

Description is found  
Srimad Bhagavatam  
(Krishna Book)

### Prayers by the Personified Vedas continued

- ॐ The Vedas personified continued.
- ॐ “Dear Lord,” they prayed, “You are equal to all, with no partiality toward a particular type of living entity.
- ॐ It is due to their own material desires that all living entities enjoy or suffer in different conditions of life.
- ॐ As Your parts and parcels, they are just like the sparks of a fire.
- ॐ Just as sparks dance in a blazing fire, all living entities are dancing on Your support.
- ॐ You are providing them with everything they desire,
- ॐ and yet You are not responsible for their position of enjoyment or suffering.
- ॐ There are different types of living entities—demigods, human beings, animals, trees, birds, beasts, germs, worms, insects and aquatics—and all enjoy or suffer in life while resting on You.”

ॐ *The living entities are of two kinds: one class is called nitya-mukta, ever liberated, and the other is called nitya-baddha, ever conditioned. The nitya-mukta living entities are in the spiritual kingdom, and the nitya-baddhas are in the material world. In the spiritual world both the living entities and the Lord are manifest in their original status, like live sparks in a blazing fire. But in the material world, although the Lord is all-pervasive in His impersonal feature, the living entities have forgotten their Kṛṣṇa consciousness to a greater or lesser degree, just as sparks sometimes fall from a blazing fire and lose their original brilliant condition. The sparks fall into different conditions and retain more or less of their original brilliance. Some sparks fall onto dry grass and thus ignite another big fire. This is a reference to the pure devotees who take compassion on the poor and innocent living entities. The pure devotee ignites Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the hearts of the conditioned souls, and thus the blazing fire of the spiritual world becomes manifest even within this material world. Some sparks fall onto water; they immediately lose their original brilliance and become extinct. They are comparable to the living entities who take their birth in the midst of gross materialists, in which case their original Kṛṣṇa consciousness becomes extinct. Some sparks fall to the ground and remain midway between the blazing and extinct conditions. Thus some living entities are without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, some are between having and not having Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and some are actually situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The demigods in the higher planets—Lord Brahmā, Indra, Candra, the sun-god and various other demigods—are all Kṛṣṇa conscious. Human society is between the demigods and the animals, and thus some are more or less Kṛṣṇa conscious, and some are completely forgetful of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The third-grade living entities, namely the animals, beasts, plants, trees and aquatics, have completely forgotten Kṛṣṇa*

consciousness. This example stated in the Vedas regarding the sparks of a blazing fire is very appropriate for understanding the condition of different types of living entities. But above all other living entities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, or Puruṣottama, who is always liberated from all material conditions.

ॐ The question may be raised as to why the living entities have fallen by chance into different conditions of life. To answer this question, we first have to understand that there cannot be any influence of chance for the living entities; chance is for nonliving entities. According to the Vedic literature, living entities have knowledge, and thus they are called *cetana*, which means “in knowledge.” Their situation in different conditions of life, therefore, is not accidental. It is by their choice, because they have knowledge. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says, “Give up everything and just surrender unto Me.” This process of realizing the Supreme Personality of Godhead is open for everyone, but still it is the choice of the particular living entity whether to accept or reject this proposal. In the last portion of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa very plainly says to Arjuna, “My dear Arjuna, now I have spoken everything to you. Now you may choose to accept it or not.” Similarly, the living entities who have come down to this material world have made their own choice to enjoy this material world. It is not that Kṛṣṇa sent them into this world. The material world was created for the enjoyment of living entities who wanted to give up the eternal service of the Lord to become the supreme enjoyer themselves. According to Vaiṣṇava philosophy, when a living entity desires to gratify his senses and forgets the service of the Lord, he is given a place in the material world to act freely according to his desire, and therefore he creates a condition of life in which he either enjoys or suffers. We should definitely know that both the Lord and the living entities are eternally cognizant. There is no birth and death for either the Lord or the living entities. When creation takes place, this does not mean that the living entities are created. The Lord creates the material world to give the conditioned souls a chance to elevate themselves to the higher platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If a conditioned soul does not take advantage of this opportunity, after the dissolution of this material world he enters into the body of *Nārāyaṇa* and remains there in deep sleep until the time of another creation.

ॐ In this connection the example of the rainy season is very appropriate. Seasonal rainfall may be taken as the agent for creation because after the rainfall the wet fields are favorable for growing different types of vegetation. Similarly, as soon as there is creation by the Lord’s glancing over the material nature, immediately the living entities spring up in their different living conditions, just as different types of vegetation grow after a rainfall. The rainfall is one, but the creation of the different plants is varied. The rain falls

*equally on the whole field, but the different plants sprout up in different shapes and forms according to the seeds planted. Similarly, the seeds of our desires are varied. Every living entity has a different type of desire, and that desire is the seed which causes his growth in a certain type of body. This is explained by Rūpa Gosvāmī by the word pāpa-bīja. Pāpa means “sinful.” All our material desires are to be taken as pāpa-bīja, or the seeds of sinful desires. The Bhagavad-gītā explains that our sinful desire is that we do not surrender unto the Supreme Lord. The Lord therefore says in the Bhagavad-gītā, “I shall give you protection from the reactions of sinful desires.” These sinful desires are manifested in different types of bodies; therefore, no one can accuse the Supreme Lord of partiality in giving one type of body to a certain type of living entity and another type of body to another living entity. All the bodies of the 8,400,000 species are created according to the mental condition of the individual living entities. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Puruṣottama, only gives them a chance to act according to their desires. Therefore, the living entities act by taking advantage of the facility given by the Lord.*

ॐ *At the same time, the living entities are born from the transcendental body of the Lord. This relationship between the Lord and the living entities is explained in the Vedic literature, wherein it is said that the Supreme Lord maintains all His children, giving them whatever they want. Similarly, in the Bhagavad-gītā the Lord says, “I am the seed-giving father of all living entities.” It is very simple to understand that the father gives birth to the children but the children act according to their own desires. Therefore the father is never responsible for the different futures of his children. Each child can take advantage of the father’s property and instruction, but even though the inheritance and instruction may be the same for all the children, out of their different desires each child creates a different life and thereby suffers or enjoys.*

ॐ *Similarly, the Bhagavad-gītā’s instructions are equal for everyone: everyone should surrender unto the Supreme Lord, and He will take charge of one and protect one from sinful reactions. The facilities of living in the creation of the Lord are equally offered to all living entities. Whatever there is, either on the land, in the water or in the sky, is equally given to all living entities. Since all living beings are sons of the Supreme Lord, everyone can enjoy the material facilities given by the Lord, but unfortunate living entities create unfavorable conditions of life by fighting among themselves. The responsibility for this fighting and creating favorable and unfavorable situations lies with the living entities, not with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, if the living entities take advantage of the Lord’s instructions as given in the Bhagavad-*

*gītā and develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then their lives become sublime, and they can go back to Godhead.*

- ॐ One may argue that because this material world is created by the Lord, He is therefore responsible for its condition. Certainly He is indirectly responsible for the creation and maintenance of this material world, but He is never responsible for the different conditions of the living entities. The Lord's creation of this material world is compared to a cloud's creation of vegetation. In the rainy season the cloud creates different varieties of vegetation. The cloud pours water on the surface of the earth, but it never touches the earth directly. Similarly, the Lord creates this material world simply by glancing over the material energy. This is confirmed in the Vedas: "He threw His glance over the material nature, and thus there was creation." In the Bhagavad-gītā it is also confirmed that simply by His transcendental glance over the material nature, He creates different varieties of entities, both movable and immovable, living and dead.
- ॐ The creation of the material world can therefore be taken as one of the pastimes of the Lord; it is called one of the Lord's pastimes because He creates this material world whenever He desires. This desire of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also extreme mercy on His part because it gives the conditioned souls another chance to develop their original consciousness and thus go back to Godhead. Therefore no one can blame the Supreme Lord for creating this material world.
- ॐ From the subject matter under discussion, we can gain a clear understanding of the difference between the impersonalists and the personalists. The impersonal conception recommends merging into the existence of the Supreme, and the voidist philosophy recommends making all material varieties void. Both these philosophies are known as Māyāvāda. Certainly the cosmic manifestation comes to a close and becomes void when the living entities merge into the body of Nārāyaṇa to rest until another creation, and this may be called an impersonal condition, but these conditions are never eternal. The cessation of the variegatedness of the material world and the merging of the living entities into the body of the Supreme are not permanent because the creation will take place again, and the living entities who merged into the body of the Supreme without having developed their Kṛṣṇa consciousness will again appear in this material world when there is another creation. The Bhagavad-gītā confirms the fact that this material world is created and annihilated perpetually and that conditioned souls without Kṛṣṇa consciousness come back again and again, whenever the material creation is manifest. If such conditioned souls take advantage of this opportunity and develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the direct instruction of the Lord, then they are transferred to the spiritual world and do not have to come back to the

material creation. It is said, therefore, that the voidists and the impersonalists are not very intelligent because they do not take shelter under the lotus feet of the Lord. Because they are less intelligent, these voidists and impersonalists take to different types of austerities, either to attain the stage of nirvāṇa, which means finishing the material conditions of life, or to attain oneness by merging into the body of the Lord. All of them again fall down because they neglect the lotus feet of the Lord.

