



KRISHNA VOICE

Vol 24, No.3, March 2023, ₹40



Sri Nityananda Trayodashi

SRI GAURA PURNIMA

Glorious Appearance Day Of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2023



**Celebrations at
ISKCON
Hare Krishna Hill
6:00pm onwards**

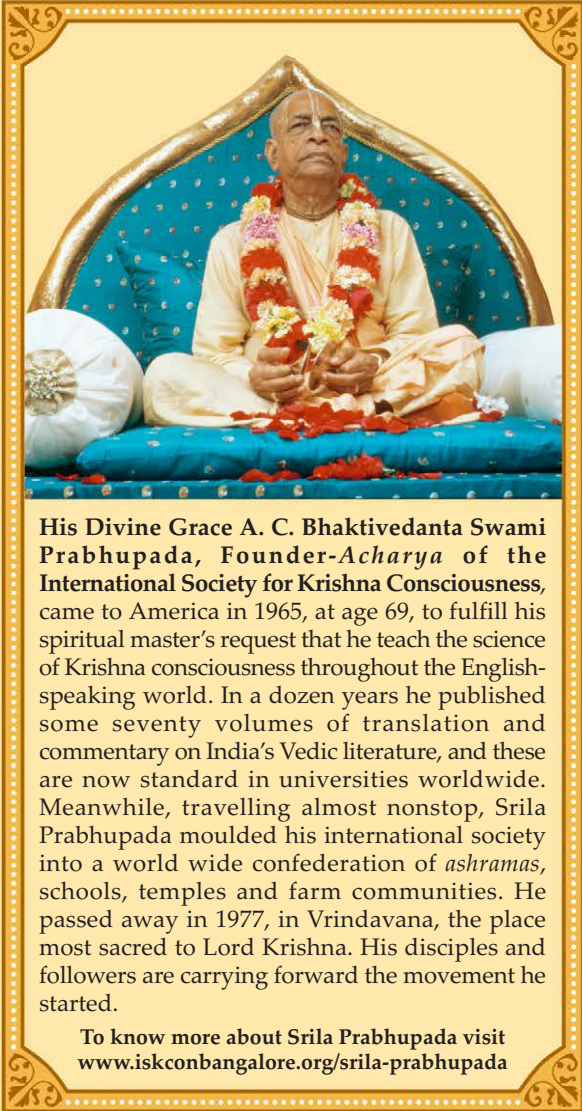
**Hare Krishna
Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna
Hare Hare
Hare Rama
Hare Rama
Rama Rama
Hare Hare**

KRISHNA VOICE



Vol 24, No.3

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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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Published and owned by Sankirtana Seva Trust. Editor: Chamari Devi Dasi. Layout, design and graphics by ISKCON Design Group, Bangalore.

For all information contact: Editor, Krishna Voice, SST, Hare Krishna Hill, Chord Road, Bangalore - 560 010 INDIA Phone: 91-80-2347 1956, 91-80-2357 8346 Fax: 91-80-2357 8625.

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The Soul's Fall

Responding to our desire, Krishna gives us a chance to forget Him.

A lecture given in Tokyo, on April 20, 1972

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

*sri-suka uvaca
atma-mayam rte rajan
parasyanubhavatmanah
na ghatetartha-sambandhah
svapna-drastur ivanjasa*

Sri Shukadeva Gosvami said: O king, unless one is influenced by the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no meaning to the relationship of the pure soul in pure consciousness with the material body. That relationship is just like a dreamer's seeing his own body working.

—*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.9.1

Many people inquire, "How did the living entity, who was with Krishna, fall into the material world?" That question is answered here. The living entity's condition is simply the influence of the material energy; actually he has not fallen. An example is given: The moon appears to be moving when clouds pass in front of it. Actually, the moon is not moving. Similarly, the living entity, because he is a spiritual spark of the Supreme, has not fallen. But he is thinking, "I am fallen. I am material. I am this body."

The body has no connection with the soul. We can experience this. The body is changing, dying, but I am the same. The idea that we have a connection with the body is due to the handling of the illusory energy of Krishna. That illusory energy develops when we forget Krishna.

In other words, our illusory identification with the body is simply due to our forgetfulness. We wanted to forget; we wanted to give up Krishna and enjoy the material world. Therefore Krishna is giving us the chance. For example, when you play a part in a drama, if you feel, "I am king," then you can talk very nicely. And if you feel, "I am Karandhara*," then you cannot play a king so nicely. The feelings must be there. If you are playing the part of a king, you must believe you are the king and have his courage. You have to forget that you are Karandhara. Then you can play the part very nicely, and the audience will appreciate. But if you think simultaneously, "I am Karandhara, and I am playing the part of the king," then you cannot play.

*A disciple in the audience.

So because we wanted to play the part of Krishna, the enjoyer, Krishna is giving us the chance—"You feel like Me." The feeling that "I am master, I am king, I am Krishna, I am God" is created by Krishna: "All right. You want to play the part of a king. I shall train you in such a way."

The director of a play tries to create the feelings within you for the part you are playing. In my younger age I played in a drama about Lord Chaitanya. Our director, Amritlal Bose, repeatedly said, especially to me, "Feel like that." So when we performed under his direction, all the people in the audience were crying. The play was artificial, but the effect on the audience was so nice.

Similarly, we have nothing to do with the material world, but we have been trained by the illusory energy in such a way that we think, "I am Indian," "I am American," "I am a *brahmana*," "I am a *shudra*," "I am this," "I am that," "I have to do this," "I have so many duties." These are all illusions. We have nothing to do with all this nonsense, but still we are taking it very seriously: "I have to do like that. I am this. I am that."

That is explained here. *Atmamayam rte rajan parasyanubhavat-manah*: "Unless one is influenced by the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no meaning to the relationship of the pure soul in pure consciousness with the material body."



The example is given of a man dreaming. “Oh, there is a tiger, a tiger! Save me!” He is crying. An awake man observing may say, “Where is the tiger? Why are you crying?” But the dreaming man is actually feeling, “The tiger has attacked me.”

Therefore this example is given: *na ghatetartha-sambandhah*. There cannot be any meaning of the relationship of the soul and the body except that it is like a dreaming man creating a situation. He is dreaming there is a tiger, and he is creating a fearful situation. Actually there is no cause of fear. There is no tiger. The situation is created by a dream.

Similarly, we have created the material world and material activity. People are running around—“Oh, I am the manager. I am the factory owner. I am this, I am that. We know his politics. We have to defeat our competitors.” All these things are created just as a man creates a situation in a dream—*svapna-drastur ivanjasa*.

So when someone asks, “When did we come into contact with the material nature?” the answer is that we have not come into contact. By the influence of the external energy we *think* we are in contact. Actually we are not fallen. We cannot be fallen. We have simply created a situation. Rather, we have not created a situation; Krishna has given us a situation. Because we wanted to imitate Krishna, Krishna has given an opportunity: “All right. You want to imitate. You want to be an imitation king on the stage. So feel like this. Play like this. Do like this. People will applaud—‘Oh, a very nice king.’”

Everyone in the material world is playing some part. “I want to be Prime Minister.” “I want to become a very big business magnate.” “I want to be a leader.” “I want to be a philosopher.” “I want to be a scientist.” They are trying to play all these nonsense parts, and Krishna is giving the opportunity—“All right.”

