

Study Guide
To

**SRIMAD
BHAGAVATAM**

CANTO ONE

The Bhaktivedanta Academy

1.0. First Canto Chapter One: Six questions lay the foundation of the entire *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

1.1. Chapter One, Questions by the Sages, verses summary.

Srila Vyasadeva offers his obeisances to Lord Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and immediately glorifies the Srimad Bhagavatam as completely pure, free from materially motivated activities, and especially nectarean having emanated from the lips of Sri Sukadeva Goswami. (1-3)

The narration of the Bhagavatam begins in the holy place of Naimisaranya, where great sages first glorify Srila Suta Goswami, the speaker of the Bhagavatam, and then begin inquiring from him (4-8) The sages begin by posing three questions. (9-13)

Then they glorify chanting and hearing about the Lord and request Suta to speak to them about the Lord and His incarnations. (14-20)

After Suta describes that the Age of Kali has just begun, the sages then ask a final (sixth) question: "Now that Sri Krsna, the Absolute Truth, the master of all mystic powers has departed for His abode, please tell us by whom religious principles are presently protected." (21-23)

1.2. Along with six questions, First Canto Chapter One presents five conditions essential for proper understanding of the Bhagavatam. Unless these five conditions are accepted then the inquiry represented by the six questions will come to no fruit. These are summarized from the Bhaktivedanta Purports. (BVPS)

1. One should hear the pastimes, names, and glories of the Lord from the Srimad Bhagavatam, in which all material forms of religion are rejected, from a bona fide spiritual master. One should become fixed in devotional service, and not allow his mind to be deflected to anything else. Patiently and submissively hearing the Srimad Bhagavatam immediately re-establishes a soul in his eternal relationship with Krsna. All other goals are rejected in the Bhagavatam. (1-3)

2. One must hear the Bhagavatam from a bona fide representative of Vyasadeva. (4-8)

3. If both the speaker and the hearer are qualified, the hearer will easily understand the Absolute Truth, Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (9-13)

4. Hearing of the ever-fresh pastimes, names, and glories of Krsna will attract one away from the horrible Kali yuga trap of the material world to the eternal blissful spiritual realm. (14-20)

5. Because of the shortness of life that Kali Yuga brings, one should fear the dangers of Kali, accept the shelter of a bona fide spiritual master, and adopt the process recommended by Lord Caitanya for self realization in Kali Yuga: hearing and chanting Krsna's glories as told in the Bhagavad-gita and the Srimad-Bhagavatam. (21-23)

Note: *Whenever the marker **BVPS** appears in parentheses at the head of a section of this study guide, it stands for **Bhaktivedanta Purports Summary**. The reader should understand that material so marked does not consist of direct quotations of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. To illustrate: in the paragraphs just above numbered 1-5, a great deal of information is condensed from Prabhupada's purports. For example, paragraph 1 is condensed from the purports to verses 1 through 3 of Chapter One of the First Canto. Therefore "(1-3)" appears at the end of that paragraph. Often the reader will come to a section of this study guide that present a "philosophical summary" or "the philosophical significance" of a question, an answer, a chapter of the Bhagavatam etc. The marker (**BVPS**) at the head of such a section means it presents a condensation of Srila Prabhupada's writings. Sometimes, however, the marker (**BVP**) is used. This stands simply for **Bhaktivedanta Purport**. Here the exact words from a purport are quoted (though not necessarily the whole purport is quoted). The verse that the purport comments upon is indicated in parentheses at the end of the section, For example. section 2.2. below ends with (8), which refers to the purport of verse 8.*

1.3. Questions One through Six (the foundational questions of the Bhagavatam) as summarized by Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura.

Regarding the six questions of the sages, in his commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.1, Visvanath Cakravarti Thakura has summarized the six questions that the sages of Namasaranya asked Suta Gosvami as follows:

1. What is the ultimate benefit for mankind?
2. What is the essence of all scriptures?
3. For what reason did the Lord take His birth from Devaki?
4. Describe the wonderful deeds of the Lord when He assumed the forms of Brahma, Rudra, etc, for the purpose of creating, maintaining, and destroying the universe.
5. Fully describe the activities of Lord Hari's incarnations within this universe.
6. Where has religion taken shelter after Krsna has retired to His own abode?

1.4. Where the answers to the six questions are to be found, according to Srila Jiva Gosvami (summary).

Srila Jiva Gosvami has commented that of these six questions, four are answered in Chapter Two and two are answered in Chapter Three.

1.5. Questions One through Six and their answers in greater detail.

Next the questions are specifically identified by verse, as are their answers:

Question One (1.1.9): What is the absolute and ultimate good (*sreyah*) for people in general?

Answer: After describing that devotional service to Sri Krsna was the essence of the scriptures, Suta explains that the ultimate benefit for people in general is to become free from material bondage and develop love of God through devotional service offered only to Krsna or His plenary parts. (Especially SB 1.2.6- 7, but also until verse 27)

Question Two: (1.1.11): What is the essence of all scriptures?

Answer: Throughout the Second Chapter of the Bhagavatam and especially in SB 1.2.6-7, and continuing on to text 28, Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is confirmed as the only object of worship, and establishing one's lost relationship with Him in love and service through devotional service is proclaimed as sum and substance of the Vedic literatures.

Question Three (1.1.12): Tell why Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared (verse 13 may be included here – see purport).

Answer: This question is answered in 1.2.34, "to reclaim those in the mode of pure goodness." In addition, this question is answered in 1.8.35, 9.4.61, 10.8.48-50, and 10.33.37.

Question Four (1.1.17): Describe the activities of the incarnations of the Lord.

Answer: The Lord's incarnations are described in Chapter Three of the First Canto. More detailed descriptions of the incarnations are recounted throughout the remainder of the Bhagavatam.

Question Five (1.1.18): Tell us of the acts of Lord performs in relationship to creating the material world. (See purport).

Answer: This question is answered in 1.2.30-33, wherein the Bhagavatam explains how Vasudeva creates the material substance and enters into it as the Purusa incarnations. In addition, Cantos Three and Four relate the creation of the universe and its population by all species.

Question Six (1.1.23): Where have religious principles gone after Krsna's disappearance from this planet?

Answer: Suta Goswami answers this question in SB 1.3.43 by declaring, "This Bhagavat Purana is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Krsna to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of Kali shall get light from this Purana."

2.0 *Srimad-Bhagavatam* First Canto Chapter Two is Suta Gosvami's answer to the first four foundational questions. The specific verses that reply to specific questions are noted before (2.5). Still, Chapter Two as a whole is to be understood as Suta's general answer.

2.1. Chapter Two, Divinity and Divine Service, verses summary.

Before replying, Suta Goswami first offers his obeisances to his guru, Srila Sukadeva Goswami, Lord Narayana, the sages Nara-Narayana Rsi, mother Sarasvati, and Srila Vyasadeva. (1-4)

Suta praises the sages' inquiries, for they are about Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He stresses the importance of the process of self-realization, and its goal--devotional service to Krsna. (5-10)

Suta says further that since Krsna is the Absolute Truth, one must satisfy Him by devotional service. (11-15)

He describes the gradual progress of consciousness of a devotee who overcomes the effects of the modes of nature and attains pure devotional service through the proper hearing of *Srimad Bhagavatam* and serving pure devotees. (16-22)

Suta explains Lord Krsna's position as beyond the modes of nature. Those who are serious about liberation worship only Him, for the Lord is the Supreme goal of life. (23-29)

The chapter ends with Suta's description of how the Lord, although transcendental to the material world, first creates the material world and then maintains His creation. (30-34)

2.2. Chapter Two summarized from a Bhaktivedanta Purport. (BVP)

The need of the spirit soul is that he wants to get out of the limited sphere of material bondage and fulfill his desire for complete freedom. He wants to get out of the covered walls of the greater universe. He wants to see the free light and the spirit. That complete freedom is achieved when he meets the complete spirit, the Personality of Godhead. There is a dormant affection for God within everyone; spiritual existence is manifested through

the gross body and mind in the form of perverted affection for gross and subtle matter. Therefore we have to engage ourselves in occupational engagements that will evoke our divine consciousness. This is possible only by hearing and chanting the divine activities of the Supreme Lord, and any occupational activity which does not help one to achieve attachment for hearing and chanting the transcendental message of Godhead is said herein to be simply a waste of time. This is because other occupational duties (whatever ism they may belong to) cannot give liberation to the soul. Even the activities of the salvationists are considered to be useless because of their failure to pick up the fountainhead of all liberties. The gross materialist can practically see that his material gain is limited only to time and space, either in this world or in the other. Even if he goes up to the Svargaloka, he will find no permanent abode for his hankering soul. The hankering soul must be satisfied by the perfect scientific process of perfect devotional service. (8)

Note: *The reader is reminded of the Note at the end of the earlier section 1.2. The marker BVP—for Bhaktivedanta Purport seen in the heading of this section 2.2. means that that the words of 2.2 come directly from the purport to verse 8 of this chapter. These words are not a summary written by the author of the study guide. In the case of such a summary, the marker BVPS—for Bhaktivedanta Purport Summary would be used. At the end of such a summary, several verse numbers would be enclosed in parentheses—for example, at the end of paragraph 1 of section 1.2., the marker (1-3) is seen. This indicates that this paragraph is a summary of the purports to verses 1 through 3.*

3.0 In First Canto Chapter Three Suta Gosvami replies to the fourth and sixth foundational questions of Srimad-Bhagavatam, and also, once more, touches on the fifth question.

3.1. Chapter Three, Krsna is the Source of All Incarnations, verses summary.

Suta Goswami describes the roles of the three Purusa avatars in the creation of both the total cosmos and the individual universes. (1-4)

Suta then briefly describes twenty-two incarnations of God that appear within this universe. He goes on to say that the Lord actually has

unlimited incarnations. (5-27) Although innumerable incarnations exist, Krsna is Their fountainhead and so is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (28)

Suta Goswami explains that the material forms (gross and subtle) of both the Lord (Virat-rupa) and the living beings are actually imaginary. Therefore, learned men describe the glories and pastimes of the Lord's incarnations so that the conditioned souls can be freed from ignorance and achieve ecstatic love for the Supreme Lord. (29-39)

Suta Goswami then glorifies the Srimad Bhagavatam as the incarnation of Lord Krsna meant for delivering the conditioned souls of Kali Yuga. He also describes how the Bhagavatam was transferred from Srila Vyasadeva to Sukadeva to Himself (40-44)

3.2. Suta Goswami gives a 5-part answer to questions four, five and six. Part 1 is concerned with the Lord's Purusa incarnations for the creation of the material world. This refers back to question five (1.1.18), which was primarily answered in the previous chapter (1.2.30-33). In part 2 he addresses question four (1.1.17), about the activities of the Lord's incarnations. At part 3 his answer begins to turn from question four to question six (1.1.23--where is *dharma* now after Sri Krsna's return to His abode?). (BVPS)

1. The Lord, through His Purusa incarnations--Karanadaksayi Visnu, Garbodaksayi Visnu, and Ksiradaksayi Visnu--creates the material world to facilitate the misguided ambitions of the jiva souls. One can perceive the spiritual nature of these incarnations, as well as all the Lord's other incarnations, if one is qualified through his devotional service. (1-4)

2. Through Garbodaksayi Visnu comes innumerable incarnations that constantly appear on different planets and in different universes, as water flows continuously from a waterfall. (5-27)

3. But Sri Krsna is not an incarnation. Rather He is the original, complete, Supreme Personality of Godhead. (28)

4. One should hear how the Lord descends into the material world, while having no connection with the material world, from bona fide sources like the Srimad Bhagavatam. Thus one will be enriched with knowledge.

One should then take shelter of the Lord, become self realized, and see the Lord face to face. (29-39)

5. To reach this stage of perfection, one should hear this Srimad Bhagavatam, the cream of Vedic literatures, with rapt attention from a bona fide spiritual master, and thus learn who is God, what one's relationship is with Him, and what one's ultimate destination is after leaving his body. Such a qualified reader of the Bhagavatam will see Sri Krsna, in person, within the Bhagavatam's pages. (40-44)

Note: *The reader is again kindly reminded that the marker (BVPS) stands for Bhaktivedanta Purports Summary. The paragraphs numbered 1-5 above are **not** direct quotations from Srila Prabhupada. They are summaries of his purports to groups of verses in Chapter Three. For example, paragraph 1 is a summary of his purports to verses 1-4.*

4.0 Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Four of Srimad-Bhagavatam. (Q7.)

4.1. Chapter Four, The Appearance of Sri Narada, verses summary.

Saunaka Rsi inquires from Suta Goswami about the history of Sukadeva Goswami's speaking the Bhagavatam to Maharaja Pariksit.(1-13)

Suta tells how Veda Vyasa compiled and edited the Vedic literatures for the benefit of the unfortunate souls of Kali Yuga. (14-25)

Even after his great work was complete, Veda Vyasa still felt dissatisfied. Just as he was contemplating the cause of his despondency, his spiritual master, Narada Muni, appeared.(26-33)

4.2. Question Seven of Srimad-Bhagavatam is asked by Saunaka of Suta.

Question Seven in essential form: O Suta Gosvami, may you please relate the pious message of Srimad-Bhagavatam as spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami? (2)

4.2.1 In verses that follow Saunaka Rsi expands Question Seven to include these 6 specific items:

Item 1: When, where and why was the Bhagavatam recited? (3)

Item 2: From where did Sukadeva's father, Krsna Dvaipayana Vyasadeva, get the inspiration to compile the Bhagavatam? (3)

Item 3: After wandering about the earth like a naked madman, how was Sukadeva Gosvami recognized as the great sage he actually was when he entered Hastinapura? (7)

Item 4: How did Emperor Pariksit meet Sukadeva Gosvami? (8)

Item 5: Why did wealthy and powerful Emperor Pariksit renounce his kingdom to fast to death on the bank of the Ganges? (10, 11)

Item 6: Emperor Pariksit did not live to enjoy his wealth and power he lived to give shelter to his subjects; so why did he give up his body which was the shelter for others? (12)

4.2.3. The philosophical significance of Question Seven and its 6 item. (BVPS)

This Bhagavatam, which contains the direct pastimes of the Lord and which leads the conditioned souls of Kali to engage in pure devotional service, the only activity that will truly satisfy them, is effective only when heard from a pure devotee who is representing Sukadeva Goswami. (1-13)

Note; *Yet another reminder: the marker (BVPS) stands for Bhaktivedanta Purports Summary.*

4.3. Summary of the answer to Question Seven that Suta Gosvami begins to give in verses 14-33 of Chapter Four. (BVPS)

1. This Bhagavatam only describes devotional service and the transcendental pastimes of Lord Krsna, and is Srila Vyasadeva's special arrangements so the unfortunate souls trapped by Kali can approach the ultimate achievement, devotional service, which alone can bring complete satisfaction to the self.(14-25)

2. One cannot feel true satisfaction until one engages in direct devotional service as the Bhagavatam describes, even though one may understand and become purified by assimilating all the knowledge of the Vedas and the Mahabharata.(26-33)

4.4. Suta's answer to Question Seven, of course, carries on until the very end of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The six specific items, though, are addressed in First Canto.

Item One is addressed from 1.4.14 to the end of the First Canto (1.19.40).

Item Two is addressed in Chapters Five and Six.

Item Three is addressed in Chapter Nineteen, specifically 1.19.30.

Item Four is addressed in Chapter Nineteen.

Item Five is addressed in Chapters Sixteen through Nineteen.

Item Six is addressed in Chapter Nineteen, specifically 1.19.13-16 (spoken by Pariksit Maharaja).

5.0 Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Five of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. (Q8-9.)

5.1. Chapter Five, Narada's Instructions on *Srimad-Bhagavatam* for Vyasadeva, verses summary. .

Narada Muni, fully understanding the situation, inquires from Vyasa about the root cause of Vyasa's unhappiness, and hints at the solution.(1-4)

Srila Vyasadeva requests his spiritual master Narada to reveal the cause of his despondency. (5-7)

Narada informs Vyasa about the importance of directly describing the glorious pastimes of Krsna. He also tells him the dangers that could arise due to Vyasa's previous writings, which only indirectly hint at the glories of the Lord. (8-16)

Narada then tells Vyasa about the secure position of a devotee serving Krsna. (17-19)

After describing the Lord as both impersonal as well personal, Narada asks Vyasa to vividly and directly describe the pastimes of Krsna. (20-22)

He tells Vyasa how in his previous birth as a sudra, Narada became fixed in the confidential devotional service of the Lord through the association of great Bhaktivedantas, (23-31)

Narada glorifies working in Krsna's service while remembering His glories.(32-36)

After glorifying transcendental sound, Narada then requests Vyasa to directly glorify the Lord's activities for the benefit of suffering humanity.(37-40)

5.2. Questions Eight and Nine of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Question Eight is asked by Narada Muni to Vyasadeva: After compiling the Mahabharata, full of all kinds of Vedic knowledge, and presenting the philosophy of impersonal Brahman, are you satisfied by identifying the body and mind as objects of self-realization? (1-4)

Question Nine (which also serves as the answer to Question Eight) is asked by Vyasadeva to Narada Muni: In spite of these accomplishments you mentioned, I am not satisfied and therefore ask you to find out the deficiency in me. (5-7)

5.3. The philosophical significance of Questions Eight and Nine. (BVPS)

Q8: True satisfaction cannot come by any means other than by pure devotional service. (1-4)

Q9: Even if one is complete in material knowledge, one must become trained to render pure devotional service and thus remove one's miseries; therefore, one must approach and surrender to training from a bona fide spiritual who is one hundred percent a pure devotee engaged in Krsna's service. (5-7)

5.4. Narada Muni's answer to Question Nine, in 6 parts. (BVPS)

1. Because the Srimad Bhagavatam directly presents the pastimes and glories of the Lord, hearing the Bhagavatam from a pure devotee is the best method of removing our impurities and again reviving our devotional service to Krsna. Although we may be attracted to other literatures due to our impure, conditioned desires, attentively studying the Bhagavatam will remove those desires. The Bhagavatam is therefore the most superior literature, superior to even the Vedic literatures which promote gradual purification and thereby confuse readers about life's ultimate goal. (8-16)

2. On one hand, any gain outside of devotional service is doomed, and on the other hand, devotional gains are eternal. Advancing through devotional service is so perfect that even if a devotee falls the Lord personally takes charge of rectifying him. (17-19)

3. For the living entity to regain his constitution position of serving Krsna through devotional service, he must seek shelter of the Lord's representative, the bona fide spiritual master, and then, under the spiritual master's direction, the disciple can purify his material attachments by using them to glorify the Lord. (20-22)

4. Therefore one who is determined to go back to Godhead must surrender to, take training from, and hear the Bhagavatam from a pure spiritual master who represents Krsna. One must serve such a spiritual master, and rejecting all desires for material happiness, use his material abilities and opulences in Krsna's service while cultivating a strong desire to serve Krsna in the spiritual world. (23-31)

5. No plan to remove our miseries other than taking shelter of the Lord in devotional service will succeed. We should become determined to purify our inclination to lord it over the material world by dovetailing our material tendencies in Krsna's service. Thus, under the direction of a pure devotee, we can always remember Krsna and go back to Godhead. (32-36)

6. Rejecting as useless everything that doesn't bring us closer to Krsna, one should uncover his relationship with Krsna through offenselessly chanting transcendental sound vibrations, like the Bhagavatam. Because all classes of men can become purified through the potency of transcendental sound vibrations, these vibrations should be widely broadcast. (37-40)

6.0 Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Six of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. (Q10.)

6.1. First Canto Chapter Six, Conversations Between Narada and Vyasadeva, verses summary.

Vyasa inquires from Narada about how he passed his life after the departure of the sages. (1-4)

Narada describes that after his mother was bitten by a poisonous snake and died, he began traveling. Once, as he sat beneath a banyan tree, he began meditating on the Lord in the heart. (5-15)

As Narada Muni meditated, the Supersoul first appeared to him and then departed. Narada Muni was grief stricken. (16-20)

The Lord then spoke to Narada, His words dispelled Narada's unhappiness. Four points He made are most relevant to the philosophical significance of **Q8-9** (see section **5.3** above). 1) Unqualified persons cannot have the Lord's darsan. 2) Still, the Lord granted darsan to Narada in order to increase his desire for Him. 3) By devotional service, even for few days, young Narada (at that time, remember, he was still in the body of the son of a sudra) will get drdha-matih, firm intelligence. 4) This intelligence is eternal. (21-25)

After recounting his meeting with the Supersoul, Narada tells Vyasa how he spent the remainder of his life. Narada then describes his next birth as the great sage, Narada Muni. (26-30)

Vyasadeva is then told of the transcendental activities that Narada Muni now continuously performs. (31-33)

Narada finishes his instructions to Vyasa, and Suta Goswami narrates the departure of Narada. Suta then describes Narada's glories. (34-38)

6.2. Question Ten of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Vyasadeva of Narada.

Question Ten is about Narada's advancement in Krsna consciousness, It has three parts:

Question Ten Part 1: What did you do after the departure of the sages who, in your prior birth, instructed you? (2)

Question Ten Part 2: How did you pass that life after initiation, and how did you attain your present body? (3)

Question Ten Part 3: How are you able to remember your prior birth, which was in a previous day of Brahma? (4)

6.3. The philosophical significance of Question Ten. (BVPS)

Inquiring from great devotees helps one advance in Krsna consciousness, and that advancement is never annihilated, as spirit is never annihilated, even at the death of the body. (1-4)

6.4. Narada Muni's answer to the three parts of Question Ten, in philosophical summary. (BVPS)

1. After associating with pure devotees and taking initiation from them, one should become serious about Krsna consciousness. When Krsna kindly removes one's material entanglements, one should devote one's time solely to spiritual development either by fearlessly traveling or by sitting in a holy place and repeatedly hearing and chanting the holy scriptures. (5-15)

2. Thus by taking initiation from and serving one's bona fide spiritual masters, and by following the regulative principles and practices of devotional service, one's love of God will gradually progress in its development until it matures beyond the probationary, regulative stage. Then, by the Lord's causeless mercy, one will be able, in ecstasy, to directly see and hear Krsna by His mercy. (16-20) To reach the stage of ecstatic love for Krsna, one should receive training in a temple, perform arcana, and there serve Krsna. These practices will naturally increase one's desire to serve more and more. Thus, through intensely hankering for Krsna's service, one will directly experience Krsna's transcendental presence. Even a short period of training in devotional service ultimately, but inevitably, leads to association with Krsna. Whatever devotional service one renders is never lost, but accumulates until it is completely mature. (21-25)

3. Thus a pure and sincere devotee experiences the association of the Lord through continuously and selflessly chanting and preaching. In this way prepares for his liberation, going back to Godhead in his spiritual body in his next life. Even as he serves in this life, he surcharges his present material body with spiritual energy. Although a great liberated devotee may again have to take birth, neither his birth nor death will be ordinary. His appearance and disappearance will be like Krsna's, who carries on His activities in an unlimited, transcendental body. (26-30) By following in the footsteps of great authorized devotees like Narada Muni, a pure devotee is awarded so much benediction from the Lord that he continuously, lovingly chants Krsna's glories. Thus he penetrates the attention of the Lord and obliges the Lord to always be visible to him. (31-33) One can cross the ocean of miseries only through devotional service. One therefore should change all his thinking and activities to Krsna conscious thinking and activities. Since we know from Narada Muni how to achieve ecstatic love of God, we should use our free will to execute devotional service. Our mission should be to preach the glories of devotional service to the suffering souls within this world, as Narada himself does. (34-38)

7.0 Questions and Answers in First Canto Chapter Seven. (Q11-12.)

7.1. First Canto Chapter Seven, The Son of Drona Punished, verses summary.

Saunaka Rsi inquires from Suta Goswami about Vyasa's activities after Narada's departure. Suta first describes Vyasa's meditation and how through his meditation Vyasa perfectly understood the Lord, the living entity, and the Lord's material energy. (1-4) **Note:** *the reader is kindly requested to carefully go through Srila Prabhupada's purport to verse 4, then to compare it to the following excerpt from Sri Tattva-sandarbha by Srila Jiva Gosvami:*

30 Suta gives a similar concise explanation of the import of the *Bhagavata* (this time) in terms of the *samadhi* experienced by its author, wherein the principle which was to be set forth in that work was ascertained: "With his heart purified and perfectly poised through *bhakti-yoga*, he saw the *purnapurusa*, with *maya* taking His shelter. The *jiva*, deluded by that *maya* considers himself to be composed of the three *gunas*, though really beyond them, and consequently comes to grief. Vyasa composed this *Satvatasamhita* for those people ignorant of the fact that *bhaktiyoga* directed toward Adhoksaja (i.e. Krsna) directly puts an end to grief. If one but hears this (*Satvatasamhita* i.e. *Bhagavata*), devotion for Krsna, the supreme *purusa*, will grow in him, putting an end to grief, delusion and fear. After composing and arranging this *Bhagavati Samhita*, Vyasa taught it to his son (Suka), then leading a life of renunciation'. (*Bhag.1.7.4-8*)

At this point Saunaka asked, "But why did the sage (Suka), then leading a life of renunciation, being unconcerned in all situations, and rejoicing in the Self alone, study this vast composition?" (*Bhag.1.7.9*)

In reply to Saunaka's query, Suta said, "Although such sages rejoice in the Self alone, and are free from all bounds, still they cherish motiveless devotion for Urukrama (i.e. Krsna); indeed such are the virtues of Hari. The venerable son of Vyasa had his heart captivated by the virtues of Hari and studied this great narrative daily, holding the devotees of Visnu dear to his heart." (*Bh.P.1.7.10-12*)

The expression *bhaktiyogena* ("through *bhakti-yoga*") means "through *prema*, or love of God", based on the use of the same term in the following verse: "Bhagavan Mukunda (i.e. Krsna) no doubt grants liberation to those who offer Him (mere) worship; but He never grants them *bhaktiyoga*." (*Bhag.5.6.18*) *Pranhite* ("perfectly poised") means "absorbed in *samadhi*", since he had been instructed earlier by Narada to "recall the events of Krsna's *lila* by means of *samadhi*". (*Bh.P.1.5.13*) The word *purna* ("full" or "perfect") should be understood in its unrestricted sense, based on the statement from the Uttara Khanda of the Padma Purana: "The words *bhagavat* and *purusa* are both free from limiting adjuncts, and refer to Vasudeva, the Self of all." And the fact that the *purnapurusa* mentioned here refers to Bhagavan Himself is also verified by Sridhara's commentary in the following verses: "The desirer of that enjoyment should worship Soma; the desireless one, the supreme *Purusa*. The high-minded ones, whether free from desires, desiring all, or desiring liberation, should worship the supreme *purusa* with intense *bhakti-yoga*." (*Bhag.2.3.-10*) According to Sridhara's commentary, the term *purusa* from the first of the two preceding verses signifies "*the paramatma*, whose sole limiting adjunct is *prakrti*", while the same term from the second verse refers to the "*purnapurusa*, free from all limiting adjuncts or conditions". The *purnapurusa* here refers to the selfsame Personality of Godhead.

31 Even if the reading *purvam* is accepted (for *purnam*), still Lord alone is indicated, based in the etymological interpretation of *Sruti* which derives the essential nature of the *purusa* from his statement, "I existed here even prior (*purvam*)(to the universe)."

It is self-evident that the phrase "he i.e. Vyasa, saw the *purusa*" means that he saw Him endowed with his *svarupa-sakti* alone, just as when someone says, "he saw the full moon", it is understood that he saw the moon endowed with all its effulgence. Therefore Arjuna said to Krsna, "Thou are the primordial *purusa*, the visible Lord, beyond *prakrti*. Having cast aside *maya* by means of Your *cicchakti* (power of consciousness), You dwell in a state of supreme independence within Yourself."(*Bhag.*1.7.23)

Therefore, the phrase *mayam ca tadapasravam* indicates that *maya* does not constitute *svarupa sakti* of *bhagavan*, since, having had her ground removed from her (indicated by the prefix *apa*), she remains concealed from *bhagavan*. As stated later, "Maya, embarrassed to remain in His presence, flees..."(*Bhag.* 2.7.47)

The nature of this *svarupa-sakti* will now be explained by means of *Bhagavata* verses 1.7.6 and 1.7.10. In the first of these, the power of *bhakt-iyoga* is understood to be a function of the *svarupasakti*, based on its ability to overpower *maya*; and in the latter, the virtues (of Hari) deserve to be considered the highest functioning of the *svarupa-sakti*, since they surpass even the bliss of Brahman.

It should be understood that no separate mention is made of the *purusa* which presides over *maya* (i.e. the *paramatma*), or of Brahman, since both are considered to fall within the domain of the *purnapurusa*, the former as a partial aspect of Him, and the latter as His unqualified manifestation. Thus, just as before, the related principle *sambandhi tattva* is here set forth.

32 Then, Vyasa saw the essential distinction between the *jiva* and *paramesvara* which forms the basis for the *abhidheya* and *prayojana* of this work, as stated earlier. Thus was it described by Suta in *Bhag.* 1.7.5.

"The *jiva*, deluded 'by that' i.e. by *maya*, considers himself to be 'composed of the three *gunas*', i.e. to be the insentient aggregate of the body, etc. even though as a conscious entity, he is 'beyond', i.e. beyond the insentient combination of the three *gunas*, and 'consequently', i.e. as a result of that misconception, 'comes to grief', i.e. experiences the misery of repeated birth and death."

Thus even though the *jiva* is a conscious entity, the phrases "deluded by *maya*" and "he considers himself (to be composed of the three *gunas*)" reveal the fact that consciousness, which constitutes his essential nature, is an attribute of the *jiva*, just as the power of illumination, which represents the essential nature of light, is also capable of illuminating both itself and other entities. This view is verified by the words from the *Bhagavat-gita*: "Knowledge is covered by ignorance, hence are beings deluded." (5.15)

Thus, Vyasa rejected that other doctrine which maintains that it is the limiting adjuncts, or *upadhis*, which constitute the nature of the *jiva*, and it is their destruction which constitutes his liberation.

The phrase "deluded by *maya*" indicates that she alone is responsible (for deluding *jivas*), while the Lord remains uninvolved. As stated later, "Foolish people are deluded by *maya*, who is ashamed to stand in the presence of the Lord, and speak boastfully of 'I' and 'mine'." (*Bhag.*2.5.13) Here the word "ashamed" indicates that *maya*,

though realising that her practice of deluding *jivas* is not pleasing to the Lord, is nevertheless unable to bear the fact that *jivas* have been ignorantly turning their backs on the Lord from time immemorial as indicated by the line, "Those who turn away from the Lord experience fear because of their devotion to a second" (*Bhag.11.2.37*) and so conceals their real nature and engrosses him in matter.

The above excerpt may be summarized by simply quoting from Srila Prabhupada's purport to Bhag. 1.7.4:

The Supreme Person has manifold energies, out of which the internal, external and marginal energies are specifically important. The energy mentioned here is the external energy, as will be clear from the statements of her activities. The internal energy is there along with the Absolute Person as the moonlight is there with the moon. The external energy is compared to darkness because it keeps the living entities in the darkness of ignorance. The word *apasrayam* suggests that this energy of the Lord is under full control. The internal potency or superior energy is also called *maya*, but it is spiritual *maya*, or energy exhibited in the absolute realm. When one is under the shelter of this internal potency, the darkness of material ignorance is at once dissipated. And even those who are *atmarama*, or fixed in trance, take shelter of this *maya*, or internal energy. Devotional service, or *bhakti-yoga*, is the function of the internal energy; thus there is no place for the inferior energy, or material energy, just as there is no place for darkness in the effulgence of spiritual light.

Thus the author of Srimad-Bhagavatam, Srila Vyasadeva, was blessed by his spiritual master Narada Muni with the same transcendental vision of the Absolute Truth that Narada received from Brahma who received it from the Lord Himself. The Absolute Truth is threefold: 1) Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, 2) the jiva in his undeluded pure state as eternal servant of Krsna, and 3) the Lord's purely spiritual internal energy, which displays an external illusory aspect that overwhelms the jivas who choose to turn away from their constitutional relationship with the Lord in devotional service. When Brahma received this divine vision, he simultaneously heard the catuhsloki-Bhagavatam (Bhag. 2.9.33-36). These four essential verses teach the fundamental truth of acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva and the three foundational principles by which the Bhagavatam and all Vedic scriptures are properly understood.

Vyasa, in order to save the conditioned souls from misery, then compiled the *Srimad Bhagavatam* and taught it to his son Sukadeva

Goswami. (5-8) **Note:** *the purport to verse 5 opens with these words by Srila Prabhupada:*

The root cause of suffering by the materialistic living beings is pointed out with remedial measures which are to be undertaken and also the ultimate perfection to be gained. All this is mentioned in this particular verse. The living being is by constitution transcendental to material engagement, but he is now imprisoned by the external energy...

“The root cause of suffering” is the jiva’s forgetting his eternal sambandha (connection) to the Lord. Suffering is healed by genuine sambandha-jnana vibrated by the spiritual master who humbly follows the lotus footsteps of Srila Vyasadeva, Narada Rsi and Catuh-mukha Brahmadeva. “Remedial measures” constitute abhideya. “The ultimate perfection to be gained” is prayojana.

Saunaka now asks Suta why Sukadeva, who was already on the path of self-realization, took the trouble to study the *Bhagavatam*. After Suta replies that even liberated souls are attracted to the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Suta begins answering Saunaka's earlier questions about Sri Krsna, Maharaja Pariksit, and the Pandavas. **Note:** *For a reminder of those questions, kindly look back at sections 4.2 through 4.4 in the study guide for Chapter Four. In his reply Suta Gosvami will transport us into Mahabharata, Vyasadeva’s epic narrative of the wealthy, powerful, cultured and devoted Kuru dynasty. At the climax of the book, the dynasty is shredded by an eighteen-day fratricidal war. Mahabharata includes Bhagavad-gita, Lord Krsna’s transcendental instructions to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kuruksetra. The reader may recall Bhag. 1.4.25 This verse makes it clear that Vyasa considered Mahabharata his most perfect work. In vain, He tried to take satisfaction from the fact that it made Vedic knowledge available to all, even women and sudras. In Bhag.. 1.5.3, Narada Muni himself praised Mahabharata, calling it “a great and wonderful work” ; but in the next verse he reminded his disciple that so far, not one piece of Vedic literature he had compiled went beyond impersonal Brahman as the ultimate goal of dharma. Vyasa’s desire had been to edify the public at large with a complete account of dharma, artha, kama and moksa through the interest-catching medium of itihasa (historical record). Yet even after having finished this “great and wonderful work”, his heart was weighed down by despondency. Why? Vedic knowledge indeed leads to self-realization. But until he received his spiritual master into his asrama cottage that day, Srila Vyasadeva had sadly failed to broadcast the transcendental glories of the Supreme Personality of*

Godhead. Therefore Narada compared his disciple's voluminous output of Vedic texts to "a place of pilgrimage for crows." (Bhag. 1.5.10)

Suta Gosvami now turns to the *itihasa* narrative of the aftermath of the devastating Battle of Kuruksetra. Saunaka and the sages listen to him tell of Asvattama, the son of Arjuna's martial teacher Dronacarya, killing the five sleeping Pandava princes in the belief that it would please Duryodhana, who lay still breathing but unable to move his limbs on the field of battle, his back having been broken by the mighty Bhima in the final campaign of the war. (9-14)

Asvattama flees after his heinous crime, and Arjuna sets out to capture him. Asvattama tries to escape by using his *brahmastra* weapon on Arjuna. When Arjuna sees the glaring *brahmastra* threatening him, he prays to Sri Krsna, who is driving his chariot, and then follows Krsna's instructions about counteracting the fearful weapon. (15-31)

Arjuna neutralizes the *brahmastra* and then captures and binds Asvattama. (31-34)

Krsna then tells Arjuna that Asvattama should be killed. Arjuna brings Asvattama back to the Pandava camp. (35-41)

There, Draupadi and the other Pandavas are appalled to see Asvattama, the son of their teacher, bound with ropes. They demand his release. Bhima, alone amongst the Pandavas, insists to the contrary that Asvattama be killed for his horrendous misdeed. Krsna hints at the solution, and Arjuna, understanding Krsna's desire, both "kills" and "not kills" Asvattama by cutting off the jewel from Asvattama's head. Then, after releasing the humiliated Asvattama, Arjuna and the Pandavas perform the funeral rituals for their relatives who have been slain in the Battle of Kuruksetra. (42-58)

7.2. Questions Eleven and Twelve of *Srimad Bhagavatam* are asked by Saunaka of Suta.

Question Eleven: After Narada departed the *asrama* of Vyasadeva, what did Vyasa do? (1)

Question Twelve: If Sukadeva Gosvami was already on the path of self-realization as an *atmarama*, then why did he undergo study of the Srimad-Bhagavatam? (9)

7.3. The philosophical significance of Questions Eleven and Twelve. (BVPS)

Q.11: The Varnasrama system is a spiritual culture in which all members--*brahmacaris*, *grhastha*, *vanaprasthas*, and *sannyasis*--progress in their realization of the Absolute Truth. But one can reach the perfection of realization of the Absolute Truth, wherein one knows Krsna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only through the linking process of devotional service. (1-4)

Q. 12: Since properly hearing the Bhagavatam will purify and attract everyone to Krsna, even one liberated in *brahman*. Lord Caitanya wanted everyone, especially those born in India, to study and become fully realized in the Bhagavatam, and preach its message all over the world. (9-14)

7.4. Suta Gosvami gives his answer to Question Eleven in verses 2-8. The philosophical summary of that answer is thus. (BVPS)

The desire to perform devotional service to Krsna, followed by a personal attachment to Krsna, will arise within the heart of even an illusioned soul attached to sense gratification if he contacts Krsna through hearing, in the association of devotees, about devotional service from the Bhagavatam. This Srimad Bhagavatam is especially meant for the Paramhansas, nevertheless, all material miseries of one who takes shelter of the Bhagavatam will completely stop. (5-8)

7.5 Suta gives his answer to Question Twelve in verses 10-11. Verse 10 is the oft-quoted Atmarama verse, explained at length on two occasions by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Translation:

All different varieties of atmaramas [those who take pleasure in *atma*, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.

7.5.1. The following from Srila Prabhupada's Purport offers a condensed insight into the importance of the Atmarama verse in Bhagavatam philosophy. (BVP)

Atma means self, and *arama* means to take pleasure. Everyone is searching after the highest pleasure, but the standard of pleasure of one may be different from the standard of another. Therefore, the standard of pleasure enjoyed by the karmis is different from that of the *atmaramas*. The *atmaramas* are completely indifferent to material enjoyment in every respect. Srila Sukadeva Gosvami had already attained that stage, and still he was attracted to undergo the trouble of studying the great Bhagavatam literature. This means that *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is a postgraduate study even for the *atmaramas*, who have surpassed all the studies of Vedic knowledge. According to *Brahma-vaivarta Purana*, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami was a liberated soul even within the womb of his mother. Srila Vyasadeva knew that the child, after his birth, would not stay at home. Therefore he (Vyasadeva) impressed upon him the synopsis of the Bhagavatam so that the child could be made attached to the transcendental activities of the Lord. After his birth, the child was still more educated in the subject of the *Bhagavatam* by recitation of the actual poems. The idea is that generally the liberated souls are attached to the feature of impersonal Brahman with a monistic view of becoming one with the supreme whole. But by the association of pure devotees like Vyasadeva, even the liberated soul becomes attracted to the transcendental qualities of the Lord. (9)

**7.5.2. Verse 11 completes the answer to Question Twelve with specific reference to the case of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.
Translation:**

Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, son of Srila Vyasadeva, was not only transcendently powerful. He was also very dear to the devotees of the Lord. Thus he underwent the study of this great narration [Srimad-Bhagavatam].

8.0 Questions and Answers in First Canto Chapter Eight. (Q13-14.)

8.1 Chapter Eight, The Prayers of Queen Kunti, verses summary.

Deeply bereaved, Lord Krsna and the Pandavas perform the funeral rituals for their relatives killed in the Battle of Kuruksetra. Krsna then prepares to leave for Dvaraka. Suddenly Uttara, wife of the deceased hero Abhimanyu, rushes forward in great fear to beg Krsna's shelter. Asvatthama had unleashed a *brahmastra*, targeting it to kill the unborn child within her womb. Krsna, as the Supersoul, covers the embryo from within and saves Uttara and Pariksit, her son-to-be. Describing this to Saunaka, Suta remarks (verse 15) that Asvatthama's weapon was so powerful nothing material could resist or counteract it. But before the personal power of the Personality of Godhead, the terrible *brahma-tejasa* of this weapon was completely nullified. (1-16) **Note:** *commenting on verse 13, Srila Prabhupada writes:*

Here the word *ananya-visayatmanam* is significant. The Pandavas were cent percent dependent on the protection of the Lord, although they were all great warriors themselves.

But the Lord neglects even the greatest warriors and also vanquishes them in no time. When the Lord saw that there was no time for the Pandavas to counteract the *brahmastra* of

Asvatthama, He took up His weapon even at the risk of breaking His own vow.

Although the Battle of Kuruksetra was almost finished, still, according to His vow, He should not have taken up His own weapon. But the emergency was more important than the vow. He is better known as the *bhakta-vatsala*, or the lover of His devotee, and thus He preferred to continue as *bhakta-vatsala* than to be a worldly moralist who never breaks his solemn vow.

After witnessing this latest feat of the Lord's kindness upon her family, Kunti, the mother of the five Pandavas, approaches Krsna along with her sons to offer her humble obeisances. She first glorifies the Lord as the original personality who is never affected by the qualities of the material world. He exists within and without everything, yet remains invisible to all. Speaking in a way that demonstrated the depth of both her love for the Lord and her realizations about Him, Kunti declares that Sri Krsna remains forever beyond the range of the perception of the materially-conditioned senses even during His descent into this world, when He by His causeless mercy he permits ordinary living entities to have His *darsana*. Kunti compares Lord Krsna to a *natyadhara*, an actor so skilful that he is unrecognizable when he assumes a role. She wonders how, as a woman, she

can possibly understand Krsna's unfathomable position, since the Lord's mission in this world is to teach *bhakti-yogi* to advanced transcendentalists. Kuntidevi declares that all she can do is offer her obeisances unto Him who has mysteriously become the son of Vasudeva, the pleasure of Devaki, the boy of Nanda and the other cowherd men of Vrndavana, and the enlivener of the cows and the senses. She then praises Him for His mind-enchancing personal features. (17-22)

Kunti recalls how the Lord protected her and her family during their calamitous years of exile. She then asserts that only one who has no material shelter can easily approach Krsna. (23-27) **Note:** *Verse 26 is important because it teaches us the four-fold meaning of material progress: janma (good birth), aisvarya (opulence), sruta (education), and sribhih (to possess beautiful bodily features). In his purport to this verse Srila Prabhupada writes:*

Being materially advanced means taking birth in an aristocratic family and possessing great wealth, an education and attractive personal beauty. All materialistic men are mad after possessing all these material opulences, and this is known as the advancement of material civilization. But the result is that by possessing all these material assets one becomes artificially puffed up, intoxicated by such temporary possessions. Consequently, such materially puffed up persons are incapable of uttering the holy name of the Lord by addressing Him feelingly, "O Govinda, O Krsna." It is said in the *sastras* that by once uttering the holy name of the Lord, the sinner gets rid of a quantity of sins that he is unable to commit. Such is the power of uttering the holy name of the Lord. There is not the least exaggeration in this statement. Actually the Lord's holy name has such powerful potency. But there is a quality to such utterances also. It depends on the quality of feeling. A helpless man can feelingly utter the holy name of the Lord, whereas a man who utters the same holy name in great material satisfaction cannot be so sincere. A materially puffed up person may utter the holy name of the Lord occasionally, but he is incapable of uttering the name in quality. Therefore, the four principles of material advancement, namely (1) high parentage, (2) good wealth, (3) high education and (4) attractive beauty, are, so to speak, disqualifications for progress on the path of spiritual advancement. The material covering of the pure spirit soul is an external feature, as much as fever is an external feature of the unhealthy body. The general process is to decrease the degree of the fever and not to aggravate it by maltreatment. Sometimes it is seen that spiritually advanced persons become materially impoverished. This is no discouragement. On the other hand, such impoverishment is a good sign

as much as the falling of temperature is a good sign. The principle of life should be to decrease the degree of material intoxication which leads one to be more and more illusioned about the aim of life. Grossly illusioned persons are quite unfit for entrance into the kingdom of God.

