

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva
ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM
(Bhāgavata Purāṇa)
The Story of the Fortunate One



Canto 7
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CANTO 7: The Science of God

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him much gratitude. He undertook the daring task of enlightening the materialist westerners, the advanced philosophers and theologians, in order to help them to overcome the perils and loneliness of impersonalism and the philosophy of emptiness.

Introduction

This book relates the story of the Lord and His incarnations since the earliest records of Vedic history, the history of the original culture of knowledge of India. It is verily the Kṛṣṇa 'bible' [in Sanskrit called a *saṁhitā*] of the Hindu universe. The [Bhagavad Gītā](#) relates to this book the way in Christianity the sermon on the mountain, by Lord Jesus, relates to the full Bible. It has about 18,000 verses contained in 335 chapters and consists of 12 subdivisions of books that are called Cantos. These books together tell the complete history of the Vedic culture and cover the essence of the classical collections of stories called the Purāṇas. This specific collection of Vedic stories is considered the most important one of all the great eighteen classical Purāṇas of India. It includes the cream of the Vedic knowledge compiled from all the Vedic literatures, as also the story of the life of Lord Kṛṣṇa in full ([Canto 10](#)). Lord Kṛṣṇa constitutes a watershed in history between the old Vedic culture and the 'modern' political culture of a continuous word struggle, in which the rule of state no longer automatically is led by the spiritual order. The book tells the story of His birth, His youth, all wonderful proofs of His divine nature and His superhuman feats of defeating all kinds of demons, up to the great Mahābhārata war at Kurukṣetra. In this war the Vedic culture fell down to be replaced by the fragmented religiosity we these days call Hinduism. This leading Purāṇa, also called the 'perfect Purāṇa', is a brilliant story that has been brought to the West by [Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda](#) (1896-1977). He was a Caitanya Vaiṣṇava, a bhakti (devotional) monk of Lord Viṣṇu [the name for the transcendental form of Lord Kṛṣṇa]. We owe

The representative of Viṣṇu on earth is named the Fortunate One in this book. We know Him specifically by the names of Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Fortunate One is the Lord who is known by His different forms or incarnations, the so-called *avatāras*. But also the devotees are part of His reality and are also called *bhāgavata* when they are of pure devotion. On top of that the book is also called *bhāgavata*. Thus there is the Lord in



His many appearances, the devotee with as many faces, and the book. They are all called *bhāgavata* or fortunate. The word *bhāga* means fortune or luck, while the term *bhaga* refers to gracious lord, happiness and wealth. To be fortunate Vedicly means to be of the opulence, or to carry, or live by, the fullness of God's riches, beauty, fame, power, knowledge and detachment.

The writer of this book is named Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva, and is also known as Bādarāyana. He is the Lord, the *Bhagavān* or venerable one among the philosophers, who in India assembled all the holy texts. He compiled the Vedas, four basic scriptures also known as the *śruti* meaning 'that what is heard', containing the basic wisdom, the mantras for the rituals and the hymns. The Purāṇas together with the Itihāsas (the separate stories) belong to the so-called *smṛti*, 'that what is remembered'. This knowledge is sometimes considered a fifth Veda. Vyāsa also wrote the book titled Mahābhārata. It is considered the greatest epic poem in the world. It describes the history (Itihāsa) of the great fall the Vedic culture once made, this culture based on spiritual knowledge. The Bhagavad Gītā is the most important part of it. Vyāsa also wrote the rest of the eighteen great story books (the Purāṇas) of India as also the Brahma-sūtra, his masterpiece on the Absolute Truth. Vyāsa was a grandfather of the Kuru dynasty. He lived a very long time. His long duration of life enabled him to write the story of the Fortunate One and all the other books. He had a son called Śukadeva who handed down the message of this holy story book, in the presence of other sages, to another member of the family, Emperor Parīkṣit, who had difficulty respecting the classical wisdom. This emperor is in this book, presented in the form of a frame story, present as a model for us normal people who seek their stability in wisdom. This knowledge was by Śuka conveyed to him in disciplic succession (*paramparā*) for the sake of the science of devotional service (bhakti), to be taught by those who teach by example (the *ācāryas*). Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupāda, from this disciplic succession was commissioned to disseminate this book in the West. He realized this together with his pupils (known as the Hare Kṛṣṇas of ISKCON), with [a verse by verse commented series of books](#) covering the entire Bhāgavatam. This site offers not all these texts (see [vedabase.io](#)) but it does offer, under the Creative Com-

mons Copyright, an as-it-is translation, independent from ISKCON, of the verses in a concatenated accessible form, complete with the [Sanskrit original version](#) and [a dictionary covering the terms used in the book](#), the previous version, a reading in mp3's and 74 bhajans for performing the necessary chanting alone and in association. This text is regularly updated and maintained by us. As a devotee I as the translator, the undersigned, received my instructions for devotional service in the temples of ISKCON, as also elsewhere. My predecessor in this duty in the Netherlands was [Śrī Hayeśvar das \(Hendrik van Teylingen 1938-1998\)](#), who was initiated by Prabhupāda. He covered most of the formal ISKCON translations into Dutch.

For the translation of this internet version were consulted the translations of C.L Goswami, M.A., Sāstrī (from the Gītā Press, Gorakhpur), the *paramparā* [disciplic succession] version of Śrīla Viṣvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and the later version of this book by Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The latter translators as *ācāryas* of the age-old Indian Vaiṣṇava tradition, are representatives of a culture of reformation of the devotion for God or bhakti, the way it has been practiced in India since the 16th century. This reformation asserts that the false authority of the caste system and single dry book knowledge is to be rejected. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, also called Caitanya Mahāprabhu (1486-1534), the *avatāra* [an incarnation of the Lord] who heralded this reform, restored the original purpose of developing devotion unto the person of God. He endeavored in particular for the dissemination of the two main sacred scriptures expounding on that devotion in relation to Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These scriptures are the [Bhagavad Gītā](#) and this Bhāgavata Purāṇa, which is also called the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. From this scripture all the Vaiṣṇava teachers of example derived, and still derive, their wisdom for the purpose of the instruction and shaping of their exemplary devotion. The word for word translations as also the full text and commentaries of this book were studied within and without the Hare Kṛṣṇa temples where the teaching of this culture takes place.

The purpose of the translation is first of all to make this glorious text available to a wider audience over the Internet. Since the Bible, the Ko-

ran and numerous other holy texts are readily available, the translator, the undersigned, meant that this book could not stay behind on the shelf of his own bookcase as a token of material possessiveness. When we started with this endeavor in the year 2000 there was no proper web presentation of this book. Knowledge not shared is knowledge lost, and certainly this type of knowledge, which stresses the yoga of non-possessiveness and devotion as one of its leading principles, could not be left out. The version of Swami Prabhupāda is very extensive covering some 2400 pages of plain fine printed text, including his commentaries. And these covered only the first ten Cantos. The remaining two Cantos were posthumously translated, commented and published by his pupils in full respect of his spirit.

I thus was faced with two daring challenges: one was to concatenate the text, or make a readable running narrative, of the book that had been dissected and commented to the single word. The second challenge was to put it into a language that would befit the 21st century with all its modern and postmodern experience and digital progress of the present cultural order of the world, without losing anything of its original verses. Thus another verse to verse as-it-is translation came about in which Viṣvanātha's, Prabhupāda's and Sāstrī's words were pruned, retranslated and set to the understanding and realization of today. This realization, in my case, originated directly from the disciple line of succession of the Vaiṣṇava line of *ācāryas*, as also from a realization of the total field of Indian philosophy of enlightenment and yoga discipline, as was brought to the West by also non-Vaiṣṇava gurus and maintained by their pupils. Therefore the author has to express his gratitude also to all these great heroes who dared to face the adamant of western philosophy with all its doubts, concreticism and skepticism. In particular the pupils of Prabhupāda, members of the renounced order (*sannyāsīs*) who instructed the author in the independence and maturity of the philosophy of the bhakti-yogis of Lord Caitanya, need to be mentioned. I was already initiated in India by a non-Vaiṣṇava guru who gave me the name Swami Anand Aadhar ('teacher of the foundation of happiness'). That name the Kṛṣṇa community converted into Anand Aadhar Prabhu ('master of the foundation of happiness), without further ceremonies of Vaiṣṇava initiation (apart from a basic training). With the name Anand

Aadhar I am a withdrawn devotee, a so-called *vānapraṣṭa*, who does his devotional service independently in the silence and modesty of his local adaptations of the philosophy.

In most cases the word for word translations and grammatical directions of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda/ISKCON, Viṣvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and C.L. Goswami M.A., Sāstrī, have been followed as they were used in their translations. I have checked them with the help of the Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary [see [the file of the terms used](#)]. In footnotes and between square brackets [] sometimes a little comment and extra info is given to accommodate the reader when the original text is drawing from a more experienced approach. Terms in italics are explained in the glossary ([the lexicon](#)). On the internet site [bhagavata.org](#) of this book, my - from ISKCON independent - version directly links to the version of Prabhupāda at each verse, together with my own previous version, so that it is possible to retrace at any moment what we, [Sakhya Devi Dāsī](#), who faithfully always assisted me for more than 23 years in the duty, and I, this servant of the Lord, have done with the text. It was realized in accordance with the scientific tradition of the Vaiṣṇava community.

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With love and devotion,
 Anand Aadhar Prabhu,
 Sakhya Devi Dāsī,
 Enschede, The Netherlands, January 24, 2024.

Chapter 1

The Supreme Lord is Equal unto Everyone

(1) **T**he king said: 'How could the Supreme Lord, being loved as a friend, equally disposed towards all living beings, oh brahmin, in support of Indra kill the demons, as if He would be partial [see also B.G. 9: 29]? (2) Being of the highest bliss and free from the material modes, there is for Him absolutely no personal need to side with the enlightened community or fear and fight the demons. (3) Oh glorious one, can you please remove the great doubt that thus has risen in us concerning the qualities of Nārāyaṇa?'

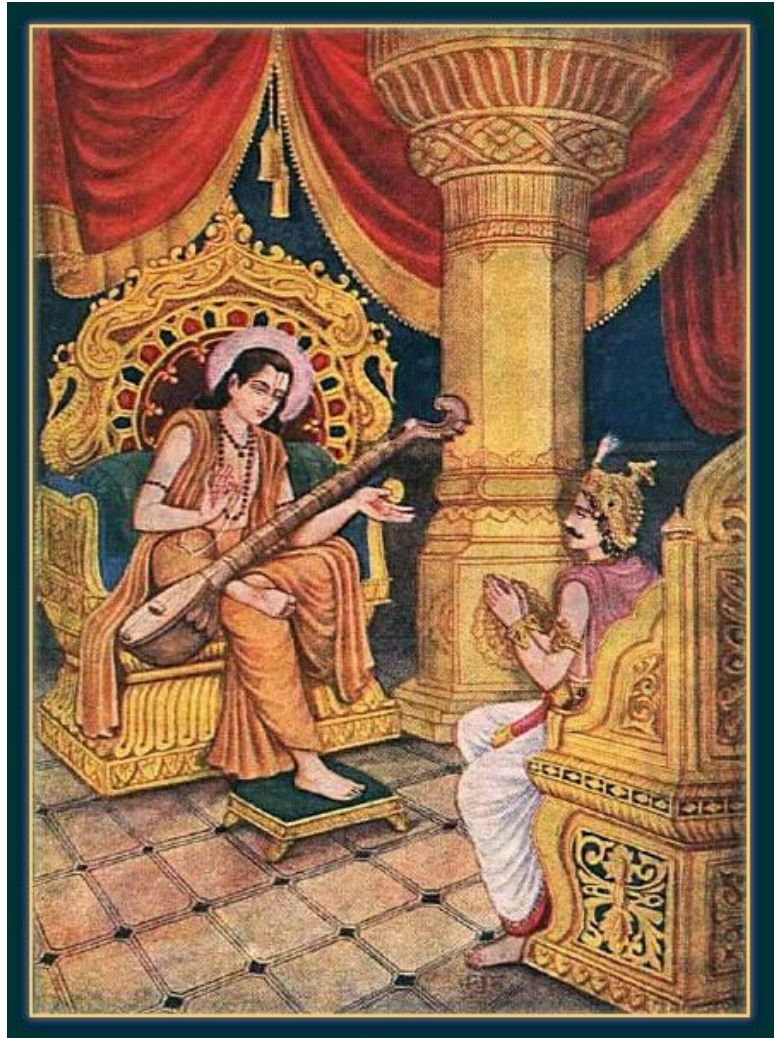
(4-5) **T**he honorable *ṛṣi* said: 'What an excellent question to ask, oh great King! Because of the wonderful activities of the Lord, that are sung by the leading souls of piety, the sages headed by Nārada, we see more and more the glories and devotion of His devotees. I will discuss with you all the topics relating to the Lord, but let me first offer my obeisances to Kṛṣṇa's greatest sage [Vyāsa-deva]. (6) Even though He is free from the modes, unborn and unmanifest, the Supreme Lord, transcendental to the material world, enters the material qualities of His illusory energy [in the form of the *guṇa avatāras* Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu] and accepts obligations and responsibilities [compare B.G. 9: 11]. (7) The qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* belong to material nature and not to the spirit soul, oh King. For the spiritual self there is no question of their combined prominence or decay, the on and off [of the fickleness one has with material things]. (8) According to the time of their prevalence one with the mode of *sattva* [goodness] finds the *devas* and the *ṛṣis* [the gods and sages], with the mode of *rajas* [passion] one encounters Asuras [the unenlightened ones] and with the mode of *tamas* [inertia] one is faced with Yakṣas and Rākṣasas [ghosts and demons, see also B.G. 14: 11-13]. (9) The way one knows fire as residing in other elements [like wood], the sages, the expert knowers, perceive

the Supersoul as present within themselves and this [divine self] is not visible when one looks at all appearances in the outer world [see B.G. 10: 10]. (10) When He desires to create material bodies for the living entities, the Supreme One manifests them on the basis of His creative potency in the mode of passion. Desiring to engage in different bodies He is of the nature of goodness and when the Lord is about to put an end to it all He, in accordance with that quality [of destruction], engages the mode of ignorance [see B.G. 9: 10]. (11) Oh ruler of man, the true cause that is the male principle, the original unmanifest foundation of matter [*pradhāna*], is the [primal, expanding] movement of time [as the fourth dimension] which forms the shelter of the Lord [to meditate upon, see also B.G. 11: 32]. (12) Oh King, also being this [authentic notion of] Time, the Supreme Lord of name and fame increases in the mode of goodness, the numbers of enlightened souls and is consequently, as the friend of the demigods, inimical to and destructive with the unenlightened souls [the materialists] who are ruled by passion and ignorance. (13) Concerning this [destruction/protection plan] in the past upon the request of King Yudhiṣṭhira, the man without enemies, the following story was lovingly told by the great sage of enlightenment [Nārada] at the grand sacrifice. (14-15) The king, the son of Pāṇḍu, after having seen how at the great offering called Rājasūya the King of Cedi [Śiśupāla] so wondrously had merged into the Supreme Personality of Vāsudeva, had as the ruler wonder-stricken at the sacrifice, before all the sages listening, asked Nārada who sat there the following question. (16) Yudhiṣṭhira had said: 'Oh how wonderful, and for sure difficult to achieve for even the transcendentalists, is the attainment of Śiśupāla behaving so hostile towards Vāsudeva, the Supreme Absolute Truth. (17) We all would like to know how this could happen, oh sage; from insulting the Lord Vena was sent to hell by the brahmins. (18) That sinful son of Damaghoṣa fostered, from his earliest prattle to his last days, anger towards Govinda, just as did the evil-minded Dantavakra [his brother]. (19) No white leprosy [vitiligo] appeared on their tongues nor did they land in the darkness of hell because of their repeated offenses against Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of

Brahman [compare B.G. 10: 12]. (20) How could they for everyone to see, so easily find absorption [*sāyujya-mukti*] in the Supreme Lord whose supreme position is so hard to attain? (21) My intelligence concerning this matter is as fickle as a candle flickering in the wind. Please, oh man of all fortune, tell us more about the particular cause of this great wonder.'

(22) **T**he son of Vyāsa said: 'After hearing the words of the king asking questions in the midst of the assembly, Nārada, the greatest among the sages, felt satisfied and addressed him about the topics. (23) Śrī Nārada said: 'This body, subject to insults, praise, honor and dishonor, is the product of a lack of discrimination between the primal state of material nature [*pradhāna*] and the supreme [position of the transcendental witness], oh King [see also B.G. 2: 14, 12: 18-19]. (24) Oh earthly ruler, because of this the living beings in this world suffer from the misconception of 'I' and 'mine', just as from the reproach and punishment associated with it. (25) Living with this false conception one thinks that the destruction of bodies is the same as the destruction of living beings. The misconception [including the reproach and the fear for punishment] is there not because of [but because of being without Him,] Him who is the beatitude of detachment and emancipation in person. How could there from His side, the side of the Soul of all, the Supreme One and Highest Control, be any question of violence [mentally and physically]? (26) Therefore, whether one is of a constant enmity, of devotion, of fear, of affection or of lusty desires, one must manage to stay connected and not care about anything else. (27) The absorption in Him [though] attained by someone in enmity might not be the same as the absorption attained by someone in devotional service, that is my definite opinion. (28-29) A larva checked by a bee in a comb

may be filled with anxiety and resentment, but because of that bee attain the same form. Just the same one may [like Śiśupāla and Dantavakra] with Kṛṣṇa, who as the Supreme Lord assumed a human form, [even] be freed from one's sins by constantly thinking of Him in enmity. (30) Moved by lust, hatred, fear, affection and devotion many, who united their mind in the Lord, consequently gave up on sin and thus attained their destination. (31) Oh King, the *gopīs* realized this by their lusty desires, Kāṁsa by his fear, Śiśupāla and other kings by their hatred, Kṛṣṇa's family members by their kinship, You [Pāṇḍavas] by your affection for Him and we through our bhakti. (32) Not to be someone like Vena, who could not adopt any of these five forms of respect in regard of the Original Person, one must fix one's mind on



Kṛṣṇa in one of these ways. (33) Śīsupāla and Dantavakra, the sons of your maternal aunt, oh Pāṇḍava, were [incarnations of] the two exalted attendants of Viṣṇu [Jaya and Vijaya, see 3.15-16] who because of a curse of the brahmins [the Kumāras] fell from grace.'

(34) Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: 'Who pronounced that curse and what kind of curse was that? It is difficult to believe that such a thing might happen to a servant of the Lord. How can it be that those exclusively devoted to Him have to take another birth [see B.G. 4: 9 and 8: 16]? (35) Those who reside in Vaikunṭha are not concerned with a material body, material senses or a material life. Please describe how they could be bound to a physical body.'

(36) Śrī Nārada said: 'One day it happened that the sons of Brahmā, Sanandana and the others [the Kumāras], traveling around the three worlds, arrived at the place where Viṣṇu resides. (37) When they [Jaya and Vijaya] saw them approaching who, despite being born before the ancients of the universe [see 1.3: 6], looked like boys of five or six years old, the two guards thought they were naked children and denied them access. (38) And so they full of anger cursed them: 'Oh, you two unworthy souls, residing at the feet of the Slayer of Madhu it is most sinful not to be free from passion and ignorance and therefore, oh fools, you will soon hereafter be born from the womb of an unenlightened mother [see 3.17]. (39) Thus being cursed to fall down from their abode the merciful sages also said to them: 'May it be so that after three births you turn back to your abode.'

(40) **T**he two were thereafter born as the sons of Diti and by the Daityas and Dānavas honored as Hiranyakaśipu, the older brother and Hiranyākṣa, the younger one. (41) Hiranyakaśipu was killed by the Lord appearing in the form of a lion [Lord Nṛsimhadeva] and Hiranyākṣa was killed by Him when He in the form of a boar had appeared to uplift the world [Lord Varāha, see 3.18-19]. (42) Hiranyakaśipu, desirous to kill his son Prahlāda, the beloved devotee of Keśava, tried different

ways of torture to cause his death. (43) But, since his son was protected by the power of the Supreme Lord, Him, the Soul in all living beings who is peaceful and equal towards all, he, with all the might he displayed, could not kill him. (44) Next the two demons, with the names of Rāvana and Kumbhakarna, took their birth from Keśinī as the sons of Viśravā and caused a lot of trouble to all the people. (45) In order to relieve the two of the curse, thereupon Rāmacandra manifested Himself and killed them. You will hear about the exploits of Rāma [see 9: 10 & 11] from the mouth of Mārkaṇḍeya, my best. (46) In their third birth the two were born in this world as *kṣatriya* sons [as Śīsupāla and Dantavakra] to your aunt. They are now freed from the curse by Kṛṣṇa who destroyed their sins with His *cakra*. (47) The gate keepers of Viṣṇu by meditating in a bond of intense hatred managed to get near Hari again and find absorption in the essence of the infallible Lord.'

(48) Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: 'How could there [with Hiranyakaśipu] be such a hatred for that great soul, his own son? Please tell me, oh supreme sage, how Prahlāda managed to develop such an attachment to Acyuta [the Infallible Lord].'

Chapter 2 Hiranyakaśipu, the King of the Demons, on Bereavement

(1) Śrī Nārada said: 'After his brother [Hiranyākṣa], as said, was killed by the Lord in the form of a boar [see 3.18-19], Hiranyakaśipu got very sad and angry, oh King. (2) Enraged biting his lips over this, he with his eyes fuming of anger stared into the grey sky and then spoke. (3) He, with his terrible teeth and fierce look, ghastly to behold, raised his trident in an assembly of Dānavas and said with a grimace the following: (4-5) 'Oh Dānavas and Daityas, Dvimūrdha ['the two-headed one'], Tryakṣa ['the three-eyed one'], Śambara and Śatabāhu ['the hundred-armed one']. Oh Hayagrīva ['the horsehead'], Namuci, Pāka, Ilvala and Vipracitti! Puloma, Śakuna and all others, listen to what I have to tell you and may

you all thereafter quickly act to it, without delay. (6) With those insignificant enemies, the theists who are of worship, conspiring behind his back, my so very dear brother and well-wisher was killed by Hari who was supposed to treat us all equally. (7-8) He [not being that equal] has forsaken His love for us and is now behaving abominably in *māyā*, just like a wild beast. As unsteady as a child, He changes from one form into another according to the desire of His worshiping devotees. With my trident I will cut Him in His neck and make Him swim in His blood. By satisfying him [Hiraṇyākṣa,] who was so fond of drinking it, I thus can find my peace. (9) When He, [Viṣṇu] that most deceitful enemy of all, is finished, the same will happen to those guys of God whose life belongs to Viṣṇu, just like it is with the drying up of the branches and leaves of a tree that is cut by its roots. (10) All of you meanwhile go to that world so neatly kept in order by the priests and politicians and see to the destruction of all those repenting and sacrificing bookworms who are of vow and charity. (11) Lord Viṣṇu roots in their sacrificial activities. He is that person full of religious principles who, exhaustingly being worshiped by the twice-born souls, is the man of dharma, He who is the shelter of these gods and sages, forefathers and all the rest. (12) Wherever the twice-born ones keep their cows, study their Vedas and are busy with their *varṇāśrama* ado, set all those towns afire and cut down all their trees.'

