

Spiritual Instruction for Vasudeva, and the Return of the Six Dead Sons of Devakī by Lord Kṛṣṇa

Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

- ॐ It is a Vedic custom that the junior members of the family should offer respects to the elders every morning.
- ॐ The children or disciples especially should offer their respects to their parents or spiritual master in the morning.
- ॐ In pursuance of this Vedic principle, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma used to offer Their obeisances to Their parents, Vasudeva and Devakī.
- ॐ One day, after having returned from the sacrificial performances at Kurukṣetra, when Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to offer Their respects to Vasudeva, Vasudeva took the opportunity to appreciate the exalted position of his two sons.
- ॐ Vasudeva had the opportunity to understand the position of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma from the great sages who had assembled in the arena of the sacrifice.
- ॐ Not only did he hear from the sages, but on many occasions he actually experienced that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were not ordinary human beings but were very extraordinary.
- ॐ Thus he believed the words of the sages that his sons Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ With firm faith in his sons, he addressed Them thus:
- ॐ “My dear Kṛṣṇa, You are the sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha [Bs. 5.1] Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ And my dear Balarāma, You are Saṅkarṣaṇa, the master of all mystic powers; therefore I have now understood that You are eternal.
- ॐ Both of You are transcendental to this material manifestation and to its cause, the Supreme Person, Mahā-Viṣṇu.
- ॐ You are the original controller of all.
- ॐ You are the resting place of this cosmic manifestation.
- ॐ You are its creator,
- ॐ and You are also its creative ingredients. Y
- ॐ ou are the master of this cosmic manifestation,
- ॐ and actually this manifestation is created for Your pastimes only.
- ॐ “The different material phases that are manifest from the beginning to the end of the cosmos under different formulas of time are also Your Self because You are both the cause and effect of this manifestation.
- ॐ The two features of this material world, the predominator and the predominated, are also You,
- ॐ and You are the supreme transcendental controller who stands above them.

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- ॐ Therefore, You are beyond the perception of our senses. You are the Supreme Soul, unborn and unchanging.
- ॐ You are not affected by the six kinds of transformations which occur in the material body.
- ॐ The wonderful varieties of this material world are also created by You,
- ॐ and You have entered as the Supersoul into all of them, down to the atom.
- ॐ You are the vital force of all these manifestations and also their supreme cognition.
- ॐ As such, You are the maintainer of everything.
- ॐ “The vital force—the life principle in everything—and the creative force derived from it are not acting independently but are dependent upon You, the Supreme Person behind these forces.
- ॐ Without Your will, they cannot work. Material energy has no cognizance. It cannot act independently, without being agitated by You.
- ॐ Because the material nature is dependent upon You, the living entities can only attempt to act.
- ॐ But without Your sanction and will they cannot perform anything or achieve the results they desire.
- ॐ “The original energy is only an emanation from You.
- ॐ My dear Lord, the shining of the moon, the heat of fire, the rays of the sun, the glittering of the stars, and the electric lightning, which are all manifested as very powerful, as well as the gravity of the mountains and the energy and fragrance of the earth—all are different manifestations of You.
- ॐ The pure taste of water, the water itself and the vital force which maintains all life are also features of Your Lordship.
- ॐ “My dear Lord, although the forces of the senses, the mental power of thinking, willing and feeling,
- ॐ and the strength, movement and growth of the body appear to be performed by different movements of the airs within the body, they are all ultimately manifestations of Your energy.
- ॐ The vast expanse of outer space rests in You.
- ॐ The vibration of the sky (its thunder),
- ॐ the supreme sound (omkāra)
- ॐ and the arrangement of different words to distinguish one thing from another are all symbolic representations of You.
- ॐ The senses, the controllers of the senses (the demigods)
- ॐ and the acquisition of knowledge, which is the purpose of the senses, as well as the subject matter of knowledge—all are You.

