

Vyasa Puja Speech by HH Suhotra Swami, recorded on 5th December 1998 in Wroclaw, Poland

Why does a Vaisnava become guru

I would like to say a few words on the principle of *guru*, since obviously today you have come together to respect that principle. So the Vedic scriptures declare

*arcye viṣṇau śilā-dhīr guruṣu nara-matir vaiṣṇave jāti-buddhir
viṣṇor vā vaiṣṇavānām kali-mala-mathane pāda-tīrthe 'mbu-buddhiḥ
śrī-viṣṇor nāmni mantre sakala-kaluṣa-he śabda-sāmānya-buddhir
viṣṇau sarveṣvareṣe tad-itara-sama-dhīr yasya vā nārakī saḥ*

This is a warning against *naraki buddhi*, which means hellish intelligence. It's a warning against the kind of conceptions which lead the living entity to the darkest regions of material existence. We should know that Lord Kṛṣṇa declares in Bhagavad-gīta, 16th chapter, that there are souls whom He considers to be envious and mischievous, who are simply causing untold difficulties, untold miseries for other living entities, because they deliberately exhibit only bad qualities. And they want to propagate those bad qualities. They are not satisfied just to be bad in themselves, they have to try to make the whole world bad and then they are... even then they are not satisfied but they think they will be satisfied, because demons cannot be satisfied.

Anyway, Lord Kṛṣṇa says this type of living entity He personally pushes down. He makes this special point. He says: "I push them down". It's actually a philosophical question that sometimes comes up, that we are all spirit souls. Every living entity is a spirit soul and the spirit soul is naturally eternal, full of knowledge, full of bliss, naturally wants to ascend to the transcendental platform. That is actually the spiritual nature of everyone. But then the question comes up: "But why are there living entities who seem to be addicted to darkness, who reject everything spiritual, who just want to be gross sense-gratifiers, who want to cultivate the worst kind of qualities, the most inauspicious qualities, who want to do harm to others? Why? Why there are those of that nature?" It's very perplexing actually, because we say everyone is spirit soul, so why should some want to be so *tamasic*? And Kṛṣṇa gives the answer in the 16th chapter of Bhagavad-gīta. The answer is that He makes them that way, He pushes them down. Because Kṛṣṇa is... Taitirīya Upaniṣad says *raso-vai-saha* – this famous *sloka* that is so often quoted by the Gaudiya vaiṣṇavas, it's Vedic Upaniṣadic literature but is actually given in a very essential form, the essence of Lord Caitanya's whole presentation. *Raso-vai-saha*. Who is God? God is the sweetness of the sweet, *rasa*.

And only that living entity, who knows this *rasa* as Kṛṣṇa attains *ananda*, attains actual bliss. But all other living entities they are searching after that same *rasa*, everyone is searching after Kṛṣṇa. Everyone is motivated in what they do by some sort of taste of sweetness. You find this explained in the Introduction of SP's Nectar of Devotion. This is

actually... when we inquire, you may hear that in India there are different Vaisnava *sampradayas* - there is Sri Vaisnava, there is of course Brahma Vaisnava *sampradaya*, Madhvacarya, the *tattvavadis* on the south, there is Visnu Swami, there is Nimbarkacarya. So they are all Vaisnavas but what is the specialty of Lord Caitanya's movement? Not that we say that the Gaudiya Vaisnava *sampradaya* is right and all the other Vaisnava *sampradayas* are wrong, but there is a special contribution. And that contribution is this *rasa*, this knowledge of *rasa* - the transcendental sweet relationship that is cultivated by the pure devotees in love of God. And *raso-vai-saha* - Krsna is that *rasa*. And that *rasa* is sought by every living entity. This is the one point that unifies all living entities, whether we say they are sinful or pious or whatever religion they may belong to, all these mundane differences are there, but there is one thing that unites all living entities and that is the search for *rasa*. So the process that is given by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the actual scientific process to attain that which everyone is seeking. Lord Caitanya has spelled it out right in the Siksastakam, the first verse - *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*. So He is saying *param vijayate sri-krsna-snakirtanam* - all glories to this *sankirtana* movement. Why? Because it is giving the living entities that taste for which they are always anxious.

