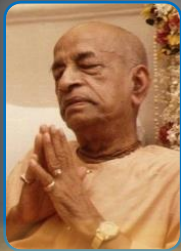


# Freedom Newsletter



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada  
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

ISKCON Prison Ministry / **September 2024**

PO Box 2676  
Alachua, FL 32616

## HOW TO FIND PERFECT KNOWLEDGE IN AN IMPERFECT WORLD

*This conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and physicist Gregory Benford took place in October 1973, at the Los Angeles Hare Kṛṣṇa center.*

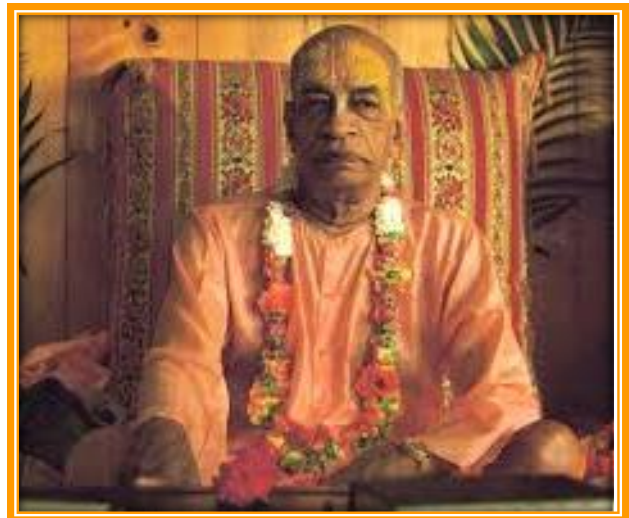
**Dr. Benford:** You are probably familiar with what Western theology calls “the problem of evil”: Why does evil exist?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Evil is the absence of good, just as darkness is the absence of sunlight. If you keep yourself always in the light, where is the question of darkness? God is all-good. So if you keep yourself always in God consciousness, then there is no evil.

**Dr. Benford:** But why was the world created with evil men?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Why was the police department created? Because there is a necessity. Similarly, some living entities want to enjoy this material world; therefore God creates it. He is just like a father who gives a separate room to his mischievous children to play in. Otherwise, the naughty boys would always disturb him.

**Dr. Benford:** This world, then, is something like a prison?



**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, it is a prison. Therefore, there is suffering here. In the prison house you cannot expect comfort, because unless there is suffering, there is no

lesson for the prisoners. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gita*; *duhkhalayam asasvatam*. *Duhkhalayam* means “the place for suffering.” And *asasvatam* means “temporary.” You cannot make a compromise and say, “All right, I am suffering, but I don’t care about that—I shall remain here.” You cannot remain here; you will be kicked out. Now you are thinking that you are an American, you are a great scientist, you are happy, you are getting a good salary.... That’s all right, but you cannot stay in this post. The day will come when you will be kicked out. And you do not know whether you are going to be an American or a scientist or a cat or dog or demigod. You do not know.

**Dr. Benford:** I think that I will probably be nothing.

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, that is another kind of ignorance. Krsna explains in the *Bhagavad-gita* [2.12], *dehino ‘smin yatha dehe kaumaram yauvanam jara / tatha dehantara-praptih*: first you are in the body of a boy, then a young man, and in the future you will be in the body of an old man—

**Dr. Benford:** But after I’m an old man I might be nothing.

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, no. *Tatha dehantara-praptih*: after death you will pass into another body. So, you cannot say, “I am going to be nothing.” Of course, you may say anything, but the laws are different. You may know the law, or you may not know the law.’ It doesn’t matter—the law will act. For example, if you think, “I will touch the fire—it will not burn me,” that is not a fact. It will burn. Similarly, you may think there is nothing after death, but it is not a fact.

**Dr. Benford:** Why does a person like me—someone who’s trying to understand the world rationally—seem to find no way in which to do it?

**Srila Prabhupada:** You are trying to know things rationally, but you are not going to the proper teacher.

**Dr. Benford:** But I feel that by studying the world I can acquire knowledge, and there is a way to check that

knowledge. You formulate hypotheses, you perform experiments, you verify your ideas, and then you see if you can use these ideas in the practical world.

**Srila Prabhupada:** That is one more kind of ignorance—because you do not know that you are imperfect.  
**Dr. Benford:** Oh, I know that I’m not perfect.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Then what is the use of your trying to study the world this way and that way? If you are imperfect, the result will be imperfect.