Kunti speaks more about the mystery of Krsna's birth and activities, as well as the reason for His advent. (28-36)

Begging Lord Krsna to remain in Hastinapura, she freely admits that because the welfare and splendor of the Pandava kingdom depend upon His presence. (37-40)

Kunti then reveals her heart's desire: that her affection to all others but Krsna be severed. Offering her obeisances to the Lord, Kunti declares her complete dependence upon Him. She asks a benediction: that her mind may forever flow towards Sri Krsna's transcendental name, form, qualities and pastimes, just as the Ganges ever flows to the sea. (41-42) **Note:** *In this memorable passage from his purport to verse 42, Srila Prabhupada states:*

In the *Bhagavad-gita* we can see that Arjuna desired not to fight with his brothers and relations just to satisfy his own personal desires. But when he heard the message of the Lord, Srīmad *Bhagavad-gita*, he changed his decision and served the Lord. And for his doing so, he became a famous devotee of the Lord, for it is declared in all the scriptures that Arjuna attained spiritual perfection by devotional service to the Lord in friendship. The fighting was there, the friendship was there, Arjuna was there, and Krsna was there, but Arjuna became a different person by devotional service. Therefore, the prayers of Kunti also indicate the same categorical changes in activities. Srimati Kunti wanted to serve the Lord without diversion, and that was her prayer. This unalloyed devotion is the ultimate goal of life. Our attention is usually diverted to the service of something which is nongodly or not in the program of the Lord. When the program is changed into the service of the Lord, that is to say when the senses are purified in relation with the service of the Lord, it is called pure unalloyed devotional service. Srimati Kuntidevi wanted that perfection and prayed for it from the Lord.

After Kunti ends her prayers, Krsna again attempts to leave Hastinapura. Maharaja Yudhisthira, overwhelmed by the death of his kinsman, approaches Krsna in a dejected mood and is filled with lamentation. (43-52)

8.2. Questions Thirteen and Fourteen of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* are asked by Queen Kunti of Lord Krsna.

Question Thirteen: You Yourself descend to propagate the transcendental science of devotional service unto the hearts of the advanced transcendentalists and mental speculators, who are purified by being able to discriminate between matter and spirit. How, then, can we women know You perfectly? (20)

Question Fourteen: O my Lord, You have executed all duties Yourself. Are you leaving us today, though we are completely dependent on Your mercy and have no one else to protect us, now when all kings are at enmity with us? (37)

8.3. The philosophical significance of Question Thirteen. (BVP)

It is said in the Upanisads that the Supreme Truth, the Absolute Personality of Godhead, is beyond the range of the thinking power of the greatest philosopher. He is unknowable by great learning or by the greatest brain. He is knowable only by one who has His mercy. Others may go on thinking about Him for years together, yet He is unknowable. This very fact is corroborated by the Queen, who is playing the part of an innocent woman. Women in general are unable to speculate like philosophers, but they are blessed by the Lord because they believe at once in the superiority and almightiness of the Lord, and thus they offer obeisances without reservation. The Lord is so kind that He does not show special favor only to one who is a great philosopher. He knows the sincerity of purpose. For this reason only, women generally assemble in great number in any sort of religious function. In every country and in every sect of religion it appears that the women are more interested than the men. (20)

Note: *Once again the reader's attention is drawn to the marker (BVP), standing for Bhaktivedanta Purport. The words of section 8.3. are directly those of His Divine Grace. The same is true of the following section.*

8.4 The philosophical significance of Question Fourteen. (BVP)

The lessons of the *Bhagavad-gita* and all the *Puranas*, specifically the *Bhagavata Purana*, are therefore inevitably connected with the history of the

Pandava *mahatmas*. For them, separation from the Lord was just like the separation of a fish from water. Srimati Kuntidevi, therefore, felt such separation like a thunderbolt, and the whole prayer of the Queen is to try to persuade the Lord to stay with them. After the Battle of Kuruksetra, although the inimical kings were killed, their sons and grandsons were still there to deal with the Pandavas. It is not only the Pandavas who were put into the condition of enmity, but all of us are always in such a condition, and the best way of living is to become completely dependent on the will of the Lord and thereby overcome all difficulties of material existence. (37)

Note: *Lord Krsna does not verbally answer these questions of Queen Kunti. The answers are found in the Bhaktivedanta Purports as cited above in sections 8.3-4 of this study guide. What we observe in this chapter will become even more evident in the next: that leading personalities from Mahabharata like Queen Kunti, mother of the Pandavas, and Bhishma, commander of the numerically superior Kaurava forces that fought the Pandavas only to be defeated in 18 days, now plainly announce to the world that Lord Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and that everyone should surrender to Him.*

Special Two-Chapter Study Guide: First Canto Chapters Nine and Ten

9.0. First Canto Chapter Nine. (No questions.)

9.1. Chapter Nine, The Passing Away of Bhismadeva in the Presence of Lord Krsna, verses summary.

Maharaja Yudhisthira, Krsna, and the Pandavas go to the battlefield where Bhishma is lying on a bed of arrows. Many great rsis also arrive, and Bhismadeva properly receives them all, especially Lord Krsna, for Bhishma is aware of His glorious position. (1-10)

Seeing the Pandavas, Bhishma enumerates all the sufferings the Pandavas tolerated prior to the battle. Bhishma then explains that such things could only have happened due to the actions of eternal time and Krsna's inconceivable plan. (11-17)

Bhisma describes the glories and actual position of Krsna. (18-22)

Note: *Why is Bhismadeva's testimony about Sri Krsna so important for us to hear? Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport to verse 19:*

Pure devotees of the Lord are all *bhavas*, or persons who know the glories of the Lord in different transcendental loving services. As the Lord has innumerable expansions of His plenary form, there are innumerable pure devotees of the Lord, who are engaged in the exchange of service of different humors. Ordinarily there are twelve great devotees of the Lord, namely Brahma, Narada, Siva, Kumara, Kapila, Manu, Prahlada, Bhisma, Janaka, Sukadeva Gosvami, Bali Maharaja and Yamaraja.

In verse 19 Bhisma praises Siva, Devarsi Narada and Kapila as asya anubhavam bhagavan veda guhya-tamam, knowing very confidentially about the glories of the Supreme Lord. Up to this point in the Bhagavatam's narrative, we have heard from one other Mahajana, namely Sri Narada Muni. Now Srimad-Bhagavatam introduces us to a second greatly realized devotee of the Lord. Prabhupada continues:

Bhismadeva, although one of them, has mentioned only three important names of the twelve who know the glories of the Lord. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, one of the great acaryas in the modern age, explains that *anubhava*, or the glory of the Lord, is first appreciated by the devotee in ecstasy manifesting the symptoms of perspiring, trembling, weeping, bodily eruptions, etc., which are further enhanced by steady understanding of the glories of the Lord. Such different understandings of *bhavas* are exchanged between Yasoda and the Lord (binding the Lord by ropes) and in the chariot driving by the Lord in the exchange of love with Arjuna. These glories of the Lord are exhibited in His being subordinated before His devotees, and that is another feature of the glories of the Lord.

In Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi 4.17-22, Lord Krsna is quoted as saying:

“All the universe is filled with the conception of My majesty, but love weakened by that sense of majesty does not satisfy Me. If one regards Me as the Supreme Lord and himself as subordinate, I do not become subservient to his love, nor can it control Me. In whatever transcendental mellow My devotee worships Me, I reciprocate with him. That is my natural behaviour. ‘In whatever way my devotees surrender unto Me, I reward Him accordingly. Everyone follows my path in all respects, O son of Prtha.’ If one cherishes pure loving devotion to Me, thinking of Me as his son, his

friend or his beloved, regarding himself as great and considering Me his equal or superior, I become subordinate to him.”

Prabhupada’s purport to Bhag. 1.9.19 continues:

Sukadeva Gosvami and the Kumaras, although situated in the transcendental position, became converted by another feature of *bhava* and turned into pure devotees of the Lord.

This kind of bhava draws the mumuksavas (persons desiring liberation) to the lotus feet of the Lord. It has already been mentioned in the Bhagavatam. See verse 1.2.26 and the purport. Bhag. 1.9.19p now tells of a third kind of bhava:

Tribulations imposed upon the devotees by the Lord constitute another exchange of transcendental *bhava* between the Lord and the devotees. The Lord says "I put My devotee into difficulty, and thus the devotee becomes more purified in exchanging transcendental *bhava* with Me." Placing the devotee into material troubles necessitates delivering him from the illusory material relations. The material relations are based on reciprocation of material enjoyment, which depends mainly on material resources. Therefore, when material resources are withdrawn by the Lord, the devotee is cent percent attracted toward the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Thus the Lord snatches the fallen soul from the mire of material existence. Tribulations offered by the Lord to His devotee are different from the tribulations resulting from vicious action.

Queen Kunti exhibited this bhava when she offered Lord Krsna her prayer of Bhag. 1.8.25. Srila Prabhupada finishes his purport to 1.9.19:

All these glories of the Lord are especially known to the great mahajanas like Brahma, Siva, Narada, Kapila, Kumara and Bhisma, as mentioned above, and one is able to grasp it by their grace.

It appears that Bhisma himself was in the mumuksava-bhava. Evidence: he mentions only Narada, Siva and Kapila (great sages all) as Mahajanas; in verse 20 he tells Yudhisthira that he has been thinking of Krsna as his maternal cousin, dear friend, well-wisher, counsellor, messenger, benefactor and so on “out of ignorance only”; and as Srila Prabhupada revealed in a letter dated 67-12-29, Bhisma was ordinarily a worshiper of Lord Visnu, the giver of liberation, though he knew Krsna to be not different. In verse 23 he prays for mucyate kama-karmabhiih, “liberation from all fruitive activities”, and in verse 24 he visualizes the Lord (who stood before him with two

hands) as being four-armed. Yet he expressed great appreciation for the Lord's friendship with Arjuna (33-38) which moved Krsna to defend His friend from Bhishma's determined attack.

Bhishma appreciates that Krsna has personally come to be present before him at the time of his death. Suta mentions that Maharaja Yudhisthira asked Bhismadeva about the essential principles of various religious duties. (23-25) **Note:** *In verse 25 the specifics of Yudhisthira's question are omitted. Therefore this guide does not count it as a question under study.*

Bhismadeva first answers Yudhisthira's questions regarding the duties of a religious monarch and then notices that the auspicious time for his departure has arrived. He thus withdraws his consciousness from this world and focuses it on Krsna. (26-33) **Note:** *Bhismadeva's answers to Yudhisthira's question are mentioned by Suta Gosvami in brief summary. Elaboration is found in Srila Prabhupada's purports to these verses.*

Bhishma especially fixes his mind on remembering Sri Krsna as he saw Him on the battlefield as the chariot driver of Arjuna. (34-38)

Bhishma further glorifies Krsna's wonderful reciprocations with His other devotees. (39-42) **Note:** *in verse 40 he expresses his transcendental appreciation for the conjugal affection shared between Lord Krsna and the gopis of Vraja.*

Bhismadeva breathes his last. After the great sages and the Pandavas depart, Yudhisthira begins ruling the kingdom according to the instructions he has received from Bhismadeva. (43-49) **Note:** *Bhishma left his body with his mind fixed upon the form of Lord Partha-sarathi, attaining nirvikalpa-samadhi (43p) in Vaikuntha-dhama (44p). It might appear to the reader that Bhishma's devotion to the Lord was tinged with jnana or salvationism. Yet in Chapter 18 of Bhagavat-arka-marici-mala Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura counts the sentiments he expressed in verses 33 and 41-42 as siddha-prema-rasa, perfectional love of God. Yes, in facing death, Bhishma resorted to traditional yogic method of meditation. Even the object of his meditation was the Narayana form of the Personality of Godhead. But in the final analysis these efforts were motivated by a heartfelt desire to attain the loving association of the Personality of Godhead.*

9.2. Philosophical summary of Chapter Nine. (BVPS)

1. Krsna arranges pastimes in the material world to glorify His devotees. (1-10)

2. Devotees ungrudgingly accept the adverse conditions and sufferings that they undergo in their devotional service, for they are committed to the Lord's plan, the exact nature of which no one can ascertain. (11-17)

3. Krsna re-establishes the conditioned soul's relationship with Him by demonstrating pastimes with His pure devotees. These pastimes, regardless of the Lord's dealings, all produce ecstasy for His devotees, for the Lord, although internally guiding all living entities as Supersoul, even externally guides his devotee. (18-22)

4. Pure devotees always think of Krsna and are the greatest of yogis, and although such devotees are brought by Krsna to the spiritual sky after leaving their body, they only desire to always think about Krsna, and the Lord, in reciprocation, arranges their glorification. (23-25)

5. In the pastime the Lord arranged with Bhismadeva, we learn that that which attracts the mind of a dying man becomes the beginning of his next life, so one should always think of Krsna and then, when he leaves his body, go back to Godhead, having faith that the Lord who is also the Supreme Controller, will personally fulfill any spiritual desire one may have. Therefore one should rid himself of all material desires, focus His mind on Krsna, and following Krsna's instructions obtain a relationship with Krsna in the spiritual world. (26-33)

6. So intimate is the loving reciprocation between the devotees and the Lord that although a devotee is sometimes placed to act as the Lord's enemy within a particular pastime, nonetheless, the Lord accepts whatever His devotee offers because it is offered with love. The Lord becomes so obliged to His pure devotee that He desires to execute His devotee's orders, as a father is pleased to execute the orders of his son. Sometimes the Lord puts His devotees in ignorance as He did to Arjuna, so the Bhagavad-gita could be spoken. Thus the devotee can carry on many relationships with the Lord, even by playing the part of an enemy, if that part is offered with transcendental love. (34-38)

7. Dying while looking at or remembering Krsna carries one to the highest perfection of life, and one should therefore have the Lord before him when he dies or hear the Bhagavad-gita and the Srimad Bhagavatam and thus pass at death to Vaikuntha, to act as either the Lord's servant, friend, parent, or fiancée. (39-42)

8. After a great devotee passes from this world and his spiritually surcharged body is offered special respect, the devotees feel separation for the great soul, not for his body, and then feel the Lord with them within their hearts as they glorify Him and do their duty of consoling his relatives. (43-49)

10.0. Questions and Answers in First Canto Chapter Ten. (Q15.)

10.1. Chapter Ten, Departure of Lord Krsna For Dvaraka, verses summary.

Saunaka questions Suta about Yudhisthira's rule of the kingdom after the Kuruksetra battle, and Suta Goswami answers by describing the wonderful world situation created by Yudhisthira's reign. Sukadeva then narrates Krsna's departure from Hastinapura to Dvaraka and describes the expressions of affection by the residents of Hastinapura, especially the ladies of Hastinapura, who offer their prayers as the Lord leaves. (1-6, 7-20)

The ladies appreciate their fortune in seeing the Lord and creator of the universe, Krsna, who is usually only seen by great, pure devotees, and who mercifully descends to the material world in different ages. (21-25)

The ladies then describe the glories of the land in which Krsna descends, as well as the great fortune of the wives of Krsna, who so intimately relate with Him. (26-30)

The Lord accepts the prayers of the ladies and leaves Hastinapura for Dvaraka. (31-36)

10.2. Question Fifteen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami.

Question Fifteen: After killing his enemies who desired to usurp his rightful inheritance, how did the greatest of all religious men, Maharaja Yudhisthira, assisted by his brothers, rule his subjects? Surely he could not freely enjoy his kingdom with unrestricted consciousness. (1)

10.3. The philosophical significance of Question Fifteen. (BVP)

The inquiry was important for Saunaka Rsi, who wanted to know about the behavior of Maharaja Yudhisthira when he was at ease to enjoy the kingdom. (1)

10.4. Suta Gosvami gives his principle answer to Question Fifteen in verse 2: Lord Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the maintainer of the world, became pleased after reestablishing Maharaja Yudhisthira in his own kingdom and after restoring the Kuru dynasty, which had been exhausted by the bamboo fire of anger.

10.5. The philosophical significance of his answer. (BVP)

...[I]n the material world the wrath of those who want to lord it over material nature interacts, and the fire of war takes place, exhausting the unwanted population. Such fires or wars take place, and the Lord has nothing to do with them. But because He wants to maintain the creation, He desires the mass of people to follow the right path of self-realization, which enables the living beings to enter into the kingdom of God. The Lord wants the suffering human beings to come back home, back to Him, and cease to suffer the threefold material pangs. The whole plan of creation is made in that way, and one who does not come to his senses suffers in the material world by pangs inflicted by the illusory energy of the Lord. The Lord therefore wants His bona fide representative to rule the world. Lord Sri Krsna descended to establish this sort of regime and to kill the unwanted persons who have nothing to do with His plan. The Battle of Kuruksetra was fought according to the plan of the Lord so that undesirable persons could get out of the world and a peaceful kingdom under His devotee could be established. The Lord was therefore fully satisfied when King Yudhisthira was on the throne and the seedling of the dynasty of Kuru, in the person of Maharaja Pariksit, was saved. (2)

10.6. In verses 3-7 Suta Gosvami adds details to his principle answer.

1. Maharaja Yudhisthira, after being enlightened by what was spoken by Bhismadeva and Lord Sri Krsna, the infallible, engaged himself in matters of perfect knowledge because all his misgivings were eradicated. Thus he ruled over the earth and seas and was followed by his younger brothers. (3)

2. During the reign of Maharaja Yudhisthira, the clouds showered all the water that people needed, and the earth produced all the necessities of man in profusion. Due to its fatty milk bag and cheerful attitude, the cow used to moisten the grazing ground with milk. (4)

3. The rivers, oceans, hills, mountains, forests, creepers and active drugs, in every season, paid their tax quota to the King in profusion. (5)

4. Because of the King's having no enemy, the living beings were not at any time disturbed by mental agonies, diseases, or excessive heat or cold. (6)

5. Sri Hari, Lord Sri Krsna, resided at Hastinapura for a few months to pacify His relatives and please His own sister [Subhadra]. (7)

10.7. The *Bhagavatam*'s first introduction of emotions of pure devotional love in the conjugal *rasa* is in Canto One Chapter 10.

10.7.1. In bidding farewell to the Lord, the ladies of Hastinapur say amongst themselves:

Oh, how supremely glorified is the dynasty of King Yadu, and how virtuous is the land of Mathura, where the supreme leader of all living beings, the husband of the goddess of fortune, has taken His birth and wandered in His childhood. (26)

O friends, just think of His wives, whose hands He has accepted. How they must have undergone vows, baths, fire sacrifices and perfect worship of the Lord of the universe to constantly relish now the nectar from His lips [by kissing]. The damsels of Vrajabhumi would often faint just by expecting such favors. (28)

10.7,2. According to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura (*Sri-Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala* Ch. 18) these verses express *prema-mahima*, the glory of *rasa*, which is attained by pure love of Godhead.

11.0. First Canto Chapter Eleven. (No questions.)

11.1. *Adhyaya-prakasika* of Chapter Eleven: Lord Krsna's Entrance into Dvaraka.

Having departed Hastinapura, Sri Krsna journeys with his royal entourage to His own capital, Dvaraka. The citizens gather before the Lord to offer prayers, The Lord accepts their offerings. Krsna enters the city, greets more citizens, and exchanges affection with His mothers. Finally the Lord enters into each of His 16,108 palaces and sees each of His queens. The transcendental character of the Lord and the spiritual nature of Krsna's relationships with His queens are described.

11.2. *Slokanusaram*: Srila Suta Gosvami tells the sages of Naimisaranya that after reaching His own country—the kingdom of the Anartas—Lord Krsna at last arrived at Dvaraka's outskirts. There He sounded His conch shell, the Panchajanya, to herald His arrival. The pure white conch seemed reddened by the touch of Krishna's lips, so that it appeared like a white swan playing in the stems of red lotus flowers. [*Nivesa*: in 3p Srila Prabhupada writes,

Just as the *gopis* at Vrndavana used to think of Krsna while He was away from the village for cowherding engagements, the citizens of Dvaraka were all immersed in thought of the Lord while He was away from Dvaraka to attend the Battle of Kuruksetra.

His Divine Grace adds,

By ardent love and devotional service to the Lord, or in other words by spiritual contact with the Lord, everything becomes spiritually reddened like the conchshell in the grip of the Lord, and the *paramahansa*, or the supremely intelligent person, plays the part of the ducking swan in the water of spiritual bliss, eternally decorated by the lotus flower of the Lord's feet.]

Having long endured the transcendental pain of separation from Krishna, when the citizens of Dvaraka heard the transcendental sound of their Lord's *sankha*, they rushed quickly out the city gates to have a long-awaited *darsana* of the Lord. As they came before Lord Krishna, the residents of Dvaraka presented Him with gifts while welcoming Him in ecstatic language. (1-10)

In truth there had never been any question of danger to Dvaraka's citizens even while Sri Krsna was personally absent from the throne. Just as the underworld capital of Nagaloka, named Bhogavati, is protected by fearsome celestial serpents, Dvaraka was similarly protected by famous warriors like Bhoja, Madhu, Arha, Kukura, Andhaka and other fierce yet noble *ksatriyas* who were as strong as Lord Krsna Himself. [*Nivesa: that the capital of Nagaloka is located below the earth's surface, where it is ever-immersed in subterranean darkness, yet is a prosperous metropolis illuminated by the brilliant jewels that naturally adorn the heads of ferocious celestial serpents called Nagas, is explained in 11p.*] Year round Dvaraka city was blessed by the opulences of all seasons simultaneously. It was the site of countless hermitages, orchards, flower gardens, parks and ponds from which lovely lotuses bloomed. In every residential doorway auspicious articles such as yogurt, fruit, sugarcane, incense, lamps and full pots of water were placed; and fruit, flowers and unbroken seeds were strewn here and there over the ground. Upon hearing of Krishna's arrival, Vasudeva, Akrura, Ugrasena and Balarama, as well as Pradyumna, Carudesna, Samba and the other sons of the Lord, abandoned their engagements of eating, sitting or resting and hastened to meet Him. [*Nivesa: in 15p, Srila Prabhupada presents a short biography of each of the seven personalities named in the previous sentence.*] (11-15)

Keeping the *brahmanas* and elephants in front, the Lord's male relatives rode upon their chariots and were accompanied by the sounds of bugles and the chanting of the Vedic hymns. Hundreds of famous prostitutes, all beautifully decorated, proceeded upon various vehicles, for they were very eager to see the Lord. [*Nivesa: 19p is especially well-known among Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavatam purports. Here he makes understandable to the modern reader a rather controversial aspect of the Vedic social order: even the prostitutes were granted a degree of public respectability. Moreover, such women were often celebrated devotees of the Lord. His Divine Grace relates in this purport the narrative of Bilvamangala Thakura and the beautiful courtesan Cintamani, who became the Thakura's*

vartmapradarsa-guru.] There were also numerous dramatists, singers, dancers and learned speakers who desired to offer their respective talents for Krishna's pleasure. [*Nivesa: in 20p Srila Prabhupada glorifies the creative talents of Vedic civilization: the dramatists, artists, dancers, singers, historians, genealogists, orators and so on, who are all classified as sudras in the varnasrama social system.*] Indeed, all of the citizens came out to greet Krishna, and, in turn, the Lord offered each and every one of them due respect and honor. The Lord thus greeted the various grades of persons by bowing His head, exchanging words, embracing, shaking hands, giving affectionate looks and smiles, and awarding assurances and benedictions. As Lord Krishna passed along the public roads, accompanied by His elderly relatives and *brahmanas*, the ladies assembled on the roofs of the palaces to see Him, for they considered this to be the greatest festival. Although the inhabitants of Dvaraka were accustomed to seeing the Lord daily, since He is the reservoir of all beauty, they were never satiated. [*Nivesa: in verse 26 the Lord's chest is said to be the abode of the Goddess of Fortune. His face is the vessel from which our eyes that hanker to see all beautiful things should drink. The administrative demigods are sheltered in His strong arms. His lotus feet are the shelter of devotees who have no other topic than Krsna to speak or sing about. In his purport to this verse Srila Prabhupada writes that Lord Sri Krsna is always served by thousands and thousands of Laksmis. His Divine Grace divides the human race into different categories. Some are interested only in gaining the favour of the Goddess of Fortune. But "These goddesses of fortune," as Prabhupada points out, "can be seen automatically if we are attracted by the bodily features of the Lord." In Bhagavata-sandarbha 103.4-5, Srila Jiva Gosvami explains:*

4 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself describes the potency Sri [*the Goddess of Fortune*] in these words (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3.16.7):

“Because I am the servitor of My devotees, My lotus feet have become so sacred that they immediately wipe out all sin, and I have acquired such a disposition that the goddess Sri does not leave Me, even though I have no attachment for her and others praise her beauty and observe sacred vows to secure from her a slight favour.”

At the end of the Fourth Canto (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.31.22) Sri Narada describes goddess Sri in these words:

5 “Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is self-sufficient, He becomes dependent on His devotees. He does not care for the goddess Sri, nor for the kings and demigods who are after the favours of goddess Sri. Where is that person who is actually grateful and will not worship the Personality of Godhead?”

In 26p Prabhupada notes that impersonalists have no opportunity for the darsana of Goddess Sri because of their deliberate neglect of the spiritual form of Her transcendental husband. Another category of humanity, the artists, whose minds are overtaken by the beauty of the material world, should better seek the lovely vision of the lotus face of the Lord. All that is beautiful in nature emanates from His smile, and all beautiful music is but specimens of His whispering voice. A third category of man, the tiny human gods who hold positions in state service, should take shelter of the mighty arms of the Lord, as do His sons, the demigods directly empowered by Him. Srila Prabhupada then compares the final and ultimate category of human beings, the devotees, to bees mad after the honey of Sri Krsna's lotus feet. 26p ends with His Divine Grace's rendition of a prayer by Srila Rupa Gosvami, who compares himself to such a bee.] As Lord Krishna passed along the road, an umbrella protected His head from the sunshine, and peacock fans moved in semi-circles, while showers of flowers fell upon the road. With His bright yellow garments it appeared as if a dark cloud was surrounded simultaneously by the sun, moon, lightning and rainbows. (15-27)

The Lord proceeded to His father's palace. His mothers, headed by Devaki embraced Krishna, and in turn, He offered His obeisances unto them by placing His head at their feet. [*Nivesa: in 28p Srila Prabhupada lists 7 kinds of mothers; the verse states that of all the different mothers present, Devaki was His real mother.*] When the mothers sat Krishna upon their laps, milk began to flow from their breasts due to intense parental affection, and the tears from their eyes wetted His body. Then Krishna entered His own palaces. [*Nivesa: in 31p Srila Prabhupada sweetly explains the transcendental miracle of Sri Krsna's intimacy with His 16,108 wives, each of whom dwelt in her own splendid palace. The purport ends with a summary of Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura's fivefold analysis of the psychology displayed by the queens during this reunion with the Lord.*] After His long absence, His beloved queens were besides themselves with joy upon seeing Him. Roused from their meditations, they instantly stood up from their cushioned seats, shyly covering their faces as was the social custom. Hesitantly taking in the wonderful sight of their Lord with their coy glances, the bashful queens first of all embraced Krishna in the innermost core of their hearts. As the their love for Him unburdened itself from its initial restraint, they embraced Him visually. Next they sent their sons to embrace Him. As the most cultured of women they tried to restrain themselves, yet at last the wives of Lord Krishna could not help but freely

shed tears of joy upon seeing Him after such a lengthy separation. Suta Gosvami rhetorically asks the sages what woman, having had the fortune of seeing the Lord's lotus feet, can be detached from them? (28-33)

These simple women thought of Krishna as their beloved husband, and since He never seemed to leave their sides, they considered Him to be dominated by them. [*Nivesa: in spite of His wives' naïve assumption that He could be bound by their feminine wiles, Sri Krsna's consorts at Dvaraka were no ordinary women. In 35p Srila Prabhupada writes,*

The women who became the wives of the Lord are certainly not ordinary women, because to get the Lord as one's husband is the result of many, many millions of births' *tapasya* (austerity).]

As dear as they were to Him, Lord Krishna's wives could not fathom His glories. Although their beautiful smiles and furtive glances were exciting enough to conquer Cupid or even Lord Shiva, they could never agitate the senses of the Lord, for He was perfectly detached from his wives' abundant charms. This is the divinity of the Supreme Lord—He is not affected by the qualities of material nature, even though He may be in contact with them. (34-39) [*Nivesa: in 38p Srila Prabhupada states that first-grade devotees under the complete shelter of the Lord also do not become influenced by the material modes of nature.*]

11.3. Vrtti in five parts, summarized from Srila Prabhupada's purports to Chapter Eleven.

11.3.1. One who is not yet pure can achieve spiritual vision and see Krsna through chanting His name and taking shelter of Him. He is the only protector. (1p-10p)

11.3.2. The conduct of the Dvaraka-*vasis* in this chapter is the purpose of human life. If we do not learn to see Krsna face to face, all else we see is illusion. (11p-22p)

11.3.3. In His *arca* form even today, the Lord can be seen by all in Vaisnava temples. These forms will draw affection from every living being capable of giving affection, as the Lord drew affection from the residents of Dvaraka who saw him every day. (23p-29p)

11.3.4. No soul can be satisfied unless he attains some position in the Lord's service. It is necessary that we understand this. The Supreme Lord appears in this world to attract the living entities into taking part in such relationships as the one's He displayed in Dvaraka with His queens. (30p-35p)

11.3.5. When Krsna related to His queens, He reciprocated with their pure affection, which was free of any tinge of the modes of material nature, although foolish persons may confuse the behaviour shared between the Lord and His consorts with mundane sensuality. (36-39)

11.4. *Parisistam* (appendix).

11.4.1. *Vinodakam*: In Chapter Four of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura's *Bhagavat-arka-marici-mala* (entitled "The Factual Truth of Krsna—*Bhagavat-svarupa Tattvam*", found in the *Sambandha* division of the book) the Thakura presents these two verses from the chapter of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* under our present examination:

Verses 01.11.37-38

Suta Gosvami to Saunaka Rsi

The common materialistic conditioned souls speculate that the Lord is one of them. Out of their ignorance they think that the Lord is affected by matter, although He is unattached. (37)

This is the divinity of the Personality of Godhead: He is not affected by the qualities of material nature, even though He is in contact with them. Similarly, the devotees who have taken shelter of the Lord do not become influenced by the material qualities. (38)

11.4.2. *Vinodakam*: In the same book, Chapter Six (entitled "Tasting the Sublime Nature of Relationships with the Lord"—*Bhagavat-rasa-tattvam*—which is found in the part of the *Sambandha* division that glorifies the qualities of liberated souls), the Thakura cites these two verses from Canto One Chapter Eleven:

Verses 01.11.35-36

Suta Gosvami to Saunaka Rsi

That Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, out of His causeless mercy, appeared on this planet by His internal potency and enjoyed Himself amongst competent women as if He were engaging in mundane affairs. (35)

Although the queens' beautiful smiles and furtive glances were all spotless and exciting, and although they could conquer Cupid himself by making him give up his bow in frustration, and although even the tolerant Siva could fall victim to them, still, despite all their magical feats and attractions, they could not agitate the senses of the Lord. (36)

11.4.3. Vinodakam: Srila Bhaktivinoda's *Bhagavat-arka-marici-mala* (the eighteenth chapter, in the *Prayojana* division, entitled "The Perfection of the Mellow of Pure Love—The Glories of Rasa", or *siddha prema-rasa/rasa-mahima*) includes these three verses from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* First Canto Chapter Eleven:

Verses 01.11.7-9

Citizens of Dwaraka Pray to Krsna

O creator of the universe, You are our mother, well-wisher, Lord, father, spiritual master and worshipable Deity. By following in Your footsteps we have become successful in every respect. We pray, therefore, that You continue to bless us with Your mercy. (7)

Oh, it is our good luck that we have come again today under Your protection by Your presence, for Your Lordship rarely visits even the denizens of heaven. Now it is possible for us to look into Your smiling face, which is full of affectionate glances. We can now see Your transcendental form, full of all auspiciousness. (8)

O lotus-eyed Lord, whenever You go away to Mathura, Vrndavana or Hastinapura to meet Your friends and relatives, every moment of Your absence seems like a million years. O infallible one, at that time our eyes become useless, as if bereft of sun. (9)

11.5. Vindodakam: Two important preaching verses from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Canto One Chapter Eleven. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada often quoted the second (38) in lectures.

KRṢṂA IS EVERYTHING FOR HIS DEVOTEES

SB 1.11.7

*bhavāya nas tvam bhava viśva-bhāvana
tvam eva mātātha suhṛt-patiḥ pitā
tvam sad-gurur naḥ paramam ca daivatam
yasyānuvṛtyā kṛtino babhūvima*

bhavāya—for welfare; naḥ—for us; tvam—Your Lordship; bhava—just become; viśva-bhāvana—the creator of the universe; tvam—Your Lordship; eva—certainly; mātā—mother; atha—as also; suhṛt—well-wisher; patiḥ—husband; pitā—father; tvam—Your Lordship; sat-guruḥ—spiritual master; naḥ—our; paramam—the supreme; ca—and; daivatam—worshipable Deity; yasya—whose; anuvṛtyā—following in the footsteps; kṛtinaḥ—successful; babhūvima—we have become.

O creator of the universe, You are our mother, well-wisher, Lord, father, spiritual master and worshipable Deity. By following in Your footsteps we have become successful in every respect. We pray, therefore, that You continue to bless us with Your mercy.

Sūta Gosvāmī

KRṢṂA—BEYOND THE GUṂAS

SB 1.11.38

*etat īsanam īśasya
prakṛti-stho 'pi tad-guṇaiḥ
na yujyate sadātmā-sthair
yathā buddhis tad-āśrayā*

etat—this; īsanam—divinity; īśasya—of the Personality of Godhead; prakṛti-sthaḥ—being in contact with material nature; api—in spite of; tad-guṇaiḥ—by the qualities; na—never; yujyate—is affected; sadā ātmā-sthair—by those who are situated in eternity; yathā—as is; buddhiḥ—intelligence; tat—the Lord; āśrayā—those who are under the shelter of.

This is the divinity of the Personality of Godhead: He is not affected by the qualities of material nature, even though He is in contact with them. Similarly, the devotees who have taken shelter of the Lord do not become influenced by the material qualities.

Sūta Gosvāmī

11.6. *Vinodakam*: Points of interest extracted from some of Srila Prabhupada's purports in Canto One Chapter Eleven:

3p

Some distinguished fiction writer in Bengal concluded that the Krsna of Vrndavana, that of Mathura and that of Dvaraka were different personalities. Historically there is no truth in this conclusion. The Krsna of Kuruksetra and the Krsna of Dvaraka are one and the same personality.

7p

For attaining spiritual existence, the human form is a chance for all to understand our eternal relation with God. Our relation with Him is eternal; it can neither be broken nor vanquished. It may be forgotten for the time being, but it can be revived also by the grace of the Lord, if we follow His injunctions, which are revealed in the scriptures of all times and all places.

9p

When Brahmaji and other demigods want to consult Lord Visnu, the plenary portion of Lord Krsna, they have to wait on the shore of the ocean of milk where Lord Visnu is lying on White Land (Svetadvipa). This ocean of milk and the Svetadvipa planet are the replica of Vaikunthaloka within the universe. Neither Brahmaji nor the demigods like Indra can enter into this island of Svetadvipa, but they can stand on the shore of the ocean of milk and transmit their message to Lord Visnu, known as Ksirodakasayi Visnu. Therefore, the Lord is rarely seen by them, but the inhabitants of Dvaraka, because of their being pure devotees without any tinge of the material contamination of fruitive activities and empiric philosophical speculation, can see Him face to face by the grace of the Lord. This is the original state of the living entities and can be attained by reviving our natural and constitutional state of life, which is discovered by devotional service only.

12p

It is understood that the whole *dhama*, or residential quarter, was surrounded by such gardens and parks with reservoirs of water where lotuses grew. It is understood that all the people depended on nature's gifts of fruits and flowers without industrial enterprises promoting filthy huts and slums for residential quarters. Advancement of civilization is estimated not on the growth of mills and factories to deteriorate the finer instincts of the human being, but on developing the potent spiritual instincts of human beings and giving them a chance to go back to Godhead. Development of factories and mills

is called *ugra-karma*, or pungent activities, and such activities deteriorate the finer sentiments of the human being and society to form a dungeon of demons.

16-17p

In the *Vedas* also it is enjoined that no one can know the Supreme Lord without being favored by Baladeva. *Bala* means spiritual strength not physical. Some less intelligent persons interpret *bala* as the strength of the body. But no one can have spiritual realization by physical strength. Physical strength ends with the end of the physical body, but spiritual strength follows the spirit soul to the next transmigration, and therefore the strength obtained by Baladeva is never wasted. The strength is eternal, and thus Baladeva is the original spiritual master of all devotees.

19p

It appears that the prostitutes of Dvaraka, who were so eager to meet the Lord, were all His unalloyed devotees, and thus they were all on the path of salvation according to the above version of the *Bhagavad-gita*. Therefore, the only reformation that is necessary in society is to make an organized effort to turn the citizens into devotees of the Lord, and thus all good qualities of the denizens of heaven will overtake them in their own way. On the other hand, those who are nondevotees have no good qualifications whatsoever, however they may be materially advanced. The difference is that the devotees of the Lord are on the path of liberation, whereas the nondevotees are on the path of further entanglement in material bondage. The criterion of advancement of civilization is whether the people are educated and advanced on the path of salvation.

21p

Even one hundred years ago in India, all dramatic performances were centered around the superhuman activities of the Supreme Lord. The common people would be verily entertained by the performances of dramas, and yatra parties played wonderfully on the superhuman activities of the Lord, and thus even the illiterate agriculturist would be a participant in the knowledge of Vedic literature, despite a considerable lack of academic qualifications. Therefore, expert players in drama, dancers, singers, speakers, etc., are required for the spiritual enlightenment of the common man.

23p

As pure living entities, all are the separated parts and parcels of the Lord, and thus no one is alien by His eternal relation. Such pure living entities are graded differently in terms of contamination of the modes of material nature, but the Lord is equally affectionate to all His parts and parcels, despite material gradation.

25p

It appears from the verse that the inhabitants of Dvaraka were all owners of big palaces. This indicates the prosperity of the city. The ladies got up on the roofs just to have a look at the procession and the Lord. The ladies did not mix with the crowd on the street, and thus their respectability was perfectly observed. There was no artificial equality with the man. Female respectability is preserved more elegantly by keeping the woman separate from the man. The sexes should not mix unrestrictedly.

31p

Ordinarily, a *yogi* or mystic living being is able to expand himself at utmost to tenfold expansions of his body, but the Lord can do so to the extent of as many thousands or infinitely, as He likes. Unbelievers become astonished to learn that Lord Krsna married more than 16,000 queens because they think of Lord Krsna as one of them and measure the potency of the Lord by their own limited potency. One should know, therefore, that the Lord is never on the level of the living beings, who are but expansions of His marginal potency, and one should never equalize the potent and the potency, although there is very little difference of quality between the potent and the potency. The queens were also expansions of His internal potency, and thus the potent and potencies are perpetually exchanging transcendental pleasures, known as pastimes of the Lord. One should not, therefore, become astonished to learn that the Lord married so many wives. On the contrary, one should affirm that even if the Lord marries sixteen thousand million wives, He is not completely manifesting His unlimited and inexhaustible potency.

32p

One indirectly embraces the husband by sending the son to embrace him because the son is developed as part of the mother's body. The embrace of the son is not exactly the embrace of husband and wife from the sexual point of view, but the embrace is satisfaction from the affectionate point of view. The embrace of the eyes is more effective in the conjugal relation, and thus according to Srila Jiva Gosvami there is nothing wrong in such an exchange of feeling between husband and wife.

36p

[B]ecause the Lord is all-perfect *atmarama*, or self-sufficient. He does not require anyone's extraneous help for His personal satisfaction. Therefore, the queens could not satisfy the Lord by their feminine attractiveness, but they satisfied Him by their sincere affection and service. Only by unalloyed transcendental loving service could they satisfy the Lord, and the Lord was pleased to treat them as wives in reciprocation. Thus being satisfied by their unalloyed service only, the Lord reciprocated the service just like a devout

husband. Otherwise He had no business becoming the husband of so many wives. He is the husband of everyone, but to one who accepts Him as such, He reciprocates. This unalloyed affection for the Lord is never to be compared to mundane lust. It is purely transcendental. And the grave dealings, which the queens displayed in natural feminine ways, were also transcendental because the feelings were expressed out of transcendental ecstasy. It is already explained in the previous verse that the Lord appeared like a mundane husband, but factually His relation with His wives was transcendental, pure and unconditioned by the modes of material nature.

12.0. Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Twelve. (Q16-17.)

12.1. *Adhyaya-prakasika*: Chapter Twelve, Birth of Emperor Pariksit.

The sages of Naimisaranya turn their questions back to topics about Maharaja Pariksit. Suta Goswami first explains the glories of Maharaja Yudhisthira and the glories of Maharaja Yudhisthira's reign over the earth.

Suta then explains the vision of the Lord that Pariksit saw while still in the womb.

Sukadeva narrates the birth of Pariksit and Yudhisthira's observance of Pariksit's birth ceremony, which was attended by learned brahmanas who described the Lord's protection of Pariksit.

In answer to Yudhisthira's inquiry about how Pariksit will compare to his ancestors, the *brahmanas* glorify the future qualities of Pariksit. The *brahmanas* finally describe the future death of Pariksit, and then, after being sufficiently remunerated, return home.

Pariksit grows and his qualities develop under Yudhisthira's guardianship. Yudhisthira decides to perform a sacrifice to atone for his own sins. His brothers collect the needed money, and Yudhisthira performed the sacrifice in the presence of Lord Krsna. Following the sacrifice, Arjuna returns to Hastinapura with Krsna.

12.2. *Slokanusaram*: Saunaka Rsi is curious to hear from Suta Goswami about the valiant and highly devoted King Pariksit, whom Lord

Krsna saved while the king was yet within the womb of his mother Uttara. [*Nivesa: the details of Saunaka's questions and Suta's answers will be dealt with in vrttis that follow this slokanusaram.*] (1-3)

Suta begins his reply by glorifying the post-Kuruksetra reign of Yudhisthira Maharaja over Planet Earth, which was admired even by the denizens of heaven. [*Nivesa: in Chapter Eight of this Canto Suta Gosvami related Asvatthama's launching of a brahmastra against Pariksit—grandson of Arjuna by Abhimanyu and Uttara—at the time the prince was yet within his mother's womb. Without repeating that account, the sage now speaks of Pariksit's response to this danger.*] As Pariksit suffered the scorching heat of Ashvattama's fiery *astra* as it sought him out within his mother's womb, he attentively marked the Supreme Lord coming to his rescue. [*Nivesa: in 7p Srila Prabhupada points out,*

Even in that helpless condition, the child Pariksit endured the unbearable temperature due to his being a great fighter by nature.]

The Lord appeared in a four-armed form that was the size of a thumb. His beautiful body was transcendently blackish. His dress was a dazzling yellow. Adorned with a golden helmet and earrings, the Lord continually wielded His club in a circular motion, dispelling the blazing weapon's radiation, just as the sun dissipates the morning dew. Actually, the embryo within Uttara's womb was indeed incinerated by the *brahmastra*. But being the supreme magician, the Lord instantly provided Pariksit with a second body. Then, as the wonder-struck child looked on, the Lord suddenly disappeared. (4-11)

And so, after all good astronomical signs had gradually evolved in the sky, the great-grandson of Pandu was at last born. Greatly satisfied, Maharaja Yudhisthira performed the birth ceremonies. Learned *brahmanas*, headed by Kripa and Dhaumya, expertly recited the Vedic *mantras*. At the conclusion of the ritualistic performances, Maharaja Yudhisthira gave abundant gold, land, villages, grains and animals to the *brahmanas*. In return, the satisfied *brahmanas* informed him, "O King, this child was saved by the Lord because he is a pure devotee and the last remaining descendent of the pious king Puru. He will be known as Vishnu-ratah as well as Pariksit." [*Nivesa: from Srila Prabhupada's word-for-word translation to verse 17, we learn Visnu-ratah means "one who is protected by Lord Visnu."* In 17p *His Divine Grace* writes,

And because he is especially given protection by the Lord, the indication must be concluded that the child would be a first-grade devotee of the Lord with all good qualities. There are three grades of devotees, namely the *maha-bhagavata*, *madhyam-adhikari* and the *kanistha-adhikari*. Those who go to the temples of the Lord and offer worshipful respect to the Deity without sufficient knowledge in the theological science and therefore without any respect for the devotees of the Lord are called materialistic devotees, or *kanistha-adhikari*, the third-grade devotees. Secondly, the devotees who have developed a mentality of genuine service to the Lord and who thus make friendships only with similar devotees, show favor to the neophytes and avoid the atheists are called the second-grade devotees. But those who see everything in the Lord or everything of the Lord and also see in everything an eternal relation of the Lord, so that there is nothing within their purview of sight except the Lord, are called the *maha-bhagavatas*, or the first-grade devotees of the Lord. Such first-grade devotees of the Lord are perfect in all respects. A devotee who may be in any of these categories is automatically qualified by all good qualities, and thus a *maha-bhagavata* devotee like Maharaja Pariksit is certainly perfect in all respects.]