This is the special contribution of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, which goes beyond... this morning we were speaking of the Vedic system, so *dharma artha kama moksa* - this is called *catur varga*. *Catur varga* means fourfold goals of human life. In the Vedic society everyone is also looking for these goals. In the Vedic society they are presented very scientifically: *dharma* - so what is the path, the proper path of the human being, what are the laws that the human being should follow, what should the human being do - that's presented in *dharma*. *Artha* - what is the wealth, the advantages that the human being should attain. *Kama* - what are the appropriate enjoyments for human being and then finally *moksa*. After these, *dharma, artha, kama*, after we have gone through that, then naturally we look for liberation. So what is that *moksa*? So this is called *catur varga* - the fourfold goals of human being.

But Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taught that there is something beyond these four - *premā pumartho mahān*. There is something even you attain these four, this is something we should very much... In our ISKCON movement in 1998-1999 we have so many discussions going on, but this is something we should very much understand that even if we are to manage, as I said this morning - it has to be by Lord Krsna's grace... But say Lord Krsna would bless us that there would be in ISKCON nice *dharma, artha, kama, moksa* - still the living entity will not be satisfied. This is the secret of Lord Caitanya's instruction. Even you get that, even some *ksatriya-avatara* comes down, big king with a council of expert *brahmanas*, takes charge of ISKCON and makes everything very nice so that we have nice marriages, according to Vedic system, according to astrology, proper occupations would be there for everyone and proper Vedic law would be nicely enforced. Even if we had all that still the living entity would not be satisfied. This is what Lord Caitanya has come to teach us. So there is something more and that is the subject matter that Lord Caitanya presents - *premā pumartho mahān*."

There is the fifth, Prabhupada says, the fifth dimension. Sounds rather esoteric. The fifth dimension of spiritual life. And that is the dimension of love of Godhead. So in that dimension then this actual *rasa* for which everyone is anxious to taste, is attained by the living entity. And that *rasa* is at Krsna's lotus feet.

This is only possible by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and He has surcharged... just like you take water and you surcharge water with carbon dioxide. You know there is this kind of (.....?) you can get and there is a little carbon dioxide thing you screw on the bottom and it surcharges the water with carbon dioxide and the whole water becomes bubbly. So similarly Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu... because the *dharmā*, the *yuga dharmā* was already there scheduled that to attain *moksa*, which is the fourth dimension, we should chant Hare Krsna. So in every Kali-yuga there is an *avatara* of Krsna, Who appears to teach the chanting of the Hare Krsna Maha-mantra but only in one *yuga* in the whole day of Brahma does *Sri Krsna Caitanya - Radha Krsna nahe anya* - that Lord Caitanya, Who is no other than Radha and Krsna, only in one Kali yuga out of 1000 Kali yugas in the day of Brahma, only one of these *avatars* is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself. And only He surcharges the Hare Krsna maha-mantra with Krsna *prema*, with love of Krsna. And in all the other *yugas* chanting brings the living entities to liberation.

Of course this is a very sinful age. Everyone born in this age is born in sin, that's a fact. We all just should put up our hands and surrender on this point. In this age it's not reasonable to consider: "Oh, maybe I was on Brahmāloka in my last life". This is not reasonable to think like that. No. The best policy is just to accept: "I am very fallen, I am very sinful and that's why I took birth in this age, that's the only reason why I'm here". Otherwise the great saints and sages they are not coming here in this age. This is like... I remember my Godbrother Ravindra Svarup giving a nice example. He was talking about some regions of cities in the US. They are called *ghetto* where very low class people live, where there is a lot of criminal activity, a lot of drug abuse. If one goes there one is taking a great risk to be robbed, to be killed, to be raped. So therefore the high class people that are respectable will never go to that part of the town. Actually there are these news reports, so someone - tourists from Germany, places like that, they get lost driving, they rent a car and they get lost in one of these neighborhoods and then they get surrounded by all kinds of very heavy looking people who just do whatever they want with them. So respectable people will never enter such a degraded neighborhood. And so Ravindra Svarup Prabhu in one lecture he was saying: "For the demigods the earth planet in Kali yuga is like one of these neighborhoods. They will never come here. Too abominable".

