

A few words about this book

When Srila Prabhupada started the ISKCON movement in 1966 he had, at that time, only published the first three portions of his lifework, the Srimad Bhagavatam. As he travelled the world, and as his movement grew, Srila Prabhupada presented many more standard Vaishnava works. A wealth of philosophy, history and culture, with translations and detailed commentaries in readable English, the books totalled over sixty volumes.

Although Srila Prabhupada had frequently suggested the systematic study of his books, the very substantial quantity of scholarly information always presented newcomers with a dilemma: what to study, and in what order, to gain a grasp of the entire Vaishnava theology, culture and practice? For some time after his passing in 1977, education within ISKCON, both in the residential communities and in the congregational groups, continued in a relatively ad hoc fashion.

In 1995 a group of senior devotees from many parts of Europe met to discuss the standardization of teaching within ISKCON. They compiled a list of all the subjects explained within Srila Prabhupada's books, placed the subjects in logical order, and set about devising lesson plans and accompanying teachers' manuals. The result was The Vaishnava Training and Education Syllabus, which was gradually implemented within many courses at the movement's centres throughout Europe and Russia.

ISKCON's congregational groups, variously termed nama-hatta, sanga, bhakti-sanga or bhakti-vriksha, depending on which country you live in, now well outnumber its residential communities. The movement is thus largely a network of such groups meeting weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Such groups regularly chose to work their way through Bhagavad-gita, but this sometimes proved a lengthy task, taking years to complete even with regular meetings. Unfamiliar concepts and terminology sometimes made discussion inaccessible for newcomers to the groups, while certain teachings of Vaishnava practice, history or culture, were left unexplained for years.

This book, and the others which accompany it, have been written as a very condensed presentation of the material in the Vaishnava Syllabus. They are designed to cover all the basic themes and topics a devotee needs to know. The volume of text has been kept deliberately short and simple, and much information is presented as lists or bullet-points. Although the main intention was that the books were to be read in conjunction with a series of talks given at group meetings, they can also be studied separately and any questions noted and brought up to a devotee teacher. The books are not intended to replace the valuable company of experienced and knowledgeable vaishnavas, but can act both as a systematic learning aid and a reminder of points already studied.

We also recommend that you either begin or continue your systematic study of Srila Prabhupada's books in the following order:

1. Compilations such as Science of Self Realization, Journey of Self Discovery
2. Sri Isopanishad
3. Nectar of Instruction
4. Bhagavad-gita As It Is
5. Srimad Bhagavatam, Canto One
6. Teachings of Lord Chaitanya
7. The Krishna Book
8. Nectar of Devotion
9. Srimad Bhagavatam, Canto Two, Canto Six
10. Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita
11. Srimad Bhagavatam, remaining Cantos.

We hope you enjoy your studies in Krishna consciousness, and we wish you progress in your friendships with vaishnava teachers and fellow students.

Hare Krishna.

Bhaktivedanta Manor Training and Education Department

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Preliminary Discussions

What is philosophy?

1. Seeking after wisdom or knowledge, esp. that which deals with ultimate reality, or with the general causes and principles of things.
2. The academic study of knowledge, thought, and the meaning of life.
3. The particular doctrines of a specific school relating to these issues.
4. Any system of belief or values.

Philo- is from Greek and means to have a love or a liking for.

-sophy comes from the Greek word for wisdom.



Philosophy is the science of sciences, states Srila Prabhupada, or the science from which all other sciences are derived. It means to search, research, inquire, and see with intelligence the nature of the absolute truth, the ultimate reality, the original source of everything. The search for the absolute truth (athato brahma-jijnasa), he explains, is the beginning of philosophy.



What is theology?

A system of religion; rational analysis or study of a religious faith.

Theo- comes from the Greek for God.

-logy refers to the study of something.



Theology is the science of God, says Srila Prabhupada, which means knowing God, His nature, and our relationship to Him.

The Science of Love of God: Sambandha, Abhidheya, Prayojana

Three spiritual divisions of Vedic knowledge

Sambandha	the living entity's eternal relationship with Supreme Personality of Godhead
Abhidheya	The living entity's understanding of this relationship and acting accordingly
Prayojana	the ultimate goal of life: to develop love of God and return back to Godhead.

The three stages of spiritual advancement:

First one has to establish his relationship with God as an eternal servant (sambandha), then he acts in that relationship (abhidheya) to achieve the goal of life, love for God (prayojana).

The same applies to any relationship. A boy and girl, for example, may want a family. First they meet and establish a relationship. They marry. Then they act in that relationship, and then comes the children.

Sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana. They are the culmination of the entire Vedanta philosophy, the essence of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, and the great riches of life.



"Dharma means to understand our relationship with God and to act in that relation so that we may attain the ultimate goal of life. That is dharma. Sambandha, abhidheya, prayojana. The whole Vedic civilization is based on this."

(Srila Prabhupada Lectures)

"Caitanya Mahaprabhu concludes that we are after riches. He says that Krishna, devotional service, and love of Krishna, these three items are the topmost riches in life."

(Srila Prabhupada Lectures)



Unit One

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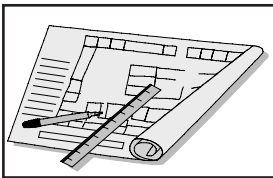
The Methods of Attaining Knowledge

The starting point in philosophical discussion is epistemology-establishing the basis of knowledge. Jiva Goswami lists in his Sad-sandharbha ten methods of attaining knowledge, including tradition, history, guessing, comparison, probability, and logic, and shows how all of them fit into three main categories.



Pratyaksa (Direct sense perception)

The knowledge we get through the five senses.



Anumana (Mental reasoning)

Literally "to follow (anu) the mind (mana)"



Sabda (Authoritative testimony)

Literally "sound"

How might you apply each of the methods to finding out the following?

- The size of the sun
- What's on the radio
- Whether or not there really is a Santa Claus
- How long it takes to fry 100 eggplant pakoras
- How the film-makers create their special effects

What uses and limitations do each of the three methods have?

Pratyaksa (Direct sense perception)



Uses	Limitations

Anumana (Reasoning)



Uses	Limitations

Sabda (Hearing from higher authorities)



Uses	Limitations

How much can each one help us in our search for absolute knowledge?



--

About Vedic Authority

1. The Vedas are like an instruction manual to the material world.
2. The artist knows best of his own painting.
3. Inductive (by own strength) and deductive (that comes down) knowledge: if the authority is perfect, then hearing from him the perfect method.
4. We can experiment and come to the same conclusion, but accepting authority will save us time.
5. The Vedic knowledge is described as apauruseya (not of man).
6. The Vedas are accepted as axiomatic.

**Imperfect Senses (Karanapata-
va)**

The senses are limited and can easily be misled.

Illusion (Pramada)

Accepting as real something that is not real.

Mistakes (Bhrama)

"To err is human."

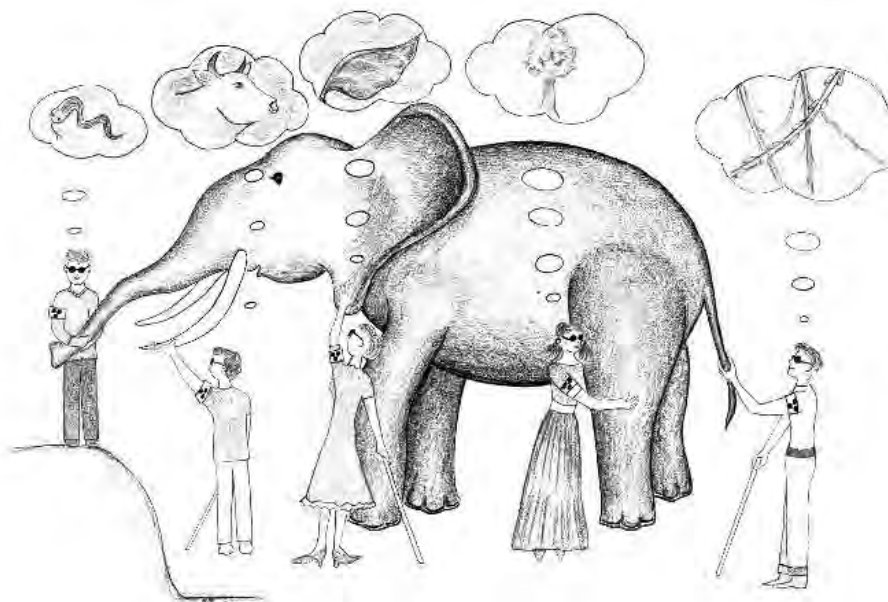
Cheating (Vipralipsa)

To propagate falsehood, to present yourself as something you are not

The Four Defects of the Conditioned Soul

Looking for the key under the street light:

Using our material mind and senses to find the truth is like the man who dropped his car keys in the driveway but searches for it under the street-light, where the light is better. Taking help from the scriptures is like using a torchlight in the driveway.



God is all-powerful, all-good, and all-knowing.



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Faith



What do you have faith in? Why?

What do you have little or no faith in? Why?

How does faith develop?

What is the general meaning of the word faith?

What is faith?

- undeviating _____
- confidence that simply by _____ all other duties, responsibilities, and interests are fulfilled and one will attain the highest perfection
- calm conviction of the _____ of Krishna consciousness

The Importance of Faith in Bhakti and the Danger of Doubts

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."

(Svetasvatara Upanisad)



A faithful man who is dedicated to transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses is eligible to achieve such knowledge, and having achieved it he quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is no happiness neither in this world nor in the next. (Bg 4.39-40)

Those who are not faithful in this devotional service cannot attain Me, O conqueror of enemies. Therefore they return to the path of birth and death in this material world. (Bg 9.3)

Anything done as sacrifice, charity or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of Prtha, is impermanent. It is called asat and is useless both in this life and the next. (Bg 17.28)

And I declare that he who studies this sacred conversation of ours worships Me by his intelligence. And one who listens with faith and without envy becomes free from sinful reactions and attains to the auspicious planets where the pious dwell.

(Bg 18.70-71)

Srila Prabhupada describes in his purport to Bg 9.3 how one's level of faith determines one's degree of advancement in Krishna consciousness:

"It is only by faith that one can advance in Krishna consciousness."

Doubts are compared to demons in the Bhagavad-gita. When doubts arise in the mind and create a disturbance, they can indicate the presence of stubborn material attachments that are being gradually removed by the process of devotional service.

The Danger of Blind Faith and the Importance of Doubting:

Is there some benefit in doubting? Can you think of some way that doubt can play an important role in spiritual life?



Doubt is a function of the _____. (SB 3.26.30)

Nothing should be accepted _____; everything should be accepted with _____ and with _____. (Bg 10.4-5p)

Before surrendering, one is free to _____ on this subject as far as the _____ goes; that is the best way to accept the instruction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (Bg 18.63p)

What is the difference between blind faith and reasonable faith?



What is the difference between blind doubt and reasonable doubt?



How to develop faith and destroy doubts:

1. Associate with faithful devotees.
2. Cleanse the heart of all the material dirt that causes doubt by chanting Hare Krishna and follow the Krishna consciousness process.
3. Take shelter of Krishna with prayer and submission.
4. Follow the process and see for yourself how it works.
Examples: road map; jar of honey.
5. See how it works for others.
6. Cultivate knowledge and philosophical understanding, and destroy ignorance by study of the scriptures and through philosophical inquiry.



One who follows the instruction of the Bhagavad-gita, as it is imparted by the Lord, the Personality of Godhead Himself, becomes free from all doubts by the grace of transcendental knowledge. . . .

Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bharata, stand and fight. (Bg 4.41-42)



What particular points challenge your faith?



The Existence of God

People are generally more inclined to listen to the positive case for God's existence after their objections against His existence are shown to be insubstantial.

How could you deal with of the following objections?

1. Why is there so much suffering in the world?
2. You cannot give any proof of God.
3. You have a belief, but we have real knowledge (science).
4. It is just a psychological need of weak people.
- The Ontological argument: There is no question of whether or not there is a Supreme - something must be supreme in the universe; it is just a matter of finding out what it is.
- The origin is either nothing, impersonal, or personal.
- The Absolute is by definition unlimited. It must therefore include

*janmadyasya
yathah*

"The Absolute Truth is that from which everything comes, upon which everything is based. It is the ultimate origin and foundation."

