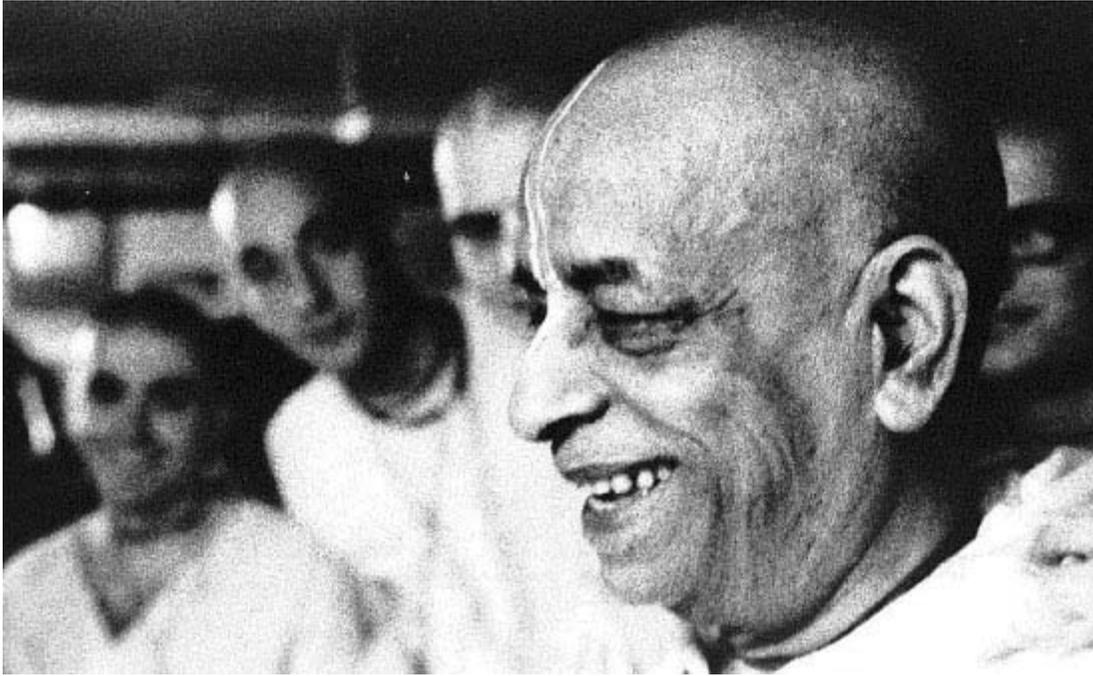


ALL GLORY TO SRI GURU AND SRI GAURANGA



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder Acharya: International Society for Krishna Consciousness
(l to r. Bharadwaja, Vaikunthanath, Jayapataka and Yamunacharya)

Mithuna Twiins Astrological Services
“Home of the Bhrigu Project”

THE ASTROLOGICAL NEWSLETTER

Chant this mantra:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

...and your life will be sublime

6 Nov. 2010 (#15) Kartika Amavashya, Deepavali, 524 Gaurabda Era.

The Astrological Newsletter (Please e-share it with your friends).

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed.

Abhaya Mudra Dasi

Jyotish Shastris, etc.

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Dear Prabhus, Welcome to the Deepavali issue. Deepavali is celebrated for many reasons, most notably the return of Sri Sita-Rama and Lakshman to Ayodhya. As Amavashya is the night of the dark Moon, the Ayodhya-*vashis* set out lamps or deeps to guide the *pushpa-vahan* carrying the Personality of Godhead Lord Rama and His entourage home.

From an astrological point of view, *amavashya* is the day when the Sun and Moon are conjoined. When the planet of the mind (*manasa-karaka* or Moon) and the Sun (*atma-karaka*) are together, this translates into an opportunity to fix the mind on the soul. Hence, *yogis* revere *amavashya* as a time for silence and meditation on the Lord in the heart.

For this reason, we have decided to dedicate this issue to the most mystical (and most misunderstood) of Lord Krishna's devotees, Lord Shiva. Shiva's blessings are beneficial for advancement both in devotional service as well as in mystic sciences such as astrology, and this is the subject of this issue.

India's center of astrology is Avantikapur, present-day Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh. Ujjain is one of India's seven holy cities or *sapta-puris*. It is also the home of the Gurukula of Sri Sandipani Muni where Lords Krishna and Balarama studied, the Jyotir-linga called Mahankaleshwara, the sacred Kshipra River and a Shakti-pitha called Hara Siddhi Devi or "the power of Shiva." It was only after a visit to Ujjain that I gained self-confidence in my ability to read horoscopes as a service for Krishna. This is due to the fact that the Jyotir-linga there, Mahankaleshwara, is the "lord of time", the basis of jyotish. As ever, thanks for your interest.