**Dr. Benford:** That’s true.

**Srila Prabhupada:** So why waste your time?

**Dr. Benford:** But there doesn’t seem to be any other way of finding knowledge.

**Srila Prabhupada:** Even for material knowledge, you have to go to the university and consult a professor. Similarly, when you want to learn spiritual

knowledge—perfect knowledge—you have to approach a perfect teacher. Then you will get perfect knowledge.

**Dr. Benford:** But how does one know when the teacher is perfect?

**Srila Prabhupada:** It is not difficult. A perfect teacher is one who has learned from another perfect teacher.

**Dr. Benford:** But that merely removes the problem a step.

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, because there is one perfect teacher—Krsna—who is accepted by all classes of teachers. In India we still find the Vedic culture, which is taught by Vedic scholars. And all these Vedic teachers accept Krsna as the supreme teacher. They take lessons from Krsna and teach that.

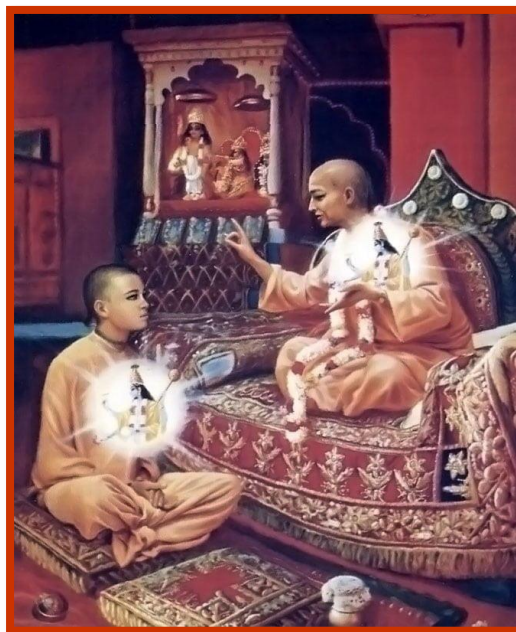
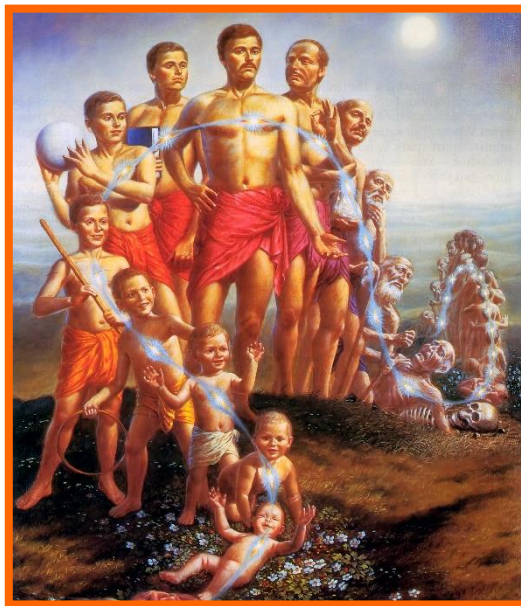
**Dr. Benford:** So anyone I meet who accepts Krsna as the perfect teacher—he is a perfect teacher?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes. Anyone who is teaching the teachings of Krsna—he is a perfect teacher.

**Dr. Benford:** Then all the

devotees here are perfect teachers?

**Srila Prabhupada:** Yes, because they are teaching only Krsna’s teachings, that’s all. They may not be



perfect. But whatever they are speaking is perfect, because it is taught by Krsna.

**Dr. Benford:** Then you are not perfect?

**Srila Prabhupada:** No, I am not perfect. None of us claim that we are perfect—we have so many defects. But because we don't speak anything beyond Krsna's teachings, our teaching is perfect. We are just like a postman who brings you a money order for one

thousand dollars. He is not a rich man, but if he delivers to you the envelope as it is, you are benefited. He is not a rich man, but his perfect dealing—his honest dealing—is perfect. Similarly, we are not perfect; we are full of imperfections. But we don't go beyond the teachings of Krsna—that is our process—and therefore our teachings are perfect. 🌸



