner in which Lord Balarama could slay Romaharshana Suta by only hitting him with a blade of *kusha* grass, the answer is provided in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* via the use of the term 'Prabhu,' which means 'master.' The position of the Lord is always transcendental, and since He is omnipotent, He is free to act in any manner that He chooses, without being constrained by the ethical norms that govern the material world.

Everyone who was present became extremely angry at the death of Romaharshana Suta, and a lot of wailing took place. In spite of the fact that every single *brahmana* and sage who was aware that Lord Balarama was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they did not hesitate to condemn His action. They presented their complaint in a humble manner, saying, "Our dear Lord, we believe that Your action is not in accordance with the religious principles. We would like to take this opportunity to notify You, dear Lord Yadunandana, that we, the *brahmanas*, have placed Romaharshana Suta in that coveted position for the length of this significant sacrifice. As a result of our election, he was seated on the Vyasasana, and it is considered quite inappropriate for a person who is situated on the Vyasasana to rise up in order to greet a person. Moreover, we granted Romaharshana Suta a life that was free from disturbances. In light of the circumstances, given that Your Lordship has taken the decision to kill him without being aware of all this, we believe that Your conduct has been comparable to that of a person who has taken the life of a saint. Dear Lord, the saviour of all fallen souls, You are aware of all the Vedic teachings. As a result of the fact that you are the master of all mystic abilities, the Vedic injunctions are not normally applicable to Your nature. However, we humbly beseech that You demonstrate Your unending compassion towards other individuals by gently atoning for the killing of Romaharshana Suta. On the other hand, we do not recommend any particular course of action that You should take, in order to make amends for having killed him; rather, we only recommend that You embrace some means of atonement in order to encourage others to follow in Your footsteps. When a great personality does anything, the average individual tends to follow in His footsteps."

The Lord said, "Yes, I must atone for this action, which may have been appropriate for Me, but is inappropriate for others; therefore, I believe it is My duty to carry out an appropriate act of atonement that is enjoined in the authorised scriptures. Simultaneously, I will this Romaharshana Suta back to life, with a span of time that is sufficiently lengthy, with adequate vigour, and complete power of the senses. Furthermore, if you so choose, I will gladly grant him any other request that you may have. I will be at your disposal. It will be My great pleasure to bestow all of these blessings unto you in order to satisfy your requests."

This declaration made by Lord Balarama unequivocally affirms that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has the

liberty to behave in any manner that He chooses. Despite the fact that what He did was inappropriate, He had the ability to quickly counterbalance the deed, which would result in greater benefits for everyone. Consequently, it is not appropriate to emulate the deeds of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; rather, it is more appropriate to simply obey the directions that the Lord has given. Despite the fact that they regarded the action of Lord Balarama as being inappropriate, all of the great educated sages came to the realisation that the Lord was able to quickly compensate those actions with higher gains. All of them prayed, "Our dear Lord, the uncommon use of Your *kusha* weapon to kill Romaharshana Suta may remain as it is; because of Your desire to kill him, he should not be brought to life again." This was done because they did not want to distract from the objective of the Lord, which was to kill Romaharshana Suta. "At the same time, it is appropriate for Your Lordship to keep in mind that we, the sages and *brahmanas*, have freely bestowed upon him a long life; hence, such a blessing ought not to be rejected." As a result, the request made by all of the knowledgeable *brahmanas* in the assembly was ambiguous. This was due to the fact that they wanted to preserve the blessing that they had bestowed upon Romaharshana Suta, which was that he would continue to live until the conclusion of the great sacrifice. However, at the same time, they did not wish to negate Balarama's decision to kill him.

As a result, the Supreme Personality of Godhead found a solution to the dilemma in a way that was commensurate with His elevated position. He said, "Because the son is produced from the body of the father, it is the injunction of the Vedas that the son is the representative of the father. Thus, I believe that Ugrashrava Suta, who is the son of Romaharshana Suta, should now assume his father's place and continue the lectures on the *Puranas*. Furthermore, on account of the fact that you desired for Romaharshana to have a long life, this blessing will be passed on to his son. Because of this, the son, Ugrashrava, will be able to enjoy all of the amenities that you have provided, including a long life span in a body that is in excellent health, free from any disruptions, and with complete vigour in all of the senses involved."