(13) **P**roving him their respects, they took the instructions of their master on their heads and terrorized, as experts in destruction, all the people. (14) The cities and villages, pasturing grounds, orchards and gardens, fields, forests, hermitages and mines, farms, mountain places, cowherd camps and also the capitals, they all burned down. (15) Some of them set the dwellings ablaze with firebrands and others demolished with picks the bridges, surrounding walls and the city gates while another group took up axes to destroy the source of livelihood by cutting down the fruit trees. (16) When the people thus time and again were disturbed by the followers of the king of the *Dai*-*tyas*, the God-fearing souls gave up their heavenly positions and wandered all over the earth in order

not to be visible to the demons. (17) Hiraṇyakaśipu, very distressed about the loss of his brother, performed the obsequies and pacified his nephews. (18-19) Śakuni, Śambara, Dhṛṣṭi, Bhūtasantāpana, Vṛka, Kālanābha, Mahānābha, Hariśmaśru and Utkaca, as also their mother Ruṣābhānu and Diti, his own mother, he, as a well adapted person, addressed with the sweetest words saying this, oh ruler of man.

(20) **H**iraṇyakaśipu said: 'Oh mother, oh mother; oh sister in law and nephews, you should not lament over our hero who, facing the enemy, chose for the glory of a hero's death. (21) Just like travelers, who amassing at a road house thereafter resume their course, oh sweet mother, the ways of living beings, who by providence in this world were brought together in one place [in a family, a country or religion], part again according to each his karma. (22) The eternal inexhaustible soul, free from the tinge of matter, is capable of going anywhere. Knowing all and being transcendental, that soul takes up the self of a body that, under the influence of the material world, demonstrates various qualities [see B.G. 13: 22]. (23) Just as trees being reflected in water can appear to be moving, one can also, by moving one's head [one's 'eyes'], have the illusion that the world is moving around. (24) The unchangeable living being the same way is confused by the mind he has with the qualities of matter, oh mother of mine, which leads to it that he, despite his formlessness, starts to believe in a physical form. (25-26) This soul confounded about his formless existence, with the body in mind thus knows loved ones and enemies, allies and strangers in his karma with the material affair. Accepting that he is born and will die, he laments in different ways and has all kinds of worries, being uncertain about what the scriptures say and being forgetful about proper discrimination. (27) In this context one often recites an ancient story about Yamarāja in discussion with the friends of someone who died. Listen closely. (28) Once in Uśīnara there was a famous king known as Suyajña, who was killed by his enemies during a war. His kinsmen sat around him. (29-31) With his jeweled armor scattered here and there and his ornaments and garlands fallen down, he was lying there in his

blood, pierced by an arrow through his heart. With his hair loose and his eyes obscured, he had his lips bitten in anger, his lotus face covered by dust and his arms and weapons cut off lying on the battlefield. When the queens ascertained that the master of Uśīnara thus had been treated by providence, they had their eyes full of tears and pounded their breast constantly with their hands while they, fallen down at his feet, repeatedly cried: 'oh husband!' (32) Wailing loudly about their beloved husband they moistened his lotus feet with their tears that were red because of the *kunkum* of their breasts. With their ornaments and hair loosened, they for everyone heart-rending lamented, sobbing pitifully:

(33) 'Alas by merciless providence, oh Lord of us, you, oh beloved one, have been taken beyond the range of our sight. You used to provide the livelihood of the state and the inhabitants of Uśīnara, but now that you have departed you are the cause of an increasing lamentation. (34) You were such a grateful husband to us, oh King, how can we, all following you, live without you? You, who are our best friend, please tell us whereto those who served your lotus feet, have to follow you, now you left us.' (35) The queens thus lamenting, had taken the dead husband on their lap, not wishing the corpse to be taken away. Meanwhile the sun was setting in the west. (36) Hearing the kith and kin of the ruler crying that loudly, Yamarāja personally appeared in the form of a boy and spoke to them.



(37) Śrī Yamarāja said: 'Ah, how can you people older than me who saw the law of nature ruling every day of your lives, be this bewildered? You yourselves will return to the same nature this man returned to. Yet you weep uselessly [compare B.G. 2: 28]! (38) Look how lucky we are, for we, abandoned by our father and mother, weak as we are, have not been eaten by the wolves! So why worry knowing that He who protected us in the womb, will also protect us later on? (39) Oh, poor women, the Supreme Controller creates, by the exercise of His will, all of this without ever changing Himself and it is He who, next to that, also maintains and destroys. One says that all beings

moving and not moving are involved in the game of the Lord, who is always fully entitled to maintain something or someone, or put an end to it all. (40) Something lost in the street can, protected by destiny, be preserved, while something kept at home, can be fated to be lost. Despite being unprotected, one, under His protection, may remain alive, whether one is at home or in the forest, but this one here, being struck down, well protected as he was, did not survive. (41) Living beings have their own type of birth according to their karma and also all disappear in due course of time because of [this finite] karma. But this does not apply to the soul, despite the fact that it, being situated within this material world, in various forms is bound to her different basic qualities. The soul is of a completely different nature [see also B.G. 2: 20]. (42) This body of the person that with fire, water and earth out of ignorance was born, undergoes changes and is vanquished again, is just as separate from him as the material of a house is separate from its indweller. (43) The fire in wood can be observed separately, just as the air within the body and the [time-effect of the] all pervading ether that does not mix with anything. The same way the living entity can be separately considered as transcendental to its material encasement of involvement with the modes. (44) [The body of] this man [called] Suyajña is there right in front of you and you, oh foolish people, now cry for him. But he who heard and spoke with that body in this world, you have never seen! (45) The great ruler of the body, the life air, is, despite residing within this body, not the listener, nor the speaker. The soul within this body with all its senses is the master different from its life air. (46) That what expands and manifests, this might, this powerful soul, obtains and forsakes high and low-class bodies, characterized by the five elements, the senses and a mind. In that engagement he [this power of the self in the form of the so-called *linga*, the subtle body] differs from the form he assumes by dint of his moral quality [see also 4.29]. (47) One is bound to karma for as long as one is connected to the subtle body [consisting of mind, intelligence and false ego]. From that karmic bondage there is the reversal [from being controlled by the spirit soul to being controlled by the body] and the misery following that illusory uni-

fication [B.G. 8: 6]. (48) Just like everything suggested by the senses, with what one sees and says, is false in a daydream and offers no firm ground, it is equally useless to cling to the dream of [the happiness and distress derived from] the material qualities of nature. (49) That is why those who understand that, do not complain about what is permanent and transient in this world. They otherwise, evidently, could not do anything about the life habits of those who do complain [see also B.G. 2: 11]. (50) Some hunter who was assigned the task to decimate the number of birds in the forest, spread a net and luring the birds here and there with food, thus caught them. (51) When he saw a pair of kuliṅga birds foraging in the forest, the hunter quickly managed to lure the female bird of the two. (52) Oh queens, the male seeing how the female bird, in the grip of time, was caught in the ropes of the net, very upset did not know what to do next so that the poor thing began to wail emotionally about its mate: (53) 'Alas how cruel is the mighty Lord for my wife who was so kind to me! What can I do for the poor one crying for me, her poor [husband]? (54) Let the Lord also take my life. What is the use of living my single body half? What kind of miserable existence is it to suffer that pain for a lifetime? (55) How unfortunate are my babies waiting for their mother in their nest. How can I without the mother maintain the young that cannot fly yet?' (56) While the bird thus with wet eyes most sad at a distance lamented over the loss of his beloved, the bird-catcher as a messenger of time managed to sneak up on him and take his life by piercing him with an arrow.

(57) **A**nd so it is with you, oh ignorant ladies. You do not see the finality of your existence! Lamenting over your husband will not bring him back, not even in a hundred years.'

(58) **Ś**rī Hiraṇyakaśipu said: 'The boy thus having spoken, astounded the hearts of all the relatives. They understood that everything material was just a temporary, imperfect appearance [see also B.G. 2: 18]. (59) After Yamarāja in this form had given instruction he disappeared. Thereupon the relatives of King Suyajña performed the duties for the funeral. (60) Therefore do not lament about

yourself or anyone else. In this material world one only lacking in knowledge is obsessed with the meaning of this 'mine' and thine' of one's self-interest and the interest of others. For who is that actually, that soul of you and of the others?'

(61) Śrī Nārada said: 'Diti and her daughter-in-law [Rūṣābhānu,] hearing the speech of the king of the Daityas promptly gave up their grief over their son and husband and submitted their minds to the true knowledge of life.'

Chapter 3 Hiraṇyakaśipu's Plan to Become Immortal

(1) Śrī Nārada said: 'Hiraṇyakaśipu, oh King, wished to become unconquerable, free from old age and immortal, the one and only king with no rivals or opponents. (2) In a valley near Mandara Hill he performed a most difficult austerity in which he, staring into the sky, raised his arms upwards and stood on the ground with the big toes of his feet. (3) Emanating from the hair on his head there was a light as bright as a supernova that by its beams made all the gods doing penance turn back to their home bases. (4) The fire that, generated by his severe penance, together with smoke spread sideways, upwards and downwards, heated all the worlds. (5) The rivers and oceans were in turmoil, the islands, the mountains and the earth shook and the stars with their planets fell, while the ten directions were ablaze. (6) Scorched by it the demigods gave up their residences and went to Lord Brahmā's place to tell their leader: 'Oh Master of the Universe, we are all afflicted by the penance of the Daitya king and no longer capable of keeping our positions in heaven. (7) Please, can you do something about it and put an end to this, oh Lord of the entire world, before everyone, who offers you worship, oh chief of all, is lost. (8) Just consider what he [Hiraṇyakaśipu] has in mind, performing that most difficult penance. You of course know everything about it - but we nevertheless would like to submit it to you. (9-10) [This is what he consi-

ders:] 'Lord Brahmā, who, by his austerity absorbed in yoga, created the moving and unmoving living beings [see 3.8], has his throne in all the worlds high and low. I, by dint of an even more severe penance [than his] being absorbed in yoga, will, from the eternality of time and the soul, achieve the same for myself. (11) By my strength I will turn this world upside down and handle everything that is not right different from before. What is the use of all other practices? At the end of a day of creation, time will vanquish all the worlds of Viṣṇu anyway!' (12) We discovered that he in his severe penance is of this resolve. Can you please, according to your own judgement, take the necessary measures, oh master of the three worlds? (13) It belongs to your position as the supreme master of the universe, to improve the welfare, happiness, opulence and victory of the twice-born souls and the cows.'

(14) Thus being informed by the godly souls, the most powerful person, he who was born on the lotus, oh King, accompanied by Bhṛgu, Dakṣa and others, went to the place of penance of the *daitya* lord. (15-16) Being covered by an anthill, grass and bamboo and with his fat, skin, flesh and blood eaten away by the ants, he could not be spotted any longer. But he who rides the swan smiled with wonder when he saw how he, like a sun covered by clouds, heated all the worlds by his penance. (17) Śrī Brahmā said: 'Please appear, show yourself, oh son of Kaśyapa! All good fortune to you who are so perfectly of penance. I, the granter of boons have arrived. Let your wish be my blessing for you. (18) I have personally witnessed your great power of endurance and how wonderful it is that someone, whose body is eaten away by worms and ants, can manage to keep his life air confined to his bones. (19) No sage before you ever did this, nor will any other do so hereafter. Who can sustain his life-air for a hundred celestial years [36.000 years] without taking a drop of water? (20) Oh son of Diti, by your resolve to be of this penance, that even for the greatest saints is very hard to perform, you have won me. (21) I will grant therefore all your wishes, oh best of the Asuras. When someone who is destined to die meets an immortal person like me, that will certainly not be fruitless.'

(22) Śrī Nārada said: 'Having said this, the original godhead and first living being of the universe sprinkled divine, all-potent water from his *ka-mandalu* [waterpot] over the body that was eaten by the ants. (23) He therewith was fully restored to the complete capacity of his mind, senses and strength. Like fire springing from fire wood, he arose from his anthill grown with bamboos with a fully endowed young body as strong as a thunderbolt that had a luster of molten gold. (24) When he saw the god right in front of him in the sky upon his swan carrier he, very pleased about that encounter, with his head on the ground offered his obeisances [compare B.G. 9: 23-24 and 2.3: 10]. (25) Rising to his feet before his own eyes seeing the Almighty One he, overwhelmed by jubilation, with tears in his eyes and his hair standing on end, with folded hands and a faltering voice, humbly began to pray. (26-27) Śrī Hiraṇyakaśipu said: 'At the end of a day of creation, when he [Lord Brahmā] under the influence of time is covered by the dense darkness of ignorance, this cosmic creation manifests [again] by the light of the rays emanating from his body. This world, endowed with the three basic qualities of *rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas* [passion, goodness and ignorance], is by him created, maintained and annihilated. That transcendental and supreme Lord I offer my respectful obeisances. (28) The original living being, the seed of creation, knowledge and wisdom, him, the deity of the life force, the senses, the mind and the intelligence who realized this manifestation by his passion, I offer my reverential homage. (29) Operating through the life force, you constitute the factual control of the moving and immobile creatures. You are the origin of all activities and the mastermind and source of insight of all living beings. You are the great Lord of the knowing and acting senses, the controller of the material elements, their

qualities and the mind thereabout [compare B.G. 7: 7]. (30) By means of your body in the form of the three Vedas you promote the seven kinds of rituals [beginning from the *agniṣṭoma-yajña*] of the four kinds of priests [known as *hotā*, *adhvaryu*, *brahma* and *udgātā*] and the knowledge required. You are the one soul without a beginning and an end of all living entities, the supreme inspirator and the True Self within. (31) Not affected by anything, you are [the personification of] the ever vigilant Time that, by each of its segments in the form of days, hours and minutes and such, reduces the duration of life of all beings. You are the cause of life of this material world, the Great Self and Supreme Controller who was never born. (32) Nothing exists separate from you, whether it is higher evolved or just lower, moves around or



does not move. [Vedic] knowledge in all its divisions makes up the diversity of your body. You are the one golden principle of life [called *hiranyagarbha*] who, transcendental to the three modes, are greater than the greatest. (33) Oh Almighty One, you, as the one soul and oldest person invisibly situated in your supreme abode, manifested the externality of this cosmic manifestation by which you enjoy the senses, life air, mind and qualities [that you gave us]. (34) I offer my obeisances to you, that Supreme Lord who, endowed with spiritual and material potency, expanded to the unlimited, unimaginable form of this totality.

(35) **I**f you are willing to grant the boon that I desire, oh my Lord, oh best of all benefactors, then make it so that I will not die because of any of the living beings created by you. (36) Neither at home nor outside, neither during the day nor at night, neither from any known weapon nor by any other thing, neither on the ground or in the sky, nor by any human being or animal I may die. (37-38) Neither lifeless things nor living entities, neither demigod or demon nor the great serpents may kill me. I must have no rivals, have the supremacy in battle and the rule over all embodied souls including the deities of all planets. My glory must equal yours and never may the powers I acquired by yogic penance be defeated.'

Chapter 4 Hiraṇyakaśipu Terrorizes the Universe

(1) **Śrī** Nārada said: 'Thus being solicited Lord Brahmā, who sees everywhere, pleased about Hiraṇyakaśipu's austerities then granted him the benedictions that are so hard to obtain. (2) Lord Brahmā said: 'My son, even though these boons you asked for are difficult to obtain for men, I will grant them to you, my best.'

(3) **T**hereupon the mighty Lord departed, he whose grace is faultless and who was worshiped by the most exalted Asura as the Almighty One praised by all rulers of mankind. (4) The Daitya

who thus had obtained his desired boon and had acquired a body with a golden luster, constantly thinking about the brother killed by the Lord, maintained a feeling of hatred towards Him. (5-7) Conquering the three worlds in all directions, He, the greatest Asura, brought the masters of all places under his control: god, demon and man; the kings, the musicians of heaven and the birds [the Garudas]; the serpents, the perfected souls and the bards; the scientists, the seers and the leading manes; the fathers of mankind, the treasure keepers and the wild men; the goblins, the evil spirits and the ghosts. As the conqueror of the world, he usurped the power of rule of all authorities, everywhere. (8) Situated in the pleasure garden of the gods with the riches of all opulence, he thus resided in the highest world. Living in the palace of the king of heaven as created by Viśvakarmā, the great Asura architect, he, in control of all the wealth of the entire universe, dominated the three worlds from that abode of Lakṣmī. (9-12) The steps there were made of coral, the floors of emerald, the walls of crystal and the rows of pillars were made of vaidūrya [cat's eye] stone. One also found there the most wonderful canopies and seats bedecked with rubies and bedding with pearls on its borders that was as white as the foam of milk. In the quarters adorned with jewels and gems, in which they saw their beautiful faces and teeth reflected, celestial ladies left and right made sweet sounds with their tinkling ankle bells. In that royal residence ruling most severely with the greatest might and mind, the dictator, controlling everyone, enjoyed it to be worshiped by the tormented, God-fearing entourage at his feet. (13) Oh best one, he, the embodiment of all austerity, yoga, strength and good sense, who by anyone but the three principal deities, was honored with all glory with presentations from the hands of all important men, was thus engaged, while being intoxicated by strong scented wines that made his eyes roll red as copper. (14) With all his power occupying the seat of Indra, he was glorified by Viśvāvasu, Tumburu [the greatest Gandharvas] and by me, oh son of Pāṇḍu. Again and again all the singers and girls of heaven, the perfected souls, the saints and those who base themselves on knowledge offered their prayers to him. (15) Thus with gifts in abundance being worshiped by

all classes and age groups, he, in the exercise of his power, reserved every share of the oblations for himself alone. (16) Mother earth yielded, as the cow of plenty, under his rule on all her seven continents spontaneously crops in a great abundance, while all the wonders of the universe could be observed in the sky. (17) The seas and oceans of salt and sweet water, wine, ghee, cane juice, yogurt and milk, as also their wives the rivers, carried all kinds of precious stones in their waves. (18) The valleys between the mountains and hills were his pleasure grounds that offered all the wealth of plant and tree throughout all the seasons. He alone stood for all the different qualities of all the ruling gods of nature. (19) Despite having conquered all directions as the one and only ruler, with the right to exhaustingly enjoy all thinkable pleasures, he was not at peace with it, for he had lost the control over his senses. (20) Being cursed by the brahmins [the Kumāras] he was intoxicated by great pride over the opulence he had acquired, so that a long period passed of living in offense with the scriptures [see also B.G. 16: 23-24].

(21) **B**ecause of his painful rebukes all the worlds were disturbed and for their leaders there was no safe place to be found. Therefore they approached the Infallible One to seek shelter [compare B.G. 5: 29]. (22-23) They prayed thereto: 'We offer our obeisances in the direction where the Supersoul of Hari, the Supreme Lord, is found and from where the peaceful and pure souls of the renounced order never return.' With their minds under control, being wakeful and feeding on air only, they thus steadied and purified their intelligence in the worship of the Master of the Senses.

(24) **T**hen, like thunder, in all directions a loud voice resounded free from a form, that drove away the fear of the saintly souls: (25-26) 'Do not fear, oh best souls of learning, I wish you all the best. From having My vision, the living beings may attain all good fortune. The nefarious activities of this great demon are known to Me and I shall put them to an end. Just wait and see. (27) When one is hostile towards the gods, the Vedas, the cows, the brahmins, the saints, the dharma and towards Me, one will soon perish.

(28) The moment he [Hiraṇyakaśipu] is of violence against his peace-loving son, that great soul Prahlaḍa who has no enemies, I shall kill him, irrespective the blessings he received [from Lord Brahmā, see also 3.25: 21].'

(29) **Ś**rī Nārada said: 'After thus having been addressed by the spiritual master of all living beings, the God-conscious souls offered Him their obeisances and returned to their places. Being relieved of all their anxieties they considered the demon as good as dead [2.3: 10]. (30) The Daitya king fathered four most qualified sons of whom the one named Prahlaḍa was the best, being endowed with all the qualities of a great devotee [see 5.18: 12]. (31-32) He, as a good brahmin being of full control over the senses and the mind, was firmly established in the Absolute Truth and was, alike the Supersoul, the beloved, best friend of all living beings. He sat down at the feet of the great souls like a servant, like a father he took care of the poor, he was like a brother to his equals and always kind to the spiritual masters whom he esteemed as the Supreme Controller Himself. He was of education, purpose, beauty, nobility and completely free from arrogance and impudence [compare B.G. 12: 13-19 and B.G. 18: 42]. (33) Even though he was born from an Asura, he was not of a demoniac nature. In the midst of danger he was of an unperturbed consciousness and he had no desire whatsoever to talk about, or be concerned with, temporary matters. Material qualities he considered insubstantial and by controlling his senses, life air, body and mind he quieted his lusts. (34) His qualities are, like those of the Supreme Lord, our Controller, unabatedly defended by the scholars to this very day, oh King. (35) In gatherings of saintly people, the enemies [of the demons] discuss these characteristics, using him as an example. When even the wise and learned souls do this, oh King, then why should you, or anyone else, not do that also? (36) One runs out of words when one tries to enumerate the countless qualities of him who owed his greatness to his natural attraction for Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (37) As a small boy he, in his full absorption in the attraction of Kṛṣṇa, refrained from playing and seemed to be absentminded, having no understanding for

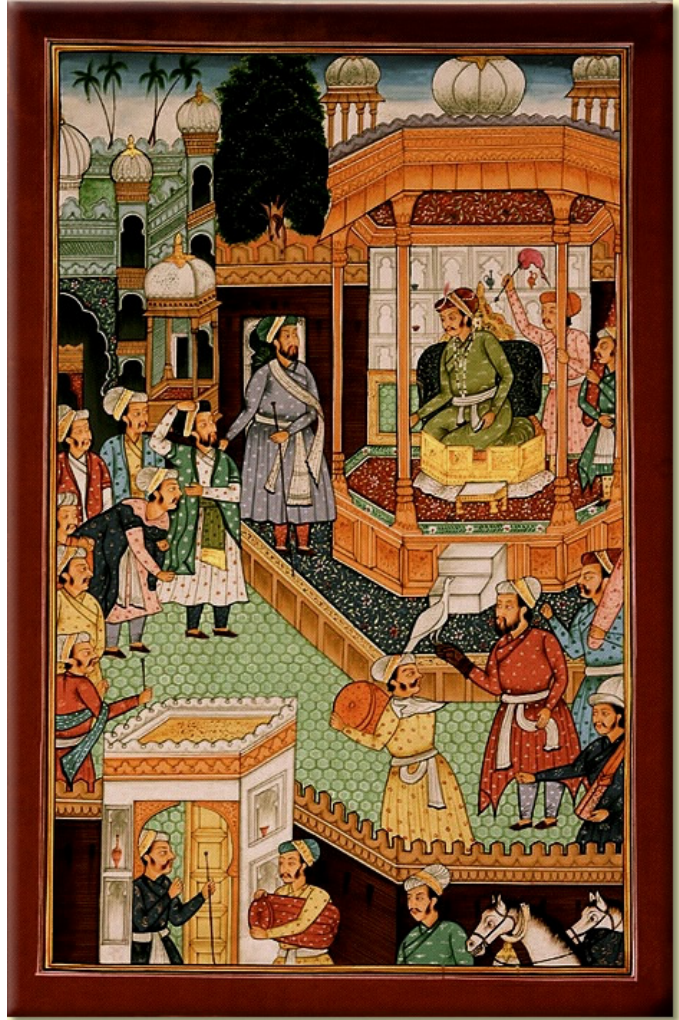
worldly matters. (38) As he sat and walked, ate and lay down, drank and talked he, embraced by Govinda, was impervious to all of it. (39) Sometimes worrying about [not being in] Vaikunṭha he cried, sometimes he laughed about a twist of mind and sometimes he chanted aloud in great jubilation thinking of Him. (40) Sometimes he, being overwhelmed, loudly exclaimed [His name], sometimes he danced without shame and sometimes he, lost in thoughts about Him and projecting himself into His position, imitated Him. (41) Then again he, with his hair standing on end and with tears in his half-closed eyes, fell completely silent, rapt with joy in being caught in the loving association of His transcendental bliss. (42) By his constant service at the lotus feet that are glorified in the hymns and by the evolution of his selfless association, he attained the highest ecstasy. From the spiritual soul he that way continually brought peace to all [around him] who lacked in spirit and association. (43) Unto him, that exalted and most fortunate, broad-minded devotee who was his own son, oh King, Hiraṇyakaśipu committed the greatest sin.'