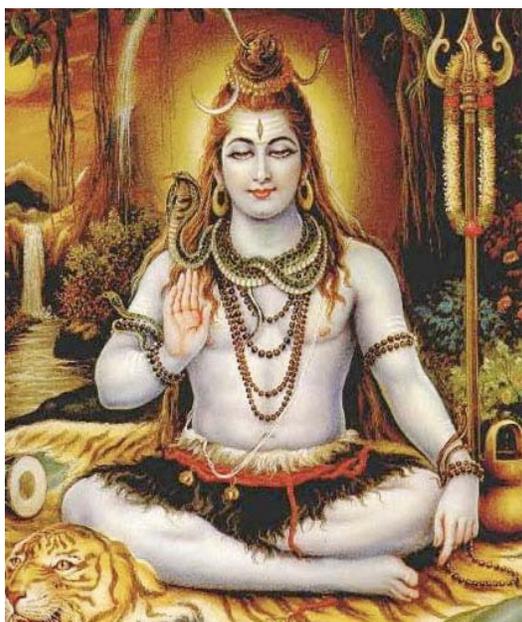
Hare Krishna,

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Editor

In Search of the Greatest Vaishnava

Patita Pavana das Adhikary

“Lord Shiva, the spiritual master of the entire world, is free from enmity. He remains ever peaceful and self-satisfied. Among the devatas, no one is greater. How, then, is it possible that Daksha could be inimical towards such an auspicious personality?” (SB 4.2.28)

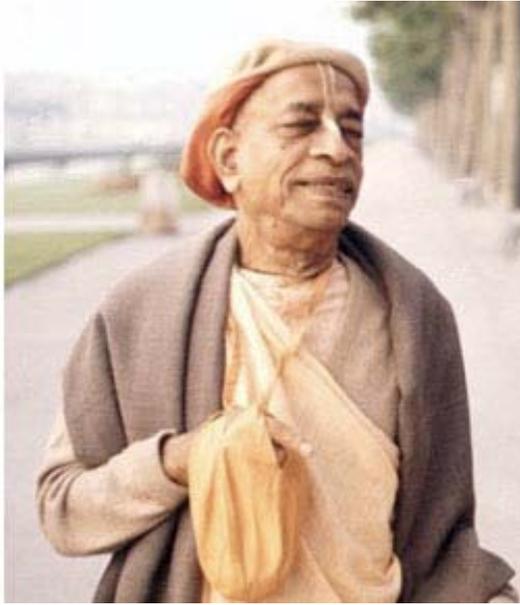


Recently, I had a long conversation with a self-styled European Shaivite. Having paid an undisclosed sum to a poseur “guru” for the privilege of “becoming God,” he was unwilling to admit that his money had been lost in a sort of quasi-spiritual ponzi scheme. He claimed the usual hackneyed impersonal fantasies: the dream of merging into a whatever-it-is, and leaving behind this whatever-is-not. I told him I would like to meet his wife, Maya Devi the Goddess of Material energy. When he politely declined with an uneasy chuckle, I asked to see his *tandava nritya* so I could get a front row seat of the Universe scorched in the flames of its last gasp. Suddenly he remembered an appointment, and though we would part company as friends I had failed to change his mind.

As he stood up to leave I prodded him one last time with a little friendly advice to “chant Hare Krishna.” He nodded a polite “*shivo’ham*” (“I am Shiva”) and darted towards the door. The conversation caused me to reflect again how far beyond the conceptual abilities of impersonalists it is to understand that the very Lord Shiva they claim to worship in their fruitless quest for Godhood is a Vaishnava. Indeed there is not one Vaishnava who can equal him. Shiva, the husband of Parvati, is none other than an eternal and unparalleled servant of Lord Krishna. Lord Shiva finds the highest bliss while meditating upon the pastimes of the Supreme Lord in an attitude of sacrifice and devotional service. What then can be said for his “worshippers”

who claim to have become God? This question is answered in the pages of the *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

Indeed, such counterfeit Shaivites are themselves unknowing victims of the curse of the great sage Bhrigu Muni. At the *yagna* of Daksha, Bhrigu uttered his prophetic words (full verses at SB 4.2.27-32): “Those who are avowed to follow Shiva will certainly become atheists who are diverted from the path of *shastra*. The followers of Shiva will foolishly imitate him by growing their hair long, drinking wine and eating flesh. They will blaspheme the



Vedas and the holy *brahmanas*.”

Commenting on the curse of Bhrigu Muni, Srila Prabhupada states in his *Bhaktivedanta Purport* (to SB 4.2.31):

“...Therefore to follow the Vedic system is to follow the standard etiquette of society. But the followers of Lord Shiva, (those) who are drunkards, who are addicted to intoxicants and sex life, who do not bathe and who smoke *ganga* are against all human etiquette. The conclusion is that persons who rebel against the Vedic principles are

themselves the evidence that the *Vedas* are authoritative, because by not following the *Vedic* principles they become like animals. Such animalistic persons are themselves evidence of the supremacy of the Vedic regulations.”

Such so-called Shaivites genuinely harm society by misleading the general mass of people into sinful activities by calling illicit sex as an act of *yoga* and intoxication as a sacrament. Recently in San Francisco one such self-appointed acolyte of the lord of *tamo-guna* created a large following during morning outdoor worship ceremonies around a huge “Shiva *linga*” that he claimed had self-manifested in Golden Gate Park. When the park officials pointed out that they had trucked in and unloaded the granite block as a traffic break, the *mayavadi* responded by demolishing the huge rock with a sledge and then advertised the pieces in the newspaper for hundreds of dollars each.

* * *



Brihadeeshwara Temple, Tanjore

My tête-à-tête with the imitation Shiva was still echoing in my mind as I strolled home that evening, absorbed in meditating upon Lord Shiva's actual identity with each step. It is said that as oil mixed with water will rise to the top, so at last does truth. And the truth is that only a servant of a Vaishnava can have insight into the mood of the supreme Vaishnava Lord Shiva. Taking a shortcut

through green fields while mulling over Shiva's glories, I was moving beneath a canopy of stars while my mind was embarking upon a sort of *manasa tirtha yatra*. My thoughts focused upon *darshan* again at some the great temples of Shankar that I have visited in India over the years.



