

IN
VAIKUNTHA
NOT EVEN THE LEAVES
FALL



A TREATISE ON
THE
BONDAGE OF THE JĪVA

SATYA NĀRĀYAṆA DĀSA
KUNDALĪ DĀSA

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VAIKUNṬHĀ
NOT EVEN THE LEAVES
IFALL

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THE
BONDAGE OF THE JĪVA

SATYA NĀRĀYANA DĀSA
KUṆḌALI DĀSA

JIVAS

JIVA INSTITUTE OF VAISNAVA STUDIES

Interested readers are invited to
correspond with the authors
at this address:

JIVA INSTITUTE OF VAISNAVA STUDIES

Śrī-Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir
Ramana Reti, Vṛndāvana
Mathurā Dist. U.P., India

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यस्य स्मरणमात्रेण पतितोऽपि मुक्तो भवेत् ।
अनादिनिधनोऽच्युतो जीवगतिः स नः पातु ॥१॥

*yasya smarāṇa-mātreṇa
patito 'pi mukto bhavet
anādi-nidhano 'cyuto
jīva-gatiḥ sa naḥ pātu*

पतन्ति कृष्णसान्निध्याद् वैकुण्ठादपि केचन ।
जल्पन्तीत्यल्पज्ञाः न तु शास्त्रार्थकोविदाः जनाः ॥२॥

*patanti kṛṣṇa-sānnidhyād
vaikunṭhād api kecana
jalpantīty alpajñāḥ na tu
śāstrārtha-kovidāḥ janāḥ*

आलोड्य बहुशास्त्राणि विचार्य च पुनः पुनः ।
अज्ञ-शंका-शातनाय सिद्धान्तस्तु स्थिरीकृतः ॥३॥

*āloḍya bahu-śāstrāṇi
vicārya ca punaḥ punaḥ
ajñā-śaṅkā-śātanāya
siddhāntas tu sthīri-kṛtaḥ*

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PREFACE

This book has five parts or waves. Each wave is divided into chapters. The book should be read in order because information presented often builds on the earlier chapters. There is also some repetition of key points and arguments.

In the First Wave we present the *siddhānta* of our *paramparā* and the verdict of the *śāstra* on the *jīva*'s bondage. We also cite numerous references from Śrīla Prabhupāda that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. The last three chapters explain the word *anādi*. A clear understanding of this word is very important, for it leaves no room for doubt as to the origin of the *jīva* in conditioned existence.

In the Second Wave, while establishing that preaching does not always mean presenting the *siddhānta*, we cite some historical examples of such preaching strategy being used by our predecessor *ācāryas*, including Śrīla Vyāsadeva. We also show that reconciling is one of the important duties of faithful followers of the spiritual master, and that logic based on *śāstra* has a vital role in such reconciliation. We conclude this wave by reconciling the *siddhānta* of no fall from Vaikuṅṭha with Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha.

In the Third Wave we refute the main objections of those who believe that the *jīva* fell from the spiritual world to become a conditioned soul. Throughout this book, for the sake of brevity, we refer to them as fall-*vādīs*. Here we also refute the attempts to support the fall-*vāda* theory found in the first two chapters of the book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa*.

In the Fourth Wave we present nineteen chapters filled with many wonderful scriptural and logical arguments of further evidence in favor of the no-fall down *siddhānta*. The Fifth Wave is only one chapter. Here we list the many philosophical inconsistencies in accepting that *nitya-siddhas* can fall from Vaikuṅṭha as our *siddhānta* and give our concluding remarks.

IN VAIKUNTHA NOT EVEN HE LEAVES FALL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is no denying our debt to Drutakarma Dāsa. Without his inspiration we would never have undertaken the task of researching and writing this book. He so inspired us that researching, writing, editing, proofreading, and, layout was all done in the space of four months. Since we are doubly satisfied with the results we must be doubly indebted to him. We thank him and his supporters.

In addition, we wish to thank those who gave us staunch moral support and invaluable critical feedback on difficult parts of the manuscript. Among those persons were Puruṣatrāya Swami, Dhanurdhara Swami, Bhānu Swami, Bhakti Caitanya Swami, Bhūrijana prabhu, and Kṛṣṇa Kṣetra prabhu. Other persons worthy of thanks for assisting our effort in some way are Harikeśa Swami, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī, Puruṣottama prabhu, Dhyānanakuṇḍa Devī Dāsī and Bhakta Chris. Jālandhara prabhu was helpful in a number of ways. His steadfast assistance was greatly appreciated. Special thanks and gratitude to Navadwīpa prabhu, who did a wonderful job of editing the manuscript; and to Puṇḍarīka prabhu and Mahāmāyā Devī Dāsī, who did an equally wonderful job with the proofreading. Finally, Kūrma-rūpa prabhu, fought valiantly with the erratic electricity to deliver a nicely laid out book. He also did the Index. Many thanks to him. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

INTRODUCTION

This book is the result of controversy. In writing it we were advised to downplay the controversial aspect “because a book on *siddhānta* should not explicitly bring out controversy.” Another reason given is that we must be careful not to date the book. Upon consideration, however, we could not agree with either view. Without the controversy we would not have written the book. Why should this historical fact be hidden?

Further, we also have the example of our previous *ācāryas*. In their writings they often dealt openly with controversy. We find that there is wisdom in this, for by making it open there is less chance that the same circumstances that caused the controversy will recur.

In the ISKCON community this particular controversy—where did the conditioned *jīva* come from or “the *jīva*-issue”—has been smoldering for many years. Now, with the publication of this book, we hope to end the confusion. In the ISKCON community this particular controversy—where did the conditioned *jīva* come from or “the *jīva*-issue”—has been smoldering for many years. Now, with the publication of this book, we hope to end the confusion. But the confusion may not end. In the *Pṛīti-sandarbhā*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains why. He says there are three types of discussions—*vāda*, *jalpa*, and *vitandā*. In a *vāda* discussion the motive of all concerned is to find out the truth. This is the ideal kind of discussion. It is for persons who are sober and impartial about the outcome; they simply want to know what is the truth of the matter. They are in the mode of goodness. *Jalpa* is a discussion wherein one is not interested in what is said by others, whether it has some truth or all of the truth, because one simply wants to be heard. Any other view or contribution is of no interest. This is the way for a person in the mode of passion. A *vitandā* discussion is in the mode of ignorance. In this version the truth is of no value. One simply wants to win at all costs. We believe that this book will clear the

confusion for those persons interested in *vāda*.

Our commitment to writing a book on the *jiva*-issue began when the following letter was posted to the GBC conference on COM:

Text 31415: 27-Aug-94 18:16 EDT /167 lines/ LINK: Drutakarma (Dasa)
ACBSP (Alachua)
Reply-To: Drutakarma.ACBSP@iskcon.com
Receiver: GBC Body <20>
Subject: once we were with Krsna
Dear GBC members,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Lately I have been receiving inquiries from GBC members, BBT Trustees, and temple presidents about my forthcoming book "Once We Were With Krsna", which shows conclusively that Srila Prabhupada's teaching was just as the title says, and that this is in complete harmony with "Srimad-Bhagavatam" and the teachings of our previous acharyas going back to Lord Caitanya. One controversial feature of this book is that I am directly naming those who hold opposing views and answering them point by point. Since copies of the drafts of some chapters are floating around, by Xerox and computer, I thought it best to make sure all of you, and not just some of you, have an opportunity to see what is coming. The second chapter, on Srila Prabhupada's teachings, is attached to this message. I am attaching the first chapter, on evidence from "Srimad-Bhagavatam" to another message. The third and final chapter, on the teachings of the previous acharyas, is still being written, but as soon as it is finished I will send it to you. I am also including below the text of a letter to one of the GBC members. It explains why I am taking the step of bringing out this book. Originally, I intended to send it to just that one member, but since interest in the whole issue seems to be widening, I am sending it to all the members.

Dear————— Prabhu,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Like you, I share an interest that Srila Prabhupada's teachings remain the central focus of ISKCON, and that they be passed down to the next generation unchanged. I fear, however, that all of this is now endangered.

The specific point of my concern is Srila Prabhupada's teachings on the origin of the *jiva*. Srila Prabhupada addressed this issue many times, and said we have come "from Vaikuntha planet," we were "with Krsna in His lila," etc. It has been said that Srila Prabhupada's views are not supported by shastra and previous acharyas. But my rather extensive investigation of these accusations reveals that they are unfounded. I can produce dozens of statements from Bhaktivinoda Thakura and Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati that are exactly in line with Srila Prabhupada's teachings. Support for the idea that the *jiva* was originally with Krishna can also be found in the Bhagavatam and other works. There is nothing in the Sandarbhas of Jiva Goswami that contradicts Srila Prabhupada's

teachings, despite the claims of Satyanarayana and Kundali, and others such as Bhanu Swami. I say this on the basis of my own study and on the authority of Gopiparanadhana Prabhu, who has closely examined the relevant passages. One might say, well, perhaps we are just dealing with a case of a transcendental disagreement among acharyas. The problem is that one of the acharyas is our founder-acharya. So even if one wants to accept that, then it is clear that in ISKCON we have to take sides, the side of Srila Prabhupada. But I am convinced there is no difference between Srila Prabhupada and any of the major acharyas in our line going back to Lord Caitanya. Some of Srila Prabhupada's God brothers or disciples of his God brothers may have different opinions, but in one hundred years none of them will be recognized as a great acharya, whereas Srila Prabhupada's place in history as one of the greatest acharyas ever is already assured.

You have asked if there is any role that the GBC could play in resolving this issue. I am not at all hopeful that the GBC can actually do what needs to be done, because so many of the members are doubtful about what Srila Prabhupada said. Some of them, I suspect, actually agree with the position taken by Kundali and Satyanarayana that Srila Prabhupada spoke untruths to his disciples because they were too neophyte to understand the real siddhanta. That is so out of character for Srila Prabhupada that it is hard for me to see how any ISKCON devotee could accept it, unless they are ill-motivated or influenced by someone who is ill-motivated.

Basically, I think this issue will be settled, if at all, in the marketplace of ideas, where I am accustomed to function in a direct and confrontational manner. Nevertheless, I will outline a series of actions that I think the GBC could take to deal with the issue, if it so desired.

1. Pass the following resolution:

Srila Prabhupada's clear teaching is that the jivas in the material world originally existed with Kṛṣṇa in one of His spiritual planets directly engaged in His service. Their falldown into this material world is due to misuse of their free will. When they go back to Godhead, they regain their original positions as Kṛṣṇa's loving servants. This view is in harmony with both "Srimad-Bhagavatam" and the previous acharyas in our line going back to Lord Caitanya. No other view shall be presented as conclusive in any BBT or ISKCON publications, courses, or classes. Any ISKCON member actively promoting an opposing view among ISKCON members shall be subject to sanctions, including removal from positions of authority (sannyasa, GBC, guru, temple president) and ultimately expulsion. The BBT is requested to publish Drutakarma's book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa* [names and exceptionally polemical statements removed] with adequate advertising and distribution to the devotee community. [This resolution would supersede any previous resolutions establishing study groups, etc. to research this question.]

2. Once the idea that Srila Prabhupada said that the conditioned souls were once with Krishna has been adopted as ISKCON's official policy, then the GBC could take further steps to insure our doctrinal purity. I will offer some suggestions.

3. I am absolutely convinced that Satyanarayana and Kundali must be removed from the BBT project of publishing Jiva Gosvami's Sat-sandarbhās and that the entire thing should be handed over to a loyal Prabhupada follower. It is true that, at present, Dravida and Gopiparanadhana have been given authority to filter out the nonsense views that Satyanarayana has introduced in his commentaries, but that is a very precarious situation. It is like having a cook, but you have to check every offering to make sure he isn't putting meat on the Deity plates. Satyanarayana is very fixed in his views, and he is expert in propagating them among those many devotees who regard him as an authority in shastric matter. I have reports that in Vrndavana lectures and seminars he is directly saying that Srila Prabhupada is wrong on the question of the origin of the jiva. The issue is, however, much larger than the Sandarbha question or even the jiva question. The larger matter at stake is the integrity of Srila Prabhupada's teachings. If Srila Prabhupada's teachings on the origin of the jiva, found everywhere in his books, letters, lectures, and conversations, can be relativized by word juggling Sanskrit experts influenced by outside figures, then what next? It seems to me that the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust should only publish authors whose views are totally in line with those of the Bhaktivedanta—His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. To publish someone's work is to give them prestige inside and outside of ISKCON. And giving Satyanarayana this position is going to give him a better platform for pushing his erroneous views. Also, the BBT is setting him up with a whole institute for translating Vaishnava literature in Vrndavana. Right now there are a few strong-minded individuals who are acting to prevent him from getting his contradicting of Srila Prabhupada into print. But at any time in the future this could change, We might find that Srila Prabhupada's books get edited to bring them in line with Satyanarayana's views. Or instead we might find that footnotes and other explanatory materials are added to let people know what Srila Prabhupada really meant on this question (Satyanarayana has already written such things for exactly this purpose—it's just a question of printing them in the books). And we could see this translation institute in Vrndavana become an avenue for the infiltration of all kinds of wrong ideas and attitudes into ISKCON. What about the fear that if Satyanarayana is confronted he will just go and publish his books anyway? Let him. If the steps I recommend are taken, it will be clear to ISKCON members that he is just doing his own thing—just one more Sanskrit scholar who has gone off the deep end. As Srila Prabhupada said, "I am also practically finding that if any of our students artificially try to become scholars by associating with unwanted persons [specifically in India] they become victimized, for a little learning is dangerous, especially for the Westerners. I am practically seeing that as soon as they begin to learn a little Sanskrit then immediately they feel that they have become more than their guru and then the policy is kill guru and be killed himself." That is the road Satyanarayana has embarked upon. To kill Srila Prabhupada's teachings (by whimsically explaining them away) is to kill Srila Prabhupada. So let him go and publish his nonsense interpretations elsewhere. At least we will know that we have preserved Srila Prabhupada's teachings intact and insured against that thing Srila Prabhupada most feared—that we would change or relativize what he taught us.

4. In general, the BBT should not publish books by authors with views contrary to

those of Srila Prabhupada on this question.

5. Narayana Maharaja's views on the origin of the jiva question should come under scrutiny, and that this should be taken into consideration in the GBC's evaluation of Narayana Maharaja followers among the GBC and other senior ISKCON devotees.

I think a lot of this will automatically happen once the GBC takes the correct step of affirming that Srila Prabhupada's statements that the jivas were once with Krishna is ISKCON's position on this matter.

If the above steps were taken, I would feel satisfied that ISKCON had acted properly to safeguard the integrity of Srila Prabhupada's teachings, not just on the jiva question, but in general.

Please feel free to circulate copies of this letter to whomever you like.

Your servant,
Drutakarma Dasa
(Text 1415)

The above letter sets the stage. We want our readers to note some of the salient features of this letter. One thing is the confidence of the author. The reader is lead to believe that he has the final conclusion on this matter. His tone of confidence alone is enough to intimidate the average reader who will then be overwhelmed by the "facts" that he presents by way of analysis and so on in his book. Nevertheless, we maintain that after reading just a few chapters of this book, our readers will agree that the confidence exhibited by our accuser is unfounded. Indeed, his confidence will be found to be along the lines of what Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura describes in *Mādhurya Kādambinī* as false confidence:

A *brāhmaṇa* child, having just begun the study of the scriptures, thinks he has become immediately a learned scholar worthy of everyone's praise. Similarly, a person just beginning devotional service may have the audacity to think that he has mastered everything. This is called *utsāha-mayī*, filled (puffed-up) with enthusiasm.

Another thing worthy of note is the way in which the author of the above letter has cleverly wrapped himself in the name of Śrīla Prabhupāda so that to disagree with him is to prove oneself a "Prabhupāda killer" and to remain silent is a virtual admission of guilt. Thus, the only way to prove one's loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda is to agree with him. His approach is to cut off all possibility of a dialogue over a philosophical difference of opinion. In fact, the writer seeks no dialogue. He knows all the answers and though we may have a different opinion he is not the least bit interested to know how or why we hold such an opinion. Even if he was right about the *jīva* issue, we wonder if his approach was the way to handle the matter, what to speak of the fact that he is wrong?

We hope our readers will appreciate by the end of this book how important it is to see through the sort of unjust tactic our accuser has employed; otherwise much harm can be inflicted on our

community by those who lack the integrity to deal justly with such differences of opinion. Unless we learn to discriminate in such matters, the devotee community will always be victims of those willing to resort to such conduct—seeking to create a state of panic and prejudice by whipping devotees into an emotional state in the name of Śrīla Prabhupāda. His singular purpose is to destroy all credibility of the accused. Indeed, in the eyes of those swayed by this writer’s rhetoric, for us to make any utterance in our defense will only appear to confirm their worse suspicions.

Despite the risk to us, however, we feel obliged to respond to the charges against us, not so much for the sake of saving face, but for preserving the *paramparā siddhānta* and preserving Śrīla Prabhupāda’s place in the disciplic succession. Otherwise, as will be shown in the course of this book, to accept Drutakarma Dāsa’s understanding of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings on the origin of the *jīva* is to remove him from being a link in the chain of disciplic succession. We find no evidence anywhere in Prabhupāda’s life or teachings that he wanted to be seen as anything but standing shoulder to shoulder with the disciplic succession. The fall-*vāda* theory (that the spirit soul falls from Vaikuṅṭha) does, however, isolate him from the *paramparā*. This is entirely unacceptable to us.

Besides that there are many other unsavory implications of the fall-*vāda* theory, which we reveal and refute in the course of the book.

Before closing we think it is important to briefly outline the background of our working relation with the BBT. In March 1992 we began on our own translating and commenting on the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*. In late May of the same year we were asked to do the work for the BBT. The condition was that we would agree to working with the BBT’s English and Sanskrit editors, Draviḍa Dāsa and Gopiparāṇadhana Dāsa respectively. We agreed. In the next two years we encountered a number of problems, none of which were of our own making. In every instance we showed ourselves to be flexible and solution-oriented and were able to come to satisfactory compromises between us and our two editors and the BBT Trustees.

We proposed a policy that in such circumstances where there was a real or apparent difference of opinion between Śrīla Prabhupāda and the author of the work being translated, we would state both views and if possible reconcile them. This met with solid approval from the BBT Trustees. In the specific case of the *jīva* issue, we knew that Prabhupāda said both things—that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha and that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha—and were quite pleased to follow in his footsteps and say both things. Our work was progressing. The *Tattva-sandarbhā* was completed and scheduled for the printer. While it was in production in Sweden, we were working on *Bhagavat-sandarbhā*.

Now the whole BBT project to bring to the devotees worldwide the greatest philosophical work in our line has stopped. We think that the devotee community should know that this is a direct result of Drutakarma Dāsa’s method of expressing his concern that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings are being “relativized by word-juggling Sanskrit experts.” In reality the *Tattva-sandarbhā* met the approval of both BBT editors, Draviḍa prabhu and Gopiparāṇadhana prabhu, solid BBT men for the last 20 years.

Not only did the entire *Sandarbhā* translation project grind to a stop, but the BBT project to construct a facility in Vṛndāvana for translation work was also stopped. All of this stoppage, even if reversed, was done at great expense and inconvenience to the society. At the time of this writing, the fate of these services to Śrīla Prabhupāda is still uncertain. In this instance a great disservice was done to the society of devotees, to Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to our predecessor *ācāryas*, for, as will be shown, our accuser is completely mistaken. Indeed, we hope that this book proves the value of studying the writings of our previous *ācāryas* for properly understanding the philosophy. Śrīla Prabhupāda said he gave us the framework and it is up to us to fill in the details. With respect to the *siddhānta* of our *paramparā*, we show in this book that there is no

better approach than to draw on the works of our *ācāryas*.

Our fervent hope is that whatever lessons can be extracted from this event will be helpful to avoid such disasters to our society in the future. Unless we learn from these experiences, then, as conventional wisdom has it, history will be doomed to repeat itself. In the world of duality, certainly conflict or controversy can arise at any moment. That is no cause for dismay. What makes a big difference is how the problem is handled. Drutakarma Dāsa's handling of the *jīva* issue is an example of how not to do it.

Finally, we hope that by presenting this book in response to the above letter and the book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa*, the charges against us will be cleared and the controversy over the *jīva* issue will be resolved forever. Our approach has been to go back up the line of *paramparā* and see which of the two versions by Śrīla Prabhupāda is consistent with our previous *ācāryas*. We are confident that readers interested in *vāda* will be pleased with the result. If we have made any error or offense in our attempt to present the *siddhānta*, we pray for the kindness of the Vaiṣṇavas that they rain their mercy down on us and guide us rightly on this razor-edged path. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

All glory to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

**FIRST WAVE:
SIDDHĀNTA
INTRODUCTION**

The first wave has ten chapters. Chapters One and Two give the verdict of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura on the origin of the *jīva*. He says there are three types of *jīvas*: Those in Goloka having their origin from Lord Baladeva, in Vaikuṅṭha from Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, and those in the material energy from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu. This last type of *jīva* has always been in the material world and is called *nitya-baddha*, but they can become *nitya-mukta* by pure devotional service. The Third Chapter is based on the works of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. According to him *nitya-muktas* are never influenced by the material energy. The Fourth Chapter gives references from the writings of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who sometimes said that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha and sometimes said that *jīvas* fell from Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. We have cited only his statements supporting the first view because the second view is widely known among devotees. Why Prabhupāda made contradictory statements on this issue is answered in the Second Wave.

In the Fifth Chapter we give evidence from *Śruti*, *Vedānta Sūtra*, *Govinda Bhāṣya*, *Āgama*, and the *Nārada Bhakti Sūtra* all in favor of no fall down from Vaikuṅṭha. Chapter Six gives evidence from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. We also refer to the commentaries by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Chapter Seven includes evidence from the writings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. Thus in the first seven chapters of the first wave we give the verdict of our prominent *ācāryas*.

Finally, in chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten we discuss the meaning of the word *anādi* (lit. beginningless). It is the philosophical term most commonly used by our *ācāryas* for describing the conditioned souls. It is a difficult concept to grasp but crucial in understanding the subject of the book. Readers are advised to read these chapters carefully.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGIN OF THE JIVA

**ACCORDING TO
ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA**

In ISKCON, the question of the origin of the *jīva* has come up again and again from the very beginning. The earliest record we could find was in the question and answer period in a *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* class in San Francisco in 1967. “They were never conditioned. They were never conditioned, never conditioned. They are called *nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated.” He clearly says that the *nitya-muktas*, eternally liberated souls, never misuse their free will to leave Kṛṣṇa, but later on in the same conversation:

Bhaktijāna: How could we make a poor choice if we were part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa? How could we have chosen the material world?

Prabhupāda: Oh, because you have got independence. Don’t you see so many students come. They go away again. Yesterday Kīrtanānanda went to call Rancora. He said, “Oh, I have forgotten this!” So you can forget. . .

Bhaktijāna: But Kṛṣṇa will always be there if we want to go back?

Prabhupāda: Eh? Kṛṣṇa is always prepared to accept you. He’s always prepared. But because He has given us independence, we misuse it and we fall under the clutches of *māyā*. That is our misfortune. We create this misfortune, and we can create our good fortune. “Man is the architect of his own fortune.” So if you become Kṛṣṇa conscious, it is to your good fortune. If you become *māyā* conscious, it is to your bad fortune. You are the creator.

Bhaktijāna: When the souls that were never conditioned at all... do they also have the independence?

Prabhupāda: Yes, but they have not misused. They know that “I am meant for Kṛṣṇa’s service,” and they are happy in Kṛṣṇa’s service.

Bhaktijāna: Could they ever misuse it?

Prabhupāda: Yes, they can misuse it also. That power is there. Yes?

Devotee: Well, I believe you once said that once a conditioned soul becomes perfected and gets out of the material world and he goes to Kṛṣṇaloka, there’s no possibility of falling back.

Prabhupāda: No! There is possibility, but he does not come.

On the one hand, Prabhupāda asserts the infallibility of the liberated souls and on the other he stresses the misuse of free will as the reason we are here. Yet he says that the liberated souls never misuse their free will. The clear conclusion is that we were never liberated souls. And if so, where did we come from? But Śrīla Prabhupāda never comes out and states clearly what is the case. But it is interesting that after stressing that liberated souls never become conditioned he only talks about the process of going back. His examples all have to do with going from here to there and not coming from there to here. Of course, in other places he said openly that we came from Kṛṣṇa *līlā*.

These contradictory instructions on the bondage of the *jīva* question have caused devotees to

become divided. Some favor the fall position, others argue for the no-fall position. We have found that the debate cannot be settled strictly on the basis of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, letters, lectures, and conversations. We end up in a deadlock of argument and counter-argument, quoting and counter-quoting. A better solution is to go back up the chain of *paramparā* and determine which of Prabhupāda's two statements is confirmed as the *siddhānta* and which is to be taken as secondary. Relying on guru, *śāstra* and *sādhu* to confirm each other is the way to resolve controversial issues.

Before the time of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, none of our *ācāryas* wrote at length explaining the *jīva's* origin prior to conditioned life. The question of whether the *jīva* fell from Vaikuṅṭha or any other place simply did not come up. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.20) and in other places the *śāstras* state that both the material nature and the living entity are *anādi*, beginningless, and the *ācāryas* repeated that. They understood that the relationship between the *jīva* and material nature is also *anādi*. Everyone understood that there can be no prior condition to a beginningless event and so the need for elaboration was nonexistent.

Our *ācāryas* simply stated that the conditioned existence of the *jīva* is *anādi*, without any beginning. Then they go on to explain devotional service as the answer to the miseries of conditional existence. In Western culture, philosophy, logic, and in the English language we have no equivalent word for the concept of *anādi*; therefore the term is not properly understood and thus, questions about the *jīva's* origin prior to conditioned life arise. (Later on, we have three chapters explaining the philosophical import of the word *anādi*, both from the philosophical and the logical point of view). Our predecessor *ācāryas* did not have this problem. While it is a fact that they did not go beyond *anādi* to explain the origin of the *jīva*, they did clearly state that no one—whether a *nitya-siddha* or *sādhana-siddha*—falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

When we study the writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, we find that whereas other *ācāryas* previously explained *anādi* in philosophical terms he explained it in a novel way. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's explanation is more for the common man. His explanation is misunderstood by some as support of the theory that the *jīva* falls from the Lord's *nitya-līlā* in Vaikuṅṭha, but close scrutiny of his writings show that he does not explicitly state this anywhere. If our conclusion was merely a matter of our interpretation, then we may have grounds for a protracted debate with the fall-*vādīs*. We find, however, that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura himself offers an explanation for the conditioned soul's existence that clearly does not include fall from Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* or Vaikuṅṭha. This makes it clear that citing his writings as evidence for the fall position is a misuse of the Ṭhākura's teachings in that it contradicts his own explanation. About the word *anādi* he writes, (*Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter One):

Service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is the eternal duty, *nitya dharma*, of the *jīva*. Forgetting that, the *jīva* is possessed by *māyā*. From then on the soul turns his face away from Kṛṣṇa. Because this non-devotion to Kṛṣṇa is manifest only at the time he enters the material world, there is no history of the *jīva's* fall within the time of the material world. For this reason the words *anādi bahirmukha* (the living entity's non-devotion to Kṛṣṇa is beginningless) are used. From the time of non-devotion to Kṛṣṇa and entry into *māyā* the eternal duty of the *jīva* becomes perverted.

From this some understand that the *jīva* enters the material world from somewhere else. This is not the true view, however, because something that is beginningless cannot have a prior state of existence, as will be explained further along.