A fundamental definition of the Absolute Truth from the Vedanta-sutra



1.:

2.:

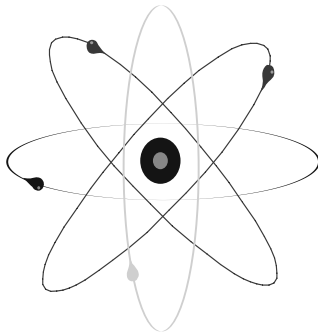
3.:

4.:

5. Other:

- both personal and impersonal aspects.
- Everyone had a father before him. But ultimately the line must trace back to the original father.
- We speak of Mother Nature, but who is the Father? Where do the souls come from that give life to the material bodies?
- All the scriptures of the world confirm the existence of God.
- Krishna as the Supersoul, causes remembrance, knowledge, and forgetfulness. Instinct and the occurrence of inspiration further indicate His presence in the heart.

Intelligent Design



If you didn't know anything about watches, and you found one lying somewhere, you would not suppose that the watch's form was an accident, with its intricate and finely tuned mechanics. You would assume it had been designed and created by someone with a particular purpose in mind.



Similarly, the incredible complexity and perfection of the creation indicates intelligent design: the tiny atoms and molecules, the workings of cells and biological functions, the variety of life-forms, the balance of the ecosystem and nature, the planetary systems and stars, the universal laws.



"It does not matter whether or not we see the lawmaker behind the common laws; we must admit that there is a lawmaker. Matter can never work automatically, without a living hand, and therefore we must admit the existence of God, the supreme living being, behind the laws of nature."

-Srila Prabhupada, Light of the Bhagavat.



Can a Scientist Believe in God?

One of the great dogmas that plague modern thinking is the idea that belief in God is irrationally based only on faith and sentiment. Those who hold this opinion admit that knowledge obtained by empirical means is limited and imperfect, but they still dismiss any alternative body of knowledge that lies beyond their inherently defective and limited empirical knowledge even though scientific attitude demands that alternative hypotheses be rejected only after sufficient consideration and testing.

Such people, while calling religious texts dogmatic and while avoiding submission to God's authority, have imposed a great dogma on themselves in the name of science.

"It is the business of science to offer rational explanations for all events in the real world, and any scientist who calls on God to explain something is failing in his job. This is one piece of dogmatism that a scientist can allow himself." (William Bonner, pg.119, *The mystery of the Expanding Universe*)

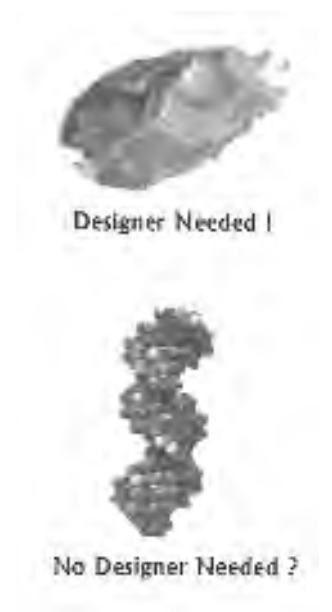
It is one thing to say that we cannot experimentally verify the existence of God by currently available methodologies of modern science. But it is hasty and foolish to assume that there can exist no methodologies of a different nature that can help us directly verify the existence of God, or that the methods of science and religion cannot be integrated.

The Illogical Imagination of the Atheists

When anthropologists dig in the earth and find a triangular piece of sharp flint, they conclude that it must have been designed by someone to be the tip of an arrow. Such things designed for a purpose, scientists agree, could not be products of chance.

When it comes to living things, however, the same logic is often abandoned. A designer is considered unnecessary. But the simplest single-celled organism, or just the DNA of the genetic code, is far more complex than a shaped piece of flint. Yet atheists insist that these had no designer and were shaped by chance events.

Darwin at least recognised the need for some designing force, and he assigned the job to natural selection. "Natural selection", he said, "is daily and hourly scrutinising, throughout the world, the slightest variations; rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good."



More Evidence

When we think calmly and carefully about this wonderful universe, we see order and design at every level - in the atoms, the molecules, the solar system and the universe. Scientists continue to find new and astonishing aspects of this order. The very word 'cosmos' means 'an orderly, harmonious systematic universe'.

An atom includes a nucleus surrounded by orbiting electrons. All matter is made up of these building blocks. What makes one substance differ from another is the number of protons and neutrons in the nucleus and the arrangement of electrons revolving around it. This has an exquisite order. At the molecular level, networks of atoms are so fantastically arranged that even a slight change in the position of a few atoms or a little variation in the geometry of a molecule can cause the colour of a substance to change; a mild, pleasing odour to become repellent and pungent; and a flavour to change from bitter to sweet.



As for the planet earth, the atmosphere among many other functions, maintains the temperature within safe limits for life and carries the vital supply of fresh water-vapour far inland from the oceans to irrigate the earth.

It can be easily shown through many simple illustrations how God created this world and took care of every detail, so that we living beings can have all the necessary things for existence. One example is the four remarkable properties of water.

- its power of absorbing vast quantities of oxygen at low temperatures
- its maximum density at 4 degrees centigrade above the freezing point, whereby lakes and rivers remain liquid
- the lesser density of ice than water, so that it remains on the surface
- its power of releasing great quantities of heat as it freezes, which preserves life in oceans, lakes and rivers throughout long winters.

From the infinitely large to the infinitesimally small, from galactic clusters to atoms, the universe is characterised by superb organisation. Indeed, the universe is so precisely organised that man can use the heavenly bodies as the basis for his timekeeping.

One of the smallest seeds has packaged within it the biggest living thing on earth - the giant sequoia tree. It grows over 300 feet high. Four feet above the ground its diameter may be 36 feet. One tree may contain enough wood to build 50 six-room houses. The two-foot-thick bark is flavoured with tannin an insect repellent, and its spongy, fibrous texture makes it almost as fireproof as asbestos. Its roots cover three or four acres. It lives over 3000 years.

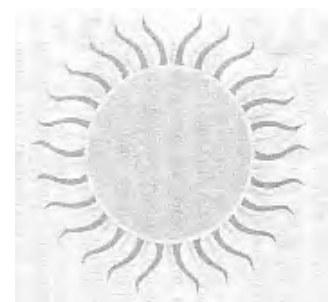
Yet the seeds that a sequoia tree rains down by the millions are not much bigger than a pinhead surrounded by tiny wings. Does it make sense to believe that the majestic giant and the tiny seed that packages it were not shaped by design?

Nobel-prize-winning physicist Robert A Millikan said at a meeting of the American Physical Society: "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends ... A purely materialistic philosophy is to me the height of unintelligence. Wise men in all ages have always seen enough to at least make them reverent."

Every day the sun supplies the solar system with a tremendous amount of heat, light and energy. The very tiny fraction of the sun's energy that falls on the earth - estimated at about five parts in a hundred million - is about 100,000 times greater than all the energy used in the world's industries. Put in a different way, the energy the sun emits in one second is greater than the whole amount of energy that the human species has consumed throughout its history!

The development that has taken place in all of the physical sciences during the past hundred years has come about chiefly from the application of the scientific method to the study of matter and energy. In the experimental part of this study every effort is made to eliminate every known possibility that the results obtained are due in any way to mere chance. This study consistently has shown in the past and still continues to show that the behaviour of even insensible matter is not at all haphazard, but on the contrary obeys definite natural laws. As physicist Stephen W Hawking said: "The more we examine the universe, we find it is not arbitrary at all but obeys certain well-defined laws that operate in different areas. It seems very reasonable to suppose that there may be some unifying principle."

After commenting on all the special conditions of order and law that are so obvious in the universe, 'Science News' observed: Contemplation of these things disturbs cosmologists because it seems as if such particular and precise conditions could hardly have arisen at random. One way to deal with the question is to say the whole thing was contrived and lay it



on Divine Providence." Many scientists have begun to acknowledge what the evidence keeps insisting - intelligence.

Astrophysicist John Gribin admitted in 'New Scientist' that "Though scientists claim, by and large, to be able to describe in great detail what happened after the moment of creation, what brought about the instant of creation remains a mystery," And, he mused, "maybe God did make it, after all."

The Unseen Is Proven by the Seen

One may not know God for sometime, but sooner or later, an intelligent person asks - "How is it that the material universe from the sub microscopic realm of the atom to the expanding reaches of the galactic objects is running like an intricate well-oiled clock? If hundreds of scientists have to break their heads to put a single satellite in orbit, how much greater giant brain, capable of careful planning, would be required to put millions of planets in orbit? Modern scientists are proud of automation, but there is a scientific brain behind automation also. What great intelligence has been able to imagine them, realise them and put them in motion?"



A clear principle is established: "The unseen is proved by the seen. The creation reflects the creator at every point. God can be easily seen in this creation just as an inventor can be easily known by his invention." The Bhagavad-Gita explains that everything rests upon God just as pearls are strung on a thread. Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita (7.7):

"O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to me. Everything rests upon me, as pearls are strung on a thread."

The analogy is clear. By superficial examination of a pearl necklace, one cannot see what is keeping all the pearls together. But we figure, that there must be some binding factor, else the pearls would have scattered. Similarly, God is the underlying thread of truth binding this entire cosmic manifestation together in an orderly manner. It is he who put all the planets and galaxies into precise orbits and it is he who maintains them.

Isaac Newton's Model

There is a wonderful incident in the life of Sir Isaac Newton that goes to show how he was a strong believer of God.

Newton had a small - scale model of the solar system, which, on completion, was installed on a large table in his home. The artisan had

proximity, but also constructing the model in such a manner that everything rotated and orbited when a crank was turned.

One day, one of Newton's atheistic friends came by for a visit and was naturally intrigued by the model. Having expressed admiration at the workmanship, he inquired about the artisan. Newton replied in all seriousness that there was no artisan. The model had just popped up by chance. Of course, the visitor was not convinced. Finally, Newton explained, "You refuse to believe that this puny contraption came about by chance and yet you are convinced that the great original, the actual solar system, of which this mechanism is only a model, has come into being without a designer or a maker. Now tell me, by what sort of reasoning do you reach such an absurd conclusion?"

Thus Newton defeated his friend and made him realize that behind this marvellous creation of the universe, there is the hand of God.

Once when Newton was standing on seashore, one of his friends praised him for his world-renowned laws of mechanics and other inventions. Newton replied, "All my findings are like the pebbles that you find on the seashore, whereas God's mysterious creation is like this unfathomable ocean! Who can begin to understand his energies?" Thus Newton recognized the greatness of God.

Taken from 'Discover Your Self' by Radheyshyam Das (IYF Pune)



Unit Three

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"You Are Not The Material Body"

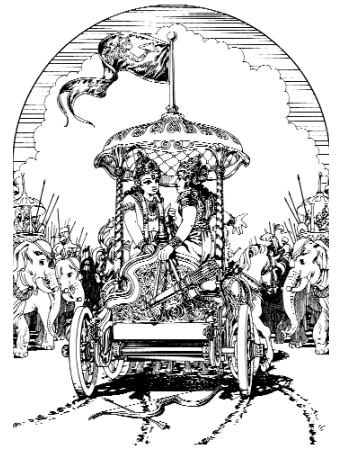
The Power of Identity

The belief that you hold, about who you are, and your identity, is very powerful; the way you see yourself in relationship to everything else determines your behaviour and your goals.

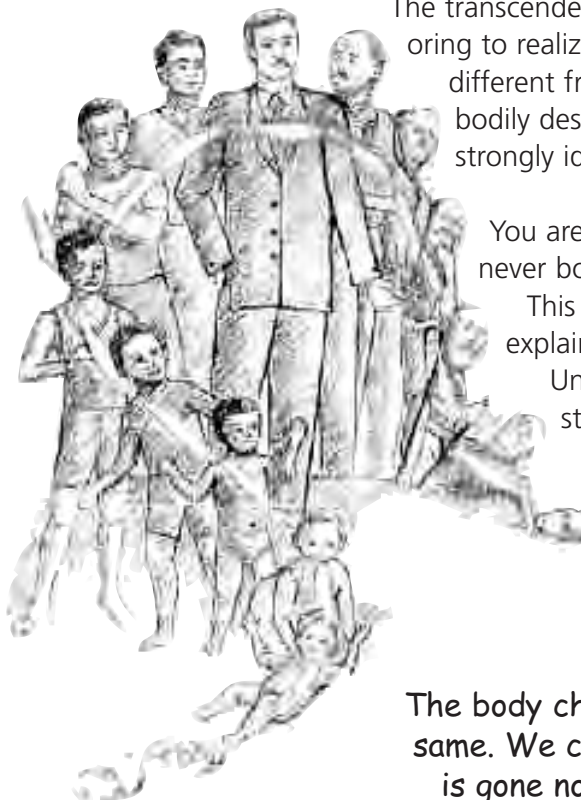
Write a description of your present material identity-nationality, age, everything you can think of.



Who are you?



"The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end; therefore, fight, O descendent of Bharata."



The transcendentalist is constantly endeavoring to realize himself as a spiritual soul, different from any of the temporary bodily designations which we so strongly identify ourselves.