But these things are all nonsense. Simply dreaming. When you dream, the next moment the dream is gone, and everything in the dream is finished. No more tiger, no more jungle. Similarly, as long as the body continues, I think, “I am a responsible leader. I am this. I am that.” But as soon as the body is finished, these ideas are gone.

Krishna says, *mryu sarva-haras caham*: “I am death. I take everything away.” Just think of our past life. Suppose I was a king or something like that. From *Bhrgu-samhita* it was ascertained that I was a big physician in my last life, with a spotless character, no sins. I don’t know. It may be. But I have no remembrance that I was a physician. So what do we know? I might have been a very big influential physician, with a good practice, but where is it all now? All gone.

So our contact with matter is just like a dream. We are not fallen. Therefore, at any moment we can revive our Krishna consciousness. We become liberated as soon as we understand, “I have nothing to do with matter. I am simply Krishna’s eternal servant.” Sometimes when a fearful dream becomes intolerable, we break the dream. Similarly, we can break the material connection at any moment as soon as we come to the point of Krishna consciousness. “Oh, Krishna is my eternal master. I am His servant.” That’s all. That is the way.

Actually we are not fallen. We cannot be fallen. The same example: Actually there is no tiger; it is dreaming. Similarly, our fallen condition is also dreaming. We are not fallen. We can simply give up that illusory condition at any moment.

So if you study all these verses very nicely, you will get all this knowledge quickly. Now what is the purport?

[A disciple reads:] “Maharaja Parikshit’s question as to how a living entity began his material life, although he is apart from the material body and mind, is perfectly answered. The spirit soul is distinct from the material conception of his life, but he is absorbed in such a material conception because of being influenced by the external energy of the Lord, called *atma-maya*. This has been already explained in the First Canto in connection with Vyasadeva’s realization of the Supreme Lord and His external energy. The external energy is controlled by the Lord and the living entities are controlled by the external energy.”

Prabhupada: Krishna says, *mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te*: “As soon as one surrenders unto Me, he has no more illusion.” People are conditioned, encaged. Mayavadis, or impersonalists, undergo austerities and penances just to become liberated. Yogis also try to become “one.” So many endeavours are going on. But the simple process is that as soon as you surrender you are not fallen. “It was illusion. I was dreaming. I am Krishna’s.” By thinking in this way, one immediately becomes liberated. Immediately. Within a second.

Liberation can be attained within a second, provided we abide by the order of Krishna. *Sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*. This is the position. We are not fallen. We are thinking we are fallen. So we have to give up this nonsense thinking. Then we are liberated.

Is there any difficulty in understanding this point? Just see how important this verse is. It is already there, but you are not reading. Read each verse; read every day carefully. Try to assimilate, understand, and you will get more profit—every day a hundred yards forward. They are such important verses. How nicely composed by Vyasadeva! In two lines the whole thing is explained. This is called *shastra*.

Read the purport.

[The disciple reads:] “The external energy is controlled by the Lord, and the living entities are controlled by the external energy—by the will of the Lord. Therefore, although the living entity is purely conscious in his pure state, he is subordinate to the will of the Lord in being influenced by the external energy of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (15.15) also the same thing is confirmed; the Lord is present within the heart of every living entity, and all the living entity’s consciousness and forgetfulness are influenced by the Lord.”

Prabhupada: Now, people may ask, “Why does Krishna within the heart give one type of consciousness to one and a different type of consciousness to another?” That is His kindness. I wanted to forget Krishna, so Krishna is giving the appropriate consciousness: “All right, you can forget Me in this way.”

The *karmis*, or ordinary materialists, the Mayavadis, and the so-called yogis wanted to forget Krishna. So Krishna is giving them intelligence: “All right. You forget Me like this.” And if you want to revive your relationship with Krishna, He will give you intelligence. *Dadami buddhi-yogam tam yena mam upayanti te:* “I shall give you intelligence to come to Me.” *Ye yatha mam prapadyante.* As you want, Krishna gives you facility.

Go on reading.

[Disciple reads:] “Now the next question automatically made will be why the Lord influences the living entity to such consciousness and forgetfulness. The answer is that the Lord clearly wishes that every living entity be in his pure consciousness as the part and parcel of the Lord and thus be engaged in the loving service of the Lord as he is constitutionally made; but because the living entity is partially independent also, he may not be willing to serve the Lord, but may try to become as independent as the Lord is. All the non-devotee living entities are desirous of becoming equally as powerful as the Lord, although they are not fit to become so.”

Prabhupada: The living entity will never be God, but we see that by the influence of the illusory energy many people think, “I am God,” or “I shall become God by pressing my nose like this.” This is going on. But they will never be able to become God. That is not possible. If everyone can become God, then there is no meaning of God.

Karmis say, “I shall become a millionaire. I shall become a trillionaire. I shall become head of state. I shall become



Prime Minister.” They struggle to attain these things.

And for yogis to think, “I shall become God” is simply another struggle. It is illusion. Krishna may give them some yogic success. In India there is a rascal who makes gold appear. And people are after him—“Oh, he is God, he is God.” By producing a little gold, he becomes God.

Another yogi makes two *rasagullas* [sweets] appear. So by producing two *rasagullas*, four cents’ worth, he becomes God. You see? This is illusion. I can purchase two *rasagullas* from the market for four cents, so he has become God for four cents. People think, “Oh, he is God. He can produce *rasagullas*.” They have no sense. I can produce *rasagullas* in our kitchen. But rascals think, “Oh, this yogi is wonderful.”

So Krishna gives a person some power of yogic *siddhi*, or perfection, and the person thinks, “I have become God.” And some flatterers think, “Oh, you are God.” Such yogis are in the same dream as the *karmis*. And as soon as death comes, everything is finished—your Godhood and everything, finished. Now comes doghood. And another dream: “I am dog.” First of all “I am God,” then “I am dog.” This is going on.

Therefore Bhaktivinoda Thakura has said, (*miche*) *mayar bose, jaccho bhese*: “Why are you being washed away by the waves of *maya*? Just stand up.” (*Jiv*) *krishna-das, ei biswas, korle to ar duhkho nai*. “Simply stay fixed on this point: ‘I am an eternal servant of Krishna.’ Then there is no more dream.” And if you allow yourself to be washed away, Krishna gives you facility: “All right, come on. Be washed away.”

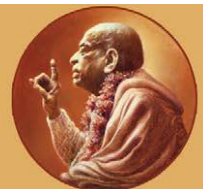
Then?

[Disciple reads:] “The living entities are illusioned by the will of the Lord because they wanted to become like Him. Like a person who thinks of becoming a king without possessing the necessary qualifications, similarly, when the living entity desires to become the Lord Himself, he is put in a condition of dreaming that he is a king. Therefore the first sinful will of the living entity is to become the Lord, and the consequent will of the Lord is that the living entity forget his actual life and thus dream of the land of utopia where he may become one like the Lord. The child cries to have the moon from the mother, and the mother gives the child a mirror to satisfy the crying and disturbing child with the reflection of the moon. Similarly the crying child of the Lord is given over to the reflection, the material world, to lord it over as a *karmi* and to give this up in frustration to become one with the Lord. Both these stages are dreaming illusions only. There is no necessity of tracing out the history of when the living entity desired this. But the fact is that as soon as he desired it, he was put under the control of *atma-maya* by the direction of the Lord. Therefore the living entity in his material condition is dreaming falsely that this is ‘mine’ and this is ‘I.’ The dream is that the conditioned soul thinks of his material body as ‘I’ or falsely thinks that he is the lord and that everything in connection with that material body is ‘mine.’ Thus only in dream does the misconception of ‘I and mine’ persist life after life. This continues life after life, as long as the living entity is not purely conscious of his identity as the subordinate part and parcel of the Lord.