In *Śrī Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta* (First Shower, Fourth Flow) Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda writes:

Jada-jagate āsibāra pūrvei tāñhādera bandhana hauyāya, tāñhādera bandhanake

anādi bale, tāñhārā nitya-baddha nāme-abhihita hana. Yāñhāra erupa baddha hana nāi, tāñhārā nitya-mukta. Yāñhārā baddha haiyāchena, tāñhāra nitya-baddha.

Because the *jīva* is bound before entering the material world his bondage is called *anādi*, or beginningless. Therefore he is called *nitya-baddha*. Those who are not bound in this way are called *nitya-mukta*. And those who are bound are called *nitya-baddha*.

And in *Jaiva Dharma* (Chapter Sixteen) he writes, “Therefore karma has no beginning in material time. Thus it is called *anādi*, beginningless.”

“This is pretty conclusive for the fall down theory,” fall-*vādīs* say, thinking that prior to having karma the *jīva* was somewhere else and that somewhere else was Vaikuṅṭha, but this is only because of a deep bias and a lack of proper deliberation. First of all, even if we accept this as proof of some sort of fall down, he never mentions that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. That is conjecture on the part of the fall-*vādīs* to accommodate their belief in the fall theory.

On the contrary, in *Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter Fifteen, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda writes:

Vrajanātha: *Jīvera svarūpe māyara kāryya nāi, ihā avāśya svikṛta haibe; jīvera svabhāve māyāra vikrama haite pāre ihāo bujhilāma. Ekhana jijñāsā kari, cic-chakti ki jīvake taṭastha-svabhāva diyā nirmāna kariyāchena?*

Bābāji: *Nā. Cic-chakti kṛṣṇera paripūrṇa-śakti-tini yāhā udbhava karena, se samasta i nitya-siddha vastu. Jīva nitya-siddha naya; sādhana dvārā jīva sādhana-siddha haiyā nitya-siddhera samāna ānanda bhoga karena. Śrīmatīra caturvidha sakhīgaṇa nitya-siddha evaṁ cic-chakti-svarūpa-śrīmatīra kāya-vyuha. Jīva-sakala kṛṣṇera jīva-śakti haite udita haiyāchena. Cic-chakti yerūpa kṛṣṇera pūrṇa-śakti, jīva-śakti serūpa kṛṣṇera apūrṇa-śakti. Pūrṇa-śakti haite samasta pūrṇa-tattvera pariṇati; apūrṇa-śakti haite aṅu-caitanya-svarūpa jīva-sakalera pariṇati. Kṛṣṇa eka eka śaktite adhiṣṭhita haiyā tad-anurūpa svarūpa prakāśa karena cit-svarūpe adhiṣṭhita haiyā (svayaṁ-rūpa) kṛṣṇa o paravyomanātha nārāyaṇera svarūpa prakāśa karena; jīva-śaktite adhiṣṭhita haiyā vrajera svīya vilāsa-mūrti-rūpa baladeva-svarūpa prakāśa karena; māyāśaktite adhiṣṭhita haiyā kāraṇodakaśāyī kṣīrodakaśāyī o garbhodakaśāyī rūpa viṣṇur svarūpa-traya prakāśa karena. Vraje kṛṣṇa-svarūpe samasta pūrṇa-cid-vyāpāra prakāṣa karena. Baladeva-svarūpe śeṣa-tattva haiyā śeṣi-svarūpa kṛṣṇera aṣṭa-prakāra sevā-nirvāhera janya nitya-mukta pārṣada jīva-nīcayake prakāṣa karena; ābāra para-vyome śeṣa-rūpa-saṅkarṣaṇa haiyā śeṣi-rupe nārāyaṇera aṣṭa-prakāra sevā-nirvāhera janya nitya-pārṣada-rūpa aṣṭa-prakāra sevaka prakāṣa karena; saṅkarṣaṇera avatāra-rūpa mahāviṣṇu jīva-śaktira adhiṣṭhāna haiyā paramātmā-svarūpe jagad-gata jīvātma-sakalake prakāṣa karena. Ei samasta jīva māyā-pravaṇa; ye paryanta bhagavat-kṛpā-bale cic-chakti gata hlādinīra āśraya nā pān, tata-dīna tāñhādera māyā-kartṛka parājīta haibāra sambhāvanā. Māyā baddha ananta jīva māyā-kartṛka parājīta haiyā māyāra guṇātrayera anugata. Ataeva siddhānta ei ye jīva-śakti jīvake prakāṣa karena, cic-chakti jīvake prakāṣa-karena nā.*

Vrajanātha: In the *svarūpa* of the *jīva* there is no product of *māyā*. This has to be accepted. The nature of the *jīva* can be influenced by *māyā*. This I have also understood. Now I want to know if the *cit-śakti* has created the *jīva* by giving it the marginal nature? (Vrajanātha is asking about the conditioned *jīvas*).

Bābāji: No, *cit-śakti* is the complete potency of Kṛṣṇa. Whatever it manifests are all *nitya-siddha* objects. The *jīva* is not *nitya-siddha*; he becomes *sādhana-siddha*

through *sādhana* and enjoys bliss like the *nitya-siddha*. The four types of *sakhīs* of Śrī Rādhā are *nitya-siddhas*; they are *kāya-vyūha* manifestations of Śrī Rādhā, who is the personification of the *cit-śakti*.

All the *jīvas* have appeared from the *jīva-śakti* of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Just as *cit-śakti* is Kṛṣṇa's complete potency, similarly the *jīva-śakti* is His incomplete potency. All complete objects have appeared from the complete potency, similarly from the incomplete potency come the innumerable atomic *jīvas*. Lord Kṛṣṇa, presiding over each of His potencies, manifests His various expansions correspondingly. Presiding over the *cit* potency, He manifests His Kṛṣṇa form and that of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha. Presiding over His *jīva-śakti*, He manifests His *vilāsa* form of Baladeva in Vraja. Becoming situated in His *māyā-śakti*, He manifests the three Viṣṇu forms—Karaṇodakaśāyī, Kṣīrodakaśāyī, and Garbhodakaśāyī.

From His Kṛṣṇa form in Vraja, He manifests all the *cit* entities. From His Baladeva form as *Śeṣa tattva*, He manifests the *nitya-mukta jīvas* who are associates that render service in eight ways to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the *Śeṣī tattva*. Again, becoming Saṅkarṣaṇa as *Śeṣa rūpa*, He manifests eight types of eternal associates to render service in eight ways to Śeṣī, Nārāyaṇa. Mahā-Viṣṇu, an incarnation of Saṅkarṣaṇa, becoming situated in the *jīva-śakti* as Supersoul, manifests the living entities of the material world. All these *jīvas* (coming from Mahā-Viṣṇu) are disposed to *māyā*. Until they attain the shelter of the *hlādinī-śakti* of the *cit* world by the mercy of the Lord, they are prone to be defeated by *māyā*. The unlimited conditioned *jīvas* being defeated by *māyā* remain under the influence of her three modes. Therefore the principle is that only the *jīva-śakti* manifests *jīvas* and not the *cit-śakti*.

The essence is that there are three types of *jīvas*. Those that originate in Vraja manifest from Lord Baladeva. Those in the Vaikuṅṭha planets manifest from Saṅkarṣaṇa. Those in the material world manifest from Mahā-Viṣṇu. The first two types of *jīvas* are *nitya-mukta* and the third type are *nitya-baddha*. The third type, by the mercy of the Lord, can also become *muktas* if they take to devotional service. This explanation is very much in line with what the Six Gosvāmīs have written, which is cited elsewhere in this book.

If there is any doubt about this explanation, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further writes (*Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter Sixteen):

goloka-vṛndāvanastha evaṁ paravyomastha baladeva o saṅkarṣaṇa prakāṭita nitya-pārṣada jīva-sakala ananta; tāñhārā upāsya-sevāya rasika; sarvadā svarūpārtha viśiṣṭa; upāsya sukhānveśī, upāsyer prati sarvadā unmukha, jīvaśaktite cic-chaktira bala lābha kariyā tāñhārā sarvadā balavān, māyāra sahita tāñhādera kona sambandha nāi, māyā-śakti baliyā kona śakti āchena, tāhā o tāñhārā avagata na'na, yehetu tāñhārā cin-maṇḍala-madhyavartī evaṁ māyā tāñhādera nikaṭa haite aneka dūre, tāñhārā sarvadā i upāsya-sevā-sukhe magna, duḥkha jaḍa-sukha o nija sukha ityādi kathana i jānena nā. Tāñhārā nitya-mukta. Preme i tāñhādera jīvana; śoka, maraṇa, o bhaya ye ki vastu tāhā tāñhārā jānena nā. Karaṇābdhiśāyī mahā-viṣṇura māyāra prati ikṣaṇarūpa kiraṇagata anucaitanya gaṇa o ananta; tāñhārā māyā pārśva sthita baliyā māyāra vicitratā tāñhādera darśana-pathārūḍha. Pūrve ye jīva-sādhāraṇera lakṣaṇa baliyāchi, se samasta lakṣaṇa tāñhādera āche, tathāpi atyanta aṇu-svabhāva-prayukta sarvadā taṭastha-bhāve cij-jagatera dike evaṁ māyā-jagatera dike dṛṣṭipāta karite thākena. E avasthāya jīva atyanta durbala kenanā, juṣṭa vā sevya-vastura kṛpā-lābha karataḥ cid-bala lābha karena nāi;

iñhādera madhye ye saba jīva māyābhoga vāsanā karena, tāñhārā māyika-ṣayā abhīniviṣṭa haiyā māyāte nitya-baddha; yāñhārā sevyā-vastura cid-anuśilana karena tāñhārā sevyā tattvera kṛpāra sahita cid-bala lābha karataḥ cid-dhāme nīta ha'na.

There are unlimited *jīvas* who are eternal associates of the Lord. In Goloka Vṛndāvana they are manifested by Lord Baladeva for the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In Vaikuṅṭha they are manifested by Śrī Saṅkarṣaṇa for the service of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha. They are eternally and blissfully engaged in the service of their worshipable Lord, always situated in their *svarūpa*, always striving to make the Lord happy, always favorable to the service of the Lord, and always powerful with the energy of the *cit-śakti*. They have absolutely no relation or contact with the inert *māyā*. Indeed they do not even know that there is an energy called *māyā*. Because they live in the spiritual region, *māyā* remains very far from them. They are always absorbed in the bliss of service to their worshipable Lord. They are transcendental to mundane misery and happiness and are always liberated. Their very life is love, and they have no conception of lamentation, fear, and death.

The atomic conscious *jīvas*, who come out like rays from Mahā-Viṣṇu's glance at *māyā*, are also uncountable. Being in proximity to *māyā*, these *jīvas* see the variegatedness of *māyā*. They have all the characteristics of the ordinary *jīvas* as described before, yet because of their atomic nature they sometimes glance marginally towards the spiritual creation and sometimes towards the material creation. In this marginal state the *jīva* is weak, because he has not yet attained spiritual power by the mercy of the worshipable Lord. Out of these unlimited *jīvas*, the ones who desire to enjoy *māyā* remain eternally bound by *māyā*, because of being attached to sense enjoyment. Those who engage in devotional service to the Lord go to the spiritual world getting the strength of the *cit-śakti* by the mercy of the Lord.

Besides the fact that this passage confirms the previous one, we also learn that the *nitya-mukta* devotees don't even know there is an energy called *māyā*. Later on Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes that the reason why some *jīvas* become liberated and some become bound is the proper use or misuse of their natural independence. This does not include the *nitya-mukta jīvas*, who have no contact with *māyā* and thus have no scope to misuse their natural independence. Also, from these statements it is explicit that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, because these *jīvas* originating from Mahā-Viṣṇu have never been in the *nitya-līlā* in the spiritual sky, because Mahā-Viṣṇu is situated in the Virajā river, which is the demarcation between the spiritual energy and the material energy.

Being *taṭastha śakti*, the *jīvas* that come from Mahā-Viṣṇu may come to the material world or go to the spiritual world according to how they choose to use their minute independence, but no one falls into the material world from the Vaikuṅṭha planets or from Vrajaloka. The *jīvas* in Vaikuṅṭha are *nitya-mukta* and always have the power of the *cit* potency. Thus they can never be influenced by *māyā*. This verdict is confirmed in the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā* where Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains at length the infallible nature of the Lord's internal potency, which we discuss later in this book.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda explains that the *jīvas* in the *taṭastha* region are weak because they have not yet acquired the power of the *cit* potency. If they engage in devotional service, they can also become strong by the *cit-śakti*; then they will become liberated eternally. Moreover, he said that *nitya-muktas* have no contact with *māyā*, indeed they do not even know of *māyā*. They cannot be

attracted to something they are not even aware of. One has to know an object, properly or improperly, before desiring it or becoming attracted to it. This cuts to pieces the theory of the fall from the *nitya-lilā*.

After this Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura answers the question: Why did Lord Kṛṣṇa make some *jīvas* weak so that they come under the influence of *māyā*? This question would not arise if the fall down theory was in his mind, because he already said that *nitya-muktas* are strong because of the *cit* potency:

Vrajanātha: Lord Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of mercy. Why did He make the *jīva* weak and thereby cause his bondage by *māyā*? (Note: *Jīva* here refers only to the conditioned souls).

Bābāji: It is right that Kṛṣṇa is merciful, but He is also *lilāmāyā*, or one who performs only *lilā*. Considering that various types of *lilās* will be performed under various situations, the Lord made the *jīva* competent for unlimited gradations of positions from the marginal state up to the topmost platform of *mahābhāva*. To facilitate the *jīvas* and make them firm in their competence for these various positions, He created many low levels associated with *māyā* which present unlimited obstacles in the attainment of the supreme bliss. These range from the lowest inert matter up to false ego. The living entities bound by *māyā* are in ignorance of their *svarūpa*, engaged in acquiring pleasure for themselves, and not devoted to Kṛṣṇa. In this state, as much as the *jīva* goes down, that much more the merciful Lord—becoming manifest before him along with His associates and abode—gives him the facility to attain the ultimate destination. Those *jīvas* who accept that facility try to achieve this highest destination. Gradually they reach the transcendental abode of the Lord and attain the exact same status as His eternal associates.

A class of “weak” *jīvas* exist to enable the Lord, who is *lilāmāyā*, to have the full range of *lilā*. Without this facility He could not be said to enjoy all varieties of *lilā*. At the same time the weak *jīva* has the inherent capacity to reach the apex of development by taking to devotional service. Thus, the Lord, in another aspect of His variegated *lilā*, incarnates within the material energy to teach. As the culmination of that form of *lilā*, the Lord comes as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and teaches the fallen *jīvas* the highest destination possible, the attainment of *mahābhāva* in the mood of the *gopīs*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura continues:

Vrajanātha: Why does the Lord give trouble to the *jīvas* for the sake of his *lilā*?

Bābāji: The quality of free will in the *jīva* is a special mercy of the Lord on them, because an inert object without free will is very insignificant. Because of this independence the *jīva* gains lordship over the inert material world. Misery and happiness are states of mind. What we consider misery, a person attached to it considers happiness. The end result of all types of material happiness is misery and nothing else. A man attached to sense gratification ultimately attains misery. When this misery increases then it gives rise to the desire for happiness. This desire leads to discrimination, which brings inquisitiveness. Because of inquisitiveness one attains the association of saints, which gives rise to faith. By faith one ascends the path of progression. Just as gold is purified by heating it in fire and beating it with a hammer, in the same way the *jīva* who is affected with the contaminations of sense enjoyment and non-devotion to Kṛṣṇa is purified by putting him on the anvil of the material world and beating him with the hammer of

miseries. The misery of the conditioned *jīva* ultimately brings him pleasure. Thus misery is an instance of the Lord's mercy. Therefore the misery that befalls *jīvas* as part of Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* appears auspicious to the farsighted and miserable to the short sighted.

The Lord's material energy is inert. No pleasure results from *līlā* with inert matter, "because an inert object without free will is very insignificant." The *jīvas*, owing to their free will, attempt to lord it over matter and the duality of misery and happiness is set in motion. This is really a state of mind, but ultimately the sense of misery leads the *jīva* to inquire about happiness. So misery has an important function—it serves as impetus for the weak *jīvas* to take to spiritual life and become strong. The end result of material happiness is misery and the end result of misery, spanning many lifetimes (*bahūnām janmanām ante*), is the happiness of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way, all aspects of *līlā* are possible for the Lord, who is by nature *līlāmāyā*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda continues:

Vrajanātha: The misery in the conditioned state is ultimately auspicious, yet it is painful at present. Was it not possible for the omnipotent Lord to find some other solution to this miserable process?

Bābāji: Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* is very wonderful and of myriad types. This is also one type of astonishing *līlā*. The supremely independent Lord performs all types of *līlā*; why would He not perform this type? To maintain all varieties, no *līlā* can be abandoned. Besides, even if some other type of *līlā* is performed, the instruments (*jīvas*) of that *līlā* have to accept some form of trouble. Lord Kṛṣṇa is a person (*puruṣa*) and an agent. All instruments (*jīvas*) are under the will of the *puruṣa*. They are objects, or in other words, that which is acted upon by the *puruṣa*, whereas the *puruṣa* is the agent, or He who acts. Being under the will of an agent, it is natural that they will experience some misery. If that misery is ultimately pleasurable, however, then it is not misery. Why are you calling it misery? The apparent misery which nourishes Lord Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* is supremely blissful for the *jīva*. Abandoning the pleasure aspect of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva*, who has free will, has accepted the misery, which comes as a result of absorption in *māyā*. If anyone is to be blamed then that is *jīva*, not Kṛṣṇa.

The unlimited and omnipotent Lord would be limited and impotent if He did not perform all varieties of *līlā*, and He would not be supremely independent. The *jīvas* are like the subjects that are ruled by the king, the agent. Their independence is minute, not absolute. They are under the will of the Lord and, being under another's will, it is natural that one has misery. However, because this misery leads to pleasure it should not be taken as misery. And in any event, the choice is always open to the living entity to reject lording it over matter and accept the pleasure aspect of the Lord. Although he has never been in the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord, and although he has been in the Lord's material *līlā* from a time without beginning (*anādi*), the choice to be in material consciousness or spiritual consciousness is made by the *jīva*. Hence the *jīva* alone is responsible for being in the bondage of karma in the material world.

After this, Vrajanātha poses another question, "If the *jīva* had not been given independence, what would have been the loss?" Bābāji explains that free will is the inherent quality of the *jīva*. Without it the *jīva* would become as worthless and insignificant as inert matter. The cause of suffering is misuse of this free will, but the Lord, out of mercy, comes to protect the *jīva* and manifest His wonderful pastimes in the material world. Even then the *jīva* is unable to understand the Lord's pastimes. Then the Lord descends in Śrī Navadvīpa and personally

explains His name, form, qualities, and pastimes. He also teaches others by His own example. Then how can such a merciful Lord be blamed? It is the *jīva*'s stupidity that he does not pay heed to the Lord's teachings. Therefore, to rectify his mistake *māyā* punishes him. To forget that "I am an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa" is the mistake on the part of the *jīva*.

Again, readers should keep in mind that this forgetfulness of the *jīva* is beginningless and thus the Lord is not to be blamed. Although he is beginningless, the *jīva* is not inert. He is conscious and does not have to remain in his ignorant condition. He can choose to get out of this miserable condition.

The conclusion is this: Kṛṣṇa is supremely independent and the Supreme enjoyer. He performs various types of *līlās* and this is one among them. If He did not have this *līlā*, He could not be said to enjoy endless varieties nor would He be complete. The *jīva* alone is to be blamed for his miseries because as the marginal potency the choice is always there between Kṛṣṇa and *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa should not be blamed for this arrangement. This is also in agreement with Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura as will be mentioned later on. Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms the same thing in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā* in his purport to 7.116, which we quote in part:

Someone may argue, "Why is there a need to create the spiritual sparks?" The answer can be given in this way. Since the Absolute Personality of Godhead is omnipotent, He has both unlimited and limited potencies. This is the meaning of omnipotent. To be omnipotent, He must have not only unlimited potencies but limited potencies also. Thus to exhibit His omnipotency He displays both. The living entities are endowed with limited potency although they are part of the Lord. The Lord displays the spiritual world by His unlimited potencies, whereas by His limited potencies the material world is displayed. . . .

If the Personality of Godhead did not possess both limited and unlimited energies, He could not be called omnipotent. *Mahato mahiyān aṇuto'niyān*. He is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest. He is smaller than the smallest in the form of the living entities and greater than the greatest in His form of Kṛṣṇa. If there were no one to control, there would be no meaning to the conception of the supreme controller (*īśvara*), just as there is no meaning to a king without his subjects. If all the subjects became king, there would be no distinction between the king and an ordinary citizen. Thus for the Lord to be the supreme controller there must be a creation to control. The basic principle for the existence of the living entities is called *cid-vilāsa*, or spiritual pleasure. The omnipotent Lord displays His pleasure potency as the living entities. The Lord is described in *Vedānta-sūtra* as *ānandamayo'bhyāsāt*. He is by nature the reservoir of all pleasures, and because He wants to enjoy pleasure, there must be energies to give Him pleasure or supply Him the impetus for pleasure. This is the perfect philosophical understanding of the Absolute Truth.

A close scrutiny of this purport reveals that it echoes almost point for point the words of Bābājī in the passages already quoted. A point worthy of note is that here Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the reason for the existence of the *jīva* and the material world: The Supreme Lord, who is *līlāmāyā*, the performer of a variety of *līlās*, displays both His limited potency (*bahirāṅga śakti*), unlimited potency (*antarāṅga śakti*) and marginal potency (*jīva-śakti*) as a basic feature of His nature. If He did not do so, He could not be called omnipotent or complete or *līlāmāyā*. Thus according to His sweet will, He engages some *jīvas* in His limited potency. After all, they are energies of the Lord and meant for His pleasure, "*cid-vilāsa*." Therefore, some get to participate

in His *līlā* with His limited potency and some get to be in His *līlā* with His unlimited potency. All is done according to His own sweet will. Thus no stain or blame is to be attributed to the Lord for this state of events, for it is His very nature.

The *jīvas*' suffering is not inflicted by the Lord. Their suffering is on account of their desire to lord it over the material energy of the Lord. If the *jīvas* give up trying to become *īśvaras*, they would not suffer for being engaged in the Lord's *līlā* with His material energy. Their suffering is caused because of their exhibiting their lording-over propensity, which has no beginning. Indeed, for one who engages in pure devotional service there is no distinction between the material world and the spiritual world. Thus, conditioned souls are suffering not because the Lord wills it on them, but because they do not desire to act as His servant. They can reverse this entanglement by surrendering to the Lord in devotional service. Suffering serves as an impetus for such surrender. For those who take to devotional service, there is no difference between heaven and hell.

In other words, the unalloyed devotee makes no distinction between the spiritual world and the material world. Even if one argues that his being here is beginningless and therefore he could not have had any choice in the matter of whether he wanted to be in the limited potency or unlimited potency of the Lord's *līlā*, the fact remains that the decision to lord it over the limited potency is entirely his. The conditioned *jīvas* always had the choice either to look towards *māyā* or towards the Lord.

The *jīva* therefore is always situated in the *taṭastha* condition. Once he reaches the spiritual sky, however, having attained the shelter of the internal potency of the Lord, he never comes back to *māyā*. Now he has joined the eternal *līlā* of the Lord in His unlimited potency, "which is never created or destroyed." And those who have never been to the material world never fall because they have the protection of the *cit-śakti*. This is all very consistent with the passages cited from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who says that the Lord has diverse *līlās* in which He engages His energies and this is but one of His many varieties of *līlās*.

Readers should also take note that in both Śrīla Bhaktivinoda's and Śrīla Prabhupāda's definitive explanations of the nature of the Lord and the bondage of the *jīva*, both are in agreement; and in both cases there is no mention of souls falling from Vaikuṅṭha. If anyone doubts that this is the definitive description of the *siddhānta*, readers should take note of the concluding sentence in the passage from Śrīla Prabhupāda, "This is the perfect philosophical understanding of the Absolute Truth." Earlier in the same purport before the part that is quoted he wrote, "This is pure philosophical understanding." Such conclusive statements leave no room for doubt that in this purport Śrīla Prabhupāda laid bare the *siddhānta*. And if someone says that it does not deal with the *jīva* issue, we hasten to point out that he does raise the question "Why is there a need to create the spiritual sparks?" and answers it.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER TWO

MORE FROM THE TEACHINGS OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA

In the first chapter we mentioned that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda gave a novel explanation of the word *anādi*. In *Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter Sixteen, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura defines the meaning of *anādi* karma: "The root of all karma is the desire to act and that has its root in *avidyā*. To forget that

‘I am the servant of Kṛṣṇa’ is *avidyā*. This *avidyā* is not born in material time. It arises at the *taṭastha* region. Therefore karma has no beginning in material time. For this reason karma is called *anādi*.”

Some people take this definition of *anādi* as an indication of the fall down of the *jīva*, thinking that if karma did not begin in material time it must begin in spiritual time, but this is impossible. It surely cannot have a beginning in spiritual time because, according to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, every event in the spiritual world is eternal (Chapter 15), *cij-jagatera kāla akhaṇḍarūpe nitya-vartamāna*.

Furthermore, in the spiritual world, material time is conspicuous by its absence. As Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī writes (*Brahma Saṁhitā* 56): “I worship that transcendental seat, known as Śvetadvīpa where there is eternal existence of transcendental time, who is ever present and without past or future and hence is not subject to the quality of passing away even for the duration of half a moment.” If karma had a beginning in the spiritual world it would never come to an end, but all Vedic philosophers agree that karma comes to an end at the point of liberation. Therefore Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said that *avidyā*, the root cause of karma, arose at the *taṭastha* region, not in Vaikuṅṭha. We leave it to the sagacious reader to figure out the whereabouts of the *taṭastha* region. In any case, it is not Vaikuṅṭha.

The point is that karma has no beginning either in spiritual time or material time. Hence it is rightly called *anādi*, beginningless. Whether you say, “It has no beginning in material time” or “It has no beginning,” it means the same thing. Material conditioning cannot have a beginning in spiritual time. That is self-contradictory. If conditioned life had its beginning in the spiritual world or spiritual time, then the *jīva* would never be able to attain liberation, because its karma would then be eternal.

Moreover, there is no possibility of material conditioning outside material time because *māyā* exists only within material time. So if it has no beginning in material time and no beginning in spiritual time, it is beginningless, *anādi*. Therefore, the meaning of *anādi* given by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is the same as that used by our other *ācāryas*, such as Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has apparently just stated the case in a slightly different way.

This is evident from his comment on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.12.21 in *Bhāgavat-ārka-marīci mālā* (8.31), *bhagavān kahilena-he uddhava, ei samaṣṭi-vyaṣṭi svarūpa viṣvai anādi saṁsāra taru*. “The Lord said, “O Uddhava, this universe which is in the form of individual and aggregate entities is the beginningless universal tree.” Here the material bodies of the conditioned living entities as well as the aggregate universal body are compared to *saṁsārataru purāṇa*. The important point is that the word *anādi* is used both for the individual tree as well as the aggregate tree, the universe. If the individual tree is not accepted as beginningless, then the universal tree is not accepted as beginningless. That means once there was no material nature, but this is unacceptable, because the Lord says in *Bhāgavad-gītā* (13.20) that both the material nature and the living entity are beginningless, *anādi*.