## Excerpts from inmates' letters

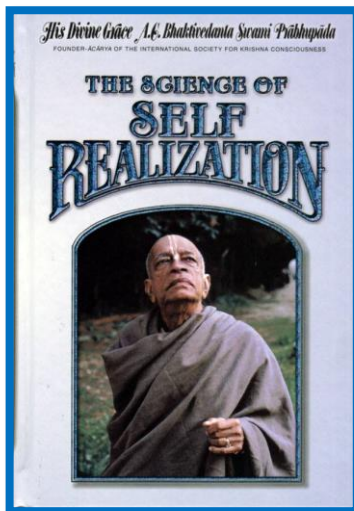
Before I started to write to ISKCON or knew what it were, I was professing the religion of ISLAM. I do still practice "ISLAM", but now it is to the fullness of my ability. Swami Srila Prabhupāda has opened my eyes to worship God within my religion in devotional service. The day when all Muslims worldwide fast, a day which is called "Ramadhan", I will be observing it in devotional service. I will add in it the Hare Krishna mantra. I will not stop reading books about Lord Shri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By me reading about the Lord's pastimes, names, qualities, forms etc., it has given me so much of joy. I read my Srimad Bhagavad-gita As It Is, The Holy Quran, and the Nectar of Devotion. These three books has served me well. The book *Science of Self-Realization* is a wonderful book and I have allowed two other prisoners to read it and they liked it. I really love the book *Nectar of Instruction!* Nonetheless, I am chanting the Hare Krishna Maha mantra. It is so wonderful. Since I have started corresponding with IPM, it has helped me out a lot. Everything I read of Lord Shri Krishna by Srila Prabhupada I will apply it within my life. I am really dedicated with the Hare Krishna's movement

**Wilbert W. —Louisiana**

For most of my life I had believed that God was both unknowable and unapproachable, believing that nothing controlled my life. I had complete control of everything, and after this life there was nothing after. I was not a spiritually minded person, and it was missing in my life. Then somebody came into my life, wearing neck beads, and he awakened

something inside of me and told me about Krishna and ISKCON, he gave me *Science of Self-Realization* book by Srila Prabhupada. The book answered my questions, answers that I couldn't find anywhere else. If it would have not been for Srila Prabhupada journeying to USA and fulfilling the order of his spiritual master, I would have never come back to Krishna. I would still be a lost soul. All glories to Srila Prabhupāda! I continue to remind myself that whatever happens, I have to ask Krishna for help to lead me in right direction.

**Randall S. —Airway Heights Washington**



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada has brought a whole other life to my old material living life. He has given his books and life got changed; that's how I see the whole world. Srila Prabhupada's books have instilled values and principles. The life takes on a whole new meaning after you see people like Srila Prabhupada, who dedicate his life to Krishna and to people to whom he attracted to Krishna. One book that changed the way I see things was an autobiography on Prabhupada's life.

How he started out having a family like most people, but he moved on trying his best to print *Back to Godhead* magazine, how he never saw defeat on any of his plans and goals. How he came to America with barely anything and how he raised Krishna Consciousness from the ground up. Many things shocked me in those stories, some made me laugh, some made me cry; but overall I was touched by the love and dedication brought by Prabhupada. Krishna was his protector, his rock, his God and nothing could stop him.

When I read first time *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, this book became one of my favorite books. I have never read a book so informative, so to the point, but so simple at the same time. The one thing I noticed was how many times I saw a group of words, “*The Supreme Personality of Godhead*”; after some time it just stuck in my mind. It made me want to seek out more about Krishna consciousness and Krishna. Altogether, I hope to go back to Godhead.

**Anthony G. —Ely, Nevada**

Srila Prabhupada taught the truth, he was very wise and showed us the path. From his every spoken and written words, Srila Prabhupada was a warm and loving person to anyone and everyone; and his heart was full of compassion. Today I am calm and at peace because of the teachings of Lord Krishna. I continue chanting, and each day becomes a far richer experience. Prabhupada in his great words tells us that we are ever changing and love of

Krishna is the best way to go where we have never been before. I am deeply immersed in reading and rereading, making notes on volumes I & 2 of Krishna book. I am a diligent student. The more I chant, the more I learn; the more I learn, the more the chanting deepens in meaning. Prabhupada put others first and there’s no ifs, or buts. While heroes change with context and time, Prabhupada doesn’t. He was a hero that inspired and should be emulated. He did good and never expected anything in return; an extraordinary individual, teaching the road to be traveled, a road I myself have begun walking. Srila Prabhupada’s words inspired me, his words touched my life and has left footprints on my heart. Srila Prabhupada’s words have made me loving and caring of others. I am at peace with myself; I am in prison but free. The direction I am headed in is Krishna consciousness; all my energies desire this. Thank you Srila Prabhupada, my hero.