I recalled how once in Tanjore an Iyengar follower of Sri Ramanuja Acharya had advised me that it is useless to preach to Shaivites because "it will take them ten births to become Vaishnavas." Ignoring his well-intentioned counsel, that very evening I had found myself sitting in a circle with several dozen Shaivite *brahmanas*. I was the only one among them with vertical *tilak*. Their leader, an otherwise friendly Iyer, challenged me to prove that Shiva is not the Supreme Lord. Recalling the

instructions of Srila Prabhupada in such matters of debate, I responded, "If he is the Godhead Himself, then upon whom is he meditating and from where is his source of bliss?" The group spoke in hushed tones amongst themselves and fell into a thoughtful silence as though on cue. None could reply.

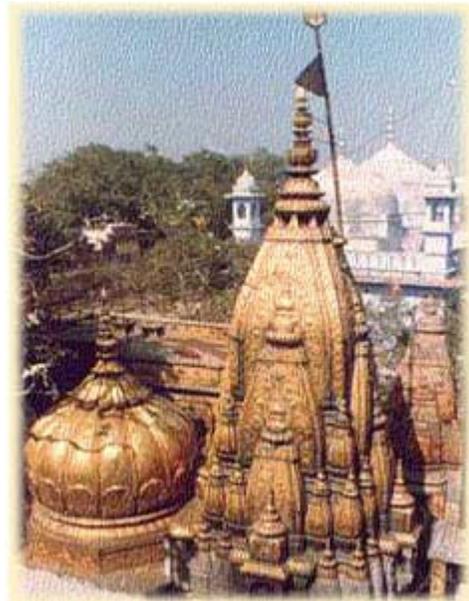
It is not that we Vaishnavas do not respect Lord Shiva; we honor his actual position. A journey through the *Bhagavatam* as seen through the lens of the Bhaktivedanta Purports reveals some of the myriad facets of Lord Shiva: husband, *yogi*, renunciate, mystic, philosopher, demi-god, destroyer of the material Universe and withal, protector of devotees. And experience tells me that at each of his Srines Lord Mahadeva appears to display a different mood. Yet still he meditates, for each facet of Mahadeva's inconceivable personality is absorbed trying to understand the Supreme Lord Hari. Hari,

Lord Krishna, is the inconceivable Achintya, the Godhead Who pervades this material world yet is beyond it. Indeed, Lord Shiva is such a great devotee of Lord Krishna that he actually refuses all opulence--even though he is the husband of the Goddess of the material creation--because he knows all wealth belongs to Krishna. Though blockheads are drawn to him thinking their prayers will turn them into God, Shiva himself is the meekest servant. Though greedy materialists kneel before him begging for a lavish lifestyle, Lord Shiva doesn't even own a house of his own.

The great sage Kashyapa Muni describes Lord Shiva to his wife Diti (see full verses at SB 3.14.25-28):

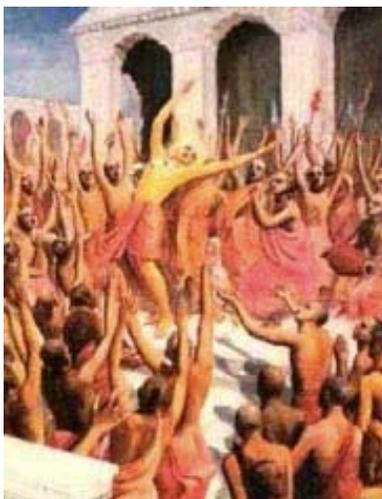
“Though the *chakra*-like whirlwind of *dhuli-dhumara* (dust and smoke) at the *smashana* (burning grounds) has covered his matted locks, and his *rukma-deha* (reddish body) is smeared with *bhashma* (ashes), he remains *amala* (untainted and spotless). He sees all with his three eyes. He regards no one as his relative, and neither does he consider anyone as either favorable or repulsive. Though his character is unimpeachable and he is followed by great souls seeking freedom from nescience, he appears himself as some sort of devil who grants salvation to devotees. Unfortunate fools who do not realize that he is absorbed in self-realization laugh at him. Such fools are simply engaged in maintaining their bodies with fine clothing, ornaments, garlands and unguents although the body is fit for consumption by dogs.”

Other than us Vaishnavas, who are the worshippers of Lord Shiva? Srila Prabhupada answers this question in his Bhaktivedanta Purports (to SB 3.14.28): “There are two kinds of devotees of Lord Shiva. One class is the gross materialist seeking only bodily comforts from Lord Shiva, and the other class desires to become one with him. They are mostly impersonalists who prefer to chant *shivo'ham*, ‘I am Shiva,’ or ‘After liberation I shall be-





come one with Lord Shiva.’ In other words, the *karmis* and *jnanis* are generally devotees of Lord Shiva, but they do not properly understand his real purpose in life. Sometimes so-called devotees of Lord Shiva imitate him in using poisonous intoxicants. Lord Shiva once swallowed an ocean of poison, and thus his throat became blue. The imitation Shivas try to follow him by indulging in poisons, and thus they are ruined.