Maharaja Yudhisthira inquired, "Will this child become as great and saintly a king as the others that had appeared in this royal dynasty?" The *brahmanas* assured him, "This child will maintain the *praja* exactly like Ikshvaku; he will be true to his promise just like Lord Rama, the Personality of Godhead; and he will be a munificent giver of charity and protector of the surrendered, like Shibi, the son of Ushinara. Like Arjuna, he will be a great bowman. [*In 21p, Srila Prabhupada provides a detailed account of Arjuna's pastimes.*] Pariksit's strength will be like that of a lion. Forbearing like the earth, he will be as worthy a shelter as the Himalayas. In terms of equanimity of mind, he will be like you, my dear Yudhisthira. He will be munificent like Lord Shiva; and he will be the resort of everyone like the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Narayana. In magnanimity, his greatness will be like Rantideva's. In patience he will be like Bali Maharaja. And like Prahlada Maharaja, he will be a great devotee of Lord Krishna. After hearing the prediction of his death at the hands of Takshaka, he will inquire about self-realization from Sukadeva Gosvami, and thus achieve a life of fearlessness." Thereafter, the *brahmanas* departed. (12-29)

Just as the waxing moon develops day after day, the child grew up luxuriantly under the care of his grandfathers. Because he examined all human beings in his search for that personality whom he had seen within his

mother's womb, he constantly contemplated the Lord and became famous as *pariksit*, “the examiner.” From his very childhood, Pariksit was a *maha-bhagavata*. He was constantly rapt in contemplation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (30-31) [*Nivesa*: in his purport to verse 30, *Srila Prabhupada* writes,

One may not be as fortunate as Maharaja Pariksit to have the opportunity to see the Lord in the womb of his mother, but even if he is not so fortunate, he can be made so if the parents of the child desire him to be so. There is a practical example in my personal life in this connection. My father was a pure devotee of the Lord, and when I was only four or five years old, my father gave me a couple of forms of Radha and Krsna. In a playful manner, I used to worship these Deities along with my sister, and I used to imitate the performances of a neighboring temple of Radha-Govinda. By constantly visiting this neighboring temple and copying the ceremonies in connection with my own Deities of play, I developed a natural affinity for the Lord. My father used to observe all the ceremonies befitting my position. Later on, these activities were suspended due to my association in the schools and colleges, and I became completely out of practice. But in my youthful days, when I met my spiritual master, Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, again I revived my old habit, and the same playful Deities became my worshipful Deities in proper regulation. This was followed up until I left the family connection, and I am pleased that my generous father gave the first impression which was developed later into regulative devotional service by His Divine Grace. Maharaja Prahlada also advised that such impressions of a godly relation must be impregnated from the beginning of childhood, otherwise one may miss the opportunity of the human form of life, which is very valuable although it is temporary like others.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.3.15-16 notes that even while playing with dolls, little Prince Pariksit used to render seva to Lord Krsna by imitating the worship of the family Deity.]

At an appropriate time, Maharaja Yudhisthira desired to perform the horse-sacrifice, so that he could free himself from the sinful reactions that he had incurred during the battle at Kurukshetra. Because the state treasury had become exhausted by the war, Lord Krishna advised the Pandavas to collect the gold that had formerly been left in the Himalayas after King Marutta's great sacrifice. In this way, Maharaja Yudhisthira was enabled to perform three *ashvamedha-yagyas* under Lord Krishna's direction, and for His satisfaction alone. After the completion of the horse sacrifices, Lord Krishna remained in Hastinapura for a few months and then returned to Dvaraka, as

previously described. (32-36) [*Nivesa: In 34p Srila Prabhupada comments thus upon King Yudhisthira's dedication to pious works:*

One should take lessons from the acts of Maharaja Yudhisthira. He was afraid of sins committed on the battlefield, and therefore he wanted to satisfy the supreme authority. This indicates that unintentional sins are also committed in our daily occupational discharge of duties, and to counteract even such unintentional crimes, one must perform sacrifices as they are recommended in the revealed scriptures. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gita* (*yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra loko 'yam karma-bandhanah*) that one must perform sacrifices recommended in the scriptures in order to get rid of commitments of all unauthorized work, or even unintentional crimes which we are apt to commit. By doing so, one shall be freed from all kinds of sins. And those who do not do so but work for self-interest or sense gratification have to undergo all tribulations accrued from committed sins. Therefore, the main purpose of performing sacrifices is to satisfy the Supreme Personality Hari. The process of performing sacrifices may be different in terms of different times, places and persons, but the aim of such sacrifices is one and the same at all times and in all circumstances, viz., satisfaction of the Supreme Lord Hari. That is the way of pious life...]

12.3. Nivrtti: Question Sixteen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Saunaka of Suta Gosvami. It is about the glorious birth and death of Maharaja Pariksit. Saunaka asks it in two parts:

Question Sixteen Part 1: How was the great emperor Pariksit, who was a highly intelligent and great devotee, born in that womb? (2)

Question Sixteen Part 2: How did his death take place, and what did he achieve after his death? (2)

12.3.1. The first part of Question Sixteen is specifically answered in verses 7-17. The answer is summarized philosophically thus by Srila Prabhupada.

It is said in the *Brahma-samhita* (Ch. 5) that the Supreme Lord Govinda, by His one plenary portion, enters into the halo of the universe and distributes himself as Paramatma, or the Supersoul, not only within the heart of every living being, but also within every atom of the material elements. Thus the Lord is all-pervading by His inconceivable potency, and thus He entered the womb of Uttara to save His beloved devotee Maharaja Pariksit. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (9.31) the Lord assured everyone that His devotees are never to be vanquished. No one can kill a devotee of

the Lord because he is protected by the Lord, and no one can save a person whom the Lord desires to kill. The Lord is all-powerful, and therefore He can both save and kill as He likes. He became visible to His devotee Maharaja Pariksit even in that awkward position (in the womb of his mother) in a shape just suitable for his vision. (9p)

12.3.2. As Suta answers Question Sixteen, he relates a question by Maharaja Yudhisthira to the *brahmanas* conducting the birth ceremony of Maharaja Pariksit. This Question Seventeen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is answered within the answer to Question Sixteen.

Question Seventeen: Will Pariksit become as saintly a king, as pious in his very name and as famous and glorified in his achievements, as others who appeared in this great royal family? (18)

12.3.3. The significance of Question Seventeen is that in the previous question the sages asked about Pariksit's birth and death; but here Maharaja Yudhisthira inserts a query about his life.

12.3.4. Verses 19 through 26 present a summary of King Pariksit's life in answer to Question Seventeen. That answer is philosophically summarized thus by Srila Prabhupada.

In the line of royal succession in the family of Maharaja Yudhisthira, all the kings, without exception, were the wisest men of their times, and so also it is foretold about Maharaja Pariksit and his son Maharaja Janamejaya, who was yet to be born. Such wise kings can become chastisers of upstarts and uprooters of Kali, or quarrelsome elements. As will be clear in the chapters ahead, Maharaja Pariksit wanted to kill the personified Kali, who was attempting to kill a cow, the emblem of peace and religion. The symptoms of Kali are (1) wine, (2) women, (3) gambling and (4) slaughterhouses. Wise rulers of all states should take lessons from Maharaja Pariksit in how to maintain peace and morality by subduing the upstarts and quarrelsome people who indulge in wine, illicit connection with women, gambling and meat-eating supplied by regularly maintained slaughterhouses. In this age of Kali, regular license is issued for maintaining all of these different departments of quarrel. So how can they expect peace and morality in the state? The state fathers, therefore, must follow the principles of becoming wiser by devotion to the Lord, by chastising the breaker of discipline and by uprooting the symptoms of quarrel, as mentioned above. (26p)

12.3.5. The second part of Question Sixteen (regarding Pariksit's death) is specifically answered in verses 27 and 28. That answer is philosophically summarized thus by Srila Prabhupada.

Maharaja Pariksit, being especially attached to the Lord from the beginning of his body in the womb of his mother, was continuously under the shelter of the Lord, and the so-called warning of his death within seven days from the date of the curse by the *brahmana's* son was a boon to him to enable him to prepare himself to go back home, back to Godhead. Since he was always protected by the Lord, he could have avoided the effect of such a curse by the grace of the Lord, but he did not take such undue advantage for nothing. Rather, he made the best use of a bad bargain. For seven days continuously he heard *Srimad-Bhagavatam* from the right source, and thus he got shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord by that opportunity. (28p)

12.4. Parisistam.

12.4.1. Vinodakam: even though at this point in the *Bhagavatam* narrative the two great souls, Sukadeva Gosvami and Maharaja Pariksit, have yet to meet one another, we cannot help but note a remarkable symmetry in the way they first awakened to Krsna consciousness: even before birth, while within the wombs of their mothers. Srila Jiva Gosvami comments further upon the transcendental compatibility of these *mahabhagavatas* in his *Sri Krsna Sandarbha*.

Anuccheda 55

Text 1

Maharaja Pariksit and Sukadeva Gosvami were both great devotees of the Lord. They are described in the following verses (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.3.15-16):

"Maharaja Pariksit, the grandson of the Pandavas, was from his very childhood a great devotee of the Lord. Even while playing with dolls he used to worship Lord Krsna by imitating the worship of the family Deity."

"Sukadeva Gosvami, the son of Vyasadeva, was also full in transcendental knowledge and was great devotee of Lord Krsna, son of Vasudeva. So there must have been discussion of Lord Krsna, who is glorified by great philosophers and in the company of great devotees."

The word "*ca*" (also) in this verse refers the reader to the description of Maharaja Pariksit and Sukadeva Gosvami are both equally exalted devotees of the Lord. We may also note that the word "*vasudeva*" used in this verse means "Sri Krsna, the son of the Maharaja Vasudeva". The words "*satam samagame*" and "*urugayasya gunodarah*" indicate that although great devotees are generally engaged in glorifying the various forms of the

Supreme Lord, Maharaja Pariksit and Sukadeva Gosvami will converse specifically about the transcendental pastimes of Lord Krsna.

12.4.2. Vinodakam: Srila Prabhupada on Vedic knowledge, education, and *Bhagavat-dharma*. The following is quoted from 29p.

The *Vedas* are the storehouse of knowledge, both material and spiritual. But such knowledge aims at perfection of self-realization. In other words, the *Vedas* are the guides for the civilized man in every respect. Since human life is the opportunity to get free from all material miseries, it is properly guided by the knowledge of the *Vedas*, in the matters of both material needs and spiritual salvation. The specific intelligent class of men who were devoted particularly to the knowledge of the *Vedas* were called the *vipras*, or the graduates of the Vedic knowledge. There are different branches of knowledge in the *Vedas*, of which astrology and pathology are two important branches necessary for the common man. So the intelligent men, generally known as the *brahmanas*, took up all the different branches of Vedic knowledge to guide society. Even the department of military education (*Dhanur-veda*) was also taken up by such intelligent men, and the *vipras* were also teachers of this section of knowledge, as were Dronacarya, Kpacarya, etc.

The word *vipra* mentioned herein is significant. There is a little difference between the *vipras* and the *brahmanas*. The *vipras* are those who are expert in *karma-kanda*, or fruitive activities, guiding the society towards fulfilling the material necessities of life, whereas the *brahmanas* are expert in spiritual knowledge of transcendence. This department of knowledge is called *jnana-kanda*, and above this there is the *upasana-kanda*. The culmination of *upasana-kanda* is the devotional service of the Lord Visnu, and when the *brahmanas* achieve perfection, they are called Vaisnavas. Visnu worship is the highest of the modes of worship. Elevated *brahmanas* are Vaisnavas engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and thus *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, which is the science of devotional service, is very dear to the Vaisnavas. And as explained in the beginning of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, it is the mature fruit of Vedic knowledge and is superior subject matter, above the three *kandas*, namely *karma*, *jnana* and *upasana*.

Amongst the *karma-kanda* experts, the *jataka* expert *vipras* were good astrologers who could tell all the future history of a born child simply by the astral calculations of the time (*lagna*). Such expert *jataka-vipras* were present during the birth of Maharaja Pariksit, and his grandfather, Maharaja Yudhisthira, awarded the *vipras* sufficiently with gold, land, villages, grains and other valuable necessities of life, which also include cows. There is a need of such *vipras* in the social structure, and it is the duty of the state to maintain them comfortably, as designed in the Vedic procedure. Such expert *vipras*, being sufficiently paid by the state, could give free service to the people in general, and thus this department of Vedic knowledge could be available for all.

12.5. Anumana and Vinodakam: The compiler of this study guide personally attended Srila Prabhupada's **Bhagavat-dharma Discourses**, held in New Vrindaban by His Divine Grace in September 1972. It was here, by the grace of my spiritual master, that I first caught a glimpse of the difference between mere "Vedic knowledge" and *Bhagavat-dharma*. On 5 September His Divine Grace explained:

Formerly the *brahmanas* used to learn Ayur-vedic medicine and astrology. The lower castes--the *ksatriyas*, *vaisyas* and *sudras*--used to consult the *brahmanas* on these two

subjects. Everyone wants to know about his health, and therefore everyone wants to know about the future, so by studying, these the *brahmanas* could supply the information required.

However, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* points out: "I am not this body." The body is like an automobile; we may ride in it, but we do not identify with it. The body is like a machine, or a car. Krsna has given us these machines because we have desired them. This is stated in *Bhagavad-gita*:

*isvarah sarva-bhutanam
hrd-dese 'rjuna tisthati
bhramayan sarva-bhutani
yantrarudhani mayaya*

Thus the living entities are travelling all over the universe, driving a machine known as the material body. This body is given by material nature, which acts under the direction of the Supreme Lord. In this way we have been given a car, and we think that it is a very nice car. Actually it is not a very nice car, but whenever we get a new car we think it is nice, however rotten it may be. Our tendency is also to identify with this car of the body. If a man drives a new car, he forgets that he is a poor man. He thinks, "I am this car," and this is his identification. But *Srimad Bhagavatam* informs us that one who takes the body to be himself and bodily relations--one's family, home, nation, etc.--to belong to him, is a fool...

Krsna is situated in everyone's heart, and he talks to the sincere person. It is fact that Krsna talks, but he does not talk to a nonsensical person or a rascal. He talks to His bona fide representative and gives him full understanding. This is stated by Krsna Himself in *Bhagavad-gita*:

*tesam satata-yuktanam
bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam
yena mam upayanti te*

One must be engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord with love and devotion. What is the symptom of love? The devotee in love with Krsna wants to see that His names become widespread. He wants His Lord's names to be known everywhere. This is love. If I love someone, I want to see that he is glorified all over the world. In *Bhagavad-gita* Krsna says this of one who spreads His names and imparts the message of *Bhagavad-gita*:

*na ca tasman manusyesu
kascin me priya-krttamah
bhavita na ca me tasmad
anyah priyataro bhuvi*

"There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear."

Everything is there in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*--how we can love, what are the symptoms of love, how we can please God, how we can talk with God, etc. Everything is there. We have to simply take advantage of this great information. We may read *Bhagavad-gita* or *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, but of what use are they if we read them and simply become a great politician? Of course one can become a politician, but this is not the real purpose for reading *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad Bhagavatam*. The real purpose is

to come to know Krsna. If one knows Krsna, he knows everything, including politics, economics, science, philosophy, religion, sociology--everything. If we simply understand God, Krsna, then everything will be revealed because Krsna promises to give us the intelligence from within. If Krsna gives us intelligence, what can excel it? Krsna will certainly give us the intelligence provided we become devotees or lovers of Krsna. Then, out of compassion, Krsna gives all knowledge:

*tesam evanukampartham
aham ajnana-jam tamah
nasayamy atma-bhavastho
jnana-dipena bhasvata*

Thus Krsna gives *buddhi-yogam*, real intelligence. And what is the value of this *buddhi-yogam*? *Yena mam upayanti te*: such intelligence can take us back home, back to Godhead. By material intelligence we may learn how to sink down to hell. A materialistic person cannot control his senses: he is *go-das*, a servant of the senses. However, when one comes to the position of controlling he senses, he becomes *gosvami*. This is a title given to one who has completely controlled the senses. It is not that Krsna is sending the uncontrolled senses to baffle the conditioned soul; Krsna makes the paths clear--either become His devotee and go back home, back to Godhead, or glide down to the darkest regions of the universe. The two paths are there, and the opportunity to take one or the other is given in the human form of life. One can select one path or the other, just as at the conclusion of *Bhagavad-gita*, Krsna gives Arjuna the choice:

*iti te jnanam akhayatam
guhyad guhyataram maya
vimrsyaitad asesena
yathecchasi tatha kuru*

The facility to do whatever we like is always given to the living by God. We can do whatever we like. It is not that we are given no facilities to select. To select the path of hell or the path back to Godhead depends on us. If we engage our minds always in Krsna consciousness, the path is clear.

13.0. Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Thirteen. (Q18-19.)

13.1 *Adhyaya-prakasika*: Dhrtarastra Quits Home.

Vidura returns to Hastinapura after learning the science of the self from Maitreya Muni. Maharaja Yudhisthira questions Vidura about his travels and Vidura, after replying, stays in Hastinapura for some time.

While in Hastinapura, Vidura preaches to Dhrtarastra, his elder brother, to give up his material attachments. Vidura pushes Dhrtarastra to immediately leave home and pursue self-realization. Dhrtarastra finally leaves along with his chaste wife (Gandhari) and Vidura.

When their absence is detected by Yudhisthira, he inquires from Sanjaya, Dhrtarastra's servant, about Dhrtarastra's whereabouts. Narada Muni appears, and Yudhisthira questions the sage. Narada instructs Yudhisthira about the true situation of the living entity in this world. Narada advises Yudhisthira to take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, who has descended upon the earth. Before Narada departs, he explains that Dhrtarastra, after going to the Ganges, will voluntarily give up his body through the performance of mystic *yoga*.

13.2. *Slokanusaram*: Now Suta Gosvami draws the attention of Saunaka Rsi and the sages to the movements of the saintly Vidura on his pilgrimage to holy places where great sages gather for *satsanga*. [*Nivesa: 1p relates the story of Vidura's life in brief. His going on pilgrimage after being ejected by Duryodhana from the Kaurava household will serve a key role in Canto Three.*] Vidura's heart and mind were now reservoirs of an ocean of transcendental knowledge he had humbly received from Maitreya Rishi. Returning at last to Hastinapura, capital of the victorious Pancha-Pandavas, he was joyfully received by the Pandavas, Dhritarastra, Gandhari, Kunti, Kripa, and many others who hurried to greet him. [*Nivesa: in 3-4p, Srila Prabhupada relates at some length the life stories of Gandhari, Prtha (Kunti), Draupadi and Subhadra, great Vaisnavis all.*] Their delight upon seeing this pure-hearted devotee of the Lord was so great it appeared as if they had regained their consciousness after a long period. While offering obeisances or embracing Vidura, according to their relationship, everyone shed tears of affection due to relief from the anxiety of a long separation. (1-6)

Vidura was sumptuously fed and permitted sufficient rest. Then Maharaja Yudhisthira seated him comfortably and reminisced, "My dear uncle, do you remember how your partiality, like the wings of a bird, saved us, along with our mother from all sorts of calamities? [*Nivesa: 8p details the calamities Yudhisthira only hints at.*] While traveling to holy places of pilgrimage, how did you maintain yourself? Devotees like your good self are truly holy places personified. Because you always carry the Supreme Lord within your heart, wherever you travel becomes sanctified. You must have visited Dvaraka, and so please tell us how the members of the Yadu dynasty are faring." (7-11)

Vidura replied in a friendly but guarded manner, recounting all of his adventures except the news of the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty. He simply could not bear to see the Pandavas distressed at any time. There was a mystery to Vidura's identity. He was actually Yamaraja. Having been cursed by Mandavya Muni, this great Maharaja consented to live on earth for one hundred years as the son of a *sudra*. During Yamaraja's absence, Aryama, one of the twelve Adityas, took over his post so that sinful human beings would continue to be judged and punished after their deaths. (12-15)

The purpose of Vidura's return to Hastinapura, even after he had accepted the renounced order of life, was to rectify the mentality of his misguided elder brother, Dhritarastra. Vidura was treated like a godly person by his relatives, and when he sat down to instruct Dhritarastra, all of the palace residents, including the Pandavas and their mother, gathered around to hear him. Such spiritual discourses are beneficial for all, and are especially welcomed by exalted personalities like Maharaja Yudhisthira who, although now the indisputable ruler of the surface of the world, was protected from *Maya* by the humble sincerity of his devotion to Lord Mukunda. But Yudhisthira's blind uncle Yudhisthira was quite a different story. Insurmountable, eternal time had imperceptibly overcome Dhritarastra. He remained doggedly sunk in whatever family affairs remained after the death of his one hundred sons on the warfield of Kuruksetra. Vidura sarcastically addressed Dhritarastra as "king" and sternly warned, "Please get out of here immediately, for fear has already overtaken you. This frightful situation cannot be remedied by anyone in this material world, for it is the Supreme Personality of Godhead as *kala* who has approached us all. Whoever is under the influence of eternal time must surrender his most dear life. So what to speak of other things such as wealth, honor, family, home and property?" (15-20) [*Nivesa: in 20p we find this brilliant but sobering observation:*

A great Indian scientist, busy in the planmaking business, was suddenly called by invincible eternal time while going to attend a very important meeting of the planning commission, and he had to surrender his life, wife, children, house, land, wealth, etc. During the political upsurge in India and its division into Pakistan and Hindustan, so many rich and influential Indians had to surrender life, property and honor due to the influence of time, and there are hundreds and thousands of examples like that all over the world, all over the universe, which are all effects of the influence of time. Therefore, the conclusion is that there is no powerful living being within the universe who can overcome the influence of time.

Many poets have written verses lamenting the influence of time. Many devastations have taken place over the universes due to the influence of time, and no one could check them by any means.]

"My dear brother," Vidura continued, "your sons, friends and well-wishers have all passed away. You yourself are at the fag-end of your tragic life. Invalidity has overcome your once-magnificent body. Worse still, you live at the mercy of others. Blind from birth, now you are even hard of hearing. Your memory is enfeebled, your teeth are loose, your liver is defective, and you constantly cough up mucus. And yet, because every conditioned soul has powerful hopes of continuing his life, you too drag on with bodily maintenance just like a household dog. Look at yourself, eating remnants of food tossed your way by Bhimasena! [*Nivesa: Srila Prabhupada remarks in 23p:*

A *sadhu* should never flatter kings or rich men to live comfortably at their cost. A *sadhu* is to speak to the householders about the naked truth of life so that they may come to their senses about the precarious life in material existence. Dhrtarastra is a typical example of an attached old man in household life. He had become a pauper in the true sense, yet he wanted to live comfortably in the house of the Pandavas, of whom Bhima especially is mentioned because personally he killed two prominent sons of Dhrtarastra, namely Duryodhana and Duhsasana. These two sons were very much dear to him for their notorious and nefarious activities, and Bhima is particularly pointed out because he killed these two pet sons. Why was Dhrtarastra living there at the house of the Pandavas? Because he wanted to continue his life comfortably, even at the risk of all humiliation. Vidura, therefore, was astonished how powerful is the urge to continue life...Dhrtarastra is blind and continues to hope to live comfortably in the midst of all kinds of reverses of life. A *sadhu* like Vidura is meant to awaken such blind persons and thus help them go back to Godhead, where life is eternal. Once going there, no one wants to come back to this material world of miseries. We can just imagine how responsible a task is entrusted to a *sadhu* like Mahatma Vidura.]

[Vidura continued:] "Remember, my brother, it was you who plotted again and again to murder these very Pandavas upon whom your life now depends. You tried arson and poison to put an end to them—how degrading it is for you to linger on in Hastinapura just to slake, by their charity, the feeble urges of your failing senses! What is the use of it anyway? Unwilling as you may be to die, and however determined you are to hang on to life even at the cost of your honor, your body will certainly dwindle and deteriorate just like an old garment. (21-25)

"Listen well: one who leaves home secretly and then gives up his body in an unknown and remote place, undisturbed by material conditions, is called *dhira*. Better still is the *narottama*, or best among men, who after realizing the falsity and misery of material existence, leaves home so that he can fully depend upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Who is residing within his heart. My dear brother, the age of Kali is soon approaching. Its terrible influence will diminish all the good qualities of men. You should therefore leave for the North immediately, without informing your relatives." (26-28) [*Nivesa: a person who attempts to hold the post of a leader of men that requires of him to set a high example of spiritual and moral discipline, but who unfortunately falls into a humiliated state of degradation, would do well to seriously consider these words from 28p:*

One can compensate for a life of frustration by becoming a *dhira*, or leaving home for good without communicating with relatives, and Vidura advised his eldest brother to adopt this way without delay because very quickly the age of Kali was approaching. A conditioned soul is already degraded by the material association, and still in the *Kali-yuga* the good qualities of a man will deteriorate to the lowest standard. He was advised to leave home before *Kali-yuga* approached.

To push his brother toward this good end, in verse 25 Vidura harshly condemns Dhrtarastra as a kṛpāna, "miser." Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport:

Dhrtarastra, due to his wrong conception of life, had already spoiled eighty percent of his achieved energy, so it behooved him to utilize the remaining days of his miserly life for the ultimate good.

The Mahabharata reveals that even though he was disqualified from the throne because he was blind from birth, Dhritarastra had always aspired to become the king. After the death of Pandu, this desire deepened. Under its influence Dhritarastra sanctioned numerous wicked plans, hoping that the kingdom might fall into the hands of his own sons. All such evil attempts failed, however, for such was the will of the Lord. And yet, even after the cruel death of his one hundred sons, simply because the cultured Yudhisthira respectfully treated Dhritarastra as royalty, he continued to pass his remaining days in illusion, his intelligence seduced by royal comforts.]

Vidura's instructions had the miraculous effect of convincing Dhritarastra about the value of spiritual life. At once he broke off the strong tie of family affection by summoning forth his resolute *ksatriya* determination. That night, he left home unannounced and set out on the path of liberation. As Dhritarastra travelled to the north, his faithful wife, Gandhari, accompanied him like half of his body—even though he was no longer attached to her. (29-30)

After arising the next morning, Maharaja Yudhisthira performed his religious duties, which consisted of daily prayers, offering sacrifice to the sun-god, and distributing charity to the *brahmanas*. [*Nivesa: The cutting words of Srila Prabhupada in 32p make crystal clear to the modern reader the vital significance of King Yudhisthira's rigid execution of morning duties under Vedic injunction:*

One who is not prepared to practice injunctions prescribed in the *sastras* cannot be a good man simply by book knowledge. Modern householders are practiced to different modes of life, namely to rise late and then take bed tea without any sort of cleanliness and without any purificatory practices as mentioned above. The household children are taken to practice what the parents practice, and therefore the whole generation glides towards hell. Nothing good can be expected from them unless they associate with *sadhus*. Like Dhrtarastra, the materialistic person may take lessons from a *sadhu* like Vidura and thus be cleansed of the effects of modern life.]

When Yudhisthira entered the palace to offer respects to his superiors, he discovered his old aunt and uncles were missing. Suddenly overcome by anxiety, the King turned to Sanjaya and demanded, "Where is our old, blind uncle? Where is my well-wisher Vidura, and my mother Gandhari? Although they were both highly mortified by the death of their sons, I have no doubt been most ungrateful. Having taken my offenses seriously, did they drown themselves in the Ganga?" (31-33) [*Nivesa: In 33p Srila Prabhupada makes this most moving observation of the saintliness of Maharaja Yudhisthira:*

When, therefore, he [Yudhisthira] could not find his uncle and aunt in the palace, naturally his doubts arose, and he conjectured that they had gone down to the water of the Ganges. He thought himself ungrateful because when the Pandavas were fatherless, Maharaja Dhrtarastra had given them all royal facilities to live, and in return he had killed all Dhrtarastra's sons in the Battle of Kuruksetra. As a pious man, Maharaja Yudhisthira took

into account all his unavoidable misdeeds, and he never thought of the misdeeds of his uncle and company. Dhrtarastra had suffered the effects of his own misdeeds by the will of the Lord, but Maharaja Yudhisthira was thinking only of his own unavoidable misdeeds. That is the nature of a good man and devotee of the Lord. A devotee never finds fault with others, but tries to find his own and thus rectify them as far as possible.]

Suta Gosvami points out to the sages that the grief and mental agitation caused by the disappearance of his master at first hindered Sanjaya's reply. By means of intelligence Sanjaya managed to pacify his disturbed mind, and, wiping tears from his eyes, he at last told Yudhisthira, "I do not know anything about your two uncles and Gandhari, for I have been cheated by those great souls." As Sanjaya uttered these piteous words, Narada Muni suddenly appeared. The Pandavas hastily got up from their seats to welcome the transcendentalist and offer him their obeisances. Yudhisthira mournfully said, "My dear Narada, I do not know where my two uncles and aunt have gone. O Devarshi, you are like the captain of the ship and so I request you to guide us so that we may reach our proper destination." (34-40)

Being so addressed, Narada explained, "My dear King, there is no cause for lamentation, for everyone is under the control of the Supreme Lord. It is He alone who brings persons together and then disperses them, like a player who arranges and then re-arranges his playthings. As a cow is controlled by a rope through its nose, so humanity is conditioned to obey the orders of the Lord by being trained to follow the Vedic injunctions. [*Nivesa: note how expertly Srila Prabhupada reminds us of the worldwide urgency of the yuga-dharma mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, headquartered at Sridhama Mayapur on the bank of the sacred Ganga:*

All living beings in the material world have taken up the risk of conditioned life by their own selection and are thus entrapped by the laws of material nature. The only way to get out of the entanglement is to agree to obey the Supreme. But instead of becoming free from the clutches of *maya*, or illusion, foolish human beings become bound up by different nomenclatures, being designated as *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas*, *vaisyas*, *sudras*, Hindus, Mohammedans, Indians, Europeans, Americans, Chinese, and many others, and thus they carry out the orders of the Supreme Lord under the influence of respective scriptural or legislative injunctions. The statutory laws of the state are imperfect imitation replicas of religious codes. The secular state, or the godless state, allows the citizens to break the laws of God, but restricts them from disobeying the laws of the state; the result is that the people in general suffer more by breaking the laws of God than by obeying the imperfect

laws made by man. Every man is imperfect by constitution under conditions of material existence, and there is not the least possibility that even the most materially advanced man can enact perfect legislation. On the other hand, there is no such imperfection in the laws of God. If leaders are educated in the laws of God, there is no necessity of a makeshift legislative council of aimless men. There is necessity of change in the makeshift laws of man, but there is no change in the God-made laws because they are made perfect by the all-perfect Personality of Godhead. The codes of religion, scriptural injunctions, are made by liberated representatives of God in consideration of different conditions of living, and by carrying out the orders of the Lord, the conditioned living beings gradually become free from the clutches of material existence. The factual position of the living being is, however, that he is the eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord. In his liberated state he renders service to the Lord in transcendental love and thus enjoys a life of full freedom, even sometimes on an equal level with the Lord or sometimes more than the Lord. But in the conditioned material world, every living being wants to be the Lord of other living beings, and thus by the illusion of *maya* this mentality of lording it over becomes a cause of further extension of conditional life. So in the material world the living being is still more conditioned, until he surrenders unto the Lord by reviving his original state of eternal servitorship. That is the last instruction of the *Bhagavad-gita* and all other recognized scriptures of the world. (42p)]

[Narada Muni continued speaking to Yudhisthira:] “Feelings of separation are due to illusory affection and nothing else. Thus you should give up your anxiety, which is due to ignorance of the eternal self. You are simply thinking, 'How will these poor, helpless creatures continue to exist without me?' One's gross material body is under the control of *kala*, *karma* and the three *gunas*. Since this body is already in the jaws of the serpent, so to speak; how can it give protection to others? The nature of material life is that it is a hard struggle for existence wherein the weaker beings are devoured by the stronger ones. [*Nivesa*: at this point Sri Narada Muni utters one of the more famous verses of Srimad-Bhagavatam, which summarizes the cruel state affairs among the living entities of this material world:

*ahastani sahanam
apadani catus-padam
phalguni tatra mahatam
jivo jivasya jivanam*

Those who are devoid of hands are prey for those who have hands; those devoid of legs are prey for the four-legged. The weak are the subsistence

of the strong, and the general rule holds that one living being is food for another. (*Bhag.* 1.14.47)]

[Narada continued:] “Therefore, you should turn your undiverted attention toward the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna. He has already completed His mission on behalf of the demigods by removing the burden of the earth. As long as the Lord is present here, you should carry on with your duties, but after His disappearance, you should also be prepared to leave this mortal world.

[*Nivesa*: In verse 49, Narada plainly states what that mission was that Sri Krsna carried out on behalf of the demigods: He appeared in this world as the kala-rupa, the form of all-devouring time. His purpose was to eliminate those who defy His supreme will. Regarding the Lord’s return to the spiritual world upon the completion of this mission, in his purport to verse 50 *Srila Prabhupada* states:

Narada, like Vidura, did not disclose the imminent annihilation of the Yadu dynasty, but indirectly gave a hint to the King and his brothers to wait till the incident happened and the Lord departed.

In short, the disappearance of Dhritarastra and Gandhari are but an overture to the departure of the Pandavas, once Lord Krsna’s rectification of dharmasya-glanih is complete.] Narada spoke further: "Dhritarastra, Gandhari and Vidura have gone to Saptasrota, on the southern side of the Himalayas, where the Ganga had been divided into seven parts for the satisfaction of the *sapta-risis*. On the banks of the river, Dhritarastra is now beginning the practice of *astanga-yoga* by bathing three times daily, performing *agnihotra* sacrifices, and maintaining his life on water alone. In this way, Dhritarastra will realize his qualitative oneness with the Lord and thus become impervious to all material influences. Most likely, on the fifth day from today, Dhritarastra will quit his body by burning it to ashes in a fire created from his mystic power. When the chaste Gandhari sees her husband burning along with his thatched cottage, she will enter into the fire with rapt attention. After witnessing this, Vidura will leave that place, overcome by mixed feelings of delight and grief. (41-59) [*Nivesa*: in his purport to verse 59 *Srila Prabhupada* explains that Vidura was delighted that his unfortunate brother Dhrtarastra attained liberation in impersonal Brahman. His grief was due to the following:

...he was sorry that he could not make his brother turn into a pure devotee. This was not done by Vidura because of Dhrtarastra's being inimical to the Pandavas, who were all devotees of the Lord. An offense at the feet of a

Vaisnava is more dangerous than an offense at the lotus feet of the Lord. Vidura was certainly very liberal to bestow mercy upon his brother Dhrtarastra, whose past life was very materialistic. But ultimately the result of such mercy certainly depended on the will of the Supreme Lord in the present life; therefore Dhrtarastra attained liberation only, and after many such liberated states of life one can attain to the stage of devotional service. Vidura was certainly very mortified by the death of his brother and sister-in-law, and the only remedy to mitigate such lamentation was to go out to pilgrimage.]

After saying this, Narada departed through the airways, and by taking the *rishi's* instructions to heart, Yudhisthira was able to free himself from all lamentation. (60)

13.3. *Vrtti*: Question Eighteen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Maharaja Yudhisthira of Vidura. It is a question about Vidura's welfare and his travels to holy places, particularly Dvaraka. The question has three parts.

Question Eighteen Part 1: Maharaja Yudhisthira said: My uncle, do you remember how you always protected us, along with our mother, from all sorts of calamities? Your partiality, like the wings of a bird, saved us from poisoning and arson. (8)

Question Eighteen Part 2: While traveling on the surface of the earth, how did you maintain your livelihood? At which holy places and pilgrimage sites did you render service? (9)

Question Eighteen Part 3: My uncle, you must have visited Dvaraka. In that holy place are our friends and well-wishers, the descendants of Yadu, who are always rapt in the service of the Lord Sri Krsna. You might have seen them or heard about them. Are they all living happily in their abodes? (11)

[Continuing *vrtti* 13.3:] Desiring to spare the Pandavas pain, Mahatma Vidura in verse 13 deals with this question as a conventional inquiry, not as a philosophical one. He answers according to *Niti-sastra*. The summary is thus from Srila Prabhupada.

According to *Niti-sastra* (civic laws) one should not speak an unpalatable truth to cause distress to others. Distress comes upon us in its own way by the laws of nature, so one should not aggravate it by propaganda. For a compassionate soul like Vidura, especially in his

dealings with the beloved Pandavas, it was almost impossible to disclose an unpalatable piece of news like the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty. Therefore he purposely refrained from it. (13p)

13.4. Vrtti: Question Nineteen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Yudhisthira of Sanjaya. It covers verses 32-34.

Question Nineteen: Yudhisthira wishes to know why his uncles Vidura and Dhrtarastra, and his aunt Gandhari, suddenly vacated Hastinapura.

13.5. Vrtti: Sanjaya was unable to answer. Narada Muni appeared there. Yudhisthira put his question before the sage. In verses 41-59 Narada answers Question Nineteen. He reveals that Vidura had accompanied Dhrtarastra and his wife Gandhari to a holy place. There in most probably 5 days they would departure from this world by mystic *yoga*, after which Vidura would go his own way in search of perfectional instruction in Krsna consciousness. In this way Narada Muni also hinted at King Yudhisthira's own impending departure from this world. The philosophical significance of Narada's answer follows in three parts, summarized from Srila Prabhupada's purports as indicated.

1. One should use his intelligence to seek liberation, not for seeking happiness or avoiding distress, for the Lord only can free one from the distress that is coming from karma. Therefore, no one can be actually dependent on us, rather they are dependent on the Lord, and by depending on the Lord and following the regulations of Krsna consciousness, one's sufferings can gradually be mitigated. (41p-47p)

2. One should look to the mission of the Lord, which is to remove the harassment of the devotees and mass of people by the demonic and to reclaim the fallen souls, and one should not be disturbed by the affairs of so called happiness and distress. (48p-50p)

3. Although the purpose of practicing the sitting postures in yoga is to become free from the modes, this freedom is most easily accomplished by engaging the senses in Krsna's service, wherein one can get free from the modes. This will occur when one practices devotional service without offending vaisnavas, associates with potent sadhus, is pious, and follows the footsteps of Narada Muni. (51p-60p)

13.6. *Parisistam*:

13.6.1. *Vinodakam*: in *Bhagavata-arka-marici-malam* Chapter Fifteen (“Analysis for Favorable Conditions for *Bhakti*”—*bhakti anukulya vicarah*) which is found in the *Abidheya* division of the work, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura cites this verse from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* First Canto Chapter Thirteen:

01.13.10

Maharaja Yudhisthira to Vidura

My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified.
Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.

13.6.2. *Vinodakam*: three important preaching verses from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Chapter Thirteen Canto One often quoted by Srila Prabhupada in his lectures.

PURE DEVOTEE—LIKE A TĪRTHA

SB 1.13.10

bhavad-vidhā bhāgavatās

tīrtha-bhūtāḥ svayam vibho

tīrthī-kurvanti tīrthāni

svāntaḥ-sthena gadābhṛtā

bhavad—your good self; *vidhāḥ*—like; *bhāgavatāḥ*—devotees; *tīrtha*—the holy places of pilgrimage; *bhūtāḥ*—converted into; *svayam*—personally; *vibho*—O powerful one; *tīrthī-kurvanti*—make into a holy place of pilgrimage; *tīrthāni*—the holy places; *sva-antaḥ-sthena*—having been situated in the heart; *gadā-bhṛtā*—the Personality of Godhead.

My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.

Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja

TIME AFFECTS THE GRHAMEDHIS

SB 1.13.17

evam gr̥heṣu saktānām

pramattānām tad-īhayā

atyakrāmat avijñātaḥ

kālaḥ parama-dustaraḥ

evam—thus; *gr̥heṣu*—in the family affairs; *saktānām*—of persons who are too attached; *pramattānām*—insanely attached; *tad-īhayā*—engrossed in such thoughts; *atyakrāmat*—surpassed; *avijñātaḥ*—imperceptibly; *kālaḥ*—eternal time; *parama*—supremely; *dustaraḥ*—insurmountable.

Insurmountable, eternal time imperceptibly overcomes those who are too much attached to family affairs and are always engrossed in their thought.

Sūta Gosvāmī

JUNGLE’S LAW

SB 1.13.47

ahastāni sahasānām

apadāni catuṣ-padām

phalgūni tatra mahatām

jīvo jīvasya jīvanam

ahastāni—those who are devoid of hands; *sa-hastānām*—of those who are endowed with hands; *apadāni*—those who are devoid of legs; *catuṣ-padām*—of those who have four legs; *phalgūni*—those who are weak; *tatra*—there; *mahatām*—of the powerful; *jīvaḥ*—the living being; *jīvasya*—of the living being; *jīvanam*—subsistence.

Those who are devoid of hands are prey for those who have hands; those devoid of legs are prey for the four-legged. The weak are the subsistence of the strong, and the general rule holds that one living being is food for another.

Nārada Muni

13.6.3. Vinodakam: interesting points extracted from Srila Prabhupada’s purports in First Canto Chapter Thirteen,

According to *Niti-sastra* (civic laws) one should not speak an unpalatable truth to cause distress to others. Distress comes upon us in its own way by the laws of nature, so one should not aggravate it by propaganda.

14p

Saintly persons like Vidura must be treated as well as a denizen from heaven. In those days denizens of heavenly planets used to visit homes like that of Maharaja Yudhisthira, and sometimes persons like Arjuna and others used to visit higher planets. Narada is a spaceman who can travel unrestrictedly, not only within the material universes but also in the spiritual universes. Even Narada used to visit the palace of Maharaja Yudhisthira and what to speak of other celestial demigods. It is only the spiritual culture of the people concerned that makes interplanetary travel possible, even in the present body.

25p

The words *krpanasya jijiviso* are significant. There are two classes of men. One is called the *krpana*, and the other is called the *brahmana*. The *krpana*, or the miserly man, has no estimation of his material body, but the *brahmana* has a true estimation of himself and the material body. The *krpana*, having a wrong estimation of his material body, wants to enjoy sense gratification with his utmost strength, and even in old age he wants to become a young man by medical treatment or otherwise.

27p

There are three classes of transcendentalists, namely, (1) the *dhira*, or the one who is not disturbed by being away from family association, (2) one in the renounced order of life, a *sannyasi* by frustrated sentiment, and (3) a sincere devotee of the Lord, who awakens God consciousness by hearing and chanting and leaves home depending completely on the Personality of Godhead, who resides in his heart. The idea is that the renounced order of life, after a frustrated life of sentiment in the material world, may be the stepping stone on the path of self-realization, but real perfection of the path of liberation is attained when one is practiced to depend fully on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lives in everyone's heart as Paramatma. One may live in the darkest jungle alone out of home, but a steadfast devotee knows very well that he is not alone. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is with him, and He can protect His sincere devotee in any awkward circumstance. One should therefore practice devotional service at home, hearing and chanting the holy name, quality, form, pastimes, entourage, etc., in association with pure devotees, and this practice will help one awaken God consciousness in proportion to one's sincerity of purpose.