We have been born in this age, we should simply consider ourselves to be *patita* - very fallen and very sinful. *Asat sanga* - our association. Association means our tendencies - with whom we want to associate not only physically but also mentally, the things that come to mind when we view the world. It's all so impure, so nasty, so degraded. So it's a very good policy on the first step to just accept this, just admit this: "Yes, I am very degraded and very fallen". Then we can take actual advantage of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy. He is *patita-pavana*, He has descended to save us from this most

unfortunate condition. And actually we should understand, we have been... yes, actually we are counted among the demons. And we have been put in that position by Krsna.

This is the original point that there are living entities, who are pushed downward into the lowest condition of life, the most nasty habits. And they like them, they like them, they are attached to them. This is punishment, but Lord Krsna is so expert - it's punishment but we don't think it's punishment at all. We think it's nice. This is how Krsna manages this world. He is definitely punishing so many sinful souls but in such a way that they are very happy. They think: "Oh, yes". They don't understand that to have such degraded habits - meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxication - from a *sattvic* point of view it's abominable. This is like the life of a worm in stool. But the worm in stool is very happy. Srila Prabhupada says in one lecture like you take these tweezers. So you see a worm in stool and you pick it up from the stool and put it to the side - it will crawl back: "Why are you taking me from my home? I like this".

This is the nature of the living entities of this age. And why is that? That is arranged by Krsna! *Raso-vai-saha* - He is the taste. So for those He punishes He causes the taste to manifest in the most abominable conditions of life. And like the worms in stool they crawl - "Very nice, yes, that's what I want". So this is all guided by the Lord in the heart. And He is doing this why? Because of offences, because we have cultivated in some previous existence, what I was speaking in the beginning of the lecture, *naraki-buddhi* - hellish intelligence.

Arce visnur siladhir - to see the Deity of the Lord as a stone. This is *aparadha*, this is offense. The Deity has come as an *avatara* descending into our field of vision. *Arca avatar*, *arca* means He has come just to accept our worship. We have this nature, it is in every human being to render service, to render worship. Service and worship are synonyms, they mean the same thing. The materialistic people - whom they are worshiping, whom they serve? They serve their dog. The family dog. Some poodle or some Siamese cat. That creature they will bathe, they will put a nice jeweled necklace, they will feed, even they are cooking (laughs) for the animal, rendering all services (laughs). And this is the nature, I mean, you can't deny it. Either animal or child or whatever it may be but everybody has this inborn nature to render service, to render worship.

So out of His kindness the Lord descends in this world as *arca avatar*. And His invitation is rather than worship D-O-G, dog, you worship G-O-D, God. "You come and serve Me, I'm standing here and although I'm God I'm in your hands - you can dress Me, you can feed Me, you can put Me into bed at night, you can wake Me up in the morning, you can offer prayers, you can decorate Me". This is our nature so if we do this for the Lord the by His grace we attain this *rasa*, this higher taste of spiritual life.

But there are those who are *naraki-buddhi* - with hellish intelligence and they say: "Why should I worship some stone or metal statue? What is the use of that? I get much more pleasure if I worship my poodle or my Siamese cat. I find much more profit from that".

This is *naraki-buddhi*. So this is a ticket to hell, this attitude. By thinking like that one becomes qualified as a resident for hell.

Arce visnur siladhir gurusu naramatir... So this is the next point about *guru*. So *guru* is also a kind of *avatara*. Actually it is a fact because Lord Krsna tells this directly to Uddhava when He says *acarya-mam-vijnaninya navamanyeta...* He says: "You should see the *acarya*, or the spiritual master, as Myself. Never see him any other way". But there are those who see him as an ordinary man - *naramatir* means to see him just as some ordinary person. Now the thing is... this is a very deep point because the spiritual master himself... I studied, because I'm a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. So I studied very carefully Srila Prabhupada's own pronunciation, own pronouncements about the position of the spiritual master, particularly to himself in that position. So subjectively, means Srila Prabhupada looking at himself, he would never present himself as being someone special. We often see that there are those who tend to think the spiritual master some kind of supernatural entity. As if maybe he has been brought down in some UFO (laughs), some mystical person, some magical person with special powers, who looks at us and knows everything what we are thinking.