ॐ In the Caitanya-caritāmṛta, the author, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, after studying all the Vedic literature and hearing from all authorities, has given his opinion that Kṛṣṇa is the only supreme master and that all living entities are His eternal servants. His statement is confirmed in the prayers by the personified Vedas. The conclusion is, therefore, that everyone is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, everyone is serving under the supreme direction of the Lord, and everyone is afraid of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is out of fear of Him that activities are rightly executed. Everyone's position is to be subordinate to the Supreme Lord, yet the Lord has no partiality in His view of the living entities. He is just like the unlimited sky; as the sparks of a fire dance in the fire, similarly, all living entities are like birds flying in the unlimited sky of the Supreme Lord. Some of them are flying very high, some are flying at a lower altitude, and some are flying at a still lower altitude. The different birds are flying in different positions according to their respective abilities, but the sky has nothing to do with this ability. In the Bhagavad-gītā the Lord confirms that He awards different positions to different living entities in proportion to their surrender. This proportionate reward by the Personality of Godhead to the living entities is not partiality. Therefore, in spite of the living entities' always being under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in their different positions, spheres and species of life, He is never responsible for their different living conditions. It is foolish and artificial, therefore, to think oneself equal to the Supreme Lord, and it is still more foolish to think that one has not seen God. Everyone is seeing God according to his capacity; the only difference is that the theist sees God as the Supreme Personality, the most beloved, Kṛṣṇa, and the atheist sees the Absolute Truth as ultimate death.

ॐ The personified Vedas continued to pray.

ॐ “Dear Lord,” they said, “from all Vedic information it is understood that You are the supreme controller and all living entities are controlled.

ॐ Both the Lord and the living entities are called nitya, eternal, and so are qualitatively one, yet the singular nitya, or the Supreme Lord, is the controller, whereas the plural nityas are controlled.

- ॐ The individual controlled living entity resides within the body, and the supreme controller, as Supersoul, is also present there, but the Supersoul controls the individual soul.
- ॐ That is the verdict of the Vedas.
- ॐ If the individual soul were not controlled by the Supersoul, then how could one explain the Vedic version that a living entity transmigrates from one body to another and enjoys or suffers the effects of his past deeds, sometimes being promoted to a higher standard of life and sometimes being degraded to a lower standard?
- ॐ Thus the conditioned souls are not only under the control of the Supreme Lord but are also conditioned by the control of the material nature.
- ॐ This relationship of the living entities with the Supreme Lord as the controlled and the controller definitely proves that although the Supersoul is all-pervasive, the individual living entities are never all-pervasive.
- ॐ If the individual souls were all-pervasive, there would be no question of their being controlled.
- ॐ The theory that the Supersoul and the individual soul are equal is therefore a polluted conclusion,
- ॐ and no sensible person accepts it; rather, one should try to understand the distinctions between the supreme eternal and the subordinate eternal.”
- ॐ The personified Vedas therefore concluded, “O Lord, You are the unlimited eternal (dhruva), and the living entities are the limited eternal.”

ॐ *The form of the unlimited eternal is sometimes conceived as the universal form, and in the Vedic literatures like the Upaniṣads the form of the limited eternal is vividly described. It is said therein that the original, spiritual form of the living entity is one ten-thousandth the size of the tip of a hair. It is also stated that spirit is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest. The individual living entities, who are eternally part and parcel of God, are smaller than the smallest. With our material senses we can perceive neither the Supreme, who is greater than the greatest, nor the individual soul, who is smaller than the smallest. We have to understand both Him who is greater than the greatest and him who is smaller than the smallest from the authoritative sources of Vedic literature. The Vedic literature states that the Supersoul is sitting within the heart of every living entity’s body and is as big as a thumb. Therefore the argument may be put forward, How can something the size of a thumb be accommodated within the heart of an ant? The answer is that this thumb measurement of the Supersoul is imagined in proportion to the body of the living entity. In no circumstance, therefore, can the Supersoul and the individual living entity be taken as one, although both of them enter within the material body of a living entity. The Supersoul lives within the heart to direct or control the individual living entity. Although both are*

*dhruva, or eternal, the living entity is always under the direction of the Supreme.*

ॐ *It may be argued that because the living entities are born of the material nature they are all equal and independent. In the Vedic literature, however, it is said that the Supreme Personality of Godhead impregnates the material nature with the living entities and then they come out. Therefore, the appearance of the individual living entities is not factually due to material nature alone, just as a child produced by a woman is not her independent production. A woman is first impregnated by a man, and then a child is produced. As such, the child produced by the woman is part and parcel of the man. Similarly, the living entities are apparently produced by the material nature, but not independently. It is due to the impregnation of the material nature by the supreme father that the living entities are present. Therefore the argument that the individual living entities are not parts and parcels of the Supreme cannot stand. For example, the different parts of the body cannot be taken as equal to the whole; rather, the whole body is the controller of the different limbs. Similarly, the parts and parcels of the supreme whole are always dependent and are always controlled by the source of the parts and parcels. It is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā that the living entities are parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa: mamaivāṁśaḥ. No sane man, therefore, will accept the theory that the Supersoul and the individual soul are of the same category. They are equal in quality, but quantitatively the Supersoul is always the Supreme, and the individual soul is always subordinate to the Supersoul. That is the conclusion of the Vedas.*

ॐ *The significant word used in this connection is yan-maya, or cin-maya. In Sanskrit grammar, the word mayat is used in the sense of “transformation,” and also in the sense of “sufficiency.” The Māyāvādī philosophers interpret that the word yan-maya, or cin-maya, indicates that the living entity is always equal to the Supreme. But one has to consider whether this affix, mayat, is used for “sufficiency” or for “transformation.” The living entity never possesses anything exactly in the same proportion as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, this mayat affix cannot be used to mean that the individual living entity is sufficient. The individual living entity never has sufficient knowledge; otherwise, how could he have come under the control of māyā, or the material energy? The word “sufficient” can be accepted, therefore, only in proportion to the magnitude of the living entity. The spiritual oneness of the Supreme Lord and the living entities is never to be accepted as homogeneity. Each and every living entity is individual. If homogeneous oneness is accepted, then by the liberation of one individual soul, all other individual souls would have been liberated immediately. But the*

fact is that every individual soul is differently enjoying and suffering in the material world.

- ॐ As mentioned above, the word *mayaṭ* is also used in the sense of “transformation”; sometimes it is also used to mean “by-product.” The impersonalist theory is that Brahman Himself has accepted different types of bodies and that this is His *līlā*, or pastime. There are, however, many hundreds and thousands of species of life in different standards of living conditions, such as human beings, demigods, animals, birds and beasts, and if all of them were plenary expansions of the Supreme Absolute Truth, then there would be no question of liberation, because Brahman would already be liberated. Another interpretation put forward by the *Māyāvādīs* is that in every millennium different types of bodies are manifest, and when the millennium is closed all the different bodies or expansions of Brahman automatically become one, ending all different manifestations. Then in the next millennium, according to this theory, Brahman again expands in different bodily forms. If we accept this theory, then Brahman becomes subject to change. But this cannot be accepted. From the *Vedānta-sūtra* we understand that Brahman is by nature joyful. He cannot, therefore, change Himself into a body which is subject to so many painful conditions. Actually, the living entities are infinitesimal parts and parcels of Brahman, and as such they are prone to be covered by the illusory energy. As explained before, the particles of Brahman are like sparks blissfully dancing within a fire, but there is a chance of their falling from the fire to smoke, although smoke is another condition of fire. This material world is just like smoke, and the spiritual world is like a blazing fire. The innumerable living entities are prone to fall down to the material world from the spiritual world when influenced by the illusory energy, and it is also possible for the living entity to be liberated again when by cultivation of real knowledge he becomes completely freed from the contamination of the material world.
- ॐ The theory of the *asuras* is that the living entities are born of material nature, or *prakṛti*, in touch with the *puruṣa*. This theory also cannot be accepted, because both the material nature and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are eternally existing. Neither the material nature nor the Supreme Personality of Godhead can be born. The Supreme Lord is known as *aja*, or unborn. Similarly, the material nature is called *ajā*. Both these terms, *aja* and *ajā*, mean “unborn.” Because both the material nature and the Supreme Lord are unborn, it is not possible that they can beget the living entities. But it is accepted in the Vedic literature that as water in contact with air sometimes presents innumerable bubbles, so a combination of the material nature and the Supreme Person causes the appearance of the living entities within this material world. As bubbles in the water appear in different shapes, the living