29p

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the great preacher of the principles of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, has stressed the importance of association with *sadhus*, pure devotees of the Lord. He said that even by a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can achieve all perfection. We are not ashamed to admit that this fact was experienced in our practical life. Were we not favored by His Divine Grace Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Maharaja, by our first meeting for a few minutes only, it would have been impossible for us to accept this mighty task of describing *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in English. Without seeing him at that opportune moment, we could have become a very great

business magnate, but never would we have been able to walk the path of liberation and be engaged in the factual service of the Lord under instructions of His Divine Grace.

37p

That great souls cheat others may be astonishing to know, but it is a fact that great souls cheat others for a great cause. It is said that Lord Krsna also advised Yudhisthira to tell a lie before Dronacarya, and it was also for a great cause. The Lord wanted it, and therefore it was a great cause. Satisfaction of the Lord is the criterion of one who is bona fide, and the highest perfection of life is to satisfy the Lord by one's occupational duty. That is the verdict of *Gita* and *Bhagavatam*. Dhrtarastra and Vidura, followed by Gandhari, did not disclose their determination to Sanjaya, although he was constantly with Dhrtarastra as his personal assistant. Sanjaya never thought that Dhrtarastra could perform any act without consulting him. But Dhrtarastra's going away from home was so confidential that it could not be disclosed even to Sanjaya. Sanatana Gosvami also cheated the keeper of the prison house while going away to see Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and similarly Raghunatha dasa Gosvami also cheated his priest and left home for good to satisfy the Lord. To satisfy the Lord, anything is good, for it is in relation with the Absolute Truth. We also had the same opportunity to cheat the family members and leave home to engage in the service of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Such cheating was necessary for a great cause, and there is no loss for any party in such transcendental fraud.

41p

There are different types of philosophers, and the greatest of all of them are those who have seen the Personality of Godhead and have surrendered themselves in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Among all such pure devotees of the Lord, Devarsi Narada is the chief, and therefore he has been described herein as the greatest of all philosopher devotees.

43p

One may argue that since the Lord is bound to award the reactionary results of our own actions, the example of a player [*Nivesa: earlier in this purport the Lord's control over the living entities is compared to the relationship of a player to his playthings*] cannot be applied. But it is not so. We must always remember that the Lord is the supreme will, and He is not bound by any law. Generally the law of karma is that one is awarded the result of one's own actions, but in special cases, by the will of the Lord, such resultant actions are changed also. But this change can be affected by the will of the Lord only, and no other.

46p

The world's movements for freedom through political, economic, social, and cultural propaganda can do no benefit to anyone, for they are controlled by superior power. A conditioned living being is under the full control of material nature, represented by eternal time and activities under the dictation of different modes of nature. There are three material modes of nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance. Unless one is situated in the mode of goodness, one cannot see things as they are. The passionate and the ignorant cannot even see things as they are. Therefore a person who is passionate and ignorant cannot direct his activities on the right path. Only the man in the quality of goodness can help to a certain extent. Most persons are passionate and ignorant, and therefore their plans and projects can hardly do any good to others. Above the modes of

nature is eternal time, which is called *kala* because it changes the shape of everything in the material world. Even if we are able to do something temporarily beneficial, time will see that the good project is frustrated in course of time. The only thing possible to be done is to get rid of eternal time, *kala*, which is compared to *kala-sarpa*, or the cobra snake, whose bite is always lethal. No one can be saved from the bite of a cobra. The best remedy for getting out of the clutches of the cobralike *kala* or its integrity, the modes of nature, is *bhakti-yoga*, as it is recommended in the *Bhagavad-gita* (14.26). The highest perfectional project of philanthropic activities is to engage everyone in the act of preaching *bhakti-yoga* all over the world because that alone can save the people from the control of *maya*, or the material nature represented by *kala*, *karma* and *guna*, as described above. The *Bhagavad-gita* (14.26) confirms this definitely.

47p

There is nothing to be lamented if a tiger eats a weaker animal, including a man, because that is the law of the Supreme Lord. But although the law states that a human being must subsist on another living being, there is the law of good sense also, for the human being is meant to obey the laws of the scriptures. This is impossible for other animals. The human being is meant for self-realization, and for that purpose he is not to eat anything which is not first offered to the Lord. The Lord accepts from His devotee all kinds of food preparations made of vegetables, fruits, leaves and grains. Fruits, leaves and milk in different varieties can be offered to the Lord, and after the Lord accepts the foodstuff, the devotee can partake of the *prasada*, by which all suffering in the struggle for existence will be gradually mitigated. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gita* (9.26). Even those who are accustomed to eat animals can offer foodstuff, not to the Lord directly, but to an agent of the Lord, under certain conditions of religious rites. Injunctions of the scriptures are meant not to encourage the eaters of animals, but to restrict them by regulated principles.

54p

Even the highest mode, the material mode of goodness, is also a cause of material bondage, and what to speak of the other qualities, namely passion and ignorance. Passion and ignorance increase the material propensities of hankering for material enjoyment, and a strong sense of lust provokes the accumulation of wealth and power. One who has conquered these two base mentalities and has raised himself to the platform of goodness, which is full of knowledge and morality, cannot also control the senses, namely the eyes, the tongue, the nose, the ear and touch. But one who has surrendered himself unto the lotus feet of Lord Hari, as above mentioned, can transcend all influences of the modes of material nature and be fixed in the service of the Lord. The *bhakti-yoga* process, therefore, directly applies the senses to the loving service of the Lord. This prohibits the performer from engaging in material activities. This process of turning the senses from material attachment to the loving transcendental service of the Lord is called *pratyahara*, and the very process is called *pranayama*, ultimately ending in *samadhi*, or absorption in pleasing the Supreme Lord Hari by all means.

Vrtti: In *Anuccheda 278* of the *Bhakti-sandharbha*, Srila Jiva Gosvami sheds light upon the stages of “*yoga*” that a *bhakti-yogi* passes through as a natural result of the third (*smaranam* or remembrance) of the nine processes of devotional service to Lord Krsna. *Smarnam* develops in five stages. The first is *samanyam*, focusing the mind upon the Deity. Next is *dharana*,

withdrawing the mind from things other than the Deity. *Dhyana* follows, which is the concentration of the mind upon the holy name, form and pastimes of the Deity. The fourth stage is *dhruvanusmrti*, when the devotee's mind flows uninterruptedly to the form of the Lord. The final stage, *samadhi*, is when the Deity Himself appears within the mind of the devotee. The *samadhi* of the *bhakti-yogi* is never to be compared to the *asamprajnata-brahma-samadhi* that, after many years of austerity and the complete suspension of physical and mental activity, is only rarely achieved by *astanga-yogis*.

58p

This entering of a chaste lady into the fire of her dead husband is called the *sati* rite, and the action is considered to be most perfect for a woman. In a later age, this *sati* rite became an obnoxious criminal affair because the ceremony was forced upon even an unwilling woman. In this fallen age it is not possible for any lady to follow the *sati* rite as chastely as it was done by Gandhari and others in past ages. A chaste wife like Gandhari would feel the separation of her husband to be more burning than actual fire. Such a lady can observe the *sati* rite voluntarily, and there is no criminal force by anyone. When the rite became a formality only and force was applied upon a lady to follow the principle, actually it became criminal, and therefore the ceremony was to be stopped by state law.

14.0 Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Fourteen. (Q20.)

14.1 Chapter Fourteen, The Disappearance of Lord Krsna, *adhyaya-prakasa* (brief chapter summary).

Arjuna's return to Hastinapura is past due, and Maharaja Yudhisthira, after noticing inauspicious signs, reveals to Bhimasena his fears that Lord Krsna, whom the Pandavas completely depend upon, has departed from this earth. (1-9)

Yudhisthira elaborates for Bhimasena the omens he has observed and concludes that Krsna's footprints will no longer grace this earth. (10-21)

Arjuna suddenly returns from Dvaraka and Yudhisthira, in anxiety, questions him about the welfare of the Yadus. Yudhisthira's questions turn to the reason for Arjuna's dejected countenance. Yudhisthira concludes that the

only possible cause for heroic Arjuna's depression is Lord Krsna's disappearance. (22-44)

14.2. *Slokanusaram*: Suta Gosvami relates that Arjuna had departed Hastinapura for Dvaraka. His intention was to visit Shri Krishna and the Yadus to find out about the Lord's future programs of action. Several months passed without Arjuna's return. Maharaja Yudhisthira then noticed many inauspicious omens. He took them as indications of a change in the direction of eternal time. This caused fear to penetrate his heart. He saw disruptions in the seasonal regularities, and noticed the people in general had become proud, greedy, angry and deceitful. Many citizens in his kingdom had taken up abominable means of livelihood. Ordinary transactions were polluted with cheating, even among friends. There was a constant strain of misunderstanding between husband and wife, parents and children, as well as between brothers and well-wishers. (1-4)

Seeing all this, Maharaja Yudhisthira anxiously said to his younger brother Bhima, "Under my order Arjuna went to Dvaraka. Now seven months have passed. Could it be, just as Narada predicted, that Lord Krishna is about to disappear from this earth? Due only to His causeless mercy we achieved unrivaled royal opulence, good wives, control over our subjects, and victory over our enemies. Now just see all the evil portents manifest in the world due to celestial influence. These indicate danger in the very near future. The left side of my body is quivering. My heart is racing in fear. Look! A she-jackal vomits fire while howling at the rising sun. Dogs fearlessly bark at me. Cows pass me on the left side. Lower animals like asses circumambulate me. My horses appear to weep as soon as they see me. Here is a pigeon that appears to be a messenger of death. The shrieking of owls and their rivals, the crows, makes my heart tremble. The sky is encircled by smoke; the earth and mountains appear to throb; sounds of thunder vibrate in the clear sky and lightning flashes across the blue. Clouds of dust raised by the blasting wind darken the whole world. Rain clouds pour blood upon the earth. The sun's rays seem diminished, and the stars seem to fight one another in the sky. Living entities all around us are bewildered—they seem ablaze and weeping. Rivers, lakes and the mind are all agitated, and butter no longer burns. What is this extraordinary time that has come upon us? Cows no longer give milk. They stand unmoving with tears in their eyes. Even the deities in the temples seem to be crying, perspiring, and about to depart. The cities, villages and the countryside appear to be devoid of beauty and happiness. I think that all these disturbances indicate some great loss to

the world's good fortune. Being marked by the footprints of Lord Krsna's lotus feet, the earth had become most fortunate. However, these inauspicious signs indicate that this will no longer be the case." (5-21)

As Yudhisthira considered the many portents of doom around him, Arjuna returned, Maharaja Yudhisthira saw his face was pale and marked with unprecedented dejection. Indeed, Arjuna's head hung low and tears glided down from his lotus eyes. Remembering Narada's prediction, Yudhisthira questioned his younger brother, "Please tell me whether our friends and relatives of the Madhu, Bhoja, Dasharha, Arha, Satvata, Andhaka and Yadu dynasties are all passing their days in happiness? Is my grandfather Shurasena; my maternal uncle Vasudeva; Balarama the Personality of Godhead; Hridika and his son Kritavarman; Kamsa's father Ugrasena; and Krishna's sons, headed by Pradyumna, Sushena, Charudeshna, Samba and Risabha, faring well? Is Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, enjoying life at Dvaraka, surrounded by His friends and relatives?" (22-38)

[*Nimesa*: In his purport to verses 32-33, Srila Prabhupada writes:

The constant companions of Lord Krsna, such as Uddhava, are all liberated souls, and they descended along with Lord Krsna to this material world to fulfill the mission of the Lord. The Pandavas are also liberated souls who descended along with Lord Krsna to serve Him in His transcendental pastimes on this earth. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (4.8), the Lord and His eternal associates, who are also liberated souls like the Lord, come down on this earth at certain intervals.

In *Krsna Sandarba* (*annucheda* 64), Srila Jiva Gosvami remarks in this connection:

1 Before speaking to Brahma the four essential verses of Srimad Bhagavatam, Lord Krsna revealed Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed in the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.15):

"Lord Brahma saw in the Vaikuntha planets Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Lord of the entire devotee community, the Lord of the Yadu dynasty, the Lord of the goddess of fortune, the Lord of all sacrifices, and the Lord of the universe, and who is served by the foremost servitors like Nanda, Sunanda, Prabala and Arhana, His immediate associates in Dvaraka."

In this verse, the words "akhila-sattvatam patim" mean "the Lord of all the heroes in the Yadu dynasty."

sattvatas means Lord of Yadus

Sridhara Svami confirms this in his tika

“Mahavaikuntha” is also used

2 That Sri Krsna, the master of the Yadu dynasty, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead is confirmed in the following verse spoken by Sukadeva Gosvami (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.4.20):

Sattvatas also at times means Vaisnavas, but in this case, dynasty

"May Lord Krsna, who is the worshipable Lord of all devotees, the protector and glory of all the kings like Andhaka and Vrsni of the Yadu dynasty, (all are called Yadus or sattvatas) the husband of the goddess of fortune, the director of all sacrifices and therefore the leader of all living entities, the controller of all intelligence, the proprietor of all planets, spiritual and material, and the supreme incarnation on the earth (the supreme all in all)", be merciful upon me."]

Maharaja Yudhisthira now addressed queries of concern to the person of his brother. "My dear Arjuna, I wonder how your health is, for you appear to have lost your bodily luster. Could this be due to your having been neglected and disrespected by others for having stayed so long at Dvaraka? Has someone addressed you harshly or threatened you? Did you fail to keep a promise or were you unable to give in charity to a deserving person? Could you not give protection to brahmanas, children, cows, women, or diseased persons that had approached you for shelter? Have you contacted a woman of low character or one who was inferior to you? Have you taken your meal alone without providing for old men and boys that deserved to dine with you? Have you committed some other abominable act?" (39-43)

At least Yudhisthira expressed the real anxiety perturbing his mind. "Or, is it that you are feeling empty due to having lost your most intimate friend, Lord Krishna? My dear Arjuna, I can think of no other reason for your having become so utterly dejected." (44)

14.3. *Vrtti* section 1: Question Twenty of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by Yudhisthira of Arjuna. There are three parts.

Question Twenty Part One: Since Arjuna had come from Dvaraka, Yudhisthira asked after the welfare of Lord Krsna, His family and the Yadu dynasty. (25-38)

Question Twenty Part Two: Receiving no answer from Arjuna, Yudhisthira then anxiously inquired about his brother's welfare. In this section, beginning with verse 39, the king expresses concern that his brother's loss of luster may be due to discrepancies in the execution of his *ksatriya* duties, (39-43)

Question Twenty Part Three: Finally Yudhisthira asked, "Or is it that you are feeling empty for all time because you might have lost your most intimate friend, Lord Krsna?" (44)

14.4. *Vrtti* section 2: The philosophical significance of Question Twenty.

1. When a civilization or person is separated from Krsna, the result is inauspicious. Sufferings are inflicted upon the separated souls by the Lord's material energy. (Summarized from 1p-21p)

2. But beyond the material sufferings is the spiritual world. There infallible entities exist in wonderful reciprocation with the Lord. (22p-44p)

3. Feelings of transcendental separation of the devotee from the Lord superficially appear to be suffering, but in truth they are the evidence of perfectional attachment to Krsna. In his purport to verse 8 Srila Prabhupada remarks:

There is no difference between the Lord's Self and the Lord's transcendental body. The expansions execute differential activities. When the Lord, however, appears in His person as Lord Sri Krsna, His other plenary portions also join in Him by His inconceivable potency called *yogamaya*, and thus the Lord Krsna of Vrndavana is different from the Lord Krsna of Mathura or the Lord Krsna of Dvaraka. The *virat-rupa* of Lord Krsna is also different from Him, by His inconceivable potency. The *virat-rupa* exhibited on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra is the material conception of His form. Therefore it should be understood that when Lord

Krsna was apparently killed by the bow and arrow of the hunter, the Lord left His so-called material body in the material world. The Lord is *kaivalya*, and for Him there is no difference between matter and spirit because everything is created from Him. Therefore His quitting one sort of body or accepting another body does not mean that He is like the ordinary living being. All such activities are simultaneously one and different by His inconceivable potency. When Maharaja Yudhisthira was lamenting the possibility of His disappearance, it was just in pursuance of a custom of lamenting the disappearance of a great friend, but factually the Lord never quits His transcendental body, as is misconceived by less intelligent persons. Such less intelligent persons have been condemned by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gita*, and they are known as the *mudhas*. That the Lord left His body means that He left again His plenary portions in the respective *dhamas* (transcendental abodes), as He left His *visva-rupa* in the material world.

In this connection Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura states in *Srimad-Bhagavata Tatparya 2*:

Let all things that are favorable for the service of Krishna become the objects of our worship. Let the abomination of mundane conceptions with regard to grass and creepers not affect us. It is not possible for us to become liberated, by our own endeavor, from our present material conceptions, material endeavors and false ego. Lord Krishna has said in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *daivi hy esa gunamayi mama maya duatyaya*--that this material nature, which consists of three material modes, is very difficult to overcome. The Supreme Lord and the material energy, or *maya*, are two separate objects. The Supreme Lord is the Absolute Truth whereas *maya* is temporary by nature. The temporary material conception of this world created by *maya* induces the conditioned souls to engage in fruitive activities.

In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.19.18) it is stated as follows:

An intelligent person should see that any material activity is subject to constant transformation and that even on the planet of Lord Brahma there is thus simply unhappiness. Indeed, a wise man can understand that just as all that he has seen is temporary, similarly, all things within the universe have a beginning and an end.

In the material world, we acquire knowledge through our senses—the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and touch, as well as the mind. We try to analyze that accumulated knowledge with the help of *pratyaksa* (direct perception) and *anumana* (imagination). Actually, these attempts are the causes of our misfortune. Cultivation of Vedic knowledge while maintaining the sense of being the doer falls under the category of material knowledge.

It is stated in the Vedas, *dye vidye veditavye para para ceti*. Any knowledge other than spiritual knowledge is mundane knowledge. It is very difficult to gain freedom from the inauspiciousness caused by mundane knowledge. There is every possibility of inauspiciousness even in the topmost planet of this material world, known as Brahma-loka.

Learned persons know that this material world is temporary. All the endeavors of human beings within the fourteen worlds are being baffled at every moment. The conditioned souls are always put into illusion. By considering the phrase, *tejo-vari-mrdam yatha vinimayo*—by the Supreme Lord even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water—one can understand that by seeing things in an apparent way, one often fails to see the actual truth.

Unless one is favored by the Supreme Lord, one cannot see things in their true perspective. We should always consider that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, is worshipable and that His abode, Vrindavana, is similarly worshipable. The abode of Vrindavana is the place of Sri Krishna's pastimes. Krishna is the personification of all transcendental mellows. If, out of good fortune, we realize this fact then we are sure to achieve the highest benefit. In the abode of Vrindavana, there is only one object of worship and that is Krishna. He is served by five kinds of servants who are all subordinate to Him.

[*Nimesa*: Question Twenty is answered by Arjuna in the next chapter.]

14.5. *Parisistam* (appendix): Selected excerpts from Srila Prabhupada's purports in this chapter.

2p:

Lord Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is ad infinitum, more powerful than the most powerful sun of our experience. Millions and billions of suns are created by Him and annihilated by Him within His one breathing period. In the material world the sun is considered to be the source of all productivity and material energy, and only due to the sun can we have the necessities of life. Therefore, during the personal presence of the Lord on the earth, all paraphernalia for our peace and prosperity, especially religion and knowledge, were in full display because of the Lord's presence, just as there is a full flood of light in the presence of the glowing sun. Maharaja Yudhisthira observed some discrepancies in his kingdom, and therefore he became very anxious about Arjuna, who was long absent, and there was also no news about Dvaraka's well-being. He

suspected the disappearance of Lord Krsna, otherwise there would have been no possibility of fearful omens.

4p:

In the conditioned state the living being is not satisfied even if he actually becomes the lord of all that he surveys, which he never becomes, and therefore he becomes the victim of all kinds of cheating, even with his nearest and most intimate relations. In such an unsatisfactory state of affairs, there is no harmony, even between father and sons or between husband and wife. But all these contending difficulties can be mitigated by one process, and that is the devotional service of the Lord. The world of hypocrisy can be checked only by counteraction through devotional service to the Lord and nothing else.

9p:

Material prosperity consists of a good wife, good home, sufficient land, good children, aristocratic family relations, victory over competitors and, by pious work, attainment of accommodations in the higher celestial planets for better facilities of material amenities. These facilities are earned not only by one's hard manual labor or by unfair means, but by the mercy of the Supreme Lord. Prosperity earned by one's personal endeavor also depends on the mercy of the Lord. Personal labor must be there in addition to the Lord's benediction, but without the Lord's benediction no one is successful simply by personal labor. The modernized man of Kali-yuga believes in personal endeavor and denies the benediction of the Supreme Lord. Even a great *sannyasi* of India delivered speeches in Chicago protesting the benedictions of the Supreme Lord. But as far as Vedic *sastras* are concerned, as we find in the pages of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the ultimate sanction for all success rests in the hands of the Supreme Lord. Maharaja Yudhisthira admits this truth in his personal success, and it behooves one to follow in the footsteps of a great king and devotee of the Lord to make life a full success. If one could achieve success without the sanction of the Lord then no medical practitioner would fail to cure a patient. Despite the most advanced treatment of a suffering patient by the most up-to-date medical practitioner, there is death, and even in the most hopeless case, without medical treatment, a patient is cured astonishingly. Therefore the conclusion is that God's sanction is the immediate cause for all happenings, good or bad. Any successful man should feel grateful to the Lord for all he has achieved.

28-29p:

Sri Rama, or Balarama, is the protector of the devotees of the Lord. Baladeva acts as the spiritual master of all devotees, and by His causeless mercy the fallen souls are delivered. Sri Baladeva appeared as Sri Nityananda Prabhu during the advent of Lord Caitanya, and the great Lord Nityananda Prabhu exhibited His causeless mercy by delivering a pair of extremely fallen souls, namely Jagai and Madhai. Therefore it is particularly mentioned herein that Balarama is the protector of the devotees of the Lord. By His divine grace only one can approach the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, and thus Sri Balarama is the mercy incarnation of the Lord, manifested as the spiritual master, the savior of the pure devotees.

33p:

The *jiva-tattvas* are infinitesimal potential particles of the Lord, and therefore they require the protection of the Lord at all times. And to the eternal servitors of the Lord, the Lord is pleased to give all protection at all times. The liberated souls never, therefore, think themselves as free as the Lord or as powerful as the Lord, but they always seek the protection of the Lord in all circumstances, both in the material world and in the spiritual world. This dependence of the liberated soul is constitutional, for the liberated souls are like sparks of a fire that are able to exhibit the glow of fire along with the fire and not independently. Independently the glow of the sparks is extinguished, although the quality of fire or the glowing is there. Thus those who give up the protection of the Lord and become so-called lords themselves, out of spiritual ignorance, come back again to this material world, even after prolonged *tapasya* of the severest type. That is the verdict of all Vedic literature.

34p:

The Lord is the protector of cows and the brahminical culture. A society devoid of cow protection and brahminical culture is not under the direct protection of the Lord, just as the prisoners in the jails are not under the protection of the king but under the protection of a severe agent of the king. Without cow protection and cultivation of the brahminical qualities in human society, at least for a section of the members of society, no human civilization can prosper at any length. By brahminical culture, the development of the dormant qualities of goodness, namely truthfulness, equanimity, sense control, forbearance, simplicity, general knowledge, transcendental knowledge, and firm faith in the Vedic wisdom, one can become a *brahmana* and thus see the Lord as He is. And after surpassing the brahminical perfection, one has to become a devotee of the Lord so that His loving affection in the form of proprietor, master, friend, son and lover can be transcendently achieved. The stage of a devotee, which attracts the transcendental affection of the Lord, does not develop unless

one has developed the qualities of a *brahmana* as above mentioned. The Lord is inclined to a *brahmana* of quality and not of false prestige. Those who are less than a *brahmana* by qualification cannot establish any relation with the Lord, just as fire cannot be kindled from the raw earth unless there is wood, although there is a relation between wood and the earth. Since the Lord is all-perfect in Himself, there could not be any question of His welfare, and Maharaja Yudhisthira refrained from asking this question. He simply inquired about His residential place, Dvaraka Puri, where pious men assemble. The Lord stays only where pious men assemble and takes pleasure in their glorifying the Supreme Truth. Mahārāja Yudhisthira was anxious to know about the pious men and their pious acts in the city of Dvaraka.

41p:

The *brahmanas* who are always engaged in researching knowledge for the society's welfare work, both materially and spiritually, deserve the protection of the king in all respects. Similarly, the children of the state, the cow, the diseased person, the woman and the old man specifically require the protection of the state or a *ksatriya* king. If such living beings do not get protection by the *ksatriya*, or the royal order, or by the state, it is certainly shameful for the *ksatriya* or the state.

15.0. Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Fifteen. (No questions, Q20 is answered.)

15.1 Chapter Fifteen, The Pandavas Retire Timely, *pratijna* (“solemn statement of purpose”—ref. *C.c. Adi. 7.106p*):

Suta Gosvami reveals the purpose of Chapter Fifteen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Canto One, entitled *The Pandavas Retire Timely*, in verses 32 through 37. The Pandavas, having no separate mission on the earth apart from that of the Lord, decided to go back home, Back to Godhead, when they learned of the departure from the material world of Lord Krsna and the Yadu dynasty. Lord Krsna’s mission was to pick out the thorn of demonic kingly dynasties lording over the earth with the thorn of His own eternal associates (the Yadavas and the Pandavas). Had He permitted the Yadavas to flourish on the earth after that mission was completed, their descendents might have become yet another burden upon the earth. Thus like a magician the Lord disappeared from this world, taking with Him His entire dynasty.

The instant Krsna departed, the personality of Kali, who was already present, was able to fully manifest his influence throughout the world. Noting the signs of the change of *yugas*, Maharaja Yudhisthira understood it was time for he and his family to follow the Lord back to the spiritual world.

15.2. *Adhyaya prakasika* (brief summary) of Chapter Fifteen.

Arjuna, grief-stricken and overwhelmed, his mind fixed on the Lord, reveals to Maharaja Yudhisthira that Sri Krsna, his dear friend, is now lost to him. (1-6)

He recalls incident after incident how Krsna empowered and protected him and the other Pandavas. (7-17)

Arjuna then speaks about the intimacy of his relationship with Krsna, and how, in the absence of His Lord, he now has lost his powers and was defeated by some insignificant cowherdmen. (18-21)

Arjuna relates to Yudhisthira the destruction of the Yadu dynasty. (22-26)

By remembering Krsna's instructions to him, Arjuna becomes situated in transcendence, beyond the modes of material nature. (27-31)

After hearing from Arjuna, Yudhisthira and Kunti decide to go back to Godhead. Suta then philosophically explains the disappearance of the Yadus and the Supreme Lord. (32-36)

Understanding that Kali has entered, Maharaja Yudhisthira enthrones Maharaja Pariksit as emperor, frees himself from the material conception of life, and leaves home to devote himself completely to contemplation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (37-44)

After describing how the Pandavas followed Yudhisthira and after describing the death Vidura, the chapter ends with a benediction. (45-51)

15.3. *Slokanusaranam* of Chapter Fifteen.

Srila Suta Gosvami tells the sages that being extremely grief-stricken because of separation from Lord Krishna, Arjuna's mouth and heart had

dried up, and because his voice had become choked up as well, he could not properly reply to Yudhisthira's inquiries at first. While checking his tears and breathing very heavily, Arjuna remembered Krishna's chariot driving and other friendly activities, and thus his affection for the Lord increased at every moment. At last Arjuna answered his brother: "O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who treated me just like an intimate friend, has left me, and thus my prowess, which was astonishing even to the demigods, is no longer with me. I have lost Him, whose momentary absence would render all of the universes void, just like lifeless bodies. (1-6)

"It was only because He had mercifully empowered me," Arjuna continued, "that I was able to vanquish all of the princes at Draupadi's *svayamvara*; and conquer Indra and his host of wrathful demigods, so that Agni could devour the Khandava forest. And because of Maya Danava's gratitude at being saved from Khandava fire, we Pandavas obtained by the Lord's grace our wonderful assembly house where all the princes assembled to pay tribute to you at the *Rajasuya-yajna*. (7-8) [*Nimesa: In his purport to verse 8, Srila Prabhupada notes.*

The club of Bhimasena was also a gift of Maya Danava.]

"It was Krsna alone that enabled Bhima to kill Jarasandha. [*Nimesa: see 9p for an elaboration on the indirect assistance Krsna gave to Bhimasena in his duel with Jarasandha, which lasted 28 days because these two powerful opponents were so evenly matched.*] When your queen piteously feel at the lotus feet of Lord Krsna after her hair was rudely loosened before the public by the abusive Kauravas, it was He who then decided that the hairs on the heads of the queens of Kuru would be loosened in grief over the loss of their husbands in the Kuruksetra war. Sri Krsna saved us from the wrath of Durvasa Muni. [*Nimesa: In 11p, the wonderful story of Durvasa Muni's visit to the Pandavas with his ten thousand disciples is recounted in detail by His Divine Grace.*] Only by Lord Krsna's influence could I astonish Lord Shiva with my fighting ability and thereafter reach the heavenly planets. There Indra and the demigods took shelter of my arms in the campaign against the demon Nivatakavaca. On the battlefield of Kuruksetra, Lord Krsna withdrew the Kauravas' strategic intelligence and their enthusiasm for battle. And so their expert arrangements for victory came to nought. (9-15) [*Nimesa: Srila Prabhupada comments in 15p:*

The Absolute Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krsna, expands Himself by His plenary Paramatma portion in everyone's heart, and thus He directs everyone in the matter of recollection, forgetfulness, knowledge, the absence of intelligence and all psychological activities (Bg. 15.15). As the Supreme Lord, He can increase or decrease the duration of life of a living being. Thus the Lord conducted the Battle of Kuruksetra according to His own plan. He wanted that battle to establish Yudhisthira as the Emperor of this planet, and to facilitate this transcendental business He killed all who were on the opposite party by His omnipotent will. The other party was equipped with all military strength supported by big generals like Bhishma, Drona and Salya and it would have been physically impossible for Arjuna to win the battle had the Lord not helped him by every kind of tactic. Such tactics are generally followed by every statesman, even in modern warfare, but they are all done materially by powerful espionages, military tactics and diplomatic maneuvers. But because Arjuna was the Lord's affectionate devotee, the Lord did all this Himself without personal anxiety by Arjuna. That is the way of the devotional service to the Lord.]

“Great warriors like Bhishma, Drona, Kama, Bhurishrava, Susharma, Shalya, Jayadratha, and Bahlika released their invincible weapons at me during the battle at Kurukshetra, but by Krishna's grace, they could not harm me. (16-17) [*Nimesa: In 16p Srila Prabhupada details the deeds and fates of four figures of prominence in Mahabharata, namely Karna, Napta or Bhurishrava, Trigarta or Susharma, and Jayadratha.*]

"O King, Lord Krishna used to decorate His pleasant joking and frank talks with me with beautiful smiles that, as I now remember them, rend my heart. I am stunned to recall His addressing me as “O son of Prtha”, “O friend” and “O son of the Kuru dynasty.” We used to eat and sleep together, and we would simply pass our leisure time enjoying life together. Sometimes, as we would brag about our respective prowess, if Krishna would exaggerate, I would reproach Him by sarcastically saying, 'My friend, You are speaking very truthfully.' Due to the intimacy of our relationship, the Lord would always excuse these utterances that minimized His value, just as a true friend forgives his friend. As I recollect these intimacies I find myself overwhelmed by grief. Due to separation from Sri Krishna my heart feels void. In His absence my *ksatriya* powers, once unmatched in this world, are slackened. I was even defeated by a band of cowherd dacoits while escorting His queens from Dvaraka to Hastinapura. [*Nimesa: The real reason for Arjuna's defeat is revealed in 20p. In the Vishnu Purana and the Brahma Purana it is stated that once, the fair damsels of heaven pleased Ashtavakra Muni by their service. The sage blessed the women that the*

Supreme Lord would become their husband. Ashtavakra's body, being curved in eight place, obliged him to walk in a very peculiar manner. When these same women who had been blessed by him saw his manner of movement, they could not check their foolish laughter. The angered Muni cursed them to be kidnapped by rogues even while they would be wives of the Supreme Lord. The remorseful girls managed to pacify Ashtavakra, however; so he blessed them by saying that they would once again regain their husband after being kidnapped. So as to keep Ashtavakra's words intact, Lord Krishna personally became the dacoits and kidnapped His own wives. Otherwise, if real rogues had touched Krishna's wives, the ladies would have immediately vanished from the scene.] I am the same Arjuna, and I was using the same chariot, drawn by the same horses, and I wielded the same Gandiva bow and arrows. However, in the absence of Lord Krishna, all of these have become null and void. (18-21)

"O King, as for the male residents of Dvaraka, I must inform you that they were cursed by the *brahmanas*, and as a result, they became mad with intoxication by drinking rice wine. A fight broke out amongst themselves with deadly results. Now only four or five of the Yadus remain alive. I know that this is all due to the will of the Supreme Lord. Just as bigger aquatics swallow the smaller ones, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to lighten the burden of the earth, engaged the stronger Yadus in killing the weaker ones. My dear brother, now my only wish is to take shelter of those instructions that Lord Krishna personally imparted to me, for I know that they are the only means to get relief from the flaming emotions that consume my troubled heart." (22-27) [*Nimesa: In 27p Srila Prabhupada makes clear that by "those instructions", Arjuna means Bhagavad-gita, spoken by Lord Krsna at the start of the Kuruksetra War. The following section of 27p is most illuminating for students of the two greatest works of Bhagavat literature. His Divine Grace expertly summarizes the Gita and leaves no doubt that it teaches in concise form the same knowledge as Srimad-Bhagavatam.*

In the *Bhagavad-gita*, five important factors of knowledge have been delineated pertaining to (1) the Supreme Lord, (2) the living being, (3) nature, (4) time and space and (5) the process of activity. Out of these, the Supreme Lord and the living being are qualitatively one. The difference between the two has been analyzed as the difference between the whole and the part and parcel. Nature is inert matter displaying the interaction of three different modes, and eternal time and unlimited space are considered to be beyond the existence of the material nature. Activities

of the living being are different varieties of aptitudes which can entrap or liberate the living being within and without material nature. All these subject matters are concisely discussed in the *Bhagavad-gita*, and later the subject matters are elaborated in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* for further enlightenment. Out of the five subjects, the Supreme Lord, the living entity, nature, and time and space are eternal, but the living entity, nature and time are under the direction of the Supreme Lord, who is absolute and completely independent of any other control. The Supreme Lord is the supreme controller. The material activity of the living being is beginningless, but it can be rectified by transferral into the spiritual quality. Thus it can cease its material qualitative reactions. Both the Lord and the living entity are cognizant, and both have the sense of identification, of being conscious as a living force. But the living being under the condition of material nature, called *mahat-tattva*, misidentifies himself as being different from the Lord. The whole scheme of Vedic wisdom is targeted to the aim of eradicating such a misconception and thus liberating the living being from the illusion of material identification. When such an illusion is eradicated by knowledge and renunciation, the living beings are responsible actors and enjoyers also. The sense of enjoyment in the Lord is real, but such a sense in the living being is a sort of wishful desire only. This difference in consciousness is the distinction of the two identities, namely the Lord and the living being. Otherwise there is no difference between the Lord and the living being. The living being is therefore eternally one and different simultaneously. The whole instruction of the *Bhagavad-gita* stands on this principle.

In the *Bhagavad-gitā* the Lord and the living beings are both described as *sanatana*, or eternal, and the Lord's abode, far beyond the material sky, is also described as *sanatana*. The living being is invited to live in the *sanatana* existence of the Lord, and the process which can help a living being to approach the Lord's abode, where the liberated activity of the soul is exhibited, is called *sanatana-dharma*. One cannot, however, reach the eternal abode of the Lord without being free from the misconception of material identification, and the *Bhagavad-gita* gives us the clue how to achieve this stage of perfection. The process of being liberated from the misconception of material identification is called, in different stages, fruitive activity, empiric philosophy and devotional service, up to transcendental realization. Such transcendental realization is made possible by dovetailing all the above items in relation with the Lord. Prescribed duties of the human being, as directed in the Vedas, can gradually purify the sinful mind of the conditioned soul and raise him to the stage of knowledge. The purified stage of acquiring knowledge becomes the basis of devotional service to the Lord. As long as one is engaged in researching the solution of the problems of life, his knowledge is called *jnana*, or purified knowledge, but on realizing the actual solution of life, one becomes situated in the devotional service of the Lord. The

Bhagavad-gita begins with the problems of life by discriminating the soul from the elements of matter and proves by all reason and argument that the soul is indestructible in all circumstances and that the outer covering of matter, the body and the mind, change for another term of material existence which is full of miseries. *The Bhagavad-gita* is therefore meant for terminating all different types of miseries, and Arjuna took shelter of this great knowledge, which had been imparted to him during the Kurukñetra battle.]

The rest of Chapter Fifteen is a commentary by Suta Gosvami on Arjuna's reply to Maharaja Yudhisthira and the effect that reply had upon the Pandavas. First he tells the sages that Arjuna, deeply absorbed in thinking of the instructions the Lord imparted at Kuruksetra, became pacified at heart as all material contamination vanished from his consciousness. Arjuna's spiritual assets as an associate of the Lord, which had apparently been covered by his doubts and lamentation, were fully restored. As his eternal identity asserted itself, Arjuna was released from the fetters of the modes of material nature. (28-31)

Suta then points out that as soon as he heard about Lord Krishna's disappearance and the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty, Maharaja Yudhisthira decided to go back home, back to Godhead. Arjuna's words had been overheard by Queen Kunti. They instilled in her the same determination. She instantly applied her full attention to the devotional service of the Lord. From the very day that Lord Krishna departed from the earth, the personality of Kali, who had already partially appeared, became fully manifest. At once innumerable inauspicious conditions were created. Being intelligent enough to perceive this, Yudhisthira first of all enthroned his grandson, Parikshit, as the emperor of the world. Then he posted Aniruddha's son, Vajra, at Mathura, to rule the kingdom of Shurasena. Now free from governmental responsibility, Maharaja Yudhisthira performed a Prajapatya sacrifice in preparation for accepting the renounced order of life. (32-39)

After ridding himself of his royal robes and ornaments, Yudhisthira donned torn cloth. He gave up eating all solid food. He let his hair hang down loose and voluntarily became dumb. Thus assuming the appearance of a madman, Yudhisthira showed no interest in anything, even his brothers. He acted as if he heard nothing around him, just like a deaf man. Completely giving up the bodily conception of life, Yudhisthira departed at once for the North, to absorb himself fully in thought of

the Supreme Lord. (40-44) [**Nimesa**: In 42p Srila Prabhupada describes the meditational technique that Maharaja Yudhisthira employed:

All that is manifested in the material world is the product of the *mahat-tattva-avyakta*, and things that are visible in our material vision are nothing but combinations and permutations of such variegated material products. But the living entity is different from such material products. It is due to the living entity's forgetfulness of his eternal nature as eternal servitor of the Lord, and his false conception of being a so-called lord of the material nature, that he is obliged to enter into the existence of false sense enjoyment. Thus a concomitant generation of material energies is the principal cause of the mind's being materially affected. Thus the gross body of five elements is produced. Maharaja Yudhisthira reversed the action and merged the five elements of the body in the three modes of material nature. The qualitative distinction of the body as being good, bad or mediocre is extinguished, and again the qualitative manifestations become merged in the material energy, which is produced from a false sense of the pure living being. When one is thus inclined to become an associate of the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, in one of the innumerable planets of the spiritual sky, especially in Goloka Vrndavana, one has to think always that he is different from the material energy; he has nothing to do with it, and he has to realize himself as pure spirit, Brahman, qualitatively equal with the Supreme Brahman (Paramesvara). Maharaja Yudhisthira, after distributing his kingdom to Pariksit and Vajra, did not think himself Emperor of the world or head of the Kuru dynasty. This sense of freedom from material relations, as well as freedom from the material encagement of the gross and subtle encirclement, makes one free to act as the servitor of the Lord, even though one is in the material world. This stage is called the *jivan-mukta* stage, or the liberated stage, even in the material world. That is the process of ending material existence. One must not only think that he is Brahman, but must act like Brahman. One who only thinks himself Brahman is an impersonalist. And one who acts like Brahman is the pure devotee.

Like their elder brother, the other Pandavas also took note of the symptoms of Kali. In every way they followed Yudhisthira's example. As the Pandavas trod the path of renunciation, they meditated upon the lotus feet of Lord Krishna as the supreme goal of life. In this way, rapt in deep personal trance, each and every one of the Pandavas in his self-same body entered Lord Krishna's supreme abode, Goloka Vrindavana. (45-48)

Suta Gosvami then reveals that while traveling on pilgrimage, Vidura left his body at Prabhasa so that he could be reinstated in his original post as the

lord of Pitriloka. Seeing her five husbands depart home, Draupadi absorbed her mind fully in Lord Krishna, as did Arjuna's wife Subhadra, and thus these glorious ladies attained the same result as their exalted husbands.(49-50)

Suta Gosvami concludes this chapter by pronouncing this benediction: The subject of the departure of the sons of Pandu for the ultimate goal of life, back to Godhead, is fully auspicious and is perfectly pure. Therefore anyone who hears this narration with devotional faith certainly gains the devotional service of the Lord, the highest perfection of life. (51)

15.4. *Vrtti*: The essence of Arjuna's answer to Question Twenty and Suta Gosvami's comment on his answer, in 7 parts as derived from the Bhaktivedanta Purports indicated.

1. Arjuna is a dear friend of Sri Krsna. Krsna wonderfully reciprocates with Arjuna in power and glory which is caused by Arjuna's dependence on Krsna. (1p-6p)
2. Arjuna gives examples of the loving reciprocations between Arjuna and Krsna in fraternal rasa. (7p-17p)
3. Such dealings of pure devotees with Krsna are fully satisfying. According to His plan, the Lord arranges for the give-and-take of such dealings with His associates in the course of His pastimes. (18p-21p, 22p-26p)
4. Maya is the condition of illusory separation from Krsna. It is completely different from the loving ecstatic separation that Arjuna felt in Chapter 15. One become free of Maya through association of devotees and by remembering the Lord's instructions, by chanting, reading the scriptures, etc. Because Krsna is eternally present, one can even become liberated from illusion simply by understanding Krsna's birth and activities. (27p-31p)
5. Krsna is always here, and doesn't expire when He "leaves" this world. (32p-35p)
6. At least at the end of one's life, one should detach himself from all material dependencies and designations and leave home to fix his mind in incessantly thinking of Krsna. (36p-44p)

7. But one must begin training and live purely in one's life to attain success at the time of death by fixing one's mind in Kṛṣṇa and going back to Godhead. If one can master this art and attain the same result of going back to Godhead while still within this body. (45p-51p)

15.5. *Parisistam* (appendix).

15.5.1. *Vinodakam* (points of interest especially intended for full-time enrolled students readying themselves for the *Bhakti-vaibhava* examination on the first six Cantos of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*):

15.5.1.1. At exam time, students are responsible for knowing the *Pratijna* (“solemn statement of purpose”—see 15.1) of this and every chapter. The *Pratijna* is derived from Srila Prabhupada’s title for a chapter; in this case it is “The Pandavas Retire Timely”. Verses 32-37, in which Suta Gosvami explains why the Pandavas, in view of the time factor, prepared to leave this world. offer a purport to that title. Suta’s explanation can be broken down into these three components:

A. The Pandavas had no separate mission on the earth apart from that of the Lord. When they learned of the departure from the material world of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Yadu dynasty, they decided to go back home, Back to Godhead. (32p-33p)

B. Lord Kṛṣṇa’s mission was to pick out the thorn of demonic kingly dynasties lording over the earth with the thorn of His own eternal associates (the Yadavas and the Pandavas). Had He permitted the Yadavas to flourish on the earth after that mission was completed, their descendents might have become yet another burden upon the earth. Thus like a magician the Lord disappeared from this world, taking with Him His entire dynasty. (34p-35p)

C. The instant Kṛṣṇa departed, the personality of Kali, who was already present, was able to fully manifest his influence throughout the world. Noting the signs of the change of *yugas*, Maharaja Yudhisthira understood it was time for he and his family to follow the Lord back to the spiritual world. (36p-37p)

15.5.1.2. Students should know the essential question that Arjuna addresses in this chapter—a question that was asked by Yudhisthira in the previous chapter—and “the essence of the essence” of Arjuna’s reply.