(44) Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: 'Oh *devarṣi* sworn to vows, we would like to know from you the following: why did the father make his own pure and exalted son suffer? (45) Sons going against the will of their fathers are lovingly reprimanded. But for teaching them a lesson they cannot be punished like an enemy, is it not? (46) Please oh brahmin, what to say about this father who, so mean to the point of death, hated his own obedient son? Please drive away the doubts we have, for he was a great devotee of the sort who honors his father as his guru, oh master.'

Chapter 5

Prahlāda Mahārāja, the Saintly Son of Hiraṇyakaśipu

(1) Śrī Nārada said: 'The powerful sage Śukrācārya ['the teacher of purity'], who by the Asu-



ras was chosen to serve as their priest, had two sons named Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka who lived near the residence of the Daitya king. (2) The king sent the boy Prahlāda, who was skilled in reasoning, to them in order to be instructed in different subjects of knowledge, together with other Asura children. (3) Hearing and repeating what the teachers all said there, he considered it a bad way of thinking because it was based on the notion of foes and allies. (4) One day the Asura ruler placed his son on his lap, oh son of Pāṇḍu, and asked: 'Now tell me my son, what do you think yourself would be the best?'

(5) Śrī Prahlāda ['the joy of understanding'] said: 'Fine, oh King of the Asuras, I think that every embodied soul always has a mind full of worries because of being captured by the material world.'

When one wants to get rid of that covering of the soul, that worldly concern which is nothing but a blind well, it is better to head for the forest and seek refuge with the Lord.'

(6) Śrī Nārada said: 'When the Daitya heard how his son, in full possession of his faculties, with these words sided with the enemy, he laughed about the diverted intelligence of small misinformed boys [like him]: (7) 'This boy will be perfectly protected [against these kind of ideas] in school, where his mind is free from the influence of brahmins in favor of Viṣṇu who [possibly] present themselves different from what they are.'

(8) Taken to school, the Daitya priests called for Prahlāda and questioned him, while comforting him with a soft voice and pleasant words. (9) 'Dear child, Prahlāda, we wish you all the best, tell us the truth and do not lie. What gave you this wrong way of thinking we do not find with the other children? (10) Tell us, did this opposing vision originate from evildoers or was it something of yourself? We, your teachers are eager to hear about this, oh best one of the family.'

(11) Śrī Prahlāda said: 'This reasoning about others in terms of foes and allies belongs to people with a material notion of life. Such people, reasoning from what they see, are bewildered about the external affair that is created by Him, the Supreme Lord I respect [see also B.G. 5: 18]. (12) When someone is devoted to Him, the animal notion is destroyed of this time-bound way of discriminating between the 'I' of himself and the 'I' of someone else. (13) For those whose intelligence and service was spoiled by this notion of friends and foes, it is certain that it is most difficult to be of devotional service unto Him, the Supersoul. Even others who are spiritual and follow the Vedic path, are confounded about how to serve Him who transformed my intelligence. (14) Oh brahmins, just like iron all by itself moves in the direction of a magnet, my consciousness has changed by the command of the *cakra* in His hand [the natural order of Time, see e.g. 5.14: 29].'

(15) Śrī Nārada said: 'After saying all this to the brahmins, the great mind fell silent and was harshly chastised by the servants of the king who, considering it obnoxious, were angry: (16) 'Oh get us a stick for him, this cinder of the dynasty, who with his corrupted intelligence is discrediting us. This calls for the solution of the fourth diplomatic option of the *danda* [the rod, after *sāma*, pacification; *dāna*, legally settled charity; and *bheda*, dividing posts]. (17) In the sandalwood forest of the Daityas this boy was born as a thorn tree that serves as a handle to the ax of Viṣṇu for cutting us by the roots!'

(18) Thus in different ways threatening him with punishments and such, they taught Prahlāda what the scriptures said about the [first] three goals of life [the *purusārthas* of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*]. (19) After his teachers were convinced that he knew all there was to be known about the four principles [of diplomacy] he, being bathed and nicely decorated by his mother, was taken to the Daitya ruler. (20) Fallen at his feet, the boy was encouraged with blessings by the Asura, who derived great joy from closing him for a long time in his two arms. (21) Putting him on his lap he smelled his head and wetted him with the water of his tears. Then he with a smile on his face said the following, oh Yudhiṣṭhira.

(22) Hiraṇyakaśipu said: 'Now tell me Prahlāda, my son, what you, well taught as you are, oh love of my life, consider the best of everything you all this time have learned from your teachers.'

(23-24) Śrī Prahlāda said: 'I think that when a person truly wants to be of devotion to the Supreme Personality, the Lord, the best thing he can learn is to be of the nine symptoms of bhakti unto Viṣṇu: listening, singing, remembering Viṣṇu, offering help at the feet, to be of sacrifice, doing prayers, being of service, being a friend and surrendering one's heart and soul.'

(25) When Hiraṇyakaśipu heard his son say this he, with lips trembling of anger, told the son of the guru [who was Prahlāda's teacher] the following: (26) 'You fake brahmin! You fool! What is

this? Are you siding with the enemy now, so mischievously teaching this nonsense without properly taking care of my boy? (27) This just demonstrates how many cheaters there are in this world falsely dressing up as friends. But in due course of time one can see how sin manifests itself, just like a disease does with people with a wrong lifestyle.'

(28) **T**he son of the guru said: 'This what your son says is not what we taught him, nor has anyone else taught him that, oh enemy of Indra. This is his natural inclination, oh King. Do not be angry with us, do not put the blame on us.'

(29) **Śrī** Nārada said: 'After thus being answered by the teacher, the Asura addressed his son for the second time: 'If you have not heard it from the mouth of your teacher, you wretch, then from where came this bad notion?'

(30) **Śrī** Prahlāda said: 'Persons swearing by a worldly existence develop a life leading to hell, for they fail in their sense control and repeatedly chew the chewed. They are never inclined toward Kṛṣṇa [see B.G. 4: 4-5] because of what others tell them, out of their own understanding or by a combination of the two [see also B.G. 2: 44]. (31) They who think to gain by the external world have, in their difficult ambitions, really no sense of life's purpose, Lord Viṣṇu. Even though they follow a lead they, just like blind men led by the blind, obeying the dictates of material nature, are bound to the ropes of her strong power [of māyā]. (32) To vanquish the unwanted - which is the purpose of all the great souls [the gurus and devotees] - is out of the reach of these people for as long as their consciousness is not in touch with the Feet of Renown, for as long as they do not accept the consecration by the rule [or dust] of the feet of those living [voluntarily] in poverty who are free from this bondage.'



(33) **T**hus having spoken the son stopped. Hiranyakaśipu blind with anger out of his mind, threw him from his lap on the floor. (34) Overpowered by indignation he furiously with bloodshot eyes said: 'Men, oh sons of Nirṛti [a demon], put an end to his life immediately, lead this boy away to be killed! (35) This one here is the murderer of my brother, for he, this lowest one giving up his own well-wishers, is as a servant at the feet of Viṣṇu, he worships Him who has killed his own uncle! (36) And to Viṣṇu he is no good either with his five years of age and his faithless forsaking of the difficult to deny love of his parents. (37) Even being born from others a child constitutes a blessing as beneficial as a medicinal herb, but a son born from oneself who is of evil intentions should be given up like one gives up a diseased limb. For

being deleterious to the well-being of the body its removal still allows a happy life. (38) Anyway, he must be killed who, eating, lying down and sitting with us, posed as a friend, but is as good an enemy to us as uncontrolled senses are to a sage.'

(39-40) **T**he sons of Nirṛti obeying the command of their leader then with their frightening teeth and faces, their red hairs, mustaches and the sharp tridents in their hands fearfully roared: 'Yeah, let us cut him to pieces!' and with their lances attacked the vital parts of Prahlaḍa who sat there silently. (41) But just as laudable actions have no effect when they are performed the wrong way, their attack had no effect upon him whose mind was absorbed in the Supreme Absolute of the Fortunate One, the Soul of Each, who cannot be perceived by the senses. (42) Oh Yudhiṣṭhira, the Daitya ruler, alarmed upon seeing how the attempts failed, with determination devised a variety of ways to kill him. (43-44) He tried to crush him with an elephant, attack him with huge snakes, cast spells of doom, throw him from heights, to conjure tricks, imprison him, administer poison and subject him to starvation, cold, wind, fire and water and pile rocks upon him, but by none of these means the demon succeeded in putting his son, the sinless one, to death. With his prolonged efforts having no success he got very nervous.

(45) [**H**e thought:] 'With all these unholy expressions and diverse methods, devised to kill him, with all these treacheries and abominations, he found relief by his own strength! (46) Despite being a child he is in control of matters and afraid of nothing. So close to me he will, just like a mistreated dog, always keep his tail curved and never forget my misconduct. (47) His unlimited faith, his imperishability and his lack of fear for any of these hostilities, will definitely sooner or later be the cause of my death.'

(48) **T**hus ruminating with his face downward, he lost a great deal of his splendor. Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the two sons of Uśanā [Śukrācārya], then spoke to him in private. (49) 'All the leaders of the three worlds who are dominated by you alone, tremble when you lift your eyebrows. You have

nothing to fear from him, oh master. We do not understand why you should worry about the qualities and faults of some child. (50) Just keep him bound by the ropes of Varuṇa until our guru Śukrā returns, so that he does not flee out of fear. Assisted by people with more experience [like us], he will develop the intelligence getting older.'

(51) **T**hus being advised he took heed of what the sons of the spiritual master told him and so it happened that Prahlaḍa was instructed in the duties of the members of a royal household. (52) Fulfilling religious duties, managing the economy and the regulation of desires was repeatedly in full explained to Prahlaḍa who was humble and submissive, oh King [compare B.G. 14: 20 & 26]. (53) [But again] what the teachers related to him about the three paths, this education he received from these people taking pleasure in the duality [of friends and foes], he did not consider good [spiritual] instruction at all [compare 6.3: 20-25]. (54) When the teachers were busy with their own household duties the boys of his age there took the opportunity to take him aside. (55) He then smilingly addressed them, in pleasing words telling them with great intelligence and learning how merciful it is to live a better life with God. (56-57) Oh great king, all the boys giving up their playthings out of respect for his words, then sat around him with their minds no longer corrupted by the instructions and actions of those [teachers] who took pleasure in the duality. To them, who were freed the moment they fixed their hearts and eyes on him, he spoke compassionately as a real friend and a great example of an Asura in devotion.'

Chapter 6 Prahlaḍa Instructs His Asura Schoolmates

(1) **Ś**rī Prahlaḍa said: 'Someone intelligent should, in this rarely obtained human birth, from early childhood on practice the dharma of devotional service unto the Lord [as described in 7.5: 23-24]; this life, even though temporary, is ruled by that purpose. (2) Because He is the most kind-

hearted and beloved living being, the Master of the Soul, to approach the feet of Viṣṇu constitutes the path for the person to follow in this world [see also 3.25: 38 and B.G. 5: 29]. (3) By divine ordinance sensual happiness, oh Daityas, is available everywhere to all embodied beings, just as the unhappiness one runs into without having asked for it. (4) There is no need to endeavor for that [material happiness], one would only waste one's life because nothing is gained that way. The lotus feet of Mukunda [the Lord of Liberation] constitute the foundation for [lasting] peace and happiness. (5) A mindful person having a material life in a human body, should therefore, for as long as he is healthy and strong and not decrepit, go for the real benefit [of Mukunda]. (6) Of the hundred years that he has for his life a person in service of his senses spends half his time unproductively by, being drowned in darkness, ignorantly passing the night with sleeping. (7) In one's childhood one is naive and in one's teens one plays and thus twenty years pass, and it takes another twenty years in which one, having aged, cannot engage because of being physically incapacitated. (8) The rest of your life you spend as a fool because you, in the grip of family matters, are bewildered by mighty desires that can never be satisfied. (9) What person can free himself when he, attached to his household, being bound by the ropes of love, misses the control over his senses [see 1.2: 6-7]? (10) How can someone who thinks that making money is more important than living [in devotion and gratitude], forsake that acquiring for which a merchant, thief and public servant risks his dear life? (11-13) How can one give it up to associate privately with, and appreciate the words of, one's loving, pleasing and attractive wife? How can one refrain from one's love for the children with their cute prattle, to think of the sons and daughters one enshrined in one's heart, from one's brothers and sisters and the care for one's needy parents? How can one be indifferent about household matters as nice furniture, a good income, pets and rows of servants and maids? By giving priority to the interest of the tongue and the genitals fostering all kinds of desires that can never be fulfilled, one is engaged like a silkworm [that spins itself in its own cocoon]. How can such a massive illusion be forsaken? (14) Constantly plagued by the

threefold misery of life [as caused by nature, by others and himself, see 2.10: 8] he does not regret the pleasure he derives from his family, but being materially infatuated, the maintenance of his family shortens his life-span without him ever understanding what the real purpose of life would be. That purpose he lost. (15) With a mind set on wealth, he learned that it is wrong to cheat for the sake of money. Nevertheless he, after having died, is tied to this material world [by Yamarāja being sentenced to take another birth]. Without mastering his senses he as a family man, with his insatiable lusts, after all, was guilty of theft [see also B.G. 16: 11-12]. (16) Despite knowing this, oh sons of Danu, someone who has to take care of his family does not find time for himself, as a consequence of which he, being estranged, gropes in the dark with a 'mine' and 'thine' conception of life like that of animals. (17-18) Nobody will ever, wherever or whenever, with a poor fund of knowledge be able to liberate himself. Because one, as a sexual plaything hankering after the gratification of one's lusts, by that attachment founds complete families, you, my Daitya friends, in this respect [wishing liberation] have to keep yourselves far removed from seeking refuge with the demon of being addicted to sensual pleasures. One instead should approach Lord Nārāyana, the original godhead, who through the association of liberated souls chalks out the path of the liberation you seek. (19) It is not hard to satisfy the Infallible One, oh Asura sons, because He has established Himself everywhere in this world as the perfection of the self of all living beings [compare B.G. 14: 3-4]. (20-23) He is the One present within all beings high and low, beginning with the simplest plant life up to Lord Brahmā. Within the single elements and all their transformations as also within the totality of the material energy, within the balanced state of the modes of nature as also within their perturbation, He is the one and only transcendental original source that is the Supreme Lord, the Controller who is free from decay Himself. Considering the original position of His inner presence and His outward personal manifestations, He is both the pervaded that can be described, and the undifferentiated, all-pervading Supreme Transcendence that defies description. He is the changeless and undivided

One [Consciousness] in the form of bliss and understanding; He is the Supreme Controller about whose unlimited opulence one is mistaken because He is hidden from view by the illusory energy that is ruled by the basic qualities of material nature. (24) Be therefore merciful towards all living entities. When you, with a friendly attitude, give up the Asura mentality [of friends opposing enemies], you will satisfy the Lord beyond the Senses [see also B.G. 12: 13-20]. (25) With Him, the Eternal and Original One, being satisfied, nothing is out of one's reach. Why would those who are thus of service in this world that is ruled by the three basic qualities, have to work for a sense of duty [regulating the lusts, the economy and the religion] that follows automatically [from this devotion]? Why would we, having risen above the modes, be of desire when we are singing about His feet? (26) The prescribed threefold of dharma, *kāma* and *artha*, the knowledge of the soul and of the three Vedas, of the logic, of law and order and of the different professional identities, I all consider to be the [surface] truth of the lesson to be learned. But it is one's full surrender to the Supreme Friend that leads to the [deeper realization of one's personal relationship with the] transcendental person [one's *svarūpa*, compare 1.2: 8]. (27) This knowledge, free from material contamination, is most difficult to attain. It was explained to Nārada by Lord Nārāyaṇa, the friend of all men, for the sake of all souls who are exclusively of surrender to Him, the Supreme Lord. That understanding is possible for those who do not care [anymore] for material possessions and who bathed their bodies in the dust of the lotus feet. (28) I received this spiritual knowledge concerning the *bhāgavata dharma* [of devotional service unto the Lord, in nine aspects, see 7.5: 23-24] together with its practical applica-

tion from Nārada, who does not care about a material life and only has eyes for the Lord.'

(29-30) **T**he Daitya sons said: 'Prahāda, you and we have no other teachers but the two sons of Śukrācārya, they are the schoolmasters for us children. But you, remaining in the palace, could have such a difficult to acquire association with a great soul like Nārada. Please dispel the doubts we have about this, dear friend, so that we can believe you.'

Chapter 7



What Prahlāda Learned in the Womb

(1) **N**ārada Muni said [to Yudhiṣṭhira, see 7.1: 13]: 'Thus being requested by the Daitya sons he, the Asura who was such a great devotee of the Lord, with a smile addressed them, remembering what I had told him. (2) Śrī Prahlāda said: 'When our father left for Mandarācala to perform austerities, the godly souls made a great war effort in opposing the Dānavas. (3) The demigods headed by Indra said: 'What a luck that the sinner, who pained everyone, has been consumed by his own sins, like a serpent being eaten by the ants [so that we now can defeat the Daityas. See 7.3: 15-16].' (4-5) When the Asura leaders heard how they by the great display of violence of their attackers one after the other were killed, they fearfully fled in all directions. None of them, in his great haste and desire to stay alive, any longer took heed of his wife, children or wealth, home, relatives, animals or the articles of his household. (6) In the rush of their victory the Suras plundered the king's palace, during which Indra captured my mother, the queen.

(7) **T**he *devaṛṣi*, who happened to arrive there on the spot, saw how she, being led away on the road, trembling with fear screamed like a kurarī [an osprey]. (8) He said: 'Oh King of the Suras, you should not lead this woman away, she is innocent. Release her right away, oh greatest one of fortune, she is the chaste wife of someone else!'

(9) **I**ndra said: 'She carries the seed of this impossible Sura enemy in her womb, let her remain in our custody until she delivers. With that objective being realized, I will release her.'

(10) **N**ārada said: 'This child is evidently sinless. He is [in fact] a very great saintly devotee, a powerful servant of the Eternal One. You will not cause his death.'

(11) **A**fter he had said that, Indra released her out of respect for the words of the *devaṛṣi* and out of respect for someone [like me] dear to the Eternal Personality. He devoutly circumambulated her

and then returned to his heaven. (12) The *ṛṣi* thereafter took my mother to his *āśrama*, reassuring her with the words: 'Stay here my child, until your husband arrives.' (13) She, like he had said, thus lived with the *devaṛṣi*, with nothing to fear from any side for as long as the penance of the Daitya leader was not completed. (14) For the welfare of the child that she expected, the faithful woman in that place, where she wanted to deliver, with great dedication rendered service unto Nārada. (15) The *ṛṣi* mercifully instructed her, and [through her] specifically me, in both the principles of dharma of relating to the Lord and the pure spiritual knowledge [concerning the difference between soul and matter, compare 1.2: 7]. (16) Because she is a woman and because it happened such a long time ago, she has forgotten all this knowledge, but I, blessed by the sage, have not. The memory of it has not left me even to this day [see also B.G. 9: 32]. (17) If you confide in my words that knowledge is also within your reach. Provided a firm faith, the intelligence of the very best is there just as well for [even] women and small children as it is there for me [see also B.G. 18: 55]. (18) One sees all the six conditions of the body, beginning with birth, just like one sees them with the fruits of the Creator in the form of a tree [that come about, exist materially, grow, transform, dwindle and perish], but these changes do not apply to the soul [see also B.G. 2: 20]. (19-20) The soul is eternal, does not dwindle, is pure, is an individual, is the knower of the field and the original foundation, the unchanging, the self-illuminated, actual cause that pervades all, independently and immutably. By [contemplating] these twelve transcendental symptoms of the soul, a conscious person is impelled to give up the false conception of 'I' and 'mine', originating from the illusion that is attached to everything that belongs to having a body [see also 6.4: 24]. (21) Gold being locked up in stones is by the gold-diggers in different ways won in the gold mines and easily extracted by the experts. The experts concerning the difference between spirit and matter can, the same way, from within the fields constituted by organic bodies [see also B.G. 13: 1-4], with the help of spiritual processes, extract the brahmin essence that is the goal. (22) The teachers of example speak of eight types of material energy

[B.G. 7.4], three basic qualities or modes of nature and sixteen modifications [the senses of action and perception, the elements and the mind, see also 1.3: 1]. The individual living entity, the person, is the one element connecting all the others. (23) The body, that moves about or stands still, combines all these [24] elements and is thus characterized by this duality [of spirit and matter]. Thus being equipped, one, for the sake of [the authenticity of the] person, has to say 'not this, not that' [*neti neti*]. That is the way to turn away from everything that is not the soul. (24) Sober and thoughtful persons are of a mind that is purified on the basis of discriminating both the being connected with and the being independent from the material world that is ruled by creation, maintenance and destruction. (25) The Original Person of Transcendence is He who oversees the movements of the intelligence in the waking state, the dream state and deep sleep. (26) One should ascertain the original position of the soul by [*neti neti*] turning away from the division [of the mind] that is produced by the different actions of the intelligence overturned by the three modes of material nature, just as one can notice the [presence of] air by its different odors [see also B.G. 3: 42]. (27) This constitutes the entrance [to the transcendental position] within this ocean of matter, in which one, deprived of insight and meaning, is caught in the operating modes of material nature, the same way one is caught in a dream.