This beginningless event is undergoing a beginningless cycle of creation and annihilation. As he further writes, (*ei taru*) *karma-pravāhamāyā*, this tree is undergoing a flow or cycle of karma. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, commenting on the same *Bhāgavatam* verse (11.12.21), says, *purāṇaḥ anādiḥ*, “*Purāṇa* means beginningless.” The popular meaning of the word *purāṇa* is old or ancient, yet both Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

translate it as *anādi*. If Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had any other meaning of *anādi* in his mind, he could have written it as a more traditional synonym of *purāṇa* instead of *anādi*.

Therefore, the only meaning of the word *anādi* as used by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is beginningless. His attempt to explain *anādi* differently in *Jaiva Dharma* and other works was on account of the audience he had to preach to in his time. This is discussed in the Second Wave of this book.

If someone still has doubts about the truth of no fall from Vaikuṅṭha and that the conditioning of the *jīva* is *anādi*, with no prior state, then Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further writes (*Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter Seventeen:):

There are two types of *jīvas* liberated from *māyā*—*nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated, and *baddha-mukta*, those who were bound but became liberated. The *jīvas* who were never bound by *māyā* are called *nitya-mukta*. The *nitya-muktas* are also of two types, *aiśvarya gata nitya mukta* and *mādhurya gata nitya mukta*. The former are the associates of Lord Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṅṭha and are the atomic particles from *mūla* Saṅkarṣaṇa. The latter are the associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Goloka. They are the atomic particles of Śrī Baladeva situated in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

In this description of *nitya-muktas*, he does not count the *jīvas* bound in the material world who come from Mahā-Viṣṇu. After this he describes the three classes of *baddha-muktas*, or those who were bound and became liberated. Nowhere does he mention a class called *mukta-baddha*—or those who were liberated and became bound. Therefore it is conclusive that he does not support the theory of fall down from Vaikuṅṭha.

In the *Bhagavat-ārka-marīci-mālā* (8.37), in the chapter, *Baddha-jīva-lakṣaṇam* (Characteristics of a Bound *Jīva*) commenting on *Bhāgavatam* 11.11.7 he writes: *Pippalāda pakṣi avidyā-yukta āchena baliyā nitya-baddha. Apippalāda vidyāmaya ata eva nitya mukta*. “The bird which eats the *Pippala* fruit is in ignorance therefore he is *nitya-baddha*, or bound eternally. The bird which does not eat the *Pippala* fruit is full of knowledge, and therefore he is *nitya-mukta*, or eternally liberated.” Here he applied the adjective *nitya* to both the conditioned souls as well as to the Supersoul, who is never-conditioned. Therefore, *nitya* cannot have any other meaning but to mean ever-bound in the case of the *jīva* and ever-liberated in the case of the Supersoul. To give it a different meaning in the same sentence would be considered a defect. Consequently, no conditioned soul was formerly a *nitya-mukta* resident of Vaikuṅṭha.

These evidences presented from Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s writings are from the parts where he is directly explaining the conditioning of the *jīva*. Therefore this is the *mukhya vṛtti*, or primary statement. Taking this understanding as definitive, one should then try to understand his other statements wherein he says that the *jīva* has forgotten Kṛṣṇa and therefore he is covered by *māyā*. The fall-*vādīs* cite such statements while completely ignoring the primary statements in the Ṭhākura’s writings. They only cite statements which talk about “regaining *svarūpa*,” “remembering again” and so on and then interpret them as proof of fall from Vaikuṅṭha. But the fact remains that nowhere does Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura write that the *jīva* can fall or fell from Vaikuṅṭha. Rather, he explicitly states that *nitya-mukta jīvas* have no contact or knowledge of *māyā*; they are strong by the *cit-śakti* of *māyā*, which means that even if they have to descend into the material world they will not be covered by *māyā*; they are always engaged in the blissful service of the Lord; they never experience material miseries.

The *jīva*'s forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa has no beginning. And actually it means forgetting that

one's constitutional position is to be the servant of Kṛṣṇa. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes (*Śrī Caitanya Śikṣāmṛtam, Prathama Vṛṣṭi, Fourth Shower*):

Because the *jīva* is bound before entering the material world his bondage is called *anādi*, or beginningless . . .

The *jīva* who is under the influence of *māyā* forgets Kṛṣṇa and seeks to fulfill various desires.

The *jīva* who is atomic consciousness is naturally the servant of Kṛṣṇa who is the complete consciousness. Servitorship to Kṛṣṇa is the very identity of the *jīva*. Forgetting this eternal nature, the *jīva* is bound by *māyā*, but as soon as he remembers his eternal nature, he becomes free from *māyā*.

The two points to be noted from this are that forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa has no beginning and forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa actually means ignorance of one's own eternal nature. Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms this in his purport on the famous *kṛṣṇa bhuli* verse (*Cc. Madhya, 20.117 Purport*), "When the living entity forgets his constitutional position as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, he is immediately entrapped by the illusory, external energy." Although the verse says *kṛṣṇa bhuli*, "forgetting Kṛṣṇa," Śrīla Prabhupāda explains it as forgetting his constitutional position. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta in his *Vivṛti* commentary of *Bhāgavatam* (2.9.35) says that forgetfulness is indirect, *vyatireka buddhite kṛṣṇa-vismaraṇa ghate*. It means that because the *jīva* is not engaged in the service of the Lord he is said to be in a forgetful state, not that he knew Kṛṣṇa and then forgot Him. This is in harmony with the words of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and leaves no scope for the fall down theory. Thus from the direct statements of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, as well as by analysis of his indirect statements such as "forgetting Kṛṣṇa", it is clear that the conditioned souls did not fall from Vaikuṅṭha. The *jīva* being the eternal servant of the Lord does not necessarily imply that he has been in personal touch with Kṛṣṇa. Māyādevī is a servant of Kṛṣṇa but she never associates with Him.

The fall-*vādīs* disregard the text directly dealing with the bondage of the *jīva* and therefore arrive at a wrong conclusion by seeing passages such as "when they forget their natural function as Kṛṣṇa's servitors," "The *jīva*, having forgotten his eternal relation with Kṛṣṇa, has fallen into the sea of *samsāra*." There are many such indirect statements in the works of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, and Śrīla Prabhupāda. If one is unaware of the direct and definitive references given earlier, then these indirect statements surely seem to support the fall theory. But such is not the case.

The problem is that we try to understand the eternal, spiritual objects with our material mind. We understand things by comparison with our experience. All our experiences in the material world are material and are about objects which have a beginning and an end. It is a difficult task for the spiritual teacher to explain the eternal and spiritual entities in the language of material experience and for a man with only material experience to properly grasp the transcendental objects. One needs purity of heart and spiritual realization to grasp transcendence. If that is lacking, then it is impossible to comprehend correctly topics such as the bondage of the *jīva* and concepts such as *anādi*. In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has warned us in the following statement (*Jaiva Dharma, Chapter Fifteen*):

Vrajanātha: *Pūrvve śuniyāchi, cij-jagat nitya evaṁ jīva o nitya; tāhā haile nitya-vastura udbhava, sṛṣṭi o prākatya kirūpe sambhava haya? Kona samaye yadi tāñhārā prakāta hana, athaca pūrvve aprakāta chilena, tāhā haile tāñhādera nityatā kirūpe sambhava haya?*

Bābāji: *jada-jagate ye deśa o kāla anubhava kariteche, tāhā cij-jagatera deśa o kāla*

haite vilakṣaṇa. Jaḍa-jagatera kāla—bhūta vartamāna o bhaviṣyat—ei tin vibhāge vibhakta; cij-jagatera kāla akhaṇḍa-rūpe nitya-vartamāna. Cid vyāpāre yat kichu ghaṭanā ācche, samasta i nitya-vartamān-kāle pratīta. Āmārā ye kichu varṇanā kari, sakala i jaḍa kāle o deśera adhikṛta; sutarām āmarā yakhana “jīva sṛṣṭa haiyāchilena,” “jīva pare māyā-baddha hailena,” “cij-jagat prakṛta haila,” “jīvera gaṭhane cit vai māyāra kāryya nāi,” eirūpa kathā bali, takhana āmādera vākyera upara jādīya kālera vikrama haiyā thāke—āmādera baddhāvasthāya e prakāra varṇana anivāryya; ei janya jīva viśaye, cid-viśaye samasta varṇane i māyika-kālera adhikāra chāḍḍāna yāya nā-bhūta, bhaviṣyat bhāva sutarām āsiyā pade. Ei varṇana-sakalera tātparya anubhava-samaye śuddha-vicāraka-gaṇa nitya-vartamāna-kāla-prayogera anubhava kariyā thākena. Bābā, ei viśayera vicāra samaye ekaṭu viśeṣa satarka thākiye anivārya vākye heyatva parityāga kariyā cid-anubhava karibe....Āmi jānitechi, tumi ekhana i ei bhāva haṭhāt hṛdayaṅgama karite pāribe nā, tomāra hṛdaya yata cid-anuśilana-vṛddhi haibe, tata i jaḍa haite cidera, vailakṣṇya sahaḥje udaya haibe. Tomāra śarīra jadamaya, śarīrera samasta kriyā jadamaya; kintu vastutaḥ tumi jadamaya nao—tumi aṇu caitanya vastu. Āpanāke āpani yata jānite paribe, tata i nija-svarūpake māyika jagat haite sreṣṭha-tattva baliyā anubhava karite pāribe. E phalaṭi āmi baliyā dile tomāra lābha haibe nā, athavā tumi śuniyā laile o lābha haibe nā. Tumi harināmera anusīlane nijera cinmayatva yata i udaya karāibe, tata i tomāra cij-jagatera pratīti haibe.

When Vrajanātha heard that there are three types of living entities—originating from Baladeva, Sankarṣaṇa and Mahā-Viṣṇu—he asked Bābāji:

Vrajanātha: Previously, I heard that the spiritual world and the living entities are eternal. If that is true, then how can an eternal object be created or manifested? If they are manifest at a particular time, then it would imply that they were unmanifest before that; then how can they be considered eternal?

Bābāji: The space and time of the spiritual world are completely different from the space and time you are experiencing in this inert world. Material time is divided into past, present, and future. But in the spiritual world there is only the one imperishable present time. Every event in the spiritual world is ever-present.

Whatever we speak or describe in the material world is under the influence of material space and material time. Therefore, whenever we make statements such as, “the *jīvas* were created,” “thereafter the *jīvas* became bound by *māyā*,” “the spiritual world became manifest,” “there is no aspect of *māyā* in the constitution of the *jīva*,” material time influences our language. These kinds of statements are unavoidable in our conditioned state. For this reason, no statement concerning the *jīva* and spirit is exempt from the jurisdiction of material time. Feelings of past and future naturally creep in. Therefore, while experiencing the import of the descriptions of the spiritual world and spiritual objects, people who are devoted to pure thinking experience the changeless nature of present time. Be very careful in this respect. Giving up the unwanted sense which is unavoidable (due to the influence of material time) try to experience the spirit. . . .

I know at present you will not be able to digest these subtleties so quickly. As the spiritual influence will increase in your heart, so the spiritual understanding will easily increase, distinguishing it from the material conception. Your body is inert and so are all the bodily activities, but you are not; you are an atomic conscious being. The more you are able to understand yourself, the more you will

experience yourself as superior to the material world. Therefore, even if I explain it and you listen, you will not be able to grasp it. The more you awaken your spiritual consciousness by taking shelter of the holy name, the more you will experience the spiritual world.

In this passage Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains the difficulty in understanding spiritual topics while in the conditioned state. The same problem exists for the person who has to explain it to the conditioned souls. The teacher is limited by language and the student is limited by his experience. Thus, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura suggests that if we want to have proper understanding and experience of spiritual topics, we have to purify our heart and abandon the influence of material time which is unavoidable in spiritual descriptions. If this is not done, then our understanding will be incorrect, which is exactly the case with the fall-*vādīs*. They are trying to understand the *jīva*-issue only on the basis of words such as, “when they forget their eternal relation with Kṛṣṇa.” The fall-*vādīs*, due to the influence of material time on the spiritual descriptions, pay attention only to the words “when they forget,” which implies a beginning, but they overlook the word eternal in “eternal relation.” Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura suggests that we give up the influence of material time and keep the pure spiritual characteristics. But the fall-*vādīs* keep the influence of material time and give up the spiritual characteristics. The result is that the spiritual entities (such as *nitya-muktas*) are treated as ephemeral objects. This is a major obstacle to spiritual realization.

In later chapters we will explain how by accepting the fall-*vāda* theory and following their premise to its logical conclusion, materialistic concepts creep into Vaikuṅṭha and all other spiritual objects. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself becomes reduced to an ephemeral object. Indeed, the whole spiritual process becomes a mockery. Therefore such *apa-siddhāntas* must be challenged and uprooted to safeguard the *bhakti mārṅga*.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGIN OF THE JĪVA ACCORDING TO ŚRĪLA BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA

In the last two chapters we have seen that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accepts that the conditioning of the *jīvas* in the material world is beginningless and that *nitya-muktas*, not even aware that the Lord has an energy called *māyā*, have no chance to fall down from their eternal position. We also saw how his words can be misinterpreted by those who lack spiritual insight.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda is the illustrious son of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He imbibed Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism from his father. Therefore one would not expect him to disagree with the Ṭhākura. He writes in his commentary on *Brahma-saṁhitā* (21), “But so long as he (*jīva*) remains submissive to Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Māyā, he is not liable to the influence of Māyā. The world afflictions, births, and rebirths are the concomitants of the fettered condition of souls fallen into the clutches of the deluding potency from a time that has no beginning.” Clearly he accepts that the bondage of the *jīva* is *anādi*, or beginningless.

In the booklet *Vaiṣṇavism—Real and Apparent*, under the heading “The Bondage of *Jīva*,” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes:

Jivas are of two kinds (1) *Nitya-mukta* (eternally free), (2). *Nitya-baddha* (eternally enslaved). Free *jivas* are never enslaved. They are serving the Supreme God in five different functions in His eternal blissful abode, where there is no change, no destruction, no misery. *Jiva*, once entered there, never comes back here.

Here, as in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.10), he accepts only two classes of *jivas* and categorically says, “Free *jivas* are never enslaved.” He also says, “*Jiva*, once entered there, never comes back here.” These two sentences mean that whether one has always been in *Vaikuṅṭha* or goes there from the material world, one never falls down from *Vaikuṅṭha*.

From these two references (*Brahma-saṁhitā* and *Vaiṣṇavism—Real and Apparent*), Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī clearly accepts two things: (1) that the bondage of the *jiva* has no beginning and (2) that a liberated soul, whether *nitya-mukta* or *baddha-mukta*, never falls down.

In *Śrī Caitanya’s Teachings—Part II, Chapter One, (Immanent and Transcendent)* p. 391-2, Third Edition, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes:

Tatastha has both the power of associating with temporal as well as eternal planes. Souls who have got their stations at Tatastha have got free will. Each of the individual souls by exercising his free will can abuse or properly use his independence. He has got two different fields in two different directions. He may choose one of these for his stage. When he is in an enjoying mood and considers himself identical with the Predominating Object or the Absolute, he is said to be fallen and when he shows an aptitude for serving the Transcendental Predominating Object, he is freed from the clutches of limitation and is eternally associated in serving the Predominating Object. The souls in the tatastha position are not one, but many in number. They are not to associate themselves with unalloyed *Chit Shakti* or unalloyed *Achit* or *Maya Shakti*. In the Tatastha position, souls do not show any activity but they are found to be in an indolent stage.

And on p. 365-6 he writes:

Vishnu has three energies, one of them is meant for manifestation of His eternal Abode, another Potency is for creating all human souls who are emanations from His Tatastha-shakti found between the temporal and eternal worlds. By this potency He creates human souls. The human soul has two different predilections. If he desires to serve God-head he is allowed into the Eternal Region. If he desires to lord it over this world he comes down for enjoying in different capacities the products of the Deluding Potency.

This does not mention fall from *Vaikuṅṭha*, but from *tatastha*, which is the marginal potency, situated between the spiritual and material potencies. The souls there are in an indolent stage of existence. No resident of *Vaikuṅṭha* could be described as “indolent,” so this is surely not *Vaikuṅṭha*. This verdict agrees exactly with Bhaktivinoda Thākura in *Jaiva Dharma*. In the same book on page 366 Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes:

This position, which is like a geometrical line, is designated *tatastha-śakti*, the fountain-head of all human souls. *Tatastha-śakti* is located between the two potencies of Vishnu one of which maintains this transforming world and the other is the source of the manifestation of the eternal world that does not change like this world. These potencies belong to the Personality of God-head Vishnu.

He also says that there is no ignorance in the spiritual world which means that nobody makes mistakes out of ignorance. (p. 390-1):

In *Chit-jagat* there is no ignorance whatsoever of free souls whereas in *Mayik Jagat*, *mayik* impressions of fallen fettered souls are always obscured with intervening materials.

In Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's *Vivṛti* commentary on *Bhāgavatam* 3.7.12 he writes, *Bhakti-yoge avasthita mukta-puruṣa kṛpāṇa o baddha hana na*, "Being situated in *bhakti-yoga* a liberated person never becomes miserly or bound." And in his *Vivṛti Sāra* on *Catuḥ śloki bhāgavatam* (2.9.35), he writes:

Prakṛti, kāla o karma—ihārā cetana-maya o advitīya-vastura janaka-jananī vā vināṣakārī nahe. Cetana māyā vastura sahita ihādera vaiṣamyō o viśeṣatva ācche-ihārā acit-paryāye gaṇita. Ihādigera madhye prathame duiṭi vināśi nahe, karma vināśi haile o prāganādi.

Prakṛti, time, and karma, these can neither generate nor destroy a conscious entity or the non-dual reality. These are distinct from the conscious entity and thus they are counted among the *acit*, or inert, group. Out of these three, the first two are indestructible. Karma is destructible but it has no beginning.

Here he clearly accepts karma as beginningless, which means the *jīva* could not have been in *Vaikuṅṭha* prior to being entrapped in karma, because this would negate the beginningless nature of karma. The problem is that fall-*vādīs* do not appreciate that when a beginningless event, karma, is associated with a beginningless entity, the *jīva*, it means that both must be concurrent. One could not have had a prior existence. Both are simultaneously beginningless. Therefore, if beginningless karma could not have begun in the spiritual world then the beginningless *jīva* bound by karma could not have been in the spiritual world either.

Sometimes it appears from the writing of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī that he is indicating a fall from *Vaikuṅṭha*, but careful study of the text and its proper reconciliation with definitive statements such as those cited above easily removes such doubts. One such passage is seen in his *Vivṛti* on *Bhāgavatam* 11.2.48:

Baddha-jīva indriyaja-jñāne āpanāke ābaddha kariyā jagate bhagavad-itarānubhūtirā sahita praṇaya vā vidveṣa kariyā thāke, kintu uhā ye vaikuṅṭha-dharme avasthita nahe-e kathā bujhite pāre nā. Vāstava-satya aprākṛta vastu viṣṇura śakti-viśeṣa māyā taṭastha-śakti-pariṇata jīvake indriyaja-jñāne vimugdha kariyā viṣṇu-sevā-rahita kare. Takhana se vikṣipta o āvṛta haiyā advaya-vaikuṅṭha haite cyuta haya.

The conditioned soul, binding himself to sense perception, exists in the material world having attachment or hatred along with his material experience, but he cannot understand that these do not exist in the nature of *Vaikuṅṭha*. *Māyā*, which is the energy of Lord Viṣṇu and real, bewilders the *jīva*, who is part a product of the *taṭastha śakti*, in sense perception and keeps him without service to Lord Viṣṇu. Then being bewildered and covered, he is fallen from *advaya-vaikuṅṭha*.

From the last statement, it seems very clear that we have fallen from Vaikuṅṭha, but that is far from the truth. There is no *māyā* there. The devotees in Vaikuṅṭha can neither be bewildered or covered by her, which is the prerequisite of falling down. The statements that the *jīva* is “bewildered,” “covered,” or fallen, do not mean that they happen at a particular time. The conditioning of the *jīva* has no beginning and thus he has always been bewildered, covered, and in a fallen state. In the same *Bhāgavatam* commentary just a few verses before (*Vivṛti* on *Bhāg.* 11.2.37), Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta wrote, *Advaya-jñāna vrajendra-nandana svayam-rūpa tattva. Tadāśrita janagaṇera sva-svarūpe avasthiti-kāle kona apriya vṛti āvāhana karibāra avakāśa haya nā.* “Vrajendra-nandana, the non-dual consciousness, is the *svayam-rūpa tattva*. Those who have taken shelter of Him, being situated in their own *svarūpa*, have no opportunity to invoke any kind of inauspiciousness.” And there is never a time that *nitya-mukta* devotees are not situated in their own *svarūpa* because nothing else is possible.

According to the *Saṁsad Bengālī English Dictionary*, the word *cyuta* means "got detached, dislocated, dislodged, come away, shed, fallen, or slipped" and so on. Later in this book we explain that the word *patita* (literally fallen), when describing the conditioned state of the *jīva*, does not imply a previously liberated state. The same applies to the word *cyuta*, which is a synonym of *patita*. Although, in the quote from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, it is translated in the last line as “he is fallen from *advaya-Vaikuṅṭha*,” the real meaning is that he is dislocated or cut-off from *advaya-Vaikuṅṭha*. The use of the passive voice in the statement of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta ("is fallen") indicates simply that the *jīva* is in a fallen state in relationship to his Vaikuṅṭha *dharma* and not that he falls from Vaikuṅṭha. This condition is beginningless.

A similar instance where Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta seems to indicate a fall down from Vaikuṅṭha is seen in his book *Caitanya’s Teachings* (p. 350):

Because we have shown diffidence we have proved our indolence to associate with Him; so, like shooting stars, we have been simply thrown off from Him. We have rebelled against that Entity. Now to go back to Him, it is essential that all our associations and movements should tend to His service.

This seems to imply a fall-down from Lord Kṛṣṇa’s association, but, again, close scrutiny reveals that this is not the case, because if we accept the above words literally then we are contradicting his statements in other parts of this and other books, some of which we have cited above. The above reference is from a dialogue between Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and a German lady named Mrs. Nora Moreli. It is difficult for a Westerner to grasp such difficult concepts in their original sense. Therefore, a preacher is bound to put it in simple terms. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also said that such concepts cannot be understood unless the heart is purified. This also explains why Śrīla Prabhupāda made fall down statements in his letters and conversations.

Ideas such as falling from Vaikuṅṭha are illogical. They are based on one’s material conception projected upon the transcendental reality. In this regard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes emphatically (*Vivṛti* on *Bhāg.* 3.7.11):

Goloke bhagavān o tāñhāra nitya parikāra-gaṇera sevya-sevaka-gata nitya cid-vaicitryake jaḍa—jagate māyā-vaśe baddha-jīvera karma-bhūmikāya naśvara pratīti darśane samāna jñāna karile nānā vṛthā kutarka upasthita haya. Tādṛśa darśane bhagavad-vastu māyika naśvara jaḍa vastu saha samāna bhūmikāya

avasthita mane haiyā tarker udaya karāya kintu prakṛta prastāve tāhā nahe. Bhagavānera svarūpa śaktira līlā vaicitrya māyika-bhūmikāya baddha-jīvera naśvara ceṣṭāra saha samāna nahe.

People present many illogical arguments, *kutarka*. They consider the Lord in Goloka and the eternal transcendental variety, in the form of the eternal relation between the worshipable Lord and His devotees, equal to the temporary activities of the conditioned souls under the influence of *māyā*. Many arguments are raised in such philosophy considering the eternal transcendental objects equal to the material inert objects, but reality is not so. The pastimes of the *svārūpa-śakti* of the Lord are not equal to the temporary endeavors of the conditioned soul in the material world.

Arguments given in support of fall down—which ultimately seek to impose an imperfection on the perfect world or on the perfect devotees—are only *kutarka*, false logic. They stem from a poor understanding of the Lord’s *svārūpa-śakti*. All planets in the material world are places of fall down and by the influence of *māyā*, people equate Vaikuṅṭha to these material planets. If this was correct, then what would be the significance of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s statement, *ā brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ . . . punar janma na vidyate?* What would be the value of His statement that in the material world all beings are fallible and in the spiritual world all beings are infallible?

From his own statements, it is clear that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta does not accept that the living entity falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Hence, any statement where he appears to say differently must be taken as a misunderstanding of his true meaning on the part of the reader. Besides that there is much evidence from the *śāstras* and other realized devotees about the conditioning of the *jīva*, all of which state that it has no beginning.

It should also be noted that all the references stating that the bondage of the *jīva* is beginningless—given here from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta and in the previous chapter from the works of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura—are direct discussions on the bondage of the *jīva*. The fall-*vādīs* avoid citing these parts but always manage to find support for their belief from the indirect words such as “attaining original *svārūpa*,” “regaining memory” and so on, which they interpret to mean the conditioned soul was formerly in the Lord’s *nitya-līlā* in Vaikuṅṭha. None of their *śāstric* quotes directly state that *jīvas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha, yet they demand direct quotes that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. When this is presented, they try to reason it away. Some even ignore it altogether. In light of the above quotes, however, their conclusion is seen to be nothing but a misinterpretation.

In preaching a saintly devotee may sometimes adjust the *siddhānta* or speak in an apparently ambiguous manner, but a dutiful disciple or granddisciple must not confuse what is essentially a preaching technique with the true *siddhānta*, for that would be a disservice to the entire *paramparā*.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER FOUR

THE ORIGIN OF THE JĪVA ACCORDING TO ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

From the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda it is explicit that he has sometimes said that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha and sometimes that we fell from Kṛṣṇa’s association. The fall-*vādīs* like to proclaim that there are just a scant few statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, and even those are not definitive. And in any case they are fewer. We have not made a count for comparison, because the sheer number of statements of one over the other cannot be accepted as proof of the *siddhānta*.

For example, the *Bhāgavatam* states *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* only once, but Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, after careful analysis concludes that it is the “emperor statement” of the *Bhāgavatam*. Although stated only one time, it is the *siddhānta*. Our approach to solving this problem is to first ascertain what is the *siddhānta*; once we have the answer, then it is simply a matter of relegating all statements that contradict the *siddhānta* to preaching strategy. Thus far we have shown that two predecessor *ācāryas* do not support fall down from Vaikuṅṭha. We find that Śrīla Prabhupāda made many similar statements. Hereafter we cite some examples from Prabhupāda supporting the position that the *jīva* does not fall. We cite many of these statements because some of our readers may not be aware that Prabhupāda made so many clear and definitive statements on this point—statements that need no interpretation:

From Vedic scriptures it is understood that sometimes even Brahmā and Indra fall down, but a devotee in the transcendental abode of the Lord never falls. (*Bhāg.* 3.15.48, purport)

The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world or Vaikuṅṭha, for it is the eternal abode.” (*Bhāg.* 3.16.26, purport)

This ordinary living being is of two kinds—*nitya-baddha* or *nitya-mukta*. One is eternally conditioned and the other is eternally liberated. The eternally liberated living beings are in Vaikuṅṭha *jagat*, the spiritual world and they never fall into the material world. (*Bhāg.* 5.11.12, purport)

The *nitya-siddha* devotees never fall down to the region of the material atmosphere even though they sometimes come into the material plane to execute the mission of the Lord. (*Bhāg.* 3.3.26, purport)

Therefore it is to be understood that when Jaya and Vijaya descended to this material world, they came because there was something to be done for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Otherwise it is a fact that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. (*Bhāg.* 7.1.35, purport).