**Alan Jay Cotton, Miami FL**



## STORIES FROM THE ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

### THE STORY OF LORD VĀMANA —from Canto 8, chapters 18 & 19

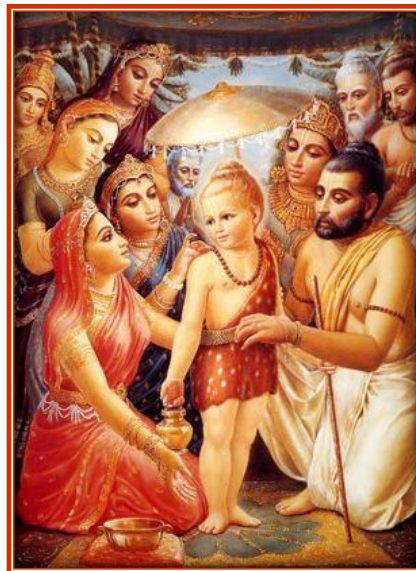
*Vedic history tells of an incident many hundreds of thousands of years ago, during a period of conflict between the demigods and the demons, when the demons came to power, sending the legitimate ruling demigods into hiding.*

The king of the demons at that time was Bali Mahārāja, who was the grandson of Mahārāja Prahlada, a great devotee, and whose great-grand-father was Hiranyakasipu, a very powerful demon. His spiritual master was Sukaracharya, a hereditary brāhmaṇa (born of a brahman (priest) father, but without brahmana qualifications himself).

Harassed by the demons, the demigods prayed to Lord Vishnu, the maintainer of the universe, to help them regain their rightful properties and administrative posts. In answer to their prayers, the Lord then appeared as the extraordinarily beautiful dwarf brahmana child Vāmanadeva, who was the Personality of Godhead Himself.

Wearing a belt of straw, a sacred thread, an upper garment of deerskin, and matted locks of hair,

Lord Vāmanadeva entered Bali Maharaja’s arena of sacrifice. His shining effulgence diminished the brilliance of all the priests and their disciples, who thus stood from their seats and welcomed the Lord properly by offering obeisances.



Bali Mahārāja, jubilant at seeing Lord Vāmanadeva, offered Him a seat with great satisfaction, and worshiped Him by washing His lotus feet and placing the water on his head. He told Vāmanadeva: “O son of a brāhmaṇa, it appears that You have come here to ask me for something. Therefore, whatever You want You may take from me. O best of those who are worshipable, You may take from me a cow, gold, a furnished house, palatable food and drink, the daughter of a brāhmaṇa for Your wife, prosperous villages, horses, elephants, chariots or whatever You desire.” Bali Mahārāja, was very charitably disposed. Sometimes the atheists are also very charitable; they do pious activities,

give charity and welfare work, but also think, ‘why should we bother about God?’ Such persons, even though very moral and pious in the estimation of the material world, are also demons, on account of their apathy for Krishna Consciousness.

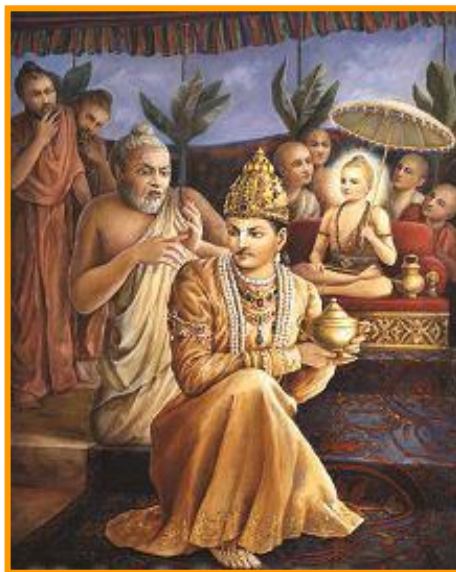
Vāmanadeva replied, “O King, who are able to give charity munificently, I ask of you only three paces of land, to the measurement of My steps. Although you are able to give Me as much land as I want, I do not want anything from you that is unnecessary.”

Bali was surprised at this request for so little land and he replied, “I am able to give You an entire island because I am the proprietor of the three divisions of the universe. You have come to take something from me and have pleased me by Your sweet words, but You are asking only three paces of land. Therefore You are not very intelligent. O small boy, one who approaches me to beg something should not have to ask anything anymore, from anywhere. Therefore, if You wish, You may ask from me as much land as will suffice to maintain You according to Your needs.”

Vāmanadeva, the Personality of Godhead said: “O my dear King, even the entirety of whatever there may be within the three worlds cannot satisfy a person whose senses are uncontrolled. One should be satisfied with whatever he achieves by his previous destiny, for discontent can never bring happiness. A person who is not self-controlled will not be happy even with possessing the three worlds. Material existence causes discontent in regard to fulfilling one’s lusty desires and achieving more and more money. This is the cause for the continuation of material life, which is full of repeated birth and death. But one who is satisfied by that which is obtained by destiny is fit for liberation from this material existence. A brāhmaṇa who is satisfied with whatever is providentially obtained is increasingly enlightened with spiritual power, but the spiritual potency of a dissatisfied brāhmaṇa decreases, as fire diminishes in potency when water is sprinkled upon it. Therefore, O King, from you, the best of those who give charity, I ask only three paces of land. By such a gift I shall be very pleased, for the way of happiness is to be fully satisfied to receive that which is absolutely needed.”