“In his pure consciousness, however, there is no such misconceived dream, and in that pure conscious state the living entity does not forget that he is never the Lord, but he is eternally the servitor of the Lord in transcendental love.”

Prabhupada: 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



Fasting

Mar 3 Ekadashi
Mar 4 *break fast*
Mar 18 Ekadashi
Mar 19 *break fast*
Apr 2 Ekadashi
Apr 3 *break fast*

Festivals

Mar 7 Sri Gaura Purnima -
Appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
Fasting till moonrise
Mar 8 Festival of Jagannatha Mishra
Mar 22 Shubharambham (Ugadi)
Mar 30 Sri Rama Navami
Fasting till sunset

Crow-And-Tal-Fruit Logic

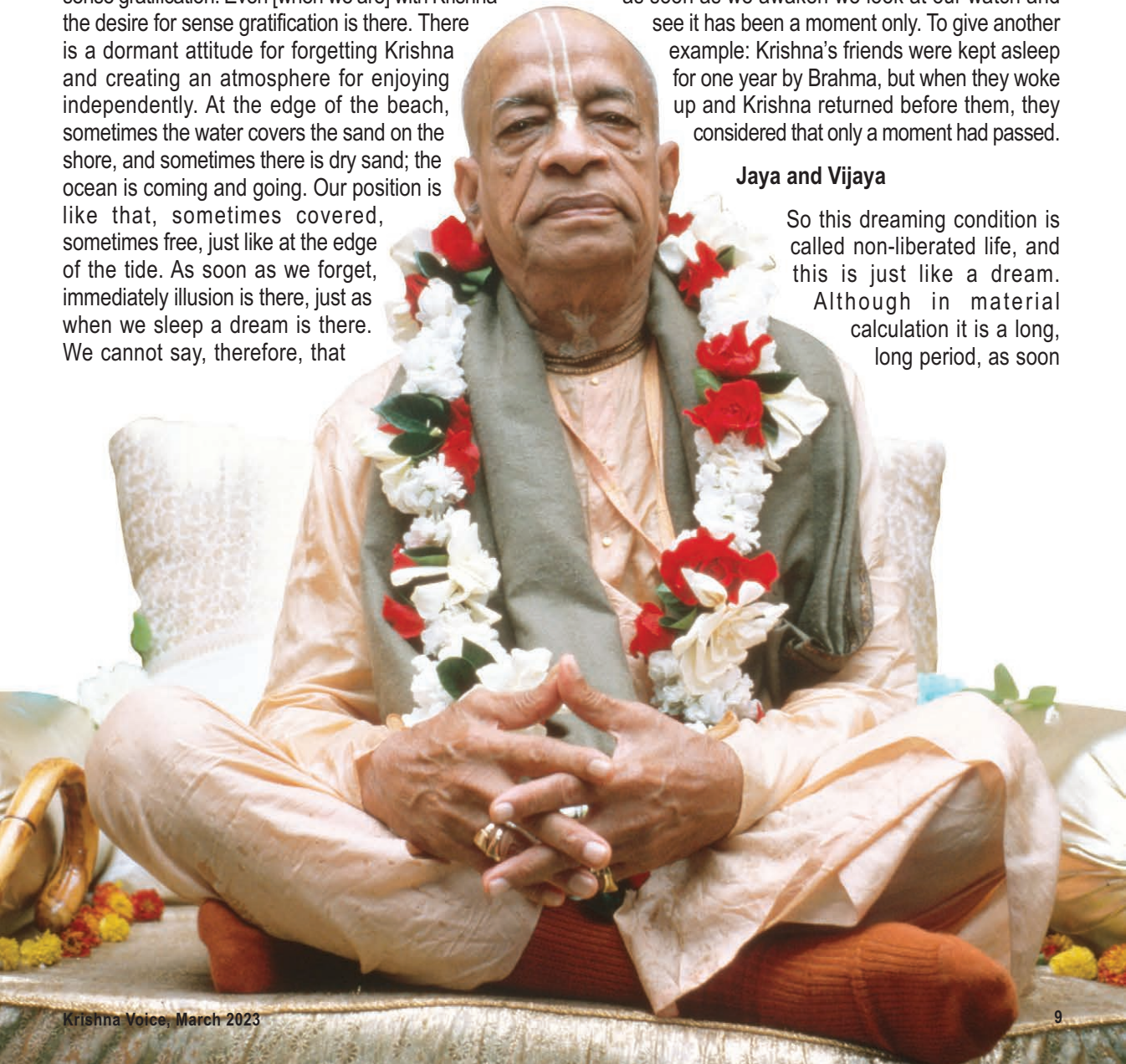
Srila Prabhupada dictated this essay in reply to a question about the origin of the living entity: Were we originally with Krishna, or did we fall from Krishna's impersonal energy, the brahmajyoti? The essay was an addendum to a letter Prabhupada wrote to his disciple Madhudvisa Dasa in June of 1972. We have edited it lightly for grammar and punctuation.

We never had any occasion when we were separated from Krishna. For example, one man is dreaming, and he forgets himself. In a dream he creates himself in different forms—"Now I am the king." This creation of himself is as seer and as subject matter, or seen—two things. But as soon as the dream is over, the "seen" disappears. But the seer remains. Now he is in his original position. Our separation from Krishna is like that. We dream this body and so many relationships with other things. First the attachment comes to enjoy sense gratification. Even [when we are] with Krishna the desire for sense gratification is there. There is a dormant attitude for forgetting Krishna and creating an atmosphere for enjoying independently. At the edge of the beach, sometimes the water covers the sand on the shore, and sometimes there is dry sand; the ocean is coming and going. Our position is like that, sometimes covered, sometimes free, just like at the edge of the tide. As soon as we forget, immediately illusion is there, just as when we sleep a dream is there. We cannot say, therefore, that

we are not with Krishna. As soon as we try to become the Lord, immediately we are covered by *maya*. Formerly we were with Krishna in His *lila*, or sport. But this covering of *maya* may be of very, very, very, very long duration; therefore [in the interim] many creations are coming and going. Due to this long period of time it is sometimes said that we are ever conditioned. But this long duration of time becomes very insignificant when one actually comes to Krishna consciousness. It is like in a dream: We are thinking it is a very long time, but as soon as we awaken we look at our watch and see it has been a moment only. To give another example: Krishna's friends were kept asleep for one year by Brahma, but when they woke up and Krishna returned before them, they considered that only a moment had passed.