But Srila Prabhupada subjectively never put himself in such position. That's not to say that Srila Prabhupada is not a *sakti-avesa avatara*. Obviously from what he did we understand... He is *Prabhupada* - that means there are many Prabhus, many spiritual masters but they all sit at his lotus feet. But still subjectively Srila Prabhupada considered himself simply a servant of his spiritual master. When he was asked... he was asked at one point: "Are you the *guru* of such and such famous person?" There was some famous person in the US in 1960-s who was known to come and see Srila Prabhupada, ask him questions. So this word got around, so someone asked Prabhupada: "Are you the *guru* of so and so?", some famous poet. And Prabhupada said: "I'm nobody's *guru*". So subjectively that's how Prabhupada saw himself - I'm not a *guru*.

And we find his own spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, has written one essay about the position of the spiritual master and he says something very interesting. He says that for one to think that he is a *guru*, for one actually to assume such a position - "I'm a *guru*" - this is demoniac. He actually says that - this is demoniac. He says Vaisnavas has nothing to do with that mentality - to think "I'm a *guru*, I'm big important teacher, spiritual personality and I have these little peons who run around and serve me" and so on and so forth.

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati made it very, very clear that this thinking oneself in that role is totally against Vaisnavism. So then obviously the question comes: "Why then a devotee would take such a position?" And the answer is that Krsna... just like Krsna told Arjuna... Arjuna didn't want to fight. Who wants to fight anyway? I mean, if someone has some sense, just this common sense, common human sentiments he doesn't want to get in a position where he has to kill other people. Sometimes is necessary but it is something that is always very regrettable. So Arjuna didn't want to do it but Krsna said: "Do it for Me". And (as I was saying this morning) "If you do this for Me then I will protect you".

So Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura was explaining the same thing about the role of a *guru*. It is not something that a Vaisnava wants to do. Just like Arjuna - he is Vaisnava and he didn't want to fight, he didn't want to kill. And this is with *guru* too. But Krsna looking at the living entities, seeing how they are ready to worship anything. They are ready to make Lenin their *guru*, they are ready to make Stalin their *guru*, they are ready to make Hitler their *guru*, they are ready to worship any fool and rascal. And if the Vaisnavas don't take that position then they are going to follow some demon right to the lowest depths of hell. Very enthusiastically - throwing flowers: "Jaya Asurapada! Jaya Asurapada!" (laughs). They are so ready to do this. So therefore Lord Krsna... just like the Pandavas they were not anxious to rule the world, they were ready to settle for just five villages. They were *ksatriyas* so they had to rule something. So, all right, we will take five villages, little villages. Like in Mayapura - Tarunpura, this place next to our ISKCON Candrodaya Mandir, the little village, one devotee Murari Gupta is living there. So they were satisfied - "Give us five villages like that". But Lord Krsna wanted them to rule the whole world. Why? Because unless My devotees rule the whole world then some rascal upstart... there were so many at that time when Lord Krsna descended. This was His mission. There were so many upstart rascal kings who wanted to become the boss of the world. They were all making politics and were positioning themselves to take over. They all had their plans. We read about them in Krsna book. There was Kamsa, there was Jarasandha, there was Sisupala - all of them were making their alliances and their schemes. And Lord Krsna openly, frankly declares in Bhagavad-gita that He has come to wipe the world clean of their influence and to establish His devotees as the leaders of the human society because in this way the human beings will actually have a chance to use this human form of life for what it is meant. Like the Srimad Bhagavatam says - *mukti dvara* - that is why Krsna gives this human body. He doesn't give this human body for sense gratification. If that's what the living entity wants to do then you can have body of a dog or a cat or anything. There are so many forms of life meant just for sense gratification. The human form of life is called *mukti-dvara* in the SB, which means "the door to liberation". That is what this body is meant for.

But if the leaders of society are like it is stated *sva-vigraho stha...jatu nam agadagrajah* - when the leaders of society are people *jatu nam agadagrajah*, who will never chant the name of Krsna, if they are averse to that... As soon as they hear even the first indication that now there will be a discussion of God and then they immediately plug in their ears, they don't want to hear about this. And so in Kali yuga it's this class of men that becomes a leader, this class of men becomes a *guru*. A demoniac class. And therefore the whole society, the rest of human society they are classified... like in the Vedic society there were four *varnas* - *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *vaisya*, *sudra* - so in Kali yuga there are four classes of animals - dog, hog, camel and ass. These are the "*varnas*" today - dogs, hogs, camels and asses. And this is abominable, this is terrible, this is most unfortunate.