You are an eternal spirit; you were never born and you will never die.

This is the first point Krishna explains in the Bhagavad-gita.


Understanding this is the first step in spiritual life.

The body changes throughout life but the self remains the same. We can remember having a child's body. That form is gone now, but the inner self, the observer, remains.

Common Arguments:

1. What is the difference between a dead body and a living body? When someone dies, we say, "Oh, he has gone." Even a child can understand that the person is no longer there.
2. Any combination of non-conscious atoms or dull material elements cannot produce consciousness. This is common sense.
3. Energy is never lost or destroyed. So what happens to the source of consciousness, the living force, at the time of death?
4. We even say, "My body." That indicates that we intuitively know that the "I" owns the body; they are two different things.
5. People's testimonies about out of body experiences and past life memories give us powerful evidence.
6. The Vedas conclude: Matter, which can be perceived by the material senses, is temporal and unconscious. Spirit, which is imperceptible to the material senses, is the eternal consciousness.
7. Together they make up the whole of reality which we experience in this universe.

Some common objections:



But the soul can't be perceived in any way or measured with any instrument. Why should we believe in a hypothetical entity for which there is no evidence?

Actually, you can see the soul; it is just a matter of training, just as you must study in the university for many years to see how an atom exists. The soul is like a spiritual atom. The symptom of its presence is consciousness.

Evolutionary theory has proven that life is a result of chemical combinations—everyone knows that.

Evolutionary theory is still a theory, and real scientists know that it has many problems. And a significant body of discoveries defies the theory. It is far from having proven anything. We challenge people to prove that life comes from chemicals by demonstrating it in the laboratory.

The brain is so complex, we cannot understand how it works, but you can tell that it is the source of consciousness because if certain parts are damaged, the consciousness is impaired.

Not necessarily. If a computer is damaged, the user's ability to operate through the computer will be impaired, but that doesn't mean that the user is created by the computer. Consciousness may work through the brain but that doesn't mean that the brain is consciousness. It is still a collection of material elements. Atoms, electrons, and molecules cannot see, no matter what combination you put them in.

The Soul

The soul is the life force within the body. It is the source of consciousness, your very self, which is experiencing the changes of the mind and body. Therefore it is also called the knower of the "field" (i.e. the body).

Here is a list of important qualities of the soul:

- Eternally an individual personality and identity
- Pleasure-seeking by nature
- Sat-cit-ananda
- Transcendental / does not mix with anything
- More powerful than ten thousand suns
- Situated in the heart alongside with the Supersoul
- Always dependent; must take shelter of Krishna or His energy
- An eternal part and parcel of Krishna and therefore has the same qualities as Krishna
- A servant and lover of Krishna
- Controlled by Krishna
- Naturally serves Krishna
- Illuminates the entire body with consciousness, as sun illuminates the solar system.
- Never born and never dies
- Ten-thousandth of the tip of a hair
- Unbreakable, insoluble, everlasting, indestructible
- Unchangeable, invisible, inconceivable and immutable
- Cannot be cut by any weapon, burned by fire, moistened by water, nor dried by the wind.



Sanatana-dharma

The Constitutional Position of the Soul

- Sanatana means eternal.
- Self-realization means to understand the real nature (eternal identity) of the self.
- Identity is defined in terms of relationships to others-parents, brothers, uncles, occupation, community, society, nation.
- If we want to know our ultimate, eternal (constitutional) identity, we have to see our position in relationship to the Absolute Truth, to God.

So what is our relationship to God?

That is our dharma, our eternal (sanatana-) dharma.

- Colloquially, dharma means occupation, religion, or path. But these are not universal or eternal or the essence of the living being's existence.
- The root meaning of dharma is "essence" or "that which sustains one's existence"; For instance saltiness is the essence of salt - you can not remove it. Heat and light are the essences of fire; they are its dharma. Similarly the essential nature of the living entity is activity in relationship to others => service.
- Religion really means to re-link. And re-linking with God is a process universal to all religions. Yoga means the same thing: to connect oneself with God. And this connection is re-established through service.

Summary

So, our constitutional identity is defined by our relationship to the Lord. And our essential nature is to serve. Therefore we are servants of the Lord, just as the part is to the whole. This is our sanatana-dharma, our eternal occupation, our real religion.

What is the difference between mundane religion and transcendental religion?

Mundane religion is bound to the material and involves the four material principles:

_____	(.....)
_____	(.....)
_____	(.....)
_____	(.....)

Krishna consciousness rejects these four mundane principles (Bg 18.66) {although a devotee still achieves the benefits of them all automatically without separate endeavour (Bg 9.22)} and embraces the principle of

_____ (.....).

Consider the peace and satisfaction felt in serving others as compared to the frustration of trying to lord it over others. A cook or a nurse for example feels satisfaction when the recipients of their services are satisfied; whereas an ambitious status seeker is always envious of those above him.



A cook feels satisfaction when the recipients of their services are satisfied



Write down your experience of serving others and of being served.

So what is Devotional Service, define it?



An ambitious status seeker is always envious of those he sees as competitors



What is the problem with being servile or sycophantic?

What is an appropriate service mood?



Unit Four

The Law of Karma	41
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The Law of Karma

What is Karma?

- Literally means "work" or "activity"
- The law of karma means for every action there is a reaction (the law of cause and effect)
- The pain or pleasure we cause others will sooner or later return back to us.





Therefore whatever pain or pleasure we are experiencing now is a result of our previous activities.



"As you sow,
so shall you
reap."




There are various stages both in cause and effect. Each effect is also a cause for future effect.

	Bija	Seed	Desire (to enjoy and control separate from Krishna in various ways)
	Kutastha	Bud	Decision (thinking, feeling, and will- ing-in the mind, coming to the decision to perform a particular activity.)
	Phalonmukha	Fruit	Activity (Performing it)
	Prarabdha	Reap/ harvest	Reaction (Happiness and Distress)

Karma is administered by the Supersoul

- He knows everything-past, present, and future
- He keeps track of our karmic accounts
- He arranges for the particular body and circumstances we get in life
- He makes sure that we get the karmic reactions we deserve by both (a) giving us the knowledge, forgetfulness, remembrance, and inspiration that will guide us in the required direction; and (b) arranging other appropriate circumstances externally.
- He awards the living beings what they desire and deserve.

Three divisions of action and subsequent reaction (karma)

Karma Pious work that adheres to Vedic principles	Vikarma Work that contravenes Vedic injunctions; sinful	Akarma Not a negation of work, but of reactions; i.e. work with no reactions. Work done not for oneself but for Krishna
 Examples:	Examples:	Devotional service Impersonal meditation
Elevates one to higher status, a good birth or life on the heavenly planets.	Produces negative reactions; lower birth	Gives liberation and establishes one in loving devotional service

Points of discussion

- Even so-called good karma is bondage.
- Action in inaction / inaction in action
= reaction from not working / no reaction from work (see Bg 4.18)
- Action in Krishna consciousness burns up previous reactions
- Everything depends on desire; we cannot obliterate desire-we must change it.
- Giving and accepting money in charity

Destiny and Free Will

Is the living entity in the material world controlled or free?
Are his activities pre-determined or does he choose them himself?

Philosophers, theologians, and scientists throughout the centuries have pondered and discussed this age-old theme.

People generally like to think that they are totally free. Think of anything you know or have heard that supports the idea of the living entity being controlled, even when he thinks he is free.



What inhibits our freedom?

Why wouldn't it be correct to say that we are completely controlled and have absolutely no free will?

- We wouldn't be responsible for our own actions and get karma (animals don't accumulate karma, because they cannot make independent decisions).
- That would make God whimsical for sending some living entities to enjoy in heaven and other to suffer in hell.
- Krishna is supremely independent; His parts and parcels are therefore also minutely independent.
- If we had no free will, how could we surrender? And how could there be any love?



Further points:

What is our freedom? How does our free will manifest in daily life?

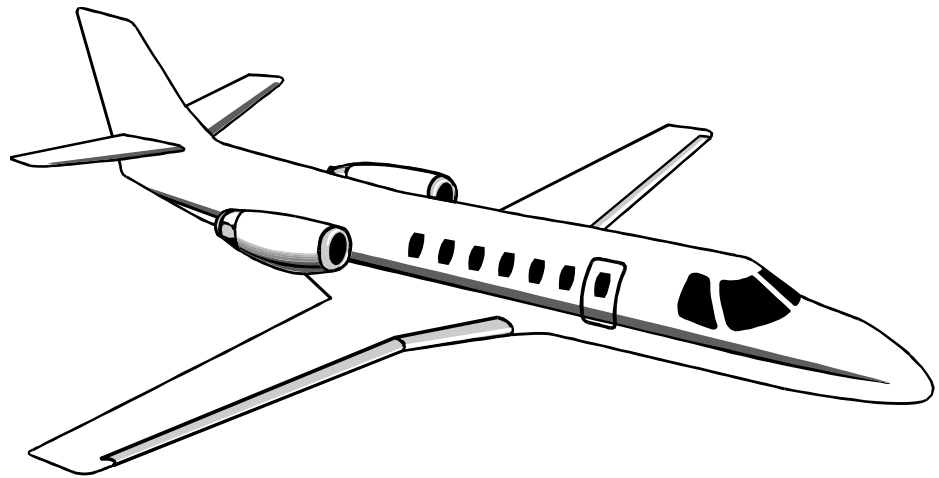
Here are a few examples:

- Following Krishna's instructions or not (We have the free will to submit ourselves to the control of material nature or Krishna's instructions.)
- Choosing to do good in moments of moral dilemma
- A person may become attracted to a certain mode and thus associate with it and thus develop that mode more within himself.

Thesis: One is completely _____.

Anti-thesis: One is completely _____ and _____.

Synthesis: _____ and free will _____ side by side.



The passengers on an airplane have freedom to act while flying, but their destination is pre-determined once they have decided to board..

Points of Discussion

- Common misinterpretations of karma; dodging responsibility
- The soul is responsible for her own entanglement; Krishna never wanted us to leave his association.
- Entanglement and liberation are results of desire; Use and misuse of freedom;
- What is freedom really?
- Breaking laws leads to loss of freedom.

Re-incarnation



"As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up old and useless ones. " (Bg 2.22)

Definitions:

Re-incarnation: the incarnation or embodiment of a soul in a new body after it has left the old one at physical death

Transmigration: the passing (of souls) from one body to another at death.

Basic Description

- The human being's activities create karmic reactions or karma-phala ('work-fruit'). His desires, thoughts, words, and actions in life produce a total impression on the mind.
- As long as the living entity still has material desires, Krishna continues to give him another opportunity to fulfill them.
- After death, the living being gets another body according to his desire, the total impression on the mind, and his karma-phala.
- The 8,400,000 species are created with different sets of senses to fulfill the different desires of the living entity.
- Karma-phala, which determines the path one takes through various species or to other human bodies, is accrued only in the human form of life.
- The soul uses up his accumulated karma-phala as he passes through the non-human species.
- Eventually, the soul returns to the human platform, where he gets a new opportunity to carve out a new destiny.
- This cycle continues until the living entity becomes free of material desire, which holds him in the material world.



"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail. " (Bg 8.6)

Evidence

Write down any evidence or arguments that support this concept.



Direct perception (science):

Mental reasoning (Philosophy / Logic):

Scripture:

Quotes:

Throughout the ages, many famous thinkers (philosophers, writers, scholars, theologians, scientists, artists, etc.) have accepted the concept of reincarnation:

"I am confident that there is truly such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead." (Socrates while drinking the cup of poison)

"Every soul comes into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of its previous life.... Its work in this world determines its place in the world which is to follow this." (Origen)

"God generates beings and sends them back over and over again, until they return to Him." (Koran)

"It is not more surprising to be born twice than once." (Voltaire)

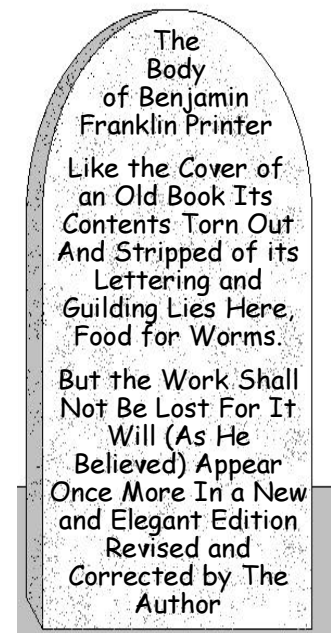
*They will come back, come back again
As long as the red earth rolls.
He never wasted a leaf or a tree.
Do you think He would squander souls?
(Rudyard Kipling)*

"I am no Hindu, but I hold the doctrine of the Hindus concerning a future state to be incomparably more rational, more pious, and more likely to deter men from vice, than the horrid opinions inculcated by Christians on punishments without end." (Sir William Jones, founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal)

"It is absolutely necessary that the soul be purified, and if this does not take place in this life on earth, it must be accomplished in future lives." (St. Gregory, bishop of Nyssa)



**"Who do men say that I am? John the Baptist, Elias or Jeremias."
(Jesus)**



Benjamin Franklin's self-composed epitaph



Unit Five

The Three Aspects of the Absolute Truth

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The Three Aspects of the Absolute Truth:

Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan

Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan. (SB 1.2.11)

Brahman

Brahman: means spirit, the greatest, supreme, Krishna's all-pervading energy.