Jaya and Vijaya

So this dreaming condition is called non-liberated life, and this is just like a dream. Although in material calculation it is a long, long period, as soon



as we come to Krishna consciousness this period is considered a second. For example, Jaya and Vijaya had their *lila* with Krishna, but they had to come down [to the material world] for their little mistake.* They were given *mukti*, merging into the Brahma-sayujya [Lord Krishna's impersonal effulgence], after being killed three times as demons. This Brahma-sayujya *mukti* is non-permanent. Every living entity wants pleasure, but Brahma-sayujya is minus pleasure; it consists of eternal existence only. So when those who get Brahma-sayujya *mukti* do not find transcendental bliss, they fall down to make a compromise with material bliss, for example by founding schools and hospitals. So even Lord Brahma is still material and wants to lord it over the material world. He may come down to become a germ, but then he may rise up to Krishna consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead. This is the position. So when I say yes, there is eternal *lila* with Krishna, that means on the evidence of Jaya-Vijaya. Unless one develops full devotional service to Krishna, he goes up only to Brahma-sayujya but falls down. But after millions and millions of years of keeping oneself away from the *lila* of the Lord, when one comes to Krishna consciousness this period becomes insignificant, just like dreaming. Because he falls down from Brahma-sayujya, he thinks that this may be his origin, but he does not remember that before that even, he was with Krishna. So the conclusion is that whatever may be our past, let us come to Krishna consciousness and immediately join Krishna. With a diseased man it is a waste of time to try to find out how he has become diseased; better to spend time curing the disease.

*Editor's note: Jaya and Vijaya, gatekeepers at a gateway to Vaikuntha, the spiritual world, once refused entrance to four great sages, the Kumaras. The sages then cursed Jaya and Vijaya to fall to the material world. The sages mitigated the curse, however, by saying that after three births as demons Jaya and Vijaya would be reinstated to their former post. Thus Jaya and Vijaya eventually attained *sayujya-mukti*, merging into the body of the Lord, and thereafter returned to Vaikuntha. (This is discussed in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Canto Three, chapters fifteen and sixteen, and Canto Seven, chapter one.)

An Allegory

On the top of a tree* there was a nice *tal* fruit. A crow went there and the fruit fell down. Some *panditas*—big, big learned scholars—saw this and discussed: “The fruit fell due to the crow agitating the limb.” “No, the fruit fell simultaneously with the crow landing and frightened the crow so he flew away.” “No, the fruit was ripe, and the weight of the crow landing broke it from the branch.” And so on and so on. What is the use of such discussions? So whether you were in the Brahma-sayujya or with Krishna in His *lila*, at the moment you are in neither, so the best policy is to develop your Krishna consciousness and go there [back to Godhead]—never mind what is your origin.

*The *tal*-fruit tree is the palmyra palm.

Always With Krishna

Brahma-sayujya and Krishna *lila*—both may be possible. But *when* you came down from Brahma-sayujya or when you came down from Krishna *lila*, that remains a mystery. But at the present moment we are in *maya*'s clutches, so at present our only hope is to become Krishna conscious and go back home, back to Godhead. The real position is servant of Krishna, and servant of Krishna means in Krishna *lila*. Directly or indirectly, we are always serving Krishna's *lila*, even in dream. Just as we cannot go out of the sun when it is daytime, so where is the chance of going out of Krishna *lila*? The cloud may be there—the sky may become very gray and dim—but still the sunlight is there, everywhere, during the daytime. Similarly, because I am part and parcel of Krishna, I am always connected with Krishna. My finger, even though it may be diseased, remains part and parcel of my body. Therefore, we try to treat it, cure it, because it is part and parcel. So Krishna comes Himself when we forget Him, or He sends His representative. Awake or dreaming, I am the same man. As soon as I awaken and see myself, I see Krishna. Cause and effect are both Krishna. For example, cotton becomes thread, and thread becomes cloth. Still, the original cause is cotton. Therefore, everything is Krishna in the ultimate sense. When we cannot contact Krishna personally, we contact His energies. So there is no chance to be outside Krishna's *lila*. But we see differences under different conditions. To give another example: In the pool of water and in the mirror the same me is reflected, but in different reflections. One is shimmering, unsteady; one is clear and fixed. Except when we are in Krishna consciousness, we cannot see our actual position rightly; therefore the learned man sees all living entities as the same parts and parcels of Krishna. Material existence is impersonal because [in that existence] my real personality is covered. But we should think that because I am now covered by this clay, I am diseased. And we should think that I must get to business to get myself uncovered, not wonder how I got this way. Now the fruit is there—take it and enjoy. That is your first business. God is not bound by cause. He can change [anything]; He is the cause of all causes. Now don't waste your time with this *kaka-taliya-nyaya*, “crow-and-*tal*-fruit logic.” 🌸

The Original Social System

By Ravi Gupta

One of the first things that comes to mind for many people when they hear mention of India is Hinduism's infamous caste system, one of the most hotly debated topics on India. People see casteism as a major cause of India's problems. The lower classes are abused and oppressed while the upper classes rule—all based on birth. People question why anyone would believe in a religion that supports such abuse.

On an electronic bulletin board, one Indian writes, "My family suffered a great deal because of this casteism, and I think it is a very big handicap for our nation." When people in the West are asked what they know about India, they often reply, "The caste system and the Taj Mahal."

How has India acquired such a notorious way of organizing society? What is the proper role of the *brahmanas*, the priestly class? How is the system supposed to function?

Caste discrimination by birth, thought to be one of the fundamental characteristics of Hinduism, is absent from the Vedic scriptures, the essence of which is the *Bhagavad-gita*. The present-day caste system is a degradation of *varnashrama-dharma*, the original social system described by Lord Krishna Himself in the *Bhagavad-gita* (4.13):

*catur-varnyam maya srstam
guna-karma-vibhagasah*

"According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me." Because among human beings Lord Krishna created divisions, called *varnas*, they are natural in any society. Classes exist, whether based on birth, wealth, power, or occupation. A classless society is therefore impossible. Even communism, which was supposed to be classless, had enormous disparity between the ruling class and ordinary workers.

Lord Krishna says that a person's *varna* comes from his *guna*, "nature" or "quality," and karma, the type of activity he does. Krishna does not use the word *janma*, "birth." The *varnashrama* system is not rigid or oppressive. If a person born into a family of a lower *varna* shows the qualities and inclinations of a *brahmana*, he can be educated accordingly and become a *brahmana*. On the other hand, being born in an upper-*varna* family does not automatically confer that status without the proper qualities and training. Srila Prabhupada gives an example: "A son cannot claim, 'Because my father is a lawyer, then I am also lawyer.' The son also must become a qualified lawyer."

Now, a child who grows up in a pure and austere family that studies the scriptures and worships the Lord will tend to be attracted to those qualities and activities when he grows up. Children of doctors often grow up to become doctors themselves. To that extent birth can be one factor indicating a person's work. But the decisive factors are one's qualities and training.

For example, Lord Rsabhadeva, an incarnation of Krishna, was a king, and therefore his one hundred sons were born in a *kshatriya* family. But, as Srila Prabhupada writes, "Out of these, ten were engaged as *kshatriyas* and ruled the planet. Nine sons became good preachers of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*maha-bhagavatas*), and this indicates that they were above the position of *brahmanas*. The other eighty-one sons became highly qualified *brahmanas*." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5.4.13, purport). Another example: Kanchipurna, the instructing guru of the great devotee Ramanujacharya, was a *shudra* by birth.

After reading on the Internet *Bhagavad-gita's* description of the caste system, an Indian gentleman wrote, "I think Hinduism is completely distorted, and it is upon our shoulders that we bring it back to its original state. To tell people the basic definition of each caste would be very helpful."

