

DEER MADE BHARAT MAHARAJ, A DEER



Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, in this way Bharata Mahārāja was overwhelmed by an uncontrollable desire which was manifest in the form of the deer. Due to the fruitive results of his past deeds, he

fell down from mystic yoga, austerity and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The King was so engrossed in petting and maintaining the deer that he fell down from his spiritual activities. In due course of time, insurmountable death, which is compared to a venomous snake that enters the hole created by a mouse, situated itself before him.

At the time of death, the King saw that the deer was sitting by his side, exactly like his own son, and was lamenting his death. Actually the mind of the King was absorbed in the body of the deer, and consequently — like those bereft

of Kṛṣṇa consciousness — he left the world, the deer, and his material body and acquired the body of a deer.

However, there was one advantage. Although he lost his human body and received the body of a deer, he did not forget the incidents of his past life. Although in the body of a deer, Bharata Mahārāja, due to his rigid devotional service in his past life, could understand the cause of his birth in that body. Considering his past and present life, he constantly repented his activities.

In the body of a deer, Bharata Mahārāja began to lament: What misfortune! I have fallen from

the path of the self-realized. I gave up my real sons, wife and home to advance in spiritual life, and I took shelter in a solitary holy place in the forest. I became self-controlled and self-realized, and I engaged constantly in devotional service — hearing, thinking, chanting, worshiping and remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. I was successful in my attempt, so much so that my mind was always absorbed in devotional service. However, due to my personal foolishness, my mind again became attached — this time to a deer. Now I have obtained the body of a deer and have fallen far from my

devotional practices.

Although Bharata Mahārāja received the body of a deer, by constant repentance he became completely detached from all material things. He did not disclose these things to anyone, but he left his mother deer in a place known as Kālañjara Mountain, where he was born. He again went to the forest of Śālagrāma and to the āśrama of Pulastya and Pulaha.

Remaining in that āśrama, the great King Bharata Mahārāja was now very careful not to fall victim to bad association. Without disclosing his past to anyone, he remained in that āśrama and ate dry leaves only. He was

not exactly alone, for he had the association of the Supersoul. In this way he waited for death in the body of a deer. Bathing in that holy place, he finally gave up that body.