It is the oneness that underlies the variety of manifestations, the substance of existence.

*Saguna Brahman -Brahman with manifested qualities (material world).
Nirguna Brahman-means without manifested qualities (spiritual world).*

Paramatma (Supersoul)

A localised expansion of the Lord, expanded everywhere in every heart and atom of the material universe.

- He is one but appears divided, just as the sun shines on everyone.
- He knows all bodies, unlike the individual soul.
- His source and identity: Ksirodakasayi Vishnu



What does He do? What are His functions?

He is sometimes detectable as conscience or the inner voice.

He has all knowledge and is our best well-wishing friend. Therefore we should surrender to Him. That will be the best for us.



Bhagavan

(= of opulence [bhaga] the owner [van])

- The personal and original aspect of the Absolute Truth.
- Bhagavan realization includes Paramatma and Brahman realization.
- Parasara Muni's definition: the Supreme Personality who possesses all six opulences in full.

Which people today are well-known for having one of these particular opulences?



Wealth

Strength

Fame

Beauty

Knowledge

Renunciation

What are some examples of how Krishna exhibited specific opulences?



Wealth (Aisvarya)

Strength (Virya)

Fame (Yasasah)

Beauty (Sriyah)

Knowledge (Jnana)

Renunciation (Vairagya)

What are the characteristics of God (Bhagavan or Vishnu-tattva)?



Inter-relationship of All Three:

- train coming: seeing smoke, light, meeting the driver
- approaching a distant mountain
- the three aspects of the sun: rays, globe & personality

Worshippers	Possible Attainment	Realization
Brahman (brahmavadis)	Brahmajyoti	Sat
Paramatma (yogis)	Brahmajyoti or Vaikuntha planets	Sat, cit
Bhagavan (bhaktas)	Vaikuntha or Goloka-Vrndavana	Sat, cit, ananda



Unit Six

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Krishna, the Supreme Absolute Truth

Why do we accept Krishna as the original Supreme Personality of God-head?

Here are some typical counter-arguments:

- He is an incarnation of Vishnu (seen at birth).
- Brahma or Shiva are more powerful.
- He exhibited human traits (Rancor, fight with Salva).
- He takes the form of a small child and then grows to an adult.
- Just a bias: other scriptures glorify demigods like Indra as the Supreme.



The Supreme Lord and His Abode



What makes Krishna unique?

*isvarah paramah krishnah
sac-cid-ananda-vigraha
anadir adir govindah
sarva-karana-karanam*

"Krishna, who is known as Govinda, is the Supreme Godhead. He has a spiritual form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. He is the origin of all and He has no other origin, for He is the primeval cause of all causes."

Krishna is the original source of everything in existence: all energies, all Vishnu-tattva expansions, all living beings. Everything everywhere that expands from Him, is a part of Him. He is the supreme object of worship, the supreme master, the supreme friend, the supreme lover.

Krishna is known as the son of Nanda and Yasoda. He is renowned for playing His flute and wearing a peacock feather on His hair. He always appears as a fresh youth and He is called Syama because His bodily hue is like the blackish-blue monsoon clouds.

Govinda means the giver of pleasure to the cows or the senses. He plays as a cowherd boy in the forests of Vrndavana and enjoys conjugal pastimes with the beautiful cowherd damsels, especially with His internal pleasure potency, Radharani. The crown-jewel among His wonderful varieties of pastimes is the rasa-lila dance.

His devotees' love for Him is the most exalted anywhere in the universe. He can attract all living entities by playing His flute. His name means the all-attractive one. The exquisite beauty of His form cannot be rivaled by any one in the creation.

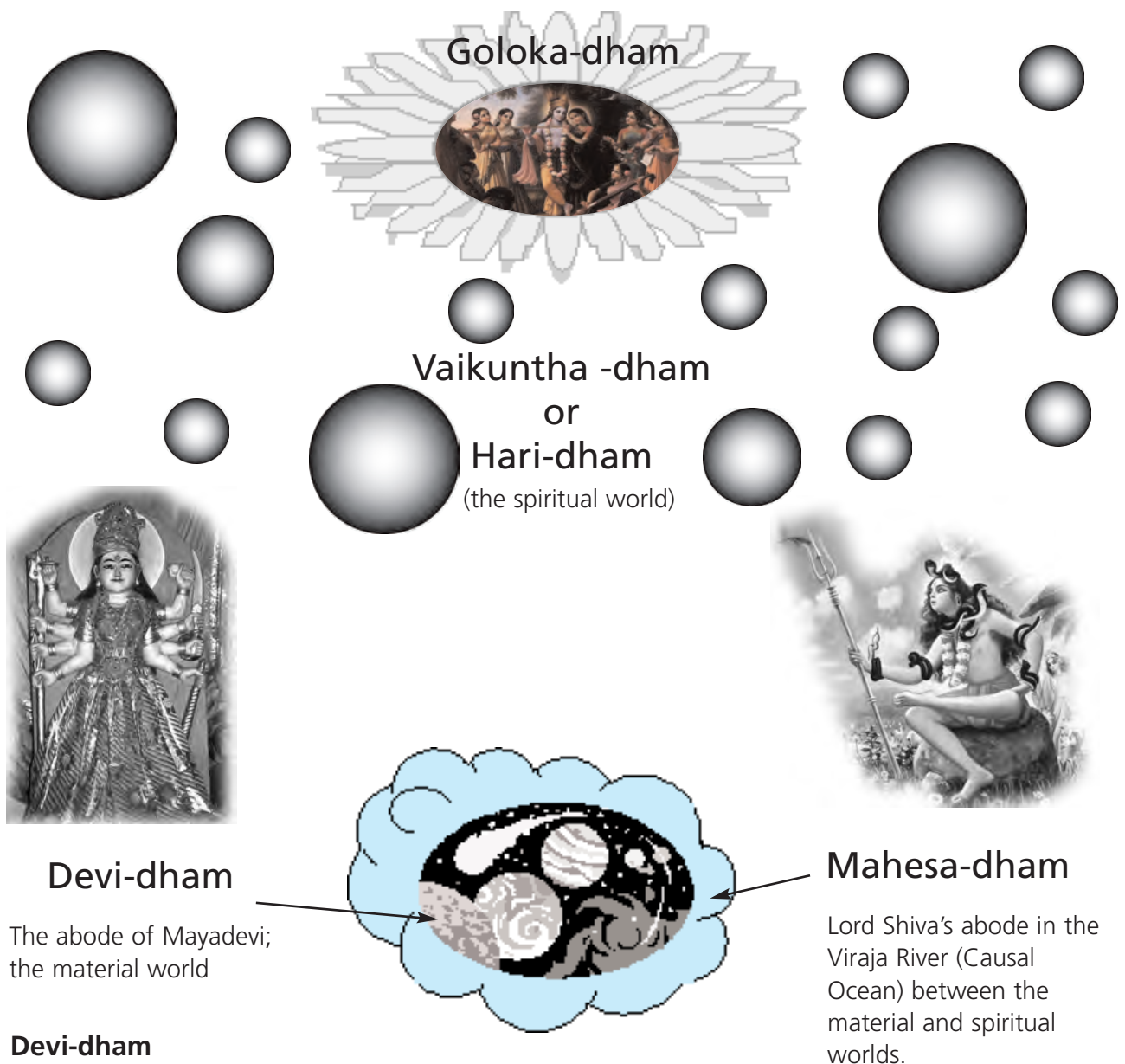
Radharani and Her Expansions

Radharani is Krishna's supreme and eternal consort. She expands Herself into innumerable forms for the Lords pleasure. All the gopis, the queens of Dvaraka and the Laksmis, consorts of Vishnu or Narayana, are all expansions of Radharani.



The Four Dhams or Abodes

Knowing these four realms or abodes gives one an overview of the sum totality of existence (summum bonum).



Devi-dham

- Where the living entities go when they give up the desire to serve Krishna and desire to enjoy separately from the Lord
- Meant for fulfilling the living entity's desires and for his rehabilitation
- A temporal place of illusory enjoyment and constant suffering
- Conditioned by birth, old age, disease and death
- The knowledge of the living entity is covered by ignorance and illusion
- False ego makes the living entity identify with the material body
- A place of duality and relativity

Mahesa-dham

- A marginal place between Devi-dham and Hari-dham
- Not part of the spiritual world, nor the material world
- No opportunity to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- For impersonalists who want to merge into the Transcendence
- For liberated souls who have not realized the opulence of Hari-dhama
- The destination of nirvana, the Buddha philosophy
- System of jnana-yoga makes one eligible to enter there

General Description of Vaikuntha

(Vai-free from; kuntha-anxiety)

- Unlimited planets, each being unlimited
- Once having gone there, we never return to the material world
- Ever-increasing pleasure and love
- No artificial lighting - everything is self-illuminating
- Ever-fresh, youthful, eternal, immortal
- Each planet is predominated by a particular expansion of Narayana
- Everyone and everything there is perfect
- Everything is made of pure consciousness
- Kama-dhenu cows, Kalpa-vrksa wish-fulfilling trees
- Described: SB 3.15.12-24

Krishnaloka or Goloka-dham

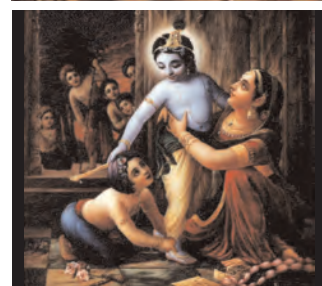
- the supreme spiritual planet in Vaikuntha
- It is like the whorl of a lotus flower (other planets are the petals)
- Three divisions: Vrndavana, Mathura, Dvaraka
- It emanates the bright rays of effulgence (brahmajyoti) throughout the entire spiritual world.
- Krishna performs wonderful pastimes there and reveals His sweetness.
- Every step is a dance, every word is a song

Being the abode of the original Supreme Personality, Goloka-dham displays special features not found anywhere else in Vaikuntha. Among them are the especially sweet relationships (rasas) Krishna has with His devotees there.

The Five Primary (Direct) Rasas

These rasas are eternally manifested in the hearts of the pure devotees.

Rasa	Activities	Qualities	Examples
Santa (Neutrality)	Meditation and worship of Brahman and Paramatma; Appreciating Krishna's beauty	Full attachment to Krishna	Sukadeva Gos. Bilvamangala. Four Kumaras Navayogendras
Dasya (Servitude)	Menial service, Prayers, obeisances, fanning, carrying umbrella supplying betel, cleaning clothes	Full attachment to Krishna's Service	Brahma, Daruka Uddhava Pradyumna Bhisma
Sakhya (Friendship)	Joking, fighting, playing, massaging, counselling, relaying confidential messages, singing, dancing	Full attachment to Krishna's Service Relaxed intimacy	Sudama Arjuna Bhima Ujjvala Stoka Krishna
Vatsalya (Parental)	Bathing, dressing, decorating, smelling head, chastising, instructing, protecting.	Full attachment to Krishna's Service Relaxed intimacy Maintenance	Yasoda-mata, Nanda Maharaj Devaki, Vasudeva, Kunti, Rohini, Sandipani Muni
Madhurya (Conjugal)	Exchange of glances and sweet smiles, dancing, kissing, embracing, talks and arguments	Full attachment to Krishna's Service Relaxed intimacy Maintenance Offering the body	Radharani Rukmini Satyabhama Lalita, Visakha Candravali



The Development of Qualities in the Rasas

Full attachment to Krishna in Santa-rasa is accompanied by complete detachment from material enjoyment. The devotee does not perform any personal service unto the Lord, but is fixed in a state of appreciation, awe, and reverence. This is the beginning of devotional service.

The stage of Dasya-rasa adds service to the foundation of appreciation. The devotee is convinced that the living entity is the servant and the Lord is the master.

Relaxed intimacy is added to the previous two qualities in Sakhya-rasa. This quality replaces the mood of awe and reverence, and devotees on this level consider themselves equal to Krishna.

The maintenance (and protection) characteristic of Vatsalya-rasa indicates that the devotee in this relationship with Krishna considers himself or herself in a superior position. He or she feels that Krishna is dependent on them.