Ordinarily, there is no possibility that the four sages could be so angry with the doorkeepers, nor could the Supreme Lord neglect His two doorkeepers, nor can one come back from Vaikuṅṭha after once taking birth there. (*Bhāg.* 3.16.29, purport)

The devotees of the Lord, however, never fall down. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.31), the Supreme Personality of Godhead assures Arjuna, *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*: “O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.” Again in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40), Kṛṣṇa says:

*nehābhikrama-nāso ’sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya*

trāyate mahato bhayāt

“In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous types of fear.” (Bg. 2.40) (NOI 3 purport)

A pure living entity in his original spiritual existence is fully conscious of his constitutional position as an eternal servitor of the Lord. All souls who are situated in such pure consciousness are liberated, and therefore they eternally live in bliss and knowledge in the various Vaikuṅṭha planets in the spiritual sky. When the material creation is manifested, it is not meant for them. The eternally liberated souls are called *nitya-muktas*, and they have nothing to do with the material creation. (Bhāg. 3.5.29, purport)

They are all self-realized souls who are *nitya-mukta*, everlastingly liberated. Although they could conceivably declare themselves Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, they never do so; they always remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and serve the Lord faithfully. Such is the atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭha-loka. Similarly, one who learns the faithful service of Lord Kṛṣṇa through the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will always remain in Vaikuṅṭha-loka and have nothing to do with the material world. (Bhāg. 6.1.34, 36, purport)

But once one is engaged in the spiritual activities of *bhakti-yoga*, one does not fall down. (Bhāg. 8.3.11)

The living entities are divided into two categories—the eternally liberated and eternally conditioned. Those who are ever-liberated never come in contact with *māyā*, the external energy. The ever-conditioned are always under the clutches of the external energy. This is described in *Bhagavad-gītā: daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā* “This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.” (Bg. 7.14) The *nitya-baddhas* are always conditioned by the external energy, and the *nitya-muktas* never come in contact with the external energy. (Cc. *Madhya*. 22. 14-15)

Sometimes it is asked how the living entity falls down from the spiritual world to the material world. Here is the answer. Unless one is elevated to the Vaikuṅṭha planets, directly in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is prone to fall down, either from the impersonal Brahman realization or from an ecstatic trance of meditation. (Bhāg. 3.25.29, purport)

Here Śrīla Prabhupāda raises the question himself and then answers it. The meaning is clear—that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Surprisingly, fall-*vādīs* either offer no explanation of these statements or they interpret them to mean that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha after returning there from the material world. This raises a number of problems: If one does not fall after attaining Vaikuṅṭha, why is it that those already there fall? Have they not attained Vaikuṅṭha? If liberated souls can fall, why does the Lord say in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.16) that those in the spiritual world are infallible? If the *māhātmās* are under the shelter and protection of His *daivī-prakṛti*, which is proclaimed throughout the *śāstras* to be His superior energy, how can the liberated devotees be taken out of the internal energy’s protection? These are all very serious

questions that come to mind when the fall down theory is considered, because if accepted as the philosophy they immediately lodge us in many inconsistencies.

Fall-*vādīs* insist that the *jīva*, even if a *nitya-siddha*, can do something foolish. He can misuse his minute free will and opt to enjoy *māyā*. This does not make sense because if the residents of the spiritual world know nothing about *māyā*, how can they misuse their free will to go after such an illusion? In this way, so many of the implications of this theory do not add up. When all this is pointed out to the fall-*vādīs*, they generally resort to the argument that, “It doesn’t matter to me what you no-fall-*vādīs* say. All I know is that Śrīla Prabhupāda said it and I am just the postman; I deliver the message as I received it from him.”

This is only a seemingly sincere position, because a disciple is duty bound to understand the teachings of the spiritual master and then preach it according to his realization. Prabhupāda warned us not to parrot what we have heard. He instructed us to properly understand his teachings and then repeat them in our own words. This is an automatic safeguard against parrotlike repetition. Further, to be a faithful disciple doesn’t mean that when we hear something contradictory we simply choose our favorite version and repeat it claiming to be a faithful postman. We are supposed to study the matter first and reconcile it with the overall philosophy and *siddhānta*. Having done so, we can then preach with authority on this point even if for the sake of preaching we choose to adjust the *siddhānta*.

A preacher is not like a postman in all respects. No one expects the postman to answer questions about the letter he delivers. But everyone expects a preacher to clear doubts about his message. The example of a postman is relevant only in the sense that a preacher should not change the message. The example is not intended to establish that the preacher should speak by rote. On this point of discerning the *siddhānta* Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

If one is seriously interested in Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, he must be ready to follow the rules and regulations laid down by the *ācāryas*, and he must understand their conclusions. The *śāstra* says: *dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitāṁ guhāyāṁ mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* (*Mahābhārata, Vana Parva* 313.117). It is very difficult to understand the secret of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but one who advances by the instruction of the previous *ācāryas* and follows in the footsteps of his predecessors in the line of disciplic succession will have success. Others will not. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says in this connection, *chādiya vaiṣṇava-sevā nistāra pāyeche keba*: “Unless one serves the spiritual master and *ācāryas*, one cannot be liberated.” Elsewhere he says:

ei chay gosāi jar—mui tār dās
tā-sabāra pāda-reṇu mora pañca-grās

“I simply accept a person who follows in the footsteps of the six Gosvāmīs, and the dust of such a person’s lotus feet is my foodstuff.” (Cc. *Ādi* 8.6, purport)

Fall-*vādīs* don’t bother to figure out what is the *siddhānta*. They prefer to wrap themselves tightly in the name of Śrīla Prabhupāda and invoke seemingly glorious slogans such as

“Prabhupāda *sampradāya*” and “Prabhupāda *siddhānta*,” which only serves to further muddy the issue. This is like throwing dust into the eyes of the innocent devotees; it only obscures their vision. In this way less discriminating devotees are bewildered as to what is the philosophy, since some devotees don’t try to figure out such issues themselves, but wait for someone they trust to give them their cues as to which way to go on the matter. After all, who will want to disagree with a devotee who has wrapped himself in Prabhupāda’s name? It only makes one look like he is against Prabhupāda. Thus, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy that *siddhāntīs* (no fall-*vādīs*) are against Śrīla Prabhupāda just by daring to disagree with the person who claims to be the faithful postman of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

And that outcome is precisely what the fall-*vādī* wants to prove in the first place—that the no-fall-*vādīs* are against Prabhupāda. Fortunately, not everyone is taken in by this tactic. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in this connection:

False devotees, lacking the conclusion of transcendental knowledge, think that artificially shedding tears will deliver them. Similarly, other false devotees think that studying books of the previous *ācāryas* is unadvisable, like studying dry empiric philosophies. But Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, following the previous *ācāryas*, has inculcated the conclusions of the scriptures in the six theses called the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*. False devotees who have very little knowledge of such conclusions fail to achieve pure devotion for want of zeal in accepting the favorable directions for devotional service given by self-realized devotees. Such false devotees are like impersonalists, who also consider devotional service no better than ordinary fruitive actions. (Cc. *Adi* 2.117)

This statement, ironically, comes in the purport to the verse in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* wherein Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says that students of the Absolute Truth must not avoid controversy for it strengthens the mind. A further irony is that the fall-*vādīs* brought this controversy to a head in an attempt to stop the translation and publication of the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās* of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, which is the very book mentioned by Śrīla Prabhupāda as having all the conclusions of our philosophy. Innocent persons must be careful to not come under the sway of such persons, whom Śrīla Prabhupāda considers “false devotees.” It is the duty of sincere followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda to expose such persons or they will cause all sorts of disturbances to society.

From the above analysis it is clear that fall-*vādīs* take a one-sided view of the *jīva* issue. It is also clear that they do not know the *siddhānta*, because knowing the *siddhānta* means being able to reconcile all apparent contradictions. The Absolute Truth is that plane of reality whereupon all contradictions can be reconciled. The Lord has various opposing potencies in Him, *samunnaddha-viruddha-śaktaye* (*Bhāg.* 4.17.33); they all reside in Him peacefully, *yasmin viruddha-gatayo hy anīśam patanti* (*Bhāg.* 4.9.16). Fall-*vādīs*, however, cannot reconcile the numerous no-fall statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda, our previous *ācāryas*, and the *śāstra* with their fall down theory. *Siddhāntīs*, on the other hand, have no trouble reconciling the two, as will be seen later on.

Many more quotes from Śrīla Prabhupāda establishing that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha are in his books. We think it is important for our readers to have first-hand knowledge of what Prabhupāda said on this side of the matter, otherwise enthusiastic fall-*vādīs* will put their own slant on things and try to convince people that the no-fall statements were just some obscure part of Prabhupāda’s teachings. Therefore we cite some more of his statements here:

Pure devotional service is so spiritually relishable that a devotee becomes automatically uninterested in material enjoyment. That is the sign of perfection in progressive devotional service. A pure devotee continuously remembers the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and does not forget Him even for a moment, not even in exchange for all the opulence of the three worlds. (*Bhāg.* 1.5.19, purport)

Therefore, the devotees never fall down, but the materialists, i.e., the fruitive workers and the speculative philosophers, do fall down, being forced by their respective modes of nature. (*Bhāg.* 1.6.31, purport)

The residents of Vaikuṅṭha are always powerful and effulgent. (Cc. *Ādi* 5.22)

The expansions of His separated forms are called living entities, and these living entities are classified according to the energies of the Lord. They are divided into two classes—eternally liberated and eternally conditioned. Eternally liberated living entities never come into contact with material nature, and therefore they do not have any experience of material life. They are eternally engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or devotional service to the Lord, and they are counted among the associates of Kṛṣṇa. (*TLC*, p.108)

Persons who have achieved eternal, blissful life exactly on the level of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who are able to attract Lord Kṛṣṇa by their transcendental loving service, are called eternally perfect. The technical name is *nitya-siddha*. There are two classes of living entities, namely *nitya-siddha* and *nitya-baddha*. The distinction is that the *nitya-siddhas* are eternally Kṛṣṇa conscious without any forgetfulness, whereas the *nitya-baddhas*, or eternally conditioned souls, are forgetful of their relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

The position of the *nitya-siddhas* is explained in the *Padma Purāṇa* in connection with the narration of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Satyabhāmā-devī. The Lord tells Satyabhāmā, “My dear Satyabhāmā-devī, I have descended to this earthly planet by the request of Lord Brahmā and other demigods. Those who are born into this family of Yadu are all My eternal associates. My dear wife, you should not consider that My associates are ever separated from Me; they are My personal expansions, and as such, you must know that they are almost as powerful as I am. Because of their transcendental qualities, they are very, very dear to Me, as I am very, very dear to them.” (*The Nectar of Devotion*, p. 205)

The last word in knowledge is not self-realization or Brahman realization. There is more to realize—namely, that the *jīva* is the eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa. This realization is the awakening of supramental consciousness, and the activities a *jīva* performs in such consciousness are the beginning of his eternal life. (*Renunciation Through Wisdom*, p.147)

There are living entities; their number is greater. *Nitya-mukta*, ever-liberated. They live in the spiritual world, Vaikuṅṭha planets. *Nitya-mukta*. *Nitya-mukta* means eternally liberated. They never come down in this material world. And we are *nitya-baddha*—ever-conditioned, eternally conditioned. (*Bhāg.* Lecture, 1973, Māyāpura)

There are two kinds of living entities. *Nitya-baddha* means ever-conditioned. Ever-conditioned means those who are in this material world; they do not know when they came in touch with this material world. Neither they do know when they will be liberated. They are called *nitya-baddha*, ever-conditioned. And similarly, there are *nitya-siddhas*. *Nitya-siddhas* means they never come in contact with this material world, and even they come here for some business, they do not forget their position. That is *nitya-siddha*. Try to understand. There are two kinds of living entities: *nitya-siddha*, *nitya-baddha*. *Nitya-baddhas* are within this material world. Beginning from Brahmā down to a small ant, insignificant ant, they are all *nitya-baddhas*.

Anyone who is in this material world, *nitya-baddha*. And *nitya-siddhas*, they belong to the spiritual world. They never come in contact with this material world, and even they come for some business under the order of the Supreme Lord, they do not touch these material qualities. They remain always transcendental. As Kṛṣṇa remains always transcendental, even though He is in this material world, similarly, Kṛṣṇa's *nitya-siddha* associates, they are also transcendental. They never touch this material world. (Bg. Lecture, 1973)

The mature devotees, who have completely executed Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are immediately transferred to the universe where Kṛṣṇa is appearing. In that universe the devotees get their first opportunity to associate with Kṛṣṇa personally and directly. (*Kṛṣṇa Book*, Ch. 28, Releasing Nanda Mahārāja From the Clutches of Varuṇa, p. 186)

In all these quotes from Śrīla Prabhupāda the point to note is that in none of these places does he make a distinction between the *nitya-siddhas* (eternally perfect *jīvas*) and *sādhana-siddhas* (the *jīvas* who have attained perfection by *sādhana*). He states categorically that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Then where do the conditioned souls come from? We have seen Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's explanation that the *jīvas* in conditioned life come from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has also confirmed that and by a careful reading of the Thirteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* we find that Śrīla Prabhupāda agrees with them. This chapter opens with Arjuna asking Kṛṣṇa about nature (*prakṛti*), the enjoyer (*Puruṣa*), the field, (the body), the knower of the field (the conditioned soul), knowledge, and the end of knowledge. In 13.20 the Blessed Lord informs Arjuna about the origin of the conditioned soul:

*prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva
viddhy anādi ubhāv api
vikāraṁś ca guṇāṁś caiva
viddhi prakṛti-sambhavān*

Material nature and the living entities should be understood to be beginningless. Their transformations and the modes of matter are products of material nature.

From the purport:

Both material nature and the living entity are eternal. That is to say that they existed before the creation. The material manifestation is from the energy of the Supreme Lord, and so also are the living entities, but the living entities are of the

superior energy. Both the living entities and material nature existed before this cosmos was manifested. Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of *mahat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him, and because they are conditioned, they are averse to serving the Supreme Lord.

Every devotee understands from this that material nature is eternal although sometimes manifest and sometimes wound up into Mahā-Viṣṇu. The common example given is that of a spider, which expands its energy in the form of its web and sometimes it takes the web back into its body. Similarly, the material nature is manifested and unmanifested in a cycle that is *anādi*, beginningless. There was no prior state to this beginningless cycle. Every devotee accepts that is just the way things are, by the sweet will of the Lord.

Owing to a failure to appreciate the precise meaning of the word *anādi*, however, we do not understand that the *anādi jīva* could not have had a prior state to its relationship with the *anādi* material nature. We know that material nature was never in Vaikuṅṭha, but we mistakenly assume that the *jīva* was there before coming into the *anādi* cycle of bondage. But Kṛṣṇa does not make any distinction as to their origin. He does not need to, because logically two beginningless events—material nature and the conditioned *jīva*—must be concurrent. That is to say the material nature, the conditioned *jīvas*, the spiritual nature, the liberated souls, and even Kṛṣṇa Himself are all beginningless. This is the inconceivable nature of the Absolute Truth. None of these items had a prior state of existence.

In the purport Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly identifies both material nature and the living entities as having the same source, “Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of *mahat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him. . . .” This cycle is beginningless both for material nature and the living entities, but for those *jīvas* who take advantage of the path of devotional service, it has an end. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in the introduction to *Bhagavad-gītā*, quoting Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, karma has no beginning, but it can end.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, commenting on this same verse of the *Bhagavad-gītā* writes, *evam mitho vivikta-svabhāvayor anādyoḥ prakṛti-jīvayoḥ saṁsargasyānādikālikattvam*, “In this way material nature and the living entity, who have a distinct nature and who are beginningless, are united in a relationship which has no beginning.” He uses the word *anādikālikattvam*, “the beginningless union of the *jīva* with *māyā*.”

Commenting on the same verse Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes *māyā-jīvayor-api mac-chaktitvena anāditvāt tayor saṁśleṣo'py anādir iti bhāvaḥ*. [“The Lord says], ‘Because both *māyā* and *jīva* are My potencies, they are both beginningless and thus their union is also beginningless.’ This is the sense of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s words.” Here he is using the *nyāya* principle that the qualities of *anādi* objects are also *anādi*. In this case the material nature and the *jīva* are *anādi*, and the quality—bondage—is also *anādi*. In fact in the beginning of his commentary on this verse, he says, “In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa is answering two questions—why or how did the union of the *jīva* and *māyā* occur? And when did it occur? He says that both of these are answered by the word *anādi* in this verse. For the first question, *anādi* means *na vidyate ādi*

kāraṇam yayoh, the union of *māyā* and the *jīva* has no cause. The answer to the second question is also *anādi*, it has no beginning.”

The conclusion is that the *jīva*'s bondage literally has no beginning. Those *jīvas* in the class called conditioned souls were always conditioned, *nitya-baddha* or *anādi karma*.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER FIVE

EVIDENCE FROM OTHER ĀCĀRYAS AND FROM ŚRUTI AND SMṚTI

As mentioned in the first chapter, the other *ācāryas* in our line before Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura have not written at any great length on the question of the origin of the *jīva* in conditioned life. A careful analysis of their statements show, however, that none of them have mentioned a fall from Vaikuṅṭha prior to conditioned life. Indeed, in many places they assert that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. In other words there is agreement between them and Śrīla Prabhupāda, as will be shown in the next chapter.

In this chapter, besides giving evidence from the works of our predecessor *ācāryas* for the beginningless bondage of the *jīva*, we also give evidence from the *śruti* and *smṛti*. The *śruti* confirms that the *jīva*'s bondage is caused by beginningless *māyā* (*Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* 1.16):

*anādi māyayā supto yadā jīva prabudhyate
ajam anidram asvapnam advaitam budhyate tadā*

When the *jīva* wakes from sleep which is caused by the beginningless illusion or ignorance, then he realizes that he is unborn, and free of sleep, dreams, and dualism.

The verse clearly states that the condition of illusion is itself *anādi*. Someone may argue that it is *māyā*—used here in the sense of the external energy—that is *anādi*, and not the bondage of the *jīva*. But that is not the intention of this verse. The verse is not describing *māyā-śakti*; it is explaining the conditioning of the *jīva* and its characteristics at the liberated stage. Moreover, by logic, the effect of *anādi* objects is also *anādi*. So if *māyā* is *anādi*, as the verse says, then its effect, “the sleep of the *jīva*,” is also *anādi*. So in either case the bondage of the *jīva* has no beginning. Conditioned souls were always conditioned, *anādi-baddha*. This is confirmed in the commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura on *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.20) when he says that not only are the *jīva* and *prakṛti* *anādi*, but their relationship is also *anādi* (*māyā-jīvayor-api mac-chaktitvena anāditvāt tayoh saṁśleṣo'py anādir iti bhāvah*).

His explanation is confirmed in *Vedānta Sūtra* (2.1.35), which states that the karma of the living entity is beginningless, *na karmāvibhāgād iti cen nānāditvāt*, “If someone says that the theory of karma cannot explain the inequality seen in the world, arguing that everyone had the same karma at the beginning of creation, this is not true because karma is beginningless.”

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments on this *sūtra*:

*karmanah kṣetrajñānām ca brahmavad anāditva- svikārāt.
Pūrva-pūrva-karmānusareṇottarottarakarmaṇi pravarttanāt na kiñcid dūṣaṇam
smṛtiś ca:*

*punya-pāpādikaṃ viṣṇu karyet pūrvakarmanā
anāditvāt karmaṇaś ca na virodhaḥ kathaṅcana*

Karmaṇo'nāditvenānāvasthā tu na doṣaḥ prāmāṅikatvāt.

Vyāsa has accepted that karma and the *jīvas* are beginningless, just like Brahman. Thus there is no fault, because subsequent karma is inspired by the past karma. The *Smṛti* confirms this:

"Lord Viṣṇu makes the living entities do good or bad acts according to their past karma. There is no contradiction in this because karma has no beginning."

If someone objects, that if karma is beginningless, then it has the defect of infinite regress, we say that is not so, because the scriptures say so.

Vedānta-sūtra gives the essence of the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, and the *Purāṇas* and from this *sūtra* alone (2.1.35) one must understand that they all accept that karma has no beginning. And they do not say that karma has no beginning only in material time, just "karma has no beginning." In *Vedānta Sūtra* (4.4.22) it is said, *anāvṛtīḥ śabdāt anāvṛtti śabdāt*, "There is no return from the spiritual world because scripture says so. Ye, there is no return from the spiritual world because scripture says so." Fall-*vādīs* will say that this *sūtra* is only talking about those who reach Vaikuṅṭha from the material world. That is true. But it also implies that eternal residents will not fall to the material world.

In this regard, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes in *Govinda-bhāṣya*, *na ca sarveśvaraḥ śrī hariḥ svādhina muktaṃ svalokāt-kadācit pātyitumiccheth mukto vā kadācit taṃ jīhased iti śakyam saṅkitum*. "One cannot even imagine that the Supreme Lord Hari would ever desire that the liberated souls fall down, nor would the liberated souls ever desire to leave the Lord." He says this is because of their extreme mutual love, *dvayor mīthaḥ snehātīśayabhidhānāt*. Then he cites four verses as evidence:

*teṣāṃ jñānī nitya-yukta
eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham
ahaṃ sa ca mama priyaḥ*

Of these, the one who is in full knowledge and who is always engaged in pure devotional service is the best, for I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me. (Bg.7.17)

*sādhavo hṛdayaṃ mahyaṃ
sādhūnām hṛdayaṃ tv aham
mad-anyaṭ te na jānanti
nāhaṃ tebhyo manāg api*

The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them. (*Bhāg.* 9.4.68)

*ye dārāgāra-putrāptān-
prānān vittaṃ imaṃ param
hitvā mām śaraṇaṃ yātāḥ
kathaṃ tārīs tyakutṃ utsahe*

Since pure devotees give up their homes, wives, children, relatives, riches and even

their lives simply to serve Me, without any desire for material improvement in this life or in the next, how can I give up such devotees at any time? (*Bhāg.* 9.4.65)

*dhautātmā puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇa-
pāda-mūlān na muñcati
mukta-sarva-parikleśaḥ
pānthaḥ sva-saraṇaṁ yathā*

A pure devotee of the Lord whose heart has once been cleansed by the process of devotional service never relinquishes the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, for they fully satisfy him, as a traveler is satisfied at home after a troubled journey. (*Bhāg.* 2.8.6)

Here one may argue that the above *sūtra* and the verses cited refer to those who became devotees after being in the material world. Again, there is no indication in the *sūtra* nor in the context that it is not equally applicable to those who have eternally taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet (*nitya-siddhas*) and those who achieved that shelter after being conditioned in the material world (*sādhana-siddhas*). Throughout the *śāstras* and the commentaries of the *ācāryas*, including Śrīla Prabhupāda, no such distinction is ever made. As Prabhupāda said emphatically on many occasions, "They were never conditioned. They were never conditioned, never conditioned. They are called *nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated." He says they can misuse their free will, but they never do.

If the Lord is unable to give up His devotees who became perfect by doing devotional service, and if such devotees never want to leave the Lord, then by what logic or *śāstra pramāṇa* can one say that the Lord will give up His eternal devotees and that His eternal devotees would like to give up the Lord?

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa continues commenting in the same vein and says that the Lord has determination (*saṅkalpa*) never to give up His devotees and He is *satya-saṅkalpa*, one whose determination is never foiled by anything. Who can disagree with that?

The *Āgamas* also say that the *jīvas* are bound by beginningless karma (*Viṣṇu-rahasya*, Chapter Five):

*anādi-karmaṇā baddhā jīvā nityaṁ hy anantaśaḥ
līṅga-deha-yutāḥ sarve patitā murcchitā iva
yadi te sthūla-dehena yūtā na syur ime'khilāḥ
kathāṁ karmāṇi kurvīran viṣṇu-bhakti-parāṇmukhāḥ
apūrṇa-bhaktayaste vā kathāṁ mokṣam avāpnuyuḥ*

The *jīvas*, bound by beginningless karma, are eternal and countless. They lie wrapped in subtle bodies as in a state of unconsciousness. They are not devoted to Lord Viṣṇu and if they are not given a gross body how can they engage in karma or *bhakti*? And being devoid of *bhakti* how can they attain liberation?

These verses explain our philosophy in a nutshell. The main point to be noted is the beginningless nature of karma, and that the souls are in a state of sleep, or ignorance. In the words of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta they are indolent. Śrīla Prabhupāda used the Sanskrit term *susupti*, which is comparable to a state of deep sleep or, in other words, ignorance. This echoes the statement of Haridāsa Ṭhākura when he told Lord Caitanya that if all the entities in the universe went back to Godhead, then the universe would immediately fill up with entities awakened from the mode of ignorance.

The *Nārada Bhakti Sūtra* (41) describes that there is no difference between the Lord and His

pure devotees, *tasmīms taj-jane bhedābhāvāt*: “One can attain *bhakti* either by the association of the Lord’s pure devotees or directly by the Lord’s mercy because the Lord and His pure devotees are non-different.”

From this it is clear that a pure devotee can grant *bhakti* just like the Lord. This is because he is potent like the Lord. In the words of the *sūtra*, they are non-different. That automatically means that they are also non-different in the quality of not falling down. The Lord never falls down, He is *acyuta* and His eternal servants also do not fall, *kaunteya pratijānīhi*. If a person becomes a pure devotee, he can deliver the whole world as is confirmed in *Nārada Bhakti Sūtra* (50): *sa tarati sa tarati lokāms tarayati*, “Such a person, indeed, is delivered, and he also delivers the rest of the world.” Then how is it possible that *nitya-mukta* devotees could fall down?

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER SIX

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪ: NO ONE FALLS FROM VAIKUṆṬHA

In this chapter we present the glories of Vaikuṅṭha, the infallible abode of the Lord. We believe that all the arguments favoring fall from Vaikuṅṭha are largely on account of a lack of knowledge about the true nature of Vaikuṅṭha. This chapter will clear away all doubt that Vaikuṅṭha is a place where the residents can come under the influence of ignorance, *avidyā*. With that out of the way we can begin our discussion in earnest about the origin of the *nitya-baddha jīva*.

In *Bhagavat-sandarbhā* (Text Sixty-one), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī lists ten characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha. The third item is that anyone who has attained Vaikuṅṭha does not fall. He elaborates on this in Texts Sixty-three and Sixty-four:

Text Sixty-Three

No one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Śrī Kapiladeva said (*Bhāg.* 3.25.37-38):

*atho vibhūtiṁ mama māyāvinas tām
aiśvaryam aṣṭāṅgam anupravṛttam
śriyam bhāgavatīm vāsprhayanti bhadrām
parasya me te ‘śnuvate tu loke*

*na karhicin mat-parāḥ śānta-rūpe
nankṣyanti no me ‘nīmiṣo leḍhi hetih
yeṣām aham priya ātmā sutaś ca
sakhā guruḥ suhrdo daivam iṣṭam*

Although My devotees, who are free from ignorance, by My mercy, may be offered the eight types of mystic perfections, the opulence of the heavenly planets or even the opulence of Vaikuṅṭha, they do not desire it. They automatically attain these when they reach My abode. My dear mother, devotees who receive such transcendental opulences are never bereft of them. Neither weapons nor the change of time can destroy such opulences. Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their relative, their son, preceptor, benefactor, and Supreme Deity, they cannot be deprived of their possessions at any time.