*entities also appear in the material world in different shapes and conditions, influenced by the modes of material nature. As such, it is not improper to conclude that the living entities appearing within this material world in different shapes, such as human beings, demigods, animals, birds and beasts, all get their respective bodies due to different desires. No one can say when such desires were awakened in them, and therefore it is said, anādi-karma: the cause of such material existence is untraceable. No one knows when material life began, but it is a fact that it does have a point of beginning because originally every living entity is a spiritual spark. As a spark's falling onto the ground from a fire has a beginning, so a living entity's coming to this material world has a beginning, but no one can say when. Even though during the time of dissolution all the conditioned living entities remain merged within the spiritual existence of the Lord, as if in deep sleep, their original desires to lord it over the material nature do not subside. Again, when there is cosmic manifestation, they come out to fulfill the same desires, and therefore they appear in different species of life.*

ॐ *The living entities merged into the Supreme at the time of dissolution are compared to honey. In the honeycomb, the tastes of different flowers are conserved. When one drinks honey, one cannot distinguish what sort of honey has been collected from what sort of flower, but the palatable taste of the honey presupposes that the honey is not homogeneous but is a combination of different tastes. Another example is that although different rivers ultimately mix with the water of the sea, this does not mean that the individual identities of the rivers are thereby lost. Although the water of the Ganges and the water of the Yamunā mix with the water of the sea, the river Ganges and river Yamunā still continue to exist independently. The merging of different living entities into Brahman at the time of dissolution involves the dissolution of different types of bodies, but the living entities, along with their different tastes, remain individually submerged in Brahman until another manifestation of the material world. As the salty taste of seawater and the sweet taste of Ganges water are different and this difference continuously exists, so the difference between the Supreme Lord and the living entities continuously exists, even though at the time of dissolution they appear to merge. The conclusion is, therefore, that even when the living entities become free from all contamination of material conditions and merge into the spiritual kingdom, their individual tastes in relationship with the Supreme Lord continue to exist.*

ॐ *The personified Vedas continued: “Dear Lord, it is therefore our conclusion that all living entities are attracted by Your material energy, and only due to their mistakenly identifying themselves as products of the material nature are they transmigrating from one kind of body to another in forgetfulness of their eternal relationship with You.*

- ॐ Because of ignorance, these living entities misidentify themselves in different species of life, and especially when elevated to the human form of life, they identify with a particular class of men, or a particular nation or race or so-called religion, forgetting their real identity as eternal servants of Your Lordship.
- ॐ Due to this faulty conception of life, they are undergoing repeated birth and death.
- ॐ Out of many millions of them, if one becomes intelligent enough by associating with pure devotees, he comes to the understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and comes out of the jurisdiction of the material misconception.”
- ॐ *In the Caitanya-caritāmṛta it is confirmed by Lord Caitanya that the living entities are wandering within this universe in different species of life, but that if one of them becomes intelligent enough, by the mercy of the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, then he begins his devotional life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is said, harim vinā na mṛtiṁ taranti: without the help of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one cannot get out of the clutches of repeated birth and death. In other words, only the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, can relieve the conditioned souls from the cycle of repeated birth and death.*
- ॐ The personified Vedas continued: “The influence of time—past, present and future—and the material miseries, such as excessive heat, excessive cold, birth, death, old age and disease, are all simply the movements of Your eyebrows.
- ॐ Everything is working under Your direction.”
- ॐ *It is said in the Bhagavad-gītā that all material activity is going on under the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The Vedas continued: “All the conditions of material existence are opposing elements for persons who are not surrendered unto You. But for those who are surrendered souls and are in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, these things cannot be a source of fear.” When Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva appeared, Prahlāda Mahārāja was never afraid of Him, whereas his atheist father was immediately faced with death personified and was killed. Therefore, although Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva appears as death for an atheist like Hiraṇyakaśipu, He is always kind and is the reservoir of all pleasure for the devotees like Prahlāda. A pure devotee is not, therefore, afraid of birth, death, old age and disease.*
- ॐ *Śrīpāda Śrīdhara Svāmī has composed a nice verse in this regard, the meaning of which is as follows: “My dear Lord, I am a living entity perpetually disturbed by the conditions of material existence. I have been cracked to pieces by the smashing wheel of material existence, and because of my various sinful activities while existing in this material world, I am burning in the blazing fire of material reactions. Somehow or other, my dear Lord, I have come to take shelter under Your lotus feet. Please accept me and give me protection.” Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, also, prays like this: “My dear Lord, O son of*

*Nanda Mahārāja, associated with the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu, I have come to take shelter under Your lotus feet after suffering greatly in the material condition of life, and I pray that You please be merciful upon me. Please do not kick me away, for I have no other shelter than You.”*

ॐ *The conclusion is that any process of self-realization or God realization other than bhakti-yoga, or devotional service, is extremely difficult. Taking shelter of devotional service to the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore the only way to become free from the contamination of material, conditioned life, especially in this age. Those who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are simply wasting their time, and they have no tangible proof of spiritual life.*

ॐ *It is said by Lord Rāmacandra, “I always give confidence and security to anyone who surrenders unto Me and decides definitely that He is My eternal servant, for that is My natural inclination.” Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā, “The influence of the material nature is insurmountable, but anyone who surrenders unto Me can verily overcome the influence of material nature.” The devotees are not at all interested in arguing with the nondevotees to nullify their theories. Rather than wasting time, they always engage themselves in the transcendental loving service of the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*

ॐ *The personified Vedas continued:*

ॐ *“Dear Lord, although great mystic yogīs may have full control over the elephant of the mind and the hurricane of the senses, unless they take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master they fall victim to the material influence and are never successful in their attempts at self-realization.*

ॐ *Such unguided persons are compared to merchants going to sea on a ship without a captain.”*

ॐ *By one’s personal attempts, therefore, one cannot get free from the clutches of material nature. One has to accept a bona fide spiritual master and work according to his direction. Then it is possible to cross over the nescience of material conditions. Śrīpāda Śrīdhara Svāmī has composed a nice verse in this connection, in which he says, “O all-merciful spiritual master, representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, when my mind will be completely surrendered unto your lotus feet, at that time, only by your mercy, I shall be able to get relief from all obstacles to spiritual life, and I shall be situated in blissful life.”*

ॐ *Actually, ecstatic samādhī, or absorption in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, can be achieved by constant engagement in His service, and this constant engagement in devotional service can be performed only when one works under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master. The Vedas therefore instruct that in order to know the science of devotional service one has to*

*submit himself unto the bona fide spiritual master. The bona fide spiritual master is he who knows the science of devotional service in disciplic succession. This disciplic succession is called śrottriya. The prime symptom of one who has become a spiritual master in disciplic succession is that he is one hundred percent fixed in bhakti-yoga. Sometimes people neglect to accept a spiritual master, and instead they endeavor for self-realization by mystic yoga practice, but there are many instances of failure, even by great yogīs like Viśvāmitra. Arjuna said in the Bhagavad-gītā that controlling the mind is as impractical as stopping the blowing of a hurricane. Sometimes the mind is compared to a maddened elephant. Without following the direction of a spiritual master one cannot control the mind and the senses. In other words, if one practices yoga mysticism and does not accept a bona fide spiritual master, he will surely fail. He will simply waste his valuable time. The Vedic injunction is that no one can have full knowledge without being under the guidance of an ācārya. Ācāryavān puruṣo veda: one who has accepted an ācārya knows what is what. The Absolute Truth cannot be understood by arguments. One who has attained the perfect brahminical stage naturally becomes renounced; he does not strive for material gain because by spiritual knowledge he has come to the conclusion that in this world there is no insufficiency. Everything is sufficiently provided by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A real brāhmaṇa, therefore, does not endeavor for material perfection; rather, he approaches a bona fide spiritual master to accept orders from him. A spiritual master's qualification is that he is brahma-niṣṭha, which means that he has given up all other activities and has dedicated his life to working only for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. When a bona fide student approaches a bona fide spiritual master, he submissively prays to the spiritual master, "My dear lord, kindly accept me as your student and train me in such a way that I will be able to give up all other processes of self-realization and simply engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service."*

ॐ The devotee engaged by the direction of the spiritual master in the transcendental loving service of the Lord contemplates as follows: "My dear Lord, You are the reservoir of pleasure. Since You are present, what is the use of the transient pleasure derived from society, friendship and love? Persons unaware of the supreme reservoir of pleasure falsely engage in deriving pleasure from sense gratification, but this is transient and illusory." In this connection, Vidyāpati, a great Vaiṣṇava devotee and poet, says, "My dear Lord, undoubtedly there is some pleasure in the midst of society, friendship and love, although it is materially conceived, but such pleasure cannot satisfy my heart, which is like a desert." In a desert there is need of an ocean of water. But if only a drop of water is poured on the desert, what is the value of such water? Similarly, our material hearts are full of multidesires, which

*cannot be fulfilled by materialistic society, friendship and love. When our hearts begin to derive pleasure from the supreme reservoir of pleasure, then we can be satisfied. That transcendental satisfaction is possible only in devotional service, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*

ॐ The personified Vedas continued:

ॐ “Dear Lord, You are sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha [Bs. 5.1], the ever-blissful form of knowledge, and because the living entities are parts and parcels of Your personality, their natural state of existence is to be fully conscious of You.