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- ॐ The resolution of intelligence and the sharp memory of the living entity are also You.
- ॐ You are the egoistic principle of ignorance, which is the cause of this material world,
- ॐ the egoistic principle of passion, which is the cause of the senses,
- ॐ and the egoistic principle of goodness, which is the origin of the different controlling deities of this material world.
- ॐ The illusory energy, or māyā, which is the cause of the conditioned soul’s perpetual transmigration from one form to another, is You.
- ॐ “My dear Supreme Personality of Godhead, You are the original cause of all causes, exactly as the earth is the original cause of different kinds of trees, plants and similar varieties of manifestation.
- ॐ As the earth is present in everything, so You are present throughout this material manifestation as the Supersoul.
- ॐ You are the supreme cause of all causes, the eternal principle.
- ॐ Everything, in fact, is a manifestation of Your one energy.
- ॐ The three qualities of material nature—sattva, rajas and tamas—and the result of their interaction are linked up with You by Your agency of yogamāyā.
- ॐ They are supposed to be independent, but actually the total material energy rests upon You, the Supersoul.
- ॐ Since You are the supreme cause of everything, the interactions of the material manifestation—birth, growth, existence, transformation, deterioration and annihilation—are all absent in You.
- ॐ Your supreme energy, yogamāyā, is acting in variegated manifestations, but because yogamāyā is Your energy, You are therefore present in everything.”

ॐ *In the Bhagavad-gītā, this fact is very nicely explained in the Ninth Chapter, wherein the Lord says, “In My impersonal form I am spread all over the material energy; everything is resting in Me, but I am not there.” This very statement is also given by Vasudeva. To say that the Lord is not present everywhere means that He is aloof from everything, although His energy is acting everywhere. This can be understood by a crude example: In a big establishment, the energy, or the organization of the supreme boss, is working in every nook and corner of the business, but that does not mean the original proprietor is present there. Although in every department the presence of the proprietor is felt by the worker, the physical presence of the proprietor in every department is a formality only. Actually his energy is working everywhere. Similarly, the omnipresence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is felt in the action of His energies. Therefore the philosophy of inconceivable simultaneous oneness with and difference from the Supreme Lord is confirmed everywhere. The Lord is one, but His energies are diverse.*

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- ॐ Vasudeva said, “This material world is like a great flowing river, and its waves are the three material modes of nature—goodness, passion and ignorance.
- ॐ This material body, as well as the senses, the faculties of thinking, feeling and willing and the stages of distress, happiness, attachment and lust—all are different products of these three qualities of nature.
- ॐ The foolish person who cannot realize Your transcendental identity above all these material reactions continues in the entanglement of fruitive activity and is subjected to the continuous process of birth and death, without a chance of being freed.”
- ॐ *This is confirmed in a different way by the Lord in the Fourth Chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā. There it is said that anyone who knows the appearance and activities of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is freed from the clutches of material nature and goes back home, back to Godhead. Therefore Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental name, form, activities and qualities are not products of this material nature.*
- ॐ “My dear Lord,” Vasudeva continued, “despite all these defects of the conditioned soul, if someone somehow or other comes in contact with devotional service, he achieves the civilized human form of body with developed consciousness and thereby becomes capable of executing further progress in devotional service.
- ॐ And yet, illusioned by the external energy, people generally do not utilize this advantage of the human form of life.
- ॐ Thus they miss the chance of eternal freedom and unnecessarily spoil the progress they have made after thousands of births.
- ॐ “In the bodily concept of life, due to false egotism one is attached to the offspring of the body, and thus everyone in conditioned life is entrapped by false relationships and false affection.
- ॐ The whole world is moving under this false impression and suffering material bondage.
- ॐ I know that neither of You is my son;
- ॐ both of You are the original chief and progenitor, the Personality of Godhead, the Puruṣa with pradhāna.
- ॐ But You have appeared on the surface of this globe to minimize the burden of the world by killing the kṣatriya kings who are unnecessarily increasing their military strength.
- ॐ You have already informed me about this in the past.
- ॐ My dear Lord, You are the shelter of the surrendered soul, the supreme well-wisher of the meek and humble.
- ॐ I am therefore taking shelter of Your lotus feet, which alone can give one liberation from the entanglement of material existence.
- ॐ “For a long time I have simply considered this body to be myself, and although You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I have considered You my son.