Someone has managed to achieve this human form of life and that is the fate - you live the life like a dog, hog, camel and ass with some big royal... Srila Prabhupada said - royal addition of the animals in charge as the *guru*, as the leader. So therefore although a Vaisnava has no subjective desire to assume such a position as a *guru*, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has asked us, He has asked everyone - *amara ajnaya guru* - you all become

guru. There are different functions in this designation *guru*. Some of course are doing the typical function *diksa*, giving initiation. And there is *siksa* – to give instructions, there is *varma-pradarsika* - to show the way. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu expects all of his followers to become *guru* – *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa* - and save this world. So it is for this reason that one accepts this position. And so accepting this position then he becomes Krsna's instrument even though himself... as I said, I studied Srila Prabhupada, his own attitude and it's amazing how humble he was, how (there is this term) self-deprecating - it means he would always say "I have no qualification. Except one thing - that I'm following the order of my spiritual master and therefore I'm acting as a spiritual master only because I'm following the order of my *guru*. But otherwise I have no qualification".

So subjectively this is how the spiritual master thinks - that "I am an ordinary man" but actually he is NOT an ordinary man because he has become Krsna's instrument. So if others think he is just an ordinary man then, again, *naraki buddhi* - this is hellish intelligence. Because just like the Deity has come to give us a chance so the spiritual master is sent by Krsna to teach us not only by what he speaks but also by his example what it means to serve Krsna.

Arcye visnau sila-dhir gurusu nara-matir vaisnave... and to think of other devotees, Vaisnavas... *jati buddhir* - as some kind of sect. *Jati* means actually a sect or a cast. *Jati* means cast. So some particular group. Like there are Jehova's witnesses and Masons and Theosophical society and (.....?) people and even, we can say, the big religions - the Catholics and the Orthodox, the Protestants. So there are these different sects of people and they have their particular rituals and these rituals bind them together and it's just a society more or less of mutual sense gratification. They find that by working together they have economic advantages. If they do business with one another there is lesser price to pay and more profit to make. So those who think that the Vaisnavas have similar program. That this Vaisnava *dharma*, Vaisnava religion is just a convenient way for people to get together and make business in this world and make a lot of money... Ha, wish it was true (laughs). Those are people who think that this Vaisnava *dharma* exists simply to provide material advantages. And you will be surprised - even in Bengal... you are fortunate if you don't speak Bengali, but if you take a ride on a train going from Mayapur to Calcutta there are people in the other compartments... when they see an ISKCON devotee they start to talk among themselves openly in Bengali language. And they are conversing among themselves about all the gossip stories that go around in the Bengali villages about what's going on - "Oh, there is another one"... "Yes, they are bringing in drugs to India" or "They have a big prostitution ring" or this or that. So they talk like that - that to dress up like Hare Krsna, to wear *tilak* this is all just a cover of some kind of criminal activities. So again, *naraki buddhi* - this is a hellish intelligence.

So if we throw away this advantage of the human form of life and instead we cultivate a hellish intelligence then, as Krsna says in 16-th Chapter, "then I push them down" because they are spoiling the whole purpose of human life. So He pushes them down but then the same Krsna comes as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to lift us up. He is called *patita-pavana* - He lifts up the most fallen. He gives a very, very simple process whereby

anyone can actually cultivate the correct *rasa* - instead of having taste for sinful activities one can redirect one's taste to the service of the lotus feet of Krsna. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu makes that possible. But there is something that we must from our side contribute to this process. And this something is that we have to be very, very careful to curb down our own propensity for offences. And definitely we have that propensity. Otherwise we would have not taken birth in this age. You can be sure of that. If we did not have this propensity of committing offences then why we would have taken birth on this planet in this age of Kali which is the most offensive and hellish age? Age of gross materialism, gross atheism.