(28) **T**herefore, in the yoga of realizing the cessation of the stream of consciousness, be so good to burn the weeds of all karma of being conditioned by the modes of nature. (29) Of all the thousands of processes [possible], that method, as offered by the *bhāgavata* [the Lord, the pure devotee and the book], is the one to quickly bring about the love for the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead [see also B.G. 18: 66, and the footnote *]. (30-31) Properly wait upon a guru with faith and devotion, offer all that you acquired, be of association with the saintly and devoted ones and be of worship for the Lord. Have faith in the discourses about the Lord, sing about His qualities and activities, meditate on the feet and exercise respect in worship of the deities. (32) Understanding that Hari, the Supreme Lord is situated in all living

beings, one should be of the highest regard for all creatures and their needs. (33) When one thus manages to subdue the six symptoms [of sensual weakness: lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness and jealousy], devotional service is rendered to the Lord, to Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality with whom one finds love. (34) Hearing about the uncommon activities and great power of His exploits and His qualities, as demonstrated by the pastimes of His different appearances, there will be horripilation, tears, a faltering voice and loud chanting, shouting and dancing, because of the great jubilation associated with it. (35) Like being haunted by a ghost, there are sometimes laughs, exclamations, meditative moods, exercises of respect towards other living beings, prolonged heavy breathing and utterances like: 'Oh Lord, Master of the World, Nārāyaṇa!' That way being absorbed in thoughts about the True Self, one is free from shame. (36) When one is immersed in thoughts of love about Him, one is freed from all obstacles on one's path and harmonized in one's body and mind. This happens because the so very powerful seed of desire is burned by the exercise of bhakti. That is how one achieves Adhokṣaja, the Lord Beyond the Senses [**]. (37) When one constantly stays in touch with Adhokṣaja, the contaminated mind of an embodied being in this world is halted and the cycle of this material existence is ended. Those who are advanced know everything about that spiritual heaven of happiness. Be therefore of devotional service to the Lord of Hearts residing in your heart [see also B.G. 18: 54].

(38) **A**nd why would the worship of the Lord being the space [for others] in one's heart, constitute a problem, oh Asura sons? With Him always present there as the Soul of one's soul and the friend of all possible living beings, why would it be necessary to endeavor for ordinary sensual pleasures [compare 7.6: 19 and B.G. 9: 26]? (39) Wealth, women, one's animals, children and all of that; houses, land, elephants, a treasury, luxury and all the money and the sense gratification, is by someone whose lifespan is but short and who inevitably has to die, lost in a second. What pleasure can one derive from such a temporary thing? (40) Similarly, the [higher] worlds that are achieved by great sacrifice, are all perishable. However

comfortable they might be, they are not flawless and therefore He whom one never heard or saw making a mistake, the Supreme Lord, is the one to be worshiped for one's self-realization with the bhakti we talked about [see also B.G. 8: 16]. (41) Because of the material knowledge in support of the many activities in which one is engaged in this world, one may consider oneself highly advanced, but time and again man achieves the inescapable result of the opposite [of having degraded for the sake of a material purpose]. (42) The determination of the *karmi* [the achievement-oriented person] to be happy and to be free from misery out here, is an ambition that always leads to unhappiness because that desire obscures the [interest of the lasting] happiness that is the result of a more reserved attitude [concerning material outcomes]. (43) For the purpose of obtaining the objects of desire he wished in his ambitions, the living being in this material world needs to be embodied. This perishable body encloses the soul but, serving other purposes [than lasting happiness], it is directed elsewhere. (44) What can one say? One is ultimately separated from that upon which one based one's [material] self-esteem: one's children, wife, home, wealth and all of that, the realm, the treasury, the elephant, the ministers and servants and the relatives. (45) Of what value to the soul is all of this? These trivial matters concerning the perishable body, appear to be necessary, but they are useless for attaining the nectar ocean of eternal happiness.

(46) **J**ust ask yourselves, oh Asura sons, of what interest it would be for someone to be embodied in this world and, from the time of his conception on, in all stages of life, having to suffer the consequences of his karma. (47) Someone embodied engages in result-motivated actions with the body



he acquired as a consequence of what he did in the past, and because he performs these actions in ignorance, he obtains yet another body. (48) Therefore worship selflessly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord, the Soul of the soul who is free from desire and upon whom depends [the fulfillment of the desire to regulate] one's sensual pleasure, religion and income. (49) The Lord and Master of all living beings is the beloved, original source of life who, with the [five] elements of nature, created all these individual souls as manifestations of His cosmic intelligence. (50) Whether one is a god, a demon, a man, a ghost or a singer of heaven, all who render service to Mukunda's feet, will find the fulfillment that we have found! (51-52) Being a perfect brahmin, a fine godly person or a saint, oh Asura descendants, will not suffice for pleasing Mukunda, nor will

good conduct or vast learning. Neither will charity, austerity, worship, cleanliness nor vows suffice. The Lord is satisfied by unalloyed devotional service, the rest is but outer display [see also B.G. 9: 30 and 1.2: 8]. (53) Oh Dānava sons, recognize Him, the Soul and Master of all living beings, everywhere, in each and all, as your self interest, and then be of devotional service unto Him the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (54) Oh Daityas, the ghosts and demons, the women and the laborers, the cowherds, the birds, the animals and the sinners without any doubt all can arrive at and be part of the qualities of the Infallible One, of Acyuta [see also B.G. 4: 9]. (55) The supreme self-interest of a person in this world is to see Govinda everywhere and to be of unalloyed devotional service unto Him [see also bhajan 1 and 2].'

*: To this there is also a significant verse in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanāḥ*

'Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed.'

** : Śrīla Madhvācārya writes as follows:

*tad-bhāva-bhāvaḥ tad yathā svarūpam bhaktiḥ
kecid bhaktā vinṛtyanti gāyanti ca yathepsitam
kecit tuṣṇīm japanty eva kecit śobhaya-kāriṇaḥ*

'The ecstatic condition of devotional service was completely exhibited by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who sometimes danced, sometimes cried, sometimes sang, sometimes remained silent, and sometimes chanted the holy name of the Lord. That is perfect spiritual existence.'

Chapter 8

Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva Slays the King of the Demons

(1) Nārada Muni said [to Yudhiṣṭhira]: 'Having heard his explanations, all the attending Daitya sons accepted his words because of their profundity and rejected what their teachers had taught them. (2) When the two sons of the guru [Śukrācārya's sons Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka] realized how the intelligence [of the boys] had gotten fixed on this one subject matter, they fearfully contacted the king to submit to him what was going on. (3-4) All over his body trembling with anger and with a mind determined to kill his son, he rebuked Prahlaḍa. With the harshest words he furiously with an angry face and crooked, wicked eyes, approached him who did not deserve such a treatment at all. He [from his side] gentle and restrained, just stood there with his hands folded before his father who was hissing like a vicious snake trampled upon.

(5) Hiraṇyakaśipu said: 'Oh you impudent fool, you intriguer of the family, you outcaste, you so obstinate going against my rule, today I will send you to the abode of Yamarāja! (6) When I am angry all inhabitants of the three worlds and their leaders tremble for me. By what power do you so fearlessly overstep my rule, you rascal [compare B.G. 9: 31]?''

(7) Prahlaḍa said: 'He is not only my strength but also yours, oh King, as also the strength of all other exalted and lower living beings. All beings moving around and who do not move around, beginning with Lord Brahmā, fall under His control. (8) He, the Supreme Controller of Time, Urukrama, the Lord of the Great Strides [Vāmana], is the one strength of one's mind and life, the steadiness of one's physical power and senses. He, the True Self, is the Supreme Master of the three basic qualities, who by His different natural forces creates, maintains and withdraws again the entire universe. (9) Please give up your Asura way. Be of an equal mind with the soul and create no enemies. Destroy only the enemy that is an uncontrolled mind. That approach constitutes the best method to worship the unlimited Lord. (10)

In the past there were plunderers who, not in control of the six enemies [the mind and the five senses], stole away everything. Others saw themselves as conquerors of the ten directions. But, with a saint who managed to defeat his senses and is of an equal regard for all living beings, where are those enemies found who result from one's own imagination?'

(11) Śrī Hirāṇyakaśipu said: 'You apparently, with your unlimited pretenses, seek your own demise. You prove that people about to die talk gibberish, you pitiful idiot! (12) You unlucky soul, you talk of someone other than me who would be the controller of the universe, but where is He to be found? If He is omnipresent, then why do I not see Him in this pillar right in front of me [see also B.G. 7: 25]? (13) Let that Lord, whom you wished yourself as your protector, protect you, now that I am going to sever your head from your trunk, now that I am going to put an end to someone talking such nonsense like you.'

(14) Thus with a stream of abuses enraged chastising that great devotee, his son, Hirāṇyakaśipu, who rose from his throne and took up his sword, with his fist struck hard against a column. (15) That very moment from within the column a most fearful sound could be heard, as if the covering of the universe cracked open. That sound, dear King, reached as far as the place of the godly souls of Lord Brahmā and made them believe the destruction of their abodes was at hand. (16) He who in his display of power wanted to kill his son, also heard the tumultuous sound one had never heard before. Together with the assembly present he stood amazed about the fact that one could not determine its origin. Thus all these men of power were beset by fear. (17) To be true to the words that were spoken in defense of His omnipresence, of His pervading each and everything, one could see a most wonderful form of Him taking shape in a pillar in the middle of the assembly hall. It was neither an animal nor a man. (18) The king, studying the phenomenon from all sides, saw how a living being emerged from the middle of the pillar. But not being able to ascertain whether it was an animal or a human being he said amazed:

'What kind of form is this? It is half man and half lion!'

(19-22) As he was contemplating the miracle that took place in front of him, the extraordinary, most frightening form of Nṛsiṃhadeva appeared. He had eyes glowing like molten gold and deadly teeth in a face extending into manes. Looking around with a dreadful frown, He waved His tongue like a razor sharp sword. His ears stood motionless straight up and His nostrils and mouth were opened wide like mountain caves. His huge body was short and fat with a broad neck and a broad chest over a small waist. His body was covered with whitish hairs resembling the rays of the moon and hundreds of arms, stretched in all directions, were equipped with hard to challenge fatal nails that served as weapons, next to His other personal weapons. Faced with that excellence the Daityas and Dānavas fled away. (23) Hirāṇyakaśipu murmured to himself: 'I guess this is what the Lord so full of mystical potency is trying to do in order to get me killed, but what's the use?' and thus taking up his mace, the Daitya threw himself forward like an elephant to attack the loudly roaring Lord Nṛsiṃha. (24) As invisible as an insect that has fallen into a fire, the Asura disappeared in the effulgence of Nṛsiṃha. It was not so astonishing that moment, considering the fact that He formerly, by the effulgence of His goodness, had swallowed the darkness [of the entire creation]. (25) The greatest of the demons reaching Lord Nṛsiṃha, thereupon furiously, with great force exercising his prowess, struck Him with his club. But the Lord, the Wielder of the Club, seized him like the son of Tārṅṣya [Garuḍa] would capture a great snake. (26) Oh son of Bharata, when He, in order to play a game, allowed the Asura to slip from His hands, exactly the way Garuḍa sometimes deals with a snake, the godly souls of the different worlds, who were driven from their positions, from behind the clouds considered that a bad turn of events. (27) The demon, thinking that He had let him go out of fear for his display of power, after regaining his strength, took up his sword and shield and with great force again attacked Nṛsiṃhadeva. (28) When he, with his moon spotted shield and sword, as fast as a hawk was maneuvering up and down, so as not to



offer any opportunity, the Lord made a very shrill, loud sound of laughter that was so frightening that he, with his eyes [for a moment] closed, was captured by the Greatest of all Speed. (29) In protest he with his limbs wrestling tried to escape, but the Lord placed him, whose skin could not even be cut by Indra's thunderbolt, at the entrance of the palace on His lap like he was a snake or mouse and pierced him with His nails as easy as Garuḍa pierces a poisonous viper. (30) With His most fearful eyes full of anger he was difficult to behold. With His mouth wide open licking the edges with His tongue and with His mane and face smeared red with traces of blood, He wore the intestines like a garland around His neck and looked like a lion that just has killed an elephant. (31) The heart He with His pointed nails had ripped out completely and thrown aside and the thousands of followers, who with their raised weapons attended to their leader, He all killed using His nails and the other weapons in His countless hands. (32) Shaking His manes He scat-

tered the clouds and with His glaring glance He outshone the luminaries. The waters and oceans, struck by His breathing, swirled in perturbation and afraid of His roar the elephants guarding the quarters [of the universe] cried. (33) With Him tossing His hair, the celestial chariots crowding in the sky were shoved from their places, the earth shook under the heavy weight of His feet, His intolerable force moved the mountains and hills and His effulgence outshone everything else in all directions of the sky.

(34) Thereafter sitting in the assembly hall on the highest seat of man with a most fearsome, terrible countenance, there was no one to challenge Him nor anyone to worship Him. (35) But upon

hearing how he, the Daitya who was the headache of the three worlds, in the battle had been killed by the Lord, there were exclamations of joy, blossoming faces and endless showers of flowers from the wives of the demigods. (36) At that time there was an overcast formed by all the celestial chariots of the demigods desirous to attend. Drums and kettle drums were sounded and the greatest singers and angels of heaven sang and danced. (37-39) All the godly souls, Brahmā, Indra and Śiva, the sages, the ancestors, the perfected souls, the scientific experts and the great serpents [great egos] assembled there. The founding fathers, the leaders of mankind, the residents of heaven and the best of the angels arrived there too, as did the venerable souls, the keepers of the wealth and the monkey-like, oh my best one. Also the goblins came, the souls of superpower as also they who were Viṣṇu's personal associates, like Sunanda and Kumuda. With their hands folded before their heads to offer their obeisances, each of them approached Him who

had appeared as half a man, half a lion and now sat there on the throne displaying His effulgence.

(40) Śrī Brahmā said: 'I bow down before You, oh Inscrutable One of unlimited powers. You with all Your might and prowess and with the purity of Your actions, stand for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. While You in Your divine game [*līla*] engage with the modes, You never change Yourself.'

(41) Lord Śiva said: 'The end of the *yuga* is the time suitable for You to kill in anger this insignificant demon; just protect his son, this *bhakta* of surrender next to You, oh caretaker of the devotees.'

(42) Śrī Indra said: 'Our share of the sacrifices was secured by Your Lordship protecting us, oh Supreme One. We have no words to describe the degree our lotuslike hearts were afflicted by the Daitya, our hearts that are really Your residence. Alas, oh Lord, how insignificant is our world in the grip of Time, but for the sake of the devoted souls in Your service, You have shed Your light so that they may find liberation from their bondage. What else but considering the visible world as unimportant, would constitute their way, oh Nṛsimhadeva?'

(43) The sages [the Ṛṣis] said: 'You are the supreme example who taught us our austerity. By this power of Yours this world, oh Original Personality of Godhead, is created, [maintained] and reabsorbed. That penance was stolen by this unwise soul but is now, oh Shelter of the Needy, restored by the protection of Your embodiment.'

(44) The ancestors [the Pitṛs] said: 'Of the demon who, engaging with force, enjoyed our *śrāddha* sacrifices that were offered by our sons and

grandsons, of him who, even at the holy bathing places, drank from our offerings of sesame water, You [now] pierced the intestines of his belly with the nails of Your hand and thus have these offerings [finally] reached their proper destination. We offer Him our obeisances, He, the maintainer of the universal principles of religion who appeared as a man-lion.

(45) The souls of perfection [the Siddhas] said: 'This most uncivilized and dishonest person who stole away the joy of our perfection in yoga and who, with the power of his mysticism and penance, was so proud of his wealth, has been torn apart by Your nails. We bow down before You, oh Nṛsimha.'



(46) **T**he scientific experts [the Vidyādhara] said: 'Our forms of knowledge that each are attained by a different way of concentrating, were pushed aside by this fool puffed up about his strength and prowess. He who in battle killed him like he was an animal, to Him who appeared as Nṛsiṃha, we surrendered souls are ever obliged.'

(47) **T**he snake people [the Nāgas] said: 'By piercing the chest of that greatest of all sinners who seized our jewels and beautiful women, You have done our wives a great favor. Let us offer You our obeisances.'

(48) **T**he original fathers [the Manus] said: 'We, the Manus are Your authorities but were disrespected by this son of Diti who broke with the moral ties for the establishment, oh Lord. With You having killed this villain, oh Master, please tell us what we, Your eternal servants, can do for You.'

(49) **T**he founding fathers [the Prajāpatis] said: 'We, the creators of the generations, owe our lives to You, oh Supreme Controller and not to him who denied the living beings, we have put on this world, a life. And now, by assuming the form of an incarnation of Your pure goodness, You, for the well-being of the world, have split open the chest of him who lies slain here.'

(50) **T**he musicians of heaven [the Gandharvas] said: 'We, oh Lord, are Your dancers and singers, Your performers, who were brought under the control of the power and strength of the one here who by You was reduced to this condition. Can anyone on the path of evil find happiness?'

(51) **T**he venerable souls [the Cāranas] said: 'Oh Lord, Your lotus feet are the shelter bestowing liberation. We duly seek our refuge there because You have put an end to this Asura, hiding in the heart of all virtuous people.'

(52) **T**he keepers of the wealth [the Yakṣas] said: 'We, serving You to Your pleasure, belong to Your best followers. This son of Diti forced us to carry his palanquin, but caused the sorrow [the poverty]

of each and everyone. Thus we acknowledge You, oh Lord Nṛsiṃha, for You are the one who put him to death, oh twenty-fifth principle [that is the Time, see 3.26: 10-15].'

(53) **T**he monkey-like beings [the Kimpuruṣas] said: 'We are questionable humans, Kimpuruṣas, but You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord. And this bad person has been slain by You after having been condemned by the saintly souls [see also B.G. 4: 7-8].'

(54) **T**he king's bards [the Vaitālikas] said: 'We, in great gatherings and arenas of sacrifice singing the glories of Your spotless reputation, have achieved the greatest position of respect. This crooked character who subdued us, oh Supreme Lord, has to our great fortune been killed by You, like he was a disease.'

(55) **T**he lower gods [the Kinnaras, those with a human head and an animal body, singers of heaven] said: 'Oh Lord, we the Kinnaras are Your faithful servants. Because of that son of Diti we had to perform in forced labor, but the sinner was by You destroyed, oh Nṛsiṃhadeva, oh Master. Please be there as our happiness and welfare.'

(56) **T**he associates of Lord Viṣṇu said: 'Today we have seen You in a wondrous human-like form. You are our shelter and the happiness of all the worlds. This servant of the state, oh Lord, was cursed by the scholars [see 7.1: 36] and has therefore been killed. We consider that to be Your special grace.'

Chapter 9

Prahlāda Propitiates Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva with Prayers

(1) Nārada Muni said [to Yudhiṣṭhira]: 'None of the Suras led by Brahmā and Śiva, could step forward because He, boiling with anger, was most difficult to approach. (2) The Goddess of Fortune, personally by the demigods being urged to do so,



could not move in His direction because she was very afraid after seeing Him so huge and wonderful as no one had ever seen or heard before. (3) Lord Brahmā then requested Prahlāda who stood close by: 'My dear son, can you please approach the Lord and propitiate Him? He is very angry because of what your father did.'

(4) 'Surely' he said and even though he was only a small boy, oh King, the great devotee slowly, step by step, approached Him and prostrated himself with folded hands offering prayers. (5) The god-head was by him, such a little boy fallen at His lotus feet, greatly moved and filled with mercy He raised His lotus hand, placed it on his head and dispelled the fear for the snake of time from all minds [present there]. (6) Because of that touch

he was cleansed of all evil. Immediately in this association with the Supersoul, at His lotus feet, his heart melted being captured in bliss. With Him in his heart tears welled in his eyes and symptoms of ecstasy manifested all over his body. (7) One-pointed of mind being greatly concentrated and with an out of love faltering voice, he in the full surrender of his heart and mind began to offer prayers to the Lord.

(8) Śrī Prahlāda said: 'All the Suras headed by Brahmā, all the saints and others, fully in the mode of goodness, being one-pointed in their determination could, despite their qualities, till the present day not please You with their streams of words. How can it be that You, as this Lord, would be pleased with my words? I was born an Asura. (9) I think that riches, a good birth, a nice body, penance, Vedic knowledge, prowess, energy, influence, strength, diligence, intelligence and mystical power will not satisfy at all. The spirit is pleased by bhakti, just like the Supreme Lord was pleased by Gajendra [the elephant]. (10) A scholar who, endowed with these twelve characteristics [see also *], does not care about the lotus feet of Him from whose navel the lotus

sprouted, I consider not as blessed as a man of low birth who dedicates his mind, words, wealth, life and everything he does, to Him. For he purifies his family, community or even his entire race that way, unlike someone who is too much of the mind. (11) Whatever the respect an ignorant person pays to the innerly always satisfied Supreme Lord, is by Him gracefully accepted, not so much for His own benefit as for the benefit of the devoted person in question, just as the reflection in a mirror is there for the glory of one's own face. (12) I will therefore, free from that notion of being unfit in full surrender to the Lord, to the best of my ability and insight, focus on His glory, however low-born I am. When one in ignorance has entered this world, the best way to find purification is to describe and sing His glory [see also

B.G. 18: 55]. (13) All souls who follow Your instructions, like Brahmā and the other demigods, are naturally always situated in goodness. But we [the Asuras], oh Lord, are not like that and are always filled with fear. [We should know that] the pleasing incarnations of Your lordship in this material world are there to promote both Your protection (prosperity, well-being) and the happiness of the soul. (14) Therefore please give up Your anger about the Asura You have killed today. Even the saints are happy when a scorpion or snake is killed. The truth is that all the worlds are restored and contented with what happened and that all their inhabitants will remember Your form as the one that dispelled their fear. (15) I myself am not afraid of Your fearsome mouth, tongue, flashing eyes and frowning face, oh Invincible One, of Your strong ferocious teeth or garland of intestines and bloody manes, of Your pointed ears, Your roar that even scares the elephants or the nails that pierced the enemy. (16) But I do fear, oh Merciful Father of Care, that intolerable, ugly repetition of birth and death, to be thrown into the miserable condition of having to live among predator-minded people and to be bound to the actions and reactions of karma, oh Insurmountable One. When do You, pleased with me, call me to the base of Your feet that constitute the refuge in this ocean of matter? (17) Because of taking birth one is, in one's pleasurable or not that pleasurable existence of being united with the world, separated [from You] and burned by the fire of lamentation, irrespective the body one resides in. Moreover, one suffers as much the remedies against that misery as one suffers the misery itself of taking the body for the real self. I, oh Greatest Being, am wandering around in this existence. Please tell me how to be of service in Your yoga. (18) From constantly hearing the narrations handed down in succession about Your pastimes as the well-wisher and Supreme Godhead, oh Lord Nṛsimha, I will easily cross over [this ocean of matter] and be free from being contaminated by the basic qualities of nature. In association with the liberated souls I will, with Your two feet as my home, find liberation from all the misery. (19) All the things that You [personally] do not care about, but which are cherished by those who are locked up in a physical body, only have the

appearance of a remedy: the parentage that is the shelter for a little child, oh Nṛsimha, the medicine for a patient, the boat for a person drowning in the ocean or the countermeasures one takes against suffering a certain material condition, oh Almighty One, [all constitute but a temporary solution]. (20) Whatever situation it may concern, whatever seems to be the reason, whatever time it might be, by whatever agent and relating to whatever agent, caused by whatever agent or for the sake of whatever agent, whatever the way of something or of whatever nature something might be, is certainly all nothing but another form of the Supreme Reality. Stated differently: in nature one finds, because of all kinds of changes, a specific form of separateness, but whatever form it may concern, it is always a manifestation of Your Lordship's energy. (21) The illusory nature of matter creates a mind that constitutes the source of fruitful actions [or karma] that are difficult to control. These actions are conditioned by the Time, that agitates the modes of nature and is respected [in a certain way] by the person. Thus being defeated by the alluring - but deluding - material energy, one is tied to the sixteen spokes [of the senses of action and perception, the elements and the mind] of the wheel of rebirth, oh Unborn One. Who can escape from this without taking to Your way [see also B.G. 9: 25]? (22) You are that one element of Time to the tender mercy of which the soul eternally is left, being defeated by the modes of Your rule. I present here, who as a form of material energy in all his forsaking and appearing is subjected to Your cyclic control, am powerless, oh Lord and Master. I am crushed under the wheel with the sixteen spokes. Please help me, this soul of surrender, to get out of this, oh Almighty One. (23) Oh Almighty One, I have seen that people in general desire the longevity, opulence and glory of the pious leaders of heaven. But our father wishing this all [for himself], was simply by the laughter he provoked of Your expansion [as Nṛsimha], pulled down by You in the blink of an eye and destroyed. (24) Therefore I do not want to live as long as Lord Brahmā does, or be rich and mighty. I know where all these foolish blessings of the senses of the embodied being lead to. I have no desire to be finished by You, so powerful as the Master of Time. Please lead me to the association of

Your servants. (25) How can one with this body, that is a host to so many diseases, now be blessed with matters that sound good but are like a mirage in the desert? Despite knowing this very well, people try to put out the fire of desire with difficult to obtain little drops of honey [temporary happiness], but they do not cure oneself of this. (26) What is my position now? How can I surpass the fact of being born, from a family far removed from the enlightened state, into the darkness of a body that is moved by passion? The lotus hand of Your causeless mercy, that You offered me on my head as a token of grace, would not even be available to Lord Brahmā, to Lord Śiva or to the Goddess of Fortune! (27) From the side of Your Lordship as the friend of the entire world there can be no question of discriminating between higher and lower born living beings. Nevertheless there is of You, depending the service, like with a desire tree, the benediction reserved for those souls who serve You, whether they are of a higher level or not [see also 2.3: 10 and B.G. 4: 33, 9: 25]. (28) The common man who in his material existence runs after the objects of his desire, falls in a blind well full of snakes. I, who by bad association the same way landed in such a condition, was by the Sura sage [Nārada], oh Supreme Lord, taken into confidence and led to the truth of the soul. How could I ever give up on the service of Your pure devotee? (29) Oh Unlimited One, by saving my life and killing my father, I think the words spoken by the *ṛṣi*, have come true. For You have proven Yourself when my father, with evil intentions, took up his sword and said: 'Let that controller other than me save you, now that I am going to sever your head.'