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- ॐ My dear Lord, at the very moment when You first appeared in Kāmsa’s prison house, You informed me that You were the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that You had descended for the protection of the principles of religion as well as the destruction of the unfaithful.
- ॐ Although unborn, You descend in every millennium to execute Your mission.
- ॐ My dear Lord, as in the sky there are many forms, appearing and disappearing, You also appear in many eternal forms and then disappear.
- ॐ Who, therefore, can understand Your pastimes or the mystery of Your appearance and disappearance?
- ॐ Our only business should be to glorify Your supreme greatness.”
- ॐ When Vasudeva was addressing his divine sons in that way, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were smiling.
- ॐ Because They are very affectionate to Their devotees, They accepted all the appreciation of Vasudeva with a kindly, smiling attitude.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa then confirmed all of Vasudeva’s statements as follows:
- ॐ “My dear father, whatever you may say, We are, after all, your sons.
- ॐ What you have said about Us is certainly a highly philosophical understanding of spiritual knowledge.
- ॐ I accept it in toto, without exception.”
- ॐ *Vasudeva was in the complete perfection of life in considering Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to be his sons, but because the sages assembled in the place of pilgrimage at Kurukṣetra had spoken about the Lord as the supreme cause of everything, Vasudeva simply repeated it out of his love for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not wish to detract from His relationship with Vasudeva as father and son; therefore in the very beginning of His reply He accepted the fact that He is the eternal son of Vasudeva and that Vasudeva is the eternal father of Kṛṣṇa. After this, Lord Kṛṣṇa informed His father of the spiritual identity of all living entities.*
- ॐ He continued: “My dear father, everyone and everything, including Me and My brother Balarāma, as well as all the inhabitants of the city of Dvārakā and the whole cosmic manifestation, are exactly as you have already explained,
- ॐ but all of us are also qualitatively one.”
- ॐ *Lord Kṛṣṇa intended for Vasudeva to see everything with the vision of a mahā-bhāgavata, a first-class devotee, who sees that all living entities are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and that the Supreme Lord is situated in everyone’s heart. In fact, every living entity has a spiritual identity, but in*

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contact with material existence he becomes influenced by the material modes of nature. He becomes covered by the concept of bodily life, forgetting that his spirit soul is of the same quality as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One mistakenly considers one individual to be different from another simply because of their material bodily coverings. Because of differences between bodies, the spirit soul appears before us differently.

ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa then gave a nice example in terms of the five material elements.

ॐ *The total material elements, namely the sky, air, fire, water and earth, are present in everything in the material world, whether in an earthen pot or in a mountain or in the trees or in an earring. These five elements are present in everything, in different proportions and quantities. A mountain is a gigantic form of the combination of these five elements, and a small earthen pot is made of the same elements, but in a smaller quantity. Therefore all material items, although in different shapes or different quantities, are of the same ingredients. Similarly, the living entities—beginning from Lord Kṛṣṇa and including millions of Viṣṇu forms, and also the living entities in different forms, from Lord Brahmā down to the small ant—are all of the same spiritual quality. Some are great in quantity, and some are small, but qualitatively they are of the same nature. It is therefore confirmed in the Upaniṣads that Kṛṣṇa, or the Supreme Lord, is the chief among all living entities and that He maintains them and supplies them with all necessities of life. Anyone who knows this philosophy is in perfect knowledge. The Vedic version *tat tvam asi*, “Thou art the same,” means not that everyone is God but that everyone is qualitatively of the same nature as God.*

ॐ After hearing Kṛṣṇa speak the entire philosophy of spiritual life in an abbreviated summation, Vasudeva was exceedingly pleased with his son.