The real purpose of Lord Shiva is to serve the Soul of the soul, Lord Krishna. He desires that all luxurious articles, such as nice garments, garlands, ornaments and cosmetics, be given to Lord Krishna only, because Krishna is the real enjoyer. He refuses to accept such luxurious items himself because they are only meant for Krishna. However, since they do not know this purpose of Lord Shiva, foolish persons either laugh at him or pointlessly try to imitate him.”

Proof of Lord Shiva's Vaishnava conviction is that Lord Shiva himself chants the names of Rama. During His South Indian pilgrimage, Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu taught a *brahmana* devotee of Lord Ramachandra to chant Hare Krishna by quoting the very words of Lord Shiva from the *Padma Purana* (CC Madhya 9.32)

*rama rameti rameti
rama rameti rameti
sahasra-namabhis tulyam
rama-nama varanane*

“Lord Shiva addressing his wife Durga as Varanana explained, ‘I chant the holy name of Rama, Rama, Rama and thus enjoy this beautiful sound. This holy name of Ramachandra is equal to one thousand holy names of Lord Vishnu.’”

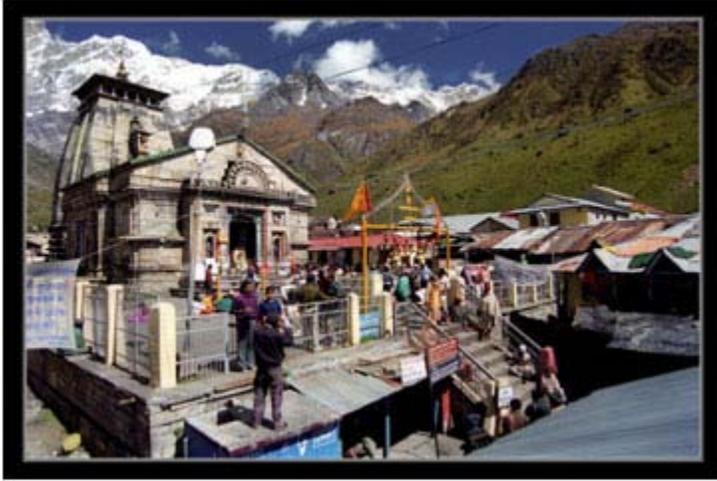
Still, Mahaprabhu pressed on with a verse from *Brahmanda Purana* (CC Madhya 9.33):

“The pious results derived from chanting the thousand holy names of Vishnu three times can be attained by only one utterance of the holy name of Krishna.”

Finding my way home I soon returned to my desk with my chance encounter with the imitation “Shiva” still on my mind. Though I hadn't convinced him, at least I would pound out an homage to Mahadeva and the evening's *manasa tirtha yatra*. Here then is my recollection of a long personal journey in sacred India in search of the greatest Vaishnava.



Homage to the Greatest Vaishnava



are India's *dwadasha jyotir lingas* (twelve temples of light). Yet how is it those who approach you with ulterior motives (and thus claim to be your "followers") so quickly descend into darkness? Though you are known everywhere, you are unknown. Still you have appeared as Vaidyanath, Bhima Shankar, Trimbeshwara, Grishneshwara and in many other forms only to impart devotional service to the world.

O Kailashnath, those who consider you merely a great *yogi* meditating away in the snowy Himalayas only succeed in trying to limit you in their ignorance. Likewise, those who consider you to be God do not understand your humble mood of pure devotion to Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Who can understand you? Although you are worshipped in the snowy mountains as Pashupatinath and Amarnath, you meditate in the bright sunlight at Amarkantaka. There your divine droplets of perspiration from the intense heat of the Sun (and from the heat of your penance) form the emerald Narmada, your river goddess daughter whose waters are *narma-dayini*, the giver of bliss.

O Umesh, you are easily pleased by the Lord's genuine devotees who praise and worship you throughout the universe. Yet--whether man or demigod---he who could hope to equal your exalted status is yet to be born. You are very dear to Lord Vishnu. Although you are unattainable, you never fail to bless the servants of Sri Hari who seek your favor, just as in your form as Lord Rameshwara you blessed the army of *vanaras* marching off to Lanka.

O Girish, those who approach you with imprudent desires to become one with you fruitlessly covet your unassailable position. Which senseless supplicant seeking to copyright your laurels as his own is willing to drink *halahala* poison, and (while wearing that venom in his throat like an indigo-colored ornament) save the world from destruction? Though they adorn their bodies with *bhashma* and carry tridents, no furious cobra ever adorns the neck of your deluded imitators. You alone are the lord of the *nagas*, worshipped (near Dwaraka) in your form as Nageshwara. The snakes which encircle your neck are representatives of Lord Sankarshan, Who mystics approach through you (to gain release from the falseness of egoism).



O Gangeshwara, you have captured the heavenly Mandakini in your long ascetic locks for the safety of the world. For the purification of mankind, the river goddess in your hair flows as the Ganga past innumerable holy *ghats*. That celestial stream called Patita Pavani gave liberation to the ancestors of King Bhagiratha, and to this day delivers all others who seek their salvation by the grace of her waters. You are worshipped as Vishwanath alongside Gangamayi (between the *sangams* of the Varuna and the Asi), and her waters are used in your daily adoration.

O Chandrashekhar, your crowning ornament is the *krishna-paksha* Moon on the *trayodashi* day of Phalguna. Even Lord Chandra kneels before your form as Somnath at Prabhas Patan where he begs for the ability to wax again (and thereby becomes relieved from the curse of Daksha).