(30) 'This universe all around us constitutes the Oneness of You alone. You exist separately of this universe which has a beginning, a middle and an end that You created by means of the three modes



of nature in many varieties. Those primal qualities give shape to Your external potency. Everything making up that diversity owes its regulation to You who entered it Yourself [See also B.G. 9: 4]. (31) Oh Lord, You are there as the entire universe, or else as the One separate from it; You are the cause and the effect. The distinction between the material energy of Your creation and You as being another Self, is a mistaken notion. The substance of something is equal to the substance of the form in which it appears; that what constitutes You is equal to that what the manifestation of the creation being maintained and annihilated consists of, just like it is with the seed and the tree and the subtle element and the earth [see 2.5: 26-29]. (32) With You retracting this universe within Yourself, You experience, within the ocean being immersed

in Yourself, the spiritual state of bliss, while You seem to be doing nothing. But with You in the uniting of Your consciousness having closed Your eyes, You also have imbibed the sleep. Without accepting material sleep nor touching the modes of nature, You are then engaged in the union of the highest state of consciousness [*turīya*, or the fourth state]. (33) Having awakened from Your slumber on the bed of Ananta in the causal ocean, the great lotus of all the worlds appeared from Your navel, like a banana tree does from its seed. That cosmic body of Yours, this universe agitated by the Time factor, constitutes Your way [in the form of the modes and their divinities] of dealing with the material affair [with *prakṛti*]. (34) He who is of the knowledge [Brahmā] and who generated from that lotus, could not discern anyone else, since Your Lordship, as the seed, had expanded into himself. He then dived into the water for a hundred demigod years, not understanding that a seed, once having fructified, oh my Lord, can no longer be perceived [see 3.8]. (35) He being born from nothing but himself, was greatly astonished to find himself upon that lotus. After a long time by severe austerities being purified, he then found You, oh Controller, who very subtly, like an aroma in the earth, are situated spread throughout all of the sentient being. (36) Lord Brahmā thus achieved transcendental bliss, for he saw, in one view combined, the Supreme Personality, being endowed with all kinds of ornaments, weapons and signs, demonstrating His full potency with thousands of faces, feet, heads, hands, thighs, noses, ears and eyes. (37) By accepting in an incarnation the head of a horse, You killed two very powerful demons named Madhu and Kaitabha, who represented the modes of passion and ignorance. Next You delivered the *śruti* [the four Vedas] to Lord Brahmā, because of which one honors Your most appreciated form [called Hayagrīva] as an embodiment of pure goodness [see also 5.18: 18 and B.G. 4: 7]. (38) You protect all the worlds this way, according to the *yuga* in question appearing in different incarnations as a human being, a saint, a god or an aquatic. Sometimes, in defense of the dharma, You kill the troublemakers of this world, oh Supreme Personality, but because You in Kali-yuga operate under cover [*channa*] You, being spoken of as one and the

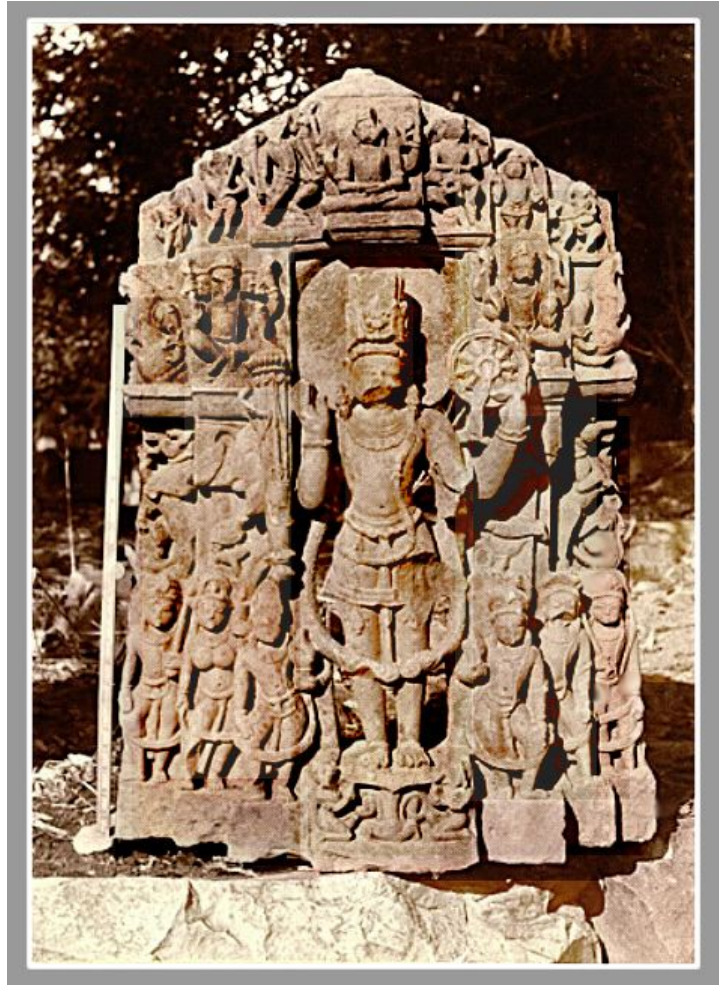
same person, are called Triyuga [for being recognizable in the three other *yugas*, see also 11.5: 32]. (39) A mind not tuned to Your transcendental topics, is far removed from the Lord of Vaikunṭha because of the sins it sympathizes with and is polluted, dishonest and hard to control. Filled with desires and lusts that mind is, because of the therewith associated urges, of highs and lows, fears and distress. Tell me how I, with such a mind being poor and fallen, must understand Your supreme purpose. (40) The tongue pulls me in this direction, oh Infallible One, and the genitals, not being satisfied, pull me that way. Likewise the skin, the belly and the ear are going for this and the nose is running after that, while the eyes are looking for yet another thing. Thus the eager, busy senses all together bring one down like a householder is brought down by his co-wives. (41) Because we this way with our karma fell into the Vaitaranī river [at the door of death], we alas, one after the other birth and death, eating all kinds of foodstuff, suffer from an ever increasing fear, seeing how the living being, caught in his body and entangled in the association with other bodies, is of enmity and friendship. Oh You, who from the other side of that river wants to show us Your kindness, in this world we at present are nothing but a bunch of fools. (42) Oh Master of All, we, friendly people, are always eager to be of service in this matter. Oh Supreme Lord, what would be the difficulty for Your great compassion to deliver us, materialistic fools, from the cause of time and again having to set up, keep going and come to naught [with our karmic endeavors], oh Friend of the Needy? (43) Oh Supreme One, because my mind is absorbed in the singing and proclaiming of Your sweet ocean of glories, I am free from worries about the hard to cross Vaitaranī [that is this world]. I am more concerned about those fools who, missing the liberation in carrying the load of their sensual interest, are making plans in favor of illusory forms of happiness and dutifulness [see also 6.17: 28]. (44) Oh Godhead, saints ambitious for their own salvation generally in silence wander in remote places, not so much interested in a life for the sake of others. But I, unlike them, do not want to ignore my suffering fellow men. I do not desire liberation for myself alone. I cannot accept it to see other peop-

le wander around oblivious of this shelter of Yours. (45) Everything associated with common householder's sexual happiness, is as trivial as rubbing one's hands to find relief from an itch. The miserable person is by this kind of itch-relief sexuality not freed from his discomfort and uneasiness and in fact the servant of all kinds of unhappiness. Only when one recognizes that kind of [temporary] imaginary happiness and manages to tolerate the itching ['not surpassing necessity', see also B.G. 7: 11 & 14], one can develop intelligence, stability and energy [*dhīra*, see also Y.S. II: 38 & 40]. (46) Silence, vows, Vedic knowledge, austerity, study, dutifulness, explaining the scripture, living alone, mantra meditation and absorption, belong to the path of liberation, but these matters [these ten activities of emancipation] are often part of a method of making a living that is practiced by people who have not conquered their senses at all, oh my Lord. Thus one in this context may wonder whether one deals with hypocrisy or not[: are we not dealing with false pretenses? See also 6.1: 16]. (47) The forms of Your [spiritual] cause and [material] effect as explained in the Vedas, are like the seed and its sprout. But You, being without a specific form, are also not any of these two forms. Those who are connected in Your yoga [the bhakti-yoga devotees] can clearly see both these aspects before their eyes, like wood and fire in wood, and this cannot be achieved any other way. (48) You are the air, the fire, the earth, the sky and the water, the sense objects, the life force, the senses, the mind, the consciousness and all assisting divinity belonging to it. You are all of that, the unique of the natural reality of the modes, as also the One beyond it all. Oh my Lord, whatever that is manifested or is expressed in the mind and by words, is no one else but You. (49) Neither all the modes of nature, nor their predominating deities, neither the complete of the cosmic intelligence, the false ego, the gross and subtle elements, the senses and their objects, nor those who are so mindful in association with all the godly souls and the mortals who all have

a beginning and an end, oh Lord glorified by all the saints, none of them is truly capable of covering all that is Yours and therefore all intelligent people at this point rest their case [and engage in Your devotional service. See also B.G. 2: 52].'

(50) 'I therefore offer You, oh Best of the Worshipable Ones, my obeisances and engage with prayers in Your worship, work for You, remember You, cherish Your lotus feet and always listen to the talks about You. How can a person without honoring You in all these six ways ever be of bhakti for You who are the goal of the best souls of transcendence [compare 7.5: 23-24, see for further prayers to Lord Nṛsiṃha 5.18: 7-14]?'

(51) Śrī Nārada said: 'I thus far have described the transcendental qualities of the *bhakta* in his bhakti. The Lord transcendental to the modes who



was pleased and in control of His anger, next addressed him who had surrendered himself at His feet. (52) The Supreme Lord said: 'Prahlaḍa, My sweet boy, I wish you all good fortune. I am pleased with you, oh best of the Asuras. Just ask Me for any blessing you desire, for I am, for each and everyone, the fulfillment of all desires. (53) Live a long life! He who does not please Me has difficulty seeing Me! But when someone has seen Me, he no longer deserves it to lament his condition. (54) For that reason, oh fortunate one, stable, intelligent and energetic devotees, who know to behave themselves and wish the best [for each and all], desire to please Me, the Master of All Benedictions, in every respect.'

(55) Śrī Nārada said: 'Even though the best of the Asuras thus was allured by worldly benedictions, he did not want anything of all that one longs for, he chose for the Supreme Lord exclusively [see also: Śrī Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, verse four].'

*: The qualifications of the brahmin are in the Sanat-sujāta described as follows:

*jñānam ca satyam ca damaḥ śrutam ca
hy amātsaryam hrīṣ titikṣānasūyā
yajñāś ca dānam ca dhṛtiḥ śamaś ca
mahā-vratā dvādaśa brāhmaṇasya*

'Spiritual knowledge, truthfulness, loyalty to the Scripture, non-enviousness, forbearance, of sacrifice, of charity, equal minded, and living to the great vow [of *yama*, which next to the truthfulness mentioned entails the four of celibacy, non-violence, non-possessiveness and non-stealing], are the twelve qualities of the brahmin.' See also 5.5: 24 and B.G. 18: 42.

Chapter 10

About Prahlaḍa, the Best Among the Exalted Devotees and the Fall of Tripura

(1) Nārada Muni said: 'Prahlaḍa, even though he was but a small boy, considered every blessing that came with his bhakti-yoga an impediment on the path and this he with a smile told the Lord of the Senses.

(2) Śrī Prahlaḍa said: 'Please do not allure me, for because of my Asura birth I am, by all those blessings, attached to material enjoyment. It was out of fear for such material association that I, desiring liberation, have taken to Your shelter for the sake of complete detachment. (3) Oh Lord, You send Your devoted servant into this world of desire to put his character to a test, for the lust to enjoy the senses, being the root cause of one's wandering around here, is found in the heart of everyone, oh Master. (4) Oh guru of the entire creation, because You are so kind to Your souls, it does not work otherwise with You [being their Well-wisher]. Anyone desiring material benefits from You [will obtain them, although he] is [then] not your servant but a merchant [see also B.G. 17: 20]. (5) Someone who for himself expects material benefits from his spiritual master is not really a servant. Nor is the master really of service who - for his own prestige - wants to bestow material benefits upon his servant [see also 10.88: 8-10]. (6) There is, as far as I am concerned, in my full devotion unto You, no question whatsoever of any desire, nor do You, as a real master, foster any further motive for our sake, like a king does have with his subject. (7) And if You would like to fulfill a desire of mine, then I pray for Your benediction, oh Lord of All Blessings, that no desire for any form of material happiness will grow in my heart [see also Śrī Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka verse four]. (8) From the moment they appear [the functions of] one's senses, mind, life air and body, one's religion, patience, intelligence, shyness, opulence, strength, memory and truthfulness are defeated by them. (9) Only when one gives up all the desires that one in one's human association finds in one's mind, one is fit for an opulence equal to Yours, oh Lotus-eyed Lord. (10) Oh Master of all Opulence, oh Original Personality, oh Lord in the form of Nṛsimha, oh Supreme One, oh Absolute Truth, oh Great Soul and Soul of all souls, let me offer You my respectful obeisances.'

(11) **T**he Supreme Lord said: 'Those persons who like you are exclusively devoted to Me do not desire any benedictions from Me in this world nor in the next. Nevertheless you may until the end of Manu's reign enjoy all the opulences of the Daitya rule out here [see also 2.3: 10]. (12) Devote yourself to My pleasing stories, be absorbed in Me, who resides in your heart as the One present within all living beings. Worship, in [yoga] uniting your consciousness, the Lord who is the enjoyer of all sacrifices and give up your self-interested activities. (13) By relishing your merit being happy, by acting piously defeating sin, by the rapid progress of time forsaking your body and by spreading your reputation throughout even the worlds of the gods, you will, freed from all attachment, turn back to Me. (14) Anyone who chants these prayers you offered to Me, any human being who remembers both Me and you, will in due course of time be freed from the bondage of his karma [see B.G. 4: 9, 6: 7, 9: 27-28, 12: 3-4 and see also 11.14: 21].'

(15-17) **Śrī** Prahāda said: 'I pray for the following benediction from You, oh Lord of Benedictions, oh Supreme Controller. My father, not knowing Your strength and supremacy, had, because of a heart polluted by anger, a false notion of You, oh master and guru of all worlds. He considered You the murderer of his brother and condemned You. Thus he was towards me, Your devotee, of the greatest sin. May my father be purified from that greatest and most difficult to overcome sin, even though he was immediately purified when You cast Your glance upon him, oh Father full of mercy for the materialists.'

(18) **T**he Supreme Lord said: 'With the purification of your father, twenty-one of your forefathers have been purified, oh sinless one. Because you, oh saintly boy, took your birth from him in this dynasty, you in fact are the purifier of the dynasty. (19) Wherever and whenever there are My devotees who, full of peace and equipoise, with the best qualities, are equally graceful towards all, everyone will be purified, even when it concerns the worst of societies. (20) They will never, in whatever way, wrong any higher or lower living being, oh King of the Daityas, because they, in

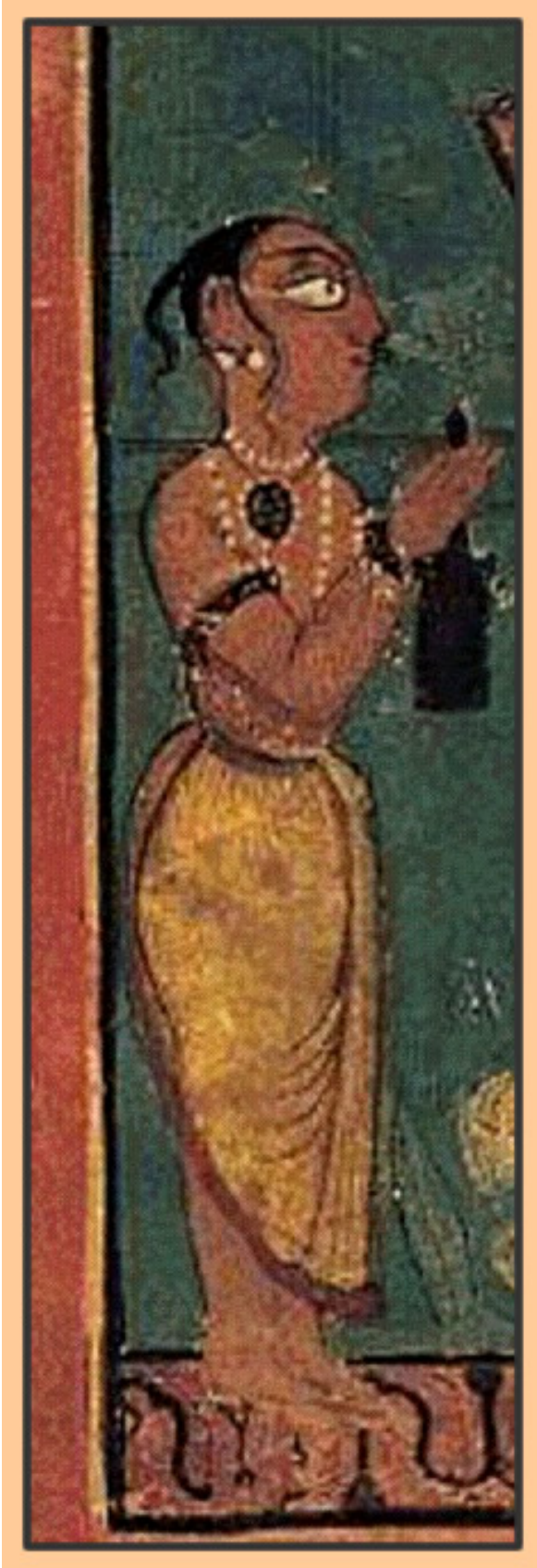
their love for Me, have forsaken all material aspirations. (21) Persons in this world following in your footsteps become My pure devotees. You are truly the best example of all My devotees [see also 6.3: 20-21]. (22) My child, you should now perform the funeral rites for your father, who in every respect was purified by the touch of My body and thus will be promoted to the worlds of the good people. (23) Assume the throne of your father, My dearest, fix your mind upon Me and do your duty for My transcendental cause the way it is prescribed in the Vedic tradition.'

(24) **Śrī** Nārada said: 'As was ordered by the Supreme Lord, Prahāda performed all the rituals associated with his father's death, oh King [Yudhishtira], and was crowned by the brahmins. (25) Brahmā, who had witnessed what had happened, with a face radiating because the Lord had been pleased, offered with transcendental words the purest prayers to Lord Nṛsimha, addressing Him in the presence of all the other gods. (26) **Śrī** Brahmā said: 'Oh God of gods, oh proprietor of the entire universe, oh love of all creation, oh first among the living beings, because of Your resolve [to protect the devotees] the most sinful Asura, who was of so much trouble to everyone, has been killed. (27) I granted him the rare benediction that he would not be killed by any creature created by me and that he would not die because of any austerity, mystical or physical power. Thus being very proud he transgressed all injunctions. (28) His son, who despite his young age was a great saint and exalted devotee, has luckily been released from the clutches of death and enjoys now, as You wished, Your shelter. (29) For all those who, faced with an enemy, meditate upon this physical presence of You, the Supersoul, oh omnipresent, almighty Lord, You are the protector against all kinds of fear, including even the fear of death.'

(30) **T**he Supreme Lord replied: 'Do not bestow blessings on demons, as you have done, oh you who were born from the lotus. To bless people of a cruel and pitiless nature is like giving milk to snakes.'