So it's just like the son of the *brahmana* sage who was garlanded with a dead snake by Maharaja Pariksit, this Srngi. So he had been a demon in his previous life but because he had been killed in the vicinity of the Lord's pastimes, he was killed on a sacred land, therefore he got the chance... this is Krsna's mercy, he got the chance in the next life to have a *brahmana* birth. So in the *brahmana* birth there are all advantages. But because he had this propensity for offences he ruined that chance. There was one king on the earth at that time, who was capable of holding back the influence of the age of Kali - that was Maharaja Pariksit and this person Srngi cursed him. And because of that curse Maharaja Pariksit... of course he willingly, he didn't fight the curse, he willingly let the serpent bite him and he left this world. But then, just after, the personality of Kali had a clear hand to do whatever he wanted and therefore 5000 years later - here we are (laughs). And the boy's father rebuked his son: "Now because of what you have done everyone will remember that it was because of the *brahmanas* that this age of Kali became powerful, because of our class, *brahmana* class". So you see, all advantages were there for this boy but he didn't strive to curb down his offensive propensity.

So by coming to this Krsna consciousness movement each one of us here also has wonderful advantage to utilize this human form of life for what it is actually meant. But knowing... we should know very well, we should admit to ourselves: "I have taken birth in this fallen age - it must mean something. It cannot mean that I was in my last life with the four Kumaras (laughs) discussing very high elevated topics with them. And then by my independent will I decided to take birth in Kali-yuga to bless everyone". (laughs) No, we should understand we have taken this birth in this age because we have a very inauspicious nature, very inauspicious side of our nature, like scorpion or like serpent - ready to bite, full of poison, ready to bite, ready to criticize, ready to find fault. We have to admit this. This is actually the first step in serious Krsna consciousness to admit: "I'm fallen, I'm low, I'm nasty, I have no good qualifications". Because if we admit that, we are opening ourselves up to receiving the good qualifications that Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu wants to bestow upon the human beings in this age. But, you know, as it is stated in Srimad Bhagavatam - *yajanti hi sumedhasa* - it's only those who are intelligent, they have to have some good intelligence. And this is where it is - to recognize: "I'm fallen, I'm sinful and therefore I'm in need of Lord Caitanya's mercy. I cannot trust my own propensities, I cannot assume myself to be some great personality and I cannot assume that the ideas that pop into my mind are coming directly from Krsna. I cannot assume such things. I have to be very, very cautious".

So this is true for everyone, in all positions in this Krsna consciousness movement. As I said, Srila Prabhupada although he was... I mean, we have no doubt about Srila Prabhupada's position, but just see the example he was giving - he was presenting himself to be simply a humble servant, apart from that he had no qualification. So subjectively this is how a devotee... and the spiritual master is teaching that. This is, we could say, the foremost lesson that the spiritual master has to teach his disciples, that: "I'm nothing special, I'm just a servant of Krsna". And then by adopting this attitude then one becomes an instrument of Krsna, then Krsna can do something with that person. This is the whole point.

And so actually the credit goes to Krsna - this is the understanding of the devotee, whatever it is that is happening in my devotional service that is wonderful, that is showing some success, some progress - that is all Krsna's credit, Krsna is doing this. And all I'm doing is I'm not standing in the way, I'm not resisting, I'm not causing a problem for what Krsna wants to do. But Krsna is so transcendently kind that He doesn't leave it at that - He wants to give credit to His devotees. This is Krsna - He is, as Srila Prabhupada says: "You take one step toward Krsna, He takes ten steps toward you". Krsna is so grateful, He is not a miser.

This world... this is a dark, material world from top to bottom. Actually this is why Krsna has to descend into this world. He says *yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bhārata*. Now consider what does it mean. He says that from time to time religion, real *dharmā*, diminishes and *adharmā*, false religion becomes prominent and I have to descend into this world to rectify the situation. What does this mean? That means even in the highest planetary systems the residents there are bewildered about what is the real purpose of our life. And that is a fact, that comes out so clear - if we read Krsna book, read about Lord Brahma's kidnapping the friends and cows of Krsna, read about Lord Indra's trying to destroy Vrndavan because they wouldn't perform a sacrifice to him... You can see that even in the topmost positions in this universe they do not understand fully what is the real purpose of this life, which is to surrender and serve Krsna in love. Even THEY don't understand. They may know all about Vedic *dharmā*, the *caturvarga* - *dharmā*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksa* - all these things, they may know but this actual essence, again this point of *rasa* - what is the driving taste for what we are doing and that should be simply to please Krsna. And that even they have problems with. So they become bewildered. Even they sometimes are giving wrong instruction, even they sometimes are misleading people.