After Vāmanadeva had thus spoken to Bali Mahārāja, Bali smiled and told Him, “All right. Take whatever You like.”

Śukrācārya, his spiritual master, then immediately spoke as follows to his disciple, “This brahmacārī (student) in the form of a dwarf is directly the imperishable Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu. You do not know what a dangerous position you have accepted by promising to give Him land. This person falsely appearing as a brahmacārī is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who has come in this form to take away all your land, wealth, beauty, power, fame and education. After taking everything from you, He will deliver it to Indra, your enemy. You have promised to give Him three steps of land in charity, but



when you give it, He will occupy the three worlds. You are a rascal! You do not know what a great mistake you have made. After giving everything to Lord Vishnu, you will have no means of livelihood. How then shall you live?”

In reality, Śukrācārya was afraid for his own position; he was living at the cost of Bali Maharaja, so if Vāmanadeva took everything away from Bali Maharaja, how would he maintain himself? That is a material calculation. The materialist does not want to serve or to give to Vishnu, because he thinks that by giving away to Vishnu he will be put in a poverty-stricken condition. Actually that is not the fact. This is a materialistic estimation; a materialistic way of worshiping. Materialists are always careful to first maintain their material status quo first, and only second try to please Vishnu, although they profess to be devotees of Vishnu. Therefore the Krishna Consciousness persons are greater than such materialistic worshippers. Materialists perform all pious activities or devotional activities for some material gain, and as soon as there is any hindrance in the path of material gain, they at once become demons. Therefore “bhakti” means *without any material desires*. That is the sign of a pure devotee; he has no motive to satisfy his material desires by devotional service.

When Bali Mahārāja was thus advised by his spiritual master, Śukrācārya, he remained silent for some time, and then, after full deliberation, he replied to his spiritual master as follows, “I am the grandson of Mahārāja Prahlāda. How can I withdraw my promise because of greed for money, when I have already said that I shall give this land? How can I behave like an ordinary cheater, especially toward a brāhmaṇa? There is nothing more sinful than untruthfulness. Because of this, Mother Earth once said, “I can bear any heavy object, but I cannot bear a liar.” O great sage, great saintly persons worship Lord Vishnu in all circumstances. Therefore, whether that same Lord Vishnu has come here to give me all benedictions or to punish me as an enemy, I must carry out His order and give Him the promised tract of land without hesitation.

Śukrācārya replied, “Although you have no knowledge, you have become a so-called learned person, and therefore you dare be so impudent as to disobey my order. Because of disobeying me, you shall very soon be bereft of all your opulence.”

Even after being cursed in this way by his so-called spiritual master, Bali Mahārāja, being a great personality, never deviated from his determination. Therefore, according to custom, he first offered water to Vāmanadeva and then offered Him the gift of land he had promised.

The unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of Vāmana, then began increasing in size, until everything in the universe was within His body, including the earth, the planetary systems, the sky, the directions, the seas, the oceans, the birds, beasts, human beings, the demigods and the great saintly persons. He covered the entire surface of the earth with one footstep, the sky with His body, and all directions with His arms. As He took His second step, He covered the heavenly planets. And not even a spot remained for the third step. He then bound Bali Mahārāja, with the ropes of Varuṇa.

The associates of the Lord present there jubilantly worshiped Him, celebrating His victory. When the demoniac followers of Mahārāja Bali saw that their master had lost all his possessions to Vāmanadeva, they

were very angry and attacked the Lord and His devotees. However, after a short battle, Bali Mahārāja ordered his followers to desist.

Lord Vāmana then said, “O King of the demons, you have promised to give Me three steps of land, but I have occupied the entire universe with two steps. Now think about where I should put My third step.”