Lord Balarama then pleaded with all the sages and *brahmanas*, emphasising that in addition to the blessing that was bestowed upon the son of Romaharshana, they should also request any other blessing from Him, which He was ready to grant without delay. As a result, the Lord positioned Himself in the role of a common *kshatriya* and

conveyed to the wise men that He was unsure of the means by which He might make up for the killing of Romaharshana, but that He would gladly welcome any suggestions they make.

The *brahmanas* were able to comprehend the intention of the Lord, and as a result, they proposed that He make amends for His actions in a way that would be advantageous for them. "Our dear Lord, there is a demon here who goes by the name of Balvala," they communicated. "Although he is the son of Ilvala, he is a very strong demon. He makes his way to this holy site of sacrifice every two weeks, on days when the moon is full and on days when there is no moon, and he causes a great deal of disruption to the way in which we carry out our responsibilities in the sacrifice. Each and every one of us, as descendants of the Dasharha line, beseech You to put a stop to this evil. If You are so kind as to take his life, we believe that this will be Your way of making up for the wrongdoing. On occasion, the demon visits this location and



Vijayasana Perumal

lavishes over us a variety of unclean and polluted substances, including puss, blood, faeces, urine, and wine. In doing so, he pollutes this holy site by showering us with such filth. It is possible for You to continue visiting all of these holy sites of pilgrimage for a period of one year after You have killed Balvala. In this manner, You will be fully free from any contamination. This is the prescription that we recommend.”

It is said that Sage Romaharshana Suta reached this temple in Varagunamangai and did severe penance to the Lord for having disrespected Lord Balarama. Finally, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Srīman Narayana gave *darshana* to Sage Romaharshana Suta in this most auspicious place.



The Vijayakoti Vimanam

The devotees who pray to Srīman Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in this temple, are said to be guaranteed *moksha*. Here in Varagunamangai, a *brahmana* named Vedhavi recited the *asana mantra* as a form of penance. After seeing the penance, Perumal bestowed His *darshana*. *Asana mantra* chanting led the *brahmana* to *moksha*. Because of this, the Lord is known as Vijaya or Asana Perumal.



The temple compound and dvajasthamba

### The Temple

A *rajagopuram* with five levels can be seen on the temple's eastern side. A *mantapa* with sixteen pillars can be seen in front of the *rajagopuram*. A *mantapam* is located behind *Balipectam* and *dvajasthamba*, which are located after the *rajagopuram*. A sanctum, an *antarala*, and a *muka mantapam* are the components that make up the sanctum sanctorum. An *ekathala vimana* made of stucco, known as *Vijaya Koti*, can be seen on the sanctuary. While in the sanctuary, *Moolavar* is seated in a position that resembles that of a victorious monarch, beneath the hood of *Adishesha*. *Varagunavalli Thayar* and *Sri Varagunamangai* are located on both sides of the temple. The *utsava* Deities may be found in the *antarala*. *Dwaralapakas* and *Alvars* are located in the *arthamantapam*. In the *muka mantapa*, *Garudalwar* is located, while the temple tank is located outside.

According to the legend, the temple was first constructed during the *Pandya* era, and it was further enlarged during the *Vijayanagara* and *Nayak* periods.

Swami *Nammazhwar* has sung about this temple:

“Reclining in *Thiruppulingudi*, seated in *Varagunamangai*, and standing in *Vaikuntam*, You enter my heart and clear my thoughts. O Lord such is Your grace! May the three worlds also see You, and may we shout and dance in joy. Pray come and show Your cloud-hue form, and let Your coral lips redden!” 🙏

Photo courtesy: *Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam*

# Govardhana Puja

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



Arati to utsava vigraha of Sri Sri Krishna Balarama in special Giridhari alankara

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.



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



# Kirtan Mela



16 & 17 DEC 2023  
10:30 AM – 8:45 PM



THE SANKIRTAN FESTIVAL OF SRILA PRABHUPADA'S  
WORLDWIDE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare,  
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare



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₹10,008/- + ₹2024/- : 56 slots (Comfort Package)  
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