(31) Śrī Nārada said: 'This, oh King, is what the Supreme Lord said, and after Hari had been worshiped by the teacher of all teachers, He who cannot be seen by ordinary living beings disappeared from the spot. (32) Prahāda thereupon bowed his head and offered his obeisances with prayers to Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, the founding fathers and the [other] demigods, who each are part of the Supreme Lord. (33) Next Lord Brahmā together with Śukrācārya and other sages, appointed him ruler over all the Daityas and Dānavas. (34) Oh King, after Brahmā and the others were properly honored, all the godly souls congratulated him, wishing him all the best and then returned to their abodes. (35) The two associates [the gatekeepers] of Viṣṇu who were born as the sons of Diti and who operated as His enemies, were thus killed by Him, the Lord residing in the core of the heart [see 7.1: 36-39]. (36) Being cursed by the brahmins, the two were born again as the demons Kumbhakarna and ten-head Rāvana and again both killed [by Him], thanks to the special powers of Lord Rāmacandra. (37) Slain lying on the battlefield with their hearts pierced by Rāma's arrows, they with their minds fixed on Him gave up their bodies, just as they did in their previous birth. (38) The two again appearing in this world with their births as Śiśupāla and Dantavakra, were the same way bound to the Lord in enmity and merged with Him [for the last time] in your presence. (39) All the kings inimical to Śrī Kṛṣṇa were, upon their death reaching His Self, freed from the burden of the sins of their previous life, just like larvae that obtain a body identical to the one of the drone that guarded them. (40) Just as one by devotional service returns to the Supreme Personality, kings like Śiśupāla returned home and attained the same supreme nature of the Lord by contemplating Him [in their enmity, see also B.G. 4: 9]. (41) All of this I described to you in reply to your inquiry on how, even hating, the son of Damaghoṣa [Śiśupāla] and others could attain the same position of wholesomeness [see 7.1: 34-35]. (42) In this narration about the Supersoul and the Godhead of all brahmins, Kṛṣṇa, I spoke about His incarnations in which He, among others, put an end to the Daityas. (43-44) This history describes the character of the devotion, spiritual knowledge and renunciation of that most exalted devo-

tee Prahāda. Try to understand each of these stories and thus discover what belongs to the Lord, the Master of maintenance, creation and destruction, what His qualities and activities are, the wisdom handed down [in disciplic succession] and how He, by the time factor, stands for the finality of all the higher and lower living beings and their cultures, however great they might be. (45) With the help of this narration, in which the transcendence is perfectly and fully described, one may get to know the Fortunate One and what the *bhāgavata dharma* [see 7.6: 28], the way of the devotees, entails. (46) Anyone who, after hearing this pious narration describing the Supreme Power of Viṣṇu, repeats it or sings about it with faith, will be liberated from being entangled in self-interested actions. (47) He who with great attention reads and listens to this story about the activities of the best of all truthful souls, this Daitya son, and how the Original Personality, playing the part of the lion king, killed the king of the demons who was as strong as an elephant, will attain the spiritual world where one has nothing to fear. (48) Oh, you [Pāṇḍavas] in your human world, are extremely fortunate, for the Supreme One of the Absolute Truth, He who is always sought by the great saints who purify all the worlds, resides in your house in a human form. (49) He is the Brahman of the Absolute Truth sought by all the great souls. He, who is factually your nephew [the son of your maternal uncle], He, your most dear well-wisher, is the oneness of transcendental happiness and the source of all life. He who is there also as your guru of instruction concerning the regulative principles, is the One to be worshiped as the completeness of the [body, the universe and the] soul. (50) Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā and others could not even by meditation directly see Him or describe Him in His real form. May He, this great master of all devotees, be pleased with the silence we observe, with our devotion, our calm and our worship. (51) Oh King, this very same Supreme Lord a long time ago restored the reputation of the demigod Lord Śiva, that was ruined by a demon called Maya Dānava who, because of great technical cunning, enjoyed an unparalleled power.'



(52) **T**he king [Yudhiṣṭhira] said: 'Please can you tell us for what reason and by what actions Lord Śiva, he who controls the entire universe, was surpassed by Maya Dānava and how he, with the help of Kṛṣṇa, restored his reputation?'

(53) **N**ārada said: 'After all the Asuras were defeated in battle by the God-conscious souls with His support, they took shelter of the greatest and best of them all, Maya Dānava. (54-55) The demon constructed three big and mighty cities made of gold, silver and iron. Possessing the uncommon ability to move [hover] around in formation they were difficult to discern. Thus hidden from view the Asuras, mindful of their former enmity with the three worlds and their controllers, oh ruler of man, started to wreak havoc in the world. (56) Thereupon the rulers of all the worlds approached Lord Śiva, fell at his feet in surrender and said: 'Please save us, your followers, oh Godhead, for we have been devastated by the *tripura* [three-city] people.' (57) To show them his favor the All-powerful Lord said to the Suras: 'Do not fear', and fixed an arrow on his bow to launch his weapon at the cities. (58) After being released his arrows shone with a ring of light as bright as the sun, so that the cities no longer could be seen. (59) Under their attack the inhabitants of the cities fell lifeless to the ground. The great yogi Maya Dānava then dipped them one after the other in a well of [life giving] nectar [called *Mṛta-sanjīvayitārī*]. (60) Touched by the divine nectar, they rose from death as strong as thunderbolts splitting the sky with flashes of light. (61) Seeing how disappointed and unhappy [Śiva,] the Emblem of the Lord was at the time, the Almighty Lord Viṣṇu considered what measures should be taken. (62) Lord Viṣṇu then personally assumed the form of a cow, while Lord Brahmā assumed the form of a calf, and together they entered in broad daylight Tripura to drink all the nectar of the well. (63) Even though the Asuras took notice of it, they could, in their bewilderment, not stop them. The great yogi Maya, aware of what happened, considered it a matter of divine ordinance and thus he addressed those who were guarding the well. Having been quite content with their illusion [of victory] they now were greatly dismayed. (64) 'Neither demigods, demons, human beings, nor anybody else

can reverse what for oneself, for others or for everyone in this world is ordained by fate.' (65-66) He [Lord Viṣṇu] thereafter equipped Lord Śiva with all necessities, like a chariot and charioteer, a flag, horses and elephants, a bow with shield and arrows and such; all matters that derived their strength from His personal dharma, spiritual knowledge, detachment, opulence, penance, culture, actions and so on. Śiva, seated on his chariot, then fixed an arrow on his bow. (67) Oh ruler of man, with the arrows joined on his bow Lord Śiva thus, being the Master and Controller, at noon set the so difficult to pierce three cities afire. (68) All the gods and saints, the ancestors, the perfected souls and the great personalities, then from their celestial chariots in the sky, with the assistance of countless kettledrums, loudly vibrated 'Jaya, Jaya', while they showered a wealth of flowers on his head and danced

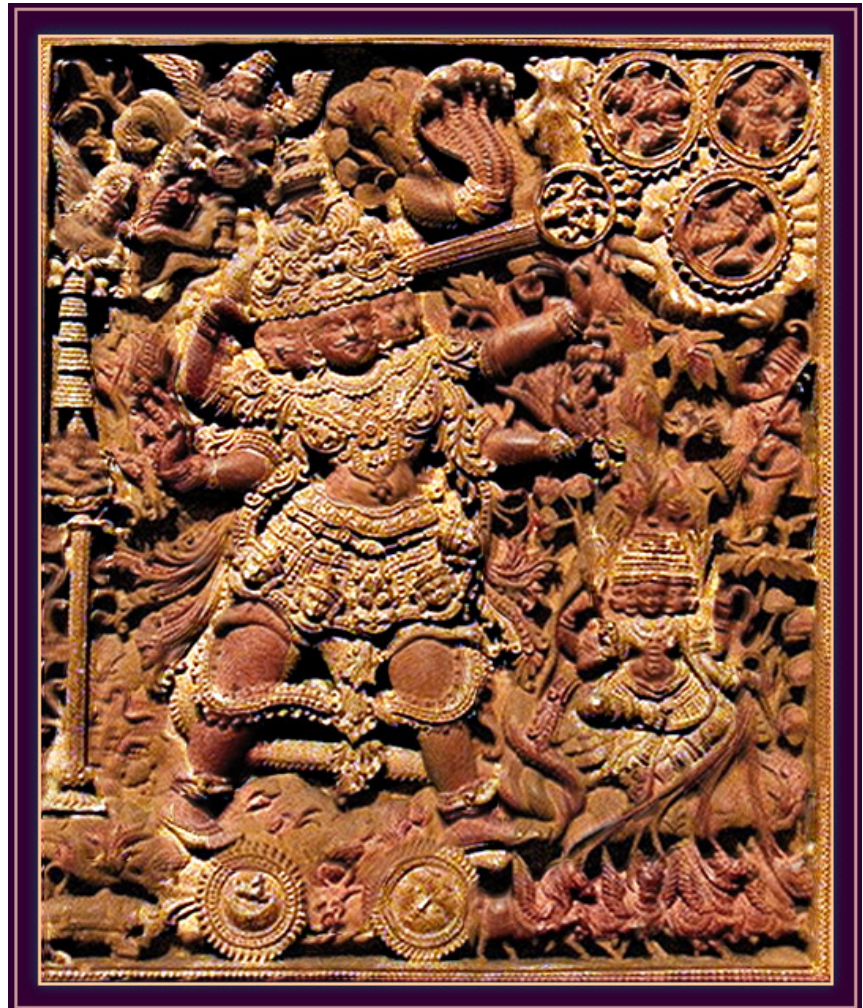
and sang in great ecstasy together with the beauties of heaven. (69) Oh King, after the mighty Lord Śiva, who had burned Tripura to ashes, thus was glorified by Lord Brahmā and the others, he returned to his abode. (70) What more can I tell you about the Lord, the teacher of the universe, who with His transcendental potency appears in the world of the human beings, the world where He, in the form of a normal human being, performs heroic acts that are discussed by the saints and sages in narrations that purify all the worlds?'

Chapter 11

The Perfect Society: About the Four Social Classes and the Woman

(1) Śrī Śuka said: 'After having listened to the story

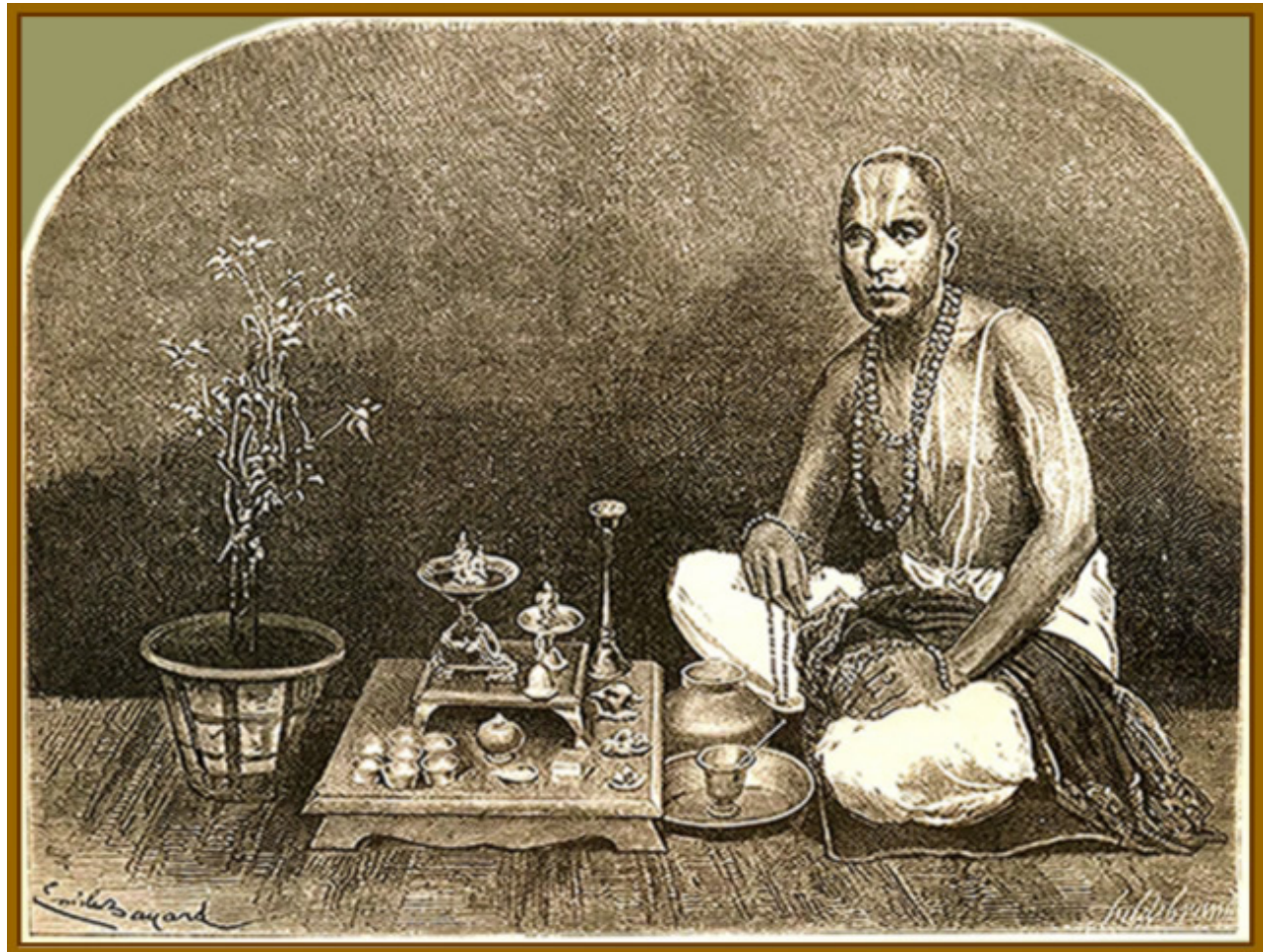
about him, [Prahāda,] the most important of all great devotees, him, the master of the Daityas who was so faithful to the Lord who covers the world in a single step [Urukrama], he who is discussed in the assemblies of the saints, Yudhiṣṭhira greatly pleased again asked the son of Brahmā [Nārada] questions. (2) Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: 'Oh great Lord, I would like to hear about the *sanātana dharma* activities [the eternal, common duties] of our human society that belong to the order of the status orientations [*varnāśrama*] by which the common people find a better life. (3) You, oh fortunate soul, are directly the son of our original father, the supreme person within this universe [Lord Brahmā]. One considers you, oh brahmin, the best of all his sons, because of your austerity, yoga and meditation. (4) Among those devoted to Nārāyaṇa you are the sage conversant with the



most confidential and supreme aspect of dharma; there is no devotee as merciful, exalted and peaceful as you are.'

(5) Śrī Nārada said: 'I offer my obeisances to the Supreme Lord, the Unborn One who defends the dharma throughout the universe. I will expound on *sanātana dharma* as I heard it from the mouth of Nārāyaṇa. (6) He who, begotten by Dharma Mahārāja in the womb of Dakṣa's daughter [Mūrti], descended [as Nārāyaṇa] along with a part of Himself [Nara], executes [even today] for the benefit of all people austerities in Badarikāśrama [the Himalayan resort for meditation]. (7) Oh King, the mind, the body and the soul find their full satisfaction in Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord who is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, the root of all dharma and the remembrance of those versed in that [what is called the science of devotional service]. (8-12) Truthfulness, compassion, austerity and cleanliness [with the *vidhi*]; tolerance, discrimination, composure and continence, nonviolence, celibacy, generosity and study of the scriptures, sincerity, contentment and to serve the holy souls [in *yama* and *niyama*]; gradually cutting with that what is unnecessary and to be of gravity in avoidance of empty talk, self-search, to share food and drink with all beings and to consider everyone first of all a part of God, oh Pāṇḍava; to listen and to sing as also to remember Him who is the shelter of all the great souls, to attend, to worship and to propitiate, to be a servant, to be a friend and to be of surrender [in *bhāgavata dharma*]; to possess all the thirty characteristics as described constitutes the supreme of dharma that pleases Him, the Soul of All, oh King [compare B.G. 12: 13-20]. (13) They who, because of their prolonged reconsideration [or formally by means of undergoing the so-called sixteen *samskāra*'s], are led by [the spiritual] instructions [of the unborn Lord Brahmā and his teachers], are called twice-born souls [*dvijas*], who, pure by their birth and activities [on the basis of their education in normally the three higher classes of society and by their initiation of having received the sacred thread] are of worship, are versed in the scriptures and give charity. They are expected to behave according to the status of their [age-bound] spiritual departments [or *āśramas* *]. (14)

For the brahmins there are the six [duties] of studying the scriptures and so on [to teach, to worship, to lead sacrifices, and to give and receive charity] and for the rest [the other occupations] there are the same six, minus the duty to accept charity. The means of livelihood of the rulers [the *kṣatriyas*] who maintain the people, consists of levying taxes and such [like customs duties and fines] from persons who do not belong to those motivated from within [the brahmins]. (15) The *vaiśyas* [the merchants] are to be engaged in their occupational activities [of farming and trading] and should always follow what the brahmins teach, while the *śūdras* [the laborers] for their livelihood have to accept the three types of twice-born souls as their masters to serve [see also B.G. 18: 41-44]. (16) There are [next to teaching, leading sacrifices and accepting charity] four different types of livelihood for the learned brahmin: to subsist on what is achieved without asking for it [*śālīna*], on what one obtains by begging [*yāyāvara*], on what one finds left behind in the fields [*śīla*] and on that what is not wanted by others in shops and markets [*uñchana*]. The latter means of these are better than the former. (17) Without a good reason, the lower classes must not [desire to] subsist the way the higher classes do, but in times of emergency anyone, except for the ruling class, may take to the means of livelihood of any other class. (18-20) *Ṛta* [honest or courageous] is what one calls subsisting on what remained in the fields etc., *amṛta* [sustainable or nectar] is called subsisting on what was obtained without asking, one speaks of *mṛta* [finality of engagement] when one asks for what one needs, while it is called *pramṛta* [or cultivation] when one subsists on tilling one's own field. It is called *satyāṇṛta* [simultaneously true and untrue] when one trades, but when brahmins and *kṣatriyas* versed in the Veda, in subordinate positions have to serve the lower classes, one speaks of *śva-vṛtti* [or doggery], an engagement that must be given up, for the brahmins represent all Vedic knowledge and the rulers embody all the gods. With *ṛta* or *amṛta* one can live and one can even live with *pramṛta* and *satyāṇṛta*, but one can never reconcile with a life like that of a dog [see also B.G. 4: 13]. (21) The brahmin is known for his control of the mind and senses, his penance, cle-



anliness, satisfaction, forgiveness, straightforwardness, spiritual knowledge and compassion, the perfection of his service to the Lord, the True Self, and his truthfulness. (22) A *ksatriya* makes his mark by his fighting skills, by his bravery and by his resolution, strength, charity, restraint, forgiveness, faithfulness to the brahminical command, his kindness and his love of truth. (23) A *vaiśya* is characterized by his devotional service unto the God-conscious souls, the guru and the Infallible One, for his practicing the three virtues [of dharma, *artha* and *kāma*], his piety and his constant effort and expertise. (24) The *śūdra* is known for his obedience, cleanliness, service to the master who maintains him, his single-mindedness, willingness to make sacrifices without further prayers, truthfulness, his protection of cows and brahmins and the virtue not to steal [see also B.G. 18: 41-44].

(25) A woman in divine respect of her husband will, always following him in his vows, be of service to her husband, be eager to please him and be well-disposed towards his friends and relatives [see also B.G. 1: 40]. (26-27) By means of cleaning, mopping and decorating running her household and personally dressing up nicely in always clean garments, a woman should chastely and modestly answer to the small and great desires of her husband and be in control of her senses and her speech, be truthful, pleasing and loving and regularly prove her respect for her husband. (28) With contentment, freedom from greed, skill, conversancy with dharma, pleasure, speaking the truth, attentiveness, purity and affection, she should honor her husband for as long as he is not fallen [in being guilty of murder, theft, addiction, adultery or complicity in crime]. (29) When a woman meditates upon her husband as being the Supreme Personality, she is of the same service as

the Goddess of Fortune; in her devotion thinking of Hari she enjoys with her husband His spiritual abode [of Vaikunṭha], just like Lakṣmī. (30) The livelihood of those who were born from mixed marriages [of different classes, *pratilomaja* with a lower man and *anulomaja* with a higher man] and who are considered lower [*antyaaja*] or have been marginalized [*antevasāyī*], should not consist of stealing and [other forms of] sinning, but should correspond to the respective family traditions.

(31) Oh King, when the occupational duty [the dharma] is in accordance with someone's societal position, that is in every age [*yuga*] by the seers of Vedic knowledge recognized as generally being auspicious for both one's present life and the life hereafter [see also B.G. 3: 25]. (32) When one for one's livelihood abides by the activities belonging to one's professional engagement, one can, in gradually putting an end to the karma that resulted from one's own nature, attain the [*nirguṇa*] state transcendental to the [operating] basic qualities of nature [see also B.G. 3: 35]. (33-34) [But...] a field over and over cultivated may, being exhausted, fall barren, having become unsuitable for further harvesting so that seeds sown are lost. The same way a mind full of lusty desires, enjoying over and over the objects of desire, may [at some point be unable to enjoy any further and thus] become detached, oh King. Just think of small drops of ghee that may be lost in a [sacrificial] fire, [but all poured at once may extinguish it]. (35) [And so,] if one happens to see a person behave according to symptoms described above that belong to another class than his own, that person consequently has to be respected accordingly [in other words, when for example someone behaves like a brahmin he must be treated like a brahmin].'

*: This concerns the *āśramas* or

civil status groups related to one's age of being a celibate student - a *brahmacarya*, a married person - a *gṛhastha* a middle-aged withdrawn person - a *vānaprastha* or someone of the renounced order - a *sannyāsī*, usually a senior.

Chapter 12 The Four Āśramas and How to Leave the Body

(1) Śrī Nārada said: 'A celibate student [*brahmacārī*], living for the sake of his teacher [only] at the residence of the guru, should behave like a



submissive servant and be firm in his friendship for his master. (2) Both in the evening and in the morning he should worship the guru, the fire, the sun and the Best One of Enlightenment [Lord Viṣṇu], being absorbed in silently murmuring his prayer [the Gāyatrī] during those junctions of the day. (3) When called by the spiritual master, he should, orderly beginning and ending, offer his obeisances with his head at the lotus feet and study the mantras. (4) With a straw rope around his waist, garments of deerskin and matted hair, he should gather kuśa grass [for sitting] and carry a rod, a water pot and a sacred thread as is prescribed. (5) In the morning and the evening he should go out to collect alms and offer all that he collected to the guru. He should eat when it is permitted or otherwise fast at times. (6) He should behave politely, eat according to necessity, be industrious, be faithful [and believe in the words of the guru], have his senses under control and only relate, to the other sex and to men controlled by women, as far as is needed [compare 3.3: 5]. (7) Anyone who is not a householder [a *grhastā*] and respects the great vow [of celibacy, *yama*; see Pat. II: 30], must refrain from addressing women, because the agitating senses [easily] carry away the mind of a renunciate. (8) Brushing the hair, massaging, bathing, rubbing the body with oil and such is something that a young student should never accept from the wife of the guru when she is young [see also 1.11: 29]. (9) The other sex is like fire to the pot of butter that a man is; when he lives alone he should only associate with women - even with his own daughter - as far as it does good [is properly settled, is useful]. (10) For as long as one is not aware of this [sexual] duality and that one can do something to master this consideration [of thus being identified], one cannot be sure of self-realization [see also B.G. 5: 18]. (11) The above [in verse 6] described directions of the guru for the householder apply equally to the renunciate soul, be it that the householder can have sexual intercourse for a certain period of time [see also B.G. 7: 11]. (12) Those who have taken the vow of celibacy must give it up to make up their eyes, massage the head and the body, crave after the female image, to eat meat, indulge in intoxicating beverages, wear flower garlands, make use of scents or scented ointments and to decorate themselves

with jewelry. (13-14) This way residing under the care of a guru, they who started a new life [as a *dvija*] attain by their studies, as far as their talent would allow, a proper understanding of the Vedas, their *śāstric* supplements and adherent *upaniṣad* philosophies. They reward the guru according to his wishes and then with his permission leave him to enter either a household life [as a *grhastā*] or enter the forest [as a *vānaprasthā* or to occupy a withdrawn position in society] or else renounce all and/or stay there [to become a *sannyāsī* like him]. (15) Adhokṣaja resides in the fire, in the guru, in oneself and in every other living entity. He, the One beyond it All, one should consider as both having entered the living beings with everything that belongs to Him as also [existing there beforehand] as not having entered them [*pravistah/ apravistah* compare B.G. 9: 4]. (16) When one lives this way [in devotion] as a celibate student, as a householder, a withdrawn person or as someone renouncing the world, one becomes conversant with the wisdom [of *sanātana dharma*] and attains the transcendental reality of the Absolute Truth.