The word *atho* (*Bhāg* 3.25.37) indicates "after the removal of ignorance." *Mama māyayā* means "by the Lord's mercy on the devotee." *Vibhūti* means "the opulence of enjoyment." *Ācitām*¹ means "manifest for the devotees purpose, and the eight mystic opulences such as *aṇimā* also naturally become present for the devotees." The devotees do not even desire the Lord's opulence, called *sārṣṭi*. This means that because the devotees yearn only for the bliss of devotional service, they have no desire for any of the above stated opulences; but they certainly achieve them in the Lord's planet called Vaikuṅṭha. This shows the Lord's special affection for His devotees. This is also exemplified in the benediction given to Sudāmā, the florist (*Bhag*.10.41.51-52):

"Sudāmā chose unshakable devotion for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul of all existence; friendship with His devotees; and transcendental compassion for all living beings. Not only did Lord Kṛṣṇa grant Sudāmā these benedictions, He also awarded him strength, long life, fame, beauty, and ever-increasing prosperity for his family. Then Kṛṣṇa and His elder brother took Their leave."

This also shows the devotee is not interested in using these opulences for his enjoyment. The phrases "after ignorance is dispelled" and "given by My mercy" also indicate that these opulences do not produce undesirable effects. *Māyayācitām* includes all opulence up to that found in Brahmaloḳa, and it shows that the devotees have control over everything. But they do not make use of such opulence, considering it very insignificant and unfit to be enjoyed. The *Śruti* states (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 8.1.6), "Just as the enjoyment earned by *karma* in this world perishes in due course, so does the heavenly pleasure attained by pious deeds." And, "Those who leave their body in full knowledge of the Lord and the real desirable objects, can freely travel in all the planets."

A doubt may be raised that if Vaikuṅṭha is another planet like heaven, with no special distinction, then sooner or later the enjoyer and the enjoyment will be vanquished. Lord Kapila answers this objection in *Bhāg*. 3.25.38 by use of the word *sāntarupe*: "The nature of Vaikuṅṭha is *sāntam*, or unchanging, and its residents, who are My devotees, are never destroyed. In other words, they are never bereft of enjoyment. My time cycle does not devour them, *no ledhi*." Thus the *Śruti* states (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 8.15.1), "He does not return." The *Gitopaniṣad* declares (*Bg*. 8.16), "From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place, but one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again."

While commenting on the name *Parāyaṇa* in the *Sahasranāma-bhāṣya* (75), Śaṅkarācārya writes, "That place in which there is no fear of return is the Supreme Abode. Therefore it is called *parāyana*." Because the term appears in the masculine gender, it is a *bahuvrīhi samāsa*, which means "the Lord to whom this place belongs."

This is not the end of the glories of those who attain Vaikuṅṭha. Lord Kapila states this with the words beginning with *yeṣām aham*. This means that for them there is no object of love other than the Lord. Alternatively, the statement can be taken as a reference to Goloka, because the *gopas* who eternally reside there have such a mood. The line beginning with *yeṣām* may also be taken as an answer to the question, "What type of people attain that abode after getting free from ignorance?" The answer is indicated by the Lord: "Only those people who desire Me as their beloved (*priyaḥ*) or husband (*patiḥ*), like the sages described in the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*; or those who meditate on Me as Brahman

personified like the four Kumāras; or those who meditate on Me as their son, friend, worshipable master, and so on, can attain Vaikuṅṭha. The word *suhṛda*, bosom friend, is in the plural, because they are of various kinds.

Śrī Nārada spoke in a similar fashion (*Bhāg.* 4.12.37): “Persons who are peaceful, equipoised, cleansed and purified, and who know the art of pleasing all other living entities, keep friendship only with devotees of the Lord, they alone can very easily achieve the perfection of going to that abode from where no one falls down, *acyuta pādama*.”²

Text Sixty-four

Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī simultaneously describes two qualities of Vaikuṅṭha—it is beyond the material world, and it is a place from where no one falls down (*Bhāg.* 12.11.19):

“O brāhmaṇas, the Lord’s umbrella is His spiritual abode, Vaikuṅṭha, where there is no fear.”

From the context of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12. 11.19) it is understood that these items (such as umbrella) belong to His form seen in the material world. The term *dvija*, twice born, is an address.

In Text Sixty-three Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī first makes a categorical statement: *tato ’skhalanam*, “No one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.” Then he supports his statement by citing two verses by Lord Kapiladeva. The important point made in them is that Vaikuṅṭha is *śānta-rūpa*, a peaceful place, and the devotees’ opulence is never devoured by time. He also said that the opulences in Vaikuṅṭha do not produce any undesirable result. Material opulence can make one proud and offensive; it makes one forget God. Spiritual opulence, on the other hand, only increases one’s devotional service. He ends Text Sixty-three by citing a verse from the *Bhāgavatam* which designates Vaikuṅṭha as *acyuta pādama*: a place from where no one falls.

Objection: In Texts Sixty-three and Sixty-four of the *Bhagavat-sandarbha*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī clearly says that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Some devotees argue that this refers to those devotees who go there from the material world. The reason for this they say is that in Text Sixty-one, while listing the characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha, he writes the third quality as *taṁ* (that Vaikuṅṭha) *labdha vatām* (those who have attained it) *askhalana* (no fall down) *guṇa* (quality) *sātmyena* (by the nature) *stūyate* (is glorified). “Vaikuṅṭha is glorified as having the quality that those who have attained it never fall down.” The word *labdhavatām*, “those who have attained it,” is the point of contention. The fall-*vādīs* use this to support their theory that one does not fall again after he has attained Vaikuṅṭha from the material world, but those who have always been in Vaikuṅṭha fall.

But the point is that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī makes no distinction between those who have attained Vaikuṅṭha from the material world (*sadhana-siddha*) and those who have attained it eternally (*nitya-siddha*). He simply states the characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha as applicable to both types of devotees. His categorical statement applies to both types of Vaikuṅṭha residents. How can one say that *nitya-muktas* have not attained Vaikuṅṭha? As will be described later, words such as “attained” are used for both those who attained it at a particular time and for those who have eternally attained it. Indeed, no *ācārya* or commentator, including Śrīla Prabhupāda, makes

a distinction between the two types of liberated living entities that reside in Vaikuṅṭha.

When we say, “Hell is a fallen place,” we never assume that it was once elevated and then it became fallen. Hell is, was, and always will be fallen. Similarly, all the residents of Vaikuṅṭha have attained Vaikuṅṭha. None of them ever fall from Vaikuṅṭha. Texts Sixty-three and Sixty-four are elaborations of this quality of Vaikuṅṭha listed in Text Sixty-one. Hence Sixty-three begins *tato 'skhalanam*, “No one falls from there.”

If Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī wanted to make a distinction he would have said *tato 'nāvarttanam*, “No one returns from there,” in place of *tato 'skhalanam*. Instead, he says that the opulence of Vaikuṅṭha yields no undesirable results such as forgetting Kṛṣṇa and falling down; that Vaikuṅṭha is *śāntarūpa*, the place of no disturbance; and that the opulence of devotees is never destroyed. Part of that indestructible opulence is their infallibility.

In Text Sixty-four he again writes, *prapañcātītatvam tato 'skhalanam ca yugapad āha*, “The characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha—that it is beyond the material world and that no one falls from there—are simultaneously described.” This leaves no room for doubt as to his meaning. Then he quotes Sūta Gosvāmī (*Bhāg.* 12.11.19). In this verse the word *akutobhayam*, “free from fear,” pertains to both of the above-mentioned qualities. There is no other word that describes the qualities of Vaikuṅṭha in this verse. Can anyone claim that Vaikuṅṭha is a place free from fear only for the devotees who go from the material world and not for the *nitya-mukta* devotees, who have yet to fall? If this was Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s intention, it is not discernible from this passage.

And indeed if it were so, we would have to assume that Vaikuṅṭha is *prapañcātī*, “beyond the material world,” only for *sādhana-siddha* devotees. Otherwise when both qualities are being described by the word *akutobhayam*, “free from fear,” how is it that one quality is applicable to all devotees, but the other is not applicable to the *nitya-siddhas*? Then for *nitya-mukta* devotees Vaikuṅṭha should lose its meaning as “a place free from anxiety,” but Lord Kapila called it *śāntarūpa*.

Fall-*vādīs* argue that in Text Sixty-three, the words *avidyā anantaram* (subsequent to material illusion) are an adjectival phrase modifying *askhalanam* (no fall down). Thus according to them, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is saying that only those who attain Vaikuṅṭha after becoming free from illusion do not fall. Others, who have never fallen, can fall.

But the *nitya-muktas* are already free from illusion. They are already in Vaikuṅṭha, so why does this no fall quality not apply to them? What could make them fall down? If a person who was materially conditioned becomes free from it, goes to Vaikuṅṭha, and never falls, and if, as the *śāstra* says, the eternal residents of Vaikuṅṭha never contact the illusory energy, then by what logic will these *nitya-mukta* souls fall?

By saying *tato 'skhalanam*, therefore, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī first emphatically declares that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Then he says, *avidyā anantaram*, not to limit the meaning of no fall only to those *sadhana-siddhas* who attain Vaikuṅṭha subsequent to material illusion, but to

include them.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said that *nitya-muktas* do not even know *māyā*. When it is said that no one falls after reaching Vaikuṅṭha, how does it imply that *nitya-muktas* can fall? Rather it implies that they can never fall. According to science, if one enters a black hole in outer space, he never comes out. According to logic, this automatically implies that something already in the black hole will not come out. How does it imply otherwise? If an object thrown into the ocean gets wet and will ever remain wet, does this not mean that objects already in the ocean are wet? Following the logic of the fall-*vādīs*—that *nitya-muktas* fall and those who go to Vaikuṅṭha from here do not fall—is like saying, “Yes, it is a fact that objects thrown in the ocean get wet, but only those objects thrown in from the outside get wet. Other objects have to come out of the ocean and only upon re-entering do they get wet.” This line of reasoning is too peculiar to comment on.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states that no one falls. He does not specify that those who go to Vaikuṅṭha from here do not fall, because he's pointing out that Vaikuṅṭha manifests its quality of no fall-down for all its residents.

In the *Bhāgavatam*, Prahlāda's teacher asked him who had polluted his intelligence thus causing him to glorify Lord Viṣṇu. Prahlāda replied (*Bhāg.* 7.5.11):

*paraḥ svaś cety asad-grāhaḥ
puṁsām yan-māyayā kṛtaḥ
vimohita-dhiyām drṣṭas
tasmai bhagavate namaḥ*

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose external energy has created the distinctions of “my friend” and “my enemy” by deluding the intelligence of men. Indeed, I am now actually experiencing this, although I have previously heard of it from authoritative sources.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the living entity has non-devotion to the Lord, which has no beginning, as is explained in 11.2.37, *parā iti puṁsām 'bhayaṁ dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ syāt' ityādi-rītyānādīta eva bhagavad vimukhānām jīvanām*. In his commentary, Jīva Gosvāmī further confirms the beginningless nature of the conditioning of the *jīvas*. By the use of *eva* he asserts that this is definitely the case. Readers should note that he also links this meaning with the verse *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ syāt* (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37).

Interestingly, this is one of the verses the fall-*vādīs* are most fond of interpreting as support for their theory that *nitya-muktas* can fall from the spiritual world. *Siddhāntic* devotees, however, who are simply interested in cleaving to the *paramparā* understanding, will side with Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the greatest philosopher in our line, whose conclusion is *tato 'skhalanam*, that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

In the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī does an elaborate analysis to show that the Lord's pastimes are eternally manifest and therefore his associates are also eternal. In Texts 107-116, he explains that the three abodes Dvārakā, Mathurā, and Vraja are eternal. Then in Text 117 he begins explaining the eternal nature of the Lord's associates up to Text 152. In these sections the glories of the Lord's internal potency and its infallible nature are revealed in detail. By the end it becomes clear that to even imply that the *māyā-sakti* could have any influence whatsoever on a resident of Vaikuṅṭha is tantamount to saying that the internal potency is fallible. If that is

accepted, then Vaiṣṇavism is reduced to Māyāvāda, which states that *māyā* covers Brahman. Of course, this has no *śāstric* support at all.

The relevant passages from the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā* are too long to cite so we just give the opening and concluding remarks. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī begins Text 117 as follows:

Evaṁ śrī-dvārakādīnām tasya nityadhāmatvaṁ siddham. Atha tatra ke tāvad asya parikarāḥ? Ucyate—puryor yādavādayo vṛndāvane gopādayaś ceti, śrī-kṛṣṇasya dvārakādi-nitya-dhāmatvena teṣāṁ svataḥ siddheh.

In this way it has been established that abodes such as Dvārakā are eternal. The next question is who are His (Lord Kṛṣṇa's) associates in these abodes? It is answered: In the cities (Dvārakā and Mathurā), the Yādavas and others, and in Vṛndāvana, the cowherd men and others are the associates. Because the abodes of Lord Kṛṣṇa such as Dvārakā are eternal, then it is naturally proven that the associates in them are also eternal.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī then gives a long analysis to prove that the Lord's associates are all eternal associates. In Text 131 he quotes two verses (*Padma Purāṇa*, *Uttarakhaṇḍa* 229.57,58) to show that all the Yādavas are eternal associates:

*yathā saumitri-bharatau
yathā saṅkarṣaṇādayaḥ
tathā tenaiva jāyante
nija-lokād-yadṛcchayā*

*punastenaiva gacchanti
tatpādaṁ śāśvatam param
na karma-bandhanaṁ janma
vaiṣṇavānāṅca vidyate*

Just as Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata come along with Him (Lord Rāma) and just as Baladeva comes along with Him (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), similarly they (other associates) also come from their abodes by the will of the Lord. Then they return to their eternal abodes along with the Lord, because it is a fact that for Vaiṣṇavas, there is neither birth nor bondage to karma.

These verses refer to those associates of the Lord who descend to this world to participate in the Lord's pastimes. In case one has a doubt that such devotees may become implicated by their karma performed while appearing in the material world, the verse explicitly denies that possibility. The word Vaiṣṇava is specifically used to show that the Lord's eternal associates never become bound by karma. Naturally it is applicable to any pure Vaiṣṇava.

Finally, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī concludes his analysis of the eternal nature of the Lord's associates in the following words (Text 153):

Tadevaṁ śruti-purāṇādi-nigamoktyānusāreṇa śrī kṛṣṇasya nityā-bhivyaktitvam dvārakādiṣu nitya-vihāritvaṁ nitya-yādavādi-parikaratvaṅca darśitam.

In this way, based on the authority of *Śruti*, *Purāṇa*, and *Nigama* we have shown that Lord Kṛṣṇa is always manifest, He eternally enjoys in the abodes of Dvārakā, Mathurā, and Vraja; and the Yādavas and Vrajavāsīs are His eternal associates.

Someone may doubt that maybe some devotees are eternal associates and some are not, but Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has not made any such distinction. For example, he cites the *Padma Purāna* in Text 117:

*ete hi yādavāḥ sarve madgaṇā eva bhāmini
sarvadā mat-priyā devi mat-tulya-guṇa-sāliṇaḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa said, O beautiful one, all the Yādavas are My associates. O Goddess, they are all dear to Me and they all have qualities just like My qualities.

From this analysis in the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha* (117-153), it is clear that the Lord’s eternal associates never fall down to the material world. Actually, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī does not end his analysis here. He raises many objections to this conclusion and refutes them thoroughly. This is called *sthūṇā-nikhanana nyāya*, or the principle of hammering in a post. The more a post is hammered, the more firmly it settles in the ground. It becomes very difficult to move, what to speak of pulling it out. In this way Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī leaves no doubt that the associates of the Lord can ever fall.

While commenting on the *Bhāgavatam* (3.7.37), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes:

Anena pārṣadānām nityatvamevābhipretam. Taduktam kāsīkhaṇḍe,

*na cyavante hi yad-bhaktā mahtyām pralayāpadi
ato’cyuto’khile loke sa ekaḥ sarvago’vyayaḥ iti*

By this verse only, the eternality of the Lord’s associates is conveyed. This is stated in the *Kāsīkhaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāna*. “Because His devotees do not fall even during the catastrophe of the great dissolution, He alone—among all people—is called *acyuta*. He is supreme, omnipresent, and imperishable.”

And Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments: *Bhagavat-parṣadānām tad-bhaktas tad-lokasya ca nityatvam abhipretam*, “This verse aims at explaining that the associates of the Lord, devotion to the Lord, and the planet of the Lord are all eternal.”

The demigods, while praying to Lord Kṛṣṇa, said that the non-devotees who consider themselves liberated and disrespect the Lord’s lotus feet fall down (*Bhāg.* 10.2.32). In contrast to them, the devotees in the material world never fall because they cross over all obstacles (*Bhāg.* 10.2.33):

*tathā na te mādharma tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāttvayi baddha-sauhrdāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu prabho*

O Mādhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune, if devotees completely in love with You sometimes fall from the path of devotion, they do not fall like non-devotees, for You still protect them. Thus they fearlessly traverse the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service.

Actually the verse says that unlike the non-devotees, the devotees never fall down. This is clear from the sentence constructed from the word meaning: “O Lord, husband of the goddess of

fortune (*mādhava*), they (*te*), the followers of the devotional path, the devotees (*tāvakāḥ*), in any circumstances (*kvacit*) do not (*na*) fall down (*bhraśyanti*) from the path of devotional service (*mārgāt*), like them (the non-devotees) (*tathā*), because of being fully attached to Your lotus feet (*baddha-sauhr̥dāḥ*).”

Commenting on this verse, Śrīdhara Svāmī writes, *tvadīyāstu na kadācid api patanti ity āhuḥ*, “But Your devotees never fall. In order to point this out, the demigods speak this verse to Lord Kṛṣṇa.” Here he unequivocally makes a statement for all devotees, including the *nitya-muktas*. In his commentary, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes, *tvad rūpapāsakāstu ātma-tattvādi-jñānābhāve’pi svadharmā-parityāge’pi kathañcit pātakāpāte’pi naiva patantīyāhu*, “But those who worship Your form do not fall even if they lack knowledge of *ātma-tattva*, have abandoned their *svadharmā*, or sometimes engage in sinful activities.” The verse refers to devotees in the material world. So what is the chance that pure devotee residents may fall from Vaikuṅṭha?

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura reiterates the same point, but he adds a little more: *yadi vā bhraśyanti tadāpi tvayi baddha-sauhr̥dā eva bhavanti citraketu-bharatendradyumanādīnām bhrañśe sati vṛtrādīve premṇaḥ śataguṇībhāva-darśanāt bhaktānām bhrañśo’pi premādhikyo-heturvā dr̥ṣṭaḥ*.

Even if they fall, they become more attached to You, just as when King Citraketu, Bharata Mahārāja and King Indradyumna had a so-called fall down. In their fallen forms, such as Vṛtrāsura (previously King Citraketu), their love multiplied hundreds of times. Therefore, the fall of a devotee causes his love to increase.

Naturally such a fall is not really a fall-down but a promotion. The commentators have explained that a fall-down such as the case of Citraketu was a very special favor of the Lord. On the pretext of a fall, the Lord makes His devotees more attached and thus calls them quickly to His abode. It is not like the proposed fall-down of a *jīva* from Vaikuṅṭha, in which he completely forgets the Lord. Therefore, Śrī Kavi Yogendra said to Mahārāja Nimi (*Bhāg.* 11.2.35):

*yān āsthāya naro rājan na pramādyeta karhicit
dhāvan nīmīlya vā netre na skhalen na pated iha*

O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall (or jump down).

How much safer must those devotees be who are never exposed to the temptations of this world on account of being eternally in the divine abode of the Lord, described as *akutobhayaṃ*, free from all fear, and *acyuta pādama*, the infallible abode?

“Infallible abode” does not mean that the abode never falls but that its residents never fall. Just as if one says that America is an unconquerable nation, one means that the people cannot be conquered. Indeed in *Bhagavat-sandarbhā* (Text 75-78), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī shows that the Lord’s associates are within His own *svarūpa*. Therefore, to argue that His eternal associates fall is tantamount to saying that the Lord Himself can fall down.

Again, this is a taint of the Māyāvāda conception. Māyāvāda philosophy states that a portion of Brahman becomes covered by *māyā* and turns into the *jīva*. The fall-*vādīs* don’t realize this unpalatable implication of their theory. Their idea is even worse than Māyāvāda because following their logic, they propose that a part of the Lord’s *svarūpa* becomes covered by *māyā*. Hence, a *nitya-mukta*, who is within the *svarūpa-śakti* of the Lord, can fall down from the infallible abode. Such beliefs run tangential to the strict Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. In his purport to *Bhāg.* 3.7.9, Śrīla Prabhupāda addressed this point with reference to the Māyāvāda theory that

Brahman becomes covered by illusion:

The inconceivable *yogam aiśvaram* of the Lord, as mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.5), is misunderstood by the froggish philosophers. In order to support a theory that Nārāyaṇa (the Lord Himself) becomes a *daridra-nārāyaṇa*, a poor man, they propose that the material energy overcomes the Supreme Lord. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, however, offer a very nice example in explanation. They say that although the sun is all light, the clouds, darkness and snowfall are all part and parcel of the sun. Without the sun there is no possibility of the sky's being overcast with clouds or darkness, nor can there be snowfall on the earth. Although life is sustained by the sun, life is also disturbed by darkness and snowfall produced by the sun. But it is also a fact that the sun itself is never overcome by darkness, clouds or snowfall; the sun is far, far away from such disturbances. Only those who have a poor fund of knowledge say that the sun is covered by a cloud or by darkness. Similarly, the Supreme Brahman, or the Parabrahman, the Personality of Godhead, is always unaffected by the influence of the material energy, although it is one of His energies (*parasya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*).

There is no reason to assert that the Supreme Brahman is overpowered by the illusory energy. The clouds, darkness and snowfall can cover only a very insignificant portion of the sun's rays. Similarly, the modes of material nature may react upon the ray-like living entities. It is the misfortune of the living entity, certainly not without reason, that the influence of the material energy acts on his pure consciousness and eternal bliss. This covering up of pure consciousness and eternal bliss is due to *avidyā-karma-saṁjñā*, the energy which acts on the infinitesimal living entities who misuse their minute independence. According to *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Bhagavad-gītā* and all other Vedic literatures, the living entities are generated from the *tatastha* energy of the Lord, and thus they are always the energy of the Lord and are not the energetic. . . .The clear conclusion is that the Supreme Lord, who is the original fire, is never overpowered, but the infinitesimal sparks of the fire can become overpowered by the illusory effect of *māyā*. It is a most ludicrous argument to say that the Supreme Lord is overpowered by His own material energy. The Lord is the master of the material energy, but the living entities are in the conditioned state, controlled by the material energy. That is the version of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Besides the clear declarative statement that “the living entities are generated from the *tatastha* energy of the Lord,” it is also clear from this purport that Śrīla Prabhupāda considers the idea that the Lord can be covered by *māyā* as ludicrous. The same reasoning applies to the thinking that His *svarūpa-śakti* can be overwhelmed by *māyā* and thereby cause the fall of the *nitya-mukta* devotees who the Lord has declared to be *daivīm prakṛtim āśritaḥ*.

As a warning against this sort of errant understanding, we quote from a letter concerning the *jīva* issue that appeared in BTG (March/April '94):

Śrīla Prabhupāda is not a Bengālī gentleman whose understanding of reality was formed in reference to particular biases and traditions. Rather he is a fully self-realized resident of the spiritual world. We have been charged by him to make his message understandable in all cultural circumstances; but we are not at liberty to change or ignore his definitive statements.

What may start as just a little difference of opinion can grow in time into an enormous gap. The habit of mental speculation breeds deviation and offenses, and so the propensity must be recognized and challenged whenever and wherever it appears. . . .

What starts as just a little deviation, barely noticeable to anyone, in time grows into a chasm.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER SEVEN

NITYA-MUKTAS NEVER CONTACT THE MATERIAL ENERGY

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is the *rasācārya* among our predecessor *ācāryas* and has compiled books mainly on *rasa* theology. In his works, therefore, he does not directly discuss at length basic philosophical points such as the bondage of the *jīva*. We find, however, no hint of *nitya-muktas* falling down from Vaikuṅṭha. On the contrary, we find support for the no-fall-down *siddhānta*. In *BRS* (1.1.7), for example, he lists six characteristics of *bhakti*:

- 1) It destroys all types of miseries from the root.
- 2) It grants auspiciousness.
- 3) It belittles the pleasure of liberation.
- 4) It is rarely achieved.
- 5) It is constituted of condensed bliss.
- 6) It attracts Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The last two characteristics are especially found in *prema-bhakti*. The word *sāndrānanda* (condensed bliss) means complete bliss. This means that devotees do not lack bliss. *Bhakti* attracts Kṛṣṇa, the source of all bliss. This means a devotee is so wonderful that even Kṛṣṇa feels attracted to him. Then how could such a devotee feel attracted to anything other than Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive?

In *BRS* 1.1.31 Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that a devotee has all perfections and eternal bliss, *nityam ca paramānanda*. *Nitya* means it will never come to an end. And in 1.3.25 he writes that a devotee who has attained *bhāva-bhakti* always takes pleasure in chanting the name of the Lord, *nāmagāne sadāruṅiḥ*. The residents of Vaikuṅṭha are situated in *prema* and thus superior to the above *bhāva-bhaktas*. How much more attachment must they have for the holy name? How could they ever give this up?

In *BRS* 2.1.281 Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes that there are two types of perfected devotees: those who have attained perfection, *sādhana-siddha*, and those who are eternally perfect, *nitya-siddha*. The first category refers to those who have attained perfection by *sādhanā* (*BRS* 2.1.282). About *nitya-siddhas* he writes (*BRS* 2.1.290):

ātma-koṭi-guṇaṁ kṛṣṇe premāṇaṁ paramaṁ gatāḥ
nityānanda-guṇāḥ sarve nitya-siddhā mukundavat

All the eternally perfected devotees have eternal and blissful qualities just like Lord Mukunda. Their supreme love for Kṛṣṇa is millions and millions of times

more than their love for their own self or body.

This verse certainly does not favor the fall-down theory. Love means giving pleasure to the object of love. The *nitya-siddhas* love Kṛṣṇa more than themselves. This means that *nitya-siddhas* have no conception of enjoying or even desiring something apart from Kṛṣṇa. Therefore they are unable to give up Lord Kṛṣṇa even for a moment, as Sarūpa says (*Brhad-bhāgvataṁṛta* .2.6.369):

*ato braja-strī-kuca-kuṅkumācitam manoramam tat-pada-paṅkaja-dvayam kadāpi
kenāpi nijendriyādinā na hātum iṣe lava-leśam apyāham.*

Therefore, I am unable by any of my senses to give up the beautiful lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa which are smeared with *kuṅkuma* from the breasts of the Vraja damsels, even for a fraction of a moment.

This means that all the senses of a devotee in Vaikuṅṭha are continuously engaged in serving the Lord and tasting the bliss of devotion. Therefore, there is no scope for him to deviate and fall. In describing the eternal forms of the Lord's associates, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in *Laghu-bhāgvataṁṛtam* (1.143):

*kiñcāsyā pārśadādīnām apyuktā nitya-mūrttitā
tasyeśvareṣitur nitya-mūrttitve kā vicitratā*

Even the associates of the Lord are described as having eternal forms. Then what wonder is it that Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is their supreme controller, should have an eternal body.

Similarly, in *Śrī Bhajana-rahasya*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:

The state of one who remembers Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is that, like Kṛṣṇa, his body is also *sac-cid-ānanda*. Therefore the Vaiṣṇava's body is not different from Kṛṣṇa's. Kṛṣṇa explains this to Uddhava in the following words from *Śrīmad Bhāgvataṁ* (11.29.34):

*martyo yaḍ tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāṁṛtatvaṁ pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service to Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences.

These verses establish that the bodies of the Lord's associates and that of the Lord are on the same level. Both are eternal. This certainly could not be possible if an associate had the potential to fall and acquire a material body. If that were the case, then it would also be possible for Kṛṣṇa to fall and obtain a material body.