O Shambhu, along with Brahma and Narada, you are one of the twelve *mahajans*, the most learned and realized personalities in the world. You are honored with the words *vaishnavanam yatha shambhu*. Even those who think that they can worship you with the *mantra*, *om namo shivaya*, must bow to Lord Hari in His form as Omkara before they can address you, His servant. Though you are called Omkareshwara at the island temple of Mamaleshwara, you yourself sing the praise Lord Hari with the three letters AUM.



O Parvatinath, during *vanavasam* Arjuna met you in the Himalayas masquerading as a hunter and, unable to defeat you, did battle with you till his weapons ran out. As he retreated to worship your *linga* form with wild flowers, he observed fragrant blossoms falling from the heavens upon your body (disguised as you were). Thus you revealed your divine form as the carrier of the trident, and bestowed celestial weapons upon Arjuna presaging his victory over the Kauravas. To this day deep in the jungle near Hastinapur, you are revered as Pandaveshwara in celebration of your gifts to Arjuna.

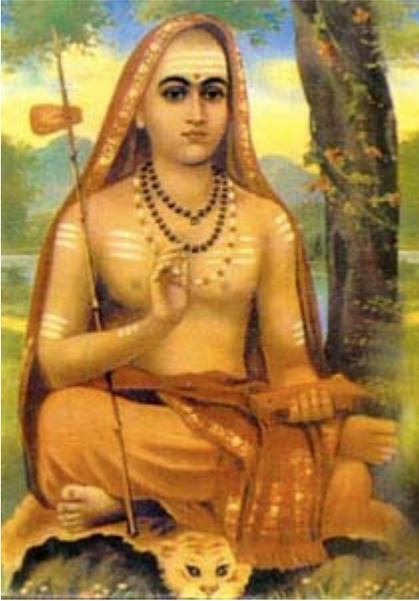
O Rudra, at Bhera Ghat the thousand-armed Banasura worshipped you by creating millions of your *linga* representatives from the earthy banks of the river. To this day your egg-shaped forms (marked with *chakras*, *yagnopavit*, etc.) become self-manifested at the very spot where rugged waterfalls meet marble cliffs.



Not far from there, your cave of Gupteshwara is an entirely self-manifested temple wherein the greatest of sages since time immemorial have arrived for your *darshan*. From here beneath the waters of the Narmada your *svyambhu lingas* have traveled all over the world for the benefit of humanity. Yet although you are worshipped in every quarter, few understand your Vaishnava character.

O Nataraja, bewildered impersonalists who confuse their adulation of you by “becoming you” are merely unfortunate victims of the same *tamo-guna* that you yourself control throughout the Universe. Though you are the destroyer of creation at the time of *pralaya*, the devotees of Sri Hari are saved while those who worship you for material benefits must become repeatedly reborn and annihilated (in this and ensuing cosmic manifestations).

O Mahadeva, the very *tilak* worn by *mayavadis* consisting of three parallel lines represents only horizontal entanglement in the ever-broadening net of Maya. In their unconscious conundrum of confusion impersonalists find their concocted process confounded by their own consternations. Dimwits who think they have become God can neither supplicate you properly, nor can they imitate your activities. Where is the “Godhood” when fallible replicas linger here doomed to re-cycle in gross ignorance? Though you are the master of material elements, your so-called votaries remain entwined in the very energies they seek to enjoy, like hunters caught in the traps they have set. Yet, because you are the caretaker of the five expanding material elements under Lord Vishnu’s direction, you are worshipped as the *pancha-tattwa lingas*: Ekambareshwara at Kanchi (*prithivi*), Jambukeshwara at Sri Rangam (*jal*), Arunchaleshwara at Thiruvanamallai (*tej*), Sri Kalahasti near Tirupati (*vayu*) and Nataraja at Chidambaram (*akash*).



O Shankar, the Rudra Vaishnava *sampradaya* headed by Sri Vishnuswami descends from you as one of the four bona fide disciplic chains even to this day. Yet, following the direct order of the Personality of Godhead Lord Narayana Himself, you founded the fifth (impersonal) *sampradaya*. You appeared as Sri Shankaracharya and propagated the *asat shastra* of *mayavada* all over India (establishing *maths* at Sringeri, Dwaraka, Badri and Puri). By so doing you repulsed the Buddhists and re-established the Vedic scriptures, paving the way for future world Vaishnavism under the leadership of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

O Maheshwar, greatest of the demi-gods, in your form of Mangalnath you blessed Lords Krishna and Balarama as They attended the *gurukula* of their Guru Maharaja Sri Sandipani Muni at Avantika. There in that ancient town of King Vikramaditya, you are also worshipped alongside the peaceful Kshipra as Mahankaleshwara. In that form you are the mystic lord of time and the position of your *linga* marks the 0° of longitude for the world. With the beat of your *dim-dim* drum you keep track of the ebb and flow of the Universe. The message of the tick tock beating of your drum is that time is

running out for our embodied state (which means that now is the correct time to fully surrender to Krishna.)