A. The essence of King Yudhisthira’s question—the “essence” being the only part of the question that Arjuna bothers to answer—was presented in the study guide for Chapter Fourteen as the third part of a series of inquiries the king put before his brother (see section **14.3** of the study guide of Chapter Fourteen, **Question Twenty Part Three**). In verse 44 of Chapter Fourteen the essential question is expressed by King Yudhisthira thus:

Or is it that you are feeling empty for all time because you might have lost your most intimate friend, Lord Krsna? O my brother Arjuna, I can think of no other reason for your becoming so dejected.

B. Arjuna’s reply, and Suta Gosvami’s comment upon it, is covered by this study guide for Chapter Fifteen in sections **15.4.1-7**. But this section spans the entire 51 verses of the chapter! If we subtract Suta’s commentary (verses 28-51) and his introductory depiction of Arjuna’s dejection (1-4), no less than 23 verses remain that Arjuna spoke personally to his brother, the emperor of the world. What then is the “essence of the essence” of Arjuna’s answer that the student needs to know for a *Bhaktivaibhava* examination? The most essential part of Arjuna’s response to the above question of Maharaja Yudhisthira is expressed in his concluding statement, verse 27:

Now I am attracted to those instructions imparted to me by the Personality of Godhead [Govinda] because they are impregnated with instructions for relieving the burning heart in all circumstances of time and space.

That this really is “the essence of the essence” of Arjuna’s answer—which, again, amounted to a total of 23 verses—is evident from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to the above-quoted text. Keep in mind Yudhisthira’s question, “Are you feeling empty for all time because you might have lost your most intimate friend, Lord Krsna?” as you read these words by His Divine Grace from the purport to 1.15.27:

The problem which arose in the heart of Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra was solved by the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita*. Again, after

the departure of the Lord from the vision of earthly people, when Arjuna was face to face with being vanquished in his acquired power and prominence, he wanted again to remember the great teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita* just to teach all concerned that the *Bhagavad-gita* can be consulted in all critical times, not only for solace from all kinds of mental agonies, but also for the way out of great entanglements which may embarrass one in some critical hour.

The merciful Lord left behind Him the great teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita* so that one can take the instructions of the Lord even when He is not visible to material eyesight. Material senses cannot have any estimation of the Supreme Lord, but by His inconceivable power the Lord can incarnate Himself to the sense perception of the conditioned souls in a suitable manner through the agency of matter, which is also another form of the Lord's manifested energy. Thus the *Bhagavad-gita*, or any authentic scriptural sound representation of the Lord, is also the incarnation of the Lord. There is no difference between the sound representation of the Lord and the Lord Himself. One can derive the same benefit from the *Bhagavad-gita* as Arjuna did in the personal presence of the Lord.

15.5.1.3. Regarding other important verses in this chapter—indicated by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in *Bhagavata-arkamarici-mala*, and/or by Srila Prabhupada's frequently quoting them—there are several listed in Chapter Eighteen of *B.a.m.m.* (in the final *prayojana* section, *siddha-prema-rasa/rasa-mahima*: “The Perfection of the Mellow of Pure Love/The Glories of Rasa):

01.15.07, 11-12, 16, 18, 21

Arjuna to Maharaja Yudhisthira

Only by His merciful strength was I able to vanquish all the lusty princes assembled at the palace of King Drupada for the selection of the bridegroom. With my bow and arrow I could pierce the fish target and thereby gain the hand of Draupadi. (7)

During our exile, Durvasa Muni, who eats with his ten thousand disciples, intrigued with our enemies to put us in dangerous trouble. At that time He [Lord Kṛṣṇa], simply by accepting the remnants of food, saved us. By His accepting food thus, the assembly of munis, while bathing in the river, felt sumptuously fed. And all the three worlds were also satisfied. (11)

It was by His influence only that in a fight I was able to astonish the personality of god Lord Siva and his wife, the daughter of Mount Himalaya. Thus he [Lord Siva] became pleased with me and awarded me his own weapon. Other demigods also delivered their respective weapons to me and in addition I was able to reach the heavenly planets in this present body and was allowed a half-elevated seat. (12)

Great generals like Bhisma, Drona, Karna, Bhurisrava, Susarma, Salya, Jayadratha, and Bahlika all directed their invincible weapons against me. But by His [Lord Krsna's] grace they could not even touch a hair on my head. Similarly, Prahlada Maharaja, the supreme devotee of Lord Nrsimhadeva, was unaffected by the weapons the demons used against him. (16)

O King! His jokings and frank talks were pleasing and beautifully decorated with smiles. His addresses unto me as "O son of Prtha, O friend, O son of the Kuru dynasty", and all such heartiness are now remembered by me, and thus I am overwhelmed. (18)

I have the very same Gandiva bow, the same arrows, the same chariot drawn by the same horses, and I use them as the same Arjuna to whom all the kings offered their due respects. But in the absence of Lord Krsna, all of them, at a moment's notice, have become null and void. It is exactly like offering clarified butter on ashes, accumulating money with a magic wand or sowing seeds on barren land. (21)

Thus ends the *vinodakam*, or points of special interest for the student preparing for the *Bhaktivaibhava* degree. The *parisistam* (general appendix) continues.

15.5.2. Selected excerpts from Srila Prabhupada's purports in this chapter.

5p

In the *Bhagavad-gita* (10.41) the Lord says, "Anyone specifically powerful and opulent in wealth, strength, beauty, knowledge and all that is materially desirable is to be considered but a product of an insignificant portion of the complete whole of My energy." No one, therefore, can be independently powerful in any measure without being endowed by the Lord. When the Lord descends on the earth along with His eternal ever-liberated associates, He not only displays the divine energy possessed by Himself, but also empowers His associate devotees with the required energy to execute His mission of

incarnation. It is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (4.5) that the Lord and His eternal associates descend on the earth many times, but the Lord remembers all the different roles of incarnations, whereas the associates, by His supreme will, forget them. Similarly, the Lord takes away with Him all His associates when He disappears from the earth. The power and energy which were bestowed upon Arjuna were required for fulfillment of the mission of the Lord, but when His mission was fulfilled, the emergency powers were withdrawn from Arjuna because the astounding powers of Arjuna, which were astonishing even to the denizens of heaven, were no longer required, and they were not meant for going back home, back to Godhead. If endowment of powers and withdrawal of powers by the Lord are possible even for a great devotee like Arjuna, or even the demigods in heaven, then what to speak of the ordinary living beings who are but figs compared to such great souls. The lesson is, therefore, that no one should be puffed up for his powers borrowed from the Lord. The sane man should rather feel obliged to the Lord for such benefactions and must utilize such power for the service of the Lord. Such power can be withdrawn at any time by the Lord, so the best use of such power and opulence is to engage them in the service of the Lord.

6p

Factually for a living being there is no one dearer than the Lord. The Lord expands Himself by innumerable parts and parcels as *svamsa* and *vibhinnamsa*. Paramatma is the *svamsa* part of the Lord, whereas the *vibhinnamsa* parts are the living beings. As the living being is the important factor in the material body, for without the living being the material body has no value, similarly without Paramatma the living being has no status quo. Similarly, Brahman or Paramatma has no *locus standi* without the Supreme Lord Krsna. This is thoroughly explained in the *Bhagavad-gita*. They are all interlinked with one another, or interdependent factors; thus in the ultimate issue the Lord is the *summum bonum* and therefore the vital principle of everything.

8p

The demon Maya Danava was an inhabitant of the forest Khandava, and when the Khandava Forest was set on fire, he asked protection from Arjuna. Arjuna saved his life, and as a result of this the demon felt obliged. He reciprocated by building a wonderful assembly house for the Pändavas, which attracted the extraordinary attention of all state princes. They felt the supernatural power of the Pändavas, and thus without grudge all of them submitted and paid tributes to the Emperor. The demons possess wonderful and supernatural powers to create material wonders. But they are always disturbing elements of the society. The modern demons are the harmful material scientists who create some material wonders for disturbance in the society. For example, the creation of nuclear weapons has caused some panic in human society. Maya was also a materialist like that, and he knew the art of creating such wonderful things. And yet Lord Krsna wanted to kill him. When he was chased both by the fire and by the wheel of Lord Krsna, he took shelter of such a devotee as Arjuna, who saved him from the wrath of the fire of Lord Sri Krsna. Devotees are therefore more merciful than the Lord, and in devotional service the

mercy of a devotee is more valuable than the mercy of the Lord. Both the fire and the Lord ceased from chasing the demon as soon as both of them saw that the demon was given shelter by such a devotee as Arjuna. This demon, feeling obliged to Arjuna, wanted to do him some service to show his gratefulness, but Arjuna declined to accept anything from him in exchange. Lord Sri Krsna, however, being pleased with Maya for his taking shelter of a devotee, asked him to render service unto King Yudhisthira by building a wonderful assembly house. The process is that by the grace of the devotee the mercy of the Lord is obtained, and by the mercy of the Lord a chance to serve the Lord's devotee is obtained. The club of Bhimasena was also a gift of Maya Danava.

12p

By the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, all the demigods, including Lord Siva, were pleased with Arjuna. The idea is that one who is favored by Lord Siva or any other demigod may not necessarily be favored by the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna. Ravana was certainly a great devotee of Lord Siva, but he could not be saved from the wrath of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Ramacandra. And there are many instances like that in the histories of the Puranas. But here is an instance where we can see that Lord Siva became pleased even in the fight with Arjuna. The devotees of the Supreme Lord know how to respect the demigods, but the devotees of the demigods sometimes foolishly think that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is no greater than the demigods. By such a conception, one becomes an offender and ultimately meets with the same end as Ravana and others. The instances described by Arjuna during his friendly dealings with Lord Sri Krsna are instructive for all who may be convinced by the lessons that one can achieve all favors simply by pleasing the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, whereas the devotees or worshipers of the demigods may achieve only partial benefits, which are also perishable, just as the demigods themselves are.

Another significance of the present verse is that Arjuna, by the grace of Lord Sri Krsna, was able to reach the heavenly planet even with the selfsame body and was honored by the heavenly demigod Indradeva, being seated with him half-elevated. One can reach the heavenly planets by the pious acts recommended in the *sastras* in the category of fruitive activities. And as stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (9.21), when the reactions of such pious acts are spent, the enjoyer is again degraded to this earthly planet. The moon is also on the level with the heavenly planets, and only persons who have performed virtues only—performing sacrifices, giving charity and undergoing severe austerities—can be allowed to enter into the heavenly planets after the duration of life of the body. Arjuna was allowed to enter into the heavenly planets in the selfsame body simply by the grace of the Lord, otherwise it is not possible to do so. The present attempts to enter into the heavenly planets by the modern scientists will certainly prove futile because such scientists are not on the level of Arjuna. They are ordinary human beings, without any assets of sacrifice, charity or austerities. The material body is influenced by the three modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance. The present population is more or less influenced by the modes of passion and ignorance, and the symptoms for such influence are exhibited in their becoming very lusty and greedy. Such degraded fellows can hardly approach the higher planetary systems. Above the heavenly planets there are many other planets also, which only those who are influenced by goodness can reach. In heavenly

and other planets within the universe, the inhabitants are all highly intelligent, many more times than the human beings, and they are all pious in the higher and highest mode of goodness. They are all devotees of the Lord, and although their goodness is not unadulterated, still they are known as demigods possessing the maximum amount of good qualities possible within the material world.

17p

The Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, is the object of worship both by impersonalists and by the devotees of the Lord. The impersonalists worship His glowing effulgence, emanating from His transcendental body of eternal form, bliss and knowledge, and the devotees worship Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those who are below even the impersonalists consider Him to be one of the great historical personalities. The Lord, however, descends to attract all by His specific transcendental pastimes, and thus He plays the part of the most perfect master, friend, son and lover. His transcendental relation with Arjuna was in friendship, and the Lord therefore played the part perfectly, as He did with His parents, lovers and wives. While playing in such a perfect transcendental relation, the devotee forgets, by the internal potency of the Lord, that his friend or son is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although sometimes the devotee is bewildered by the acts of the Lord. After the departure of the Lord, Arjuna was conscious of his great friend, but there was no mistake on the part of Arjuna, nor any ill estimation of the Lord. Intelligent men are attracted by the transcendental acting of the Lord with a pure, unalloyed devotee like Arjuna.

21p

Material civilization without the blessing of the Lord is child's play only. As long as the parents allow the child to play, it is all right. As soon as the parents withdraw, the child has to stop. Human civilization and all activities thereof must be dovetailed with the supreme blessing of the Lord, and without this blessing all advancement of human civilization is like decoration on a dead body. It is said here that a dead civilization and its activities are something like clarified butter on ashes, the accumulation of money by a magic wand and the sowing of seeds in a barren land.

24p

According to the anthropologists, there is nature's law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. But they do not know that behind the law of nature is the supreme direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Bhagavad-gita* it is confirmed that the law of nature is executed under the direction of the Lord. Whenever, therefore, there is peace in the world, it must be known that it is due to the good will of the Lord. And whenever there is upheaval in the world, it is also due to the supreme will of the Lord. Not a blade of grass moves without the will of the Lord. Whenever, therefore, there is disobedience of the established rules enacted by the Lord, there is war between men and nations. The surest way to the path of peace, therefore, is dovetailing everything to

the established rule of the Lord. The established rule is that whatever we do, whatever we eat, whatever we sacrifice or whatever we give in charity must be done to the full satisfaction of the Lord. No one should do anything, eat anything, sacrifice anything or give anything in charity against the will of the Lord. Discretion is the better part of valor, and one must learn how to discriminate between actions which may be pleasing to the Lord and those which may not be pleasing to the Lord. An action is thus judged by the Lord's pleasure or displeasure. There is no room for personal whims; we must always be guided by the pleasure of the Lord. Such action is called *yogan karmasu kausalam* [Bg. 2.50], or actions performed which are linked with the Supreme Lord. That is the art of doing a thing perfectly.

25-26p

In the material world the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest are laws because in the material world there is disparity between conditioned souls due to everyone's desire to lord it over the material resources. This very mentality of lording it over the material nature is the root cause of conditioned life. And to give facility to such imitation lords, the illusory energy of the Lord has created a disparity between conditioned living beings by creating the stronger and the weaker in every species of life. The mentality of lording it over the material nature and the creation has naturally created a disparity and therefore the law of struggle for existence. In the spiritual world there is no such disparity, nor is there such a struggle for existence. In the spiritual world there is no struggle for existence because everyone there exists eternally. There is no disparity because everyone wants to render service to the Supreme Lord, and no one wants to imitate the Lord in becoming the beneficiary. The Lord, being creator of everything, including the living beings, factually is the proprietor and enjoyer of everything that be, but in the material world, by the spell of *maya*, or illusion, this eternal relation with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is forgotten, and so the living being is conditioned under the law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest.

28p

Since the Lord is absolute, deep meditation upon Him is as good as yogic trance. The Lord is nondifferent from His name, form, quality, pastimes, entourage and specific actions. Arjuna began to think of the Lord's instructions to him on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra. Only those instructions began to eliminate the tinges of material contamination in the mind of Arjuna. The Lord is like the sun; the sun's appearance means immediate dissipation of darkness, or ignorance, and the Lord's appearance within the mind of the devotee can at once drive away the miserable material effects. Lord Caitanya has therefore recommended constant chanting of the name of the Lord for protection from all contamination of the material world. The feeling of separation from the Lord is undoubtedly painful to the devotee, but because it is in connection with the Lord, it has a specific transcendental effect which pacifies the heart. Feelings of separation are also sources of transcendental bliss, and they are never comparable to contaminated material feelings of separation.

30p

The activities of the Lord are eternal, and they are manifestations of His *atma-maya*, or internal potency. All pastimes or activities of the Lord are spiritual in nature, but to the laymen they appear to be on the same level with material activities. It so appeared that Arjuna and the Lord were engaged in the Battle of Kuruksetra as the other party was also engaged, but factually the Lord was executing His mission of incarnation and association with His eternal friend Arjuna. Therefore such apparently material activities of Arjuna did not drive him away from his transcendental position, but on the contrary revived his consciousness of the songs of the Lord, as He sang them personally.

31p

Doubts of duality begin from the misconception of the material body, which is accepted as the self by less intelligent persons. The most foolish part of our ignorance is our identifying this material body with the self. Everything in relation with the body is ignorantly accepted as our own. Doubts due to misconceptions of "myself" and "mine"—in other words, "my body," "my relatives," "my property," "my wife," "my children," "my wealth," "my country," "my community," and hundreds and thousands of similar illusory contemplations—cause bewilderment for the conditioned soul. By assimilating the instructions of the *Bhagavad-gita*, one is sure to be released from such bewilderment because real knowledge is knowledge that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, Lord Krsna, is everything, including one's self. Everything is a manifestation of His potency as part and parcel. The potency and the potent are nondifferent, so the conception of duality is at once mitigated by attainment of perfect knowledge. ... By the grace of the Lord, a pure devotee is at once raised to the place of the Absolute, and there is no chance of the devotee's becoming materially entangled again in conditioned life. One is not able to feel the presence of the Lord in all circumstances until one is endowed with the required transcendental vision made possible by devotional service prescribed in the revealed scriptures. Arjuna had attained this stage long before on the Battlefield of Kurukñetra, and when he apparently felt the absence of the Lord, he at once took shelter of the instructions of the *Bhagavad-gita*, and thus again he was placed in his original position. This is the position of *visoka*, or the stage of being freed from all grief and anxieties.

[Nimesa: according to Bhag. 5.4.5p, the visoka stage is one of eight symptoms of a liberated soul.]

34p

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura suggests that the *rsis* like Saunaka and others who were hearing *Srimad-Bhagavatam* from Sūta Gosvami at Naimisaranya were not happy to hear about the Yadu's dying in the madness of intoxication. To give them relief from this mental agony, Sūta Gosvami assured them that the Lord caused the members of the Yadu dynasty to relinquish their bodies by which they had to take away the burden of the

world. The Lord and His eternal associates appeared on earth to help the administrative demigods in eradicating the burden of the world. He therefore called for some of the confidential demigods to appear in the Yadu family and serve Him in His great mission. After the mission was fulfilled, the demigods, by the will of the Lord, relinquished their corporeal bodies by fighting amongst themselves in the madness of intoxication. The demigods are accustomed to drinking the *soma-rasa* beverage, and therefore the drinking of wine and intoxication are not unknown to them. Sometimes they were put into trouble for indulging in intoxication. Once the sons of Kuvera fell in the wrath of Narada for being intoxicated, but afterwards they regained their original forms by the grace of the Lord Sri Krsna. We shall find this story in the Tenth Canto. For the Supreme Lord, both the *asuras* and the demigods are equal, but the demigods are obedient to the Lord, whereas the *asuras* are not. Therefore, the example of picking out a thorn by another thorn is quite befitting. One thorn, which causes pinpricks on the leg of the Lord, is certainly disturbing to the Lord, and the other thorn, which takes out the disturbing elements, certainly gives service to the Lord. So although every living being is a part and parcel of the Lord, still one who is a pinprick to the Lord is called an *asura*, and one who is a voluntary servitor of the Lord is called a *devata*, or demigod. In the material world the *devatas* and *asuras* are always contending, and the *devatas* are always saved from the hands of the *asuras* by the Lord. Both of them are under the control of the Lord. The world is full of two kinds of living beings, and the Lord's mission is always to protect the *devatas* and destroy the *asuras*, whenever there is such a need in the world, and to do good to both of them.

35p

In the *Bṛhad-vaiṣṇava Tantra* it is clearly mentioned that anyone who considers the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa to be made of material energy must be ostracized by all means. And if by chance the face of such an infidel is seen, one must clean himself by jumping in the river with his clothing.

38p

Why was the King of Hastinapura, at least till the time of Mahārāja Parikṣit, accepted as the Emperor of the world? The only reason is that the people of the world were happy because of the good administration of the emperor. The happiness of the citizens was due to the ample production of natural produce such as grains, fruits, milk, herbs, valuable stones, minerals and everything that the people needed. They were even free from all bodily miseries, anxieties of mind, and disturbances caused by natural phenomena and other living beings. Because everyone was happy in all respects, there was no resentment, although there were sometimes battles between the state kings for political reasons and supremacy. Everyone was trained to attain the highest goal of life, and therefore the people were also enlightened enough not to quarrel over trivialities. The influence of the age of Kali gradually infiltrated the good qualities of both the kings and the citizens, and therefore a tense situation developed between the ruler and the ruled, but still even in this age of disparity between the ruler and the ruled, there can be spiritual emolument and God consciousness.

39p

Everyone's life must be so arranged that the last stage of life, say at least the last fifteen to twenty years prior to death, can be absolutely devoted to the devotional service of the Lord to attain the highest perfection of life. It is really foolishness to engage oneself all the days of one's life in material enjoyment and fruitive activities, because as long as the mind remains absorbed in fruitive work for material enjoyment, there is no chance of getting out from conditioned life, or material bondage. No one should follow the suicidal policy of neglecting one's supreme task of attaining the highest perfection of life, namely going back home, back to Godhead.

41p

Actually the activities of the mind cannot be stopped, for they are the reflection of the eternal soul, but the quality of the activities can be changed from matter to the transcendental service of the Lord. The material color of the mind is changed when one washes it from contaminations of life-breathing and thereby frees it from the contamination of repeated births and deaths and situates it in pure spiritual life.

46p

According to Svami Sridhara, *dharmā*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksa*, or fruitive activities, philosophical speculations and salvation, as conceived by several persons, are not the ultimate goal of life. They are more or less practiced by persons who have no information of the ultimate goal of life. The ultimate goal of life is already indicated by the Lord Himself in the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.64), and the Pandavas were intelligent enough to follow it without hesitation.

50p

When flying an airplane, one cannot take care of other planes. Everyone has to take care of his own plane, and if there is any danger, no other plane can help another in that condition. Similarly, at the end of life, when one has to go back home, back to Godhead, everyone has to take care of himself without help rendered by another. The help is, however, offered on the ground before flying in space. Similarly, the spiritual master, the father, the mother, the relatives, the husband and others can all render help during one's lifetime, but while crossing the sea one has to take care of himself and utilize the instructions formerly received. Draupadi had five husbands, and no one asked Draupadi to come; Draupadi had to take care of herself without waiting for her great husbands. And because she was already trained, she at once took to concentration upon the lotus feet of Lord Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. The wives also got the same result as their husbands, in the same manner; that is to say, without changing their bodies they reached the destination of Godhead. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura suggests that

both Draupadi and Subhadra, although her name is not mentioned herein, got the same result. None of them had to quit the body.

16.0. Questions and answers in First Canto, Chapter Sixteen. (Q21-22.)

16.1. *Pratijna*: the solemn purpose of Chapter Sixteen, How Pariksit Received the Age of Kali, is expressed in verse 4 of this chapter:

Once, when Maharaja Pariksit was on his way to conquer the world, he saw the master of Kali-*yuga*, who was lower than a *sudra*, disguised as a king and hurting the legs of a cow and bull. The King at once caught hold of him to deal sufficient punishment.

16.2. Chapter Sixteen, *adhyaya-prakasika* (chapter at a glance).

Suta Goswami explains that once, as Maharaja Pariksit was reigning under the guidance of the brahmanas, he punished the master of Kali Yuga, who was causing pain to a cow and a bull. (1-4)

Saunaka Rsi inquires about the punishment of Kali and explains the glories of hearing about topics relating to Krsna. (5-9)

Suta relates that after Maharaja Pariksit perceives the influence of the age of Kali within his kingdom, he initiates a tour to defeat Kali. While touring, Maharaja Pariksit hears the glories of his great relatives, the Pandavas. (10-16)

Dharma, who is wandering in the form of a bull, questions the earth, in the form of a cow, about the cause of the earth's current, miserable condition. (17-24)

The earth replies that her misery is caused by her separation from Krsna's presence and by an increase of Kali's influence due to Krsna's absence. Maharaja Pariksit then arrives. (25-36)

16.3. *Slokanusaranam* (the verses of Chapter Sixteen summarized)

After the Pandavas retired from this material life, Maharaja Parikshit assumed the royal position of emperor of the world under the instruction of the *brahmanas*. The young Emperor took Iravati, the daughter of King

Uttara, who was the son of Virata, as his wife. [*Nimesa 1: 2p notes that although Iravati was Parikshit's cousin-sister, the marriage was allowed because she was not of the same gotra (family).*] Iravati gave birth to four sons headed by Janamejaya. [*Nimesa 2: an account of Janamejaya's life is given in 2p; there his brothers are identified as Srutasena, Ugrasena and Bhimasena II.*] Under the direction of his spiritual master, Kripacharya, Maharaja Parikshit performed three horse sacrifices on the banks of the Ganga, and at that time, even the common people were able to see the demigods that attended. (1-3)

While Maharaja Parikshit ruled from his capital, Hastinapura, the symptoms of Kali-*yuga* began infiltrating his kingdom. When he came to know that some of his subjects were taking up meat-eating, illicit sex, gambling and intoxication, which are the root-causes of all kinds of quarrel, the news was most unpalatable. As a *kshatriya* Parikshit felt enlivened at the prospect of taking these miscreants to task for polluting his kingdom, which included the entire planet. He mounted his chariot marked with the flag of a lion and drawn by black horses. Leaving Hastinapura surrounded by his army, Maharaja Parikshit boldly set out to conquer any and all regions of the world that defied Vedic *dharma*. Of course, his grandfather Maharaja Yudhisthira had already formally declared Maharaja Parikshit the emperor of the world. It was still necessary for him to practically establish his supremacy and exact taxes. (4-11)

Maharaja Parikshit subjugated all of the kings within the nine varshas of Jambudvipa, including Bhadrashva, Ketumala, Bharata, Uttarakuru, Kimpurusha and so on. Wherever he travelled, Maharaja Parikshit was welcomed with speeches that were full of the glories of his illustrious forefathers and Lord Krishna. He would amply reward the reciters. Indeed, by hearing of how Lord Krishna had obliged his grandfathers by becoming their chariot driver, messenger, friend, spiritual master and servant, considering Himself to be younger in years, Maharaja Parikshit became overwhelmed with feelings of devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord. (12-16)

Meanwhile, Dharma, the personality of religion, was wandering about in the form of a bull. He came upon Bhumi, the goddess of the earth, who was in the form of a cow. Noticing her eyes were filled with tears and her bodily luster was faded so that she appeared to be like a mother that had lost her child, Dharma inquired, "O good lady, what is the cause of your grief? Are you suffering from some disease? Are you thinking of some relative

who is away in a distant place? Are you lamenting for me because I have lost three of my legs? Are you in anxiety because henceforward the meat-eaters will exploit you? Are you aggrieved that the demigods no longer receive sacrificial offerings and thus other dependent living beings are suffering from drought and famine? Are you feeling compassion for the poor women and children that have been left forlorn by unscrupulous men? Or, are you unhappy to see how the goddess of learning is being mishandled by so-called *brahmanas* who are addicted to all kinds of sinful habits? Are you sorry to see how the genuine brahmanas are forced to take shelter of kings that no longer have respect for brahminical culture? (17-21)

“Such administrative heads are now under the influence of Kali. Consequently the state affairs are all in disorder. Are you unhappy because of this, or because the general populace no longer follows the regulative principles that govern eating, sleeping, and mating—thus they perform these acts unrestrictedly? Dear Mother Earth, the Supreme Lord Krishna incarnated just to relieve your burden. Now, being bereft of His presence, are you remembering His transcendental pastimes and thus feeling the pangs of separation? I think that the powerful influence of time must have forcibly taken away all of your good fortune, and for this reason you are now lamenting.” (22-24)

Speaking in the form of a cow, the earthly deity replied, "O Dharma, you were also maintained on your four legs by the mercy of Lord Krishna, the reservoir of all good qualities, so that happiness spread throughout the universe. Among those good qualities are (1) truthfulness, (2) cleanliness, (3) intolerance of another's unhappiness, (4) the power to control anger, (5) self-satisfaction, (6) straightforwardness, (7) steadiness of mind, (8) control of the sense organs, (9) responsibility, (10) equality, (11) tolerance, (12) equanimity, (13) faithfulness, (14) knowledge, (15) absence of sense enjoyment, (16) leadership, (17) chivalry, (18) influence, (19) the power to make everything possible, (20) the discharge of proper duty, (21) complete independence, (22) dexterity, (23) fullness of all beauty, (24) serenity, (25) kindheartedness, (26) ingenuity, (27) gentility, (28) magnanimity, (29) determination, (30) perfection in all knowledge, (31) proper execution, (32) possession of all objects of enjoyment, (33) joyfulness, (34) immovability, (35) fidelity, (36) fame, (37) worship, (38) pridelessness, (39) being (as the Personality of Godhead), (40) eternity, and many other transcendental attributes that are eternally present and never to be separated from Him. Lord Krishna has now concluded His performance of transcendental

pastimes upon the earth, and in His absence, the age of Kali has spread its influence everywhere. It is because of this that I am very aggrieved." (25-30)

[Nimesa 3: In 26-30p Srila Prabhupada writes:

According to Srila Jiva Gosvami, the third quality, intolerance of another's unhappiness, can be subdivided into (1) protection of the surrendered souls and (2) well wishes for the devotees. In the Bhagavad-gétā the Lord states that He wants every soul to surrender unto Him only, and He assures everyone that if one does so He will give protection from the reactions of all sins. Unsurrendered souls are not devotees of the Lord, and thus there is no particular protection for everyone in general. For the devotees He has all good wishes, and for those who are actually engaged in loving transcendental service of the Lord, He gives particular attention. He gives direction to such pure devotees to help them discharge their responsibilities on the path back to Godhead.

By equality (10), the Lord is equally kind to everyone, as the sun is equal in distributing its rays over everyone. Yet there are many who are unable to take advantage of the sun's rays. Similarly, the Lord says that surrendering unto Him is the guarantee for all protection from Him, but unfortunate persons are unable to accept this proposition, and therefore they suffer from all material miseries. So even though the Lord is equally well-wishing to everyone, the unfortunate living being, due to bad association only, is unable to accept His instructions in toto, and for this the Lord is never to be blamed. He is called the well-wisher for the devotees only. He appears to be partial to His devotees, but factually the matter rests on the living being to accept or reject equal treatment by the Lord.

The fourteenth quality, knowledge, can be further extended into five subheadings, namely (1) intelligence, (2) gratefulness, (3) power of understanding the circumstantial environments of place, object and time, (4) perfect knowledge of everything, and (5) knowledge of the self.

As far as the beauty of the Lord is concerned, He has some special features that distinguish Him from all other living beings, and over and above that He has some special attractive beautiful features by which He attracts the mind of even Radharani, the supermost beautiful creation of the Lord. He is known, therefore, as Madana-mohana, or one who attracts the mind of even Cupid. Srila Jiva Gosvami Prabhu has scrutinizingly analyzed other transcendental qualities of the Lord and affirms that Lord Sri Krsna is the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead (Parabrahman). He is omnipotent by His inconceivable energies, and therefore He is the Yogeshvara, or the supreme master of all mystic powers. Being the

Yogeshvara, His eternal form is spiritual, a combination of eternity, bliss and knowledge.

He is the control switch of the material energy, and to control the material energy in the innumerable universes, He is the root cause of innumerable incarnations in all the universes. There are more than five hundred thousand incarnations of Manu in only one universe, besides other incarnations in different universes. In the spiritual world, however, beyond the *mahat-tattva*, there is no question of incarnations, but there are plenary expansions of the Lord in different Vaikunthas. The planets in the spiritual sky are at least three times the number of those within the innumerable universes in the *mahat-tattva*. And all the Narayana forms of the Lord are but expansions of His Vasudeva feature, and thus He is Vasudeva, Narayana and Krsna simultaneously. He is *sri-krsna govinda hare murare, he nãtha narayana vãsudeva*, all in one. His qualities, therefore, cannot be counted by anyone, however great one may be.]

"I had become the most fortunate planet within the universe due to being decorated by the signs of the flag, thunderbolt, elephant-driving rod, and lotus flower that adorn the lotus feet of the Lord. But, just when I was feeling myself to be so fortunate, the Lord suddenly left me. Lord Krishna conquered the gravity of His wives like Satyabhama by means of His sweet smiles of love, pleasing glances and hearty appeals. When He traversed my surface, I became immersed in the dust from His lotus feet and thus my hair stood up with transcendental pleasure. Who could tolerate the pangs of separation from that Supreme Personality of Godhead?" (31-35)

While Prithivi, the earth, and Dharma, the personality of religion, were thus conversing, Maharaja Parikshit arrived at the banks of the River Sarasvati. (36)

16.4. Vrtii (commentary) 1: Question Twenty-one of Srimad-Bhagavatam is asked by Saunaka of Suta Gosvami.

Question Twenty-one: Why did Maharaja Parikshit simply punish (but not kill) the Personality of Kali, since he was the lowest of the *sudras*, having dressed as a king and having struck a cow on the leg? (5)

16.5. Suta answers Saunaka's question in the next chapter (see section 17.4).

16.6. Vrtti (commentary) 2: Question Twenty-two of Srimad-Bhagavatam is asked by the bull, Dharma, to his wife the cow.

Question Twenty-two: After making a chain of inquiries about the welfare of the cow that links together many anomalies of the Age of Kali; the bull requests, “Please inform me of the root cause of your tribulations by which you have been reduced to such a weak state. I think that the powerful influence of time, which conquers the most powerful, might have forcibly taken away all your fortune, which was adored even by the demigods.” (19-24)

16.7. The cow (Bhumi) answers Question Twenty-two in verses 25-35. A summary of her answer is cited from the purport to verse 25.

The principles of religion are laid down by the Lord Himself, and the executor of such laws is Dharmaraja, or Yamaraja. Such principles work fully in the age of Satya-yuga; in the Treta-yuga they are reduced by a fraction of one fourth; in the Dvapara-yuga they are reduced to one half, and in the Kali-yuga they are reduced to one fourth, gradually diminishing to the zero point, and then devastation takes place. Happiness in the world depends proportionately on the maintenance of the religious principles, individually or collectively. (25p)

16.8. Parisistam (appendix)

16.8.1. Vinodakam (items of interest for full-time students preparing for the Bhaktivaibhava examination)--A verse often quoted by Srila Prabhupada from this chapter:

TAMA-GUṆIS

SB 1.16.9

andasya manda-prajñasya

vayo mandāyusaś ca vai

nidrayā hriyate naktam

divā ca vyartha-karmabhiḥ

mandasya—of the lazy; *manda*—paltry; *prajñasya*—of intelligence; *vayaḥ*—age; *manda*—short; *āyusaḥ*—of duration of life; *ca*—and; *vai*—exactly; *nidrayā*—by sleeping; *hriyate*—passes away; *naktam*—night; *divā*—daytime; *ca*—also; *vyartha*—for nothing; *karmabhiḥ*—by activities.

Lazy human beings with paltry intelligence and a short duration of life pass the night sleeping and the day performing activities that are for naught.

Śaunaka Ṛṣi

16.8.2. In the fourth chapter (*bhagavat-svarupa-tattvam*, “the factual truth of Kṛṣṇa”) of *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*, a division of the book’s *sambandha* collection of *Bhagavatam* verses, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura includes the following texts from Chapter Sixteen:

01.16.26-30

Mother Earth to Dharma

In Him reside 1) truthfulness, 2) cleanliness, 3) intolerance of another's unhappiness, 4) the power to control anger, 5) self-satisfaction, 6) straightforwardness, 7) steadiness of mind, 8) control of the sense organs, 9) responsibility, 10) equality, 11) tolerance, 12) equanimity, 13) faithfulness; 14) knowledge, 15) absence of sense enjoyment, 16) leadership, 17) chivalry, 18) influence, 19) the power to make everything possible, 20) the discharge of proper duty, 21) complete independence, 22) dexterity, 23) fullness of all beauty, 24) serenity, 25) kindheartedness, 26) ingenuity, 27) gentility, 28) magnanimity, 29) determination, 30) perfection in all knowledge, 31) proper execution, 32) possession of all objects of enjoyment, 33) joyfulness, 34) immovability, 35) fidelity, 36) fame, 37) worship, 38) pridelessness, 39) being [as the Personality of Godhead], 40) eternity, and many other transcendental qualities which are eternally present and never to be separated from Him. That Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of all goodness and beauty, Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, has now closed His transcendental pastimes on the face of the earth. In His absence the age of Kali has spread its influence everywhere, so I am sorry to see this condition of existence.

16.8.3. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura places this text in the fifth chapter (*bhagavat-sakti-tattvam*, “the factual truth of Kṛṣṇa’s energies”) of *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*. The fifth chapter is a division of the book’s *sambandha* collection of *Bhagavatam* verses:

01.16.33

Mother Earth to Dharma

I was endowed with specific powers to supersede the fortune of all the three planetary systems by being decorated with the impressions of the flag, thunderbolt, elephant-driving rod and lotus flower, which are the signs of the lotus feet of the Lord. But at the end, when I felt I was so fortunate, the Lord left me.

16.9. Excerpts from Srila Prabhupada's Purports to this chapter:

10p: The jubilation of a perfect king.

The state administration of Maharaja Parikshit was so perfect that he was sitting in his capital peacefully. But he got the news that the symptoms of the age of Kali had already infiltrated into the jurisdiction of his state, and he did not like this news. What are the symptoms of the age of Kali? They are (1) illicit connection with women, (2) indulgence in meat-eating, (3) intoxication and (4) taking pleasure in gambling. The age of Kali literally means the age of quarrel, and the abovementioned four symptoms in human society are the root causes for all kinds of quarrel. Maharaja Parikshit heard that some of the people of the state had already taken to those symptoms, and he wanted to take immediate steps against such causes of unrest. This means that at least up to the regime of Maharaja Parikshit, such symptoms of public life were practically unknown, and as soon as they were slightly detected, he wanted to root them out. The news was not palatable for him, but in a way it was, because Maharaja Parikshit got a chance to fight. There was no need to fight with small states because everyone was peacefully under his subordination, but the Kali-yuga miscreants gave his fighting spirit a chance for exhibition. A perfect *ksatriya* king is always jubilant as soon as he gets a chance to fight, just as a sportsman is eager when there is a chance for a sporting match. It is no argument that in the age of Kali such symptoms are predestined. If so, then why was there preparation for fighting out such symptoms? Such arguments are offered by lazy and unfortunate men. In the rainy season, rain is predestined, and yet people take precautions to protect themselves. Similarly, in the age of Kali the symptoms as above mentioned are sure to infiltrate into social life, but it is the duty of the state to save the citizens from the association of the agents of the age of Kali. Maharaja Parikshit wanted to punish the miscreants indulging in the symptoms of Kali, and thus save the innocent citizens who were pure in habit by culture of religion. It is the duty of the king to give such protection, and Maharaja Parikshit was perfectly right when he prepared himself to fight.

20p: Sacrifice to demigods is required of the prisoners confined to this material world.

The living beings are created by the creator Brahma, and just to maintain the created living being progressively towards the path back to Godhead, the system of performing sacrifice is also created by him. The system is that living beings live on the produce of grains and vegetables, and by eating such foodstuff they get vital power of the body in the shape of blood and semen, and from blood and semen one living being is able to create other living beings. But the production of grains, grass, etc. becomes possible by

rain, and this rain is made to shower properly by performance of recommended sacrifices.

Such sacrifices are directed by the rites of the Vedas, namely *Sama*, *Yajur*, *Rg* and *Atharva*. In the *Manu-smṛiti* it is recommended that by offerings of sacrifice on the altar of the fire, the sun-god is pleased. When the sun-god is pleased, he properly collects water from the sea, and thus sufficient clouds collect on the horizon and rains fall. After sufficient rains fall, there is sufficient production of grains for men and all animals, and thus there is energy in the living being for progressive activity. The *mlecchas*, however, make plans to install slaughterhouses for killing bulls and cows along with other animals, thinking that they will prosper by increasing the number of factories and live on animal food without caring for performance of sacrifices and production of grains. But they must know that even for the animals they must produce grass and vegetables, otherwise the animals cannot live. And to produce grass for the animals, they require sufficient rains. Therefore they have to depend ultimately on the mercy of the demigods like the sun-god, Indra and Candṛa, and such demigods must be satisfied by performances of sacrifice.

This material world is a sort of prison house, as we have several times mentioned. The demigods are the servants of the Lord who see to the proper upkeep of the prison house. These demigods want to see that the rebel living beings, who want to survive faithlessly, are gradually turned towards the supreme power of the Lord. Therefore, the system of offering sacrifice is recommended in the scriptures.

The materialistic men want to work hard and enjoy fruitive results for sense enjoyment. Thus they are committing many types of sins at every step of life. Those, however, who are consciously engaged in the devotional service of the Lord are transcendental to all varieties of sin and virtue. Their activities are free from the contamination of the three modes of material nature. For the devotees there is no need for performance of prescribed sacrifices because the very life of the devotee is a symbol of sacrifice. But persons who are engaged in fruitive activities for sense enjoyment must perform the prescribed sacrifices because that is the only means to get free from the reaction of all sins committed by fruitive workers. Sacrifice is the means for counteracting such accumulated sins. The demigods are pleased when such sacrifices are performed, just as prison officers are satisfied when the prisoners are turned into obedient subjects. Lord Caitanya, however, has recommended only one *yajna*, or sacrifice, called the *sankīrtana-yajna*, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, in which everyone can take part. Thus both devotees and fruitive workers can derive equal benefit from the performances of *sankīrtana-yajna*.

21p: In Kali-yuga, brahmanas are for sale.

In the age of Kali, the women and the children, along with *brahmanas* and cows, will be grossly neglected and left unprotected. In this age illicit connection with women will render many women and children uncared for. Circumstantially, the women will try to become independent of the protection of men, and marriage will be performed as a matter of formal agreement between man and woman. In most cases, the children will not be taken care of properly. The *brahmanas* are traditionally intelligent men, and thus they will be able to pick up modern education to the topmost rank, but as far as moral and religious principles are concerned, they shall be the most fallen. Education and bad character go ill together, but such things will run parallel. The administrative heads as a

class will condemn the tenets of Vedic wisdom and will prefer to conduct a so-called secular state, and the so-called educated *brahmanas* will be purchased by such unscrupulous administrators. Even a philosopher and writer of many books on religious principles may also accept an exalted post in a government which denies all the moral codes of the *sastras*. The *brahmanas* are specifically restricted from accepting such service. But in this age they will not only accept service, but they will do so even if it is of the meanest quality. These are some of the symptoms of the Kali age which are harmful to the general welfare of human society.

22p: So many Ajamilas today in the student community.

We know from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* that Ajamila, an innocent son of a *brahmana*, was walking down a road and saw a *sudra* pair sexually embracing. This attracted the boy, and later on the boy became a victim of all debaucheries. From a pure *brahmana*, he fell down to the position of a wretched urchin, and it was all due to bad association.

There was but one victim like Ajamila in those days, but in this age of Kali the poor innocent students are daily victims of cinemas which attract men only for sex indulgence.

The so-called administrators are all untrained in the affairs of a *ksatirya*. The *ksatriyas* are meant for administration, as the *brahmanas* are meant for knowledge and guidance. The word *ksatra-bandhu* refers to the so-called administrators or persons promoted to the post of the administrator without proper training by culture and tradition. Nowadays they are promoted to such exalted posts by the votes of the people who are themselves fallen in the rules and regulations of life. How can such people select a proper man when they are themselves fallen in the standard of life? Therefore, by the influence of the age of Kali, everywhere, politically, socially or religiously, everything is topsy-turvy, and therefore for the sane man it is all regrettable.

31p: Caste determined by birth is not varnasrama.

When God-made *varnasrama-dharma*, which is strictly meant for developing animal consciousness into human consciousness and human consciousness into godly consciousness, is broken by advancement of foolishness, the whole system of peaceful and progressive life is at once disturbed. In the age of Kali, the first attack of the venomous snake strikes against the God-made *varnasrama-dharma*, and thus a person properly qualified as a *brahmana* is called a *sudra*, and a *sudra* by qualification is passing as a *brahmana*, all on a false birthright claim. To become a *brahmana* by a birthright claim is not at all bona fide, although it may be a fulfillment of one of the conditions. But the real qualification of a *brahmana* is to control the mind and the senses, and to cultivate tolerance, simplicity, cleanliness, knowledge, truthfulness, devotion and faith in the Vedic wisdom.