In *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (1.231) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

vargaḥ priya-sakhinām yaḥ sama-premetyasau mataḥ

śaḍvidhā syānnitya-siddho bhakti siddhastathā bhavet

The *priya-sakhīs* have *sama-prema*. They are of two types—*nitya-siddha* and *bhakti-siddha*, or those who become perfect by devotional service.

If *nitya-siddhas* could fall down, then they could not be called *nitya-siddhas* or eternally perfect. Furthermore, when they return after falling down, they would be called *sādhana-siddhas*. Thus, the above categorization of *nitya-siddha* and *sādhana-siddha* would keep on changing. Such a change of definition does not suit the atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭha, which has an eternal nature, where time cannot fritter things away. From the above references it is clear that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī never had anything in mind like the fall-down theory.

While glorifying the associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī writes (*Śrī Vraja-vilāsa-stavaḥ* 39):

*tṛṇīkṛtya sphāram sukha-jalādbhi-sāraṁ sphuṭamapi
svakīyaṁ premṇā ye bhara-nikara-namrā mura-ripoḥ
sukhābhāsam śāśvat prathayitum alaṁ prauḍh-kutukād
yataste tān dhanyān param iha bhaje mādharma-gaṇān*

We worship the greatly fortunate devotees of Lord Mādhava who consider the ocean of their own happiness as a blade of straw, and who are humble because of love for Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the Mura demon. By their supreme love dalliances, they eternally exhibit that material pleasure is only a shadow of pleasure, and pleasure in *kṛṣṇa-prema* is an ocean.

Here Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī glorifies Kṛṣṇa’s devotees in Vraja, who are still living in their present bodies after attaining perfection. It is clear that even they have absolutely no attraction for material pleasure. How then can the *nitya-siddhas* have attraction and fall? *Nitya-siddhas* are worshipable even to the *sādhana-siddhas*. One becomes perfect by following the example of *nitya-siddhas*. If a *nitya-siddha* falls down, then why would a *sādhaka* will be inspired to follow him?

The very nature of *bhakti* is that it gives rise to *jñāna* and *vairāgya*—*janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam* (*Bhāg.*1.2.7). It is impossible that a *nitya-siddha* would not have *vairāgya*. Therefore, in the above verse it was said that they eternally exhibit that material pleasure is not real pleasure. This means that they never have any attraction towards it. This is real *vairāgya* because it comes out of a higher taste—*rasavarjaṁ raso’pyasya param dṛṣtvā nivartate* (*Bg.* 2.59).

Turning to the work of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī we find the following verses about the *jīva* (*Cc.Madhya*, 22.10-15):

*sei vibhinnāṁśa jīva—dui ta’ prakāra
eka—nitya-mukta’, eka—nitya-saṁsāra’*

The living entities are divided into two categories. Some are eternally liberated, and others are eternally conditioned.

*‘nitya mukta’—nitya kṛṣṇa-carāṇe unmukha
‘kṛṣṇa-pāriśada’ nāma, bhūñje sevā-sukha*

Those who are eternally liberated are always awake to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they render transcendental loving service at the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. They are to be

considered eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa, and they are eternally enjoying the transcendental bliss of serving Kṛṣṇa.

*‘nitya-bandha’—kṛṣṇa haite nitya-bahirmukha
‘nitya-saṁsāra’, bhuñje narakādi duḥkha*

Apart from the ever-liberated devotees, there are the conditioned souls who always turn away from the service of the Lord. They are perpetually conditioned in this material world and are subjected to the material tribulations brought about by different bodily forms in hellish conditions.

*sei doṣe māyā-piśāci daṇḍa kare tāre
ādhyātmikādi tāpa-traya tāre jāri’ māre*

Due to his being opposed to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the conditioned soul is punished by the witch of the external energy, Māyā. He is thus ready to suffer the threefold miseries—miseries brought about by the mind, the inimical behavior of other living entities, and natural disturbances caused by the demigods.

*kāma-krodhera dāsa hañā tāra lāṭhi khāya
bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu-vaidyā pāya*

*tānra upadeśa-mantre piśāci palāya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti pāya, tabe kṛṣṇa-nikaṭa yāya*

In this way the conditioned soul becomes the servant of lusty desires, and when these are not fulfilled, he becomes a servant of anger and continues to be kicked by the external energy, *māyā*. Wandering and wandering throughout the universe, he may by chance get the association of a devotee physician, whose instructions and hymns make the witch of the external energy flee. The conditioned soul thus gets into touch with the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and in this way he can approach nearer and nearer to the Lord.

Verse 11 says that “eternally liberated *jīvas* are always awake to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” And verse 12 clearly says that conditioned souls are those who “always turn away from the the service of the Lord.” Always turn away means they were never engaged in the service of the Lord. This is very much in line with the words of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. This is also in line with Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is also in agreement as is evident from his comments (*Amṛta-pravāha bhāṣya*) on these verses, which Śrīla Prabhupāda cited in his purport:

An explanation of verses 8 through 15 is given by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in his *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya*. The Lord is spread throughout the creation in His quadruple expansions and incarnations. Kṛṣṇa is fully represented with all potencies in each and every personal extension, but the living entities, although separated expansions, are also considered one of the Lord’s energies. The living entities are divided into two categories—the eternally liberated and eternally conditioned. Those who are ever-liberated never come in contact with *māyā*, the external energy. The ever-conditioned are always under the clutches of the external energy. This is described in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama*

māyā duratyayā, “This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.”

The *nitya-baddhas* are always conditioned by the external energy, and the *nitya-muktas* never come in contact with the external energy. Sometimes an ever-liberated personal associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends into this universe just as the Lord descends. Although working for the liberation of conditioned souls, the messenger of the Supreme Lord remains untouched by the material energy. Generally ever-liberated personalities live in the spiritual world as associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and they are known as *kṛṣṇa-pāriṣada*, associates of the Lord. Their only business is enjoying Lord Kṛṣṇa’s company, and even though such eternally liberated persons come within this material world to serve the Lord’s purpose, they enjoy Lord Kṛṣṇa’s company without stoppage. The ever-liberated person who works on Kṛṣṇa’s behalf enjoys Lord Kṛṣṇa’s company through his engagement. The ever-conditioned soul, provoked by lusty desires to enjoy the material world, is subjected to transmigrate from one body to another. Sometimes he is elevated to higher planetary systems, and sometimes he is degraded to hellish planets and subjected to the tribulations of the external energy.

This commentary states that *nitya-muktas* never come in contact with *māyā* and *nitya-baddhas* are always under the influence of *māyā*. But the *nitya-baddhas* can become free from this influence if they associate with a pure devotee of the Lord. The commentary is lucid; it has no "ifs" and "buts". It is in complete coherence with the previous *ācāryas*. Therefore we find no need of applying the general rule/special rule here as proposed by some fall-*vādīs* in their desperate bid to keep their theory from falling. When meaning is clear and it is supported by *śāstra*, *sādhu*, and guru, then it needs no interpretation. Here the primary meaning (*mukhya vṛtti*) is clear and coherent and it does not require interpretation. An attempt to interpret unambiguous statements will distort the clear meaning and the *siddhānta*.

An important point to be noted is that Lord Caitanya spoke the verses cited to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī. In these verses the Lord is directly answering the question posed by Sanātana Gosvāmī about the *jīva*’s bondage. Therefore, these verses contain the *siddhānta* as taught by the Lord. From the verses, their translations, and the commentary it is explicit that there are two types of *jīvas*—the eternally liberated, who never come in contact with *māyā*, and the eternally bound, who have always been in the grip of *māyā* but can get out by engaging in devotional service. We have seen that Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura accept the meaning of these verses in the same way and have written accordingly in their books. They have not tried to give any manipulation on the meaning of *nitya-mukta* and *nitya-baddha*. Śrīla Prabhupāda also has not said a word about the falling of the *jīva* from Vaikuṅṭha while commenting upon these verses.

Therefore, these verses describe the real *siddhānta* in their primary meaning, *mukhya vṛtti*. If there is any other statement elsewhere in the scripture or spoken by a *mahājana*, which contradicts them, then that is not the *siddhānta*; it will need to be interpreted to conform to these verses. That is called *śāstra saṅgati*, or reconciling the apparently contradictory statements of the scriptures, which is a very important feature of Vedic philosophy.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MEANING OF ANĀDI PART ONE

We have seen that none of our predecessor *ācāryas* accept fall down from *kṛṣṇa-līlā* as the explanation for the origin of the conditioned soul. Their opinion is that the *jīvas* in this world came from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu. Prior to conditioned existence they were in a place described as the *taṭastha* region. Wherever this region is, it is definitely not in the *nitya-līlā* of the spiritual sky.

Further, their conclusion as to why some *jīvas* originate from Mahā-Viṣṇu and become engaged in the material energy is that the Lord has various energies and as the Supreme Controller He engages these energies for His *līlā*. Otherwise there is no meaning to His being the omnipotent Supreme Lord. This is His very nature, *svabhava*, and He cannot be blamed for engaging His energies according to His own nature. It is also His *līlā* that He arranges for those *jīvas* entangled in His illusory energy and suffering the threefold miseries to become liberated souls in His eternal abode.

We have shown that the spiritual world, being the infallible abode of the Lord, by its very nature cannot accommodate the fall-down of any of its residents. We also gave references from *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Āgama* that the conditioning of the *jīva* in the material world is *anādi*. This is supported by great *ācāryas* like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. In this and the next two chapters we discuss the word *anādi*.

Readers should be warned that *anādi* is not an easy concept to grasp. We have tried to explain it as lucidly as we can, but it is a fact that without knowledge of *nyāya* and Sanskrit grammar it is difficult to grasp. We have seen that even people who know Sanskrit have difficulty grasping the full import of the word *anādi*, because we are now in conditioned existence.

Thus, besides logic and grammar, we need purity of the heart most of all. Without that, *anādi* remains difficult to understand. We believe that the difficulty in conveying the meaning of *anādi* is one of the reasons Śrīla Prabhupāda simplified his preaching to us about the origin of conditioned life. Our belief is supported by the example of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, because in *Shri Caitanya's Teachings* he also gave a different explanation of the *jīva*'s conditioning when speaking with Westerners.

Despite the difficulty, a proper grasp of the meaning of *anādi* is essential to this discussion. That will greatly aid our understanding, for it is the most frequently used word in the *śāstras* and by the *ācāryas* in describing the conditioned experience of the *jīva*.

When a person begins his journey on the path of transcendence he quite commonly hears that he is not the material body but a spirit soul—eternal, conscious, and blissful by nature—more brilliant than ten thousand suns. Naturally the question arises, how does such a living entity become bound and when? This question is raised directly at least twice in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We will first give the answer from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the supreme *pramāṇa* and then the explanation of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. In the next chapter we give the verdict of other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*.

In the Third Canto Vidura posed the following question to Maitreya Muni (*Bhāg.* 3.7.5):

*deśataḥ kālato yo 'sāv
avasthātaḥ svato 'nyataḥ
aviluptāvabodhātmā
sa yujyetājayā katham*

The pure soul is pure consciousness and is never out of consciousness, either due to circumstances, time, situations, dreams or other causes. How then does he become engaged in nescience?

The essence of the question is that the *jīva* is a conscious being, so how does he forget this? Śrīla Prabhupāda, commenting upon this verse, writes, “How then can the living entity become forgetful of his real identity as pure spirit soul and identify with matter unless influenced by something beyond Himself? The conclusion is that the living entity is influenced by the *avidyā* potency, as confirmed in both the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

In answering Vidura’s question, Maitreya spoke six verses beginning with 3.7.9. The essence of his answer is that the living entity is influenced by the inconceivable material energy of the Lord. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes in his commentary on 3.7.9, *anādy avidyā-saṅgavaśāt jīvena sva jñānānandaṁ vismṛtya dehābhimāna prāptam deha-dharmaṁ durbhagatvādi-kañca prāpya yadi kliśyate tarhi kasmai doṣo deya iti*, “Because of association with *avidyā*, which has no beginning, the *jīva* has forgotten his blissful and conscious nature and has developed a false ego in the material body. He suffers because of acquiring bodily characteristics and misfortune, therefore no one is to be blamed.”

He says that the reason for the material conditioning of the *jīva* is his association with *avidyā* and that association has no beginning. That means it is causeless. This, in short, is the explanation of the *jīva*’s bondage. It may be explained in various ways but this is the essence. This ignorance of one’s conscious nature is sometimes called by different names: forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, being attracted to *māyā*, leaving the Lord’s association and so on.

The second instance is in the Eleventh Canto, where Uddhava asked Kṛṣṇa, the topmost authority, about the bondage of the *jīva* (*Bhāg.* 11.10.35):

*guṇeṣu vartamāno 'pi
deha-jeṣv anapāvṛtaḥ
guṇair na badhyate dehī
badhyate vā katham vibho*

O my Lord, a living entity situated within the material body is surrounded by the modes of nature and the happiness and distress that are born of activities caused by these modes. How is it possible that he is not bound by this material enclosure? It may also be said that the living entity is ultimately transcendental and has nothing to do with the material world. Then how is he ever bound by material nature?

Lord Kṛṣṇa answers in the next chapter. He says that bondage and liberation are caused by *māyā*, which has no beginning (*Bhāg.* 11.11.3):

*vidyāvidye mama tanū
viddhy uddhava śarīriṇām
mokṣa-bandha-karī ādye
māyayā me vinirmite*

O Uddhava, both knowledge and ignorance, being products of *māyā*, are expansions of My potency. Both knowledge and ignorance are beginningless and perpetually award liberation and bondage to embodied living beings.

Here the phrase “perpetually awards liberation and bondage” means that the *jīva* is in perpetual bondage. This implies that it has no beginning but has an end, because bondage comes to an end at the time of liberation. When one attains liberation, that is also perpetual. What is ultimately implied here is that bondage has no beginning, but has an end; and liberation has a beginning, but has no end. However, this description applies only to *baddha-jīvas*. Since *Māyā*

does not exist in *Vaikuṅṭha*, she has no influence over the *nitya-mukta jīvas* who are thus liberated without beginning and without end. The phrase *māyayā me vinirmīte*, “manufactured by My *māyā*,” applies only in the material world. Lord Kṛṣṇa further said (11.11.4):

*ekasyaiva mamāṁśasya
jīvasyaiva mahā-mate
bandho 'syāvidyayānādir
vidyayā ca tathetaraḥ*

O most intelligent Uddhava, the living entity, called *jīva*, is part and parcel of Me, but due to ignorance he has been suffering in material bondage since time immemorial.¹ By knowledge, however, he can be liberated.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, commenting on this verse writes, *asya avidyayā bandhaḥ sa ca karmaṇo'nāditvād anādiḥ mokṣa-sambhavāt sāntaḥ itaro mokṣaḥ janyatvāt sādiranaśvaratvānniranto jñeyah*, “The living entity is bound by *avidyā*. This bondage has no beginning, *anādi*, because karma is *anādi*; but it is possible to achieve liberation from bondage, therefore bondage has an end. On the other hand, *mokṣa* is generated, therefore it has a beginning—but it has no end because it cannot be destroyed.”

From this it is clear that the word *anādi* is used for a condition that has no beginning but can have an end. This is how the word has been used by Vedic scholars. *Anādi* is the negation of the word *ādi* or beginning.

Confusion about the precise meaning of *anādi* has arisen in ISKCON, because Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes used it to mean beginningless and sometimes he said “since time immemorial.” This translation of *anādi*, if taken literally, puts a different slant on the meaning of the word, because “since time immemorial” implies something not literally beginningless, something not existing from eternity, but from a time beyond the pale of memory. The question arises, “Did Śrīla Prabhupāda literally mean “since time immemorial” when he used those words?”

In answer to this the fall-vadīs say, “Prabhupāda used it consistently when referring to the *jīva* and he used the word beginningless consistently when referring to the Lord. So he clearly had two distinct ideas in his mind with regard to *anādi*.”

But as will be shown in this and the next chapter, such a meaning of *anādi* is a radical departure from the meaning of the word as used by our predecessor *ācāryas*. As translators/commentators we have a responsibility to present Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings in line with our predecessor *ācāryas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda did not present himself to us standing alone. He presented himself as coming in the line of disciplic succession and so it is important to understand him in that context. All he taught us is supposed to be knowledge received in *paramparā*. He said numerous times that his only credit is that he did not “manufacture anything.” Indeed, he professed disdain for any such behavior and he tried to ingrain that in us as well. He gave us the system of guru, *śāstra*, and *sādhu* as the failsafe system of checks and balances. When there is doubt or confusion on any philosophical matter, it is surely important for us to attempt to reconcile it with the teachings of our previous *ācāryas*, especially the Six Gosvāmīs whom Lord Caitanya made responsible for laying out the tenets of our *paramparā siddhānta*. As Śrīla Prabhupāda himself has explained:

If one is seriously interested in Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, he must be ready to follow the rules and regulations laid down by the *ācāryas*, and he must understand their conclusions. The *śāstra* says: *dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* (*Mahābhārata, Vana Parva* 313.1 1 7). It is very difficult to

understand the secret of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but one who advances by the instruction of the previous *ācāryas* and follows in the footsteps of his predecessors in the line of disciplic succession will have success. Others will not. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says in this connection, *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava-sevā nistāra pāyeche kebā*: “Unless one serves the spiritual master and *ācāryas*, one cannot be liberated.” Elsewhere he says:

*ei chay gosāi jār—mui tār dās
tā-sabāra pada-reṇu mora pañca-grās*

“I simply accept a person who follows in the footsteps of the six Gosvāmīs, and the dust of such a person’s lotus feet is my foodstuff.” (Cc. *Ādi* 8.7, purport)

Considering this, if a statement of Śrīla Prabhupāda appears to be at odds with the *paramparā* version, it is our duty to understand it in the proper light and uphold the integrity of Śrīla Prabhupāda by reconciling it with our predecessor *ācāryas*. If we cannot, it is our duty to accept it as our paucity of realization on that point or after careful deliberation conclude that Prabhupāda preached to us that way according to how he viewed time, place, circumstance, and audience. The alternative—that on fine points of the *paramparā siddhānta* he had a different view than that of our predecessors—is simply unacceptable.

Therefore, in response to the question whether Śrīla Prabhupāda literally meant “since time immemorial” when he used that phrase, we say no, because that would put him at odds with the previous *ācāryas*. We find that they used *anādi* only in the strict sense of beginningless or causeless. They never use it to mean a time too remote to recall. We therefore propose that by “since time immemorial” Śrīla Prabhupāda meant, not a time beyond our recall—because it was so long ago—but that it is immemorial—because it does not exist at all. This is in line with the previous *ācāryas* and therefore acceptable to us.

Some devotees suggest that *anādi* should be understood in the literal sense of which it was used by Śrīla Prabhupāda—as time immemorial. They say this meaning should be applied going back up the chain of succession. While this suggestion is itself debatable, because Prabhupāda did not always use *anādi* to mean since time immemorial, the fact remains that in the *Sandarbhās* themselves Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has made it clear how *anādi* is to be understood in this context. His usage is so precise and clear that it makes these devotees suggestion altogether unfeasible, for to take their suggestion would put us at odds with Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Moreover, there is at least one instance which proves that Śrīla Prabhupāda considered “since time immemorial” the same as without beginning (Cc. *Madhya* 20.118):

One who is not materially infected and who does not forget Kṛṣṇa as his master is called *nitya-mukta*. In other words, one who is eternally liberated from material contamination is called *nitya-mukta*. From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and his only attempt has been to serve Kṛṣṇa. Thus he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.

Those who criticize us for saying that *anādi* means beginningless or causeless and that Śrīla Prabhupāda intended precisely what he said when he used the expression “since time immemorial” should note that in the above passage he uses “time immemorial” to refer to the *nitya-mukta* residents of the spiritual world, “From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.” This means Prabhupāda did not have in mind some remote time in a past beyond recall, but a non-existent time and therefore a non-existent memory,

because the literal meaning of “time immemorial” cannot apply to the eternal associates of the Lord in the spiritual world.

Prabhupāda says in the same passage, “always been a devotee” and “he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.” This means that he equated “time immemorial” with *anādi* in the same literal sense that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī used it, as explained in the next chapter. That is to say, for Śrīla Prabhupāda, “time immemorial” meant non-existent. Otherwise the above paragraph would be contradictory with phrases such as “eternally liberated.” “always been a devotee” and “he never forgets” used to refer to the very same entity he describes as having been a *nitya-mukta* devotee “from time immemorial.”

It is unimaginable to us that Śrīla Prabhupāda has a conclusion that differs from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Indeed, everyone on all sides of the *jīva* issue agrees that Śrīla Prabhupāda could not have had a different meaning of *anādi* in mind than that of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. The fact that Jīva Gosvāmī has his precise meaning of the word in the *Sandarbhas* will surely help us to resolve our dilemma and maintain consistency between us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and our predecessor *ācāryas*.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 2.117 Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī states that “a sincere student should not neglect such controversy” because such things strengthen the mind. It is interesting to note that in the purport Śrīla Prabhupāda specifically mentions the *Sandarbhas*, indicating them as the very place to resolve controversies:

Similarly, other false devotees think that studying books of the previous *ācāryas* is unadvisable, like studying dry empiric philosophies. But Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, following the previous *ācāryas*, has inculcated the conclusions of the scriptures in the six theses called the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhas*. False devotees who have very little knowledge of such conclusions fail to achieve pure devotion for want of zeal in accepting the favorable directions for devotional service given by self-realized devotees.

Let us then accept the favorable directions for devotional service by turning to the *Sandarbhas* and analyze Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s explanation of the meaning of *anādi* and the origin of the conditioned soul.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER NINE

THE MEANING OF ANĀDI PART TWO

In the *Paramātma-sandarbha* (47), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes:

tadevamananta eva jīvākhyās taṭasthāḥ śaktayaḥ. Tatra tāsām vargadvayam. Eko vargo'nāditaḥ eva bhagavadunmukhaḥ, anyas tvanāditaḥ eva bhagavat-parānmukhaḥ-svabhāvatastadiya jñāna-bhāvāt tadīya-jñānābhāvācca.

In this way the marginal energies called *jīvas* are unlimited. They have two classes. One class is devoted to the Lord beginninglessly (*anādi*) and the other is not devoted to the Lord beginninglessly (*anādi*). This is because the former class of *jīvas* naturally have knowledge of the Lord and the second class of *jīvas* naturally

do not have knowledge of the Lord.

It is explicit here that the bondage of the living entity has no beginning or in other words, it is causeless, *anādi*. The word *anādi* has no other meaning here. Any other meaning would not make sense. Even the rendering “since time immemorial” does not fit here for one would have to apply the same meaning to *nitya-mukta* devotees as well, since *anādi* has been used to describe both *nitya-baddha* and *nitya-mukta* in the same text. If the literal meaning of time immemorial is used then the *anādi nitya-muktas* would not be eternally liberated but would have been liberated since time immemorial, which implies that once, somewhere in the remote past, they were not liberated. That would render the word *nitya-mukta* meaningless. The reconciliation is to accept that Śrīla Prabhupāda used “since time immemorial” in the sense that the *nitya-baddhas* are beginninglessly bound and the *nitya-muktas* are beginninglessly liberated. This conclusion stands shoulder to shoulder with all our predecessor *ācāryas* and the other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* as well.

Another important point is that the bound *jīvas* by their very nature—*svabhāvata*—are in ignorance of the Lord. This means that this condition was not imposed upon them by anyone. *Svabhāva* means one’s own nature or existence, something that is not acquired from anywhere. That further confirms that their ignorance has no beginning. On the other hand, the *nitya-muktas* have natural knowledge of the Lord, which also confirms that their existence in Vaikuṅṭha has no beginning.

Further, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes:

*tatra prathamo'ntaraṅgāsakti-vilāsānugrḥīto nitya-bhagavat-parikara-rūpo
garuḍādikaḥ yathoktaṁ pādmottarakhaṇḍe — 'tripādvibhute-lokā-stu' ityādau
bhagavat-sandarbhodāhṛte (78 Anuccheda), asya ca tatasthatvaṁ
jīvatva-prasiddherīśvaratvakoṭāvapraveśāt. Aparastu tat-parān-mukhatva-doṣena
labdha-chidrayā māyayāparibhūtaḥ-saṁsārī. Yathoktaṁ haṁsa-guhya stave (Bhāg.
6.4.25) sarvaṁ pumān veda guṇānśca tajjñō, na veda sarvajñamanntam īde; ekādaśe
ca (11.2.37) bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt.*

Out of the two classes, the first is blessed by the manifestation of the internal potency and are the eternal associates of the Lord, such as Garuḍa, as described in the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, which was cited in *Bhagavat-sandarbha* (78). This energy of the Lord is marginal because of having the quality of the *jīva* and not being able to be counted in the category of the Lord.

The second class of *jīvas* are bound in the world because of being over-powered by Māyā, who finds the defect of non-devotion in them, as stated in the *Haṁsa-guhya* prayers (6.4.25), “The living entity can know everything including the modes of nature, but he does not know the All-knowing Person.” And in the Eleventh Canto (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37):

*bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā*

Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. This bewildering, fearful

condition is effected by the potency for illusion, called *māyā*. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

The important point to be noted here is that the first type of *jīvas* are the eternal associates of the Lord, *nitya-bhagavat parikara-rūpa*, such as Garuḍa. This means they can never fall down into the material world. Otherwise the word *nitya* would be meaningless.

Some people say that the word *anādi* (beginningless) simply means a long time. To support their argument they say that the words *labdha-chidrayā*, “one who finds fault with the *jīva*” indicate a sequence. The *jīva* first becomes a non-devotee, and *Māyā* seeing this defect in the *jīva* covers him. They therefore conclude that there is a beginning to this conditioning, but because it occurred before his entry into the material world it is called *anādi*. They say that this is supported by the verse cited from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.37).

This is not a well thought-out argument. There is no *māyā* in *Vaikuṅṭha*, so how is it that the *jīva* becomes a non-devotee before coming under the clutches of *māyā*? Not being a devotee and being in *māyā* are two sides of the same coin, so there is no question of being a non-devotee without contacting *māyā*. If someone argues that impersonalists in the *brahmajyoti* are non-devotees and they have no contact with *māyā*, that argument is not applicable because the *nitya-muktas* mentioned here are in *Vaikuṅṭha* proper.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī clearly says that the *nitya-mukta* is under the blessings of the internal potency, *antaraṅga-śakti-vilāsānuḡrḥīta*. And in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa assures us that the devotees are under the protection of His divine energy, *daivīm prakṛtiṁ āśritaḥ*. Therefore, what could cause the *nitya-mukta* to fall to the material world? Whatever the reason may be, it would have to be more powerful than the internal potency to snatch the devotee away from her protection; but of all the potencies of the Lord, His internal potency is the most powerful. Thus there is nothing which can pull the *jīva* down. And, again, what would be the meaning of the word *nitya* in that case?

Moreover, if the “since time immemorial” meaning of *anādi* is applied to the *anādi* non-devotee *jīvas*, then the same meaning must be applied to the other class of *jīvas* who are *anādi* devotee *jīvas*. That would mean that the eternal associates of the Lord are not actually eternal but have been associates for long time. This would mean that they are not actually eternally liberated but were conditioned at one time and became devotees at a particular time. But why should Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī use the word *anādi* in this sense? Sanskrit does not lack words for expressing these alternative meanings and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was one of the greatest scholars this earth has seen. He even wrote a book on Sanskrit grammar. He surely knew the value of precise usage, because Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs engaged him as the editor of their books. He did not lack knowledge of alternative words to express his intention, but he chose *anādi*, because it is the precise word to convey his intention. If he had meant to convey the idea of being conditioned for a long time or liberated for a long time he could have used the word *cira-baddha* instead of *anādi*.