The Brahmanas

The *Bhagavad-gita* (18.42) concisely defines the *varnas*, beginning with the *brahmanas*: "Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness—these are the natural qualities by which the *brahmana's* work."

The *brahmanas* are situated in the mode of goodness. *Brahmana* means "one who knows Brahman, the Absolute Truth." If a person thinks, "I am a *brahmana* because my parents were *brahmana* caste," he is not a knower of Brahman but a knower of the body.

Krishna describes the spiritual vision of the *brahmanas*: "The humble sages [*brahmanas*], by virtue of knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle *brahmana*, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater [outcaste]." (Bg.



King Rishabhadeva instructs his sons

5.18) By definition, a *brahmana* sees everyone equally and thus, out of humility, does not repress anyone. As soon as he does, he is no longer a *brahmana*.

The *brahmanas* are the teachers of society. With their knowledge of the scriptures they guide society in the proper direction, toward self-realization. The *brahmanas* advise the *kshatriyas*, the administrators, on how to govern to ensure the spiritual advancement of the citizens. The *kshatriyas* then use their diplomatic skill to lead society.

To ensure that the *brahmanas* stay free from the pursuit of power, wealth, and prestige, and that their work is, as far as possible, without self-interest, *brahmanas* do not receive a salary for teaching, but rather depend on charity and begging. They don't accumulate wealth beyond what they need to live. The *brahmanas* depend fully on the Supreme Lord, and the other *varnas* support them for their valuable service.

Srila Prabhupada said that because modern society is lacking in *brahmanas* with spiritual vision, it is producing cats and dogs—debauches, drunkards, and woman-hunters. These cats and dogs accept as their leader the biggest beast, who will do the most to satisfy their sensual desires, and thus create a chaotic society.

Furthermore, today's so-called *brahmanas* in India hardly possess the ideal qualifications presented in the *Bhagavad-gita*. Instead, they have taken to meat-eating, intoxication, and other sinful activities. Therefore society suffers without brahminical guidance. That is why Srila Prabhupada wanted to create *brahmanas* who could properly guide leaders in how to organize society for spiritual progress while simultaneously alleviating its material problems. The importance of well-trained *brahmanas* cannot be overestimated.

The Kshatriyas

“Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity, and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the *kshatriyas*.” (Bg. 18.43) Ruling by the instructions of the *brahmanas*, the *kshatriyas* have the duty to protect citizens and maintain peace and order.

Srila Prabhupada describes how society would be organized under the Krishna conscious state: “In Vedic civilization, the land was given to the people for cultivation, not for ownership, and a tax was collected that was twenty-five percent of the person’s income.... One cannot get land from the government unless he agrees to produce something, and if everyone produces food then there is no scarcity. At least he has his own food produced by himself.” If work is delegated in this way, Srila Prabhupada says, then there is no hunger or unemployment. By contrast, in today’s consumer society most people don’t grow food crops; rather, they produce an endless variety of needless commodities.

One of the most important duties of the *kshatriyas* is to make sure the citizens know the purpose of human life and engage in duties that will help them fulfill it. To do this, the *kshatriyas* themselves must be *rajarshis*, or saintly kings. They must possess some of the scriptural knowledge and good qualities of the *brahmanas*. In the fourth chapter, Lord Krishna describes how the knowledge of the *Bhagavad-gita* was “passed down through disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way.” Srila Prabhupada wrote in a letter, “Such a noble king is not an autocrat but is guided by *brahmanas* in how to rule and see everyone employed in their respective duties.”

An example of the ideal *rajarshi* is Lord Rama, the incarnation of Krishna in the role of a king. During Lord Rama’s reign, called *Rama-rajya*, people were peaceful, happy, materially satisfied, and spiritually advanced.

Most people, however, are neither *brahmanas* nor *kshatriyas*, but *vaishyas* and *shudras*.

The Vaishyas

“Farming, cow protection, and business are natural work for the *vaishyas*.” (Bg. 18.44) *Vaishyas* protect cows, grow food for themselves, and sell the excess. Cow protection is essential for the material and spiritual survival of society. Cow protection develops compassion, and milk builds the finer tissues of the brain for understanding spiritual matters.

The Shudras

“For the *shudras* there is labour and service to others.” (Bg. 18.44) *Shudras* do work that is of service to the other classes, so they must depend on others for their maintenance. Srila Prabhupada writes, “The *shudra* class can attain all comforts of life simply by rendering service to the higher classes. ... The higher castes should always look after the maintenance of the *shudras*.... A *shudra* should not leave his master when the master is old and invalid, and the master should keep the servants satisfied in all respects.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.9.26)

Although in general *shudras* may be less intelligent, by faithfully carrying out their occupational duties under the guidance of a spiritual master they can attain the highest platform of spiritual perfection. Srila Prabhupada writes, “The process of devotional service is so strong that the pure devotee of the Supreme Lord can enable people of the lower classes to attain the highest perfection of life.” (Bg. 9.32)

The Social Body

The *varnashrama* system may be compared to a social body. The *brahmanas*, with their knowledge to direct society, can be compared to the head, eyes, and brain of the social body; *kshatriyas*, who offer protection, are the arms; the *vaishyas*, who support society, are the stomach; and the *shudras* are the legs.

Common sense tells us that we need our head even more than we need our arms and legs, because without the head the entire body is useless. So the *brahmanas* are the most important, because of the guidance they provide. Yet without the labour of the *shudras*, the legs, society would not get anywhere. Without the support of the *vaishyas*, the *brahmanas* would be unable to devote their time to teaching and studying. And without protection and land from the *kshatriyas*, the *vaishyas* could not carry out their occupation of providing for society. But when each part of the social body performs its proper function, then the entire society can be peaceful and cooperative and can concentrate on its real goal, Krishna consciousness. 🙏

Wonderful Prasadam

By Rohininandana Dasa

In many places in his books Srila Prabhupada describes the wonders of *prasadam*, food prepared with devotion and offered to Krishna. Prabhupada discusses such merits of *prasadam* as how it effectively immunizes one against the contamination of the material nature, how it frees one from becoming a ghost after death, and even how it is considered ecstatic nectar from the lips of Lord Krishna. In the *Chaitanya-charitamrita* (*Madhya-lila*, 4.93, purport) Srila Prabhupada writes:

“The Krishna consciousness movement vigorously approves this practice of preparing food, offering it to the Deity, and distributing it to the general population. This activity should be extended universally to stop sinful eating habits as well as other behaviour befitting only demons. A demoniac civilization will never bring peace to the world.... When the people take to eating only *prasadam* offered to the Deity, all the demons will be turned into Vaishnavas.... It is then and then only that a peaceful condition can prevail in society.”

Because *prasadam* is sanctified food and should be eaten with respect, we speak of eating *prasadam* as “honouring” or “respecting” it. Srila Prabhupada relished respecting the Lord’s *prasadam* and enjoyed seeing others do so. In early ISKCON days he cooked and distributed the Sunday “love feast.” And he kept a jar of syrupy *gulab jamuns* on hand for any of his spiritual children who might feel peckish. The sweets became known as “ISKCON bullets”—tasty weapons against *maya*. Prabhupada once popped a *gulab jamun* into his mouth and exclaimed, “We are eating our way back to Godhead!” Even in 1977 in Vrindavana, after months of fasting because of what would prove a fatal illness, Prabhupada called for his senior leaders, and in a faint, concerned voice he inquired, “Are the devotees getting enough *prasadam*?”