The conjugal loving relationship includes all of the previous characteristics and adds to them the offering of the body. Krishna's female companions make themselves look beautiful for Krishna's pleasure and Krishna becomes attracted to them.

In this way, each successive rasa builds on the previous one, adding one more element each time. For more details, see Nectar of Devotion, Chapters 35 to 44.

Perceiving Krishna in His Creation

Krishna is...

...the essence of everything:

the taste in water
the sound in ether
the ability in man
the heat in fire
the life of all that lives

the intelligence of the intelligent
the prowess of all powerful men
the original fragrance of the earth
the light of the sun and the moon
the strength of the strong

...the very best of everything:

of lights	the radiant sun	of immovable	
among stars	the moon	things	the Himalayas
of the sages	Vyasa	of wielders of	
of the senses	the mind	weapons	Rama
of vibrations	transcendental om	of those seeking	
of sacrifices	chanting japa	victory	morality
among men	the monarch	of the demigods	Indra
of science	science of the self	of secret things	silence
among logicians	the conclusive	of flowing rivers	the Ganges
	truth	among lawkeepers	Yamaraja
of seasons	flower-bearing	among the	
	spring	demons	Prahlada
of weapons	the thunderbolt	among subduers	time
among cows	the surabhi	among beasts	the lion
of fishes	the shark	among birds	Garuda
of bodies of water	the ocean	of creators	Brahma



**The Supreme
Lord is directing
the wandering of
all living entities**



Know that all opulent, beautiful and glorious creations spring from but a spark of My splendor. . . . With a single fragment of Myself, I pervade and support this entire universe. (Bg 10.41-42)

One can perceive Krishna's Virat-Rupa, or 'universal-form' everywhere in the creation. The Rupa described below is a highly conceptualized form originally intended for impersonalists (krishna has no 'bones', for instance!), and is a different Virat-Rupa to the one shown to Arjuna on the battlefield. :

Hills/mountains	Stacks of His bones
Physical sound	His sense of hearing
Material aroma	His sense of smell
Trees	The hairs of His body
Clouds	Hairs on His head
Day and night	His eyelids
Religion	His breast
Irreligion	His back
The ocean	His waist
Rivers	Veins
Twilight	His dress
The air	His breath
The ten directions	His ears
The blazing fire	His mouth
The sun and moon	His eyes
Alluring material energy	His smile
The passing ages	His movements
The horse, mule, camel	His nails
Varieties of birds	His artistry
The brahmanas	His face
The ksatriyas	His arms
The vaisyas	His thighs
The sudras	Under His feet



Unit Seven

The Three Energies of the Lord	67
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The Three Energies of the Lord

The Lord has unlimited energies, but all of these energies can be divided into three main categories.

Antaranga-sakti	Internal energy	The spiritual world
Bahiranga-sakti	External energy	Material world
Tatastha-sakti	Marginal energy	The living entities

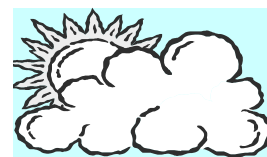
Bahiranga-sakti

Is everything a part of Krishna and connected to Him? Why is the material world called the external energy or Krishna's separated energy (bhinnaprakriti)?

Inconceivably one and different simultaneously (Acintya-bhedabheda-tattva)

Sunshine and clouds come from the sun; thus they are simultaneously one with the sun and different from the sun. Similarly, the living entities and the material creation come from Krishna and are thus simultaneously one with and different from Krishna.

Acintya-
bheda-
bheda-
tattva



Why is it called acintya, inconceivable?



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Tatastha-sakti

Stha means position.

Tata is the point at the edge of the waves that roll up on the beach, the margin between water and land.

The living entities, the marginal energy of the Lord, are compared to sea-

Tatastha-sakti

Like sea-weed on the shore; of one world but in another



weed that can drift in the ocean waves or wash up on the shore.

Why is it important to know this?



Overcoming maya

This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.
(Bg 7.14)

Taking shelter

O son of Prtha, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.
(Bg 9.13)

If you don't take shelter of the internal energy, you will remain in the shelter of the external energy. The living entity is always under the shelter of one of these two. You cannot be outside of both. You cannot realize one while in the other.

Antaranga-sakti

Antaranga-sakti includes everything in the spiritual world and is under the direct shelter of the spiritual energy.



Maya

Devotees often refer to the material world as maya. Maya means 'that which is not', or illusion. Knowing the illusions of the material world is important in spiritual life.

What illusions of the material world can you think of?



The Material World is a Place of Suffering

Srila Prabhupada often emphasised that the material world is a place of suffering. Why is it important to emphasise this point? Why do devotees need to be convinced about it?



The Three-Fold Miseries of Life

Adhyatmika: miseries coming from one's own body and mind (aching bones, rotting teeth, headaches, worry and stress.)

Adhibhautika: miseries coming from other living beings (mosquitoes, envious people, vicious dogs, etc.)

How many different ways can you give pain to your foot compared to how many ways you can give it pleasure?



Adhidaivika: miseries coming from nature (demigods) (earthquake, famine, extreme weather conditions, etc.)

Birth, Death, Old age, and Disease

Seeing how these four limiting factors of the material world create suffering for the living entity is an item of knowledge listed in Bg 13.8-12.

It takes a little contemplation and discussion to grasp. We usually forget the suffering of birth, and while we are young and healthy, old age, disease, and death seem distant and irrelevant. Therefore the Bhagavatam attempts to awaken us.

- Consider the suffering the child goes through at birth.
- Disease is a misery that repeatedly arises throughout life. See how many different kinds of disease and affliction you can think of.
- Consider also the disturbing symptoms of old age.
- Lord Kapila describes (SB 3.30) the typical miseries surrounding death.
- Old age, severe disease, and death are bad enough in themselves but they also cause pain to loved ones who see the suffering condition.

Hmmm . . . something to think about . . .

The material nature provides the living entity with much more opportunity to suffer than to enjoy. For example, how many different ways can you give pain to your foot compared with how many ways you can give it pleasure?

Even if we don't realize personally that the material world is a place of suffering, Lord Krishna certifies it in Bhagavad-gita 8.15 (duhkhalayam).

Drawbacks of Material Happiness

Material happiness . . .

- is simply a relief from suffering
- is temporary and limited
- is based on envy and is therefore unreal
- is nothing compared to what we are missing
- makes us attached
- keeps us bound to material life and the bodily concept of life
- is never as good as one expects

Exercise:

Note down the different kinds of suffering the human being generally goes through at the different stages of life.

	Birth	
Toddler	5	
Child	10	
School	15	
Teenager	20	
Work	25	
Marriage	30	
Home	35	
Neighbours	40	
Children	45	
Family	50	
Expenses	55	
Midlife...	60	
Getting older	65	
Retirement	70	
	75+	
	80	
	85+	
Death		

The soul in the material world is like a fish out of water



...or a starving bird in a cage





Unit Eight

Avataras

75

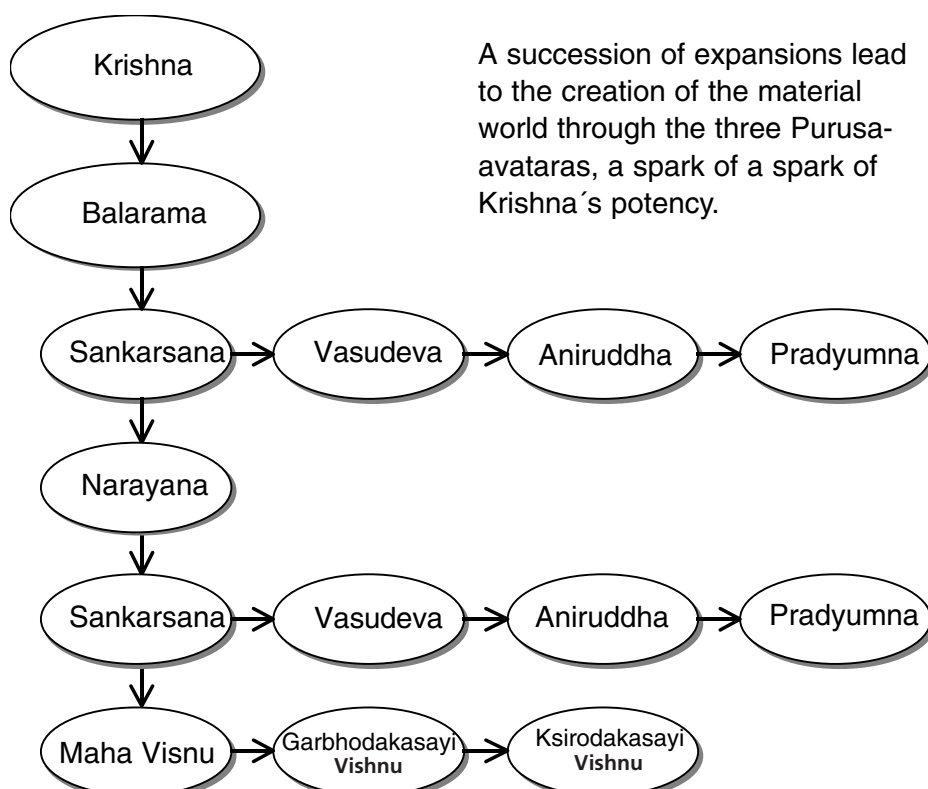
Avataras

Avatara: "One who descends"; in this case the word specifically refers to one who descends from the spiritual sky.

The Six Types of Incarnations (avataras):

purusa-avatars	Incarnations of Vishnu
guna-avatars	Incarnations that control the material qualities
lila-avatars	Incarnations for the performance of pastimes
yuga-avatars	Incarnations who establish the yuga-dharma
manvantara-avatars	The Manus - creators
saktyavesa-avatars	Empowered beings - 'immersed in shakti'

Purusa-avatars:



The universes emanate from the pores of His skin like bubbles.

Expands into each universe and creates Brahma from His navel.

Enters into every atom and every heart.



Purusha Avataras

Karanadakasayi-Vishnu

(or Maha-Vishnu)

- First avatara
- Lies on the Causal Ocean
- Creates material ingredients and universes
- Supersoul of all the universes
- Expands as Garbhodakasayi-Vishnu

Garbhodakasayi-Vishnu

- Second Vishnu avatara
- Enters all universes
- Lies on the Garbhodaka Ocean
- Supersoul of the universe
- Gives birth to Brahma from a lotus
- Expands as Ksirodakasayi-Vishnu

Ksirodakasayi-Vishnu

- Third Vishnu avatara
- Enters every atom
- Supersoul of all living entities
- Resides on the Milk Ocean in Svetadvip
- Also the avatara for the mode of goodness

Lila-avatars:

Here are 25 examples:

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| (1) Four Kumaras | (10) Hamsa | (19) Parasurama |
| (2) Narada | (11) Prsnigarbha | (20) Raghavendra |
| (3) Varaha | (12) Rsabha | (21) Vyasa |
| (4) Matsya | (13) Prthu | (22) Balarama |
| (5) Yajna | (14) Nrsimha | (23) Krishna |
| (6) Nara-narayana | (15) Kurma | (24) Buddha |
| (7) Kardami Kapila | (16) Dhanvantari | (25) Kalki. |
| (8) Dattatreya | (17) Mohini | |
| (9) Hayasirsa | (18) Vamana | |



Guna-avatars

The three deities in charge of the three modes of material nature.

Brahma	Vishnu	Shiva
● Mode of passion	● Mode of Goodness	● Mode of ignorance
● Empowered living entity	● Same as Ksiro-da-kasaysi-Vishnu	● Expansion of Maha-Vishnu
● Creates planetary systems and all species	● Maintains the universe	● Responsible for annihilation
● Born from lotus flower of G-Vishnu	● Completely transcendental; not influenced by material energy	● Manifests in material world from Brahma's forehead
● Has four heads	● As powerful as Krishna	● Impregnates the material energy with living entities
● Body made of intelligence.		

Manvantara-avatars

Incarnations of the Manus, the fathers of mankind.

- In each day of Brahma (Kalpa), there are fourteen Manus who rule in turn..
- Therefore in the life of Brahma (the total existence of the universe, 504,000 incarnations of Manu come and go.
- In our present Kalpa, the first Manu was Svayambhuva.
- The present Manu, Vaivasvata, is the seventh for this Kalpa.

Yuga-avatars

Incarnations who establish the spiritual process of the age (yuga).

In each age, the yuga-avatara appears in a different colour.

Yuga	Colour
Satya	White (sukla)
Treta	Red (rakta)
Dvarapa	Blackish blue (syama)
Kali	Black (krishna) or Yellow (pita)

The following quotes refer to the yuga-avatars in this day of Brahma.