Bali Mahārāja said: “O best Personality of Godhead, most worshipable for all the demigods, if You think that my promise has become false, I shall certainly rectify matters to make it truthful. I cannot allow my promise to be false. Please, therefore, place Your third lotus footstep on my head. Since Your Lordship is indirectly the greatest well-wisher of us demons, You act for our best welfare by posing as if our enemy. Because



demons like us always aspire for a position of false prestige, by chastising us You give us the eyes by which to see the right path. My grandfather Prahlāda Mahārāja is famous, being recognized by all Your devotees. Although harassed in many ways by his father, the demon Hiranyakaśipu, he still remained faithful to You, taking shelter at Your lotus feet. What is the use of the material body, which automatically leaves its owner at the end of life? And what is the use of all one’s family members, who are actually plunderers taking away money that is useful for the service of the Lord? What is the use of a wife? She is only the source of increasing material

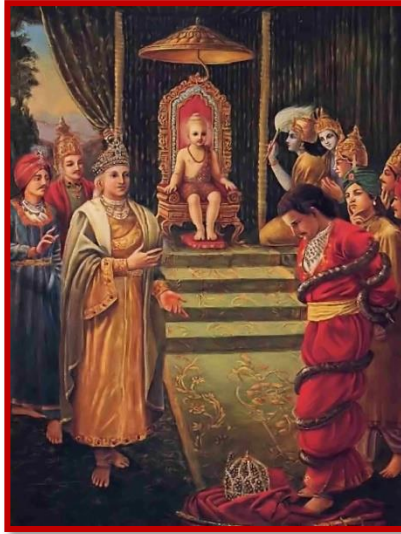
conditions. And what is the use of family, home, country and community? Attachment for them merely wastes the valuable energy of one’s lifetime. Only by providence have I been forcibly brought under Your lotus feet and deprived of all my opulence. Because of the illusion created by temporary opulence, people in general, who live under material conditions, facing accidental death at every moment, do not understand that this life is temporary. Only by providence have I been saved from that condition.”

Material opulence is so bewildering that it makes even a learned, self-controlled man forget to search for the goal of self-realization.

While Bali Mahārāja was describing his fortunate position in this way, the most dear devotee of the Lord, Prahlāda Mahārāja, appeared there, like the moon rising in the nighttime. Being bound by the ropes of Varuṇa,

Bali Mahārāja could not offer befitting respect to Prahāda Mahārāja as he had before. Rather, he simply offered respectful obeisances with his head, his eyes being inundated with tears and his face lowered in shame. When the great personality Prahāda Mahārāja saw that the Supreme Lord was sitting there, surrounded and worshiped by His intimate associates, he was overwhelmed with tears of jubilation. Approaching the Lord and falling to the ground, he offered obeisances to the Lord with his head.

Prahlad Mahārāja said, “Prahāda Mahārāja said: My Lord, it is Your Lordship who gave this Bali the very great opulence of the post of heavenly king, and now, today, it is You who have taken it all away. I think You have acted with equal beauty in both ways. Because his exalted position as King of heaven was putting him in the darkness of ignorance, You have done him a very merciful favor by taking away all his opulence. Material opulence is so



bewildering that it makes even a learned, self-controlled man forget to search for the goal of self-realization.”

In the end, the Lord transferred Bali Mahārāja from the heavenly planet to the planet Sutala, which is hundreds of times better than heaven. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead deprives His devotee of material opulences, this does not mean that the Lord puts him into poverty; rather, the Lord ultimately promotes him to a higher position. The Supreme Personality of Godhead did not even ask Bali Mahārāja to separate from his family; instead, the Lord allowed him to stay with his family members and also assured him of all protection from the effects of bad association with the demons. Bali Mahārāja certainly became an exalted devotee and the Supreme Personality of Godhead assured him that his demoniac mentality would be annihilated. In other words, by the association of devotees, the demoniac mentality is vanquished. 🌸

## Nectar of the Holy Name

kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann  
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ  
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya  
mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 12.3.51



# HOW I CAME TO KRṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

## SCARED TO BECOME A DEVOTEE —By Jatayu Dasa

**A** long, long time ago, when I was not an ISKCON devotee, I developed a growing interest in spiritual life. After many years of taking drugs and attending rock concerts I had become sick of life.

I had been a manager in several companies I worked for; most of the time I had more money than I needed and I had freedom and independence. However, somehow, I was not satisfied. I started wondering if real



happiness existed. I discovered that no matter how hard I tried, I just could not break free from certain unhealthy activities. I was looking for real freedom; freedom from the unseen forces that drove me to seek out all

those things people said would make me happy but in truth bound me with chains. I was confused. Where do I turn now? Then one day I had the courage to admit to myself that, with all these desirable things, I was not happy. This was the first scary thing; to admit I was not happy.

My life then began to change. Again, I became scared because I didn't really know where I was going. All I knew was I didn't want to be where I was. I was haunted by a thousand fears; what should I do now; will I have money? Will I have friends? Will I be cared for? And on and on. So I started to read. First it was science, then psychology, and then self-help. It didn't fit. I was scared again, where do I go?