O All-seeing Trinayana, in converting the masses to Krishna consciousness, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu visited countless numbers of your temples all over India and millions of your so-called followers fell under the tidal wave of *sankirtan yagna*. At Sri Sailam, He saw you in your form as Lord Mallika Arjuna and there induced all your worshippers to rejoice to the singing of the *mahā-mantra*. Hearing your worshipful Lord



Krishna praised in this way by the Lord Himself in the Form of His Own Devotee how delighted you must have been! Mahaprabhu then proceeded to introduce the *yuga dharma* to your temples of Vriddha Kashi, Shiva Kanchi, Trikalahasti, Pakshi Tirtha, Chidambaram, Gosamaja, Vedavana, Amritalinga, Kumbhakonam, Tanjore and to the shore of the Shiva Ganga.

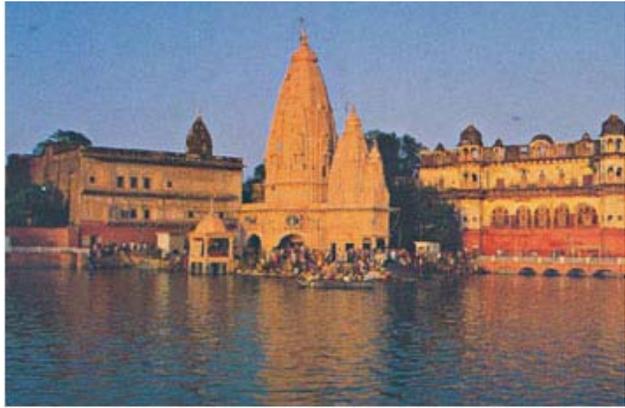
O Lord of Nandi, when Nanda Maharaja desired to move from Gokula to protect his Son, your worshipful Lord, from the wrath of Kamsa, he moved

to the hill between Barsana and Govardhan. That hill is the very incarnation of you and there you protected the Cowherd of Nandagram in your form as Nandishwara.

O Ishwara, though you are always honored as the “greatest of the demi-gods”, you are happiest when your mood of pure devotion to Krishna is recognized. As the supreme Vaishnava, you alone guard the *janma bhumi* of Lord Krishna in the mood of *dig-pala*. In your sacred form of Gokarneshwara you guard the north, as Pipaleshwara you guard the east, as Lord Rangeshwara you guard the south, while your form of Bhuteshwara keeps watch over the western direction of Mathura.

O Ashutosh, you are the supreme devotee and thus you are very easily pleased by the Lord’s devotees. But nowhere else do you give pleasure to the Sri Krishna’s own elects as in Vraja Mandala where you are the guardian of the entire *dham*. In your form as Rangeshwara you witness the destruction of Chanura and Mustika and the killing of Kamsa by the fists of the young bluish-blackish Lad. As Gopishwara you witness from a short distance the *rasa dance* of Madan Mohan and His most intimate associates. As Kameshwara you fulfill the desire of each devotee to serve Sri Krishna in a mood of self-surrendered humility. And as Chattaleshwara you guard the pure devotion of the *dham*.

O Chattaleshwara, you sit in the shadow of Giri Govardhan gazing into the waters of the lake created from the mind of Lord Krishna Himself, the Manasi Ganga. Lord Hari Deva, before Whom Lord Chaitanya danced in ecstasy, stands just opposite the lake from you. Your eternal spouse Parvati in her form of Manasi Devi also meditates upon those waters. As far as this *patita* is concerned, your mood at Manasi Ganga is supreme amongst all your Srines for here you blessed Sri Sanatana Goswami as you both delighted in the never-ending ecstasy of meditating upon Krishna’s pastimes.



O Shiva, this foolish disciple of 108 Sri Srimad Abhaya Charana Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada falls down like a stick before you and begs for your merciful blessings. As this rascal stumbles along the divine

path of Krishna consciousness, please teach me the secret of advancement in *seva* unto Guru and Gauranga in whatever moments this body has left.

This essay is humbly dedicated to “Bhagatji, Sri Srimad Vishwambhar Dayal, who was very dear to Srila Prabhupada and who encouraged and guided all his disciples in the early days of ISKCON Vrindavana. It was he who took me for my first darshan of Lord Chattaleshwara, who is also known as Sri Chakreshwara to the Brijabasis.

Lord Shiva in Jyotish Shastra

Abhaya Mudra Dasi



For many, Pashupatinath of Kathmandu, Nepal is the place of Lord Shiva’s appearance. However, Shiva (being the greatest mystic) his place of appearance and the details of his appearance remain a matter of debate. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala the birth of Lord Shiva is celebrated on *shukla chaturdashi* in the month of Paush, which falls on Ardra *nakshatra*. Some mistakenly think that Shivaratri is the birthday of Lord Shiva. In fact it is Lord Shiva’s favorite day since it was then that he wed Goddess Parvati. Shivaratri falls on the 13th day of *krishna paksha* of Magh month or Shravana *nakshatra*. The observance of this very auspicious day shows that *jyotish* has been used since time immemorial for calculating favorable dates and observing special occasions. It is interesting to mention that this day is even celebrated in accordance to Greek and Thracian mythology and later was transferred into the tradition of the Roman Empire as the day of the fanciful god of nature and wine (*soma-rasa*) Dionysus or Bacchus. This Bacchus is often depicted consuming drinks reminding one of Lord Shiva drinking the poison produced after the churning of the milk ocean. In modern times this celebration was changed St. Valentine’s, or the day of lovers. Hence many present festivities can be traced back to Lord Shiva though Shiva himself remains an enigma.