In the Satya-yuga, the Lord appeared in a body colored white with four arms and matted hair. He wore tree bark and bore a black antelope skin. He wore a sacred thread and a garland of rudraksa beads. He carried a rod and a waterpot, and He was a brahmacari. (Cc Mad.20.332)

In the Treta-yuga, the Lord appeared in a body that had a reddish hue and four arms. There were three distinctive lines on His abdomen, and His hair was golden. His form manifested the Vedic knowledge, and He bore the symbols of a sacrificial spoon, ladle and so on. (Cc Mad.20.333)

In the Dvapara-yuga the Personality of Godhead appears in a blackish hue. He is dressed in yellow, He holds His own weapons, and He is decorated with the Kaustubha jewel and marks of Srivatsa. That is how His symptoms are described. (Cc Mad.20.337)

Accompanied by His personal devotees, Lord Krishna, assuming a golden color, introduces the hari-nama-sankirtana, the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, in the age of Kali. By this process, He delivers love for Krishna to the general populace. (Cc Mad.20.340)

Saktyavesa-avatars:

Incarnations of empowered beings when Krishna invests a being with a particular potency (sakti).

1. **Direct** (saksat): an expansion of the Lord Himself (Vishnu-tattva) empowered with a particular potency:

Incarnation	Potency	In Sanskrit
Sesa Naga	Power of personal service	sva-sevana-sakti
Anantadeva	Power to bear all the planets	bhu-dharana-sakti

2. **Indirect** (avesa): a living entity empowered to represent Krishna.

Incarnation	Potency	In Sanskrit
Four Kumaras	Power of knowledge	Jnana-sakti
Narada Muni	Power of devotional service	Bhakti-sakti
Brahma	Power of creation	Sristi-sakti
King Prithu	Power of administration	Palana-sakti
Parasurama	Power to subdue evil elements	Dusta-nasaka-virya-sancarana-sakti

Kapila and Rsabadeva are known as forms of divine absorption (bhagavat-avesa).

O brahmanas, the incarnations of the Lord are innumerable, like rivulets flowing from inexhaustible sources of water. (SB 1.3.26)

Dasavataras:

Ten of the avatars are particularly well-known as the Dasavataras. They are depicted in a song by Jayadeva Goswami.



- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |



Kesava drita
nara-hari rupa . . .

How can one identify an incarnation?

Some people claim to be the latest incarnation or claim that they know one. Incarnations cannot be accepted whimsically; one can only determine an incarnation by referring to authorised scriptures.

When Sanatana Goswami asked Lord Caitanya the above question, the Lord first of all stated that an incarnation of God never declares Himself to be an incarnation. He then delineated the following guidelines:

Two aspects of the personality's features must be scrutinized:

1. svarupa-laksana-the principal features, i.e. the bodily characteristics, nature, and form, as described in the scriptures.
2. tatastha-laksana-the marginal features, i.e. his specific activities as described in the scriptures.

The great sage Vyasadeva, knowing all, has already recorded the characteristics of the avatars in the sastras.

The Lord does not have a material body, yet He descends among human beings in His transcendental body as an incarnation. Therefore it is very difficult for us to understand who is an incarnation. Only by His extraordinary prowess and uncommon activities, which are impossible for embodied living entities, can one partially understand the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
(Cc Mad.20.355)

. . . Great saintly persons understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead's incarnations by the indications of the two characteristics, svarupa and tatastha. All the incarnations of Krishna should be understood in this way.
(Cc Mad.20.362)



Unit Nine

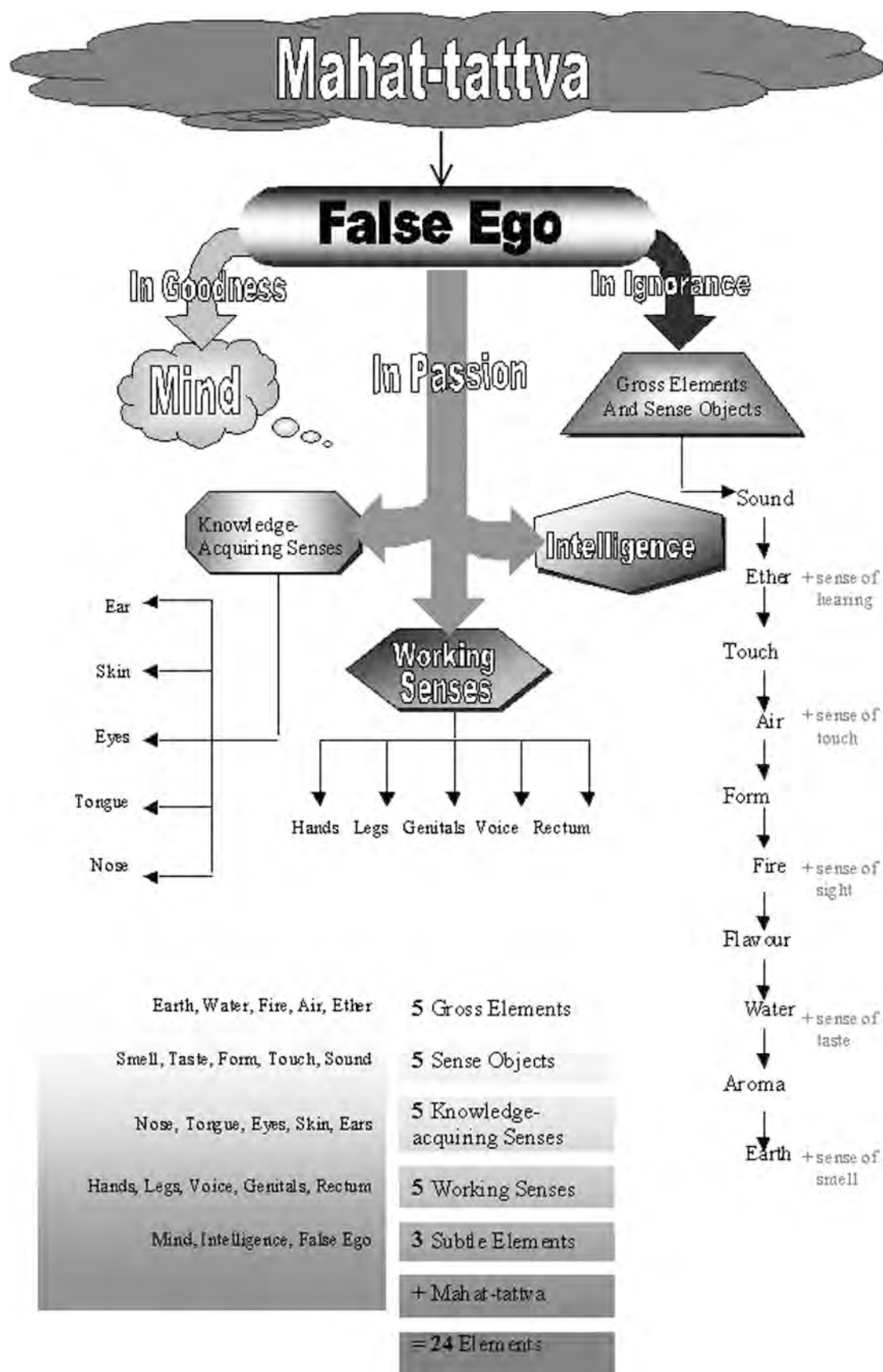
The Creation	83
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The Creation

A brief summary:

1. In one corner of the spiritual sky, a "cloud" covers one portion of the brahmajyoti. This is where the Causal Ocean is (also known as the Viraja River).
2. Maha-Vishnu lies down in the Causal Ocean. At this time, the material nature is in a neutral state (pradhana).
3. Maha-Vishnu (through His Shiva expansion) glances over the material nature, impregnating her with living entities, and agitating her into activity; she transforms into mahat-tattva, the active state.
4. The mahat-tattva produces the various elements, starting with the false ego.
5. The innumerable universes emanate from Maha-Vishnu's pores like bubbles.
6. Garbhodakasayi-Vishnu expands from Maha-Vishnu into each of the universes.
7. Garbhodakasayi-Vishnu creates within the universe another ocean, upon which He rests with the help of Sesa-naga. He produces the first living entity, Lord Brahma, from a lotus flower that sprouts from His navel.
8. Lord Brahma creates the various planetary systems, the sun, the moon, etc., and species of life. The living entities obtain bodies according to their previous karma.





Mahat-tattva

- The aggregate of all the ingredients for the material creation, including the conditioned souls.
- The germinating place for all the varieties of creation, starting with the false ego.
- Material nature's primal state.
- The shadow of pure (spiritual) consciousness
- The junction between pure spiritual existence and material existence.

**False Ego (ahankara)**

- The binding force of material existence.
- Causes one to identify with the body and mind, to think oneself a product of matter, and to see oneself as the controller and enjoyer.
- The basic principle of the material world and its activities.

**Mind (mana)**

- Basic functions are sankalpa (accepting) and vikalpa (rejecting), which are manifestations of material attachment.
- Storehouse of all knowledge, experiences, all perceptions
- Simultaneously like an attorney pleading the case of the senses and a courtroom within which the judge (intelligence) works.



Intelligence (buddhi)

- The power of discrimination and making distinctions
- The ability to utilize and synthesize knowledge (experience) into usable forms and reach conclusions for action.
- The power to understand the nature of an object.
- It figures out plans and discriminates - what is to be done and what not to be done, based on time, place and circumstance



Knowledge-acquiring Senses (jnanendriya)

- Enable the living being to relate to this world
- They cover the original spiritual senses like transformers, but have no power of perception without the spiritual senses
- Feed information about the material world through sense objects (taste, form, touch, sound, and aroma) to the mind
- Always active and attracted to sense objects like a magnet to iron; thus desires for sense gratification flow into the mind
- Have to be controlled through devotional service

Sense Objects (indriyarthas)

Sound, touch, form, taste, and aroma are the subtle forms of ether, air, fire, water, and earth respectively.

Sound	Loud/quiet, pitch, direction
Touch	Soft/hard, warm/cold, wet/dry, smooth/rough, still/moving (vibration), up/down (balance)
Form	Shape, colour, dimension, position, distance, individuality, movement
Taste	Sweet, salty, sour, bitter, astringent, pungent
Aroma	Fragrant/offensive, mild/strong, acidic

Gross Elements (maha-bhuta)

- Ether is the three-dimensional space that accommodates the existence of everything in the universe. Radio and television transmissions travel through ether.
- Air, water and earth represent gas, liquid, and solid respectively.
- Fire represents all effulgent emanations, electricity, and the entire electromagnetic spectrum.
- Air exists in a subtler form in the body and contributes to its proper functioning. A subtle form of fire in the body enables digestion.

Interrelationship between the gross elements and the sense objects

Ether					
Air					
Fire					
Water					
Earth					
	Sound	Touch	Form	Taste	Aroma

Sound for instance is a characteristic of all the elements, whereas aroma is a characteristic only of earth. Conversely, ether only has one characteristic, sound, whereas earth contains them all.



The individual is the passenger in the chariot of the material body, the intelligence is the driver, the mind is the reins, and the senses are the horses.



Time (kala)

- The twenty-fifth element. The mixing element
- Represents the presence of the Supreme Lord
- Causes fear of death

The soul and the Supersoul are sometimes counted as the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh elements.



The Hierarchy of the bodily components

The senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence. (Bg 3.42)

The Planetary Systems

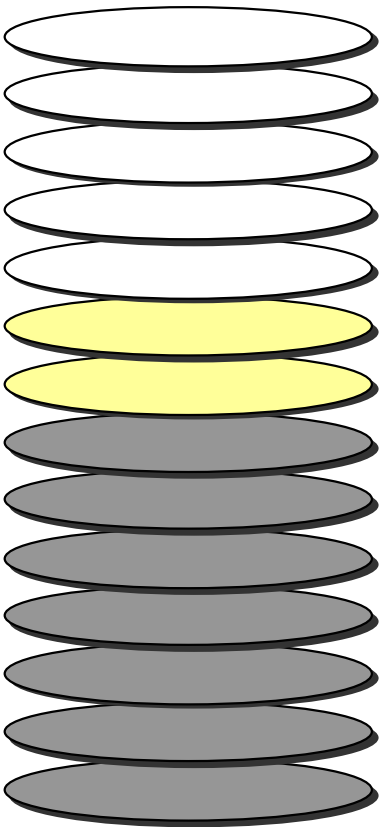
Brahma provides the universe with fourteen planetary systems for the diverse range of living beings.