So I tried Eastern philosophy. Now, here was something. I read more and learned a lot. I learned drugs were bad, so I stopped. As a result I lost 85% of my friends, and then I got really scared; but excited at the same time. If they were really my friends then they would support me to improve my life. So I took another step. I learned that happiness was not found in women, TV, eating dead animals, or in reading numerous books. I gave it all up, even though I was scared.

Then I learned happiness was not found in Rock and Roll. This is going too far I thought, so I held on. But in

the meantime my life had changed direction a dozen times and I had to admit that I was finding a wonderful sense of freedom from all the things that I thought gave me happiness. I was not doing many of these things and I was still alive. And in many ways becoming happy. But still I knew I had to go further. There was something deep inside that wasn't being fulfilled. I began to practice Hatha Yoga. Amazing things happened. I became strong both mentally and physically. I was more alert, I felt alive. But, deep inside a voice cried out for more.

Then I met the devotees. Now I was scared again. I had seen them before but did not take them seriously. Although I was now attracted to them, I turned away. But I saw them again, and again I was scared, but of what? I was afraid to lose my independence. But what was so great about my so-called independence? I made all my own decisions, I was my own man, but I was also unhappy.

I wanted to break away completely from the material world. I wanted God in my life. I want to try it, I thought. But what if I failed? What will I have to give up? I was really scared now. I will have to give up Rock and Roll and I will have to follow rules and regulations. But deep down inside, my heart said, 'try it.'

Scared as I was, I took a few steps. And wow; it worked. Kind of. I didn't become a saint and I didn't see the white light, but I did begin to feel inner peace. I took another step and fell down. And it hurt.

I took another step and fell down. What now? I tried again and started to walk. I began to realize that Kṛṣṇa was everywhere, even in my own life. I began to understand that Kṛṣṇa was a Person and that I had a relationship with Him, a loving relationship that was eternal. I was actually becoming happy. Sometimes





even tears of joy came to my eyes. I even gave up Rock and Roll, and I survived.

Today, I'm still scared but I keep taking those next steps. I still fall down, and I still get back up. I'm succeeding in spiritual life. But I did not do it alone. I always found the greatest source of strength from my devotee friends. Of course, I had to reach out to them; they could not read my mind. I had to ask for help. This too I had to learn. I had to ask the right questions and when I got the answers I acted on that knowledge.

Over the years I matured, my vision to continue comes from reading Srila Prabhupada's books, my encouragement comes from seeing devotees around me work hard and succeed, and my goal remains clear by humbly serving Kṛṣṇa the best way I can. Being scared is natural for all living entities when they are put into uncertain circumstances.

But when we come to realize that Kṛṣṇa is our best friend and that His love for us is eternal, then there is nothing in this world that is fearful. He loves us, not



like our limited love for each other, but real love; a kind of love that has no comparison in our life. And when this love touches us we will not be scared to take the next step. I am scared of death, but Kṛṣṇa will defeat that for me, simply by the sound of His name. And when I wake up in the spiritual world, there will be no more pain, nor suffering, nor fear, just eternity, knowledge and bliss, like the scriptures have told me all along.

I thought that life in the material world was bad; actually it is life in material consciousness that is bad. All of us go through these changes to some degree or other. We have learned that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a collective process as well as an individual process. We can see that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not otherworldly or abstract, but is very down to earth, natural and real. Our lives in the material world will go on, raising children, working a job, caring for friends. But when we add Kṛṣṇa

to our lives then life finally has a real purpose. Life becomes meaningful and we can become happy.

We just have to be willing to take the next step. 🌸

### What is a Vyasa-Puja Celebration?

This year, on August 27, is the day when Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared on this earth.

Every year, his disciples celebrate his appearance day with fasting (till noon), reading offerings devotees wrote, kīrtana, and honoring a prasadam feast cooked in his honor. Why do we do that? As Prabhupāda himself explains:

*"Actually there is no difference between hearing directly from Krishna and hearing directly from Krishna via a bona fide spiritual master like Vyasa. The spiritual master is the representative of Vyasadeva also. Therefore, according to the Vedic system, on the birthday of the spiritual master the disciples conduct the ceremony called Vyasa-puja."*

**Bhagavad-Gita As It Is, 18.75, purport**

We want to encourage all of you to write a Vyasa-puja offering glorifying Śrīla Prabhupāda's exalted position and appreciating his impact on the world and on your life, along with words of gratitude, realizations, and/or petitions for mercy.