ॐ Being thus elated, he could not speak but remained silent.

ॐ In the meantime, Devakī, the mother of Lord Kṛṣṇa, sat by the side of her husband.

ॐ Previously she had heard that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were so kind to Their teacher that They had brought back the teacher’s dead son from the clutches of the superintendent of death, Yamarāja.

ॐ Since she had heard of this incident, she had also been thinking of her own sons who were killed by Kāmsa, and while remembering them she was overwhelmed with grief.

ॐ Out of compassion for her dead sons, Devakī appealed to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma thus:

ॐ “My dear Balarāma, Your very name suggests that You give all pleasure and all strength to everyone.

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- ॐ Your unlimited potency is beyond the reach of our minds and words. And, my dear Kṛṣṇa, You are the master of all mystic yogīs.
- ॐ I know that You are the master of the Prajāpatis like Brahmā and his assistants,
ॐ and You are the original Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa.
- ॐ I also know for certain that You have descended to annihilate all kinds of miscreants who have been misled in the course of time.
- ॐ They have lost control of their minds and senses, have fallen from the quality of goodness and have deliberately neglected the direction of the revealed scriptures by living a life of extravagance and impudence.
- ॐ You have descended on the earth to minimize the burden of the world by killing such miscreant rulers.
- ॐ My dear Kṛṣṇa, I know that Mahā-Viṣṇu, who is lying in the Causal Ocean of the cosmic manifestation and who is the source of this whole creation, is simply an expansion of Your plenary portion.
- ॐ The creation, maintenance and annihilation of this cosmic manifestation are effected only by Your plenary portion. I therefore take shelter of You without reservation.
- ॐ I have heard that when You wanted to reward Your teacher, Sāndīpani Muni,
ॐ and he asked You to bring back his dead son, You and Balarāma immediately brought him from the custody of Yamarāja,
ॐ although he had been dead for a very long time.
ॐ By this act I understand You to be the supreme master of all mystic yogīs.
ॐ I therefore ask You to fulfill my desire in the same way.
ॐ In other words, I am asking You to bring back all my sons who were killed by Kāmsa;
ॐ upon Your bringing them back, my heart will be content,
ॐ and it will be a great pleasure for me just to see them once.”
- ॐ After hearing Their mother speak in this way, Lord Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa immediately called for the assistance of yogamāyā and started for the lower planetary system known as Sūtala.
- ॐ *Formerly, in His incarnation of Vāmana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead had been satisfied by the King of the demons, Bali Mahārāja, who donated to Him everything he had. Bali Mahārāja was then given the whole of Sūtala for his residence and kingdom.*
- ॐ Now when this great devotee, Bali Mahārāja, saw that Lord Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa had come to his planet, he immediately merged in an ocean of happiness.
- ॐ As soon as he saw Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in his presence, he and all his family members stood up from their seats and bowed down at the lotus feet of the Lords.
- ॐ Bali Mahārāja offered Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma the best seat he had in his possession,