And so there is no one else who can actually set things straight except Krsna and that's why He has to come. So this world from Krsna's point of view is so dark. And the residents from this world, even those who are counted among the demigods, they are so flickering, so unsteady from Krsna's point of view. So Krsna Himself has to come from time to time to give everyone an injection of enthusiasm, to clear doubts out of everyone's mind: "Hallo! Hare Krsna! It's Me, Krsna! Remember Me?" "Oh, yes, Lord Krsna! Jaya! Yes, I'm Your servant". So this world is such a dark place.

So how much grateful Lord Krsna feels when some living entity finally says: "To hell with all this". This is the meaning - *sarva dharman parityaja* - Lord Krsna says: "Give up

all this *dharma*". "I'm not going to listen anymore even to the so called great authorities, even the great philosophers, the great sages, their speculations about the meaning of life - it's all so confusing. I just want to surrender to Krsna, I just want to do what Krsna says. in that I'm sure". We should just think like this – how grateful Lord Krsna feels in this great circle of this universe, which is so dark and so full of confusion, when there is here and there and here and there a few living entities who finally throw up their hands and say: "No more speculation! I'm just going to surrender to Krsna". And Krsna is so grateful to that. And He wants to draw the attention of all the others countless living entities to them. They are the ones who are great. Therefore in Bhagavad-gita Krsna calls them *mahatmas* - great souls. *Mahatmanas tu mam partha daivim prakrtim asritah*. They are the great souls. *Satatam kirtayanto mam* - they are always engaged in *kirtan*, always engaged in glorifying Me. And Krsna wants to broadcast the glories of such devotees throughout the whole world. Therefore He requests such devotees: "Please cooperate with My plan - you have to take big position. I'm sorry, I know you don't want to do it, but you have to do this. This is My request".

And so in surrendering to Krsna one becomes Lord Krsna's instrument and Krsna works through that devotee. And people can see this. I just received... (break) ...who is writing in response... Recently there was one article by me in Back to Godhead. So he read that and he was writing to me that since 20 years or more he has been involved in the New Age esoteric scene - running metaphysical book store, giving seminars and workshops and this and that. For 20 years or more. And he has also been a Life member of ISKCON and he has been trying to chant 16 rounds, follow four regulative principles, study Srila Prabhupada's books. But he has these other interests. So he was writing: "I was very happy to read this article of yours in BTG because you are showing the fallacy of this channeling process". And actually he said: "This is my experience that although I have interest in this kind of things I'll tell you quite frankly - I don't find anybody in this New Age movement who comes anywhere near in personal spiritual qualities to even a serious bhakta in ISKCON". There is such a difference - someone takes to Krsna consciousness, even they are new, but if they take the process seriously then, he was writing, they show so much more advancement, tangible spiritual advancement, than someone who has spent years and years in all these speculative, metaphysical pursuits.

So my point is that people can see that. People can recognize this immediately if they are a little bit intelligent, that's what is required, a little bit of intelligence, clear intelligence. So they can see that the devotees are instruments of Krsna and this is what Krsna wants. Krsna wants to impress the confused, bewildered conditioned souls who are searching for the truth in this path and that path and becoming more and more lost. He wants them to see His devotees and understand from their direct association: "Oh, here is one who has actually attained the real purpose of life, who has actually gone through the *mukti dvara*, the door of liberation and is utilizing this human form for what it is meant. And who actually has this higher taste, transcendental taste".

So this is the system of Lord Krsna for spreading *bhakti*, pure devotion, throughout the world. We are all servants of that system. I'm only sitting here because I'm doing what is expected of me. So we are all in this together. And therefore the ceremony today, the