ॐ In this material world, anyone who has developed such Kṛṣṇa consciousness is no longer interested in the materialistic way of life.

ॐ A Kṛṣṇa conscious being becomes uninterested in family life, where there is some concession for sense enjoyment.

ॐ In other words, he is no longer interested in sense gratification.

ॐ The perfection of human life is based on knowledge and renunciation, but it is very difficult to attempt to reach the stage of knowledge and renunciation while in family life.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa conscious persons therefore take shelter of the association of devotees or sanctified places of pilgrimage.

ॐ Such persons are aware of the relationship between the Supersoul and the individual living entities, and they are never in the bodily concept of life.

ॐ Because they always carry You in full consciousness within their hearts, they are so purified that any place they go becomes a holy place of pilgrimage, and the water which washes their feet is able to deliver many sinful persons loitering within this material world.”

ॐ *When Prahlāda Mahārāja was asked by his atheistic father to describe something very good which he had learned, he replied to his father, “For a materialistic person who is always full of anxieties due to being engaged in temporary and relative truths, the best course is to give up the blind well of family life and go to the forest to take shelter of the Supreme Lord.” Those who are actually pure devotees are celebrated as mahātmās, or great sages, personalities perfect in knowledge. They always think of the Supreme Lord and His lotus feet, and thus they automatically become liberated. Devotees who are always situated in that position become electrified by the inconceivable potencies of the Lord, and thus they themselves become the source of liberation for their followers and devotees. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is fully electrified spiritually, and therefore anyone who touches or takes shelter of such a pure devotee becomes similarly electrified with spiritual potencies. Such devotees are never puffed up with material opulences. Generally, the material opulences are good parentage, education, beauty and riches, but although a devotee of the Lord may possess all four of these*

*material opulences, he is never carried away by the pride of possessing such distinctions. Great devotees of the Lord travel all over the world from one place of pilgrimage to another, and on their way they meet many conditioned souls and deliver them by their association and distribution of transcendental knowledge. They generally reside in places like Vṛndāvana, Mathurā, Dvārakā, Jagannātha Purī and Navadvīpa because only devotees assemble in such places. In this way they give saintly association to one another and thus advance. So that every living entity can take advantage of the association of Kṛṣṇa conscious persons, such great devotees open temples and āśramas where Kṛṣṇa's devotees assemble. By such association, people can develop more and more in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such advancement is not possible in ordinary household life, which is devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.*

ॐ The personified Vedas continued:

ॐ “Dear Lord, there are two classes of transcendentalists, the impersonalists and the personalists.

ॐ The opinion of the impersonalists is that this material manifestation is false and that only the Absolute Truth is factual.

ॐ The view of the personalists, however, is that the material world, although very temporary, is nevertheless not false but factual.

ॐ Such transcendentalists have different arguments to establish the validity of their philosophies.

ॐ Factually, the material world is simultaneously both truth and untruth.

ॐ It is truth because everything is an expansion of the Supreme Absolute Truth,

ॐ and it is untruth because the existence of the material world is temporary:

ॐ it is created,

ॐ and it is annihilated.

ॐ Because of its different conditions of existence, the cosmic manifestation has no fixed position.”

ॐ *Those who advocate acceptance of this material world as false are generally known by the maxim brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā. They put forward the argument that everything in the material world is prepared from matter. For example, there are many things made of clay, such as earthen pots, dishes and bowls. After their annihilation, these things may be transformed into many other material objects, but in all cases their existence as clay continues. An earthen water jug, after being broken, may be transformed into a bowl or dish, but either as a dish, bowl or water jug, the earth itself continues to exist. Therefore, the forms of a water jug, bowl or dish are false, but their existence as earth is real. This is the impersonalists' version. This cosmic manifestation is certainly produced from the Absolute Truth, but because its existence is temporary, it is false; the impersonalists' understanding is that the Absolute*

Truth, which is always present, is the only truth. In the opinion of other transcendentalists, however, this material world, being produced of the Absolute Truth, is also truth. The impersonalists argue that this is fallacious because it is sometimes found that matter is produced from spirit soul and sometimes that spirit soul is produced from matter. Such philosophers push forward the argument that although cow dung is dead matter, sometimes it is found that scorpions come out of cow dung. Similarly, dead matter like nails and hair comes out of the living body. Therefore, things produced of a certain thing are not always of the same quality as that thing. On the strength of this argument, Māyāvādī philosophers try to establish that although this cosmic manifestation is certainly an emanation from the Absolute Truth, the cosmic manifestation does not necessarily have truth in it. According to this view, the Absolute Truth, Brahman, should therefore be accepted as truth, whereas the cosmic manifestation, although a product of the Absolute Truth, cannot be taken as truth.

ॐ The view of the Māyāvādī philosopher, however, is stated in the Bhagavad-gītā to be the view of the asuras, or demons. The Lord says in the Bhagavad-gītā, *asatyam apratiṣṭhaṁ te jagad āhur anīśvaram / aparaspara-sambhūtaṁ kim anyat kāma-haitukam*: [Bg. 16.8] “The asuras’ view of this cosmic manifestation is that the whole creation is false. The asuras think that the mere interaction of matter is the source of the creation and that there is no controller or God.” But actually this is not the fact. From the Seventh Chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā we understand that the five gross elements—earth, water, fire, air and sky—plus the subtle elements—mind, intelligence and false ego—are the eight separated energies of the Supreme Lord. Beyond this inferior, material energy is a spiritual energy, known as the living entities. The living entities are accepted as the superior energy of the Lord. The whole cosmic manifestation is a combination of the inferior and superior energies, and the source of the energies is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has many different types of energies. This is confirmed in the Vedas: *parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate* [Cc. Madhya 13.65, purport]. “The transcendental energies of the Lord are variegated.” And because such varieties of energies have emanated from the Supreme Lord, they cannot be false. The Lord is ever-existing, and the energies are ever-existing. Some of the energy is temporary—sometimes manifested and sometimes unmanifested—but this does not mean that it is false. The example may be given that when a person is angry he does things which are different from his normal condition of life, but the fact that the mood of anger appears and disappears does not mean that the energy of anger is false. As such, the argument of the Māyāvādī philosophers that this world is false is not accepted by the Vaiṣṇava philosophers. The Lord Himself confirms that the view that

*there is no supreme cause of this material manifestation, that there is no God, and that everything is only the creation of the interaction of matter is a view of the asuras.*

- ॐ The Māyāvādī philosopher sometimes puts forward the argument of the snake and the rope. In the dark of evening, a curled-up rope is sometimes, due to ignorance, taken for a snake. But mistaking the rope for a snake does not mean that the rope or the snake is false, and therefore this example, used by the Māyāvādīs to illustrate the falsity of the material world, is not valid. When a thing is taken as fact but actually has no existence at all, it is called false. But if something is mistaken for something else that exists, that does not mean it is false. The Vaiṣṇava philosophers use a very appropriate example, comparing this material world to an earthen pot. When we see an earthen pot, it does not at once disappear and turn into something else. It may be temporary, but the earthen pot is taken into use for bringing water, and we continue to see it as an earthen pot. Therefore, although the earthen pot is temporary and different from the original earth, we cannot say that it is false. We should therefore conclude that the earthen pot and the entire earth are both truths because one is the product of the other. We understand from the Bhagavad-gītā that after the dissolution of this cosmic manifestation, the material energy enters into the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is ever-existing with His varied energies. Because the material creation is an emanation from Him, we cannot say that this cosmic manifestation is a product of something void. Kṛṣṇa is not void. Whenever we speak of Kṛṣṇa, He is present with His form, qualities, name, entourage and paraphernalia. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is not impersonal. The original cause of everything is neither void nor impersonal but is the Supreme Person. Demons may say that this material creation is anīśvara, without a controller or God, but such arguments ultimately cannot stand.
- ॐ The example given by the Māyāvādī philosophers that inanimate matter like nails and hair comes from the living body is not a very sound argument. Nails and hair are undoubtedly inanimate, but they come not from the animate living being but from the inanimate material body. Similarly, the argument that the scorpion comes from cow dung, meaning that a living entity comes from matter, is also unsound. The scorpion which comes out of the cow dung is certainly a living entity, but the living entity does not come out of the cow dung. Only the living entity's material body, or the body of the scorpion, comes out of the cow dung. The sparks of the living entities, as we understand from the Bhagavad-gītā, are injected into material nature, and then they come out. The body of the living entity in different forms is supplied by material nature, but the living entity himself is supplied by the Supreme Lord. The father and mother give the body necessary for the living entity under certain



conditions. The living entity transmigrates from one body to another according to his different desires, which in the subtle form of intelligence, mind and false ego accompany him from body to body. By superior arrangement a living entity is put into the womb of a certain type of material body, and then he develops a similar body. Therefore, the spirit soul is not produced from matter; it takes on a particular type of body under superior arrangement. According to our present experience, this material world is a combination of matter and spirit. The spirit is moving the matter. The spirit soul (the living entity) and matter are different energies of the Supreme Lord, and since both the energies are products of the Supreme Eternal, or the Supreme Truth, they are factual, not false. Because the living entity is part and parcel of the Supreme, he exists eternally. Therefore, for him there cannot be any question of birth or death. So-called birth and death occur because of the material body. The Vedic version *sarvaṁ khalv idam brahma* means that since both the energies have emanated from the Supreme Brahman, everything we experience is nondifferent from Brahman.