33p: How may we detain the Supreme Lord?

The beauty and opulence of the world can be enhanced by the grace of the Lord and not by any man-made planning. When the Lord Sri Krsna was present on this earth,

the impressions of the special signs of His lotus feet were stamped on the dust, and as a result of this specific grace, the whole earth was made as perfect as possible. In other words, the rivers, the seas, the forests, the hills and the mines, which are the supplying agents for the necessities of men and animals, were fully discharging their respective duties. Therefore the riches of the world surpassed all the riches of all other planets in the three planetary systems of the universe. One should, therefore, ask that the grace of the Lord always be present on earth so that we may be favored with His causeless mercy and be happy, having all necessities of life. One may ask how we can detain the Supreme Lord on this earth after His mission is fulfilled and He has left this earth for His own abode. The answer is that there is no need to detain the Lord. The Lord, being omnipresent, can be present with us if we want Him at all. By His omnipresence, He can always be with us if we are attached to His devotional service by hearing, chanting, remembering, etc.

There is nothing in the world with which the Lord is disconnected. The only thing we must learn is to excavate the source of connection and thus be linked with Him by offenseless service. We can be connected with Him by the transcendental sound representation of the Lord. The holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical, and one who chants the holy name of the Lord in an offenseless manner can at once realize that the Lord is present before him. Even by the vibration of radio sound, we can partially realize sound relativity, and by resounding the sound of transcendence we can verily feel the presence of the Lord. In this age, when everything is polluted by the contamination of Kali, it is instructed in the scriptures and preached by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu that by chanting the holy name of the Lord, we can at once be free from contamination and gradually rise to the status of transcendence and go back to Godhead.

The offenseless chanter of the holy name of the Lord is as auspicious as the Lord Himself, and the movement of pure devotees of the Lord all over the world can at once change the troublesome face of the world. Only by the propagation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord can we be immune from all effects of the age of Kali.

17.0. Questions and Answers in First Canto, Chapter Seventeen. (Q23-24.)

17.1 *Pratijna* (solemn statement of purpose) of this chapter, The Punishment and Reward of Kali (from verses 28-30, 38-39):

Maharaja Pariksit, who could fight one thousand enemies singlehandedly, thus pacified the personality of religion and the earth. Then he took up his sharp sword to kill the personality of Kali, who is the cause of all irreligion. (28)

When the personality of Kali understood that the King was willing to kill him, he at once abandoned the dress of a king and, under pressure of fear, completely surrendered to him, bowing his head. (29)

Maharaja Pariksit, who was qualified to accept surrender and worthy of being sung in history, did not kill the poor surrendered and fallen Kali, but smiled compassionately, for he was kind to the poor. (30)

Suta Gosvami said: Maharaja Pariksit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed. (38)

The personality of Kali asked for something more, and because of his begging, the King gave him permission to live where there is gold because wherever there is gold there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity. (39)

17.2. *Adhyaya-prakasika*, the chapter at a glance.

Maharaja Pariksit challenges and threatens the low-class man, dressed as a king, who is beating the cow and the bull. (1-6)

Maharaja Pariksit then questions and consoles the cow and the bull. (7-16)

The bull answers Maharaja's inquiries about the cause of his distress, After hearing the bull's reply, Maharaja Pariksit recognizes the bull to be the personality of religion (Dharma) and begins to answer him with words full of respect. (17-23)

Maharaja Pariksit, upon concluding his reply to Dharma, prepares to kill Kali. But Kali submissively bows down and surrenders to the king. Maharaja Pariksit spares Kali's life but orders his banishment. Kali requests a place where he can live according to his nature, without fear. (24-37)

Maharaja Pariksit gives Kali permission to dwell in five places-- where gambling, drinking, prostitution, and animal slaughter take place, and where gold is hoarded. Genuine *brahmanas* and *sannyasis* should never come in contact with such places. After Maharaja Pariksit sends Kali away, he re-establishes religion and begins his reign. (38-45)

17.3. *Slokanusaranam*, summary study of the verses.

Suta Gosvami continues his narration, describing for the sages that upon his arrival at the place where Dharma and Bhumi had been conversing in the forms of a bull and a cow, King Parikshit saw a shudra in the dress of a king beating the cow and bull with his club, as if they had no protector. The bull was as white as a lotus flower. As he stood upon one leg, the bull was so terrified that his entire body trembled and he was passing urine. The cow was bereft of her calf, and due to being beaten upon the legs, she was very weak and distressed. With tears in her eyes, she was hankering for some grass in the field. (1-3)

With a deep, thunderous voice, Maharaja Parikshit immediately challenged the offender: "Who are you? By your dress you appear to be posing as a godly king, and yet you dare to oppose religious principles by attempting to kill helpless creatures within my kingdom. You rogue, are you trying to beat an innocent cow in a secluded place because Lord Krishna and Arjuna are now out of sight? For this offense, you deserve to be killed by me." (4-6)

Maharaja Parikshit then addressed the bull: "Who are you? Are you simply a bull, as white as a lotus flower, who has lost three legs and is thus somehow moving on only one? Or, are you a demigod who is causing us grief by having assumed this pitiable form? This is the first time, in a kingdom that is protected by the Kuru dynasty, that you have been seen to be aggrieved, with tears in your eyes. O son of Surabhi, you can now give up your fear, for as long as I am the ruler of the earth, there will be no chance for this shudra to exploit you. When miscreants terrify the innocent creatures within his kingdom, a king's good name, duration of life, and chance for a good next birth, are all spoiled. Therefore, the prime duty of a king is to relieve the sufferings of his subjects. For this reason, I will kill this most wretched man who has dared to attack you." Hoping to get a statement of accusation against the personality of Kali, Maharaja Parikshit questioned the bull, "Who has cut off your three legs? Please tell me who has done this heinous act that is ruining the good reputation of our dynasty. Whoever causes offenseless beings to suffer must fear me, for I am prepared to punish any such person, even though he may be a denizen of heaven." (7-16) [***Nimesa 1: in 16p Srila Prabhupada writes,***

In the scriptures there is mention of *apad-dharma*, or occupational duty at times of extraordinary happenings. It is said that sometimes the great sage Visvamitra had to live on the flesh of dogs in some extraordinary dangerous position. In cases of emergency, one may be allowed to live on the flesh of animals of all description, but that does not mean that there should be regular slaughterhouses to feed the animal-eaters and that this system should be encouraged by the state. No one should try to live on flesh in ordinary times simply for the sake of the palate. If anyone does so, the king or the executive head should punish him for gross enjoyment.

There are regular scriptural injunctions for different persons engaged in different occupational duties, and one who follows them is called *svadharma-stha*, or faithful in one's prescribed duties. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.48) it is advised that one should not give up his occupational prescribed duties, even if they are not always flawless. Such *sva-dharma* might be violated in cases of emergency, if one is forced by circumstances, but they cannot be violated in ordinary times. The state executive head is to see that such *sva-dharma* is not changed by the follower, whatever it may be, and he should give all protection to the follower of *sva-dharma*. The violator is subject to punishment in terms of the *sastra*, and the duty of the king is to see that everyone strictly follows his occupational duty, as prescribed in the scripture.]

Dharma replied, "Your words are just befitting a descendent in the line of the Pandavas. O best among the human beings, it is very difficult for me to ascertain the miscreant who has caused our suffering, for I have become bewildered by the various opinions of theoretical philosophers." (17-18)
[Nimesa 2: in 18p Srila Prabhupada explains,

Although the bull, or the personality of religion, and the cow, the personality of the earth, knew perfectly well that the personality of Kali was the direct cause of their sufferings, still, as devotees of the Lord, they knew well also that without the sanction of the Lord no one could inflict trouble upon them. According to the Padma Purana, our present trouble is due to the fructifying of seedling sins, but even those seedling sins also gradually fade away by execution of pure devotional service. Thus even if the devotees see the mischief-mongers, they do not accuse them for the sufferings inflicted. They take it for granted that the mischief-monger is made to act by some indirect cause, and therefore they tolerate the sufferings, thinking them to be God-given in small doses, for otherwise the sufferings should have been greater.

Maharaja Pariksit wanted to get a statement of accusation against the direct mischief-monger, but they declined to give it on the abovementioned grounds. Speculative philosophers, however, do not sufferings in their own way, as will be described in the following verses. According to Srila Jiva Gosvami, such speculators are themselves bewildered, and thus they cannot know that the ultimate cause of all causes is the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead.]

The personality of religion, continuing to speak in the guise of a bull, continued to present various philosophical positions on the cause of the human condition of suffering. "Some philosophers declare one's own self to be the cause of suffering. Others say that it is superhuman power that is responsible. Still others claim that one's acts are the cause. There are scientists of gross materialism who explain that all suffering is ultimately caused by nature. Therefore, O King, you must judge for yourself with the help of your good intelligence, and thus ascertain the real culprit." (19-20) [*Nimesa 3a: pointing out what all these types of philosophers miss in their speculative accounts of embodied suffering, Srila Prabhupada states in 20p:*

A living being may forget all that he might have done in his past or present life, but one must know that in the same tree of the material body, the individual soul and the Supreme Soul as Paramatma are sitting like two birds. One of them, the living being, is enjoying the fruits of the tree, whereas the Supreme Being is there to witness the activities. Therefore the Paramatma feature, the Supreme Soul, is actually the witness of all activities of the living being, and only by His direction can the living being remember or forget what he might have done in the past. He is, therefore, both the all-pervading impersonal Brahman and the localized Paramatma in everyone's heart. He is the knower of all past, present and future, and nothing can be concealed from Him. The devotees know this truth, and therefore they discharge their duties sincerely, without being overly anxious for rewards. Besides that, one cannot estimate the Lord's reactions, either by speculation or by scholarship. Why does He [the Lord] put some into difficulty and not others? He is the supreme knower of the Vedic knowledge, and thus He is the factual Vedantist. At the same time He is the compiler of the *Vedanta*. No one is independent of Him, and everyone is engaged in His service in different ways. In the conditioned state, such services are rendered by the living being under force of the material nature, whereas in the liberated state the living being is helped by the spiritual nature in the voluntary loving service of the Lord. There is no incongruity or inebriety in His actions. All are on the path of Absolute Truth. Bhismadeva correctly estimated the inconceivable actions of the Lord. {*Ref.: Bhag. 1.9.43—*

Now I can meditate with full concentration upon that one Lord, Sri Krsna, now present before me because now I have transcended the misconceptions of duality in regard to His presence in everyone's heart, even in the hearts of the mental speculators. He is in everyone's heart. The sun may be perceived differently, but the sun is one. }

The conclusion is, therefore, that the sufferings of the representative of religion and the representative of the earth, as present before Maharaja Pariksit, were planned to prove that Maharaja Pariksit was the ideal executive head because he knew well how to give protection to the cows (the earth) and the *brahmanas* (religious principles), the two pillars of spiritual advancement. Everyone is under the full control of the Lord. He is quite correct in His action when He desires something to be done by someone, irrespective of the consideration of the particular case.]

[Nimesa 3b: here the compiler of the study guide adds *anumana* (reasoning) to the previous inserted comment. *Nimesa 3b* is a thought exercise for the student's better understanding of *Bhagavata-darsana* (the philosophical standpoint of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*) on the topic of the embodied suffering of the eternal soul. *The student should mark well that in his philosophical discourse, Dharma did not name Kali as the cause of his suffering. Neither did he blame the Supreme Lord. Even though "not a blade of grass moves without the sanction of the Supreme," Bhagavad-gita directly refutes that Sri Krsna causes a living entity's misery or enjoyment in the material condition:*

Nor does the Supreme Lord assume anyone's sinful or pious activities. Embodied beings, however, are bewildered because of the ignorance which covers their real knowledge. (Bg 5.15)

In the study guide to Bhag. Chapter 15 we learned that Srimad-Bhagavatam and Bhagavad-gita teach the same truth about the jivatma (as well as about Isvara, prakrti, kala, and karma). The Gita verse cited above alludes to the ignorance that covers the real knowledge of the jiva as being the actual cause of his bewilderment about the reactions of papam and sukrtam. In the First Canto we have already met the following important verse that explains the same point:

SB 1.7.5

yayā sammohito jīva

ātmānam tri-guṇātmakam

paro 'pi manute 'nartham

tat-kṛtam cābhipadyate

yayā—by whom; *sammohitaḥ*—illusioned; *jīvaḥ*—the living entities; *ātmānam*—self; *tri-guṇātmakam*—conditioned by the three modes of nature, or a product of matter; *paraḥ*—transcendental; *api*—in spite of; *manute*—takes it for granted; *anartham*—things not wanted; *tat*—by that; *kṛtam ca*—reaction; *abhipadyate*—undergoes thereof.

Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.

Sūta Gosvāmī

A devotee never holds the Lord responsible for the conditioned souls' happiness and distress. Suffering is inflicted upon the conditioned souls by His deputed maya-shakti, or material nature. Maya metes out suffering of three kinds—klesa-traya—in accordance with one's past fruitive activities. This is the version of Bhagavata-sastra. To try to argue otherwise is to display the selfishness that one cherishes at heart. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura makes the following pertinent observations in Bhagavat-tatparya 2:

The living entities who are averse to the service of the Lord try to become the objects of service in this material world and so they become entangled in the wheel of fruitive activities. Such activities are most insignificant. When we try to become the enjoyer and engage our senses in seeking limited pleasure, we become contaminated and thus invite our own ruination... What is the proof of this? The spotless *Purana, Srimad-Bhagavatam*, is the proof of this. There are innumerable evidences recorded in the Vedas and literatures in pursuance of the Vedas that support this conclusion. However, because the outlook of those who cultivate mundane knowledge is contaminated, such persons do not accept this evidence. It is something like a person who is unsuccessfully trying to get water in the desert. Actually, there is no water in the desert—it is only a mirage.

One should aspire for the actual goal of life. Everything else is unwanted and temporary. Such things create illusion in the minds of the conditioned souls. According to the opinion of many, the philosophy of impersonalism is topmost, but this is not a fact. This concept is full of contamination—it is impure. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is the spotless evidence. In this literature, there is no opportunity for cheating religion like personal sense enjoyment or liberation. There is no network of selfishness in its teachings. Because people who try to explain the *Vedas*, *Sāṁhitas*, and *Upanisads* on the strength of their academic qualifications are initiated into the path of selfishness, their evidence and reasoning are full of cheating, and thus totally unacceptable.

A fully surrendered devotee is freed from the onslaught of material nature. Lord Krishna personally takes charge of his pure devotees and then mercifully gives them a token, summary punishment. Since he had been put into doubt by the deluding energy, as well as by the influence of Kali, Dharma neglected to point out that his sufferings were the causeless mercy of the Lord. This is confirmed in 23p, cited below in Nimesa 4. Actually, the suffering of the cow and bull had been arranged by the will of the Lord just to show Maharaja Parikshit's ability to give them protection as the ideal executive head.]

Being very satisfied by the bull's meaningful statements, Maharaja Parikshit replied, "O saintly one in the form of a bull. You know the truth about religion. One who thinks that the perpetrator of an irreligious act is the cause of his suffering is just as ignorant as the miscreant is. Because you have understood this, you must verily be the personality of religion. As a devotee, you are ready to tolerate all kinds of misery, considering it to be God-sent. It is for this reason that you have not placed the blame upon this *shudra* that was beating your legs. The only conclusion is that the Lord's energies are inconceivable. No one can estimate them by mental speculation or by word jugglery." (21-23) [*Nimesa 4: in 23p Srila Prabhupada writes:*

A question may be raised as to why a devotee should refrain from identifying an actor, although he knows definitely that the Lord is the ultimate doer of everything. Knowing the ultimate doer, one should not pose himself as ignorant of the actual performer. To answer this doubt, the reply is that the Lord is also not directly responsible, for everything is done by His deputed *maya-sakti*, or material energy. The material energy is always provoking doubts about the supreme authority of the Lord. The personality of religion knew perfectly well

that nothing can take place without the sanction of the Supreme Lord, and still he was put into doubts by the deluding energy, and thus he refrained from mentioning the supreme cause. This doubtfulness was due to the contamination of both Kali and the material energy. The whole atmosphere of the age of Kali is magnified by the deluding energy, and the proportion of measurement is inexplicable.]

Maharaja Parikshit addressed Dharma in the form of a white bull: "In Satya-yuga, your four legs were established by the practice of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. Now, however, three of your legs have been broken due to rampant irreligion in the form of pride, lust for women, and intoxication. You are standing upon the last leg of truthfulness and thus you somehow manage to still hobble along. Yet, since Kali is quarrel personified and thus flourishes by deceit, he will also try to destroy your last remaining leg." (24-25) [*Nimesa 5: the following excerpts from Srila Prabhupada's purports are most helpful to our understanding of these verses:*

The principles of religion do not stand on some dogmas or man-made formulas, but they stand on four primary regulative observances, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. The mass of people must be taught to practice these principles from childhood. Austerity means to accept voluntarily things which may not be very comfortable for the body but are conducive for spiritual realization, for example, fasting. Fasting twice or four times a month is a sort of austerity which may be voluntarily accepted for spiritual realization only, and not for any other purposes, political or otherwise. Fastings which are meant not for self-realization but for some other purposes are condemned in the *Bhagavad-gita* (17.5-6). Similarly, cleanliness is necessary both for the mind and for the body. Simply bodily cleanliness may help to some extent, but cleanliness of the mind is necessary, and it is effected by glorifying the Supreme Lord. No one can cleanse the accumulated mental dust without glorifying the Supreme Lord. A godless civilization cannot cleanse the mind because it has no idea of God, and for this simple reason people under such a civilization cannot have good qualifications, however they may be materially equipped. (25p)

The Vedas warn us to go not to the darkness of ignorance but to the progressive path of light. The Lord Himself also warns that the deluding power of material energy is too powerful to overcome, but one who completely surrenders unto the Lord can easily do so. But to surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord is also not very easy. Such surrender is possible by persons of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and

truthfulness. These four principles of advanced civilization were remarkable features in the age of Satya. In that age, every human being was practically a qualified *brahmana* of the highest order, and in the social orders of life they were all *paramahamsas*, or the topmost in the renounced order. By cultural standing, the human beings were not at all subjected to the deluding energy. Such strong men of character were competent enough to get away from the clutches of *maya*. But gradually, as the basic principles of brahminical culture, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, became curtailed by proportionate development of pride, attachment for women and intoxication, the path of salvation or the path of transcendental bliss retreated far, far away from human society. With the progression of the age of Kali, people are becoming very proud, and attached to women and intoxication. By the influence of the age of Kali, even a pauper is proud of his penny, the women are always dressed in an overly attractive fashion to victimize the minds of men, and the man is addicted to drinking wine, smoking, drinking tea and chewing tobacco, etc. All these habits, or so-called advancement of civilization, are the root causes of all irreligiosities, and therefore it is not possible to check corruption, bribery and nepotism. Man cannot check all these evils simply by statutory acts and police vigilance, but he can cure the disease of the mind by the proper medicine, namely advocating the principles of brahminical culture or the principles of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. Modern civilization and economic development are creating a new situation of poverty and scarcity with the result of blackmailing the consumer's commodities. If the leaders and the rich men of the society spend fifty percent of their accumulated wealth mercifully for the misled mass of people and educate them in God consciousness, the knowledge of *Bhagavatam*, certainly the age of Kali will be defeated in its attempt to entrap the conditioned souls. We must always remember that false pride, or too high an estimation of one's own values of life, undue attachment to women or association with them, and intoxication will divert human civilization from the path of peace, however much the people clamor for peace in the world. The preaching of the *Bhagavatam* principles will automatically render all men austere, clean both inside and outside, merciful to the suffering, and truthful in daily behavior. That is the way of correcting the flaws of human society, which are very prominently exhibited at the present moment. (24p)]

The king now addressed Mother Earth who stood before him in the form of a cow: “Your burden of having to maintain the world’s population was certainly diminished by the Personality of Godhead, and by others as well. When He was present as an incarnation, all good was performed on your surface because of His auspicious footprints. Now, O chaste one, finding

yourself unfortunately forsaken by the Personality of Godhead, you lament your future with tears in your eyes. As this age of Kali descends upon us, lower-class men who pose as rulers rush in to lord over and enjoy you.” (26-27)

Implacably determined to halt the progress of Kali, the noble and powerful Maharaja Parikshit unsheathed his sharp sword to kill the miscreant *shudra* who was mockingly attired in the finery of the royal order. When Kali saw the seriousness of the king's intentions, he at once cast off his imitation royal dress and bowed down his head in surrender. At this, the righteous Maharaja Parikshit refrained from killing Kali. Smiling compassionately, the king said, "Since you have surrendered yourself unto me with folded hands, you need no longer fear for your life. However, I cannot allow you to remain within my kingdom, for you are the friend of irreligion. Wherever you stay, greed, falsehood, robbery, incivility, treachery, misfortune, cheating, quarrel and vanity will abound. You do not deserve to reside in a place where God-conscious persons perform sacrifices according to religious principles for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord." (28-34)

Suta Gosvami comments here that when Kali received this order from King Parikshit, he began to tremble with fear. As the king loomed threateningly over him just like Yamaraja, Kali pleaded, "O chief among protectors of religion, since you are the emperor of the entire world, wherever I may go I will see you with sword in hand, ready to punish me for my sinful activities. Even though I am your enemy, because I have surrendered unto you, you should allot me a place of residence where I can live peacefully under your protection." Being thus petitioned, Maharaja Parikshit agreed to allow Kali to live where gambling, intoxication, prostitution and animal slaughter were being indulged in. However, since such places practically did not exist within Maharaja Parikshit's kingdom, Kali felt cheated. He begged for something more. In response, Maharaja Parikshit finally agreed that he could live where gold was being kept, for in such places there is invariably falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity. (35-39)

Thereafter, Maharaja Parikshit carefully re-established the lost legs of Dharma within his kingdom. Then, for encouraging activities meant to improve the condition of the earth, he collected all of the illicitly held gold that had been kept for furthering the activities of Kali and engaged it in the

sankirtana-yagya. (40-45) [*Nimesa 6*: in 42p it is confirmed by Srila Prabhupada that Maharaja Parikshit seized all the gold earmarked for sinful activities and used it to promote sankirtana throughout his kingdom.

Maharaja Pariksit, therefore, like his grandfather Arjuna, collected all illicit gold kept for the propensities of Kali and employed it in the *sankirtana-yajna*, as per instruction of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.]

17.4. In verse 30, Suta answers Question Twenty-one (to review this question, refer back to 16.3 of the study guide to Chapter Sixteen). The meaning of his answer is thus, as seen from Srila Prabhupada's purport to verse 30.

Even an ordinary *ksatriya* does not kill a surrendered person, and what to speak of Maharaja Pariksit, who was by nature compassionate and kind to the poor. He was smiling because the artificially dressed Kali had disclosed his identity as a lower-class man, and he was thinking how ironic it was that although no one was saved from his sharp sword when he desired to kill, the poor lower-class Kali was spared by his timely surrender. Maharaja Pariksit's glory and kindness are therefore sung in history. He was a kind and compassionate emperor, fully worthy of accepting surrender even from his enemy. Thus the personality of Kali was saved by the will of Providence. (30p)

17.5. Question Twenty-three of *Srimad Bhagavatam* is asked by Maharaja Pariksit of the Personality of Kali. [Question Twenty-two was asked and answered in the previous chapter—see sections 16.4-5 of the study guide to Chapter Sixteen.]

Question Twenty-three: King Pariksit asked Kali to identify himself, then asked if he dared beat a cow and bull because Lord Krsna and Arjuna are out of sight. (5, 6)

17.4. Not waiting for a reply from Kali, Pariksit then asked the bull Question Twenty-four of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Question Twenty-four: King Pariksit asked the bull to identify himself, and asked if he is really a demigod. He asked who cut off three of the bull's legs. (7, 12)

17.5. In verses 17-20 the bull replies: After praising Pariksit, the bull declined to say who he was and who had cut his three legs, pleading that different philosophies of causation conflicted one another. He left it to the king to ascertain his identity and the cause of his suffering.

17.6. In verses 22-27 Maharaja Pariksit answers Questions Twenty-three and Twenty-four himself:

Noting the bull's pious unwillingness to accuse his attacker, the king identifies the bull as Dharma. Pariksit says the distress to the bull and the cow is caused by the arrival of the Age of Kali in the form of the black man dressed as a king. All this had transpired by the jugglery of the Lord's energies beginning with the time factor.

17.7. The philosophical significance of the questions and answers of Chapter Seventeen are summarized thus, in 5 parts as derived from the first through the forty-fifth verses and their purports.

1. Kali continues because no *ksatriya* king is present to suppress its irreligious activities. (1p-6p)

2. Such a king rules according to the scriptures and never allows offenseless citizens to be disturbed by irreligious offenders. (7p-16p)

3. Sometimes, to prove a point, as the Lord did when He put Bhumi and Dharma in trouble to demonstrate to the world that Maharaja Pariksit was the ideal executive head, the Lord uses His devotees and even causes them distress. (17p-23p)

4. The importance of a qualified king in removing the influence of Kali must be understood by the citizenry, who should not succumb to sentimental, ineffective programs of social reform alluded to by Srila Prabhupada in this sentence from 25p, which is a reference to a pseudo-spiritual political ploy by which Mohandas Gandhi misled millions of Indian people: Fastings which are meant not for self-realization but for some other purposes are condemned in the *Bhagavad-gita* (17.5-6). In the absence of a real leader like Maharaja Parikshit, the systematic education offered to the citizens in the *Bhagavatam* and the performance of the *sankirtana-yajna*, will accomplish the same. (24p-37p)

5. Cooperation between the *brahmanas* and a bona fide *ksatriya* ruler will bring success to the state. (38-45)

17.8.1. *Parisistam* (appendix).

17.8.1.1. *Vinodakam* (items of particular interest to students working toward a *Bhatkivaibhava* degree in this course)—

Three verses from Chapter Seventeen often quoted by Srila Prabhupada:

1) PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION

SB 1.17.24

tapah śaucam dayā satyam

iti pādāḥ kṛte kṛtāḥ

adharmāmśais trayo bhagnāḥ

smaya-saṅga-madaiḥ tava

tapah—austerity; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *dayā*—mercy; *satyam*—truthfulness; *iti*—thus; *pādāḥ*—legs; *kṛte*—in the age of Satya; *kṛtāḥ*—established; *adharmā*—irreligiosity; *amśaiḥ*—by the parts; *trayaḥ*—three combined; *bhagnāḥ*—broken; *smaya*—pride; *saṅga*—too much association with women; *madaiḥ*—intoxication; *tava*—your.

In the age of Satya [truthfulness] your four legs were established by the four principles of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. But it appears that three of your legs are broken due to rampant irreligion in the form of pride, lust for women, and intoxication.

Parikṣit Mahārāja

2, 3) PLACES WHERE KALI RESIDES

SB 1.17.38-39

sūta uvāca

abhyarthitas tadā tasmai

sthānāni kalaye dadau

dyūtaṁ pānaṁ striyaḥ sūnā

yatrādharmaś catur-vidhaḥ

sūtaḥ uvāca—Sūta Gosvāmī said; *abhyarthitaḥ*—thus being petitioned; *tadā*—at that time; *tasmai*—unto him; *sthānāni*—places; *kalaye*—to the personality of Kali; *dadau*—gave him permission; *dyūtaṁ*—gambling; *pānaṁ*—drinking; *striyaḥ*—illicit association with women; *sūnā*—animal slaughter; *yatra*—wherever; *adharmāḥ*—sinful activities; *catur-vidhaḥ*—four kinds of.

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parikṣit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed.

Sūta Gosvāmī

*punaś ca yācamānāya
jāta-rūpam adāt prabhuḥ
tato 'ṅṛtaṁ madam kāmam
rajo vairam ca pañcamam*

punaḥ—again; *ca*—also; *yācamānāya*—to the beggar; *jāta-rūpam*—gold; *adāt*—gave away; *prabhuḥ*—the King; *tataḥ*—whereby; *anṛtam*—falsehood; *madam*—intoxication; *kāmam*—lust; *rajaḥ*—on account of a passionate mood; *vairam*—enmity; *ca*—also; *pañcamam*—the fifth one.

The personality of Kali asked for something more, and because of his begging, the King gave him permission to live where there is gold because wherever there is gold there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity.

Sūta Gosvāmī

17.8.1.2. *Vinodakam*—

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura categorized these two verses from Chapter Seventeen under the *prayojana* section of *Bhagavat-arka-marici-mala*, in Chapter Eight, titled *baddha-jiva-laksanam*, “Characteristics of the Conditioned Soul”:

01.17.38-39

Suta Gosvami to Saunaka Rsi

Suta Gosvami said: Maharaja Pariksit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed. (38)

The personality of Kali asked for something more, and because of his begging, the King gave him permission to live where there is gold because wherever there is gold there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity. (39)

17.8.2. *Parisistam* (appendix) continued: memorable quotations from Srila Prabhupada's purports to this chapter.

1p: The first symptom of Kali: so-called *ksatriyas* (who are really *sudras*) and degraded *vaisyas* who cooperate to make animal slaughter a big business.

The principal sign of the age of Kali is that lower-caste sudras, i.e., men without brahminical culture and spiritual initiation, will be dressed like administrators or kings, and the principal business of such non-ksatriya rulers will be to kill the innocent animals, especially the cows and the bulls, who shall be unprotected by their masters, the bona fide *vaisyas*, the mercantile community. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.44), it is said that the *vaisyas* are meant to deal in agriculture, cow protection and trade. In the age of Kali, the degraded *vaisyas*, the mercantile men, are engaged in supplying cows to slaughterhouses. The *ksatriyas* are meant to protect the citizens of the state, whereas the *vaisyas* are meant to protect the cows and bulls and utilize them to produce grains and milk. The cow is meant to deliver milk, and the bull is meant to produce grains. But in the age of Kali, the *sudra* class of men are in the posts of administrators, and the cows and bulls, or the mothers and the fathers, unprotected by the *vaisyas*, are subjected to the slaughterhouses organized by the *sudra* administrators.

2p: The second symptom of Kali: the secular state (i.e. the state is committed to irreligion, while religious belief is a matter of personal opinion).

The next symptom of the age of Kali is that principles of religion, which are all spotlessly white, like the white lotus flower, will be attacked by the uncultured *sudra* population of the age. They

may be descendants of *brahmana* or *ksatriya* forefathers, but in the age of Kali, for want of sufficient education and culture of Vedic wisdom, such a *sudra*-like population will defy the principles of religion, and persons who are religiously endowed will be terrified by such men. They will declare themselves as adherents of no religious principles, and many "isms" and cults will spring up in *Kali-yuga* only to kill the spotless bull of religion. The state will be declared to be secular, or without any particular principle of religion, and as a result there will be total indifference to the principles of religion. The citizens will be free to act as they like, without respect for *sadhu*, *sastra* and *guru*.

3p: Milk and Sanatana-dharma.

For a Sanatanist (a follower of Vedic principles) it is the duty of every householder to have cows and bulls as household paraphernalia, not only for drinking milk, but also for deriving religious principles. The Sanatanist worships cows on religious principles and respects *brahmanas*. The cow's milk is required for the sacrificial fire, and by performing sacrifices the householder can be happy. The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible. But in the *Kali-yuga*, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

5p: The twice-born social order.

The *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas* and *vaisyas* are called twice-born because for these higher classes of men there is one birth by parental conjugation and there is another birth of cultural rejuvenation by spiritual initiation from the bona fide *acarya*, or spiritual master. So a *ksatriya* is also twice-born like a *brahmana*, and his duty is to give protection to the helpless. The *ksatriya* king is considered to be the representative of God to give protection to the helpless and chastise the miscreants. Whenever there are anomalies in this routine work by the administrators, there is an incarnation of the Lord to reestablish the principles of a godly kingdom.

6p: Death to the animal killers.

For a pious king, the culprit who kills an animal in a secluded place is punishable by the death penalty, exactly like a murderer who kills an innocent child in a secluded place.

9p: The divine origin of the cow.

As men are made after the form and features of the Supreme Lord, so also the cows are made after the form and features of the *surabhi* cows in the spiritual kingdom. In the material world the human society gives all protection to the human being, but there is no law to protect the descendants of Surabhi, who can give all protection to men by supplying the miracle food, milk. But Maharaja Pariksit and the Pandavas were fully conscious of the importance of the cow and bull, and they were prepared to punish the cow-killer with all chastisement, including death.

10-11p: The praja, or protected subjects of the Vedic king.

When there is some disturbance caused by wild animals in a village or town, the police or others take action to kill them. Similarly, it is the duty of the government to kill at once all bad social elements such as thieves, dacoits and murderers. The same punishment is also due to animal-killers because the animals of the state are also the *praja*. *Praja* means one who has taken birth in the state, and this includes both men and animals. Any living being who takes birth in a state has the primary right to live under the protection of the king. The jungle animals are also subject to the king, and they also have a right to live. So what to speak of domestic animals like the cows and bulls.

Any living being, if he terrifies other living beings, is a most wretched subject, and the king should at once kill such a disturbing element. As the wild animal is killed when it creates disturbances, similarly any man who unnecessarily kills or terrifies the jungle animals or other animals must be punished at once. By the law of the Supreme Lord, all living beings, in whatever shape they may be, are the sons of the Lord, and no one has any right to kill another animal, unless it is so ordered by the codes of natural law. The tiger can kill a lower animal for his subsistence, but a man cannot kill an animal for his subsistence. That is the law of God, who has created the law that a living being subsists by eating another living being. Thus the vegetarians are also living by eating other living beings. Therefore, the law is that one should live only by eating specific living beings, as ordained by the law of God. The *Isopanisad* directs that one should live by the direction of the Lord and not at one's sweet will. A man can subsist on varieties of grains, fruits and milk ordained by God, and there is no need of animal food, save and except in particular cases.

17p: King Pariksit's promise to battle even the denizens of heaven in defense of *dharma* was not a vain boast, for by the grace of the Lord a devotee can accomplish anything the Lord empowers him to do.

The assurances and challenges made by Maharaja Pariksit are never exaggerations of his real power. The Maharaja said that even the denizens of heaven could not escape his stringent government if they were violators of religious principles. He was not falsely proud, for a devotee of the Lord is equally as powerful as the Lord or sometimes more powerful by His grace, and any promise made by a devotee, though it may be ordinarily very difficult to fulfill, is properly executed by the grace of the Lord.

18p: Contending philosophies of causation, and the humble vision of a devotee.

There are many theoretical philosophers in the world who put forward their own theories of cause and effect especially about the cause of suffering and its effect on different living beings. Generally there are six great philosophers: Kanada, the author of Vaisheshika philosophy; Gautama, the author of logic; Patanjali, the author of mystic yoga; Kapila, the author of Sankhya philosophy; Jaimini, the author of Karmamimamsa; and Vyasadeva, the author of Vedanta-darsana.

Although the bull, or the personality of religion, and the cow, the personality of the earth, knew perfectly well that the personality of Kali was the direct cause of their sufferings, still, as devotees of the Lord, they knew well also that without the sanction of the Lord no one could inflict trouble upon them. According to the Padma Purana, our present trouble is due to the fructifying of seedling sins, but even those seedling sins also gradually fade away by execution of pure devotional service. Thus even if the devotees see the mischief-mongers, they do not accuse them for the sufferings inflicted. They take it for granted that the mischief-monger is made to act by some indirect cause, and therefore they tolerate the sufferings, thinking them to be God-given in small doses, for otherwise the sufferings should have been greater.

22p: The accuser of the doer of misdeeds is equally as sinful as the doer, even though the accuser may be "right."

A devotee's conclusion is that no one is directly responsible for

being a benefactor or mischief-monger without the sanction of the Lord; therefore he does not consider anyone to be directly responsible for such action. But in both the cases he takes it for granted that either benefit or loss is God-sent, and thus it is His grace. In case of benefit, no one will deny that it is God-sent, but in case of loss or reverses one becomes doubtful about how the Lord could be so unkind to His devotee as to put him in great difficulty. Jesus Christ was seemingly put into such great difficulty, being crucified by the ignorant, but he was never angry at the mischief-mongers. That is the way of accepting a thing, either favorable or unfavorable. Thus for a devotee the identifier is equally a sinner, like the mischief-monger. By God's grace, the devotee tolerates all reverses. Maharaja Pariksit observed this, and therefore he could understand that the bull was no other than the personality of religion himself. In other words, a devotee has no suffering at all because so-called suffering is also God's grace for a devotee who sees God in everything. The cow and bull never placed any complaint before the King for being tortured by the personality of Kali, although everyone lodges such complaints before the state authorities. The extraordinary behavior of the bull made the King conclude that the bull was certainly the personality of religion, for no one else could understand the finer intricacies of the codes of religion.

23p: When in doubt, don't.

A question may be raised as to why a devotee should refrain from identifying an actor, although he knows definitely that the Lord is the ultimate doer of everything. Knowing the ultimate doer, one should not pose himself as ignorant of the actual performer. To answer this doubt, the reply is that the Lord is also not directly responsible, for everything is done by His deputed *maya-sakti*, or material energy. The material energy is always provoking doubts about the supreme authority of the Lord. The personality of religion knew perfectly well that nothing can take place without the sanction of the Supreme Lord, and still he was put into doubts by the deluding energy, and thus he refrained from mentioning the supreme cause. This doubtfulness was due to the contamination of both Kali and the material energy. The whole atmosphere of the age of Kali is magnified by the deluding energy, and the proportion of measurement is inexplicable.

27p: The world in misery is the future of Kali-yuga.

Unfortunately, in the age of Kali the lower-class men, without training, occupy the post of a ruler by strength of popular votes, and instead of protecting the sufferers, such men create a situation quite intolerable for everyone. Such rulers

illegally gratify themselves at the cost of all comforts of the citizens, and thus the chaste mother earth cries to see the pitiable condition of her sons, both men and animals. That is the future of the world in the age of Kali, when irreligiosity prevails most prominently.

**29p: Passing administrative resolutions,
and compromising with deviation,
will not stop the corrupting march of Kali.**

The administrators should not simply pass resolutions for anticorruptional steps, but they must be ready with sharp swords to kill the persons creating corruptions from the angle of vision of the recognized sastras. The administrators cannot prevent corrupt activities by allowing wine shops. They must at once close all shops of intoxicating drugs and wine and force punishment even by death for those who indulge in habits of intoxication of all description. That is the way of stopping the activities of Kali, as exhibited herein by Maharaja Pariksit, the *maha-ratha*.

**33p: No matter the dogmatic outer form that
religion may take in society, the four universal
principles of religion must be enforced.**

The principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, as we have already discussed, may be followed by the follower of any faith. There is no need to turn from Hindu to Mohammedan to Christian or some other faith and thus become a renegade and not follow the principles of religion. The *Bhagavatam* religion urges following the principles of religion. The principles of religion are not the dogmas or regulative principles of a certain faith. Such regulative principles may be different in terms of the time and place concerned. One has to see whether the aims of religion have been achieved. Sticking to the dogmas and formulas without attaining the real principles is not good. A secular state may be impartial to any particular type of faith, but the state cannot be indifferent to the principles of religion as above-mentioned. But in the age of Kali, the executive heads of state will be indifferent to such religious principles, and therefore under their patronage the opponents of religious principles, such as greed, falsehood, cheating and pilfering, will naturally follow, and so there will be no meaning to propaganda crying to stop corruption in the state.

34p: Make your land Brahmavarta.

do not perform any sacrifice for the satisfaction of the Lord. Any

place or country where the supremacy of the Lord is accepted and thus sacrifice is performed is called *brahmavarta*. There are different countries in different parts of the world, and each and every country may have different types of sacrifice to please the Supreme Lord, but the central point in pleasing Him is ascertained in the Bhagavatam, and it is truthfulness. The basic principle of religion is truthfulness, and the ultimate goal of all religions is to satisfy the Lord. In this age of Kali, the greatest common formula of sacrifice is the sankirtana-yajna. That is the opinion of the experts who know how to propagate the process of yajna. Lord Caitanya preached this method of yajna, and it is understood from this verse that the sacrificial method of sankirtana-yajna may be performed anywhere and everywhere in order to drive away the personality of Kali and save human society from falling prey to the influence of the age.

38p: The four principles of irreligion contrasted with the four principles of religion.

The basic principles of irreligiosity, such as pride, prostitution, intoxication and falsehood, counteract the four principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. The personality of Kali was given permission to live in four places particularly mentioned by the King, namely the place of gambling, the place of prostitution, the place of drinking and the place of animal slaughter.

.....

Following in the footsteps of Maharaja Pariksit, it is the duty of all executive heads of states to see that the principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, are established in the state, and that the principles of irreligion, namely pride, illicit female association or prostitution, intoxication and falsity, are checked by all means. And to make the best use of a bad bargain, the personality of Kali may be transferred to places of gambling, drinking, prostitution and slaughterhouses, if there are any places like that. Those who are addicted to these irreligious habits may be regulated by the injunctions of the scripture. In no circumstances should they be encouraged by any state. In other words, the state should categorically stop all sorts of gambling, drinking, prostitution and falsity. The state which wants to eradicate corruption by majority may introduce the principles of religion in the following manner:

1. Two compulsory fasting days in a month, if not more (austerity). Even from the economic point of view, such two fasting days in a month in the state will save tons of food, and the system will also act very favorably on the general health of the citizens.
2. There must be compulsory marriage of young boys and girls

attaining twenty-four years of age and sixteen years of age respectively. There is no harm in coeducation in the schools and colleges, provided the boys and girls are duly married, and in case there is any intimate connection between a male and female student, they should be married properly without illicit relation. The divorce act is encouraging prostitution, and this should be abolished.

3. The citizens of the state must give in charity up to fifty percent of their income for the purpose of creating a spiritual atmosphere in the state or in human society, both individually and collectively. They should preach the principles of Bhagavatam by (a) karma-yoga, or doing everything for the satisfaction of the Lord, (b) regular hearing of the Srimad-Bhagavatam from authorized persons or realized souls, (c) chanting of the glories of the Lord congregationally at home or at places of worship, (d) rendering all kinds of service to bhagavatas engaged in preaching Srimad-Bhagavatam and (e) residing in a place where the atmosphere is saturated with God consciousness. If the state is regulated by the above process, naturally there will be God consciousness everywhere.

Gambling of all description, even speculative business enterprise, is considered to be degrading, and when gambling is encouraged in the state, there is a complete disappearance of truthfulness. Allowing young boys and girls to remain unmarried more than the above-mentioned ages and licensing animal slaughterhouses of all description should be at once prohibited. The flesh-eaters may be allowed to take flesh as mentioned in the scriptures, and not otherwise. Intoxication of all description--even smoking cigarettes, chewing tobacco or the drinking of tea--must be prohibited.

40p: Gold encourages falsity.

According to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, gold encourages falsity, intoxication, prostitution, envy and enmity. Even a gold-standard exchange and currency is bad. Gold-standard currency is based on falsehood because the currency is not on a par with the reserved gold. The basic principle is falsity because currency notes are issued in value beyond that of the actual reserved gold. This artificial inflation of currency by the authorities encourages prostitution of the state economy. The price of commodities becomes artificially inflated because of bad money, or artificial currency notes. Bad money drives away good money. Instead of paper currency, actual gold coins should be used for exchange, and this will stop prostitution of gold. Gold ornaments for women may be allowed by control, not by quality, but by quantity. This will discourage lust, envy and enmity. When there is actual gold currency in the form of coins, the influence of gold in producing falsity, prostitution, etc., will automatically cease. There will be no need of an anticorruption

ministry for another term of prostitution and falsity of purpose.

41p: The four leaders of society and their characteristics.

The *brahmanas* are the religious preceptors for all other castes, and the *sannyasis* are the spiritual masters for all the castes and orders of society. So also are the king and the public leaders who are responsible for the material welfare of all people. The progressive religionists and those who are responsible human beings or those who do not want to spoil their valuable human lives should refrain from all the principles of irreligiosity, especially illicit connection with women. If a *brahmana* is not truthful, all his claims as a brahmana at once become null and void. If a is illicitly connected with women, all his claims as a *sannyasi* at once become false. Similarly, if the king and the public leader are unnecessarily proud or habituated to drinking and smoking, certainly they become disqualified to discharge public welfare activities. Truthfulness is the basic principle for all religions. The four leaders of the human society, namely the *sannyasis*, the *brahmana*, the king and the public leader, must be tested crucially by their character and qualification. Before one can be accepted as a spiritual or material master of society, he must be tested by the above-mentioned criteria of character.