Rudra is an expansion of Shiva. He is manifested from between the eyebrows of Lord Brahma. Immediately after his manifestation, Rudra demanded to have a name and residency and Brahma gave him eleven names and designated the following places as his dwellings:

The egocentric attitude is a manifestation of the Rudra principle in the heart, wherein anger is generated. This anger develops in the heart and is further manifested through various senses, like the eyes, hands and legs. When a man is angry he expresses such anger with red-hot eyes and sometimes makes a display of clenching his fists or kicking his legs. This exhibition of the Rudra principle is the proof of Rudra's presence in such places. When a man is angry he breathes very rapidly, and thus Rudra is represented in the air of life, or in the activities of breathing. When the sky is overcast with dense clouds and roars in anger, and when the wind blows very fiercely, the Rudra principle is manifested, and so also when the sea water is infuriated by the wind it appears in a gloomy feature of Rudra, which is very fearful to the common man. When fire is ablaze we can also experience the presence of Rudra, and when there is an inundation over the earth we can understand that this is also the representation of Rudra. (SB 3.12.11, purport)

Despite the fact that Rudra is born--or rather manifested from the eyebrows of Brahma--the Lord of destruction is unborn; for how could one who is born (and therefore dies) survive his own destruction of the Universe? Many followers of Shiva worship him in this indestructible form by chanting the *mritunjaya mantra*, lit. "The chant that is victorious death."

The indestructible Lord Shiva bestowed his blessings upon the *nava-grahas* of *jyotish* that they may preside over the fates of all who are born in this universe. Each one of the planetary deities performed his own separate penance near Lord Shiva's *tapo-bhumi*. Mahadeva protected Brihaspati by cursing the Moon on *amavashya tithi*, the day when Lord Chandra stole Tara, the wife of the Deva-guru. To this day those born on *amavashya* may suffer the pangs of the dark lunar phase due to Tara's ordeal at the hands of the Moon god. Nonetheless, Shiva is known as Chandrashekhar because he also favors the Moon god by wearing his crescent as the ornament of his head.

Not only do the *devatas* adore the favors they receive from Lord Shiva, the demons often approach him knowing him to be Ashutosh, easily pleased. Ravana worshiped Shiva and for that was granted *shastric* wisdom and knowledge of *jyotish*. Ravana's astrological compilation is thought to be the legendary *Ravana Samhita*. However, this work is mostly lost as much as the mighty Ravana himself was destroyed by Sri Ram. Some *pandits* have pieced together what they consider what remains of Ravana Samhita, which today is called the *Lal Qui' tab* or red book.

A few combinations in Vedic astrology reveal blessings of Lord Shiva carried here from a previous birth:

Shiva yoga is formed when the lord of the 5th house (*vidya*) is in the 9th house (*dharmā*), the lord of the 9th house is in the 10th house (*karmā*), and the lord of 10th house in the 5th house. The result is that the person will be a big trader, a conqueror and commander of armies. He will also possess divine wisdom and will lead a virtuous life.

Hara yoga is an unusual combination that is formed when there are benefics in the 4th, 8th or 9th houses respectively from the lord of the 7th (ruling partners). If the benefic is Jupiter, the result is happiness; the Moon satisfies mental desires; Venus give pleasures and Mercury appeases obsessions. Overall, *Hara Yoga* gives a fondness for material pleasures and conquest over enemies. In some charts this reveals one who may have supplicated Mahadeva for material benefits and should re-think his priorities (and beg for his devotional blessings) before this human form of life is wasted.

Lord Shiva's dual blessings are described by Srila Prabhupada in his Bhaktivedanta Purports to SB 4.30.2

“Actually, Lord Mahadeva is one of the great demigods within this material world. Generally his blessings bestowed on ordinary people mean material happiness. The predominating deity of this material world, Durga, is under the control of Lord Mahadeva, Girisha. Thus Lord Mahadeva can offer anyone any kind of material happiness. Generally people prefer to become devotees of Lord Girish to obtain material happiness, but the Prachetas met Lord Mahadeva by providential arrangement. Lord Mahadeva instructed them to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he personally offered a prayer. As stated in the previous verse (*rudra-gitena*), simply by chanting the prayers offered by Lord Shiva to Vishnu, the Prachetas were transferred to the spiritual world.”

Though the planetary deities, the *nava-grahas* each seek the blessings of Lord Shiva, as one of the controllers of this material world he quite naturally remains detached from astrology. It is said that once when Lord Siva discovered some astrologers intruding into his personal affairs, he became furious and cursed the astrologers. Since then, due to his wrath, astrologers

cannot interpret horoscopes identically and neither can they ever agree with each other on astrological interpretations. It is no wonder that material learning fails to impress Mahadeva. Shiva is far more pleased by a devotee's service at the feet of the devotee of His worshipful Lord Sri Krishna than he is impressed by mere material knowledge.



Srila Prabhupada in line at Heathrow Airport, London, 1969: “O great soul, all the blessings of each and every one of the demigods are found in the dust of your lotus feet.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

“Self Sufficiency Doesn’t Come Cheap”

Dear Patita Pavana,

Though the Pyramid House is technically in Los Angeles (county), still it has 2 hillside acres which I have cultivated over the decades. Now we have maturing fruit trees of numerous varieties - orange, persimmon, pear, apple, lemon, plum, apricot, guava, olive, tangerine, kumquat, cherry, grape, etc. We also have a vegetable garden and enough oak trees to provide ample fuel for the wood stoves yearly just from dead branches. I recently put in a well that collects the meager, but existing, groundwater, and it pumps to a tank which also stores our gray-water. I add healthy bacteria and use the combination for irrigation because we are in a semi-arid climate. The plants love it.