- ॐ There are many arguments about the existence of this material world, but the Vaiṣṇava philosophical conclusion is the best. The example of the earthen pot is very suitable: the form of the earthen pot may be temporary, but it has a specific purpose. The purpose of the earthen pot is to carry water from one place to another. Similarly, this material body, although temporary, has a special use. The living entity is given a chance from the beginning of the creation to evolve different kinds of material bodies according to the reserve desires he has accumulated from time immemorial. The human form of body is a special chance in which the developed form of consciousness can be utilized.
- ॐ Sometimes the Māyāvādī philosophers push forward the argument that if this material world is truth, then why are householders advised to give up their connection with this material world and take sannyāsa? But the Vaiṣṇava philosopher's view of sannyāsa is not that because the world is false one must therefore give up material activities. The purpose of Vaiṣṇava sannyāsa is to utilize things as they are intended to be utilized. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given transcendentalists two formulas for dealing with this material world. When a Vaiṣṇava renounces the materialistic way of life and takes to sannyāsa, it is not on the conception of the falsity of the material world but to devote himself fully to engaging everything in the service of the Lord. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore gives this formula: "One should be unattached to the material world because material attachment is meaningless. The entire material world, the entire cosmic manifestation, belongs to God, Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, everything should be utilized for Kṛṣṇa, and the devotee should remain unattached to material things." This is the purpose of Vaiṣṇava

sannyāsa. A materialist sticks to the world for sense gratification, but a Vaiṣṇava sannyāsī, although not accepting anything for his personal sense gratification, knows the art of utilizing everything for the service of the Lord. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has therefore criticized the Māyāvādī sannyāsīs with his second formula: “Because the Māyāvādīs do not know that everything has a utilization for the service of the Lord, they take the world to be false and falsely think they are liberated from the contamination of the material world.” Since everything is an expansion of the energy of the Supreme Lord, the expansions are as real as the Supreme Lord is.

- ॐ That the cosmic world is only temporarily manifested does not mean that it is false or that the source of its manifestation is false. Since the source of its manifestation is truth, the manifestation is also truth, but one must know how to utilize it. The example of the earthen pot may be cited again: the earthen pot produced from the whole earth is temporary, but when used for a proper purpose the earthen pot is not false. The Vaiṣṇava philosophers know how to utilize the temporary construction of this material world, just as a sane man knows how to utilize the temporary construction of the earthen pot. When the earthen pot is used for a wrong purpose, that is false. Similarly, the human body or the material world, when used for sense gratification, is false. But if the human body and the material creation are used for the service of the Supreme Lord, their activities are never false. It is therefore confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā that even slightly using the body and the material world for the service of the Lord can deliver a person from the gravest danger. When properly utilized, neither the superior nor inferior energies emanating from the Supreme Personality of Godhead are false.
- ॐ As far as fruitive activities are concerned, they are mainly based on the platform of sense gratification. Therefore an advanced Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not take to them. The result of fruitive activities can elevate one to the higher planetary system, but as it is said in the Bhagavad-gītā, foolish persons, after exhausting the results of their pious activities in the heavenly kingdom, come back again to this lower planetary system and then again try to go to the higher planetary system. Their only profit is to take the trouble of going and coming back, just as at present many material scientists are spoiling their time by trying to go to the moon planet and again coming back. Those who are engaged in fruitive activities are described by the Vedas personified as andha-ṣamparā, or blind followers of the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Although such ceremonies are certainly mentioned in the Vedas, they are not meant for the intelligent class of men. Men who are too much attached to material enjoyment are captivated by the prospect of being elevated to the higher planetary system, and so they take to such ritualistic activities. But persons who are intelligent, who have taken shelter of a bona

*fide spiritual master to see things as they are, do not take to fruitive activities but engage themselves in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.*

ॐ Persons who are not devotees take to the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies for materialistic reasons, and then they are bewildered. A vivid example may be given: an intelligent person possessing one million dollars in currency notes does not hold the money without using it, even though he knows perfectly well that the currency notes in themselves are nothing but paper. When one has one million dollars in currency notes, he is actually holding only a huge bunch of papers, but if he utilizes it for a purpose, then he benefits. Similarly, although this material world may be false, just like the paper, it has its proper beneficial utilization. Because the currency notes, although paper, are issued by the government, they have full value. Similarly, this material world may be false or temporary, but because it is an emanation from the Supreme Lord, it has its full value. The Vaiṣṇava philosopher acknowledges the full value of this material world and knows how to utilize it properly, whereas the Māyāvādī philosopher fails to do so, just as those who mistake a currency note for ordinary paper discard it and cannot utilize the money. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore declares that if one rejects this material world as false, not considering the importance of this material world as a means to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, such renunciation has very little value. A person who knows the intrinsic value of this material world for the service of the Lord, who is not attached to the material world, and who renounces the material world by not accepting it for sense gratification is situated in real renunciation. This material world is an expansion of the material energy of the Lord. Therefore it is real. It is not false, as sometimes concluded from the example of the snake and the rope.

ॐ The personified Vedas continued:

ॐ “The cosmic manifestation, because of the flickering nature of its impermanent existence, appears to less intelligent men to be false.”

ॐ The Māyāvādī philosophers take advantage of the flickering nature of this cosmic manifestation to try to prove their thesis that this world is false. According to the Vedic version, before the creation this world had no existence, and after dissolution the world will no longer be manifested. Voidists also take advantage of this Vedic version and conclude that the cause of this material world is void. But the Vedic injunctions do not say that it is void. The Vedic injunctions define the source of creation and dissolution as *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*, “He from whom this cosmic manifestation has emanated and in whom, after annihilation, everything will merge.” The same is explained in the Vedānta-sūtra and in the first verse of the First Chapter of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by the words *janmādy asya yataḥ* [SB 1.1.1], “He from whom all things emanate.” All these Vedic injunctions indicate that the

cosmic manifestation is due to the Supreme Absolute Personality of Godhead and that when it is dissolved it merges into Him. The same principle is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā: “The cosmic manifestation comes into existence and again dissolves, and after dissolution it merges into the existence of the Supreme Lord.” This statement definitely confirms that the particular energy known as *bahir-aṅgā-māyā*, or the external energy, although of flickering nature, is the energy of the Supreme Lord, and as such it cannot be false. It simply appears false. The Māyāvādī philosophers conclude that because the material nature has no existence in the beginning and is nonexistent after dissolution, it is false. But by the example of the earthen pots and dishes the Vedic version is presented: although the existence of the particular by-products of the Absolute Truth is temporary, the energy of the Supreme Lord is permanent. The earthen pot or water jug may be broken or transformed into another shape, such as that of a dish or bowl, but the ingredient, or the material basis, namely the earth, continues to be the same. The basic principle of the cosmic manifestation is always the same: Brahman, or the Absolute Truth; therefore, the Māyāvādī philosophers’ theory that it is false is certainly only a mental concoction. That the cosmic manifestation is flickering and temporary does not mean that it is false. The definition of falsity is “that which never had any existence but which exists only in name.” For instance, the eggs of a horse or the horn of a rabbit or the flower in the sky are phenomena which exist only in name. There are no horse’s eggs, there is no rabbit’s horn, and there are no flowers growing in the sky. There are many things which exist in name or imagination but actually have no factual manifestation. Such things may be called false. But the Vaiṣṇava cannot take this material world to be false simply because of its temporary nature, its manifesting and again dissolving.

ॐ The personified Vedas continued by saying that the Supersoul and the individual soul, or *Paramātmā* and *jīvātmā*, cannot be equal in any circumstance, although both of them sit within the same body, like two birds sitting in the same tree.

ॐ As declared in the Vedas, these two birds, although sitting as friends, are not equal. One is simply a witness. This bird is *Paramātmā*, or the Supersoul. And the other bird is eating the fruit of the tree. That is the *jīvātmā*. When there is cosmic manifestation, the *jīvātmā*, or the individual soul, appears in the creation in different forms, according to his previous fruitive activities, and due to his long forgetfulness of real existence, he identifies himself with a particular form awarded to him by the laws of material nature. After assuming a material form, he is subjected to the three material modes of nature and acts accordingly to continue his existence in the material world. While he is enwrapped in such ignorance, his natural opulences become almost extinct. The opulences of the Supersoul, or the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, however, are not diminished, although He appears within this material world. He maintains all opulences and perfections in full while keeping Himself apart from all the tribulations of this material world. The conditioned soul becomes enwrapped in the material world, whereas the Supersoul, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, leaves it without being affected, just as a snake sheds his skin. The distinction between the Supersoul and the conditioned individual soul is that the Supersoul, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, maintains His natural opulences, known as *ṣaḍ-aiśvarya*, *aṣṭa-siddhi* and *aṣṭa-guṇa*.