Vyasa-puja ceremony for the spiritual master, we should understand that this is what Krsna wants us to do, all together, me too. I don't like it, but Krsna wants us to do this and by doing this then Krsna is becoming very, very satisfied with His devotees and is bestowing His blessings upon us all so that we can better execute His mission. And if, on the other side, again, *naraki buddhi*, if one in the name of whatever... we can be very expert in thinking of so many reasons for minimizing such a function as today: "Ah, it's not important, uh...", putting it down, putting it down. But then we are taking a great risk. The *sastras* warn us: "Watch out! You are in this human form of life but if you misuse it, cultivate *naraki buddhi* - putting down, minimizing the Deity, the spiritual master, the devotees, devotional service, then we are actually opening the door to hell. To some people this may not sound reasonable but there it stands in the Vedic scriptures, there it is. The human form of life as I was saying this morning, does have a mission, it does have a mission. Today people are very expert in proposing that every thing is open to question, we don't know why we are here. As I quoted this philosopher: "The human life is not different than the life of an oyster. So here we are with our minds and senses. We don't know why we are here, it's actually not even important". They say from the cosmic point of view it's not even important. But for us here in this human form of life our little desires are important to us. So therefore we should act on them. We should just try to fulfill our desires as best as we can in this life, knowing that nothing makes any sense anyway (laughs). It doesn't matter, you just live in this body so do what you can and you die and it's all over anyway. So this is actually the philosophy today. Whether people are philosophers or not but they are following this philosophy. They live their life according to such an idea.

When I was doing this tour here in the universities so in... I forgot the place, but there was such question... there was a couple of students who were raising some kind of challenge to what I was saying, they just didn't like it. They didn't like that I was saying that the human life has a purpose and that purpose is to develop love of Godhead. And they were trying to say: "Oh, this is what we hear anyway in our own church and now you have come here and you are saying the same thing". So then I started to ask them: "All right, forget about what I'm saying. What YOU think is important, what YOU think life is meant for?" And then they were going: "Oh, you know, we don't think about that". (laughs) And then I said: "Well, all right, but there are a lot of people who do!" (laughs) Like Albert Einstein - he was the one who said that the real goal of my life is to find out what is going on in the mind of God. So of course he is a scientist, he had his own way of doing that but at least... Prabhupada used to appreciate Einstein because at least he was thinking about God in some way or other. And he is a great man. When we look at the greatest figures in history we find that they were concerned with these problems. Not that they were fortunate enough to meet a spiritual master and actually make progress on the path of *bhakti yoga* but at least in an intellectual, philosophical way they were concerning themselves with what is the purpose of this human form of life, why we are here, what is the goal. I was pointing to them: "You are trying to raise an objection to what I'm saying but you yourself have no contrary point to make. You just don't know and you think that's enough. You know, it's just enough to say...this is the thing to be honest - "I'm an oyster, I don't know. (laughs) I'm a fool. So why you have come here? Why don't you be fool too?"

Why have you come to tell us anything? You just be a fool also". (laughs) But this is not very reasonable.

If we look at this world - this world is a slaughterhouse! Is this really commendable - we receive this human form of life and we are just going to live it like goats. The goats are the kind of creature that is meant to be slaughtered. In India the worshipers of Goddess Kali or Lord Siva they cut the heads of goats and we see also in the West in the Jewish religion, in the Islam religion they are also killing goats - the favorite animal to slaughter, to cut the throat. So this is the *karma*. And what is the goat - it's just a poor, unfortunate creature which just chew and looks for sex life and, as Prabhupada says, it will gaze at its own destruction with unseeing eyes. In these religious ceremonies where they are killing goats, so they have a line of goats and the one in front is getting its head cut off. And the other standing behind are just looking on, chewing. They can see it but it doesn't mean anything, they don't understand that in one minute I'll be there, the knife will be on my throat - "Uh, I don't know", chewing. And if there is an opportunity for sex they have sex right there, right at the place where the goats are being killed.

So this is the misfortune of this age - that there are more than six billions human beings but the vast majority are like goats. They can see their own destruction all around them and they think it's enough... "All right, I'm going to be slaughtered. So what? But if I can chew on something, if I can have a little sex life, a little bit of intoxication in the meantime then I've lived a good life (laughs). So this is most unfortunate. Lord Krsna, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu are being so compassionate. They want these living entities to see what is the actual purpose of the human form and therefore this great mission has been given to us, to those of us who have broken away from that goat civilization and have declared ourselves to try at least to serve Krsna in this lifetime. So then we have this mission given to us. And by doing it, Lord Krsna blesses His devotees. As He says: "You do this, I'll protect you and I'll bring you back home, back to Godhead". He says: "There is no servant more dear to Me than those who try to preach". These assurednesses He has given to us.

OK, so I thank you very much. And now is your turn, isn't it?
Hare Krsna!