(17) **L**et me now explain to you the rules and regulations for leading a retired life [for being a *vānaprasthā*] as approved by the seers, in respect of which a saintly person without difficulty is promoted to the world of the sages [Maharloka], oh King. (18) He should not eat grains from cultivated fields nor that what is not ripe from non-cultivated fields. He must also not eat grains or ripe and raw produce that was cooked. It is prescribed that the *vānaprasthā* should eat what has ripened naturally by the sun. (19) From the naturally grown grains and fruits the forest provides, he should prepare cakes that can be offered, and obtaining new produce, the old stock should be given up. (20) Enduring the snow, the wind, the fire, the rain and the sunshine, he should only take shelter of a thatched cottage or a cave for the sake of keeping a [sacrificial] fire. (21) [He should also be unconcerned about] the hair on his head matted in locks, about the hair on his body, his nails, his facial hair and the dirt on his body. He should have a water pot, a deerskin, a rod, tree bark [to cover himself] and utensils for the fire. (22) He should remain in the forest for twelve years, eight

years, four years or else for two years or one year only, as a saintly, thoughtful man, in such a way that he does not lose his mind because of [having to endure too much] hardship. (23) When he, because of disease or old age, cannot perform his duties any longer for advancing in knowledge and his spiritual life, he must refrain from taking food. (24) Placing the fire element within himself he should give up the false self, of being identified with the body, and as good as possible fully merge with the complete of the elements he is composed of. (25) [To lead his functions back] to their causes he merges the apertures of his body with the sky, his different vital airs with the air, his body heat with the fire, his blood, mucus and urine with water and the remainder [of his hard tissues] he merges with the earth [compare with 1.15: 41-42 and 3.6: 12]. (26-28) Speech and its organ belong to the god of fire, the hands and their dexterity belong to Indra, the legs and their power to move belong to Viṣṇu and the genitals with their sexual desire belong to the Prajāpati. The rectum and its bowel activity is of Mṛtyu [Death] and the aural sense associated with the sounds should be assigned to the [deities of the] directions. Touch and its organ belong to the wind god [Vāyu]. Eyesight along with its forms, oh King, one should assign to the sun and the tongue and its rule belong to water while smell and its odors should be consigned to the earth. (29-30) The mind and its desires belong to Candra, the intelligence and its subject matter belong to the Supreme One of Education [Brahmā], the false ego of the 'I' and 'mine' actions and its karma belong to Rudra [Śiva], the consciousness and its concept of existence belong to the Knower of the Field [the soul, see B.G. 13: 1-4] and the modes and their modifications belong to the Beyond. The [identification with the element of] earth [must be led back] to the water, the water to the lights of the luminaries, the brightness to the air, the air to the sky, the sky to the material concep-

tion of life, the false ego to that what constitutes the material energy: the complete of the cosmic reality [the *mahat-tattva*], and that reality dissolves into the primary state of nature [the unmanifested energy of *pradhāna*, see 3.26: 10] which also has its source: the imperishable [Supersoul]. (31) Thus understanding that the imperishable soul, consisting of nothing but the consciousness that remains [after this merging], is of the same quality as the Supersoul, one[*'s* individual, isolated existence] ceases like firewood that has been consumed by fire.'

Chapter 13 The Behavior of a Saintly Person



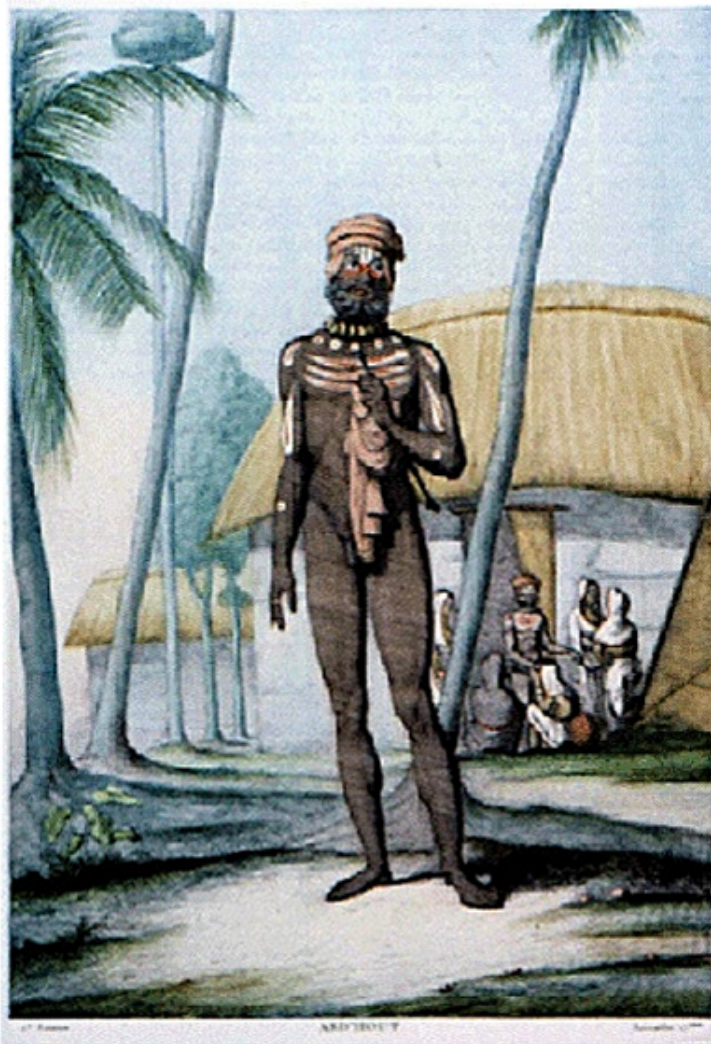
(1) Śrī Nārada said: 'Someone capable [of what I described before], should wander around from place to place without any form of material attachment and, ultimately with nothing but his body, not stay in any village longer than a single night [see also the story of King Rṣabha 5.5: 28]. (2) If the renunciate [*sannyāsī*] wears clothing at all, it should be nothing but some covering for his private parts. Except for in case of distress, he should not take to matters he has given up; he normally is characterized by nothing but the marks of renunciation: his rod [*danda*] and such. (3) With Nārāyaṇa as his refuge he, living on alms only, satisfied within, all alone and not depending on anyone or anything, moves around in perfect peace as a well-wisher to all living beings. (4) He should see this universe of cause and effect as existing within the everlasting Self in the beyond and see the Supreme Absolute itself as pervading the world of cause and effect everywhere [compare B.G. 9: 4]. (5) The soul moves from waking to sleeping to the dreaming in between [see also 6.16: 53-54]. Because of that someone of self-awareness considers the states of being bound - of being conditioned - and being liberated as in fact being nothing but an illusion. (6) He should not rejoice in the certainty of the death of the body, nor in the uncertainty of its life, he instead should observe the supreme [command] of Time that rules the manifestation and disappearance of all living beings. (7) He [the renunciate] should not be fixed on time bound literatures, nor depend on a career. Accusations and pedantry he should give up and he should not side with group bound conjecture, opinion and speculation [politics]. (8) He should not seek followers, nor should he engage in diverse literary exercises or read such writings. He should not subsist on lecturing nor set up an enterprise [for building temples e.g.]. (9) A peaceful and equal minded renunciate does not necessarily have to adopt the symbols of his spiritual position [the *danda* etc. of his *āśrama* *], he as a great soul may just as well abandon them. (10) Even though he externally may not directly be recognized as a renunciate, he is clear in his purpose. Such a saintly person may feel the need to present himself in society like a restless youth, or, having

been a scholar, present himself as a less intelligent man.

(11) As an example of such a hidden identity one [often] recites a very old story about a conversation between Prahlāda and a saintly man who lived like a python. (12-13) Prahlāda, the favorite of the Supreme Lord, once met such a saint when he, with a few royal associates, was traveling around the world in an effort to understand the motives of the people. At the bank of the Kāverī river on a slope of the mountain Sahya, he witnessed the purity and profundity of the spiritual radiance of a man who was lying there on the ground, with his entire body covered by dirt and dust. (14) From what he did, how he looked, from what he said as also by his age, occupation and other marks of identity, the people could not decide whether or not that man was someone they knew. (15) After paying his respects and honoring him by, according to the rules, touching his lotus feet with his head, the great Asura devotee of the Lord, eager to know him, asked the following question. (16-17) 'I see you are maintaining quite a fat body, like you are someone eager for money. People who always worry about an income, are surely of sense gratification. Wealthy people, they who enjoy this world and think of nothing else, therefore [easily] become as fat as this body of yours. (18) You, lying down doing nothing, oh man of the spirit, clearly have no money for sense enjoyment. How can, without you enjoying your senses, your body be this fat, oh learned one? Excuse me for asking this, but can you please tell us that? (19) Despite your being so learned, skilled and intelligent and your talent to speak nicely and your inner balance, you lie down observing how the people are engaged in their work!'

(20) Śrī Nārada said: 'The great saint thus being questioned by the Daitya king, smiled at him and was, captivated by the beauty and love of his words, willing to reply. (21) The brahmin said: 'Oh best of the Asuras, you who are appreciated by all civilized men, know from your transcendental vision all about the matters people during their lifetime are inclined to and turn away from. (22) With Nārāyaṇa *deva*, our Lord always present in one's heart, someone by his devotion alone

will shake off all ignorance, the way darkness is dispelled by the sun. (23) Nevertheless I will try to answer all your questions according to what I have heard [from the sages and their scriptures], oh King, for you, as someone desiring the purification of the self, deserves it to be addressed. (24) Under the influence of worldly interests, I myself have catered to one material desire after the other and was perforce impelled to perform actions that tied me to different types of birth. (25) After I, because of my karma, had wandered from the heavenly gate of liberation to lower species of life, I unexpectedly acquired this [human] position again [see also B.G. 8: 16 and **]. (26) But seeing how one, in that position always acting for the avoidance of misery and for the sake of the pleasure that men and women have, achieves the opposite, I have terminated those activities. (27) To be happy is the natural position of the soul and to put an end to all material activities constitutes the cause of the manifestation of this happiness. Having understood that sense enjoyment follows from fostering desires, I am now lying here slumbering silently. (28) Someone situated in this world, gets, because of its attraction, entangled in oppositions that make him afraid of a [repeated] worldly existence, and because of this duality [of his material ego] he forgets about the interest of his heart and soul, his true nature [of happiness]. (29) Just like a thirsty animal that, failing to notice water overgrown by grass, ignorantly looks for it elsewhere, also someone who is thirsty for his material interest [but fails to see the happiness of his true self] runs after a mirage [of that happiness]. (30) Someone who, with his body and everything belonging to it, is subjected to the superior control [of the material world], searches for the happiness of the soul by trying to diminish his misery [by material means]. But [not meditating on the true happiness, being completely powerless], he time and again is disappointed in his plans and actions.



(31) [And if he sometimes happens to succeed,] of what use would the incidental success of fighting adverse consequences be to a mortal person who is not free from the threefold miseries, as created by himself, by others and by nature? Where do such successes lead to? What is their value? (32) I see the miseries of the greedy rich and wealthy; as a victim of their senses they in their fear have sleepless nights in which they see danger coming from all sides. (33) He who lives for the money is always afraid of the government, of thieves, of enemies, relatives, animals and birds, of beggars, of Time and of himself. (34) Someone intelligent has to forsake the original cause leading to all lamentation, illusion, fear, anger, attachment, poverty, toiling and so on of the

human being: the desire for power and wealth [***].

(35) **T**he working bees and the big snakes in this world are in this matter our first-class gurus: from what they teach we find the satisfaction [of being happy as one is] and the renunciation [of not seeking things elsewhere]. (36) I learned from the honeybee to detach from all desires. The money you as honey [like a bee] have collected with great difficulty, is by someone else taken away again, in the process of which the owner is eventually killed. (37) Enduring like a python lying down for many days, I am satisfied with the soul without endeavor, and not interested in acquiring possessions. (38) Sometimes I eat little, sometimes I eat a lot of food that sometimes is fresh and sometimes is stale, that sometimes is palatable and sometimes is tasteless. Sometimes food is brought to me with respect and sometimes it is offered with disrespect. Thus I eat during the night or else during the day, whenever it is available. (39) Spiritually satisfied I am clothed in whatever destiny offers me, be it linen, silk or cotton, deerskin, a loincloth, bark or whatever material. (40) Sometimes I lie down on the earth, on grass, on leaves, on stone or on a pile of ash and sometimes, when someone wishes me to, I lie down in a palace on a first-class bed with pillows [see also B.G. 18: 61]. (41) Sometimes I bathe nicely, smear my body with sandalwood paste, properly dress, wear garlands and various ornaments and sit on a chariot, an elephant or the back of a horse. And sometimes I wander around completely naked as if haunted by a ghost, oh mighty one. (42) I do not curse the people nor praise them, all having a different nature. I pray for the ultimate benefit of everyone that is found in the Oneness of the Greater Soul. (43) The notion of discrimination should be offered as an oblation in the fire of consciousness, consciousness should be offered in the fire of the mind and the mind, that is the root of all confusion, must be offered in the fire of the false self. That variable ego should, following this principle, be offered in the complete of the material energy. (44) A mindful person for the sake of his self-realization, in respect of the truth, should offer the complete of his material energy as an oblation. When he thus has lost his interest [in the

world], he must, thus being situated in his essence - in his true self -, remain completely aloof. (45) This story about myself I now submit to you this way in utter confidence. But it might be so that you, from the side of your good self, as a man of transcendence with the Supreme Lord, find it contrary to the customary scriptural explanation.'

(46) **Śrī** Nārada said: 'Thus having heard from the holy man about the dharma of the *paramahāṁsas* [see also 6.3: 20-21], the Asura lord most pleased, after duly honoring him took leave and returned home.'

*: The four stages of *sannyās* are: *kuthīcaka*, *bahūdaka*, *parivrājakācārya* and *paramahāṁsa* [see further footnote 5.1].

** : Swami Prabhupāda comments: "Material life is called *pavarga* because here we are subject to five different states of suffering, represented by the letters *pa*, *pha*, *ba*, *bha* and *ma*. *Pa* means *parīśrama*, very hard labor. *Pha* means *phena*, or foam from the mouth. For example, sometimes we see a horse foaming at the mouth with heavy labor. *Ba* means *byarthatā*, disappointment. In spite of so much hard labor, at the end we find disappointment. *Bha* means *bhaya*, or fear. In material life, one is always in the blazing fire of fear, since no one knows what will happen next. Finally, *ma* means *mṛtyu*, or death. When one attempts to nullify these five different statuses of life--*pa*, *pha*, *ba*, *bha* and *ma*--one achieves *apavarga*, or liberation from the punishment of material existence."

***: Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his '*Nectar of Instruction*' (2):

*atyāhāraḥ prayāśaś ca
prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyam ca
śaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*

"One's devotional service is spoiled when he becomes too entangled in the following six activities: (1) eating more than necessary or collecting more funds than required; (2) over-endeavoring

for mundane things that are very difficult to obtain; (3) talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters; (4) practicing the scriptural rules and regulations only for the sake of following them and not for the sake of spiritual advancement, or rejecting the rules and regulations of the scriptures and working independently or whimsically; (5) associating with worldly-minded persons who are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and (6) being greedy for mundane achievements."

Chapter 14 The Supreme of the Householder's Life

(1) Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira said: 'Can you please explain to me how householders [*grhastas*] like me, not conversant with the goal of life, also easily may achieve this position of liberation in accord with the scriptures, oh *devaṛṣi*.'

(2) Nārada Muni said: 'Oh King someone who maintains a household should in direct association with great devotees [or sages] be of service by, according to their instructions, dedicating his activities unto Vāsudeva [the *avatāra*]. (3-4) When one at the appropriate time, in good association being surrounded by persons of peace, repeatedly listens to the nectar of the narrations about the Lord's *avatāras*, one will gradually see the bonds slackened of the association with one's wife and children, like one awakens from a dream [see also 5.5: 1 and B.G. 18: 54]. (5) As far as needed endeavoring for the maintenance of one's body and family, one should, in this matter being free from attachment but fully committed, contemplate one's humanity in this human society. (6) Without being selfish one should [try to] have peace with, sympathize with, or even be pleased with, whatever one's relatives, parents, children, brothers, friends and others might say or wish. (7) The intelligent person thereto has to utilize everything that was created by the Infallible One or what one obtained oneself: everything produced by heaven, earth or in between; all that life produced - like fruits -, all that the earth produced - like minerals - and all that one's fellow man supplied - of cultu-

re and donations e.g.]. (8) The stomach one may fill as much as is needed and not more, because claiming more than one is entitled to, makes one a thief deserving punishment. (9) Deer, camels, asses, monkeys, mice, snakes, birds and flies one should [in this respect] consider as one's children. How little difference is there between these animals and children? (10) On the threefold path [of dharma, *artha* and *kāma*] not being too zealous [not engaging in *ugra-karma* or harmful actions], a person, according to time and circumstance, should aspire for only as much as the grace of God would provide [see also 4.8: 54]. (11) Up to the dog, the fallen soul and the outcast, one should distribute what is needed. Even one's wife, so close to one's heart, should be shared, so that she can be there [as a mother] for all the people [e.g. for one's guests]. (12) One may give up the claim of owning one's wife [or husband], a notion for which one was prepared to kill oneself or others or abandon one's parents or spiritual master, for doing so one can conquer Him who cannot be conquered [but by sacrifice]. (13) What is [the value of] the attachment to this insignificant vehicle of time that is doomed to be eaten by the insects, to turn into stool or into ashes? What is the value of being attracted to the body of one's wife, compared to [the value of one's attraction for] the soul that is as all-pervading as the ether? (14) That what the Lord provides, that what one acquires through one's sacrifices, one should consider the means of one's livelihood. They who are wise ultimately give up, for the sake of the soul, all their claims of proprietorship. It is [not about acquiring possessions, it is] about achieving the position of the great souls. (15) With the means one naturally acquired with one's dutiful engagements, one must, next to the daily sacrifices for the gods, the sages, for mankind, all other living beings, the forefathers and for oneself, separately be of worship for the Original Person present in everyone's heart. (16) The moment one [as a householder] has everything under control including oneself, one should, with sacrifices in the fire according to the regulations as laid down in the scriptures, be of worship with all the means available for pleasing the Lord [see B.G. 4: 24-29]. (17) Oh King, the Supreme Lord, the enjoyer of all sacrifices is not worshiped by the offerings of

ghee in the mouth of the fire as much as he is by offerings to Him through the mouths of the scholars [see also 3.16: 8]. (18) Be therefore, according to your ability, of worship for the knower of the field [the Lord, see B.G. 13: 3], by offering all that is desired first of all to the brahminical demigods, and then to all the ordinary human beings and the other living entities.

(19) **D**uring [for instance] the dark fortnight of the month Āśvina [October-November] the twice-born souls with sufficient wealth should offer oblations to the forefathers, as also make offerings to their relatives during the month Bhādra [August-September], if they can afford it. (20-23) One is also advised to perform one's ceremonies at the solstices when the sun moves through the south and north or when it enters Aries or Capricorn [during the equinoxes], in the *yoga* [conjunction of the sun and the moon] named Vyatīpāta, on the days covering three lunar days [*tithis*] and on days of solar and lunar eclipses and on the twelfth lunar day and when the moon passes the constellation [*nakṣatra*] of Śravaṇa. Also suitable for the śraddha-ceremony is the day of Akṣaya-tritīyā, the ninth lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month Kārtika, the four *aṣṭakās* [the 'eight days'] in the winter season and cool season, the seventh lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha, the day of a conjunction of Maghā-nakṣatra and the waxing moon, on the days when the moon is completely full or not completely full when they coincide with the *nakṣatras* from which the names of certain months are derived, on every twelfth lunar day in conjunction with any of the *nakṣatras* named Anurādhā, Śravaṇa, Uttara-phalgunī, Uttarāśādhā or Uttara-bhādrapadā, on the eleventh lunar day that is in conjunction with either Uttara-phalgunī, Uttarāśādhā or Uttara-bhādrapadā and on days in conjunction with one's own birth star [*janma-nakṣatra*] or the Śravaṇa-nakṣatra. (24) It is by these auspicious times [of being regular to natural occurrences] that the fate of human beings is improved. For the human being during all seasons to have auspiciousness, success and longevity, one therefore on those days must perform all kinds of ceremonies [*]. (25) At all these natural times taking a holy bath, doing *japa* [the Vedic rosary],

performing fire sacrifices and keeping to vows, constitutes a permanent benefit, with whatever that is given in respect of the Supreme Lord, the twice-born souls managing the deities, the forefathers, the godly souls, the human beings in general and all other living beings. (26) Oh King, the purification rituals, which serve the interest of [having days with] the wife, the children and oneself as also serve the interest of having funerals, memorial days and days for doing fruitful labor, must be performed at the [natural] times [relative to sun and moon] meant for them.

(27-28) **L**et me now describe the places suitable for religious practices. The place most conducive to the sacred purpose is one where a follower of truth is available [the hermitage of a saint, a Vaiṣṇava, a guru], a place [a temple] where an image [a representative form] is available of the Supreme Lord of all the moving and nonmoving entities in this universe, or a place [a school, an *āśrama*] where an association of brahmins is found endowed with education, penance and mercy. (29) Every place where the form of the Supreme Lord is worshiped is an all-auspicious refuge, [especially] in combination with a river like the Ganges or one of the other famous rivers that are mentioned in the Purāṇas. (30-33) Lakes as Puṣkara and celebrated places that harbor the saints, like Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Prayāga [Allahabad] and Pulaha-āśrama; Naimiṣāraṇya [near Lucknow], Phālgunam, Setubhanda [towards Lañkā], Prabhāsa, Dvārakā, Benares, Mathurā, Pampā, Bindu-sarovara, Badarikāśrama, Nandā, the places of Sītā Devī and Lord Rāma like Citrakūṭa and, oh King, all hillsides such as Mahendra and Malaya, all belong to the holiest places. These places and all the places where the Lord and His deities are worshiped [thus also places outside of India] should by someone who desires the auspiciousness time and again be visited because the religious activities performed there are a thousand times more effective.