Once, after a festival in Mayapur, West Bengal, Prabhupada looked out from his veranda and saw some women and children licking used banana-leaf plates thrown on the rubbish heap. With compassionate intensity he said that no one within ten miles of an ISKCON temple should ever go hungry.

Preparing Prasadam

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

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

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

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

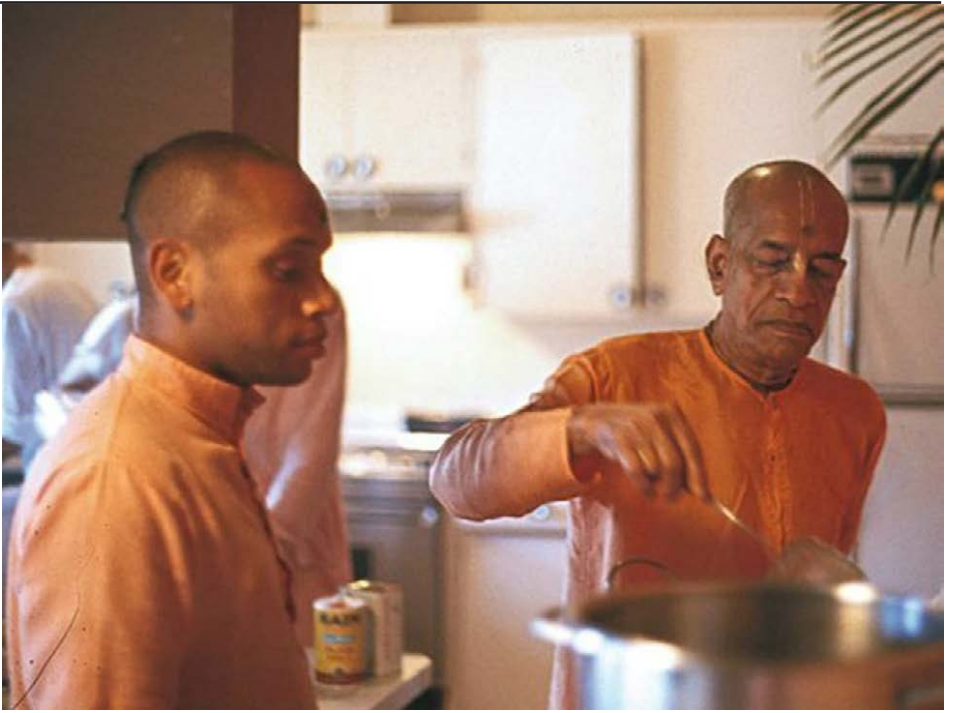
The secret of this conversion is love. Krishna is attracted by the humility and love of His devotee. The spice of love is the tasty ingredient that induces the Lord to eat an offering. Devotees therefore try to do everything with love. Their words, thoughts, and actions are heartfelt.

Offering with Love

The *Chaitanya-charitamrita* relates that the great devotee Madhavendra Puri saw his Deity, Gopala, eat a large offering of food and replace it with spiritual food, *prasadam*. Although the *prasadam* looked the same, the unoffered food had become transformed.

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

We can develop the required love for Krishna in the company of those who already love Him. We get that company in two ways: by physical proximity to a pure devotee and, more important, by



associating with a pure devotee's instructions. So in the absence of the physical association of a devotee, when we, for instance, cook something at home under his direction, we are in his company. And when, with whatever love to which we have access, we make our offering to Krishna through such a pure devotee, we can be confident he will offer it to the Lord on our behalf and the Lord will accept it.

Eating Our Way Home

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

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

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

*sarira avidya-jal jodendriya tahe kal
jive phele visaya-sagore
ta'ra madhye jivha ati lobhamoy sudurmati
ta'ke jeta kathina samsare
krishna baro doyamoy koribare jivha joy
sva-prasad-anna dilo bhai
sei annamata pao radha-krishna-guna gao
preme dako chaitanya-nitai*

“O Lord, this material body is a lump of ignorance, and the senses are a network of paths leading to death. Somehow or other we have fallen into the ocean of material sense enjoyment, and of all the senses the tongue is the most voracious and uncontrollable. It is very difficult to conquer the tongue in this world. But You, dear Lord Krishna, are very kind to us. You have given us this nice *prasadam* just to control the tongue. So now let us take this *prasadam* to our full satisfaction and glorify Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha and Krishna, and in love call for the help of Lord Chaitanya and Prabhu Nityananda.” 🙏

The glory of Kaishika

Thirukurungudi Vaishnava Nambi Temple - Part 3

by Sampatkumara Ramanuja Dasan (Adv. Ashwin.S)

Kaishika Ekadashi in Srirangam

On the evening of Dashami, the start-up for the *utsavam*, i.e. Ankurarpana is completed. On Ekadashi day, once the morning worship schedules are completed, Sri Ranganatha, the presiding Deity is carried to the Chandan Mantapa for an elaborate *abhisheka*. The Lord returns to the sanctum sanctorum after accepting delicious offerings. The regular evening offering of hot saffron milk and other items are presented to Him on this Ekadashi day, and the sanctum sanctorum remains closed.

Around 10 p.m., the doors are opened, and Sri Ranganatha is carried in procession to the Arjuna Mantapa for the festival. Apart from the traditional Neela Nayagam or Kausthubha on His chest, Sri Ranganatha dons a modest small upper cloth (akin to a jacket) and a hat on this night, as it is cold outside.

On reaching the *mantapa*, the Lord is seated on a *simhasana*. A box containing silk cloth of various hues are brought by the specific devotees who are addressed as Sripadam, those privileged to carry on their shoulders, Sri Ranganatha seated on a sort of wooden palanquin, borne on poles.

In all, 360 silk shawls are offered, one by one, to adorn Lord Sri Ranganatha. When each silk shawl is draped on the Lord, the *archaka* also offers a plate of betel leaves flavoured with flakes of refined camphor. A camphor lamp *arati* follows.

The descendants of Nathamuni, a renowned Vaishnavite Acharya, are called Arayar. As the *archaka* begins to offer each silk shawl to Lord Sri Ranganatha, the devotees serving at the temple invite Arayars to offer their *sevai*. The Arayars sing and enact the 4000 songs of the Azhwar *acharyas* before Lord Sri Ranganatha. Arayar *sevai* is regarded as a great devotional skill, and in exchange for temple honours, they read Azhwars songs, notably those



The Brahma ratha of Lord Vaishnava Nambi



Sri Krishna holding butter in both His hands



Vaishnava Nambi on an Ekadashi day

pertaining to Thirukkurugudi, the setting for the *Kaishika Purana*. The Arayars, who wear cone-shaped caps, reed cymbals, and garlands and are said to have been bestowed by Mahavishnu Himself, also perform and enact, in realistic expression, and provide pertinent commentary during the performance.

Notwithstanding their knowledge of 4000 songs of the Azhwars and other canonical literature, Arayars are supposed to strictly follow the instructions of their forefathers during the process of rendering.