If someone insists that *anādi* means beginningless when used for the devotee *jīvas* in *Vaikuṅṭha* and “since time immemorial” when applied for the conditioned souls, then he has to give some reasoning for the word being applied in two different ways in the same sentence. Otherwise, it has the defect of *ardha-kukkuṭi-nyāya*, the logic of half a hen.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī supports his statement that the first class of *jīvas* are under the blessings of the Lord’s internal potency and are His eternal associates by referring to verses from the *Padma Purāṇa*. These are the same two verses he cites in *Bhagavat-sandarbhā* (78), while explaining that the Lord’s associates are not material and that they are within the essential nature of the Lord,

svarūpabhūta.

In Text 75, 76, and 77 of *Bhagavat-sandarbha*, he describes that the Lord's associates have transcendental bodies, possess qualities identical to those of the Lord and they are beyond the influence of time. Then in Text 78 he quotes four verses (*Padma Purāna, Uttara-khaṇḍa* 228.1.4) to further show the characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha residents:

*tripādvibhuter lokāstu asaṅkhyāḥ parikīrtitāḥ
śuddha-sattva-mayā sarve brahmānanda-sukhāhvayāḥ
sarve nityā nirvikārā heya-rāga-vivarjītāḥ
sarve hiraṇmayāḥ śuddhāḥ koṭi-sūryya-sama-prabhāḥ
sarve vedamayā divyāḥ kāma-krodhādi-varjītāḥ
nārāyaṇa-padāmbhoja-bhaktyeka-rasa-sevinaḥ
nirantaram sāmāgāna-paripūrṇa-sukham-śrītāḥ
sarve pañcopaniṣat-svarūpā veda-varccasaḥ*

There are unlimited living beings in the *tripādavibhūti*, the spiritual sky. They are all *śuddha-sattva* in nature and are called *brahmānanda-sukha*. They are all pure, golden, eternal, immutable, devoid of the lower modes, and brilliant like millions of suns. They are all divine, full of Vedic knowledge, free from the qualities of lust and greed. They taste only the nectar of unalloyed devotional service unto the lotus feet of Lord Nārāyaṇa. They are always filled with the bliss of the sweet chanting of the *Sāmaveda* and are effulgent with Vedic knowledge and are the personification of the fivefold worship of the Lord.

These verses lucidly explain the nature of the eternal associates of the Lord. They have no contact with *māyā*, they are full of bliss and knowledge and are fully absorbed in the service of the Lord. It is offensive to think that they would abandon the wonderful taste of pure devotional service to enjoy the rotten material world.

The meaning of the words *tat-parāṇmukhatva doṣeṇa labdha-chidrayā māyayā paribhūtaḥ* (*Paramātmā-sandarbha*, Text 47) is that the *jīva* is covered by *māyā* who sees the defect of non-devotion in the *jīva*. It is important to understand that there is no sequence intended here. A similar example is found in the statement that *jīvas* spring from the Lord. Both the *jīva* and the Lord are *aja*, unborn, and *nitya*, eternal. How can the *jīva* spring from the Lord, because that would imply that *jīvas* did not exist once upon a time? The point is that they co-exist as energy and the energetic.

Similarly, the non-devotion of the *jīva* and *Māyā*'s covering him is all simultaneous. When expressed in words, it appears there is a sequence of events. That is the limitation of language in trying to express a reality that in fact has no relation of cause and effect. Sequence is a limitation of language, because words must be spoken or written in some sequence. Thus language has the influence of material time, which has the divisions of past, present and future. As a result language causes concurrent events to appear linear. This was explained in the second chapter of this book, citing Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

In logic, beginningless objects cannot have a relation of cause and effect, they must co-exist. "But," someone argues, "What about the Lord? Isn't He the source of everything, including the eternal entities, *janmādy asya yataḥ*?" The meaning of the Lord being the source of everything is that everything rests on Him and is dependent on Him, but He is *svarāt*. For example, we say that Lord Balarāma is the first expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Does this mean that Balarāma did not exist at one time? No one will accept that. It is the same with the *jīva-śakti* of the Lord. This is transcendental to mundane logic—hence inconceivable to the mundane mind—but we accept it

because the *śāstra* says it is so.

When we say the Lord is the source of everything, it is not meant in a cause/effect sense; it is only to show that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only *svarāt* being and everyone else is dependent. The cause and effect relation or sequence is given for two reasons: language obliges us to speak sequentially and it also makes it easier for us to understand. In this regard Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in the Introduction to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one, and when Kṛṣṇa desires to enjoy pleasure, He manifests Himself as Rādhārāṇī. The spiritual exchange of love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the actual display of the internal pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa. Although we speak of “when” Kṛṣṇa desires, just when He did desire we cannot say. We only speak in this way because in conditional life we take it that everything has a happening; however, in the absolute or spiritual life there is neither beginning nor end. Yet in order to understand that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one and that They also become divided, the question “When?” automatically comes to mind. When Kṛṣṇa desired to enjoy His pleasure potency, He manifested Himself in the separate form of Rādhārāṇī, and when He wanted to understand Himself through the agency of Rādhā, He united with Rādhārāṇī, and that unification is called Lord Caitanya.

Similarly, there is no sequence intended by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī when he is explaining the conditioned state of the *jīva*. He is only explaining the reason for his conditioning. That reason itself is beginningless. In the same way the verse *bhayam dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ* is not explaining a sequence of conditioning, although that is how it appears from the translation. The meaning of the sentence constructed just from the word meaning is: “For one who has turned away (*apetasya*) from the Supreme Lord (*īśāt*), fear (*bhayam*) will arise (*syāt*) because of absorption (*abhīniveśataḥ*) is something other than the Lord (*dvitīya*).” The turning away is *anādi* as Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has stated above, therefore the fear is also *anādi*. The verse simply states that the cause of fear is one’s non-devotion and absorption in matter. No sequence is intended. All these “reasons” co-exist without any beginning. There is no other way of saying it. We say sunlight comes from the sun, but actually they co-exist.

In this verse the *ktivā* suffix is not used in the words *īśādapetasya* or *dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ*. If the *ktivā* suffix was used it would have implied a sequence of events, but the *tasīl* suffix has been used on both of these words to indicate a cause-effect relation, but not a sequence.

One may argue that in any cause-effect relation one must assume a sequence, because cause precedes effect. In terms of our ordinary experience this is a fact, but when we speak of beginningless events, logically they must be concurrent; and therefore no cause-effect relationship can exist between beginningless events. They simply are. Out of these beginningless events some can end—karma, for example—and some do not—the existence of the Lord’s energies and His *nitya-pārṣada*, His eternal associates.

Hence the real intention of such verses is to convey that although the conditioning of the *jīva* is *anādi*, it has an end. And the process to bring it to an end is given in the second half of 11.2.37, *budha ābhajet taṁ bhaktyaikyeśam guru devatātmā*, “Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord under the guidance of a bonafide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and

soul.”

The concept of *anādi* is difficult to grasp because we have no experience in everyday life of beginningless objects having no sequential cause/effect relation, but we do have the experience of temporary objects having such a cause-effect relation. Because of such experience, the *śāstric* statements are in a cause/effect manner. Just as it is said that Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Lord Caitanya to taste the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhā. Does it mean that once upon a time Lord Caitanya did not exist? Or when Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Caitanya, Kṛṣṇa stopped existing? Certainly not. They exist eternally, but to make us understand the purpose of Their appearance such statements are made. Language, which is linear, puts constraints on us when we attempt to express ideas that are co-existent.

While commenting on verse 7.5.11 of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes, *parā iti puṁsām bhayam dvītiyābhīniveśataḥ syāt ityādi-rītyānādīta eva bhagavad-vimukhānām jīvanām*, “The living entities’ condition of non-devotion to the Lord is beginningless, as is explained in verses such as *bhayam dvītiyābhīniveśataḥ* (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) and *paraḥ iti puṁsām* (*Bhāg.* 7.5.11).” Here he confirms the meaning of the verse *bhayam dvītiyābhīniveśataḥ* as describing the beginningless state of material conditioning. This is also the meaning of verse 7.5.11 on which he is commenting.

In *Prīti-sandarbhā* (1) Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī again describes the bondage of the *jīva* as *anādi*, “because of ignorance of the Lord”:

*atha jīvaśca tadīyo’pi tajjñāna-saṁsargābhāva-yuktatvena tan-māyā-parābhūtaḥ
sannātma-svarūpa-jñāna-lopān-māyā-kalpitopādhyāvēśāc-canādi-saṁsāra-duḥkhen
a sambadhyate iti paramātma-sandarbhādāveva nirūpitam asti.*

Although the *jīva* is part of the Lord, he is devoid of knowledge about Him and this deficiency has no beginning. Because of this he is covered by *māyā*. This being so, he is united with the beginningless material miseries because the knowledge of his *svarūpa* is covered and he is absorbed in the *upādhis*, designations, created by *māyā*. This was explained in the *Paramātma-sandarbhā*.

Here Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī uses the adjective *anādi* for the material miseries and *saṁsargābhāva* for the deficiency in knowledge. *Saṁsargābhāva* is a philosophical term which is commonly used as an explanation of the word *anādi* in *nyāya śāstra*. Lest anyone doubt the validity of *nyāya*, Śrīla Prabhupāda has this to say about the *nyāya prasthāna* (Cc. *Ādi* 7.106, purport):

As already explained, there are three *prasthānas* on the path of advancement in spiritual knowledge—namely, *nyāya-prasthāna* (Vedānta philosophy), *śruti-prasthāna* (the *Upaniṣads* and Vedic mantras) and *smṛti-prasthāna* (the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Mahābhārata*, *Purāṇas*, etc.). If one believes in the Vedic literatures, one must accept all the Vedic literatures recognized by the great *ācāryas*, but these Māyāvādī philosophers accept only the *nyāya-prasthāna* and *śruti-prasthāna*, rejecting the *smṛti-prasthāna*.

We must not reject any of the three *prasthānas*, or processes for understanding, or we will be in the same league as the Māyāvādī philosophers, who are condemned in this same purport as victims of half-hen logic.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has used the *nyāya* term *sāmsargābhāva*, which is commonly used as an equivalent for *anādi*. This is significant because in *nyāya*, as will be shown, the meaning of the term *sāmsargābhāva* is precise. The implication is obvious: If we can understand *sāmsargābhāva*, then we have a clear and incontestable idea of the word *anādi* as Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī intends it.

In *nyāya śāstra* there are two types of *abhāva*, or non-existence, *anyonyābhāva* and *sāmsargābhāva*. *Anyonyābhāva* means that one object is different from another. A pen is not paper and vice versa. *Sāmsargābhāva* is of three types—*pradhvaṁsābhāva*, *atyantābhāva*, and *prāgabhāva*. *Pradhvaṁsābhāva* and *atyantābhāva* cannot be the meaning of *sāmsargābhāva* in the present context. *Pradhvaṁsābhāva* means post-non-existence. It refers to something that has a beginning, but no end. Before it is made, a sweetball does not exist. When it is made, it comes into existence. When somebody eats the sweetball, it again becomes non-existent. This non-existence, called *ananta* in philosophy, has a beginning but no end. This meaning of *sāmsargābhāva* cannot be the equivalent of *anādi* because karma, which is *anādi*, has no beginning but has an end.

The second meaning of *sāmsargābhāva*, *atyantābhāva*, means eternal non-existence. The non-existence which has neither a beginning nor end is called *atyantābhāva*. This is the definition of the word *nitya*, eternal. For example, the mango tree does not exist in the ocean; there was never a time that one did in past, nor will one grow there in the future. Therefore, the non-existence of a mango tree in the ocean has no beginning and it will never come to an end. It is *nitya*.

The final meaning of *sāmsargābhāva*, *prāgabhāva*, means pre non-existence. It refers to the non-existence of an entity before it is created. For example, before one makes a sweet ball there was non-existence of the sweet ball. When did this non-existence begin? The answer is *anādi*—it has no beginning. Before someone made the sweetball it never existed. This *anādi* state of non-existence has no beginning; however, its non-existence comes to an end when the sweetball is created. This is the technical definition of *anādi* in Vedic philosophy. Therefore Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has used the word *sāmsargābhāva* denoting pre-non-existence in place of *anādi*. If anyone questions the true meaning of *anādi*, he must contend with this fact. By the use of the term *sāmsargābhāva*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has left no room for doubt.

The conclusion is that there are four types of activities or objects, *nitya*, *anitya*, *anādi*, and *ananta*. *Nitya* are those which have no beginning and no end, like Vaikuṅṭha planets or Lord Kṛṣṇa; *anitya* are those which have a beginning and end, such as the body; *anādi* are those which have no beginning but have an end, such as the material conditioning of the *jīva*; and *ananta* are those which have a beginning but no end, such as the liberation of a *jīva* from the material world. (A mathematical representation of these four types of entities is shown in Figure One). The liberation of a conditioned soul has a beginning but it never comes to an end. The liberation of the *nitya-muktas*, on the other hand, has no beginning and no end. Hence they are *nitya-muktas*. When the *jīva* is called *nitya-baddha* it actually means *anādi baddha*, otherwise he could never achieve liberation. Philosophers sometimes use the word *nitya* for *anādi* because people are more familiar with it.

All objects, qualities, and activities can be grouped into these four classes and this is how Vedic philosophers have used these words. Thus in *Pṛiti-sandarbhā* Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has used *sāmsargābhāva* in place of *anādi* to describe the deficiency in knowledge of the conditioned soul. In the *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* (47) Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also used *anādi* for the same deficiency of knowledge. This means that for him the meaning of *anādi* is synonymous with *sāmsargābhāva*. Then, in the *Bhakti-sandarbhā* he writes that this was explained in *Paramātmā-sandarbhā*, which

clearly indicates that *saṁsargābhāva* is precisely what he meant by using *anādi* in the *Paramātmā-sandarbhā*. Therefore, because the author himself has given the meaning, no other meaning should be taken for *anādi*.

From this it is clear that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī takes the meaning of the word *anādi* as beginningless and thus the conditioned *jīvas* have been conditioned from a time without beginning. He has repeated the same in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (1):

*paramātmā-vaibhava gaṇane ca tat-taṭasthaśakti-rūpānām cidekarasānāmapy
anādi-paratattva-jñāna-saṁsargābhāva-māyā-tad-vaimukhya-labdha-cchidrayā
tanmāyayāvṛtāsya-svarūpajñānānām tayaive sattva-rajas-tamomaye jaḍe prādhāne
racitātmā-bhāvānām jivānām saṁsāraduḥkham ca jñāpitam.*

Here he has again used the word *saṁsargābhāva* and *anādi* as an adjective for the ignorance and non-devotion of the *jīva*.

From the above evidence it is clear that the term *anādi* is taken literally by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. His equating it with the word *saṁsargābhāva* leaves no doubt as to his intention. Though it is inconceivable, one can only conclude on the basis of this evidence that the conditioned existence of the *nitya-baddha jīva* is beginningless and therefore such souls could not have been in *Vaikuṅṭha* prior to their conditioned existence. Furthermore, Śrīla Prabhupāda, coming in line from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and having studied the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*, could not have had any other meaning in mind when he translated *anādi*. The word *anādi* includes the idea of immemorial time since a time which has no beginning is certainly beyond the range of memory. If in using the expression “since time immemorial” he did not mean beginningless time, then he must have used it as a preaching strategy.

FIRST WAVE: CHAPTER TEN

THE MEANING OF ANĀDI PART THREE

In this chapter we elaborate further on the meaning of the word *anādi* as it has been used by previous *ācāryas*. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *anādi* in relation to the bondage of the *jīva* appears in verses such as 4.29.70, 5.14.1, 5.25.8, 6.5.11, 8.24.46, 11.22.10, 12.11.29, and so on. In their commentaries on these verses, *ācāryas* such as Śrīdhara Svāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Vallabhācārya, Vīra Rāghavācārya, Vijayadhvajā Tīrtha, Śukadevācārya, Bhagavat-prasādācārya, Śrī Vamśīdharācārya, and Rādhā Ramaṇa Dāsa Gosvāmī all agree that *anādi* means without beginning, without birth, without creation, and so on.

The commentators do not comment each time the word *anādi* appears. They comment a few times, and in other places one has to understand the same meaning. Therefore, there is no single verse containing the word *anādi* upon which everyone has commented. To give the opinion of all the *ācāryas* listed, we would have to cite all the verses mentioned above which is impractical. Instead we just give a sample verse below (*Bhāg.* 6.5.11):

*bhūḥ kṣetram jīva-samjñam yad anādi nija-bandhanam
adrṣtvā tasya nirvāṇam kim asat-karmabhir bhavet*

[The Haryaśvas understood the meaning of Nārada's words as follows:] The word *bhūh* [the earth] refers to the field of activities. The material body, which is a result of the living being's actions, is his field of activities, and it gives him false designations. Since time immemorial, he has received various types of material bodies, which are the roots of bondage to the material world. If one foolishly engages in temporary fruitive activities and does not look toward the cessation of this bondage, what will be the benefit of his actions?

Commenting on the word *anādi*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says it means *ādi śūnyam*, without a beginning. *Anādi ādi śūnyam nijasya jīvātmano bandhanam*, "the bondage of the *jīva* has no beginning."

Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha says, *anādikālam ārabhya jīvam nitrām badhnātīti anādi bandanam*, "It completely binds the *jīva*, from a time which has no beginning, therefore it is called *anādi-bandhanam*."

Vīra Rāghavācārya writes, *anādi-nijabandhanam anādi-puṇya pāpa-karma-nibandhanam*. "This bondage is caused by beginningless sinful and pious karma."

Bhagavat Prasādācārya writes, *anādi nija-bandhanam anādi-puṇya-pāpa-rūpa-karma-nibandhanam*, "This bondage is due to karma in the form of sin and piety, which has no beginning."

The word *anādi* also appears in many other verses: 1.8.28, 2.10.34, 11.3.8, 12.1.50, relating to the Lord, His nature and so on. No commentator has ever made a distinction between the meaning of *anādi* when used to describe the Lord and His qualities and when used to describe the bondage of the *jīva*.

The *Vācaspatyam Dictionary* says, *anādi* means *Ādi kāraṇam pūrvakālo vā sa nāsti yasya parameśvare*, "Ādi means cause or previous time; one who does not have a cause or a time preceding its existence is called *anādi*, such as the Supreme Lord." Other meanings given are *nāsti ādiḥ prāthamiko yasmāt*: "One who is not preceded by anything" and *ādi-śūnye*, "One who has no beginning."

The *Śabda-kalpa-druma Dictionary* says that *anādi* means *nāsti ādiḥ kāraṇam yasya saḥ*, "that which is causeless; which has no beginning; which has no birth or origin; self-manifest."

The *Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary* by V.S. Apte first gives the etymological meaning of the word *anādi*: *ādiḥ kāraṇam pūrvakālo vā nāsti yasya saḥ*. "Anādi is that entity which does not have a cause or origin." Then he lists the following meanings: having no beginning, eternal, existing from eternity, and an epithet of Parameśvara. As examples he cites *jagadādiranādistvam* (*Kādambārī* 4.2.9), "You are the cause of the universe but You have no cause," and *anādirādi govindaḥ sarva kāraṇa-kāraṇam* (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1).

The *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* by M. Monier Williams translates *anādi* as having no beginning and existing from eternity.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, commenting on *Brahma-saṁhitā*, gives this meaning to *anādi*: *na vidyate ādir yasya*, "One who does not have a beginning or cause." The BBT translators of the Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Cantos have rendered *anādi* in the same way wherever it appears.

We have previously given the two instances in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* where the question of the *jīva*'s bondage is directly addressed. From both Maitreya's and Lord Kṛṣṇa's answer, and from the Sanskrit commentaries on those answers, it is clear that the *jīva*'s bondage is *anādi*.

The beginningless bondage of the *jīva* is further confirmed by Lord Kṛṣṇa in (*Bhāg.* 11.11.7):

*ātmānam anyam ca sa veda vidvān
apippalādo na tu pippalādaḥ
yo'vidyayā yuk sa tu nitya-baddho*

vidyā-mayo yaḥ sa tu nitya-muktaḥ

The bird who does not eat the fruits of the tree is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who by His omniscience perfectly understands His own position and that of the conditioned living entity, represented by the eating bird. That living entity, on the other hand, does not understand himself or the Lord. He is covered by ignorance and is thus called *eternally conditioned*, whereas the Personality of Godhead, being full of perfect knowledge, is eternally liberated. (italics added)

Interestingly, the Lord Himself calls the conditioned living entity *nitya-baddha*. The word *nitya* here never means since time immemorial because it has also been used as an adjective for the Supersoul, *nitya-mukta*. The word *nitya*, of course, here means *anādi*, because the *jīva* can become liberated. And so Śrīdhara Svāmī has rightly commented, *nitya-baddho'nādi-baddhaḥ*, “*Nitya-baddha* means *anādi baddha*.” No commentator explains any other meaning of *nitya-baddha*.

According to all commentators as well as the dictionary, the two meanings of the word *anādi* are beginningless and causeless. Only those entities which have a beginning have a cause. On the other hand, because bondage is causeless, Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot be blamed for this. When it is said that Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes it means He is the only independent Reality. None of His energies are independent of Him. He is not the cause in the sense that He creates them because His energies are eternal as He is eternal. Otherwise we have to assume that once upon a time He was impotent or incomplete. Similarly, He did not create the union between the *jīva* and matter. It has been existing in this way from eternity.

Therefore, one cannot blame the Lord because He did not put the *jīva* in *māyā*. If He had done so, then the conditioning would have a beginning. Just as the Lord has no beginning, so the conditioning of the *jīva* has no beginning. Just as it is worthless to ask “Why is Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Lord since time beginningless?” it is also meaningless to ask why the *jīva*'s conditioning has no beginning. It's like asking, “Since when does the sun have sunlight and why?” To investigate the cause of causeless things is waste of time. For this reason, sometimes Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Don't try to figure this out, just get out.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments further on *Bhāg.* 3.7.9, which is Maitreya Muni's answer to Vidura on the *jīva* bondage question:

Vastutastu paramātmajīvātmānau sūrya-tat-kiraṇāviva jātyaiva mitho vilakṣaṇau caitanya-caitanyaṇau bhavataḥ iti siddhāntaḥ. Chāyā-kiraṇau yathā sūryataḥ eva bhavataḥ athāpi sūrya-tulyakaṇau sūryān na bhidyete bhidyete ca, tathaiva māyā-śakti-jīva-śakti parameśvarād udbhūte apyanādi abhinne api svarūpto'bhinne eva.

In reality the Supersoul and the soul are distinct from each other just like the sun and its rays, one being the super conscious and the other the atomic conscious being. This is the principle. A shadow and rays both come from the sun and yet the sun like atomic particles are different and non-different from the sun. Similarly both *māyā* and the *jīva* have sprung from the Supersoul yet they are *anādi*. Furthermore, they are non-different from the Supersoul, and yet different by nature, or *svarūpa*.

The idea is that both *māyā* and *jīva* have an origin—the Lord. Things which have an origin must have a beginning, yet both of them have no beginning, *anādi*. This is inconceivable to logic.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given a nutshell explanation of this while discussing how it is that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one and yet eternally separated in the introduction to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Although we have quoted this passage before, it is worth repeating just to remind our readers how the material conditioning can get in the way of understanding the eternal reality, where there is no division of past, present, and future:

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one, and when Kṛṣṇa desires to enjoy pleasure, He manifests Himself as Rādhārāni. The spiritual exchange of love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the actual display of the internal pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa. Although we speak of “when” Kṛṣṇa desires, just when He did desire we cannot say. We only speak in this way because in conditional life we take it that everything has a beginning; however, in the absolute or spiritual life there is neither beginning nor end. Yet in order to understand that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one and that They also become divided, the question “When?” automatically comes to mind. When Kṛṣṇa desired to enjoy His pleasure potency, He manifested Himself in the separate form of Rādhārāni, and when He wanted to understand Himself through the agency of Rādhā, He united with Rādhārāni, and that unification is called Lord Caitanya.

The beginningless origin of *māyā* and the conditioned *jīva* are to be understood in the same way.

Returning to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, we find the following commentary (*Bhāg.3.7.10*):

Tatra bhagavataḥ pṛṣṭha-sthitayā anādyavidyayā tamaḥ svarūpayā anādi-vaimukhya-rūpa-bhagavat-pṛṣṭhasthānām jīvanām jñānam yal lupyate tasya na vastutvaṁ kāraṇaṁ nāpi prayojanaṁ kim apy asti.

Avidyā, which is *anādi*, is situated on the backside of the Lord and has the nature of ignorance. She covers the knowledge of the *jīvas* who are situated on the backside of the Lord and are non-devotees. Their non-devotion is *anādi*. There is no real reason or purpose for their knowledge being covered.

Here he clearly states that the Lord does not put the *jīva* in ignorance for any specific gain. He is *ātmārāma* and everything happens out of His nature. The *jīvas* are in ignorance without beginning and without cause. Just as Kṛṣṇa has no cause (*anādi ādi govinda*) similarly there is no cause for the bondage of the *jīvas*. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa cannot be blamed for that which He is not the cause.

The sense is this: The Lord is eternal—without any beginning or end. And no devotee raises a question why is He so. He has unlimited energies (*parasya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*). For ease of comprehension, these unlimited energies are divided into three types—internal, external, and marginal. Because the Lord is beginningless, so are His energies. These energies do not mix with each other, but the marginal energy can be under the influence of either His internal potency or external potency. When under the influence of His external potency, the *jīva* has the choice to remain or switch over to the internal potency, but when under the influence or shelter of the internal potency, he cannot be covered by the external potency, *māmaiva ye prapadyante māyāmetāṁ taranti te*. Just as the Lord is beginningless, some *jīvas* are under the influence of His external potency from a time without beginning. No one is responsible for that condition. But if we do not choose to get out, then we are to be blamed for it, not Kṛṣṇa.

For example, a man does not know the Sanskrit language and his ignorance of the language has no beginning. Because of this ignorance, he is suffering. Who is to be blamed for this?

Surely not Kṛṣṇa. He has given him a human body and if he does not learn it, then it is his mistake.

Some *jīvas* have been serving Kṛṣṇa from a time without beginning and no one questions why. But when it is said that some *jīvas* are not serving Kṛṣṇa from a time without beginning, then the question is raised. Why? Because we naturally want to blame someone to get mental satisfaction, but our real purpose should be to pursue the solution to our suffering. The cause is that we are on the back side of the Lord, which means we are not devoted to Him. The solution is to move to the front side, not to assign blame.

From this it is also implied that those *jīvas* who are on the front side of the Lord—those who are devotees—never come under the influence of *māyā*, because *māyā* never appears in front of the Lord, *villajamānayā yasya sthātumikṣāpathe'muyā* (*Bhāg.* 2.5.13). The conclusion is, therefore, that once one has the status of *nitya-mukta*—either by having had it *anādi* or by attaining it after liberation from conditioned life—one does not and cannot fall down. He is bound by the unbreakable chains of transcendental love. The bond of *triguṇa*—the three modes—can be broken, but not the bonds of *bhakti*. Some people object to this owing to material conditioning. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī such people are false logicians because they present many arguments based on *kutarka* (bad logic) and end in rejecting the conclusions of the scriptures.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, commenting on *Bhāg.* 10.87.31 writes: *na ghatate ity asya tikāyām upādhi-janmanaiveti tajjamano'pyanādipravāho mantavya iti bhāvah*, “When Śrīdhara Svāmī says that the birth of the *jīva* simply means the birth of the *upādhi*, it is to be understood that this birth of the *upādhi* is like a flow which has no beginning.” The meaning is that the *jīva* is experiencing a cycle of birth and death which has no beginning. Because it has no beginning, it is futile to ask, “Who did it?” or “When did it happen?” Such questions imply a lack of understanding of the meaning and implication of words like beginningless and causeless.