ॐ Because of their poor fund of knowledge, the Māyāvādī philosophers forget the fact that Kṛṣṇa is always full with six opulences, eight transcendental qualities and eight kinds of perfection. The six opulences are wealth, strength, beauty, fame, knowledge and renunciation. No one is greater than or equal to Kṛṣṇa in these six opulences. The first of Kṛṣṇa's eight transcendental qualities is that He is always untouched by the contamination of material existence. This is mentioned in the *Īsopaniṣad*: *apāpa-viddham*. Just as the sun is never polluted by any contamination, the Supreme Lord is never polluted by any sinful activity. Although Kṛṣṇa's actions may sometimes seem impious, He is never polluted by such actions. The second transcendental quality is that Kṛṣṇa never dies. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Fourth Chapter, He informs Arjuna that both He and Arjuna had many appearances in this material world, but that He alone remembers all such activities—past, present and future. This means that He never dies. Forgetfulness is due to death. As we die, we change our bodies and forget. Kṛṣṇa, however, is never forgetful. He can remember everything that has happened in the past. Otherwise, how could He remember that He first taught the yoga system of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to the sun-god, *Vivasvān*? Therefore, He never dies. Nor does He ever become an old man. Although Kṛṣṇa was a great-grandfather when He appeared on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, He did not appear like an old man. Kṛṣṇa cannot be polluted by any sinful activity, Kṛṣṇa never dies, Kṛṣṇa never becomes old, Kṛṣṇa is never subject to lamentation, Kṛṣṇa is never hungry, and He is never thirsty. Whatever He desires is perfectly lawful, and whatever He decides cannot be changed by anyone. These are the eight transcendental qualities of Kṛṣṇa. Besides that, Kṛṣṇa is known as *Yogeśvara*. He has all the opulences or facilities of mystic powers, such as *aṇimā-siddhi*, the power to become smaller than the smallest. It is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* that Kṛṣṇa has entered even within the atom (*aṇḍāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-stham* [Bs. 5.35]). Similarly, Kṛṣṇa, as *Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*, is within the gigantic universe, and He is lying in the Causal Ocean as *Mahā-Viṣṇu*, in a body so gigantic that when He exhales, millions and trillions of universes emanate from His body. This is called *mahimā-siddhi*.

*Kṛṣṇa also has the perfection of laghimā: He can become the lightest. It is stated in the Bhagavad-gītā that it is because Kṛṣṇa enters within this universe and within the atoms that all the planets are floating in the air. That is the explanation of weightlessness. Kṛṣṇa also has the perfection of prāpti: He can get whatever He likes. Similarly, He has the facility of īśītā, controlling power. He is called the supreme controller, Parameśvara. In addition, Kṛṣṇa can bring anyone under His influence. This is called vaśītā.*

ॐ *In this way, Kṛṣṇa is endowed with all opulences, transcendental qualities and mystic powers. No ordinary living being can compare to Him. Therefore, the Māyāvādīs' theory that the Supersoul and the individual soul are equal is only a misconception. The conclusion is, therefore, that Kṛṣṇa is worshipable and that all other living entities are simply His servants. This understanding is called self-realization. Any other realization of one's self beyond this relationship of eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa is impelled by māyā. It is said that the last snare of māyā is to dictate to the living entity to try to become equal to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Māyāvādī philosopher claims to be equal to God, but he cannot reply to the question of why he has fallen into material entanglement. If he is the Supreme God, then how is it that he has been overtaken by impious activities and thereby subjected to the tribulations of the law of karma? When the Māyāvādīs are asked about this, they cannot properly answer. The speculation that one is equal to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is another symptom of sinful life. One cannot take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness unless one is completely freed from all sinful activities. The very fact that the Māyāvādī claims to be one with the Supreme Lord means that he is not yet freed from the reactions of sinful activities. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam says that such persons are aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ [SB 10.2.32], which means that because they falsely think themselves liberated and at the same time think themselves equal with the Absolute Truth, their intelligence is not purified. The personified Vedas said that if the yogīs and the jñānīs do not free themselves from sinful desires, then their particular process of self-realization will never be successful.*

ॐ "Dear Lord," the personified Vedas continued, "if saintly persons do not take care to eradicate completely the roots of sinful desires, they cannot experience the Supersoul, although He is sitting side by side with the individual soul.

ॐ Samādhi, or meditation, means that one has to find the Supersoul within himself.

ॐ One who is not free from sinful reactions cannot see the Supersoul.

ॐ If a person has a jeweled locket in his necklace but forgets the jewel, it is almost as though he does not possess it.

ॐ Similarly, if an individual soul meditates but does not actually perceive the presence of the Supersoul within himself, his meditation is useless."

- ॐ Persons who have taken to the path of self-realization must therefore be very careful to avoid contamination by the influence of *māyā*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that a devotee should be completely free from all sorts of material desires. A devotee should not be affected by the results of karma and *jñāna*. One has to simply understand Kṛṣṇa and carry out His desires. That is the pure devotional stage. The personified Vedas continued: “Mystic yogīs who still have contaminated desires for sense gratification are never successful in their attempt, nor can they realize the Supersoul within the individual self. As such, the so-called yogīs and *jñānīs* who are simply wasting their time in different types of sense gratification, either by mental speculation or by exhibition of limited mystic powers, will never be liberated from conditioned life and will continue to go through repeated births and deaths. For such persons, both this life and the next life are sources of tribulation. Such sinful persons are already suffering tribulation in this life, and because they are not perfect in self-realization they will be plagued with further tribulation in the next life. Despite all endeavors to attain perfection, such yogīs, contaminated by desires for sense gratification, will continue to suffer in this life and the next.”
- ॐ Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks in this connection that if *sannyāsīs* (persons in the renounced order of life, who have left their homes for self-realization) do not engage themselves in the devotional service of the Lord but become attracted by philanthropic work, such as opening educational institutions, hospitals or even monasteries, churches or temples of demigods, they find only trouble from such engagements, not only in this life but in the next. *Sannyāsīs* who do not take advantage of this life to realize Kṛṣṇa simply waste their time and energy in activities outside the jurisdiction of the renounced order. A devotee’s attempt to engage his energies in such activities as constructing a Viṣṇu temple, however, is never wasted. Such engagements are called *kṛṣṇārthe akhila-ceṣṭā*, variegated activities performed to please Kṛṣṇa. A philanthropist’s opening a school building and a devotee’s constructing a temple are not on the same level. Although a philanthropist’s opening an educational institution may be pious activity, it comes under the laws of karma, whereas constructing a temple for Viṣṇu is devotional service.
- ॐ Devotional service is never within the jurisdiction of the law of karma. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *sa guṇān samatītyaitān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*: [Bg. 14.26] “Devotees of the Personality of Godhead transcend all the reactions of the three modes of material nature and are situated on the transcendental platform of Brahman realization.” The devotees are liberated in both this life and the next. Any work done in this material world for Yajña (Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa) is considered to be liberated work, but without connection with Acyuta, the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no possibility of stopping the resultant actions of the law of karma. The life of

*Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the life of liberation. The conclusion is that a devotee, by the grace of the Lord, is liberated in both this life and the next, whereas karmīs, jñānīs and yogīs are never liberated, either in this life or in the next.*

ॐ The personified Vedas continued: “Dear Lord, anyone who by Your grace has understood the glories of Your lotus feet is callous to material happiness and distress.”

ॐ *The material pangs are inevitable as long as we exist within the material world, but a devotee does not divert his attention to such actions and reactions, which are the results of pious and impious activities. Nor is a devotee very much disturbed or pleased by praise or condemnation from people in general. A devotee is sometimes greatly praised because of his transcendental activities, and sometimes he is criticized, even though there is no reason for adverse criticism. The pure devotee, however, is always callous to praise or condemnation by ordinary people. Actually, the devotee’s activities are on the transcendental plane. He is not interested in the praise or condemnation of people engaged in material activities. If the devotee can thus maintain his transcendental position, his liberation in this life and the next is guaranteed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.*

ॐ *A devotee’s transcendental position within this material world is maintained in the association of pure devotees, simply by hearing the glorious activities enacted by the Lord in different ages and in different incarnations. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based on this principle. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung, “My dear Lord, let me be engaged in Your transcendental loving service, as indicated by the previous ācāryas, and let me live in the association of pure devotees. That is my desire, life after life.” In other words, a devotee does not much care whether or not he is liberated; he is eager only for devotional service. Devotional service means that one does not do anything independently of the sanction of the ācāryas. The actions of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are directed by the previous ācāryas, headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; in the association of devotees following these principles, a devotee is able to perfectly maintain his transcendental position.*