In return, the Lord gives the Arayars the offerings brought to Him, as blessings. When the Arayars continue their performance, the Veda Vyasa Bhattar (in the lineage), who was brought to the temple with honours from his home, remains in the *mantapa*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Ranganatha hears the Arayars' translation of the Bhattar's commentary of the *Kaishika Purana*. The *archaka* receives the Sri Kosham (scriptures of *Purana*)



Ekadashi procession of Lord Vaishnava Nambi

from the Veda Vyasa Bhattar and puts them at the feet of Sri Ranganatha. The Bhattar is handed the text of the *Kaishika Purana* to read before the assembled devotees after receiving sanctified water, sandal paste *prasadam*, garland, and *shatari*.

Between his readings, the Veda Vyasa Bhattar is offered the Lord's *prasadam* including refined camphor, up to ten times. When he has finished reading the scripture, the temple devotees return him to his home with all reverence and respect.

Lord Sri Ranganatha returns to the temple's inner sanctum and Vedas are chanted: other rites continue until far before sunrise. On the way, the Bhattar stops to pay his respects and follow the Lord, as the Arayars continue to chant His praise.

At the flight of stairs leading up to the sanctum sanctorum, many Vaishnavite devotees offer flowers that have been dusted with refined camphor powder to the Deity. It is wonderful to see how rapidly and with a thrilling jolt the Lord is carried up the stairs and brought into His sanctum sanctorum. The Supreme Lord Sri Ranganatha, pleased with the gift of the *Kaishika Purana* recitation, gives the order to the *sthanikar* (administrator) to escort the Bhattar to his house with all respect and reverence.

The *archaka* honours the Bhattar by presenting him with Emperuman's *shatari*. The garlands of the Lord are also offered to the Bhattar, and *mangala arati* is then performed.

After that, the Bhattar is transported in a small palanquin to his dwelling. He is taken in the palanquin to various sub-shrines of the temple. At a number of the temple's shrines, most notably the Garuda Mantapam and the Koorthaazhwar shrine (forefather of Bhattar), garlands and honours are bestowed upon him at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Thus the famous Kaishika Ekadashi, which is held in Srirangam year after year with the same serious dedication as before, comes to an end.

Kaishika Ekadashi at Thirukkurungudi

The celebration of Kaishika Ekadashi at Thirukkurungudi, the site of the *mahathmiyam's* creation, has a special



Lord Vaishnava Nambi in Kaishika Mandapa



Lord Nambi with all His consorts



The devotees carry Lord Nambi during a temple procession

allure. In addition to the temple ceremony, the legendary narrative of Nampaduvan is performed as a dance drama till was past midnight.

This traditional drama, known as *Kaishiki Natakam*, had a setback in 1955, mostly due to a lack of patronage, and it remained inactive for the next 44 years. The tradition has been revived thanks to the efforts of Smt. Anita Ratnam, a skilled dancer and choreographer, and her team, which includes Prof. Ramanujam, a theatrical director. The Lord's message as conveyed via Nampaduvan has been effectively updated to reflect the modern context, without diluting its divine essence or compromising its ability to convey salvation.

It is fascinating to learn how the *Kaishiki Natakam* was enacted before 1955. Even ten days before Ekadashi, the actors playing the roles of the three principal characters of the play - Nampaduvan, Brahmarakshasa and elderly Nambi - paid their reverence at the Thirukkurungudi temple, then went to the neighbouring Krishna temple on the banks of the temple pond to begin practising and rehearsing the narrative. During the Ekadashi holiday, they fasted according to the strict procedures.

The temple dancers portrayed Nampaduvan and Nambi, while the temple watchman took on the role of Brahmarakshasa.

While ladies would stay at home to observe the fast, the person playing Brahmarakshasa would, with the exception of his bath, not leave the temple grounds throughout this time.

The Deity of the temple, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Vaishnava Nambi, was carried to the neighbouring Kaishika Mantapa with His consorts at about 10 o'clock, on the night of Ekadashi. All the Azhwars and Acharyas would be seated in a row even before His arrival, as in a royal durbar. The priests at the Thirukkurungudi temple would commence the ceremonies and give the offerings to Emperuman at the arrival of the Jeeyar (pontiff of the temple). Then Srimathi Mahalakshmi, who resides in Her own shrine inside the temple grounds, made her way to the Lord's gathering at the Kaishika Mantapam. When the Jeeyar's offerings to the Lord on the Ekadashi had been accepted by the *archaka*, he would return to his *matha* after accepting the *prasadam*.

The curtains would then rise for the *Kaishiki Natakam*. In the Kaishika Mantapam, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Vaishnava Nambi would be positioned with His back to the west, looking east. Outside of the Kaishika Mantapa is a large auditorium where the three artists would perform the dance-drama according to the palm leaf book owned by the devotees.

According to a book from 1957, the identity of the writer of the script is unknown; however, Smt. Ratnam attributes

it to one Veerabhadra Nattuvanar who lived during the 13th century. The actors and actresses represent the *vaibhavam* of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Vaishnava Nambi with a great deal of interest, and effectively bring forth the story of Kaishika. It is stated that even while the performers did not know how precisely the writings in the scrolls ought to be articulated, they would nonetheless put on some type of performance for the audience with all authenticity.

When everything was ready to begin the performance, the actor who would portray the Brahmarakshasa would come out from behind the temple to the sound of a drum beat. He would then be led to a room in the northern corner of the Kaishika Mantapa, where he worshipped the Rakshasa mask and put it on. As soon as the performer put on the mask that covers his head and face, he reached a level of power that made it seem as if he was the incarnation of the Brahmarakshasa. At this point, the tone of the *Natakam* is established at the instant the actor playing the part of Brahmarakshasa is taken to see the Supreme Lord in the temple, where he receives His blessings before letting out a resounding roar, and the performance began.

The drama continues for two or three hours beyond midnight, during which time the hall is packed to capacity with worshippers who have taken up all of the best viewing spots. When the retelling of the narrative of Kaishika has been completed, the performers are given honours by the temple, before departing for their homes.

Then, an elaborate worship is performed by the *archaka*. After the offerings and the *arati*, and *Divya Prabanda* and *Veda Parayana Goshti* which is the recital of a chorus from the scriptures by knowledgeable people, begins. This interpretation is derived from the Azhwars. After this, Arayar from Sri Srivilliputtur, which is the residence and birthplace of Sri Andal, explains, by means of the songs connected to Thirukkurungudi in *Periya Thirumozhi* by Thirumangai Azhwar. This explanation also comprises *abhinaya* or theatrical expression, along with the commentary. The academics will continue their recitation, and after they have finished presenting their findings, Thirumangai Azhwar is presented with *prasadam* as a token of respect.

When the sanctified water has been distributed to the assembled devotees, the *sthanika* (the administrator of the



Lord Vaishnava Nambi with Sridevi and Bhudevi



Kaishika Ekadasi, Namperumal in Srirangam adorning 365 silk shawls

temple) reads the text of the *Kaishika Purana* as it is written in the manuscript, followed by the commentary of Bhattar. At this point, as the dawn draws near, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Vaishnava Nambi, instead of going to His sanctum sanctorum, continues to wait in the Kaishika Mantapam, where the Dwadashi ceremonies will be conducted. Both the early morning *sevas* and the recitation of scriptures when the Lord's doors are opened and the *abhiseka* are offered to the Lord at the Kaishika Mantapam, which is where the Lord spends the majority of the day. After bidding farewell to His beloved Mahalakshmi and the other Azhwars and Acharyas as they travel to their various respective shrines, the Lord departs with His consorts in order to enter His sanctum sanctorum.