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- ॐ and when both Lords were seated comfortably, he began to wash Their lotus feet.
- ॐ He then sprinkled the water on his head and on the heads of his family members.
- ॐ The water used to wash the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma can purify even the greatest demigods, such as Lord Brahmā.
- ॐ After this, Bali Mahārāja brought valuable garments, ornaments, sandalwood pulp, betel nuts, lamps and various nectarean foods, and along with his family members he worshiped the Lords according to the regulative principles and offered his riches and body unto Their lotus feet.
- ॐ King Bali was feeling such transcendental pleasure that he repeatedly grasped the Lords' lotus feet and kept them on his chest,
- ॐ and sometimes he put them on the top of his head.
- ॐ In this way he felt transcendental bliss.
- ॐ Tears of love and affection began to flow from his eyes,
- ॐ and all his bodily hairs stood on end.
- ॐ He began to offer prayers to the Lords in a voice which choked up intermittently.
- ॐ “My Lord Balarāma, You are the original Anantadeva.
- ॐ You are so great that Anantadeva Śeṣa and other transcendental forms have originally emanated from You.
- ॐ And You, Lord Kṛṣṇa, are the original Personality of Godhead, with an eternal form that is all-blissful and full of complete knowledge.
- ॐ You are the creator of the whole world. You are the original initiator and propounder of the systems of jñāna-yoga and bhakti-yoga.
- ॐ You are the Supreme Brahman, the original Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ I therefore with all respect offer my obeisances unto both of You.
- ॐ My dear Lords, it is very difficult for the living entities to get to see You, yet when You are merciful upon Your devotees You are easy for them to see.
- ॐ As such, only out of Your causeless mercy have You agreed to come here and be visible to us, who are generally influenced by the qualities of ignorance and passion.
- ॐ “My dear Lord, we belong to the daitya, or demon, category.
- ॐ The demons or demoniac persons—the Gandharvas, the Siddhas, the Vidyādhara, the Cāraṇas, the Yakṣas, the Rākṣasas, the Piśācas, the ghosts and the hobgoblins—are by nature incapable of worshiping You or becoming Your devotees.
- ॐ Instead of becoming Your devotees, they are simply impediments on the path of devotion.

- ॐ But You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, representing all the Vedas, and are situated in the mode of uncontaminated goodness. Your position is always transcendental.
- ॐ For this reason, some of us, although born of the modes of passion and ignorance, have taken shelter of Your lotus feet and have become devotees.
- ॐ Some of us are actually pure devotees, and some of us have taken shelter of Your lotus feet because we desire to gain something from devotion.
- ॐ “By Your causeless mercy only are we demons in direct contact with Your personality. This contact is not possible even for the great demigods.
- ॐ No one knows how You act through Your yogamāyā potency.
- ॐ Even demigods cannot calculate the expanse of the activities of Your internal potency,
- ॐ so how is it possible for us to know it?
- ॐ I therefore place my humble prayers before You:
- ॐ Please be kind to me, who am fully surrendered unto You,
- ॐ and favor me with Your causeless mercy so that I may simply remember Your lotus feet, birth after birth.
- ॐ My only ambition is that I may live alone just like the paramahāṁsas who travel alone here and there in great peace of mind, depending simply upon Your lotus feet.
- ॐ I also desire that if I have to associate with anyone, I may associate only with Your pure devotees and no one else, for Your pure devotees are always well-wishers of all living entities.
- ॐ “My dear Lord, You are the supreme master and director of the whole world.
- ॐ Please, therefore, engage me in Your service and let me thus become free from all material contaminations.
- ॐ You can purify me in that way because if someone engages himself in the loving service of Your Lordship, he is immediately freed from all kinds of regulative principles enjoined in the Vedas.”

ॐ *The word paramahāṁsa mentioned here means “the supreme swan.” It is said that the swan can draw milk from a mixture of milk and water; it can take only the milk portion and reject the watery portion. Similarly, a person who can draw out the spiritual portion from this material world and who can live alone, depending only on the Supreme Spirit, not on the material world, is called a paramahāṁsa. When one achieves the paramahāṁsa platform, he is no longer under the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions. A paramahāṁsa accepts only the association of pure devotees and rejects others, who are too much materially addicted. In other words, those who are materially addicted cannot understand the value of the paramahāṁsa, but*

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those who are fortunate—who are advanced in a spiritual sense—take shelter of the paramahansa and successfully complete the mission of human life.