ॐ *In the Bhagavad-gītā the Lord says that a devotee who knows Him perfectly is very dear to Him. Four kinds of pious men take to devotional service. If a pious man is in distress, he approaches the Lord for mitigation of his distress. If a pious man is in need of material help, he prays to the Lord for such help. If a pious man is actually inquisitive about the science of God, he approaches the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, a pious man who is simply eager to know the science of Kṛṣṇa also approaches the Supreme Lord. Out of these four classes of men, the last is praised by Kṛṣṇa Himself in the Bhagavad-gītā. A person who tries to understand Kṛṣṇa with full knowledge and devotion by following in the footsteps of previous ācāryas conversant with scientific knowledge of the Supreme Lord is praiseworthy. Such a devotee can*



*understand that all conditions of life, favorable and unfavorable, are created by the supreme will of the Lord. And when he has fully surrendered unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, he does not care whether his condition of life is favorable or unfavorable. A devotee takes even an unfavorable condition to be the special favor of the Personality of Godhead. Actually, there are no unfavorable conditions for a devotee. Knowing that everything is coming by the will of the Lord, he sees every condition as favorable, and in any condition of life he is simply enthusiastic to discharge his devotional service. This devotional attitude is explained in the Bhagavad-gītā: a devotee is never distressed in reverse conditions of life, nor is he overjoyed in favorable conditions. In the higher stages of devotional service, a devotee is not even concerned with the list of do's and do not's. Such a position can be maintained only by following in the footsteps of the ācāryas. Because a pure devotee follows in the footsteps of the ācāryas, any action he performs to discharge devotional service should be understood to be on the transcendental platform. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore instructs us that an ācārya is above criticism. A neophyte devotee should not consider himself to be on the same plane as the ācārya. It should be accepted that the ācāryas are on the same platform as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such neither Kṛṣṇa nor His representative ācārya should be subjected to any adverse criticism by the neophyte devotees.*

- ॐ The personified Vedas thus worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead in different ways.
- ॐ *Offering worship to the Supreme Lord by praying means remembering His transcendental qualities, pastimes and activities. But the Lord's pastimes and qualities are unlimited. It is not possible for us to remember all the qualities of the Lord.*
- ॐ Therefore, the personified Vedas worshiped to the best of their ability, and at the end they spoke as follows.
- ॐ “Dear Lord, although Lord Brahmā, the predominating deity of the highest planet, Brahmāloka, and King Indra, the predominating demigod of the heavenly planets, as well as the predominating deities of such planets as the sun and the moon, are all very confidential directors of this material world, they have very little knowledge about You.
- ॐ Then what can ordinary human beings and mental speculators know of You? It is not possible for anyone to enumerate the unlimited transcendental qualities of Your Lordship.
- ॐ No one, not even the mental speculators and the demigods in higher planetary systems, is actually able to estimate the length and breadth of Your form and characteristics.
- ॐ We think that even Your Lordship does not have complete knowledge of Your transcendental qualities.

ॐ The reason is that You are unlimited.

ॐ Although it is not befitting to say that You do not know Yourself, it is practical to understand that because You have unlimited qualities and energies and because Your knowledge is also unlimited, there is unlimited competition between Your knowledge and Your expansion of energies.”

ॐ *The idea is that because God and His knowledge are both unlimited, as soon as God is cognizant of some of His energies, He perceives that He has still more energies. In this way, both His energies and His knowledge increase. Because both of them are unlimited, there is no end to the energies and no end to the knowledge with which to understand the energies. God is undoubtedly omniscient, but the personified Vedas say that even God Himself does not know the full extent of His energies. This does not mean that God is not omniscient. When an actual fact is unknown to a certain person, this is called ignorance or lack of knowledge. This is not applicable to God, however, because He knows Himself perfectly. But still, as His energies and activities increase, He also increases His knowledge to understand them. Both are increasing unlimitedly, and there is no end to it. In that sense it can be said that even God Himself does not know the limit of His energies and qualities.*

ॐ *How God is unlimited in His expansion of energies and activities can be roughly calculated by any sane and sober living entity. It is said in the Vedic literature that innumerable universes issue forth when Mahā-Viṣṇu exhales in His yoga-nidrā and that innumerable universes enter His body when He inhales. We have to imagine that these universes, which according to our limited knowledge are expanded unlimitedly, are so great that the gross and subtle ingredients—the five elements of the cosmic manifestation, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, along with the total material energy and false ego—are not only within the universe but cover the universe in seven layers, each layer ten times bigger than the previous one. In this way, each and every universe is very securely packed, and there are numberless universes. All these universes float within the innumerable pores of the transcendental body of Mahā-Viṣṇu. It is stated that just as the atoms and particles of dust are floating within the air along with the birds and their number cannot be calculated, so innumerable universes are floating within the pores of the transcendental body of the Lord. For this reason, the Vedas say that God is beyond the grasp of our knowledge. Avāñ-mānasa-gocara: to understand the length and breadth of God is beyond the jurisdiction of our mental speculation. Therefore, a person who is actually learned and sane does not claim to be God but tries to understand God, making distinctions between spirit and matter. By such careful discrimination, one can clearly understand that the Supreme Soul is transcendental to both the superior and inferior energies, although He has a direct connection with both. In the Bhagavad-*

*gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains that although everything is resting on His energy, He is different or separate from the energy.

ॐ Nature and the living entities are sometimes designated as *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* respectively. The whole cosmic manifestation is an amalgamation of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. Nature is the ingredient cause, and the living entities are the effective cause. These two causes combine together, and the effect is this cosmic manifestation. When one is fortunate enough to come to the right conclusion about this cosmic manifestation and everything going on within it, he knows it to be caused directly and indirectly by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. It is concluded in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, therefore, *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ / anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam* [Bs. 5.1]. After much deliberation and consideration, when one has attained the perfection of knowledge, one comes to the conclusion that Kṛṣṇa, or God, is the original cause of all causes. Instead of speculating about the measurement of God—whether He is so long or so wide—or falsely philosophizing, one should come to the conclusion of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*: “Kṛṣṇa, or God, is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam* [Bs. 5.1], the cause of all causes.” That is the perfection of knowledge.

ॐ Thus the *Veda-stuti*, or the prayers offered by the personified Vedas to *Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*, were first narrated in disciplic succession by *Sanandana* to his brothers, all of whom were born of *Brahmā* at the beginning of the universe. The four *Kumāras* were the first-born sons of *Brahmā*; therefore they are known as *pūrva-jāta*. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the *paramparā* system, or the disciplic succession, begins with Kṛṣṇa Himself. Similarly, here, in the prayers of the personified Vedas, it is to be understood that the *paramparā* system begins with the Personality of Godhead *Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi*. We should remember that this *Veda-stuti* is narrated by *Kumāra Sanandana*, and the narration is repeated by *Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi* in *Badarīkāśrama*. *Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi* is the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa for showing us the path of self-realization by undergoing severe austerities. In this age Lord *Caitanya* demonstrated the path of pure devotional service by putting Himself in the role of a pure devotee. Similarly, in the past Lord *Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi* was an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who performed severe austerities in the Himalayan ranges. *Śrī Nārada Muni* was hearing from Him. So in the statement given by *Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi* to *Nārada Muni*, as narrated by *Kumāra Sanandana* in the form of the *Veda-stuti*, it is understood that God is the one supreme and that all others are His servants.

ॐ In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is stated, *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa*: [Cc. Ādi 5.142] “Kṛṣṇa is the only Supreme God.” *Āra saba bhṛtya*: “All others are His servants.” *Yāre yaiche nācāya, se taiche kare ṛtya*: “The Supreme Lord, as He desires, is engaging all the living entities in different activities, and thus

they exhibit their different talents and tendencies.” This Veda-stuti is thus the original instruction regarding the relationship existing between the living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The highest platform of realization for the living entity is the attainment of devotional life. One cannot be engaged in devotional life, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, unless one is fully free from material contamination. Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi informed Nārada Muni that the essence of all the Vedas and Vedic scriptures (namely, the four Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas and the Vedānta-sūtra) is to render transcendental loving service to the Lord. In this connection Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi has used one particular word—*rasa*. In devotional service this *rasa* is the *via medium* or the basic principle for the exchange of dealings between the Lord and the living entity. *Rasa* is also described in the Vedas: *raso vai saḥ*. “The Supreme Lord is the reservoir of all pleasure.” All the Vedic scriptures, including the Purāṇas, the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta-sūtra, teach the living entities how to attain the stage of *rasa*. The Bhāgavatam also says that the statements in the Mahā-Purāṇa (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam) constitute the essence (*rasa*) of all Vedic literature. *Nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalam*: [SB 1.1.3] the Bhāgavatam is the essence of the ripened fruit of the tree of the Vedic literature.