Throughout the evening, a procession with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Vaishnava Nambi on Garuda is led through the streets.

The Revival

The *Kaishika Natakam* was brought to a halt when T. V. Sundaram Iyengar of TVS Motors, a prominent figure in the local industrial community who was born and raised in the temple town, passed away suddenly.

The task of bringing the narrative back to life was handed to Smt Anita Ratnam, Sundaram Iyengar's great-granddaughter. The drama had to be reconstructed from scratch, since palm-leaf manuscripts were hard to come by, and few people were still living to recount how it was first produced, by the time the idea for its revival was conceived. She and her group, however, seemed to have collected the necessary information and presented the first performance on November 19, 1999. Instead of using temple *devadasis* (a community that is now practically extinct) and a watchman, a trained cast of over 20 performers and musicians perform the *Kaishika Natakam* nowadays.

The author of this article was present for the Natakam ceremonies in 2002 and 2018 at the temple. According to Smt. Ratnam, the presentation was modified to fit the current scenario, without losing its authenticity. Since the original dancers are too elderly, frail, and forgetful to provide a solid foundation for the restoration. Because of this, investigations into movement and *abhinaya* have only begun with Bharatanatyam and Bhagavata Mela traditions. *Kaishika Natakam* should be used as a launching point for creative expression, not as a means of imposing either of these styles.

(To be continued) ☺

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam

Sri Nityananda Trayodashi



Alankara



Abhisheka (above) and Pallakki utsav (below)





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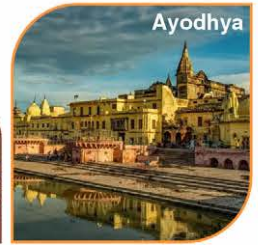
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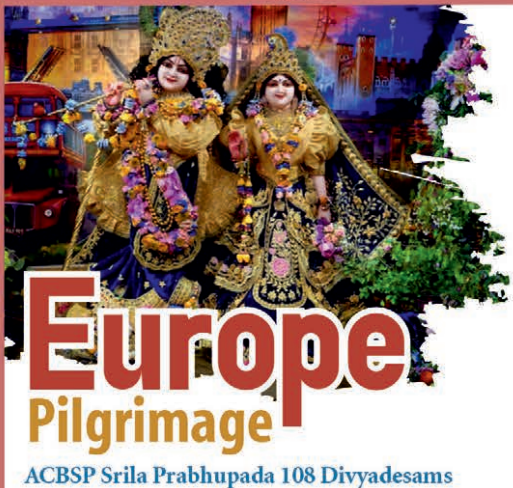
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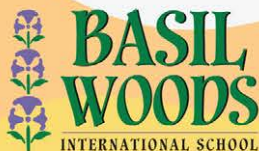
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सत्यं
INTEGRITY

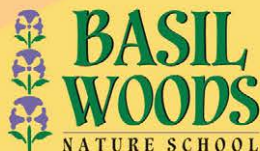
दया
EMPATHY

शौचं
PURITY

तपस्या
AUSTERITY



GUNJUR, BANGALORE EAST



LAKSHMIPURA CROSS, BANGALORE NORTH



WWW.BASILWOODSINTERNATIONAL.IN

+91 63644 25888

PROPOSED IGCSE CURRICULUM



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PROPOSED CBSE CURRICULUM



RANKED AMONG THE TOP
EMERGING INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS IN BENGALURU



GLOBAL
EDUCATION
AWARDS - 2021

“HOW I WISH ALL THE SCHOOLS ACROSS THE WORLD,
ESPECIALLY IN INDIA, REPLICATE THE MODEL (PQ+IQ+EQ+SQ)
OF BASIL WOODS SCHOOLS!”

SMT. MEENAKSHI LEKHI

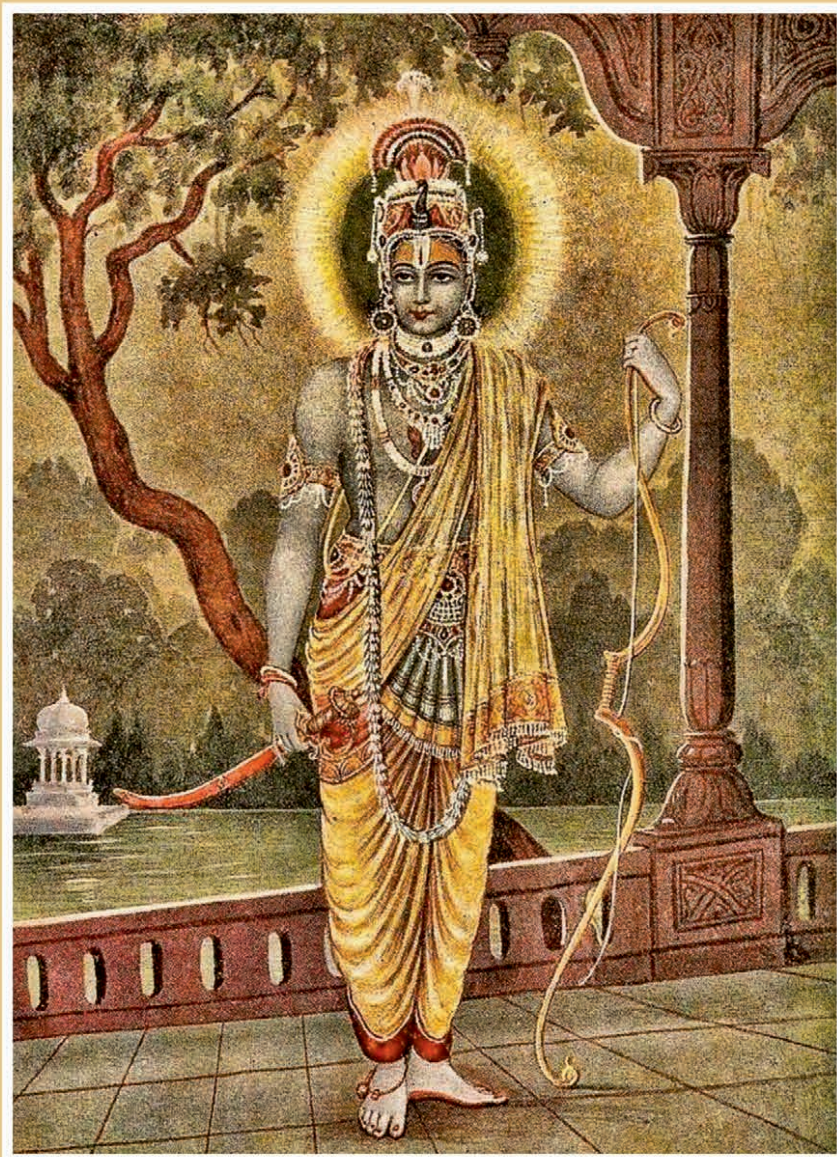
MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
AND CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



ADMISSIONS OPEN
FOR LIMITED SEATS FROM
MONT 3 TO GRADE 8
(2022 - 23)

Sri Rama Navami

Thu, March 30



sri ram jaya ram
jaya jaya ram

Celebrations: 6:00 pm onwards

Pallakhi Utsava

Sri Rama Taraka Yajna

Audio Visual Presentation