(34) **O**h controller of the earth, the Supreme Lord, in whom all that moves and not moves in this universe rests, is the only person in the world worthy to receive the honor. This is the conclusion of all scholars expert in determining to whom



one should make one's offering [see also 4.31: 14]. (35) The sons of Brahmā as also others faithful to the truth [present at Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice], oh King, decided that from the most venerable, saintly personalities of God, the Infallible One [Kṛṣṇa] was to be selected as the best one, as the first one among them to be worshiped. (36) Countless souls populate the entire universe that is like a giant tree, and because He is the root of that tree, the worship of the Infallible One will satisfy all living entities [viz. the entire tree is satisfied by watering the root]. (37) He, as the Original Person [the Puruṣa] lies down among the created beings in the form of their life principle [*jīva*]. Man, the saints, the gods and the other living beings, whom He gave a place to live in the form of a body, are His residential places [see also B.G. 18: 61]. (38) Oh King, the Lord is present in them in different degrees, so that a person is eligible for being honored as far as the [quality of the] soul [in the sense of understanding and penance and such] is manifest [compare B.G. 15:

15]. (39) When the scholars saw how since, Tretā-yuga, there was mutual disrespect in human society, oh King, they introduced deities of the Lord in order to exercise respect [see also 12.3: 52]. (40) Since then one worships with great faith and all requirements the deity of the Lord, even though that reverence yields no results, when shown in [combination with] contempt of the person [of one's fellow man, for only loving the person will do so, see also 3.29: 25 and B.G. 18: 68 & 69]. (41) Oh best of kings, know that the brahmin is the most worthy person of all people to receive the grace, for he embodies, with his austerity, education and satisfaction, the Vedic knowledge of Hari, the Supreme Personality. (42) The brahmins are [in the eyes] of Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the life and soul of the universe, oh King, the most important and worshipable persons, for they sanctify, by the dust [the grace] of their feet, all the three worlds.'

*: See the full calendar of order [with leaped solar weeks and lunar phase days] for setting days to natural events:

<http://theorderoftime.com/science/fullcalendaroforder.html>.

Chapter 15

Nārada's Instructions on Vegetarian Sharing, Irreligion, Healing, Yoga and Advaita

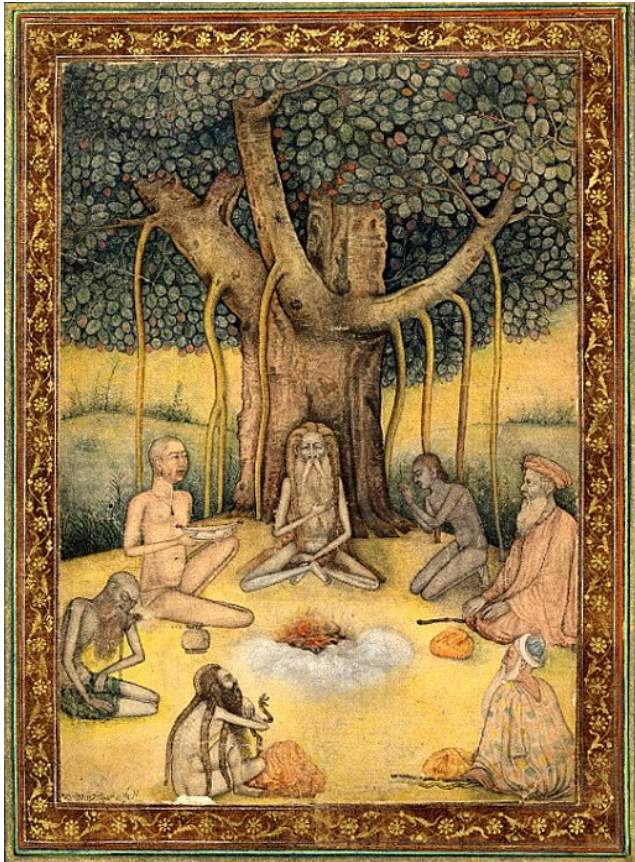
(1) Śrī Nārada said: "Some of the twice-born souls are devoted to fruitful labor, some are engaged in austerities oh, ruler of man, some excel in Vedic study while others exercise rhetoric and some also unite [their consciousness] in spiritual knowledge [in bhakti- and *jñāna*-yoga]. (2) A person desiring liberation should donate the result of his sacrifices to someone devoted to spiritual knowledge [usually a brahmin or a *jñānī*]. If it happens that such a person cannot be found, one should donate to others according to their merit. (3) Offering to the demigods one should feed two of them and offering to the forefathers three of them should be fed, or else in any case at least one should be nourished. One must not involve a great number of them, despite having the means for it. (4) In exceeding this number of invitees or relatives [with the *śraddha* ceremony], things will not work out perfectly as for the most suitable time and place, the paraphernalia, the person to receive the honor and the method applied. (5) When the sacred food, that was obtained by offering it at the proper time and place with love and devotion to the deity of the Lord, is given to the person who deserves the honor, such a practice will be a source of everlasting welfare [see also B.G. 3: 10]. (6) In offering [sanctified] food to the godly souls, the saints, the forefathers, the living beings in general, one's friends and one's family members, one should consider them all as being part of the Original Personality of God. (7) Someone who knows the dharmic principles should never offer meat [fish or eggs] during the ceremonies of belief, nor should he in his normal life be

a meat eater. One derives the greatest satisfaction from the [vegetarian] food of the sages and not so much from food [obtained] by [needless] violence against animals. (8) For persons desiring true righteousness there is no religion higher than this: to forsake in one's mind, words and actions all violence against other living beings.

(9) Persons who, by fixing themselves on the true self [in *samyama*], are free from material desires, know very well the purpose of the sacrifices. Enlightened by spiritual knowledge these transcendentalists know that some sacrifices, [animal sacrifices] have karmic consequences. (10) Living beings seeing a sacrificer, become afraid when a creature is to be sacrificed. They think: "This ignorant, unfriendly person most certainly will very soon kill us!" (11) He who knows what dharma means [see also B.G. 18: 66] is therefore supposed to perform, day after day, with satisfaction, his regular and occasional duties with the food that is given by God: the [vegetarian] food of the sages. (12) A knower of dharma speaks of five branches of *adharmā* that as kinds of unrighteousness must be given up: *vidharma*, *paradharmā*, *upadharmā*, *ābhāsa* and *chala-dharma*. (13) *Vidharma* should be [understood as] that what constitutes an objection or a detriment to dharma [to righteousness, naturalness or religiousness, the original purpose of one's duty]. *Paradharmā* is the encouragement to engage in duties strange to one's own, *upadharmā* is the way of a pretender of dutifulness, a hypocrite and *chala* refers to feigning the duty with word jugglery. (14) *Ābhāsa* is that what persons self-willed, obstinately do in defiance of their spiritual department [their *āśrama*, their civil status]. Why would acting in line with the regulations for one's natural duty not bring peace? (15) Performing one's religious duties one should not endeavor for one's livelihood [that is to say: expect no income from religious activities, see B.G. 2: 47 and 18: 9], nor should one being poor strive for possessions. The desirelessness of someone free from such endeavoring is like that of the python [see 7.13: 11] that lives effortlessly. (16) Where would he, who driven by lust and greed runs from pillar to post for the sake of riches, find the happiness typical of the contented person who, not endeavor-

ring for his maintenance, is happy from within? (17) For an ever contented mind every path followed is equally auspicious, just like it is with a person who with shoes on his feet has nothing to fear from pebbles and thorns. (18) Oh King, why would an innerly contented person not live happily on just a little bit of water when he, because of the ado with his genitals and tongue, becomes a man who is not better than a household dog? (19) An educated but discontented man will, because of his restlessness, see how the strength of his senses, his education, austerity, fame and spiritual insight will gradually dwindle and vanish. (20) With someone hungry and thirsty desires will find their end [upon eating], one is relieved of anger by approaching matters differently, but a person will not get over his greed when he delights in conquering all the directions of the globe [see also B.G. 16: 21]. (21) Oh King, many scholars with a lot of knowledge, many counselors and many political leaders, landed in hell simply because of lacking in [spiritual] contentment.

(22) Lusts are defeated by determination, anger is overcome by forsaking the object of one's desire, for greed to disappear one must consider the fact that possessions make one possessed and fear is overcome by contemplating the true [self in meditation]. (23) Deliberation [on spiritual matters] is the cure for lamentation and illusion, false pride is cured by service to a great soul, silence defeats the obstacles on the path of yoga and violence [evil, hostility] is overcome by giving up on passions [see also B.G. 4: 10]. (24) With compassion, [pity and concern] for others one can alleviate distress as caused by other living entities or by nature and by systematic meditation in yoga one can end one's own [karmic] suffering. Sleep one can conquer by exercising one's vital breath. (25) By serving the spiritual master with devotion one can easily in the mode of goodness conquer all these [symptoms] of passion and ignorance, as also those of goodness itself. (26) The guru, who is the light on the path, must be considered the Supreme Lord in person and he who considers him and what he heard from him as being mortal and time-bound, is like an elephant that has bathed [and thereafter takes a dust bath]. (27) He

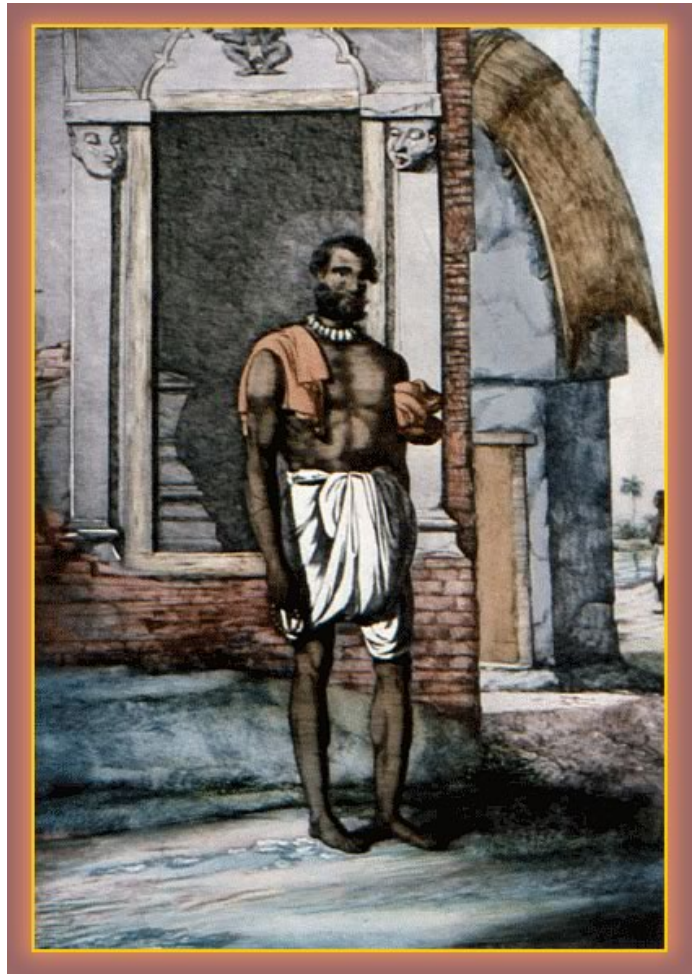


[the teacher] is by the common man taken for a normal human being, while he is the Supreme Lord in person, the ruler over the original cause of matter [*pradhāna*, the non-manifest matter] who is the Original Person as also the Lord of Yoga whose feet are sought by the masters of yoga [see also B.G. 9: 11]! (28) One has wasted one's time when all the prescribed activities and observances, designed for the definite subjugation of the six departments [of the five senses and the mind], have not led to the ultimate goal: the connectedness in yoga [of one's individual consciousness with Him].

(29) Just as occupational duties performed with the interest of acquiring an income do not serve the interest of yoga, also traditional public works of piety that are performed by a materialistic person do not contribute [to the necessary unification of consciousness. Compare B.G. 2: 42-44]. (30) He who wants to conquer his mind, must alone, in a solitary place, not depending on a company of attached people [like a family], as a renounced

person live on charity and eat little. (31) In a clean, leveled place, oh King, he must arrange for a seat and steadily, comfortably and equanimously sit down, keep his body straight and thus practice the Praṇava [see 1.2: 11 and B.G. 8: 11-14 and 6: 11-12]. (32-33) He should arrest the in- and outgoing air by stopping his inhaling and exhaling, and that very moment give up all desires that occupy his mind. While staring at the tip of his nose he must turn the mind, that wanders here and there, away from whatever. A learned yogi should from the core of his heart step by step put an end to the mind that was disturbed by lust. (34) Someone who manages to maintain this practice, will, [with his mind] like a fire that extinguishes without fuel, soon succeed in attaining the pure state [*nirvāna*]. (35) Not distracted by the various desires, the mind becomes calm and peaceful in all its movements. [One is thus] of a consciousness that is touched by the happiness of the transcendental platform, a position from which one factually can never separate oneself [see also B.G. 5: 17].

(36) **W**hen someone first leaves behind his home to wander around [as a *sannyāsī*] and then again returns to live from the field of the threefold practice of materially oriented [economic, religious and sense-oriented] activities, such a shameless mendicant may be compared to someone who eats his own vomit [a *vāntāśī*]. (37) Those who first consider their body as something separate from the soul, as something mortal meant for stool, worms and ashes, and then again glorify that body and identify themselves with it, are useless fools. (38-39) For householders to forsake their duties, for celibates to give up on vows, for withdrawn persons to submit themselves as a servant of the common man and for renunciates to hanker after the senses, is for all the *āśramas* a most abominable form of behavior by which one cheats the spiritual order. One should be indifferent about those who are thus bewildered by the external energy of the Lord, they are pitiful. (40) Once one has understood what the soul [and the Supersoul] entails, once one from the beyond has cleansed one's consciousness with spiritual knowledge,



what is there left to hanker for, why would one still be a slave of the body that one maintains? (41) One says that the body is the chariot, that the senses are the horses, that the mind - the master of the senses - is there as the reins, that the sense objects constitute the paths followed, that intelligence [reason] is the charioteer and that consciousness [goodness, character] is the great bond created by the Lord. (42) The spokes of the wheel [see also 7.9: 21] are the ten airs in the body [called *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna*, *nāga*, *kūrma*, *kṛkala*, *devadatta* and *dhanañjaya*], the inside and outside of the wheels are religion and irreligion, the one being driven is the individual self that is falsely identified, the Praṇava is the bow and the individual soul is the arrow, but final beatitude is the target. (43-44) Attachment and aversion, greed and lamentation, illusion, fear, madness, false prestige, insult, fault-finding and deception, violence and jealousy, unrest,

bewilderment, hunger and sleep, are one's enemies; these and others are the consequence of passion and ignorance, but sometimes they sprout from [being attached to] the mode of goodness. (45) As long as one has this human form, which as a chariot with all its subordinate parts depends on one's control, one must, being of service at the lotus feet of the most venerable souls, hold on to the, by the strength of the Infallible One, sharpened sword of knowledge until the enemy is defeated. When one thus found satisfaction in one's transcendental bliss, this body can be given up. (46) Not doing so being inattentive and motivated for what is untrue, the senses that act as the horses will lead the charioteer on the road of desire. There the driver falls into the hands of rogues, the sense objects [who rule with *viśaya*, eating, sleeping and mating] because of whom he, together with the horses and the rest, will land in the dark, blind well of material existence and suffer the great fear of death. (47) To be inclined towards or to cease from material engagement [*pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*], are the two types of activities mentioned in the Vedas [4.4: 20]. Being materialy inclined one keeps returning [to a worldly existence], but ceasing one enjoys the nectar of eternity [see also B.G. 16: 7].

(48-49) **S**ystematically being of violence [with the sacrificing of animals] with all kinds of fire sacrifices that require so many things, are actions filled with desire and cause anxiety. To be directed towards *darśa*, *pūrṇamāsa*, *cāturmāsya*, *paśuh*, *soma* and other ritualistic ceremonies is called *pravṛtti*. Even so the fire sacrifices and the distribution of the offerings [*huta*, *prahuta*] as also the, for the sake of the public, constructing of temples, resting houses and gardens and the digging of wells and distribution of food and water, are to be recognized as forms of *pravṛtti* engagement. (50-51) The fine substances [of the sacrifice] result in the smoke [that is associated with] the divinity of the night, the dark half of the month, the sun going through the south and the new moon [compare B.G. 8: 25]. By that divinity [one finds] the food grains that are the seeds of the vegetation on the earth's surface, oh ruler of the earth. Thus called into existence by the father

[of Time] they [by feeding us through the sacrifices] lead to one after the other birth, to the time and again regular assuming of a physical form to be present in this world [see also B.G. 9: 21]. (52) [But] a twice-born soul [a brahmin], who from his conception till his funeral is purified by means of different rites, offers, by the light of spiritual knowledge, his engagement in sacrifices into the [fire of his] sensual apparatus [and is thus of *nivṛtti* actions]. (53) Merging the senses with the mind - which is infected by words that move in waves of material predilection - he restricts the words to the collection of their constituent elements, the letters. Those elements are then restricted to the AUM of the Praṇava, which is restricted to a point [the *bindu*, a point between the eyes], this he withdraws in his sound reflection [the *nādi*] he sacrifices into his life air [*prāṇa*] that he merges with the complete of the Lord [in *brahman*]. (54) [In *nivṛtti* progressing with] the fire, the sun, the day, the end of the day, the bright half of the month, the full moon, the passage of the sun through the north and the Independent Ruler [Brahmā], he who is of discernment and who moves from the gross realm to the subtle destination, arrives in a fixed sequence at the transcendental state of intelligence, the soul [*turya*, the original state of consciousness]. (55) Repeatedly being born again in following what one calls the path of God [this *nivṛtti* process], he who endeavors for self-realization and desires the peace of the soul, will not return once he has found his position in the true self [see also B.G. 8: 16]. (56) He who on this, in the Vedas recommended path of the ancestors and the gods, keeps his eyes focussed on the scriptures, is versed and will not get bewildered, despite being a material person.

(57) **B**eing there both inside and outside, for all living beings, from the beginning till the end, this Lord, transcendental to the gross of matter, is personally present in this world as the knowledge and the known, as the expression and the expressed and as the darkness and the light. (58) Despite being rejected as a real form, a mere reflection [of a form in the mirror] is nevertheless accepted as being real. The same way one accepts the reality of what the senses are telling [as real], even though that is difficult to prove from speculations.



(59) One is neither the reflected image of the objects of this world, which consist of the earth element and such, nor is one a combination or transformation of these elements. Even though one has no existence separate from them, to consider oneself [and the soul] a part of them, is also a false notion [see also B.G. 18: 16]. (60) The body consisting of the five elements cannot exist without the sense-objects belonging to it. The untrue is found in the total form of that body which, just like that what belongs to it, in the end, turns out to be a temporary appearance. (61) It compares to the same confusion - and likewise breaking away from the regulative principles - as one has in a dream: as long as one in one's sleep is separated by that dream from the objects of the waking state, one is led astray by that part [of one's existence]. (62) A wise soul rejects from his self-realization and from his chosen unity of life conception, actions and matter in this world, the three forms [of ignorance associated with them as being three forms] of sleep [compare 1.18: 26 and B.G. 6: 16]. (63) One speaks of oneness of life conception [called *bhāvādvaita*] when one considers [the

transcendental] cause and [material] effect as being one [as being part of one and the same reality], like seeing the cloth by its threads, its warp and woof. To consider them separately is what makes them unreal [see also B.G. 18: 16]. (64) One speaks of oneness in actions [called *kriyādvaita*] when one, in all the activities of one's mind, words and body, directly is devoted to the transcendence of the absolute spirit [Brahman], oh Yudhiṣṭhira [compare B.G. 9.27]. (65) One speaks of oneness of material interest [*dravyādvaita*] when that what one aspires for oneself is one and the same as what one wishes for one's wife and children, other people or whatever living beings [this is also called enlightened self-interest or the 'golden rule']. (66) Oh king, a person should perform his duties according to his [*varnāśrama*] position in society, engaging with the means, the place and the time that are not [scripturally] forbidden and he should not follow any other course of action, unless there is an emergency [see also 7.11: 17 en B.G. 3: 35]. (67) Any human being who, with respect for these and other principles described in the Vedic literatures,

is of devotional service, and thereto abides by his occupational duties, can even at home reach His heavenly kingdom, oh King [see also B.G. 9: 32]. (68) It is the way all of you [Pāṇḍavas], oh lord of kings, escaped from all that insurmountable danger. By serving the feet of your Master [Kṛṣṇa], you managed to perform the rituals successfully and have conquered the elephants of all directions [the burden of unrighteous kings].

(69) **I** myself a long, long time ago, in a former *mahākalpa* [in another epoch of Brahmā], existed as a denizen of heaven named Upabarhana and was most respected among the Gandharvas. (70) I had a beautiful body and was most attractive, smelled nicely, was decorated and captivating to behold. Always attracted to women, I was, in the excitement of my desires, a debauchee [though]. (71) Once there was a gathering of the gods and, to the occasion of glorifying the Lord in song and dance, all the Ghandarvas and Apsaras were invited by the rulers of the universe [the Prajāpatis]. (72) I also, as an expert in singing [the glories of the divine life], went there surrounded by women. But learning about my attitude the divine rulers of the universe cursed me with great force for my dalliance: 'May you, acting contrary to the code of conduct, as from now become a *śūdra* bereft of the beauty!' (73) Thereupon having taken birth from a maidservant, I nevertheless obtained a life as a son of Brahmā because I at the time could render service to spiritual pounders [Vaiṣṇavas, see also 1.5: 23-31]. (74) I have explained to you the dharma by which an attached householder can conquer sin and quickly attain the position of the renounced order. (75) You [Pāṇḍavas] are as lucky to have in this world all the saints visiting your place because in your home, most confidentially, the Supreme Brahman in person can be found in the form of a normal human being [Kṛṣṇa, see also 7.10: 48]. (76) He is the One Brahman sought by the great souls in order to realize their liberation and bliss of heaven. He, your renown cousin [Lord Kṛṣṇa] is the beloved well-wisher, the most worshipable person, the heart and soul and the [original] guru of instruction of all of you on the regulative principles [the *vidhi*; see also 7.10: 48 and 49]. (77) His form, beyond the purview of Lord Śiva, Lord

Brahmā and the others [see also B.G. 7: 26], can factually be understood by meditation, by silence, by bhakti and by putting an end to all material association. May the One Lord, this same personality, this guru of instruction and object of devotion of the devotees, be pleased with us.'

(78) **Śrī** Śuka said: '[King Yudhiṣṭhira] the best of the Bhārata dynasty, delighted to hear the descriptions of the *devaṛṣi*, was caught in the ecstasy of love and worshiped both him and Lord Kṛṣṇa. (79) After the reverence he received from Lord Kṛṣṇa and from Yudhiṣṭhira - who as the son of Pṛthā [see family tree] was utterly amazed about the fact that Kṛṣṇa was the Parabrahman, the Supreme of the Spirit - the *muni* bade them farewell and left. (80) Thus I gave a description of the different dynasties of the daughters of Dakṣa, in which all the worlds and their moving and non-moving living beings consisting of gods, demons, human beings and so on, came about.'

Thus the seventh Canto of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam ends named: The Science of God.

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