Such offerings can be short or long, as your heart dictates. They can be shared with others or kept between you and Prabhupada; in any case, they serve as a catalyst to increase your appreciation for everything Śrīla Prabhupāda has given you, and they thus deepen your love for and connection with him.

If you want to see your offering in the *Freedom Newsletter*, please send it to us for consideration:

**ISKCON Prison Ministry**  
PO Box 2676  
Alachua, FL 32616

# Calendar

## SEPTEMBER 2024

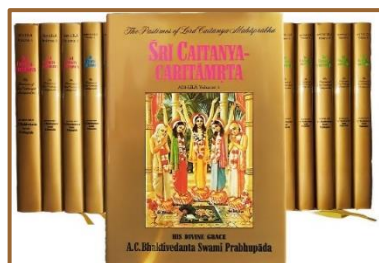
- 8 Sept 2024 - Srimati Sita Thakurani App. Day (wife of Advaita Acarya)  
11 Sept 2024 - **Radhastami : Appearance of Srimati Radharani**  
14 Sept 2024 - **Parsva Ekadashi**  
15 Sept 2024 - Appearance of Lord Vamana (the dwarf incarnation)  
15 Sept 2024 - Appearance Day of Sri Jiva Goswami  
16 Sept 2024 - Appearance Day of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura  
17 Sept 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Haridasa Thakura  
18 Sept 2024 - Acceptance of Sannyasa by Srila Prabhupada  
19 Sept 2024 - Third Month of Caturmasya Begins -fast from milk  
24 Sept 2024 - Srila Prabhupada's arrival in the USA  
28 Sept 2024 - **Indira Ekadasi**

## OCTOBER 2024

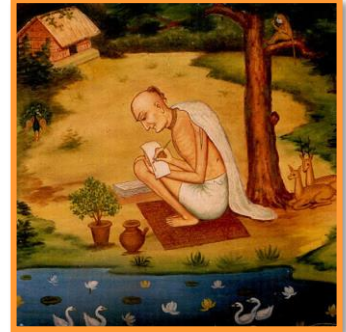
- 13 Oct 2024 - Ramacandra Vijayotsava (Lord Ramacandra's victory over the demon Ravana)  
13 Oct 2024 - Appearance Day of Sri Madhvacharya  
14 Oct 2024 - **Pasankusa Ekadasi**  
15 Oct 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Raghunatha Dasa Goswami  
15 Oct 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Raghunatha Bhatta Goswami  
15 Oct 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami  
17 Oct 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Murari Gupta  
18 Oct 2024 - Fourth Month of Caturmasya Begins -fast from urad dahl  
21 Oct 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura  
28 Oct 2024 - **Rama Ekadasi**

## NOVEMBER 2024

- 02 Nov 2024 - Appearance Day of Rasikananda  
02 Nov 2024 - Govardhana Puja  
03 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Vasudeva Ghosh  
05 Nov 2024 - **Disappearance Day of Srila Prabhupada**  
09 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Gadadhara Dasa Goswami  
09 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Dhananjaya Pandita  
09 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Srinivasa Acharya  
12 Nov 2024 - **Utthana Ekadasi**  
12 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Srila Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji  
15 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Bhugarbha Goswami  
15 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Kasisvara Pandita  
15 Nov 2024 - Appearance Day of Sri Nimbarkacharya  
15 Nov 2024 - Last Day of Caturmasya  
26 Nov 2024 - **Utpanna Ekadasi**  
26 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Narahari Sarakara Thakura  
27 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Kaliya Krsnadasa  
27 Nov 2024 - Disappearance Day of Sri Saranga Thakura



## Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami



Krishna Dasa Kaviraja's Chaitanya-charitamrta is the most accurate, authentic, and philosophical biography of Lord Chaitanya. Every line is full of infinite humility, enthusiasm, and devotion for Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Shri Nityananda Prabhu. Krishna Dasa had the wonderful power of speaking without offending, even when rebuking his opponents. He had vast knowledge in all Vedic scriptures. Although he was an erudite scholar, a strict ascetic, a devotee of the highest order, Krishna Dasa writes about himself, "I am deaf, dumb, wholly illiterate, worldly-minded, and lower than a worm in stool."

Krishna Dasa Kaviraja was a living example of "humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree." By associating with an eternally liberated associate of Lord Chaitanya like Shri Krishna Dasa Kaviraja (even through his books), one will develop the Vaishnava qualities of humility, innocence, integrity, equanimity, gentleness, purity, selflessness, patience, kindness, gravity, freedom from material desires, mild temperament, control over the six passions, friendliness, honoring all beings, being silent, expert, poetic, and absolute surrender to Shri Krishna. 🌸