Some sages group them into three categories

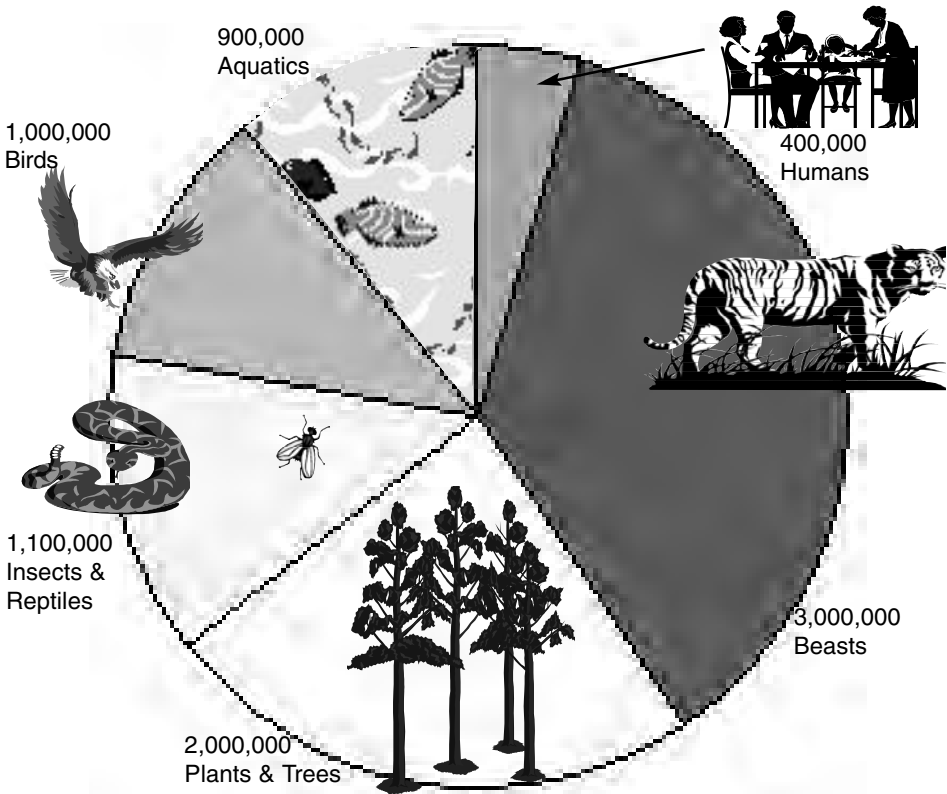
Upper Planetary Systems (Svargaloka)

Middle Planetary Systems (Martyaloka)

Lower Planetary Systems (Patalaloka)



The Species of Life



Universal Time

The Four Ages (Yugas)

= One Yuga-cycle (Divya-yuga)

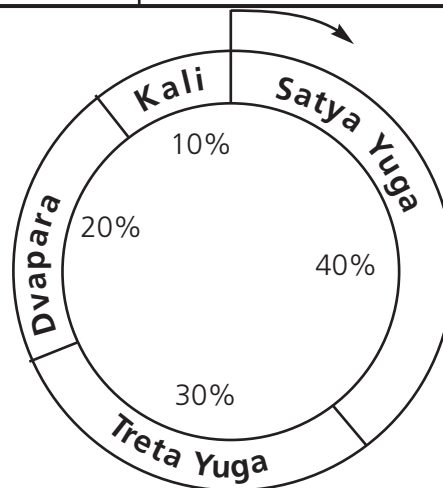
Name of the Age	Earth years	Demigod years
Satya-yuga	1,728,000	4,800
Treta-yuga	1,296,000	3,600
Dvapara-yuga	864,000	2,400
Kali-yuga	432,000	1,200
Total	4,320,000	12,000

One day and night for the demigods

= one earth year

One demigod year = 360 earth years

One Yuga-cycle: 4,320,000 years

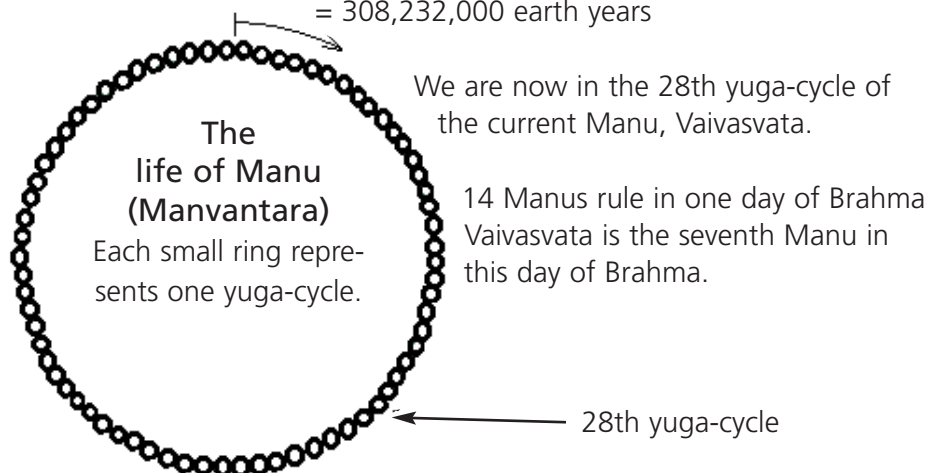


An Age of Manu (Manvantara)

The life of Manu = 71.35 yuga-cycles

= 856,200 demigod years

= 308,232,000 earth years



A Day of Brahma

= 1000 yuga-cycles

= 12 million demigod years

One year of Brahma

= 360,000 yuga-cycles

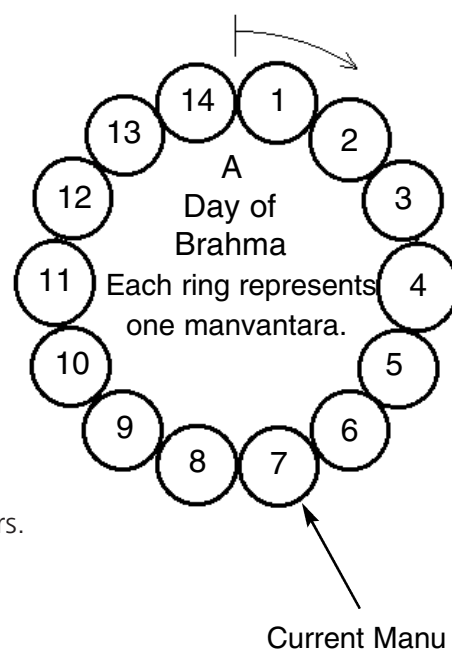
= 1180 million demigod years

Life of Brahma

= 36 million yuga-cycles

= the life of the universe

= 311,040,000,000,000 earth years.





Unit Ten

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The Three Modes of Material Nature

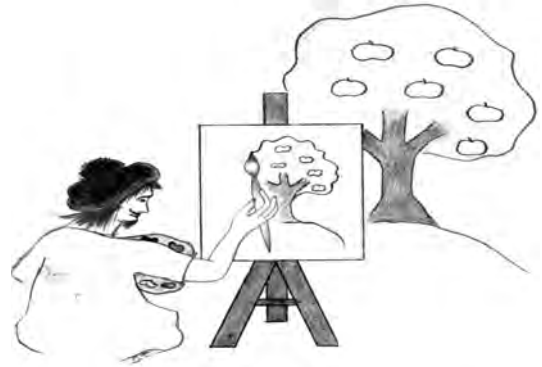
The three modes of material nature are three categories that describe the primary characteristics of the external energy. Material nature consists of these modes.

The broad palette of material characteristics (including all species of life) derive from various mixtures of the modes, just as all possible colours are mixtures of the three primary colours.

In the material world, the modes never exist in a pure state. They are always mixed to some degree or another.

They compete with one another for superiority, sometimes one particular mode gaining prominence over the other two.

The particular mixture of the modes comprising one's body determines one's behaviour, speech, and state of mind. Everyone is conditioned by the modes they have acquired.



The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature.
(Bg 3.27)

They influence one's particular kind of faith, what one believes, and how one sees the world.

Thus the material modes of nature are a significant factor in shaping existence in the material world.





Krishna dedicates the entire 14th chapter of the Bhagavad-gita to explaining the modes of the material nature and He continues this theme in the 17th and 18th chapters.

- Why is understanding this knowledge so important for spiritual life?
- Why does Krishna (Bg 14.1) call this knowledge of the modes of material nature "the best of all knowledge, knowing which all the sages have attained the supreme perfection"?
- How is it that (Bg 14.2) "By becoming fixed in this knowledge, one can attain to the transcendental nature..."?

In his purport to the first verse, Srila Prabhupada says, "Now, in this chapter, the Supreme Personality explains what those modes of nature are, how they act, how they bind, and how they give liberation."



How can they give liberation?

Goodness is the basis for developing real _____, makes one eligible for _____, and gives one the opportunity to _____.



How does one cultivate the mode of goodness?

But one has to transcend the modes to come to pure bhakti.



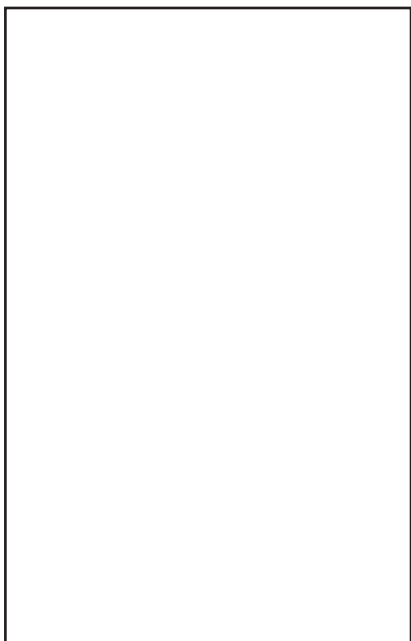
How does one overcome them?



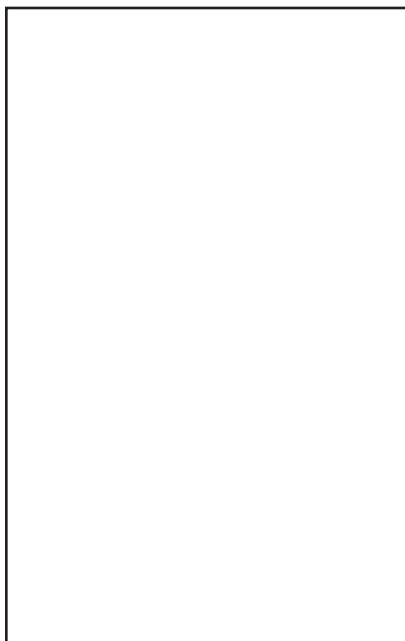
The bewildered spirit soul thinks himself the doer of activities that are actually carried out by the three modes of nature

Exercise:

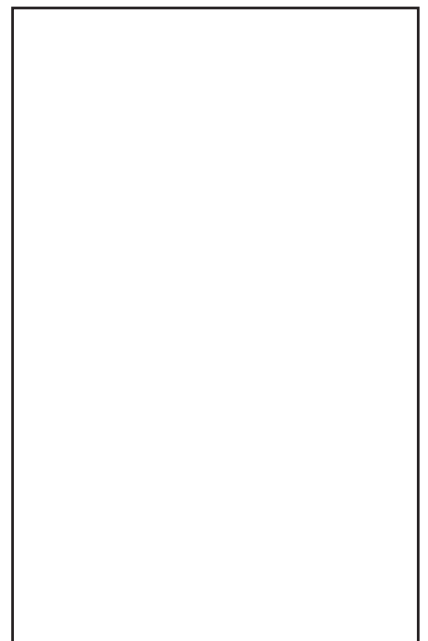
Make a sketch/cartoon/charicature of a person typifying each of the modes of nature.



Ignorance (tamas)



Passion (rajas)



Goodness (sattva)

In the table below, fill in the characteristics of a person driving, chanting, and preaching in each of the modes. In the fourth box, make up your own activity and fill in the rest.

	Ignorance	Passion	Goodness
Driving			
Chanting			
Chanting			
Something else (you name it)			

Can you think of some situation where you were clearly under the influence of one of the lower modes of nature. Briefly note down the situation here.



How could you have acted differently to be more in the mode of goodness?