- ॐ After Lord Kṛṣṇa heard the prayers of Bali Mahārāja, He spoke as follows:
- ॐ “My dear King of the demons, in the millennium of Svāyambhuva Manu, the Prajāpati known as Marīci begot six sons, all demigods, in the womb of his wife, Ūṛṇā.
- ॐ Once upon a time, Lord Brahmā became captivated by the beauty of his daughter and was following her, impelled by sex desire.
- ॐ At that time, these six demigods looked at the action of Lord Brahmā with abhorrence.
- ॐ This criticism of Brahma’s action by the demigods constituted a great offense on their part, and for this reason they were condemned to take birth as the sons of the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu.
- ॐ These sons of Hiraṇyakaśipu were thereafter put into the womb of mother Devakī, and as soon as they took their birth Kāṁsa killed them one after another.
- ॐ My dear King of the demons, mother Devakī is very anxious to see these six dead sons again, and she is very much aggrieved on account of their early death at the hand of Kāṁsa.
- ॐ I know that all of them are living with you.
- ॐ I have decided to take them with Me to pacify My mother, Devakī.
- ॐ After seeing My mother, all six of these conditioned souls will be liberated,
- ॐ and thus in great pleasure they will be transferred to their original planet.
- ॐ The names of these six conditioned souls are as follows:
- | | | |
|------------|---------------|--------------|
| ॐ Smara, | ॐ Pariṣvaṅga, | ॐ Kṣudrabhṛt |
| ॐ Udgītha, | ॐ Pataṅga, | ॐ and Ghṛṇī. |
- ॐ They will be reinstated in their former position as demigods.”
- ॐ After thus informing the King of the demons, Kṛṣṇa stopped speaking,
- ॐ and Bali Mahārāja understood the Lord’s purpose.
- ॐ He worshiped the Lord sufficiently, and thereafter Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma took away the six conditioned souls and returned to the city of Dvārakā, where Lord Kṛṣṇa presented them as little babies before His mother, Devakī.
- ॐ Mother Devakī was overwhelmed with joy and was so ecstatic in motherly feeling that milk immediately began to flow from her breasts, and she fed the babies with great satisfaction.
- ॐ She took them on her lap again and again, smelling their heads and thinking,
- ॐ “I have gotten my lost children back!”
- ॐ For the time being she was overpowered by the energy of Viṣṇu,

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- ॐ and in great motherly affection she enjoyed the company of her lost children.
- ॐ The milk from the breasts of Devakī was transcendental nectar because the same milk had been sucked by Lord Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ As such, the babies who sucked the breasts of Devakījī, which had touched the body of Lord Kṛṣṇa, immediately became self-realized persons.
- ॐ The babies therefore began to offer their obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, their father Vasudeva and their mother Devakī.
- ॐ After this, they were immediately transferred to their respective heavenly planets.
- ॐ After they departed, Devakī was stunned with wonder that her dead children had come back and had again been transferred to their respective planets.
- ॐ She could adjust the events only by thinking that Lord Kṛṣṇa can perform anything wonderful in His pastimes because His potencies are all inconceivable.
- ॐ *Without accepting the inconceivable, unlimited potencies of the Lord, one cannot understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Soul. By His unlimited potencies He performs unlimited pastimes, and no one can describe them in full, nor can anyone know them all. Sūta Gosvāmī, speaking Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam before the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya, headed by Śaunaka Ṛṣi, gave his verdict in this connection as follows.*
- ॐ “Great sages, please understand that the transcendental pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa are all eternal.
- ॐ They are not ordinary narrations of historical incidents.
- ॐ Such narrations are identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.
- ॐ Anyone, therefore, who hears such narrations of the Lord’s pastimes is immediately freed from the contamination of material existence.
- ॐ And those who are pure devotees enjoy these narrations as nectar entering into their ears.”
- ॐ *Such narrations were spoken by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the exalted son of Vyāsadeva, and anyone who hears them, as well as anyone who repeats them for the hearing of others, becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious. And only the Kṛṣṇa conscious persons are eligible to go back home, back to Godhead.*