- ॐ We understand that with the breathing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead there issued forth the four Vedas, namely the Ṛg Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sāma Veda and the Atharva Veda, and also the histories like the Mahābhārata and all the Purāṇas, which are considered to be the history of the world. The Vedic histories like the Purāṇas and Mahābhārata are called the fifth Veda.
- ॐ The twenty-eight verses of the Veda-stuti are to be considered the essence of all Vedic knowledge. The four Kumāras and all other authorized sages know perfectly that devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the essence of all Vedic literature, and they preach this on different planets, traveling in outer space. It is stated herein that such sages, including Nārada Muni, hardly ever travel on land; they perpetually travel in space.
- ॐ Sages like Nārada and the Kumāras travel throughout the universe to educate the conditioned souls that their business in the world is not that of sense gratification but of reinstating themselves in their original position of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is stated in several places that the living entities are like sparks of the fire and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is like the fire itself. If the sparks somehow or other fall out of the fire, they lose their natural illumination; thus it is ascertained that the living entities come into this material world exactly as sparks fall from a great fire. The living entity wants to imitate Kṛṣṇa and tries to lord it over material nature in order to enjoy sense gratification; thus

he forgets his original position, and his illuminating power, his spiritual identity, is extinguished. However, if a living entity takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is reinstated in his original position. To preach this process of devotional service, sages and saints like Nārada and the Kumāras travel all over the universe educating people and increasing their disciples. Their aim is that all the conditioned souls may be educated to revive their original consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus gain relief from the miserable conditions of material life.

ॐ Śrī Nārada Muni is a naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī. There are four types of brahmacārīs. The first is called sāvitra, which refers to a brahmacārī who, after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony, must observe at least three days of celibacy. The next is called prājāpatya, which refers to a brahmacārī who strictly observes celibacy for at least one year after initiation. The next is called brāhma-brahmacārī, which refers to a brahmacārī who observes celibacy from the time of initiation up to the time of the completion of his study of the Vedic literature. The next stage is called naiṣṭhika, which refers to a brahmacārī who is celibate throughout his whole life. Out of these, the first three are upakurvāṇa, which means that the brahmacārī can marry later, after the brahmacārī period is over. The naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī, however, is completely reluctant to have any sex life; therefore the Kumāras and Nārada are known as naiṣṭhika-brahmacārīs. Such brahmacārīs are called vīra-vrata because their vow of celibacy is as heroic as the vows of the kṣatriyas. The brahmacārī system of life is especially advantageous in that it increases the power of memory and determination. It is specifically mentioned in this connection that because Nārada was a naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī he could remember whatever he heard from his spiritual master and would never forget it. One who can remember everything perpetually is called a śruti-dhara. A śruti-dhara brahmacārī can repeat verbatim all that he has heard, without notes and without reference to books. The great sage Nārada has this qualification, and therefore, having taken instructions from Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, he is engaged in propagating the philosophy of devotional service all over the world. Because such great sages can remember everything, they are thoughtful, self-realized and completely fixed in the service of the Lord.

ॐ Thus the great sage Nārada, after hearing from his spiritual master Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, became completely realized.

ॐ He became established in the truth, and he became so happy that he offered prayers to Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi.

ॐ Nārada Muni addressed Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi as an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa and specifically addressed Him as the supreme well-wisher of the conditioned souls.

ॐ It is stated in the Bhagavad-gītā that Lord Kṛṣṇa descends in every millennium just to give protection to His devotees and to annihilate the

nondevotees. Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, being an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, is also addressed as the well-wisher of the conditioned souls. As stated in the Bhagavad-gītā, everyone should know that there is no well-wisher like Kṛṣṇa. Everyone should understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme well-wisher of everyone and should take shelter of Him. In this way one can become completely confident and satisfied, knowing that he has someone who is able to give him all protection. Kṛṣṇa Himself, His incarnations and His plenary expansions are all supreme well-wishers of the conditioned souls, but Kṛṣṇa is the well-wisher even of the demons, for He gave salvation to all the demons who came to kill Him in Vṛndāvana; therefore Kṛṣṇa's welfare activities are absolute, for whether He annihilates a demon or gives protection to a devotee, the result of His activities is one and the same. It is said that the demon Pūtanā was elevated to the same position as that of Kṛṣṇa's mother. When Kṛṣṇa kills a demon, the demon is supremely benefited, as much as a pure devotee is benefited by always being protected by the Lord.

ॐ Nārada Muni, after offering respects to Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, went to the āśrama of Vyāsadeva, his disciple.

ॐ Being properly received by Vyāsadeva in his āśrama and seated very comfortably, Nārada Muni narrated the entire story of what he had heard from Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi.

ॐ In this way Śukadeva Gosvāmī informed Mahārāja Parīkṣit of the answers to his questions regarding the essence of Vedic knowledge and what is considered to be the ultimate goal in the Vedas. The supreme goal of life is to achieve the transcendental blessings of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus become engaged in the loving service of the Lord. One should follow in the footsteps of Śukadeva Gosvāmī and all the other Vaiṣṇavas in the disciplic succession and should pay respectful obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari. The four sects of Vaiṣṇava disciplic succession, namely the Madhva-sampradāya, the Rāmānuja-sampradāya, the Viṣṇu-svāmī-sampradāya and the Nimbārka-sampradāya, in pursuance of all Vedic conclusions, agree that one should surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

ॐ The Vedic literature is divided into two parts: the śrutis and the smṛtis. The śrutis are the four Vedas—Ṛg, Sāma, Atharva and Yajur—and the Upaniṣads, and the smṛtis are the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas like the Mahābhārata, which includes the Bhagavad-gītā. The conclusion of all these is that one should know Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the Parama-puruṣa, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, under whose superintendence material nature works. For creation, maintenance and annihilation, the Supreme Lord incarnates into three—Lord Brahmā, Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva—after manifesting the material cosmos. All of these take charge of the three modes of material nature, but the ultimate direction is

in the hand of Lord Viṣṇu. The complete activities of material nature under the three modes are conducted under the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā (mayādhyakṣeṇa [Bg. 9.10]) and in the Vedas (sa aikṣata).

- ॐ The atheistic Sāṅkhyaite philosophers will of course offer their arguments that the material cosmic manifestation is due to prakṛti and puruṣa— material nature and the living entity, or the material cause and the effective cause. But Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes. He is the cause of both the material and the effective causes. Prakṛti and puruṣa are not the ultimate cause. Superficially it appears that a child is born due to the combination of the father and mother, but the ultimate cause of both the father and the mother is Kṛṣṇa. He is therefore the original cause, or the cause of all causes, as confirmed in the Brahma-saṁhitā.
- ॐ Both the Supreme Lord and the living entities enter into the material nature. The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, by one of His plenary expansions, manifests as Kāraṇodakaśāyī, Mahā-Viṣṇu, the gigantic Viṣṇu form lying in the Causal Ocean. Then from that gigantic form of Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu expands and enters into every universe. From Him, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva expand. Viṣṇu as Kṣīrodakaśāyī enters into the hearts of all living entities, as well as into all material elements, including the atom. The Brahma-saṁhitā says, aṅḍāntara-stha-ṣaramāṇu-cayāntara-stham: [Bs. 5.35] “The Lord is within this universe and also within every atom.”
- ॐ The living entity has a small material body taken in various species and forms, and similarly the whole universe is but the material body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This body is described in the śāstras as virāṭ-rūpa. As the individual living entity maintains his particular body, the Supreme Personality of Godhead maintains the whole cosmic creation, entering within it. As soon as the individual living entity leaves the material body, the body is immediately annihilated, and similarly as soon as Lord Viṣṇu leaves the cosmic manifestation, everything is annihilated. Therefore only when the individual living entity surrenders unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead is his liberation from material existence possible. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā: mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te [Bg. 7.14]. Surrendering unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and nothing else, is therefore the cause of liberation. How the living entity becomes liberated from the modes of material nature after surrendering unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead is illustrated by the example of a sleeping man within a room. When a man is sleeping, everyone sees that he is present within the room, but actually the man himself is not within that body, for while sleeping a man forgets his bodily existence, although others may see that his body is present. Similarly, a liberated person engaged in devotional

*service to the Lord may be seen by others to be engaged in the household duties of the material world, but since his consciousness is fixed in Kṛṣṇa, he does not live within this world. His engagements are different, exactly as the sleeping man's engagements are different from his bodily engagements. It is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gītā that a devotee engaged full time in the transcendental loving service of the Lord has already surpassed the influence of the three modes of material nature. He is already situated on the Brahman platform and is in the transcendental realm, although he appears to be living within the body or within the material world.*

ॐ In this connection, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* that the person whose only desire is to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead may be situated in any condition in the material world, but he is to be understood as *jīvan-mukta*; that is to say, he is to be considered liberated while living within the body or the material world. The conclusion, therefore, is that a person fully engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a liberated person. Such a person actually has nothing to do with his material body or the material world. Those who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called *karmīs* and *jñānīs*, and they hover on the bodily and mental platforms and thus are not liberated. This situation is called *kaivalya-nirasta-yoni*. But a person situated on the transcendental platform is freed from the repetition of birth and death. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Fourth Chapter: “Simply by knowing the transcendental nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, one becomes free from the chains of the repetition of birth and death, and after quitting his present body he goes back home, back to Godhead.” This is the conclusion of all the Vedas. Thus after understanding the prayers offered by the personified Vedas, one should surrender unto the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