Additionally, I have 48 solar panels, and a solar hot water collection array. Though we are not energy independent, we could certainly get a lot out of the land - especially if I had more time to dedicate to that endeavor. The Earth reciprocates the effort in direct proportion to the amount of care and love that goes into it. Self-sufficiency doesn't necessarily come cheap; we have had to sacrifice some comforts in order to develop the property in this manner. However, the rewards are more certain than any other investment that I can think of, and the satisfaction derived from working with Mother Bhumi knows no bounds. I can't say that I am living simply - more like I am simply trying to make a living. But working on the land somehow connects me to Srila Prabhupada's instructions for self-sufficiency - words with a double entendre.

It doesn't just mean growing your own food; it is pregnant with the idea that by working in harmony with the elements, we find sufficient pleasure in the self and the Supreme Self.

YS, Nrsimhananda das

Los Angeles

Self-sufficiency is not cheap, but neither is the human form of life. Hopefully your fine example to the devotees--and the world in general--will serve as a lifesaver in the tough times ahead. Thanks, Nrisimhananda Prabhu - Ed.

“Fantastic Horoscope Analysis” of Lord Rama’s Chart

Dear Devotees,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and all the Vaishnava acharyas. Thank you so much for including me in your mailing list for The Astrological Newsletter. I don't know why Krishna has inspired you to include me, as we have never met personally. But somehow, He must have some purpose in inspiring you to send me your newsletter.

I just read the fantastic analysis of Sri Raghunatha's astrological chart, and am charmed by the descriptions of His preeminent character. Jai Sri Rama!

The Kali-yuga predictions are also a good reminder of how we need to put our noses to the grindstone and dedicate ourselves to establishing farm communities.

All glories to your service to Srila Prabhupada's mission!

Your Godsister and aspiring servant,

Phalini dd

Los Angeles

Thank you for allowing us to be in touch with you. It is a privilege to serve you, Phalini devi. -Ed,

“Reliable Service”

Dear Patita Pavana Prabhu,

Namaste. Jaya Radhe, Jaya Shyam, Jaya Krishna Balarama! I appreciate your expertise in Jyotish and your communication with me. I would not be coming to you if I did not have respect for you or your skill in Vedic astrology. You are very prompt and complete, and this is highly commendable. Even in medicine I rarely meet such reliable people as you and Abhay. I could not be more fortunate.

Daso 'smi

M.D.

USA

It is we ourselves who have grown fortunate by your association. -Ed.

Questions / Answers

Dear Patita Pavana Prabhu:

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada. One thing I don't understand. From what I know, the more one is surrendered to Krishna, the more he is free from astrological influences. For example, a person may be destined to be killed in this life, and that is shown in his horoscope chart at birth, but he takes shelter of Krishna in disciplic succession, thus he is saved from the sinful karma. Instead of being killed, he would lose a finger only.

This question has been confusing me for a long time. The choice of surrendering to Krishna or not is not destined, it's our free will. I'm sure. So what's the point of doing astrological predictions for Krishna conscious devotees?

For great personalities like Srila Prabhupada, the predictions based on his birth chart is quite accurate. Srila Prabhupada is *nitya-siddha*, eternally liberated pure devotee. Is it that the astrological chart is automatically adjusted for his birth, his activities, just the same situation as Lord Caitanya?

You're an astrologer as well as a Krishna conscious devotee. I beg you to give me some explanation on this matter, according to Vedic teachings.

Your humble servant

Yeichen Zhang

China

Your understanding overall appears to be accurate, Yeichen. Many sages and renunciates eschew astrology, as we read in the article in this issue by Abhaya Mudra Dasi. Still Prabhupada advised astrological consultation in marriage as seen in the instructions of Lord Brahma and described by Srila Prabhupada in SB 9.18.23 (see <http://www.dandavats.com/?p=8169>). Marriage especially means that there will be some increased effects of the spinning wheel of karma, even if the "fan is unplugged" (to quote a famous example of Guru Maharaja). Also, devotees like to know something of different Vedic sciences, and find many of them useful in devotional service. For example, a rudimentary knowledge of "survival ayurveda" kept me up and running in India for seven years. We present astrology, the world's subtlest material science, in this way as a service to devotees and nothing more. Whereas one should not become an astrology fanatic and divert his mind from Krishna consciousness, still jyotish is invaluable in calculating tithis, fasts, sadesatis, mahadashas, etc. Consider also the story of Gopesh Ohja, who served Prabhupada as an astrologer in Vrindavana. Ohja--himself a Durga worshipper--became a devotee and eventually left this world listening to Prabhupada's bhajans. He came to give benefit, but left himself with the highest benefit. The mind of the pure devotee is deeper than the ocean and his ways are undecipherable. Try to think over these things and give all aspects Krishna consciousness some time. -Ed.

“Loves” the Newsletters

My dear Patita Pavana Prabhu,

I am happy to receive this Newsletter, thanks.

Your servant,

Trivikrama Swami

Florida / E. Europe

Hare Krishna,

I always get pearls of wisdom from qualified devotee Vedic astrologers and

I always love to receive the newsletters.

ys, Yamuna devi dasi

Florida

Thanks, Prabhus. Love is a two-way street! Ed.