42p: Fifty percent of the economy dedicated to sankirtana-yajna is the formula for eradicating Kali's influence.

As we have suggested before, one's accumulated wealth may be divided into three parts for distribution, namely fifty percent for the service of the Lord, twenty-five percent for the family members and twenty-five percent for personal necessities. Spending fifty percent for the service of the Lord or for propagation of spiritual knowledge in society by way of the *sankirtana-yajna* is the maximum display of human mercy. people of the world are generally in darkness regarding spiritual knowledge, especially in regard to the devotional service of the Lord, and therefore to propagate the systematic transcendental knowledge of devotional service is the greatest mercy that one can show in this world. When everyone is taught to sacrifice fifty percent of his accumulated gold for the Lord's service, certainly austerity, cleanliness and mercy automatically ensue, and thus the lost three legs of the personality of religion are automatically established. When there is sufficient austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, naturally mother earth is completely satisfied, and there is very little chance for Kali to infiltrate the structure of human society.

18.0. Questions and answers in First Canto, Chapter Eighteen. (Q25.)

18.1. The *Pratijna* (solemn statement of purpose) of this chapter, entitled Maharaja Pariksit Cursed by a Brahmana Boy, is expressed in verses 2-4:

Maharaja Pariksit was always consciously surrendered to the Personality of Godhead, and therefore he was neither afraid nor overwhelmed by fear due to a snake-bird which was to bite him because of the fury of a *brahmana* boy. (2)

After leaving all his associates, the King surrendered himself as a disciple to the son of Vyasa [Sukadeva Gosvami], and thus he was able to understand the actual position of the Personality of Godhead. (3)

This was so because those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead, of whom the Vedic hymns sing, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives. (4)

18.1.1. *Vrtti* (commentary) on the *Pratijna* regarding the qualities of Maharaja Pariksit—Verses 2 and 3 of the *Pratijna* glorify King Pariksit’s fearlessness and renunciation. These qualities evince his *rasa* for hearing the topics of Sri Krsna. Srila Jiva Gosvami elaborates in *Bhakti-sandarbha*, *Anuccheda* 250.

18.1.1.1. Part 4 of the *Anuccheda*: As a parasol bearer follows a king, so renunciation follows these descriptions of the Lord. In *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.1.3) it is said:

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam
suka-mukhad amrta-drava-samyutam
pibata bhagavatam rasam alayam
muhur aho rasika bhuvi bhavukah*

○ expert and thoughtful men, relish *Srimad Bhagavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice (*rasam*) was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.

[Nimesa 1a: anumana, or reasoned observations upon the above—
the fruit of the Vedic tree is juicy with the sweetest essence of that tree, an essence identical to the Lord Himself. Some branches of the tree of Vedic sastra are analyzed as “material”, others as “spiritual.”
*Sruti-sastra, like a tree, is most liberal in that it offers shelter to all sentient beings. According to where they take shelter under the many spreading branches of sruti-sastra, sentient beings gather into different classes—sattvic, rajasic, tamasic, liberated and bound. But the **fruit** of the Vedic tree—Srimad-Bhagavatam—is **transcendental nectar**. By the word “transcendental” the term vastu (reality) is meant. Hence the very 2nd verse of this book declares, atra paramo nirmatsaranam satam vedyam vastavam atra vastu: “Herein, for those devotees pure in heart, the supreme vastu is realizable as it really is.”*
Sri Krsna has more to say about vastu in Bhag. 11.11.1:

sri-bhagavan uvaca
 baddho mukta iti vyakhya
 gunato me na vastutah
 gunasya maya-mulatvan
 na me mokso na bandhanam

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, due to the influence of the material modes of nature, which are under My control, the living entity is sometimes designated as conditioned and sometimes as liberated. In fact, however, the soul is **never really** (*na vastutah*) bound up or liberated, and since I am the supreme Lord of *maya*, which is the cause of the modes of nature, I also am never to be considered liberated or in bondage.

Therefore the juice of the fruit of Srimad-Bhagavatam is “relishable for all” no matter if one comes under the Vedic classification of baddha (a materially conditioned soul) or mukta (a liberated soul). Both of these states are na vastutah, since they exist only as designations of the modes of nature. Neither are states of ultimate reality.

*If a soul, baddha or mukta, achieves relish for the fruit, divine qualities automatically follow his taste. The ksatriya qualities of fearlessness and renunciation, wherever the Vedas teach them prior to the soul’s gaining taste for the fruit (Srimad-Bhagavatam), may be considered “material” products of the mode of passion. But Maharaja Pariksit’s fearlessness and renunciation are different. They **follow** his taste for hearing the descriptions of the Lord. Indeed they offer*

service to that taste... “As a parasol bearer follows a king,” so writes Srila Jiva. Thus renunciation becomes a sthayi bhava (supportive mood) of santa rasa. All this is indicated in parts 1-3 of this Anuccheda 250 of Bhakti-sandarbha. Here Srila Jiva Gosvami quotes two verses from Canto 12 and cites the commentary of Sridhara Svami.]

18.1.1.2. Parts 1-3 of the Anuccheda:

1 Hearing about the transcendental qualities of the Lord is described in these words (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 12.3.14-15):

"I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge.

2 "The person who desires pure devotional service to Lord Krsna should hear the narrations of Lord Uttamasloka's glorious qualities, the constant chanting of which destroys everything inauspicious. The devotee should engage in such listening in regular daily assemblies and should also continue his hearing throughout the day."

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse the speaker describes the dynasties of the great kings. However, he does this with a desire to speak (*vivaksaya*) about transcendental knowledge (*vijnana*) and renunciation (*vairagya*). Elaborate descriptions (*vaco vibhutih*) of departed (*pareyusam*) kings are not the ultimate aspect of knowledge (*paramarthyam*). In the next verse the words *nityam* and *abhiksnam* means "every day".

[Nimesa 1b: *Refer the terms nityam and abhiksnam back to the instruction of Bhag. 1.1.3. quoted in Part 4 of Anuccheda 250. Whether one is a liberated soul or conditioned soul, he should daily drink the rasa of Srimad-Bhagavatam. Since everyone—baddha or mukta—is urged to regularly hear the Bhagavatam, it is only reasonable that rasa appears in the narratives at different levels to attach different grades of souls to Sri Krsna. In all Bhagavatam narratives there is rasa; but just as there is a variety of rasas, so in the narratives of Bhagavatam there are various tastes of sweetness that*

nurture rasa among various levels of listeners. As Sridhara Swami indicates above, the qualities of saintly kings are narrated in the Bhagavatam to help a listener be situated in vairagya (renunciation). Maharaja Parikshit is a mahabhagavata; his qualities, like Krsna's, are relishable. Hearing about King Parikshit—as we are about to do in this chapter—can satisfy the senses of a receptive, though conditioned, listener. The rasa-enriched qualities of King Parikshit bless the listener with the determination to give up engagements of selfish sense pleasure and instead use his senses and their objects for the pleasure of Krsna. This does not contradict the fact that on the whole, the Bhagavatam is a narration of Sri Krsna's qualities. Of those qualities, His mercy is one of the most wonderful. Krsna's mercy is spread through the world by the devotees who chant His holy name; this increases the attachment of everyone to Him. As we shall see below, Srila Jiva Gosvami makes this very point in Part 5 of Anuccheda 250 of Bhakti-sandarbha. Thus topics about great devotees like Maharaja Parikshit, glorified in this Chapter Eighteen of Srimad-Bhagavatam, are inseparable from the mercy of the Lord.]

18.1.1.3. Bhakti-sandarbha, Anuccheda 250, part 5:

Here the word *gunah* (qualities) means "mercy and other virtues". The nature of the Lord's virtues is seen in the following statement of *Bhagavad-gita* (11.36):

"O master of the senses, the world becomes joyful upon hearing Your name, and thus everyone becomes attached to You. Although the perfected beings offer You their respectful homage, the demons are afraid, and they flee here and there. All this is rightly done."

18.1.2. Vrtti (commentary) on the Pratijna regarding the comparison of Vedic scriptures to Srimad-Bhagavatam—Verse 4 of the Pratijna remarks that the Vedic hymns sing the glories of the Lord...

"...those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead, **of whom the Vedic hymns sing**, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives."

...but as Srila Jiva Gosvami points out in *Tattva-sandarbha* 26.3, the fact that Vedas hymns glorified Krsna before Sukadeva spoke the *Bhagavata Purana* to Maharaja Parikshit in no way obliges devotees to seek support for the *Bhagavatam* in Vedic texts.

The *Bhagavata* is Krsna's very own representative. As stated in the first *skandha*: "Now that Krsna has returned to His own abode, along with dharma and knowledge, etc... this *purana* has risen like the sun for those bereft of sight in the Kali Yuga." (*Bhag.*1.3.43, 44)

The *Bhagavata* is thus seen to be endowed with all virtues, as demonstrated in the verse, "The supreme *dharma*, devoid of all ulterior motive, is found in this *Bhagavata*..."(*Bhag.* 1.1.2) This fact is further demonstrated by the *Muktaphala*: "The *Vedas*, *Puranas*, and *Kavya* give council like a ruler, a friend, and a beloved, but the *Bhagavata* is said to give council like all three combined." Thus, even if some consider other *Puranas* to be dependent on the *Vedas*, the same supposition with regard to the *Bhagavata* is dispelled by the *Bhagavata* itself; this is also self-evident. Therefore the *Bhagavata* represents the highest form of *Sruti*. As it is said (*Bhag.* 1.4.7—**this verse is counted as item 3 of Question Seven in the study guide for Chapter Four of this Canto**):

*katham va pandaveyasya
rajarser munina saha
samvadah samabhut tata
yatraitsa satvati srutih*

How did it happen that the king [Pariksit Maharaja], the wise descendent of the Pandavas, meet the *muni* [Sukadeva Gosvami] who taught him the *Satvati Sruti*?

[Nimesa 2: *The two words that close this verse are most significant. Satvati means "transcendental." Sruti ("that which is to be heard") is a term reserved for Vedic texts; Srila Prabhupada here translates sruti as "essence of the Vedas." In Srimad-Bhagavata-tatparya 4 Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura provides an elaborate explanation of the term Satvati and why Srimad-Bhagavatam is the original Vedic samhita, or sruti:*

In ancient times, there was only one community of men, known as *hamsa*. The best among these were known as *paramahamsas*, or travelers on the path of spiritual life. Previously, Vaishnavas were referred to as *paramahamsa*. When we study the ancient history of the *bhagavata-sampradaya*, we come to know about these *mahamsa* and *paramahamsas*. They followed a process that was known as *ekäyana*. Because *Srimad-*

Bhagavatam was the subject matter for discussion of *paramahamsas*, it is also known as *pāramahamsa-samhita*.

Samhita refers to a compiled literature. The accumulation of knowledge from the five different sources found among the followers of *ekayana* is called *pancaratras*. *Puskara*, *Hayasirsa*, and *Narada-pancaratras* are in this category. A worshiper of the Supreme Lord is known as *Bhagavata*. I am speaking about the time previous to when Srila Vyasadeva had spoken *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to Sri Sukadeva at Samyaprasa. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* was first spoken by Sri Narayana to the great sage, Narada. [**This took place at the village of Kalapagrama in the Himalayas, as recounted by Srila Sukadeva in Chapter 87 of Canto 10, texts 4-48—editorial note.**] Narada then related it to Vyasadeva, who spoke it to Sukadeva. From that time onwards, it has been known as *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Before that, it was known as *Paramahamsa-satvata-samhita*.

From the writings of Srila Vyasadeva, we hear of literature like *Paramahamsa-samhita* and *Satvata-samhita*. Vedavyasa composed the *Puranas* to make the understanding of the Vedas easy. The *Puranas* are full of ancient histories. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, composed by Srila Vyasadeva, is also one of the *Puranas* but it is the only literature that supports the *ekayana* system and so it is also known as a *Pancaratra*.

There are two main branches of the Vedas—the *Ekayana* (one-path) branch and the *Bahvayana* (many-path) branch. The *Paramahamsa-bhagavatas* who belong to the *Acyuta-gotra* are counted as members of the *ekayana* branch. The sages from the *Cyuta-gotra* are counted as members of the *bahvayana* branch. These two branches, *ekayana* and *bahvayana*, are completely different from each other. In the *ekayana* system, the worship of the one Supreme Lord is encouraged. When the understanding of spiritual truth becomes distorted in due course of time, the division of the Vedas and *varnas* come into existence.

Before *Treta-yuga*, there was no division of *varnas*. Everyone was in the category of *hamsa*. As enviousness toward Vaishnavas gradually became prominent, the Vedas were divided and the one community of *hamsa* became divided into different *varnas*, headed by the *brahmanas*.

Let me go back to ancient times. The *hamsa* community used to live in that part of present-day Asia that is situated near the Kasyapa Lake, now called the Caspian Sea [**in the region of modern-day Iran—editorial note**]. At that time, they were known as Aryans. [**Aryan > Iran—ed. not.**] Because they were engaged in the worship of demigods, such as the fire-god, they considered the worship of Lord Vishnu to be similar to that of the worship of the demigods. Worship of the demigods, along with the offering of prayers, is found in various scriptures, such as the Vedas and the Samhitas. One who wants to properly understand *Srimad-Bhagavatam* should know this, otherwise, one will certainly consider *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to be just another medieval book.

Srimad-Bhagavatam is the only Veda that propounds the *ekayana* system. Words like *ekayana*, *Mahabharata* and *pancaratras* are found in the *Upanisads*. If one studies the history of the world before the appearance of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, he will know that human beings were civilized worshipers of the Supreme Lord even before the time of the *Rig-veda*. People in ancient times were spontaneous devotees of Lord Vishnu and they remained fixed in the philosophy of Vaishnavism. In the beginning of *Treta-yuga*, the *ekayana* system became obscured and the Vedas were divided.

The *ekayana* system is more or less extinct at present but if a study is carefully made, one will come to the conclusion that before the Vedic age, devotional service to Lord Vishnu was prominent among the people. Other paths and opinions began to spread only from the beginning of the *Treta-yuga*. It is not that there were Buddhists and Jains in our country long, long ago. In ancient times, there were devoted *brahmanas* that were only interested in the topics of devotional service to Lord Vishnu. Descendants of these *brahmanas* nowadays identify themselves as *Sasvatis* or *Satasatis*, which is a corruption of the word *Satvati*,

Before the arrival of five kinds of *brahmanas* from Kanyakubja, there were many *Satvata* or Vaishnava *brahmanas* in Bengal. Due to the strong influence of the atheistic philosophy of Buddhism, the spreading of the Vaishnava religion became more or less

checked. And yet, despite facing various obstacles, the ancient religion is again being propagated extensively, by the mercy of the Lord.]

18.1.2. continued [Jiva Gosvami concludes]: And in fact that Vyasa composed the *Bhagavata* only after completing all of the other *Puranas*, as stated earlier, can be verified by examining the dialogue between Vyasa and Narada, recorded in the first *skandha*.

18.1.3. More evidence: in *Srimad-Bhagavata-tatparya* 3. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura leaves no doubt about the relation of other Vedic scriptures to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

One should discuss Vedic literature as being subordinate to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Whatever one studies—be it literature such as, *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Kaṭha*, the *Samhitas*, the *Kalpas*, grammar, astrology or any other field of knowledge—if he keeps the Supreme Lord in the center then all his knowledge will become transcendental, otherwise it will be mundane.

18.2. *Adhyaya-prakasika* (Chapter Eighteen at a glance):

Suta Goswami begins by describing Maharaja Pariksit's life which contains wonderful dealings with Kṛṣṇa. (1-5)

Suta leaves no doubt that Pariksit was powerful enough to conquer over and fully subdue Kali. Yet the king understood realistically that the coming of the age of quarrel was due, since Lord Kṛṣṇa had departed the earth. He also understood that the self-controlled had nothing to fear from Kali's influence. Still, as king, it was his duty to protect the foolish and careless from that influence. (6-9)

The sages glorify Suta and the importance of hearing about Kṛṣṇa from great devotees. They then request Suta to describe the pastimes of the Lord, especially the topics upon which Maharaja Pariksit fixed his mind and, by such consciousness, attained Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. (10-17)

Suta first explains the process of purification through hearing about Kṛṣṇa. He then relates Kṛṣṇa's exalted qualities. (18-23)

Next Suta tells how Maharaja Pariksit insulted Samika Rsi by placing a dead snake around the meditating sage's neck. (24-31)

After discovering this insult to his father, the *brahmana*'s son Srngi cursed Maharaja Parikshit to die in seven days, even though his father dismissed the insult as minor. When he came to know the vengeful act of his offspring, Samika Rsi lamented. (32-37)

Samika Rsi prayed to the Supreme Lord to forgive Srngi for his foolishness. (38-46)

18.3. *Slokanusaranam* (summary study of the verse translations).

Gosvami Suta speaks thus to the sages assembled at Naimisharanya: “Let us consider Sri Krsna’s special mercy upon Maharaja Parikshit. When he was a mere embryo in his mother’s womb he was struck by Ashvatthama’s weapon. The Lord protected him even then. Much later, when Parikshit was cursed by a furious young *brahmana* to be bitten by a snake-bird, the king was unmoved by fear. This was because he was always consciously surrendered to the Personality of Godhead. Accepting the curse as the will of the Lord, Maharaja Parikshit renounced his near and dear ones and surrendered himself as a disciple of the son of Vyasa, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami. Thus he became fully cognizant of the transcendental position of the Supreme Lord. Parikshit fully dedicated his life to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead. Never once did he forget the lotus feet of the Lord. Those who always remember those lotus feet never run the risk of being overwhelmed by misconceptions, even during the last moments of their lives. As long as this great, powerful son of Abhimanyu remained emperor of the world, there was no chance the personality of Kali would flourish. Kali promotes all kinds of irreligious activities, and the very day and moment Sri Krsna departed the earth, this purveyor of sinfulness tried to assert his ungodly influence throughout the world. Yet Maharaja Parikshit had no personal enmity toward Kali; indeed, he knew well that in this age, auspiciousness produces immediate good effects while inauspicious acts must be physically undertaken before their bad reactions can manifest. (1-7) [*Nimesa 3: in 7p Srila Prabhupada explains—*

The age of Kali is called the fallen age. In this fallen age, because the living beings are in an awkward position, the Supreme Lord has given some special facilities to them. So by the will of the Lord, a living being does not become a victim of a sinful act until the act is actually performed. In other ages, simply by thinking of performing a sinful act, one used to become a victim of the act. On the contrary, a living being in this age is awarded with the results of pious acts

simply by thinking of them. Maharaja Pariksit, being the most learned and experienced king by the grace of the Lord, was not unnecessarily envious of the personality of Kali because he did not intend to give him any chance to perform any sinful act. He protected his subjects from falling prey to the sinful acts of the age of Kali, and at the same time he gave full facility to the age of Kali by allotting him some particular places. At the end of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* it is said that even though all nefarious activities of the personality of Kali are present, there is a great advantage in the age of Kali. One can attain salvation simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Thus Maharaja Pariksit made an organized effort to propagate the chanting of the Lord's holy name, and thus he saved the citizens from the clutches all good for the age of Kali. In the Vedas also it is said that by discourse on Lord Krsna's activities, one can get rid of all the disadvantages of the age of Kali. In the beginning of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* it is also said that by the recitation of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the Supreme Lord becomes at once arrested within one's heart. These are some of the great advantages of the age of Kali, and Maharaja Pariksit took all the advantages and did not think any ill of the age of Kali, true to his Vaisnavite cult.]

18.3 continued: “Though self-controlled (*dhira*) persons have nothing to fear from Kali,” Suta Gosvami continues, “Maharaja Parikshit felt responsible for his less intelligent subjects. As a worthy representative of the high-born *ksatriya* nature, the king, though as powerful and ferocious as a tiger, was caring toward the careless and foolish. O sages, as you did ask me, now I have described almost everything regarding the narrations about Lord Krsna in connection with the history of the pious Maharaja Pariksit. The topics I relate here today ensure complete success in life for those who simply submissively receive them.” (8-10)

The sages at Naimisharanya reply, "O Suta Gosvami, because you speak very nicely about the activities of Lord Krishna, may you live for many years and have eternal fame,. For mortal beings like us, your words are just like nectar. We have just begun the performance of this sacrifice, without certainty of its results, due to the many imperfections in our actions. Although our bodies have become black from the smoke, we find ourselves doubtlessly pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, that you distribute among us by your talks. (11-12) [**Nimesa 4a:** in *Bhakti-sandarbha Anuccheda 99, Srila Jiva Gosvami comments as follows on the statement of the sages in verse 12—*

3 The words *asmin karmani* mean "in this sacrifice" and *anasvase* means "without certainty of result". The result is uncertain because of the presence of many unknown factors. The result is uncertain as, for example, it is in agriculture . However, it is said here that the result of performing devotional service is certain. The phrase *dhuma-dhumratmanam* means "our bodies and minds have become dirtied by the smoke". The word here is in the genitive case. It means "of us". That is the meaning.

Devotional service on the other hand is completely dependable

4 Here *pada-padmasavam* means "the nectar of the lotus feet" and *madhu* means "honey". The two activities being compared are:

- a. the fruitive activity of this sacrifice and
- b. devotional service, where there is hearing the glories of the Lord.

The sages here say, "These non-devotional fruitive activities have made us unhappy". In this way the superiority of devotional service is established.

5 This is also described in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (12.12.54):

The great endeavour (*parisrama*) one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the *varnasrama* system, in performing austerities, and in hearing from the Vedas culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. But by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet.

Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.22) again explains:

Certainly therefore, since time immemorial, all transcendentalists have been rendering devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, with great delight, because such devotional service is enlivening to the self.]

[Nimesa 4b: in his purport to 1.18.12 Srila Prabhupada concludes—

The sages of Naimisaranya were practically sufferers from the smoke of a sacrificial fire and were doubtful about the result, but by hearing from a realized person like Suta Gosvami, they were fully satisfied. In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purana*, Visnu tells Siva that in the age of Kali, men full of anxieties of various kinds can vainly labor in fruitive activity and philosophical speculations, but when they are engaged in devotional service, the result is sure and certain, and there is no loss of energy. In other words, nothing performed for

spiritual realization or for material benefit can be successful without the devotional service to the Lord.]

18.3. continued: The sages proceed to voice to an important verse. "The value of a moment's association with a devotee of the Lord cannot be compared even to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and so what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are meant for those who are destined to die." (13) [**Nimesa 5a:** in 13p Srila Prabhupada summarizes the cause of the sages' good fortune at Naimasaranya:

Devotional service is eternal; it has no end, because it is spiritual. Therefore, since the assets of a pure devotee are completely different from material assets, there is no comparison between the two. Suta Gosvami was a pure devotee of the Lord, and therefore his association with the *rsis* in Naimisaranya is unique. In the material world, association with gross materialists is veritably condemned. The materialist is called *yosit-sangi*, or one who is much attached to material entanglement (women and other paraphernalia). Such attachment is conditioned because it drives away the benedictions of life and prosperity. And just the opposite is *bhagavata-sangi*, or one who is always in the association with the Lord's name, form, qualities, etc. Such association is always desirable; it is worshipable, it is praiseworthy, and one may accept it as the highest goal of life.]

[**Nimesa 5b:** a doubt regarding the transcendence of bhagavata-sanga is dealt with by Jiva Gosvami in Anuccheda 134 of Bhakti-sandarbha. The doubt is, if bhagavata-sanga is transcendental, it must be nirguna. Yet the Lord seems to prefer to associate with the gunas embodied by the demigods; at the same time He seems to disdain the gunas embodied by the asuras. Srila Jiva launches into this discussion by citing Bhag. 1.18.13:

10 "The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death."

11 To be freed from the influence of the three modes of material nature is best, so therefore association with a devotee who is free from the influence of the modes is the best kind of association with a devotee.

In *Srimad Bhagavatam* 7.1.1., King Pariksit asks the following question:

My dear *brahmana*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, being everyone's well-wisher is equal and extremely dear to everyone. How, then, did He become partial like a common man for the sake of Indra and thus kill Indra's enemies? How can a person equal to everyone be partial to some and inimical toward others?

12 The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not give His real mercy to the demigods and others still under the spell of the three modes of material nature. **He gives His real mercy only to the great souls, such as Prahlada, who are free from the spell of the modes. By associating with such devotees one also becomes free from the spell of the three modes of nature. When one has thus shaken off the influence of the modes, he can engage in real devotional service.** This is described by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself in these words spoken to Uddhava (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 11.25.33):

13 Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in loving service to Me.

14 The assertion that knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is *nirguna* should be understood in the secondary sense of "free from the influence of the three modes of material nature" and not in the primary sense of "not having any qualities". The impersonal conception of God imagines that God has no qualities. This idea is *nirguna* in the primary sense. The personal and impersonal features of God are both *nirguna*, but it is the personal feature of God that is *nirguna* in the sense of being free from the three modes of material nature. Indeed, the impersonal idea of God is a product of the material mode of goodness and the personal idea of God is free from the spell of the modes as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself explains in the following words (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 11.25.29):

Happiness derived from the self is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental.]

[Nimesa 5c: in Srimad-Bhagavata-tatparya 3, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura expounds upon the meaning of nirguna in reference to the personal form of the Lord—

The Supreme Lord is not a product of material goodness or passion. He is fully transcendental to the material modes of nature. Therefore, the *śāstra* has addressed Him as *nirguṇa*. *Nirguṇa* does not merely mean that He is beyond the three modes of material nature, for it indicates that He possesses unlimited spiritual qualities. The Supreme Lord is *adhokṣaja*, which means that His

activities are not under the control of the material time factor. The nature of *adhokṣaja* is, “beyond the reach of direct perception, indirect perception, and immediate perception.”]

[Nimesa 5d: In Priti-sandarbhā Anuccheda 112-113, Jiva Gosvami makes clear what the phrase “that transcendental happiness found within Me” means, from Bhag. 11.25.29, a verse he cited above in his explanation of the term nirguna. Jiva Gosvami draws a complete definition of transcendental happiness from Bhag. 1.18.13 and other verses in the First Canto.

Anuccheda 112:

The devotees dear to the Lord are described in these words of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.18.13):

tulayama lavenapi . .

The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death.

In this way it is seen that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the object of love (*visaya*) and He is also the primary cause (*alambana*) that makes the devotees fall in love with Him. By following the path that begins with hearing about the Lord, the devotees attain love (*priti*) for Him. The word *visaya* may mean either the person who loves or the person who is loved. It is said in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.16.5-6):

*tat kathyatam maha-bhaga
yadi kṛṣṇa-kathacrayam
athavasya padambhoja-
makaranda-liham satam*

Please describe all these incidents if they relate to the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The devotees of the Lord are accustomed to licking up the honey available from the lotus feet of the Lord.

By associating with the Supreme Lord, one falls in love with Him. In this way the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the primary cause (*alambana*) of ecstatic love for Him. The secondary causes (*uddipana*) of ecstatic love are different. The Lord's dear devotees, who are of two kinds, namely the devotees who have the same desire (*savasana*) and the devotees who have different desires (*bhinna-vasana*), are also objects (*visaya*) of ecstatic love. The devotees are also the reservoirs of love (*adhara*) for the Lord. However, one's material friends and kinsmen are not the causes of attaining love of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, the devotees do not pray to attain love for their friends and kinsmen. Rather they pray only to love the Supreme Lord. That they do not pray to attain love for their friends and kinsmen is seen in these words of Queen Kuntī in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.8.41):

atha vicveca vicvatman
vicva-murte sva-kesu me
sneha-pacam imam chindhi
drdham pandusu vrsnisu

○ Lord of the universe, soul of the universe, ○ personality of the form of the universe, please, therefore, sever my tie of affection for my kinsmen, the Pandavas and the Vrsnis.

Anuccheda 113

The love the devotees pray to attain is described in these words of Queen Kunti in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.8.42):

tvayi me 'nanya-visaya
matir madhu-pate'sakrt
ratim udvahatad addha
gaggevaugham udanvati

○ Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.]

18.3. continued: The sages complete their reply to Suta Gosvami by saying, “The Personality of Godhead is *prayanasya*, the exclusive shelter for all great living beings. His transcendental attributes (*gunanam agunasya*) cannot even be measured by such masters of mystic powers as Lord Siva and Lord Brahma. Can anyone who is expert in relishing nectar (*rasavit*) ever be fully satiated by hearing topics about Him? You, Suta, are a learned and pure devotee of the Lord. As such you are *bhagavat-pradhana*—the Personality of Godhead is your chief object of service. And so we beg to hear from you the pastimes of the Lord, for they are *visuddham*, above the material modes. We are anxious (*susrusatam*) to receive such messages by which Maharaja Pariksit, whose intelligence was fixed on liberation, attained the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of Garuda, the king of birds. Those topics were vibrated by the son of Vyasa to Maharaja Parikshit, and because they are about Ananta, the Unlimited, they are purifying and supreme. They are *bhagavat-abhirama*, most dear to the pure devotees, being *ati-adbhuta yoga-nistham*, wonderfully full of *bhakti-yoga*. (14-17) [*Nimesa 6: Srila Prabhupada remarks in 14p:*

Now *Bhagavata-saptahas* are held for seven days only, and after finishing the show, both the audience and the speaker become engaged in material

activities as usual. They can do so because the speaker is not *bhagavat-pradhana* and the audience is not *susrusatam*, as explained above.]

18.3. continued: In response to this praise from the sages Suta Gosvami humbly says, "I am born in a mixed caste. Simply by serving and following the great souls who are advanced in knowledge, I was promoted in birthright. All disqualifications resulting from a lower birth can immediately be cleansed away by merely conversing with such great personalities. After all, who is really worthy in this world of/ the holy name Mukunda ("the giver of liberation") other than the Lord Himself? When Brahmaji welcomed Lord Siva, he did so with water blessed by the touch of the lotus toenails of the Supreme Lord. This water (the Ganges) purifies everyone in the universe, including 'Isa' [a name of Lord Siva]. O *rishis*, birds fly in the sky as far as their capacity allows. I shall try to describe the transcendental pastimes of the Lord as far as my realization permits." (18-23) [***Nimesa 7a: in 18p Srila Prabhupada writes:***

Suta Gosvami learned the science of Krsna from great *rshis* and authorities like Sukadeva and Vyasadeva and he was so qualified that even the sages of Naimisaranya eagerly wanted to hear from him the science of Krsna in the form of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. So he had the double association of great souls by hearing and preaching. Transcendental science, or the science of Krsna, has to be learned from the authorities, and when one preaches the science, he becomes still more qualified. So Suta Gosvami had both the advantages, and thus undoubtedly he was completely freed from all disqualifications of low birth and mental agonies. This verse definitely proves that Srila Sukadeva Gosvami did not refuse to teach Suta Gosvami about the transcendental science nor did the sages of Naimisaranya refuse to hear lessons from him because of his inferior birth. This means that thousands of years ago there was no bar to learning or preaching the transcendental science because of inferior birth. The rigidity of the so-called caste system in Hindu society became prominent within only one hundred years or so when the number of *dvija-bandhus*, or disqualified men in the families of higher castes, increased. Lord Sri Caitanya revived the original Vedic system, and He elevated Thakura Haridasa to the position of *namacarya*, or the authority in preaching the glories of the holy name of the Lord, although His Holiness Srila Haridasa Thakura was pleased to appear in a family of Mohammedans.

Such is the power of pure devotees of the Lord. The Ganges water is accepted as pure, and one can become purified after taking a bath in the waters of the Ganges. But as far as the great devotees of the Lord are concerned, they can purify a degraded soul even by being seen by the lowborn, and what to speak of association. Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to purify the whole atmosphere of the polluted world by sending qualified preachers all over the world, and it remains with the Indians to take up this task scientifically and thus do the best kind of humanitarian work. The mental diseases of the present generation are more acute than bodily diseases; it is quite fit and proper to take up the preaching of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* all over the world without delay.]

[*Nimesa 7b*: Concerning the reference to “Isa” (Siva) made by Suta in verse 21, Srila Jiva Gosvami remarks in Paramatma-sandarbha Anuccheda 17:

Lord Sadasiva is thus a direct expansion of Lord Visnu. Therefore the words of *Srimad Bhagavatam* 1.18.21 refer not to Him, but to the demigod Siva.]

18.3. continued: Suta Gosvami commences with the narrative of how Parikshit Maharaja was cursed. Once, while giving chase to deer in the forest, Maharaja Parikshit became very tired, hungry and thirsty. He paused from the hunt to search for water. So doing, he came to the ashram of a well-known *rishi* named Shamika, a descendent of Angira. Entering the *rishi's* cottage, Maharaja Parikshit found him sitting silently with his eyes closed. In fact Shamika Rishi was in *samadhi* (trance), his senses, breath, mind and intelligence suspended from external perception. When he saw the sage, who had long matted hair and was dressed in deerskin, Maharaja Parikshit requested some water, for his mouth was extremely parched because of thirst. But the *rishi* offered him neither a seat of straw on the ground, nor *arghya* (water for reception), nor sweet words. When a host presents none of these, it is to be understood his intention is to neglect his guest. Anger therefore entered the king's mind. (24-28) [*Nimesa 8*; in 28p Srila Prabhupada writes,

When Maharaja Parikshit entered the door of Samika Rsi, he did not expect a royal reception by the *rsi* because he knew that saints and *rsis* are not materially rich men. But he never expected that a seat of straw, a glass of water and some sweet words would be denied to him. He was not an ordinary guest, nor was he an enemy of the *rsi*, and therefore the cold reception by the *rsi* astonished the King greatly. As a matter of fact, the King was right to get angry with the *rsi* when he needed a glass of water very badly. To become angry in such a grave situation was not unnatural for the King, but because the King himself was not less than a great saint, his becoming angry and taking action were astonishing. So it must be accepted that it was so ordained by the supreme will of the Lord. The King was a great devotee of the Lord, and the saint was also as good as the King. But by the will of the Lord, the circumstances were so created that they became ways to the King's becoming unattached to family connection and governmental activities and thus becoming a completely surrendered soul unto the lotus feet of Lord Krsna. The merciful Lord sometimes creates such awkward positions for his pure devotees in order to drag them towards Himself from the mire of material existence. But outwardly the situations appear to be frustrating to the devotees. The devotees of the Lord are always under the protection of the Lord, and in any condition, frustration or success, the Lord is the supreme guide for the devotees. The pure devotees, therefore, accept all conditions of frustration as blessings from the Lord.]

18.3 continued: While walking out of the cottage, his mind provoked by anger, Maharaja Parikshit chanced to see a dead snake lying near the door. He picked it up with the end of his bow and hung it as a garland around Shamika Rishi's neck. Then Parikshit departed for Hastinapura. Back in his palace, the king began to contemplate

and argue within himself whether the sage had actually been in meditation, with senses concentrated and eyes closed, or whether he had just been feigning trance just to avoid receiving a lower *ksatriya*. (20-31) [**Nimesa 9**: in 31p Srila Prabhupada explains:

Repentance comes in the mind of a good soul as soon as he commits something wrong. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura and Srila Jiva Gosvami do not believe that the King's action was due to his past misdeeds. The arrangement was so made by the Lord just to call the King back home, back to Godhead.

According to Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti, the plan was made by the will of the Lord, and by the will of the Lord the situation of frustration was created. The plan was that for his so-called misdeed the King could be cursed by an inexperienced *brahmana* boy infected by the influence of Kali, and thus the King would leave his hearth and home for good. His connections with Srila Sukadeva Gosvami would enable the presentation of the great *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, which is considered to be the book incarnation of the Lord.]

18.3 continued: Shamika Rishi had a young son named Shringi, who was very powerful due to his *brahma-tejas*. While playing with other boys of the same age, the inexperienced Shringi heard about how the king had insulted his father. Enraged, the boy denounced Emperor Parikshit by comparing him to a crow that lives off scraps from a kitchen or a watchdog that guards the door, "Just see how this so-called ruler has turned against his master. On what grounds can a dog enter the home and claim to dine with the owner on the same plate? So soon after the departure of Lord Krishna these upstarts have already begun to flourish! Since our Lord and protector is gone and the *ksatriya* enforcer of law in this kingdom is himself corrupt, I shall personally have to take up the matter and punish the wrongdoer. Just witness my power!" Eyes red with fury, Shringi touched water from the River Kaushika and then cursed Maharaja Parikshit: "On the seventh day from today, Takshaka will bite this most wretched descendent of the royal dynasty for impudently overstepping his authority by insulting my father." (32-37) [**Nimesa 10**: In 37p Srila Prabhupada reveals that the hand of the personality of Kali was behind Shringi's curse:

Thus the beginning of the misuse of brahminical power began, and gradually the *brahmanas* in the age of Kali became devoid of both brahminical powers and culture. The *brahmana* boy considered Maharaja Parikshit to be *kulangara*, or the wretched of the dynasty, but factually the *brahmana* boy himself was so because only from him did the *brahmana* caste become powerless, like the snake whose poisoned teeth are broken. The snake is fearful as long as his poison teeth are there, otherwise he is fearful only to children. The personality of Kali conquered the *brahmana* boy first, and gradually the other castes. Thus the whole scientific system of the orders of society in this age has assumed the

form of a vitiated caste system, which is now being uprooted by another class of men similarly influenced by the age of Kali. One should see to the root cause of vitiation and not try to condemn the system as it is, without knowledge of its scientific value.]

18.3 continued: The boy returned home to find his father seated with a dead snake draped over his shoulders. Aggrieved at this sight, and troubled from within by the dawning realization that his cursing the king was a terrible mistake, Shringi began to cry out loud to relieve his burning heart. Shamika Rishi gradually opened his eyes at the sound of his son's grief. He saw the dead snake that hung around his shoulders, then cast it aside. Shamika asked, "My dear son, why are you crying? Has anyone harmed you?" (38-40)

In response, Shringi explained all that had happened. Hearing how and why the king was cursed, Shamika Rishi was shocked. He exclaimed, "Alas! What a greatly sinful act this son of mine has done! For an insignificant offense he squandered his brahminical potency to wreak extreme vengeance upon a Narendra, a member of the royal class worshipable by the populace as the best of human beings." Gravely addressing the boy, the great sage said: "You are my son, blessed by good birth and education, but your intelligence is not mature. You fail to understand that our king is the foremost of mankind. Indeed he is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Only by the power of his protection do the citizens live in peace and prosperity. As *brahmanas* our Deity is Sri Krsna, who personally took up a chariot wheel in His hand to defend our king's illustrious grandfather. Godhead is represented by the dharmic monarchy. If that monarchy is terminated, rogues and thieves will overrun the world to vanquish the unprotected subjects as easily as a lion kills scattered lambs. If we, the *brahmanas*, destroy the monarchical regime, the responsibility for the terrible social disruptions that follow will fall on our heads. The God-given system of *varnashrama* will dissolve, reducing the general population to the level of dogs and monkeys. What is more, Emperor Parikshit is celebrated as a first-class devotee of the Lord. He is not only a worthy governor, but among kings he is a saint. Such a rare soul never deserves to be cursed. My dear son, I can only pray to the Supreme Lord that He may pardon you for having cursed a sinless person." (41-47)

Shamika Rishi was stunned by the realization that although a *ksatriya* has the right to defend himself from unwarranted aggression by even a *brahmana*—and certainly it was within Maharaja Parikshit’s power to counteract Shringi’s curse—devotees are so forbearing that they never take revenge; even when cursed, cheated, defamed, neglected or disturbed. To complicate the matter even further, the Lord never excuses offenders of His devotees, whomever they might be. "If the king were to counter-curse my son," thought the *rishi*, "then this foolish boy might get relief from his sinful reaction. The saintly Parikshit will certainly not do so, however. The only hope is to appeal to the Lord on the grounds that this offense was committed by an ignorant child." The sage did not at all take the offense of the king seriously. (48-50) **[Nimesa 11: in 49p Srila Prabhupada sums up the actual situation:**

The whole incident is now cleared up. Maharaja Pariksit's garlanding the sage with a dead snake was not at all a very serious offense, but Srngi's cursing the King was a serious offense. The serious offense was committed by a foolish child only; therefore he deserved to be pardoned by the Supreme Lord, although it was not possible to get free from the sinful reaction. Maharaja Pariksit also did not mind the curse offered to him by a foolish *brahmana*. On the contrary, he took full advantage of the awkward situation, and by the great will of the Lord, Maharaja Pariksit achieved the highest perfection of life through the grace of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami. Actually it was the desire of the Lord, and Maharaja Pariksit, Rsi Samika and his son Srngi were all instrumental in fulfilling the desire of the Lord. So none of them were put into difficulty because everything was done in relation with the Supreme Person.

18.4. Vritti (commentary) on Question Twenty-five of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, asked by the sages to Srila Suta Gosvami.

Question Twenty-five: The sages, eager to hear about Krsna, declare that those expert in tasting *rasa* find no end to the relish of the nectar of Srimad-Bhagavatam; they therefore request Suta Gosvami, "Please describe those topics of the Lord by which Maharaja Pariksit, whose intelligence was fixed on liberation, attained the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of Garuda, the king of birds. Those topics were vibrated by the son of Vyasa [Srila Sukadeva]." (11-17)

8.4.1. Suta Gosvami’s answer to Question Twenty-five spans the rest of Srimad-Bhagavatam.

8.4.2. That the sages intended by their question to hear the whole of the *Bhagavatam* from Suta as it was heard by King Parikshit from Sukadeva Gosvami is confirmed by this passage from 14p:

There is no end to such transcendental discourses. In mundane affairs there is the law of satiation, but in transcendence there is no such satiation. Suta Gosvami desired to continue the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa before the sages of Naimiṣaranya, and the sages also expressed their readiness to hear from him continuously. Since the Lord is transcendence and His attributes are transcendental, such discourses increase the receptive mood of the purified audience.

18.5. *Parisistam* (appendix)

18.5.1, *Vinodakam* (items of special interest for students working towards a *Bhaktivaibhava* degree).

18.5.1.1. A verse from this chapter often cited by Srila Prabhupada:

SĀDHU-SAṄGA

SB 1.18.13

tulayāma lavenāpi

na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam

bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya

martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ

tulayāma—to be balanced with; *lavena*—by a moment; *api*—even; *na*—never; *svargam*—heavenly planets; *na*—nor; *apunaḥ-bhavam*—liberation from matter; *bhagavat-saṅgi*—devotee of the Lord; *saṅgasya*—of the association; *martyānām*—those who are meant for death; *kim*—what is there; *uta*—to speak of; *āśiṣaḥ*—worldly benediction.

The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death.

18.5.1.2. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura includes these 2 verses from this chapter of the *Bhagavatam* in his *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*, Chapter 5 (*bhagavata-sakti-tattvam*, “The Essential Nature of the Energies of the Lord”) in the *prayojana* division of the book:

01.18.19

Suta Gosvami to Saunaka Rsi

And what to speak of those who are under the direction of the great devotees, chanting the holy name of the Unlimited, who has unlimited potency? The Personality of Godhead, unlimited in potency and transcendental by attributes, is called the *ananta* [Unlimited].

01.18.14

Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami

The Personality of Godhead, Lord Krsna [Govinda], is the exclusive shelter for all great living beings, and His transcendental attributes cannot even be measured by such masters of mystic powers as Lord Siva and Lord Brahma. Can anyone who is expert in relishing nectar [rasa] ever be fully satiated by hearing topics about Him?

18.5.1.3. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura includes this verse in *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*, Chapter 11 (*abidheya-vicara*, “Analysis of the Process”) in the *abidheya* division of the book:

01.18.12

Sages to Suta Gosvami

We have just begun the performance of this fruitive activity, a sacrificial fire, without certainty of its result due to the many imperfections in our action. Our bodies have become black from the smoke, but we are factually pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Govinda, which you are distributing.

18.5.1.4. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura includes this verse in *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*, Chapter 15 (*bhakti anukulya vicara*, “Analysis for Favorable Conditions of Bhakti”) in the *abidheya* division of the book:

01.18.13

Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami

The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death.