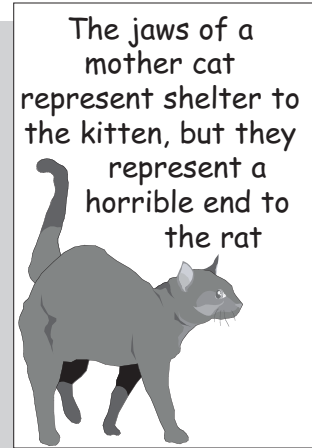


	Ignorance (tama-guna)	Passion (raja-guna)	Goodness (sattva-guna)	Pure Goodness (suddha-sattva)
Main feature	Destruction	Creation	Maintenance	Sat-cid-ananda
General characteristics	Foolishness, madness, illusion, inertia, indolence, sleep, delusion	Unlimited desiresIntense endeavor greed, attachment, fruitive activity	Relative purity, illumination, happiness, self-satisfaction, freedom from sin, real knowledge	Unmotivated, uninterrupted devotion to God, complete self-realization, bliss, real love
Destination after death	Lower planets, Animal kingdom Among ghosts and spirits	Among fruitive workers in the earthy planets or among one's ancestors	Among demigods and sages in the heavenly planets	With the Supreme Lord in Vaikuntha
Objects of worship	Ghosts and spirits	Demons, powerful menImitation gods	Demigods and Brahman	The Supreme Personality of Godhead
Food	Tasteless, stale, putrid, decomposed, unclean. Cooked more than three hours before eating, Others' remnants, Meat, fish, eggs, liquor	Too bitter, sour, salty, pungent, rich, dry, or hot. Causes pain, distress and disease.	Nourishing, sweet, juicy, fattening, palatable, healthy, satisfying, and pleasing to the heart. Increases life, purifies, gives strength. Grains, milk products, fruit, vegetables	Prepared and offered to God with love and devotion. Frees one from sinful reactions. Protects one from contamination. Induces higher consciousness.
Sacrifice	Performed faithlessly in defiance of scripture, no spiritual food distributed, no hymns chanted, no remuneration to priests	Performed proudly, ostentatiously, for the sake of material benefit (like fame, wealth, power, position, elevation to heaven)	Performed as a duty. According to scripture. No expectation of rewardspiritual food distributed hymns chanted, etc.	Performed with love and devotion according to guru, sadhu, and sastra in order to please the Lord. Accompanied by chanting
Austerity	Performed foolishly with self-torture or injury In order to harm others.	Performed ostentatiously to gain respect and honour. Only temporary results.	Performed with faith and no desire for material benefit. Of three kinds: bodily, mental, and speech. For details see Bg 17.14-16	Performed faithfully for the purpose of advancing in Krishna consciousness.

	Ignorance (tama-guna)	Passion (raja-guna)	Goodness (sattva-guna)	Pure Goodness (suddha-sattva)
Charity	Performed at an improper time and place for an unworthy person like a drunkard or gambler, with contempt, without respect	Performed to get something in return (like honor), with a desire for fruitive results, or in a grudging mood.	Performed willingly as a duty at the proper time and place and to a worthy person, with no expectation of return	Performed to satisfy the Supreme Lord. Giving to further the cause of Krishna consciousness.
Renunciation	Consists of giving up one's prescribed duties because of illusion	Giving up one's prescribed duties out of fear or because they appear troublesome	Performing prescribed duties because they ought to be done, without attachment to the fruits	Performing one's prescribed duties in Krishna consciousness and using for the Lord's pleasure
Knowledge	Meager. Unrelated to the absolute truth. Seeing one's own work as the all-in-all. Concerned only with bodily comforts, eating, sleeping, mating, and defending; resembles the knowledge of the animals	Gives rise to speculative doctrines and theories by which one sees the body as the self and consciousness as a by-product of matter. Excludes the eternal existence of the individual soul within.	Gives rise to a vision of a unifying oneness among all living beings-an undivided spiritual energy within all bodies.	Enables one to see all living beings as eternal, individual, spiritual servants of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna. Understanding of Krishna.
Action	Irresponsible, violent, distressing to others. Performed in illusion without considering the scripture, or future reactions. Results in further foolishness.	Performed with false egoism, great effort, to satisfy one's desires to enjoy the fruits of work. Results in distress.	Performed with scriptural guidance, as a matter of duty, without attachment, love or hate. Renounced from the fruits of action. Results in purification.	Performed solely for the satisfaction of Krishna, the spiritual master, and the devotees. Everything done as an offering to the Lord.
Worker	Disregards scripture, materialistic, obstinate, cheating, lazy, morose, procrastinating, expert in giving insults.	Attached to work and its fruits, desiring to enjoy them. Greedy, envious, impure, moved by sorrow and joy.	Free from material attachments, pride and false ego. Enthusiastic, resolute, and unwavering in success or failure.	Surrenders the results of work to Krishna. Takes shelter of Krishna. Fully conscious of Krishna.
Understanding	Considers irreligion to be religion and religion to be irreligion. Strives always in the wrong direction.	Cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion, truth and untruth, what should and should not be done.	Intelligently discriminates under sattric authority between what should and should not be done, what is and is not to be feared, what is liberating and what is binding.	Always perfectly considers Krishna through personal realization, confirmed by the scriptures and the spiritual master.

	Ignorance (tama-guna)	Passion (raja-guna)	Goodness (sattva-guna)	Pure Goodness (suddha-sattva)
Determination	Cannot go beyond day-dreaming, fearfulness, lamentation, moroseness, and illusion.	Fixed upon securing the fruits of religion, economic development, and sense gratification.	Practically unbreakable. Sustained with steadfastness by yoga, controlling the mind and senses.	Totally fixed on Krishna and never deviated by anything else.
Happiness	Blind to self-realization, delusion from beginning to end. Derives from sleep, laziness and illusion.	Derived from contact between the senses and their objects. Nectar in the beginning and poison at the end. Epitomized by sex enjoyment.	Compared to poison in the beginning but nectar at the end because it involves controlling the mind and senses, but awakens one to self-realization.	Derived from purified service to God in one's eternal loving relationship. Ever-increasing ecstasy. Unequalled by any mundane pleasure.
Times of day	Evening and night.	Daytime	Early morning	Anytime one serves purely
Location	Pub, brothel, betting office, casino, slaughterhouse, butchers.	City, town, village.	Forest	Any place where devotional service is performed
Animals	Monkey will take birth as a man in ignorance.	Lion will take birth as a man in passion.	Cow will take birth as a man in goodness.	Garuda, Hanuman, Krishna's horses, etc..
Trees and plants	Funguses, fir tree	Onions and garlic	Mango, nim, banana trees	Tulasi, kalpa-vrksa

Death

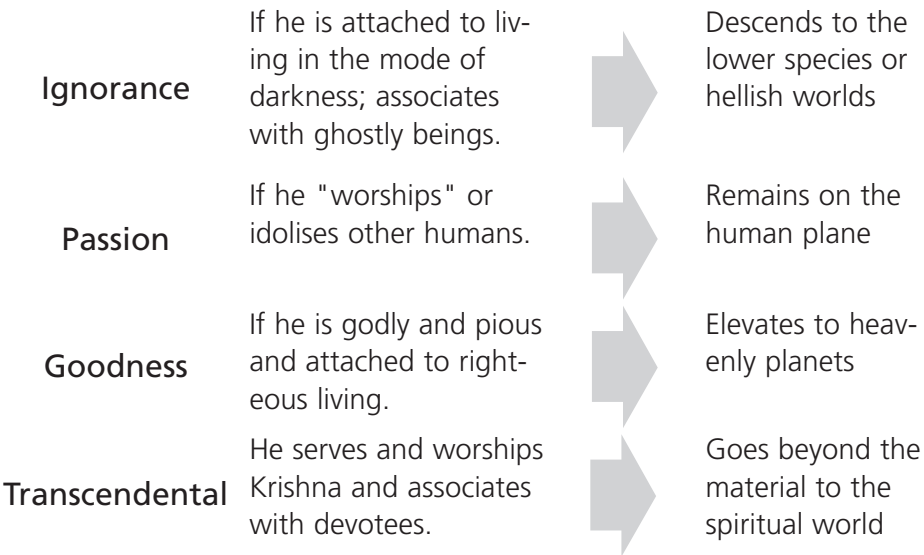


The time of death is a crucial moment for the human being, because this is when his next destination is determined. This is the moment when he has the opportunity to go back to Godhead. Everything in a devotee's life is leading up to this point, is a preparation for this one major exam. As it is said, " Whatever we do in life will be tested at the time of death."

The atheist and the devotee each perceive death differently, just as a kitten and a rat each perceive the jaws of a mother cat differently.

The jaws of a mother cat represent shelter to the kitten, but they represent a horrible end to the rat. Similarly, when Krishna comes in the form of death, it is the ultimate defeat to the atheist, but the devotee accepts it as Krishna coming to take him back.

What determines a person's next destination?



What one experiences at death:

When the body is no longer habitable for the soul, he is forced to leave. Wherever the soul travels to in the material world, the subtle body and the Supersoul go with him. When he leaves the gross body, he feels great relief, and the subtle body together with the Supersoul carries him to his new mother. This applies to everyone, whether one is passing into lower species, human species, or taking birth on the heavenly planets.

If one is very sinful, then he must suffer punishment in the hellish planets. At death, he is forcefully dragged out of his body by the Yamadutas--frighteningly hideous chastisers with fierce, twisted faces, and wild hair. In great fear, he passes stool and urine. They pull him out of the gross body with subtle ropes. On the road to Yamarāja, he suffers greatly and is reminded of his past sinful activities.

When one attains perfection, he first sees a spiritual airplane approaching. The airplane is very beautiful, as brilliant as the moon, has the form of a swan, and is covered in gold. It carries transcendental four-armed personalities from Vaikuntha. The liberated soul begins to glow and he pays obeisances to his escorts. He boards the airplane in spiritual bliss and flies back with them to the spiritual world.



One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna. (Bg 4.9)

Whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt. (Bg 8.5)

The highest perfection of human life is to remember the Personality of Godhead at the end of life. (SB 2.1.6)

At the time of death, all the bodily functions are disrupted, the mind is disturbed, and therefore one is bewildered. It is very difficult to remember Krishna at this time. The mind turns toward its greatest attachment.

To ensure that we can remember Krishna at the time of death, we have to cultivate attachment to Him throughout life. This is the preparation that a devotee undergoes.

"As sure as death," death is the only thing certain in life. Everyone must die--even Yamaraja, even Brahma, even you. " One who has taken his birth is sure to die." Therefore, you must prepare yourself.



If you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego you will be lost.

Liberation

After trying to enjoy in the material world for a long time, the living being may realize that there is nothing but different kinds of suffering and want to attain liberation from material existence.

Liberation actually means freedom from the influence of the illusory material energy.

The five kinds of liberation (mukti):

Sayujya	-	one with God
Salokya	-	same residence as the Lord
Sarsti	-	same opulence as the Lord
Sarupya	-	same bodily features as the Lord
Samipya	-	association as the Lord

Four of these types of liberation are meant for the devotees and one is meant for the impersonalists. The four Vaishnava kinds of liberation bring one to the Vaikuntha planets.

Qualities of a Liberated Soul

- Experiences a higher taste.
- Never laments
- Finds satisfaction in the self alone
- Joyful
- Mind is established in sameness and equanimity
- Unaffected by whatever good or evil he may obtain, neither praising it nor despising it
- Remains neutral, unwavering, and undisturbed through the reactions of the material qualities
- Detached
- Is steady, situated equally well in praise and blame, honor and dishonor
- Not disturbed by distress or elated when there is happiness
- Controls the mind, senses, and speech with determination
- Withdraws his senses from sense objects, as the tortoise draws its limbs within the shell
- Free from attraction, hatred, attachment, fear, anger, false pride, lust, desires for sense gratification and proprietorship
- Peaceful
- He is equally disposed toward every living entity.
- Treats alike both friend and enemy
- Looks upon a lump of earth, a stone and a piece of gold with an equal eye.
- Unaffected by the incessant flow of desires

Undoubtedly one can attain liberation on the impersonal path, but...



For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied. (Bg 12.5)

But those who worship Me, giving up all their activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, having fixed their minds upon Me, O son of Prtha-for them I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death. (Bg 12.6-7)

Being the Lord of illusory energy, Krishna can order this insurmountable energy to release the conditioned soul.



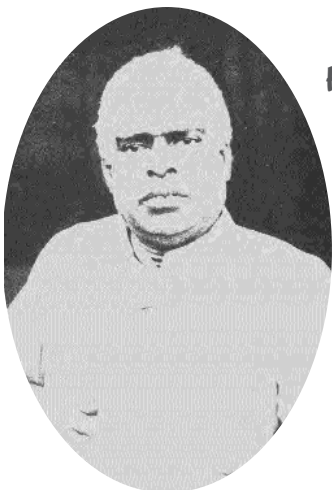
This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it. (Bg 7.14)

One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman. (Bg 14.26)

Simply desiring liberation is also _____,

therefore a devotee desires _____.

- Liberation is simply negation, but bhakti is positive.
- Liberation is automatically achieved by bhakti-yoga.
- But actual devotional service starts after liberation.



He reasons ill who says that Vaishnavs die

When they are living still in sound.

A Vaishnav dies to live, and living tries

To spread the holy name around.

- Bhaktivinoda Thakur