18.5.2. *Parisistam* (appendix) continued—excerpts from Srila Prabhupada’s purports to this chapter:

Who is Narayana Parayana? 2p:

A self-surrendered devotee of the Lord is called *narayana-parayana*. Such a person is never afraid of any place or person, not even of death. For him nothing is as important as the Supreme Lord, and thus he gives equal importance to heaven and hell. He knows well that both heaven and hell are creations of the Lord, and similarly life and death are different conditions of existence created by the Lord. But in all conditions and in all circumstances, remembrance of Narayana is essential. The *narayana-parayana* practices this constantly. Maharaja Pariksit was such a pure devotee. He was wrongfully cursed by an inexperienced son of a *brahmana*, who was under the influence of Kali, and Maharaja Pariksit took this to be sent by Narayana. He knew that Narayana (Lord Krsna) had saved him when he was burned in the womb of his mother, and if he were to be killed by a snake bite, it would also take place by the will of the Lord. The devotee never goes against the will of the Lord; anything sent by God is a blessing for the devotee. Therefore Maharaja Pariksit was neither afraid of nor bewildered by such things. That is the sign of a pure devotee of the Lord.

Ajita as known through Gita and Bhagavatam. 3p:

The word *ajita* is significant here. The Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, is known as Ajita, or unconquerable, and He is so in every respect. No one can know His actual position. He is unconquerable by knowledge also. We have heard about His *dhama*, or place, eternal Goloka Vrndavana, but there are many scholars who interpret this abode in

different ways. But by the grace of a spiritual master like Sukadeva Gosvami, unto whom the King gave himself up as a most humble disciple, one is able to understand the actual position of the Lord, His eternal abode, and His transcendental paraphernalia in that *dhama*, or abode. Knowing the transcendental position of the Lord and the transcendental method by which one can approach that transcendental *dhama*, the King was confident about his ultimate destination, and by knowing this he could leave aside everything material, even his own body, without any difficulty of attachment. In the *Bhagavad-gita*, it is stated, *param drstva nivartate*: one can give up all connection with material attachment when one is able to see the *param*, or the superior quality of things. From *Bhagavad-gita* we understand the quality of the Lord's energy that is superior to the material quality of energy, and by the grace of a bona fide spiritual master like Sukadeva Gosvami, it is quite possible to know everything of the superior energy of the Lord by which the Lord manifests His eternal name, quality, pastimes, paraphernalia and variegatedness. Unless one thoroughly understands this superior or eternal energy of the Lord, it is not possible to leave the material energy, however one may theoretically speculate on the true nature of the Absolute Truth. By the grace of Lord Krsna, Maharaja Pariksit was able to receive the mercy of such a personality as Sukadeva Gosvami, and thus he was able to know the actual position of the unconquerable Lord. It is very difficult to find the Lord from the Vedic literatures, but it is very easy to know Him by the mercy of a liberated devotee like Sukadeva Gosvami.

What determines the quality of Vedic sound? 4p:

The highest perfection of life is attained by remembering the transcendental nature of the Lord at the last moment of one's life. This perfection of life is made possible by one who has learned the actual transcendental nature of the Lord from the Vedic hymns sung by a liberated soul like Sukadeva Gosvami or someone in that line of disciplic succession. There is no gain in hearing the Vedic hymns from some mental speculator. When the same is heard from an actual self-realized soul and is properly understood by service and submission, everything becomes transparently clear.

Ever-vigilant Kali versus ever-vigilant saintly kings. 5p:

As we have already explained, the personality of Kali had entered the jurisdiction of this earth long ago, and he was looking for an opportunity to spread his influence all over the world. But he could not do so satisfactorily due to the presence of Maharaja Pariksit. That is the way of good government. The disturbing elements like the personality of Kali will always try to extend their nefarious

activities, but it is the duty of the able state to check them by all means. Although Maharaja Pariksit allotted places for the personality of Kali, at the same time he gave no chance for the citizens to be swayed by the personality of Kali.

Modern communications technology favorable for world-wide sankirtana. 7p:

In modernized human society there are great advancements of material science, and they have invented the radio to distribute sound in the air. So instead of vibrating some nuisance sound for sense enjoyment, if the state arranges to distribute transcendental sound by resounding the holy name, fame and activities of the Lord, as they are authorized in the *Bhagavad-gita* or *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, then a favorable condition will be created, the principles of religion in the world will be reestablished, and thus the executive heads, who are so anxious to drive away corruption from the world, will be successful. Nothing is bad if properly used for the service of the Lord.

Ekayana-sruti. 15p:

The speaker on the transcendental activities of the Lord should have only one object of worship and service, Lord Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And the audience for such topics should be anxious to hear about Him. When such a combination is possible, namely a qualified speaker and a qualified audience, it is then and there very much congenial to continue discourses on the Transcendence.

Material liberation and transcendental liberation. 16p:

So there are many instances in the transcendental histories of the world of an impersonalist who has later become a devotee. But a devotee has never become an impersonalist. This very fact proves that on the transcendental steps, the step occupied by a devotee is higher than the step occupied by an impersonalist. It is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* (12.5) that persons stuck on the impersonal step undergo more sufferings than achievement of reality. Therefore knowledge imparted by Sukadeva Gosvami unto Maharaja Pariksit helped him attain the service of the Lord. And this stage of perfection is called *apavarga*, or the perfect stage of liberation. Simple knowledge of liberation is material knowledge. Actual freedom from material bondage is called liberation, but attainment of the transcendental service of the Lord is called the perfect stage of liberation.

Second birth (dvija) from the purifying womb of Hari Nama. 19p:

The *dvija-bandhu*, or the less intelligent, uncultured men born of higher castes, put forward many arguments against the lower-caste men becoming *brahmanas* in this life. They argue that birth in a family of *sudras* or less than *sudras* is made possible by one's previous sinful acts and that one therefore has to complete the terms of disadvantages due to lower birth. And to answer these false logicians, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* asserts that one who chants the holy name of the Lord under the direction of a pure devotee can at once get free from the disadvantages due to a lower-caste birth. A pure devotee of the Lord does not commit any offense while chanting the holy name of the Lord. There are ten different offenses in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. To chant the holy name under the direction of a pure devotee is offenseless chanting. Offenseless chanting of the holy name of the Lord is transcendental, and, therefore, such chanting can at once purify one from the effects of all kinds of previous sins. This offenseless chanting indicates that one has fully understood the transcendental nature of the holy name and has thus surrendered unto the Lord.

The Ekayana sampradayas versus Bahvayana wrong-headedness. 22p:

The conception of many gods in the Vedic literatures by the ignorant is completely wrong. The Lord is one without a second, but He expands Himself in many ways, and this is confirmed in the Vedas. Such expansions of the Lord are limitless, but some of them are the living entities. The living entities are not as powerful as the Lord's plenary expansions, and therefore there are two different types of expansions. Lord Brahma is generally one of the living entities, and Lord Siva is the via medium between the Lord and the living entities. In other words, even demigods like Lord Brahma and Lord Siva, who are the chief amongst all demigods, are never equal to or greater than Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The goddess of fortune, Laksmi, and all-powerful demigods like Brahma and Siva are engaged in the worship of Visnu or Lord Krsna; therefore who can be more powerful than Mukunda (Lord Krsna) to be factually called the Supreme Personality of Godhead? The goddess of fortune, Laksmiji, Lord Brahma and Lord Siva are not independently powerful; they are powerful as expansions of the Supreme Lord, and all of them are engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and so also are the living entities. There are four sects of worshipful devotees of the Lord, and the chief amongst them are the Brahma-sampradaya, Rudra-sampradaya and Sri-sampradaya, descending directly from Lord Brahma, Lord Siva and the goddess of fortune,

Laksmi, respectively. Besides the above-mentioned three *sampradayas*, there is the Kumara-sampradaya, descending from Sanat-kumara. All of the four original *sampradayas* are still scrupulously engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord up to date, and they all declare that Lord Krsna, Mukunda, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and no other personality is equal to Him or greater than Him.

Paramahamsa means non-envious. 22p:

Hamsas, or swans, accept only milk out of a mixture of milk and water. Similarly, those who accept the service of the Lord instead of *maya*'s service are called the *paramahamsas*. They are naturally qualified with all the good attributes, such as pridelessness, freedom from vanity, nonviolence, tolerance, simplicity, respectability, worship, devotion and sincerity. All these godly qualities exist in the devotee of the Lord spontaneously. Such *paramahamsas*, who are completely given up to the service of the Lord, are very rare. They are very rare even amongst the liberated souls. Real nonviolence means freedom from envy. In this world everyone is envious of his fellow being. But a perfect *paramahamsa*, being completely given up to the service of the Lord, is perfectly nonenvious. He loves every living being in relation with the Supreme Lord. Real renunciation means perfect dependence on God. Every living being is dependent on someone else because he is so made. Actually everyone is dependent on the mercy of the Supreme Lord, but when one forgets his relation with the Lord, he becomes dependent on the conditions of material nature. Renunciation means renouncing ones dependence on the conditions of material nature and thus becoming completely dependent on the mercy of the Lord. Real independence means complete faith in the mercy of the Lord without dependence on the conditions of matter. This paramahamsa stage is the highest perfectional stage in bhakti-yoga, the process of devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Shringi attained his power by the grace of King Parikshit's good government. 32p:

Due to Maharaja Parikshit's good government, even a boy of tender age, who was playing with other inexperienced boys, could become as powerful as a qualified *brahmana*.

:"A fish rots from the head," 33p:

The downfall of the *brahmana* caste began in the age of Kali. And since *brahmanas* are the heads of the social order, all other orders of society also began to deteriorate. This beginning of brahminical deterioration was highly

deplored by the father of Srngi, as we will find.

**The hole through which Kali came in like a needle,
out like a plow. 35p:**

The inexperienced *brahmana*, puffed up by a little *brahma-tejas*, became influenced by the spell of Kali-yuga. Maharaja Pariksit gave license to Kali to live in four places as mentioned hereinbefore, but by his very expert government the personality of Kali could hardly find the places allotted him. The personality of Kali-yuga, therefore, was seeking the opportunity to establish authority, and by the grace of the Lord he found a hole in the puffed-up, inexperienced son of a *brahmana*. The little *brahmana* wanted to show his prowess in destruction, and he had the audacity to punish such a great king as Maharaja Pariksit. He wanted to take the place of Lord Krsna after His departure. These are the principal signs of upstarts who want to take the place of Sri Krsna under the influence of the age of Kali. An upstart with a little power wants to become an incarnation of the Lord. There are many false incarnations after the departure of Lord Krsna from the face of the globe, and they are misleading the innocent public by accepting the spiritual obedience of the general mass of people to maintain false prestige. In other words, the personality of Kali got the opportunity to reign through this son of a *brahmana*, Srngi.

The genuine rajarsi is a Narendra. 41p

The king is the best of all human beings. He is the representative of God, and he is never to be condemned for any of his actions. In other words, the king can do no wrong. The king may order hanging of a culprit son of a *brahmana*, but he does not become sinful for killing a *brahmana*. Even if there is something wrong with the king, he is never to be condemned. A medical practitioner may kill a patient by mistaken treatment, but such a killer is never condemned to death. So what to speak of a good and pious king like Maharaja Pariksit? In the Vedic way of life, the king is trained to become a *rajarsi*, or a great saint, although he is ruling as king. It is the king only by whose good government the citizens can live peacefully and without any fear. The *rajarsis* would manage their kingdoms so nicely and piously that their subjects would respect them as if they were the Lord. That is the instruction of the Vedas. The king is called *narendra*, or the best amongst the human beings. How then could a king like Maharaja Pariksit be condemned by an inexperienced, puffed-up son of a *brahmana*, even though he had attained the powers of a qualified *brahmana*?

Degraded brahminism gives rise to democracy. 44p:

The word *nah* (we) is very significant in this verse. The sage rightly takes the responsibility of the *brahmanas* as a community for killing monarchical government and thus giving an opportunity to the so-called democrats, who are generally plunderers of the wealth of the state subjects. The so-called democrats capture the administrative machine without assuming responsibility for the prosperous condition of the citizens. Everyone captures the post for personal gratification, and thus instead of one king, a number of irresponsible kings grow up to tax the citizens. It is foretold herein that in the absence of good monarchical government, everyone will be the cause of disturbance for others by plundering riches, animals, women, etc.

Shringi's backstory. 47p:

A question may be raised herein that since it was the desire of the Lord that Pariksit Maharaja be put into that awkward position so that he might be delivered from material existence, then why was a *brahmana's* son made responsible for this offensive act? The answer is that the offensive act was performed by a child only so that he could be excused very easily, and thus the prayer of the father was accepted. But if the question is raised why the *brahmana* community as a whole was made responsible for allowing Kali into the world affairs, the answer is given in the *Varaha Purana* that the demons who acted inimically toward the Personality of Godhead but were not killed by the Lord were allowed to take birth in the families of *brahmanas* to take advantage of the age of Kali. The all-merciful Lord gave them a chance to have their births in the families of pious *brahmanas* so that they could progress toward salvation. But the demons, instead of utilizing the good opportunity, misused the brahminical culture due to being puffed up by vanity in becoming *brahmanas*. The typical example is the son of Samika Rsi, and all the foolish sons of *brahmanas* are warned hereby not to become as foolish as Srngi and be always on guard against the demoniac qualities which they had in their previous births. The foolish boy was, of course, excused by the Lord, but others, who may not have a father like Samika Rsi, will be put into great difficulty if they misuse the advantages obtained by birth in a *brahmana* family.

19.0. Questions and answers in First Canto Chapter Nineteen. (Q26-27.)

19.1. The *Pratijna*, or solemn statement of purpose for Chapter Nineteen—entitled The Appearance of Sukadeva Goswami—is expressed in the following four verses.

O trustworthy brahmanas [said Pariksit Maharaja to the assembled sages], I now ask you about my immediate duty. Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and specifically of those who are just about to die. (24)

At that moment there appeared the powerful son of Vyasadeva, who traveled over the earth disinterested and satisfied with himself. He did not manifest any symptoms of belonging to any social order or status of life. He was surrounded with women and children, and he dressed as if others had neglected him. (25)

Maharaja Pariksit, who is also known as Visnurata [one who is always protected by Visnu], bowed his head to receive the chief guest, Sukadeva Gosvami. At that time all the ignorant women and boys ceased following Srila Sukadeva. Receiving respect from all, Sukadeva Gosvami took his exalted seat. (29)

Sukadeva Gosvami was then surrounded by saintly sages and demigods just as the moon is surrounded by stars, planets and other heavenly bodies. His presence was gorgeous, and he was respected by all. (30)

19.1. Chapter Nineteen, *adhyaya-prakasika*, the chapter at a glance.

Maharaja Pariksit laments that he insulted the sage. When the king is informed he's been cursed for his offense, he makes preparations for his death. Fasting, he sits down at the bank of the Ganges and gives himself up to the lotus feet of the Lord. (1-7)

After hearing of the great king's plight, many *rsis* arrive. Maharaja Pariksit welcomes them and tells them of his decision to fast until death. (8-19)

The sages glorify the king's decision and Maharaja Pariksit responds by inquiring from the sages about the duty of one who is about to die. (20-24)

Immediately after Maharaja Pariksit submits his sincere inquiry before the lotus feet of the august assembly, the exalted sages at once rise to honor the arrival of Sri Sukadeva Goswami. Approaching the assembly accompanied by a crowd of gawking ignoramuses, the young and beautiful

Sukadeva seemed unconcerned with social conventions, yet he exhibits the auspicious personal symptoms of an extraordinary personality—indeed his appearance reminded the learned persons present of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Maharaja Parikṣit offers him respect, glorifies him, and then inquires about the duty of one about to die. (25-40)

19.2. Chapter Nineteen, *slokanusaranam*, summary study of the chapter's verses.

Suta Gosvami begins this chapter by relating that Maharaja Parikṣit, back at his royal quarters in Hastinapura, grew more and more distressed as he recalled his uncivilized behavior toward the faultless *brahmana* whom he had encountered while touring his kingdom. The mind of the king was upset by such thoughts as, "My behavior towards that sage was certainly sinful. The result, no doubt, will be that I shall meet some great difficulty in the near future. My hope is that this calamity, whatever it may be, comes without delay. I wish to immediately atone for my wretchedness. After having paid my just penalty, never again will I commit such an offense. Since I am most uncivilized for having neglected brahminical culture, let my kingdom, power and opulence be burnt at once in the fire of the *brahmana's* wrath. Only a lesson of this order of severity will teach me to give up my envious and inauspicious mentality." (1-3) [*Nimesa 1: In 2p Srila Prabhupada writes,*

The Supreme Lord enjoins that *brahmanas* and cows must be given all protection. The Lord is Himself very much inclined to do good to *brahmanas* and cows (*go-brahmana-hitaya ca*). Maharaja Parikṣit knew all this, and thus he concluded that his insulting a powerful *brahmana* was certainly to be punished by the laws of the Lord, and he was expecting something very difficult in the very near future. He therefore desired the imminent calamity to fall on him and not on his family members. A man's personal misconduct affects all his family members. Therefore Maharaja Parikṣit desired the calamity to fall on him alone. By suffering personally he would be restrained from future sins, and at the same time the sin which he had committed would be counteracted so that his descendants would not suffer. That is the way a responsible devotee thinks. The family members of a devotee also share the effects of a devotee's service unto the Lord. Maharaja Prahlada saved his demon father by his personal devotional service. A devotee son in the family is the greatest boon or blessing of the Lord.]

As he was repenting like this, news of his immanent death due to Shringi's curse reached Maharaja Parikshit. Shamika Rishi had sent a messenger to inform the king of the irrevocable curse so that he might properly prepare himself for going back home, back to Godhead. Instead of trying to counteract the curse, Maharaja Parikshit took it as a good opportunity to become indifferent toward all material things. (4) [*Nimesa 2: in 4p Srila Prabhupada writes,*

Samika Muni sent news to the King that foolish Sringi, his son, although a powerful *brahmana* boy, unfortunately had misused his spiritual power by cursing the King unwarrantedly. The incident of the King's garlanding the *muni* was not sufficient cause for being cursed to death, but since there was no way to retract the curse, the King was informed to prepare for death within a week. Both Samika Muni and the King were self-realized souls. Samika Muni was a mystic, and Maharaja Parikshit was a devotee. Therefore there was no difference between them in self-realization. Neither of them was afraid of meeting death. Maharaja Parikshit could have gone to the *muni* to beg his pardon, but the news of imminent death was conveyed to the King with so much regret by the *muni* that the King did not want to shame the *muni* further by his presence there. He decided to prepare himself for his imminent death and find out the way to go back to Godhead.]

His mind resolved to meet the death fate had ordained for him, the king first of all handed over his kingdom to his son. He then sat down firmly on the banks of the river dearest to the Lord, whose current carries the dust and tulasi leaves of His lotus feet. The king's determination was to give up his life by fasting with his mind firmly concentrated upon the lotus feet of Lord Krishna. (5-7) [*Nimesa 3: Srila Prabhupada draws our attention to the fact that while the convention is that King Parikshit took shelter of the Ganges, in fact the River Yamuna flows through Hastinapura (Delhi), while the Ganges proper does not. The Yamuna is, as Srila Prabhupada points out in 6p, more associated with Sri Krsna than even the Ganges. Her waters are dearer to Krsna for carrying the holy dust of the Lord's lotus feet mixed with tulasi leaves. The Yamuna, being a tributary of the Ganges, may be referred to by that name also. At Prayaga (Allahabad), southwest of Delhi, the two rivers meet to become one. In 6p Srila Prabhupada makes clear that the version of no less than Srila Jiva Gosvami is that Maharaja Parikshit actually took shelter of the River Yamuna. The Gosvami cites the Varaha Purana's statement that while there is no difference between the two, still, when the waters of the Ganges are sanctified one hundred times it is called the Yamuna. This is compared to the scriptural statement that a thousand names*

of Visnu equal one name of Rama, and three names of Rama are equal to one name of Krsna.]

News of the emperor's great renunciation spread quickly throughout the universe. On the plea of making a pilgrim's journey, all of the great *rishis* came there along with their disciples, knowing that *Shrimad-Bhagavatam* would be spoken by Shukadeva Gosvami. And so Maharaja Parikshit was soon surrounded by such spiritual authorities as Narada Muni, Shrila Vyasadeva, Bhrigu, Vasishtha, Parashara, Atri, Vishvamisra, Angira, Parashurama, Bharadvaja, Gautama, Chyavana, Sharadvan, Utathya, Maitreya, Aurva, as well as numerous other *rishis* and great kings of the class known as *arunodayas*. Maharaja Parikshit received everyone properly, bowing his head before them in the hopes of being excused of all offenses before departing from this mortal world. (7-11) [*Nimesa 4: in 9-10p Srila Prabhupada outlines the life stories of many of the sages named in these verses.*]

After all had been comfortably seated, Maharaja Parikshit stood before the assembled sages with folded hands and announced, "The Supreme Lord, Who is the supreme controller, has kindly overtaken me in the form of a *brahmana's* curse. The Lord has done this out of His causeless mercy, for I had become too attached to family life and royal opulence. O *brahmanas*, please accept me as a completely surrendered soul, for I have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. If it be so ordained by the Supreme, let the snake-bird Takshaka—or whatever magical creation Shringi has unleashed upon me—bite me at once. My only desire is that you continue speaking about the glories of the Supreme Lord, Vishnu. (12-15)

"I offer my obeisances unto all of you and I pray that if I have to be born again within this material world, my attachment for Lord Krishna will remain intact and I may have the association of devotees. I have come here to sit down and fast until death, and so I beg you to instruct me for my highest welfare." After uttering these words, Maharaja Parikshit sat down facing north, on the southern bank of the Ganga, upon a mat of kusha grass that had been placed with the roots turned toward the east. The demigods in heaven expressed their satisfaction with the king's determination by beating their drums and showering flowers. (16-18) [*Nimesa 5: in 17p Srila Prabhupada clarifies,*

The River Ganges is celebrated as the wife of the sea. The seat of kusa straw is considered to be sanctified if the straw is taken out of the earth complete with root, and if the root is pointed toward the east it is considered to be auspicious. Facing the north is still more favorable for attaining spiritual success. Maharaja Parikshit handed over the charge of administration to his son before leaving home. He was thus fully equipped for all favorable conditions.]

[*Nimesa 6: in 18p Srila Prabhupada adds,*

There is no one in the heavenly planets who is an atheist or nonbeliever. Thus any devotee of the Lord on the surface of the earth is always praised by them, and in the case of Maharaja Parikshit they were greatly delighted and thus gave tokens of honor by scattering flowers over the earth and by beating celestial drums. A demigod takes pleasure in seeing someone go back to Godhead. He is always pleased with a devotee of the Lord, so much so that by his *adhidaivic* powers he may help the devotees in all respects. And by their actions, the Lord is pleased with them. There is an invisible chain of complete cooperation between the Lord, the demigods and the devotee of the Lord on earth.]

The *rishis* that were assembled there also praised Maharaja Parikshit with sweet words, saying, "O King, it is not astonishing that you have renounced your royal position that you may without hindrance attain the eternal association of Lord Krishna. We shall remain here until you pass away from this mortal body, and thus attain to the supreme abode of the Lord." (19-22)

Desiring to hear about Lord Krishna, Maharaja Parikshit once again addressed the sages: "You have kindly assembled here from all over the universe and are naturally inclined to do good to others. Please tell me what is the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and especially, of those who are just about to die." (23-24) [*Nimesa 7: with regard to the king's mentioning that the sages had gathered from all over the universe, in 23p Srila Prabhupada points out that even the Personified Vedas from Satyaloka were present in the assembly. In 24p Srila Prabhupada states that the king actually placed two questions before the sages: 1) what is the duty of a human being in all circumstances; and 2) what is his specific duty when facing death. These queries are not easily answered, for as Srila Prabhupada notes in 24p, "practically the whole of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, beginning from the Second Canto up to the last Twelfth Canto, deals with these two questions." Maharaja Parikshit, the greatest mahabhagavata*

among the ksatriya class of his time, knew very well that devotional service to Lord Krishna is the only real answer to both questions. He humbly petitioned the brahmana sages to confirm their acknowledgement of the method of liberation he knew to be suddha or perfectly correct. Parikshit hoped their answer would be unanimous so that he might carry out his duty without controversy. The difficulty is that different sages recommend different processes, some of them first-class as the king hoped for, but others second- and third-class. Just as doctors will differently diagnose the same patient, so it appears that the great sages also put forward various opinions.

As the *rishis* debated amongst themselves, by the will of Lord Krishna Shukadeva Gosvami appeared upon the scene. Having widely traveled the earth without any seeming purpose, Shukadeva appeared disinterested and satisfied with himself. He displayed no symptoms of belonging to any social order or status of life. Around his person foolish women and children flocked simply for their amusement. They gazed uncomprehendingly upon him as if he was but a madman. As if neither he himself nor others in his company had any concern for his appearance in the public eye, his body was devoid of even a single scrap of covering. (25)

This son of Vyasadeva was only sixteen years old. His legs, hands, thighs, arms, shoulders, and forehead were so beautifully shaped that it appeared his entire body was artistically shaped with the greatest taste and delicacy. [*Nimesa 8: in 26p Srila Prabhupada comments, "A respectable personality is described beginning with the legs, and this honored system is observed here with Sukadeva Gosvami."*] With beautifully wide eyes and highly raised nose and ears, his face was most attractive. His neck was well formed and beautiful like a conchshell. His collarbone was fleshy, his chest broad and thick, his navel deep and his abdomen beautifully striped. His arms were long. Curly hair was strewn over his beautiful face. The hue of his unclothed body reflected that of Lord Krsna. In the prime of youth, Shukadeva was blackish and very beautiful to behold. Women found the natural glamor of his body and his attractive smiles most pleasing. Yet for their sake he paid no attention to his physical attractiveness; indeed, the inner fortitude of his unyielding asceticism starkly contrasted the sweetness of his outer appearance. The great sages present there were all expert in the art of physiognomy. Observing in him the signs of a *mahapurusa*, they honored him by rising from their seats. (26-28)

Maharaja Pariksit, known as Visnurata [one who is always protected by Visnu], bowed his head to receive the chief guest, Sukadeva Gosvami. The ignorant crowd of women and boys, greatly mortified in the presence of such royal and sagacious aristocracy, quickly scattered from the side of Srila Sukadeva, leaving about him only an atmosphere of gravity and calm. Accepting without pretension the respect from all the exalted personages, Sukadeva Gosvami graciously took the seat of honor they kindly offered him. Now that he was surrounded by saintly sages and demigods, he resembled the moon amidst its entourage of stars, planets and other heavenly bodies, In that assembly Sukadeva Gosvami's presence was gorgeous. There was no doubt that he was respected by all. (29-30) [*Nimesa 9: In 30p, Srila Prabhupada writes,*

In the great assembly of saintly personalities, there was Vyasadeva the *brahmarsi*, Narada the *devarsi*, Parasurama the great ruler of the *ksatriya* kings, etc. Some of them were powerful incarnations of the Lord. Sukadeva Gosvami was not known as *brahmarsi*, *rajarsi* or *devarsi*, nor was he an incarnation like Narada, Vyasa or Parasurama. And yet he excelled them in respects paid. This means that the devotee of the Lord is more honored in the world than the Lord Himself. One should therefore never minimize the importance of a devotee like Sukadeva Gosvami.

The foremost of sages, Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, sat perfectly pacified, intelligent, and ready to answer any question without hesitation. The great devotee, Maharaja Pariksit, approached him, offered his respects by bowing before him, and politely inquired with sweet words and folded hands. The fortunate King Pariksit said: “O *brahmana*, by your mercy only, you have sanctified us, making us like unto places of pilgrimage, all by your presence here as my guest. By your mercy, we, who are but unworthy royalty, become eligible to serve the devotee. Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified. And what to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your holy feet and offering you a seat in our home? O powerful *brahmana*, it is said that you hardly stay in the houses of men long enough to milk a cow. Just as the atheist cannot remain in the presence of the Personality of Godhead, so also the invulnerable sins of a man are immediately vanquished in your presence, O saint! O great mystic! Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is very dear to the sons of King Pandu, has accepted me as one of those relatives just to please His great cousins and brothers. Otherwise [without being inspired by Lord Krsna] how is it that you have voluntarily appeared here, though you are moving

incognito to the common man and are not visible to us who are on the verge of death? You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die. Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.” (31-39) [*Nimesa 10: Srila Prabhupada notes in 37p,*

Unless one is perfectly anxious to inquire about the way of perfection, there is no necessity of approaching a spiritual master. A spiritual master is not a kind of decoration for a householder. Generally a fashionable materialist engages a so-called spiritual master without any profit. The pseudo spiritual master flatters the so-called disciple, and thereby both the master and his ward go to hell without a doubt. Maharaja Pariksit is the right type of disciple because he puts forward questions vital to the interest of all men, particularly for the dying men. The question put forward by Maharaja Pariksit is the basic principle of the complete thesis of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Now let us see how intelligently the great master replies.]

Sri Suta Gosvami tells the sages of Naimasharanya: “The King thus spoke and questioned the sage, using sweet language. Then the great and powerful personality, the son of Vyasadeva, who knew the principles of religion, began his reply.” (40)

19.3. Question Twenty-six of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is asked by King Pariksit of the sages gathered on the bank of the Ganges. He placed this question before them just prior to Sukadeva Gosvami’s arrival on the scene.

Question Twenty-six: Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances. (24)

[*Nimesa 11: The above question asked by Maharaja Pariskshit is the first of two distinct inquiries voiced by him in verse 24, as is made evident in the purport to the verse:*

In this verse the King has placed two questions before the learned sages. The first question is what is the duty of everyone in all circumstances, and the second question is what is the specific duty of one who is to die very shortly. Out of the two, the question relating to the dying man is most important because everyone is a dying man,

either very shortly or after one hundred years. The duration of life is immaterial, but the duty of a dying man is very important. Maharaja Pariksit placed these two questions before Sukadeva Gosvami also on his arrival, and practically the whole of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, beginning from the Second Canto up to the last Twelfth Canto, deals with these two questions. The conclusion arrived at thereof is that devotional service of the Lord Sri Krsna, as it is confirmed by the Lord Himself in the last phases of the *Bhagavad-gita*, is the last word in relation to everyone's permanent duty in life. Maharaja Pariksit was already aware of this fact, but he wanted the great sages assembled there to unanimously give their verdict on his conviction so that he might be able to go on with his confirmed duty without controversy. He has especially mentioned the word *suddha*, or perfectly correct. For transcendental realization or self-realization, many processes are recommended by various classes of philosophers. Some of them are first-class methods, and some of them are second- or third-class methods. The first-class method demands that one give up all other methods and surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord and thus be saved from all sins and their reactions.]

Question Twenty-seven: (Verse 24 continued, but as expressed in verses 37-38:) I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die. Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me. [*Nimesa 11: In the original verse 24, Maharaja Parikshit phrases the first and second part of his question thusly—*

O trustworthy *brahmanas*, I now ask you about my immediate duty. Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and specifically of those who are just about to die.

However, because Parikshit receives no answer from the sages—who take to discussing among themselves the questions of verse 24 until Sukadeva himself arrives—in verses 37-38 the king repeats his two questions directly to Sukadeva Gosvami. The first question as he phrases it in verses 37-38 remains essentially unchanged—“what is the duty of everyone in all circumstances.” Yet it is undeniable that he expresses his second question more elaborately the next time around, though the essential point remains the same: “what is the specific duty of one who is about to die very shortly.” Note, though, that he strengthens the second question with requests for additional details about “what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do.”]

19.4. Srila Sukadeva Gosvam begins his answer in Canto Two. (His answer fits both questions, the one Pariksit asked the sages and the one he asked Sukadeva.) He completes the answer at the end of the second chapter of the Second Canto. Ultimately however, as Srila Prabhupada confirms in his purport to verse 24, his answer spans the rest of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* up to the glorious departure of Maharaja Pariksit from this world.

19.5. Summary, in 4 parts, of the philosophical significance of the King's questions. as gleaned from the Bhaktidevanta Purports of this chapter.

1. When a pure devotee is dying, he fixes his mind on Krsna with determination. His only desire is to return to the spiritual world. From Maharaja Parikshit's personal example, we see that such a devotee should prepare himself by retiring from family life. He should shift himself to the bank of a sacred river. Even prior to this, one should rectify any offenses he may have committed. This will help the mind be fixed upon the lotus feet of the Lord without any deviation. To that end, one should ask everyone to accept his obeisances and beg them to excuse all his offenses. One should consult with authorities about how he should spend his final days. Sages usually avoid the association of those who take part in the material world, but in the case of a pure devotee who is about to die, they must overlook his previous material situation. They should give him their association. As for the devotee, he should consider his situation thusly: "The Lord, as a special favor to me, is personally removing me from this material situation for I am so strongly attached to it." By thinking this way and surrounding himself with the Lord's devotees, he feels himself surrendered to the will of the Supreme Lord and thus he conquers his fear of death. In this way even a devotee who had the most perfect life in the material world obtains the most favourable conditions for going back to Godhead at the time of death. All obstacles are removed from his path. The devotee's position is so secure that even the demigods work to help the devotee at the time of the death of his body. (1-7)

2. It is natural for devotees to live in the material world unattached to its glare, because beyond whatever material position they may obtain, their real sense of accomplishment is getting the association of the Lord. It is the nature of devotees to consider this life's highest gain. Although the departure

from this world of a great devotees is nothing to lament about—for we know he achieves the topmost spiritual planet, Goloka Vrindaban—his departure leaves us in a lamentable state. A great soul, who is so rarely found, shall no longer be within our sight. (8-19)

3. Saints and sages desire to reclaim fallen souls rotting in material existence. They preach to them that devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is everyone's duty in all circumstances, especially at the end of their lives. (20-24)

4. True sages recognize and honor an exalted devotee as soon as they see him. They show the exalted devotee respect regardless of his material, bodily situation. As for the devotee, he is obliged to accept a bona fide spiritual master from among the saints and sages in order to solve the problems of life and understand the science of transcendence. Especially one who is near death should attach himself to a great saint. Only a truly saintly person can turn any place into a pilgrimage spot. Getting the association and help of a saintly person, and taking his spiritual direction for the remainder of one's life, means that one has obtained the direct help of the Lord Himself. (25-40)

19.6. *Parisistam* (appendix)

19.6.1. *Vinodakam*, or items of special interest to students working towards a *Bhaktivaibhava* degree:

The following two verses from Chapter Nineteen were often quoted by Srila Prabhupada—

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION

SB 1.19.24

tataś ca vaḥ pṛcchyaṃ imam vipṛcche

viśrabhya viprā iti kṛtyatāyām

sarvātmanā mriyamāṅaiś ca kṛtyam

śuddham ca tatrāmṛsatābhiyuktāḥ

tataḥ—as such; *ca*—and; *vaḥ*—unto you; *pṛcchyaṃ*—that which is to be asked; *imam*—this; *vipṛcche*—beg to ask you; *viśrabhya*—trustworthy; *viprāḥ*—brāhmaṇas; *iti*—thus; *kṛtyatāyām*—out

of all different duties; *sarva-ātmanā*—by everyone; *mriyamāṇaiḥ*—especially those who are just about to die; *ca*—and; *kṛtyam*—dutiful; *śuddham*—perfectly correct; *ca*—and; *tatra*—therein; *āmṛśata*—by complete deliberation; *abhiyuktāḥ*—just befitting.

O trustworthy brāhmaṇas, I now ask you about my immediate duty. Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and specifically of those who are just about to die.

Parikṣit Mahārāja

SANNYASI’S LIFE

SB 1.19.39

nūnam bhagavato brahman

gṛheṣu gṛha-medhinām

na lakṣyate hy avasthānam

api go-dohanam kvacit

nūnam—because; *bhagavataḥ*—of you, who are powerful; *brahman*—O brāhmaṇa; *gṛheṣu*—in the houses; *gṛha-medhinām*—of the householders; *na*—not; *lakṣyate*—are seen; *hi*—exactly; *avasthānam*—staying in; *api*—even; *go-dohanam*—milking the cow; *kvacit*—rarely.

O powerful brāhmaṇa, it is said that you hardly stay in the houses of men long enough to milk a cow.

Parikṣit Mahārāja

19.6.3. Vinodakam :

In his book *Bhagavata-arka-marici-mala*, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura counts this verse from Chapter Nineteen within the *abidheya* division, in Chapter Fifteen, entitled *bhakti-anukulya-vicara* (“Favorable Conditions for Bhakti”):

01.19.33

Maharaja Pariksit to Sukadeva Gosvami

Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified. And what

to speak of seeing you, touching you, washing your holy feet and offering you a seat in our home?

19.6. Parisistam (continued): Excerpts of interest from Srila Prabhupada's purports to this chapter:

The aim of the Age of Kali. 3p:

The age of Kali aims at killing the higher principles of life, and although Maharaja Pariksit strongly resisted the domination of the personality of Kali within the world, the influence of the age of Kali came at an opportune moment, and even a strong king like Maharaja Pariksit was induced to disregard the brahminical culture due to a slight provocation of hunger and thirst.

In this age, you're probably better off being poverty-stricken. 4p:

The path of perfection frees one from all material attachments, and thus one becomes fit to enter into the spiritual kingdom. Therefore, those who are materially poverty-stricken are better candidates than those who are materially prosperous. Maharaja Pariksit was a great devotee of the Lord and a bona fide candidate for entering into the kingdom of God, but even though he was so, his material assets as the Emperor of the world were setbacks to perfect attainment of his rightful status as one of the associates of the Lord in the spiritual sky. As a devotee of the Lord, he could understand that the cursing of the brahmana boy, although unwise, was a blessing upon him, being the cause of detachment from worldly affairs, both political and social.

Sages sanctify tirthas, which are overburdened by the sins of commoners. 8p:

Common men go to pilgrimage sites to get themselves purified of all sins. Thus the places of pilgrimage become overburdened with the sins of others. But when such sages visit overburdened places of pilgrimage, they sanctify the places by their presence.

Vedic kings were not dictators. 12p:

Although the King had already decided to fast until death on the bank of the Ganges, he humbly expressed his decision to elicit the opinions of the great authorities present there. Any decision, however important, should be confirmed by some authority. That makes the matter perfect. This means that the monarchs who ruled the earth in those days

were not irresponsible dictators. They scrupulously followed the authoritative decisions of the saints and sages in terms of Vedic injunction. Maharaja Pariksit, as a perfect king, followed the principles by consulting the authorities, even up to the last days of his life.

Modern amenities for “cleanliness” ensure today’s dwellings are utterly polluted. 13p

According to religious principles, stool, urine, wash water, etc., must be left at a long distance. Attached bathrooms, urinals, etc. may be very convenient amenities of modern civilization, but they are ordered to be situated at a distance from residential quarters.

The deep-rooted bonds of family attachment are broken by the special mercy of the Lord, even in the case of exalted devotees. 14p

Maharaja Pariksit, although born in a family of great devotees, the Pandavas, and although securely trained in transcendental attachment for the association of the Lord, still found the allurements of mundane family life so strong that he had to be detached by a plan of the Lord. Such direct action is taken by the Lord in the case of a special devotee. Maharaja Pariksit could understand this by the presence of the topmost transcendentalists in the universe. The Lord resides with His devotees, and therefore the presence of the great saints indicated the presence of the Lord. The King therefore welcomed the presence of the great *rsis* as a mark of favor of the Supreme Lord.

A devotee’s preference to associate with other devotees is not based on enmity towards nondevotees; even though “birds of a feather flock together”, the devotee remains the well-wisher of the nondevotee, 16p

A devotee of the Lord does not like to associate with nondevotees, although he has no enmity with them. He desires association with the devotees of the Lord. This is perfectly natural because birds of the same feather mix together. And the most important function of a devotee is to have complete attachment for Lord Sri Krsna, the father of all living beings. As a good son of the father behaves in a friendly way with all his other brothers, so also the devotee of the Lord, being a good son of the supreme father, Lord Krsna, sees all other living beings in relation with the supreme father. He tries to bring back the upstart sons of the father to a saner stage and to get them to accept the supreme fatherhood of God. Maharaja Pariksit was certainly going back to Godhead, but even if he were not to go back, he prayed for a pattern

of life which is the most perfect way in the material world.

Messiahs from Satyaloka. 23p

In Satyaloka the inhabitants are fully cognizant of Vedic wisdom, and thus the mystic cloud of material energy is cleared. Therefore they are known as the Vedas personified. Such persons, being fully aware of knowledge both mundane and transcendental, have no interest in either the mundane or transcendental worlds. They are practically desireless devotees. In the mundane world they have nothing to achieve, and in the transcendental world they are full in themselves. Then why do they come to the mundane world? They descend on different planets as messiahs by the order of the Lord to deliver the fallen souls. On the earth they come down and do good to the people of the world in different circumstances under different climatic influences. They have nothing to do in this world save and except reclaim the fallen souls rotting in material existence, deluded by material energy.

Inconclusive philosophical hairsplitting a luxury of the pandita class, but Krsna sent Sukadeva Gosvami to put Maharaja Pariksit's remaining seven days to their absolute best use. 25p

As doctors differ, so also sages differ in their different prescriptions. While such things were going on, the great and powerful son of Vyasadeva appeared on the scene.

Giving so-called "darsana" absent of meaningful inquiry on the part of the audience is not the business of a spiritual master. 31p

Maharaja Pariksit was now prepared for meeting his death, and within the very short time of seven days he was to know the process of entering the kingdom of God.

In such important cases, one is required to approach a spiritual master. There is no necessity of approaching a spiritual master unless one is in need of solving the problems of life. One who does not know how to put questions before the spiritual master has no business seeing him.

A visit by a saintly person to a home is much more than a social call. 33p

The importance of holy places of pilgrimage is due to the presence of great sages and saints. It is said that sinful persons go to the holy places and leave their sins there to accumulate. But the presence of the great saints disinfects the accumulated sins, and thus the holy

places continue to remain sanctified by the grace of the devotees and saints present there. If such saints appear in the homes of worldly people, certainly the accumulated sins of such worldly enjoyers become neutralized. Therefore, the holy saints actually have no self-interest with the householders. The only aim of such saints is to sanctify the houses of the householders, and the householders therefore should feel grateful when such saints and sages appear at their doors. A householder who dishonors such holy orders is a great offender. It is enjoined, therefore, that a householder who does not bow down before a saint at once must undergo fasting for the day in order to neutralize the great offense.

**Devotees render the best service
to family members. 35p**

A pure and exclusive devotee of the Lord serves his family interest more dexterously than others, who are attached to illusory family affairs. Generally people are attached to family matters, and the whole economic impetus of human society is moving under the influence of family affection. Such deluded persons have no information that one can render better service to the family by becoming a devotee of the Lord. The Lord gives special protection to the family members and descendants of a devotee, even though such members are themselves nondevotees! Maharaja Prahlada was a great devotee of the Lord, but his father, Hiranyakasipu, was a great atheist and declared enemy of the Lord. But despite all this, Hiranyakasipu was awarded salvation due to his being the father of Maharaja Prahlada. The Lord is so kind that he gives all protection to the family members of His devotee, and thus the devotee has no need to bother about his family members, even if one leaves such family members aside to discharge devotional service. Maharaja Yudhisthira and his brothers were the sons of Kunti, the paternal aunt of Lord Krsna, and Maharaja Pariksit admits the patronage of Lord Krsna because of his being the only grandson of the great Pandavas.

**Use the brain to take full advantage of the
brief opportunity of sadhu-sangha. 39p**

It is the
duty of householders to maintain the saints and sages, like the children. So a saint like Sukadeva Gosvami would hardly stay at the house of a householder for more than five minutes in the morning. In other words, such saints are very rarely seen in the houses of householders, and Maharaja Pariksit therefore prayed to him to instruct him as soon as possible. The householders also should be intelligent enough to get some transcendental information from visiting sages. The

householder should not foolishly ask a saint to deliver what is available in the market. That should be the reciprocal relation between the saints and the householders.

Questions 1-27 were covered in this study of Canto One.

Chapter One: Q1-6
Chapter Four: Q7
Chapter Five: Q8-9
Chapter Six: Q10
Chapter Seven: Q11-12
Chapter Eight: Q13-14
Chapter Ten: Q15
Chapter Twelve: Q16-17
Chapter Thirteen: 18-19
Chapter Fourteen: Q20
Chapter Sixteen: Q21-22
Chapter Seventeen: Q23-24
Chapter Eighteen: Q25
Chapter Nineteen: Q26-27

End of the study guide to the First Canto