Similarly, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes in his commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā* (1.1.):

tasyām khalviśvara-jīva prakṛti-kāla-karm māṇi pañcārthā varṇyante; teṣu vibhu-samvidiśvaraḥ, aṅusarṁvij-jīvaḥ, sattvādiguṇa-trayāśrayo dravyaṁ prakṛtiḥ, traiguṇyaśūnyaṁ jaḍa-dravyaṁ kālah, puṁ-prayatna-nispādyam adṛṣṭādi-śabda-vācyam karmmeti. Teṣāṁ lakṣaṇāni-eṣv-īśvarādīni catvāri nityāni jīvādīni tvīśavaśyāni karmma tu prāgabhāva-vat anādi vināṣi ca.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* five subjects are described—the Lord, the *jīva*, material nature, time and karma. Out of these the Lord is the supreme conscious being. The *jīva* is the atomic conscious being. *Prakṛti* is the object which is the shelter of the three modes, beginning with *sattva*. Time is an inert object which is devoid of the three modes. That which is accomplished by human effort and is designated by such words as *adṛṣṭa* is karma. Their characteristics are as follows: Out of these five the first four—the Lord, the *jīva*, time, and *prakṛti*—are *nitya*, or eternal (with no beginning or end). The *jīva*, time, and *prakṛti* are under the control of the Lord. Karma is without beginning, *anādi*, but has an end (*vināṣi*), just like pre-non-existence, *prāgabhāvavat*.

Here he explicitly writes that karma has no beginning, *anādi*, but has an end. It is like *prāgabhāva*, which means the pre-non-existence of an object. *Prāgabhāva* was defined in the last chapter. It has no beginning but comes to an end when the non-existent object is produced. Therefore, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa agrees with Śrī Jīva that *anādi* means that which has no beginning but has an end.

There is no scope or need for interpretation here. Because karma has no beginning, it naturally follows that the *jīva*'s conditioning has no beginning, which means that he did not fall from Vaikuṅṭha. Such is the case with all the *jīvas* in the material world, not that some were always conditioned and some fell down later from Vaikuṅṭha. He says that this is one of the five subjects discussed in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, the verses in which Lord Kṛṣṇa assures us that having attained His abode no one comes back are talking of the *nitya-baddha*'s *anādi* karma coming to an end. That is the proper implication of these verses. To conclude that these verses indicate the fall down of *nitya-muktas* is wanton speculation. It is both illogical and *aśāstric*.

In an earlier chapter we have already cited Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa on this point. Commenting on *Bhagavad-gītā* 13.20, he writes, *evam mitho vivikta-svabhāvayoranādyoḥ prakṛti-jīvayor samsargasyānādikālikattvam*, “In this way material nature and the living entity, who have a distinct nature and who are beginningless, are united together, and this has no beginning.” He uses the word *anādikālikattvam*, “the beginningless union of the *jīva* with *māyā*.” This needs no comment except to point out that the *śāstra* says this is the way it is.

We have already given the opinion of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura about the beginningless bondage of the *jīva* from his commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.9, 3.7.10 and 11.11.4. His commentary on *Bhagavad Gītā* 13.20 is worthy of repetition. We quote from an earlier chapter:

He writes *māya-jīvayor-api mac-chaktitvena anāditvāt tayor samsleṣo'pyanādi riṭibhāvah*. [The Lord is saying,] “Because both *māyā* and the *jīva* are My potencies, they are both beginningless and thus their union is also beginningless. This is the sense of Lord Kṛṣṇa's words.” Here he's using the *nyāya* principle which says that the qualities of *anādi* objects are also *anādi*. In fact in the beginning of his commentary on this verse he says, “In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa answers two questions—why or how did the union of the *jīva* and *māyā* occur? And when did it occur? He says that both of these are answered by the word *anādi* used in this verse. For the first question *anādi* means *na vidyate ādi kāraṇam yayor*, the union of *māyā* and the *jīva* have no cause. The answer to the second question is also *anādi*, it has no beginning.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa is not to be blamed for some *jīvas* being in material conditioning. He did not initiate this, otherwise it would have a beginning and He would be the cause, but Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has denied both these possibilities. It is also important to note that Śrīla Prabhupāda has translated the word *anādi* as “without beginning” (Bg. 13.20) and in the verse translation he uses the word beginningless. That leaves absolutely no room for misinterpretation of *anādi* as used by Śrīla Prabhupāda, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Prabhupāda's translation reads:

*prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva
viddhy anādi ubhāv api
vikārāṁś ca guṇāṁś caiva
viddhi prakṛti-sambhavān*

Material nature and the living entities should be understood to be beginningless. Their transformations and the modes of matter are products of material nature.

From the purport:

Both material nature and the living entity are eternal. That is to say that they existed before the creation. The material manifestation is from the energy of the Supreme Lord, and so also are the living entities, but the living entities are of the superior energy. Both the living entities and material nature existed before this cosmos was manifested. Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of *mahat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him, and because they are conditioned, they are averse to serving the Supreme Lord. Thus they are not allowed to enter into the spiritual sky. But with the coming forth of material nature these living entities are again given a chance to act in the material world and prepare themselves to enter into the spiritual world. That is the mystery of this material creation. Actually the living entity is originally the spiritual part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, but due to his rebellious nature, he is conditioned within material nature. It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature.

An important point to be understood from this portion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's comment is that the beginningless nature of material nature is never predicated on it having been previously in the spiritual sky. If that is the case, why does the beginningless nature of the *jīvas* imply a previous condition of being in the Lord's *nitya-līlā*? The living entities as well as material nature remain absorbed in Mahā-Viṣṇu during the period of dissolution. At the time of creation Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu injects them into material nature. This cycle repeats itself again and again, without beginning and without end; except for those individual *jīvas* who practice Kṛṣṇa's instruction *man manā bhava mad bhakto*. Śrīla Prabhupāda says, "This is the mystery of creation."

Another important point to be noted in this purport is that the conditioned living entities are parts and parcels of the Supersoul or Mahā-Viṣṇu, and not of Lord Kṛṣṇa. According to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura there are three types of *jīvas* and the conditioned *jīvas* come from Lord Karaṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu or Mahā-Viṣṇu. He also said that *jīvas* come from the *jīva-śakti* of the Lord. In this regard Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, while explaining the phrase *akhila-śakti-dhṛto'mśa-kṛtam* (*Bhāg.10.87.20*), writes in the *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* (39):

Akhila-śakti-dhṛtaḥ sarva-śakti-dharasyeti viśeṣaṇam jīva-śakti viśiṣṭsy-aiva tava jīvo'mśo na tu śuddhasyeti gamayitvā jīvasya tac-chakti-rūpatvenaivāmśatvaṁ ity etad vyañjyanti.

Akhila-śakti-dhṛtaḥ means one who holds all potencies. This is an adjective. The *śrutis* make it clear that the *jīva* is not a part of the pure, unqualified Lord (Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa), but a part of that expansion of the Lord who is qualified by the *jīva-śakti*. In this way they show that the *jīva* is only a part of the Lord's energy (not a part of the Lord).

Also, in the *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* (37), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that the very nature of the *jīva* is his being part of the Supersoul, *paramātm-aikṣeṣatva-svabhāva*. This characteristic of the *jīva* is natural, not acquired due to some conditioning, and he retains this nature even when liberated. *Tathābhūtaścāyaṁ mokṣa-daśāyam apītyarthaḥ. Etādṛṣṭvañcāsyā svataḥ svarūpataḥ eva na tu paricchedādīnā.* Later on, towards the end of Text 37, he writes: *Tad-etat-tasya-paramātmāmśa-rūpatāyā nityatvaṁ śrīgītopaniṣadbhirapi darśitam.* "In this way the eternality of the *jīva*, who is part of the Supersoul, is also shown in *Bhagavad-gītā*." And then he cites the famous *mamaivāmśo jīvaloke* verse (15.7).

In this connection, Śrīla Prabhupāda comments:

Saṅkarṣaṇa is the original source of all living entities because they are all expansion of His marginal potency. Some of them are conditioned by material nature whereas others are under the protection of the spiritual nature. (Cc. *Ādi* 2.36, purport)

Saṅkarṣaṇa, the second expansion, is Vāsudeva's personal expansion for pastimes, and since He is the reservoir of all living entities, He is sometimes called *jīva*. . . . He is the original source of all living entities. All these actions of *śuddha sattva* display the potencies of Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is the ultimate reservoir of all individual living entities who are suffering in the material world. When the cosmic creation is annihilated, the living entities, who are indestructible by nature, rest in the body of Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa. Saṅkarṣaṇa is therefore sometimes called the total *jīvas*. (Cc. *Ādi* 5.41)

These references clearly show that the origin of the *jīva* is not Lord Kṛṣṇa but Saṅkarṣaṇa. And by his saying, "Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is the ultimate reservoir of all individual living entities who are suffering in the material world," Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly indicates Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu and not Lord Kṛṣṇa as the source of the conditioned souls.

As the material nature has come from Mahā-Viṣṇu and is beginningless, it is perfectly reasonable to understand that the *jīvas*, who have also come from Mahā-Viṣṇu, are also beginningless. And considering that this agrees with the verdict of our previous *ācāryas*, it is reasonable to conclude that this is the accurate meaning of *anādi*. It is the teaching of the Lord Himself and therefore the *siddhānta* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

One final point to consider is this: In *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.27, Kṛṣṇa says that the living entities are born into material nature, overcome by desire and hate. While commenting on this verse, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes:

tvan-māyayā jīvāḥ kadārbhya muhyantīyapekṣāyam āhḥ iccheti. sarge jagat-sṛṣṭyārbhakāle sarvva-bhūtāni sarve jīvāḥ sammohayanti, kena? Prācīna-kamodbuddhau yavicchādveṣau.

If someone asks, "Since when are the *jīvas* bewildered by Your *māyā*" the Lord speaks the current verse. At the beginning of the creation all *jīvas* become bewildered. By what? By the desire and hatred which springs from the karma performed in the past.

The past here means the previous cycle of creation. It cannot refer to Vaikuṅṭha because Vaikuṅṭha is free from karma. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa gives a similar explanation in which he makes it explicit that one is influenced by the impression of desire and hatred from the previous birth. Obviously there is no birth in Vaikuṅṭha and he clearly states that karma has no beginning. Therefore, both commentators agree that the *jīva* is suffering in a beginningless cycle of birth and death. In other words, that is how things have been ordered by the very nature of the omnipotent Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* (1.9):

*bhogārtham sṛṣṭirityanye kridārthamiti cāpare
devasyaiṣa svabhāvo'yam āptakāmasya kā sprhā*

Some say that the Lord creates the material world for His enjoyment, and some say He creates for His play. Indeed it is His mere nature. After all, He is fully satisfied, so what desires does He have to fulfill?

The idea is that just as the Lord is causeless so are His activities such as the creation. It is not possible to attribute any ultimate cause for them except that it is His very nature. Any one who has energy will act. People act to attain something, but the Lord is *āptakāma*, one whose desires are fully satisfied. Therefore His activities are just part of His nature.

Ironically, sometimes *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.27) is given as the proof of fall down from Vaikuṅṭha. "O Scion of Bharata, O conquerer of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, bewildered by dualities arisen from desire and hate." The claim is that it was due to envy of the Lord because of the desire to enjoy. Such an interpretation will only satisfy one who does not know the glory of Vaikuṅṭha and *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. The verse is speaking about birth at the beginning of creation. This birth is caused by the dualities of desire and hate from the previous cycle of creation, a process which is itself *anādi*. Therefore, the verse is not describing the beginning of material conditioning.

If Śrīla Prabhupāda used 7.27 to explain fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha, again, that must have been for his preaching, because the *siddhānta* is clear—*nitya-baddhas* could not have been in the spiritual world prior to conditioned life. The conclusion has to be that whenever he explained the conditioning of the *jīva* in another way, he did so for the sake of preaching, because in preaching one may sometimes adjust the *siddhānta*. More details on preaching technique will be given in the second wave.

SECOND WAVE: RECONCILIATION INTRODUCTION

Śrīla Prabhupāda made two types of statements—no living entity falls from Vaikuṅṭha, and we have fallen from the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Because both cannot stand as absolute, it is essential to reconcile his statements. Therefore, this Second Wave of the book deals with reconciliation. Reconciliation is a common necessity in our philosophy and to show this we give some historical examples. The First Chapter explains that preaching is not always the *siddhānta*, and we give an example from the life of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In the Second Chapter we explain the distinction between false logic (*kutarka*) and proper logic. We show that one has to resort to logic to reconcile the contradictory statements in the scripture or in the works of a *mahājana*. Indeed logic supported by scripture is acceptable and practiced by our *ācāryas*.

In the Third Chapter we explain that ultimately all conclusions must be based on *śāstra*. No individual person, no matter how illustrious can come up with a *siddhānta* which contradicts *śāstra*. We show that even an incarnation of God cannot speak against the conclusions of the scripture. In Chapter Four we cite an historical instance of controversy and how it was resolved. In the Fifth Chapter we explain further the need for reconciliation and preaching strategy. If there are contradictory statements in the scripture, one must try to reconcile both and understand the true intent of the speaker. The Sixth Chapter opens the discussion on why Prabhupāda preached that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. In the Seventh Chapter we further discuss why

Prabhupāda preached that *jīvas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha. We also refute the idea of “Prabhupāda *siddhānta*.” Finally we give six possible reasons why Śrīla Prabhupāda preached in favor of fall-down.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER ONE

PREACHING DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN THE SIDDHĀNTA

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the foremost preacher and the original guru. He comes to establish religion (*dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya*), which means both teaching the principles of religion and convincing the people to follow them. To this end the Lord comes and teaches both by precept and by personal example. In His manifest *līlā* He made only two disciples, Arjuna and Uddhava, to whom He spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Uddhava-gītā* respectively. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.26) He instructs us in the essence of preaching technique:

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed
ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi
vidvān yuktaḥ samācāran*

So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, by working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of activities [for the gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness].

The import of this verse is that a preacher should not disturb the minds of the ignorant people, who are attached to fruitive activities. At the same time they should develop faith in him, and he should engage them in such a way that they will gradually progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In other words, a preacher should not bring drastic and abrupt change in people's beliefs if it may threaten their development in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As much as possible, he should dovetail their existing beliefs in such a way that they gradually increase their faith in Kṛṣṇa and spiritual life.

The reason for this strategy is that it is hard for people to give up their old beliefs and habits. Every man is possessed of some particular faith, *śraddhāmayo 'yaṁ puruṣaḥ*. An expert preacher utilizes this *śraddhā* for a person's upliftment. If someone's faith is broken, the activities performed by such a person do not bring good results (Bg. 17.28):

*aśraddhayā hutam dattam
tapas taptam kṛtam ca yat
asad ity ucyate pārtha
na ca tat pretya no iha*

Anything done as sacrifice, charity or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of Prthā, is impermanent. It is called 'asad' and is useless both in this life and the next.

The *varṇāśrama* system is based on the gradual upliftment of humanity by engaging a person according to his nature. Lord Kṛṣṇa recommends (Bg.18.47) that one do his duty even though one may perform it imperfectly. This, He says, is better than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. This means that He advocates a strategy for advancing the conditioned soul in incremental stages rather than taking them immediately to the *siddhānta*.

People are of different natures; therefore, Śrīla Vyāsa wrote eighteen *Purāṇas*, which are divided according to the three modes of nature. According to their dominant mode, people are attracted to different *Purāṇas*, which describe different demigods as Supreme. The point is that although the *Purāṇas* are compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, all of them do not give absolute knowledge. They are mixed—six are for people in *tama-guṇa*, six for those in *raja-guṇa*, and six in *sattva-guṇa*. And even out of those in *sattva guṇa*, only the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is considered the spotless *Purāṇa*, because it gives the complete presentation of the Absolute Truth.

Lord Kṛṣṇa says that only the mode of goodness is conducive to knowledge (Bg.14.17), *sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam*, and Sūta Gosvāmī says that goodness is the gateway to the Absolute Reality (*Bhāg.1.2.29*), *sattvaṁ yad-brahma-darśanam*. This analysis shows that although all eighteen *Purāṇas* are compiled by Vyāsa, they do not give knowledge on the same level. One has to be very discriminating to attain the highest knowledge. Every *Purāṇa* is for a different type of *adhikārī*, yet the sole purpose is to gradually elevate everyone and bring them to the level of following *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *amala purāṇa*. This means he had a preaching strategy.

By this one should not think that Bhagavān Vyāsa has cheated humanity or is in ignorance or telling lies. He first gives people what they already have a taste for, mixed with the true message. Once they are hooked, he reveals the highest knowledge to them. Advertising follows the same principle: attract people through their attachment and then sell them the product. Vidura sums up this formula in his dialogue with Maitreya Muni (*Bhāg. 3.5.12*):

*munir vivakṣur bhagavad-guṇānām
sakhāpi te bhāratam āha kṛṣṇaḥ
yasmin nṛṇām grāmya-sukhānuvādair
matir grhītā nu hareḥ kathāyām*

Your friend the great sage Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa has already described the transcendental qualities of the Lord in his great work the *Mahābhārata*. But the whole idea is to draw the attention of the mass of people to *kṛṣṇa-kathā* (*Bhagavad-gītā*) through their strong affinity for hearing mundane topics.

Commenting on this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

The great author has compiled the *Mahābhārata* in such a way that the less intelligent class of men, who are more interested in mundane topics, may read the *Mahābhārata* with great relish and in the course of such mundane happiness can also take advantage of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the preliminary study of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Śrīla Vyāsadeva had no interest in writing a history of mundane activities other than to give less intelligent persons a chance for transcendental realization through *Bhagavad-gītā*.

This means that not all the statements in the *Mahābhārata* can be taken in the absolute sense. One has to see whether they conform to the tenets expounded in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is the mature fruit of the tree of Vedic knowledge, *niḡama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ*. This is because *Mahābhārata* is for the less intelligent and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is for the most intelligent,

nirmatsarāṇām satām. The need for reconciliation arises, therefore, whenever there is a conflict between *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Mahābhārata* or any other Vedic or corollary literature.

Here we see that because of the principle expressed in the verse (Bg. 3.26) *na bhuddibhedam janayed*, there is a gradation even in the writing of the literary incarnation of God. No preacher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be denied the right to apply this principle. And if the principle is applied in writing of *sāstra*, then what to speak of conversations, public lectures, and letters?

Lord Buddha is another example of someone who applied strategy in preaching. He is an incarnation of Viṣṇu, but he preached to get people to reject the Vedas, yet his ultimate purpose was to bring them to the level of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes (5.15.1, purport):

Lord Buddha, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, adopted a particular means to propagate the philosophy of *bhāgavata-dharma*. He preached almost exclusively among atheists. Atheists do not want any God, and Lord Buddha therefore said that there is no God, but he adopted the means to instruct his followers for their benefit. Therefore, he preached in a duplicitous way, saying that there is no God. Nonetheless, he himself was an incarnation of God.

Lord Buddha's example shows that a preacher has to act according to time, place, and circumstance. When the masses are too attached to mundane activities, it may take centuries before the real intention of the preacher is revealed. And for the sake of preaching, the preacher may have to hide the real *siddhānta*. The example of Lord Buddha is the most extreme. Every preacher has to overcome the challenge of giving the message to people who have little or no interest in it. Thus, like advertising agencies, preachers have to devise techniques to deliver their product to disinterested people.

Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya had to act in the same vein. He wanted to bring the atheistic Buddhists back to the Vedas. Therefore, according to the *Padma Purāṇa* he preached “veiled Buddhism;” he misinterpreted the *Vedānta-sūtra* in such a way that it appealed to the Buddhists. If he had to preach directly about Kṛṣṇa, they would have taken no interest. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says about his preaching (Cc. *Madhya* 25.42):

Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya has given his interpretation and imaginary meaning. It does not actually appeal to the mind of any sane man. He has done this to convince the atheists and bring them under his control.

Śrīla Prabhupāda comments:

Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya's propaganda opposed the atheistic philosophy of Buddha. Lord Buddha's intention was to stop atheists from committing the sin of killing animals. Atheists cannot understand God; therefore Lord Buddha appeared and spread the philosophy of nonviolence to keep the atheists from killing animals. Unless one is free from the sin of animal killing, he cannot understand religion or God. Although Lord Buddha was an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, he did not speak about God, for the people were unable to understand. He simply wanted to stop animal killing. Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya wanted to establish the predominance of one's spiritual identity; therefore he wanted to convert the atheists through an imaginary interpretation of Vedic literatures. These are the secrets of the *ācāryas*. Sometimes they conceal the real purpose of the *Vedas*, and explain the *Vedas* in a different way. Sometimes they enunciate a different theory just to bring the atheists under their control. Thus it is said that Śaṅkara's philosophy is for

pāṣaṇḍas, atheists.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s says, “These are the secrets of the *ācāryas*. Sometimes they conceal the real purpose of the *Vedas*, and explain the *Vedas* in a different way.” This is very important. It indicates that *ācāryas* have their secrets and these secrets are not known to the neophytes. One has to understand the heart of the *ācārya* to know his real intention. This is not an easy task. It requires two things: (1) the sense of discrimination, which comes from purity of the heart, and (2) reconciling the statements of the *ācāryas*. Each statement must confirm the others and the whole thing must rest on the *śāstra*. This example is seen in the writing of Jīva Gosvāmī in the *Tattva-sandarbha*. To ascertain what is the true message of the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, he examines the hearts of all the principle speakers and concludes that they all advocate *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

Here it should be noted again that statements made in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letters cannot override those in his commentaries. His books are mostly commentaries on recognized authoritative works in our line. They are *śāstra*—either *śruti* or *smṛti*. His commentaries are to be regarded as primary evidence. His letters and other statements are secondary evidence. Books are for everyone and letters and conversations are personal. To be accepted as absolute, the philosophy in his letters must follow the *siddhānta* in his books, and not the other way around. If he made statements in his letters that do not follow the *siddhānta*, those must be considered as his strategy for preaching.

A similar problem arises when there is a conflict between *śruti* and *smṛti*. The general principle for resolving such conflict is stated in Kulluka Bhaṭṭa’s commentary on *Manu Smṛti*, *Manvartha-muktāvali* (2.14):

*śruti-smṛtir-virodhes tu śrutir eva garīyasī
avirodhe sadā kāryaṁ smṛtaṁ vaidika vat satā*

When there is a contradiction between *śruti* and *smṛti*, the *śruti* overrides the *smṛti*.
But when there is no contradiction, saintly people should follow the *smṛti* rules just like Vedic principles.

This is because *smṛti* is based on *śruti*, which is eternal. *Śruti* is self-manifest and *smṛti* is written by a sage based on the *śruti*. *Śruti* is self-effulgent like the Lord. It is self-evident, *svataḥ pramāṇa*; but *smṛti* is dependent on the *śruti* for its validity. *Śruti* is like the sun; it does not need some other light to see it, for it illuminates other objects as well as itself. It is the source of all other lights. Whenever there is an opposition between the support and its dependents, the support takes precedence. This is because the dependents cannot exist without the support.

Similarly, the *Vedas* are self-evident and do not need any other *pramāṇa* to verify them. One may argue that when there is a contradiction between the statements of *śruti* and *smṛti*, why not consider both of them as true under different conditions. This means they are optional (*vikalpa*). Such a solution is possible only if both contradictory statements have equal importance. This is in conformity to the rule, *tulya-bala-virodhe vikalpaḥ*, “when statements having equal importance contradict each other, they are taken as optional.” In the case of the *śruti* and *smṛti*, however, the *śruti* is more powerful than the *smṛti*. So there is no question of them being optional.

The relation between Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books and letters is like that of the *śruti* and *smṛti*. If a letter contradicts the *siddhānta* established in his book, then the book overrides the letter; but if there is no contradiction between them, then letters are to be treated like books. Similarly, his books override his conversations and lectures.

For example, suppose a person never personally asked Śrīla Prabhupāda about the bondage of the *jīva*, but by reading his books and the works of the previous *ācāryas*, that person understood

that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. In the last few years Śrīla Prabhupāda's letters and conversations have been published and show numerous statements contrary to what is found in his books. Should that person, whose understanding has been based on Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, change his outlook to conform to those statements in Prabhupāda's letters and conversations? For those who say "Yes," we ask why?

His books are distributed much more than his lectures and letters. Not everyone who has read his books has read his letters. The same is expected in the future. Do we assume that such a person will remain in darkness? In that case, what does it mean when Śrīla Prabhupāda says, "Everything is in my books"? Nowhere do we find that he says, "Everything is in my letters and conversations." He also said that his books will be the law books for the next 10,000 years, which means they, not his letters and conversations, are the basis for understanding his teachings. And from the evidence presented in the First Wave, it is clear—based on his books—that he stood side by side with our other *ācāryas* accepting no fall-down as the *siddhānta*.

Even if his commentaries state that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha, those statements cannot be accepted as the *paramparā siddhānta* unless they can be reconciled with the *sāstra*—as per the example of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. How he reconciled the words of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī will be shown in the upcoming Fourth Chapter. Whenever an *ācārya* teaches something that is not in line with the *siddhānta*, that is always to be taken as his preaching technique.

Here we will briefly mention the example of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, because he is discussed at length in a later chapter. He wrote in an essay that the description of hell in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is not to be taken literally. In *Jaiva Dharma*, however, he accepted everything in the *Bhāgavata* as real. As Sadāpūta Dāsa wrote in BTG (Jan/Feb '94) in the article *Rational Mythology*:

I should point out clearly that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura did not personally accept the modified version of the *Bhāgavata* he presented to the Bengālī intellectuals. He actually accepted the so-called myths of the *Bhāgavata* as true, and he presented them as such in many of his writings.

Here it is seen that the book takes precedence over the essay. Indeed, for preaching purposes the preacher may speak something at variance with the *siddhānta*. By this we do not say that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was lying, cheating or did not know. All devotees understand that this was his genius for preaching purposes and hail it as one of the glories of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. We see that the same applies to Śrīla Prabhupāda for his preaching that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. Therefore, the criticism by some devotees that by our accepting no fall from Vaikuṅṭha as the *siddhānta* we are implying that Prabhupāda lied to or cheated his disciples is unfounded and unjust.

Here is another quote from Sadāpūta Dāsa's BTG article:

We have discussed how Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura found it necessary to present a modified version of the Vaiṣṇava teachings to young Bengālī intellectuals at the high noon of British political and ideological imperialism. But as the sun began to set on the British empire, his son and successor Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

began a vigorous program of directly presenting the Vaiṣṇava conclusion throughout India.

Can one say that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was rejecting Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura?

Another historical instance of preaching in which an *ācārya* has presented a mixed philosophy is that of Śrīdhara Svāmī. Lord Caitanya accepted him as a great authority on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as do most Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. Lord Caitanya said (Cc. *Antya* 7.133, 7.135):

*śrīdhara-svāmī-prasādet bhāgavata jāni
jagadguru śrīdhara-svāmī guru kari māni
śrīdhararera anugata je kare likhana
saba loka mānya kari karaya grahaṇa*

Śrīdhara Svāmī is the spiritual master of the entire world because by his mercy we can understand the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I therefore accept him as a spiritual master. One who comments on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* following in the footsteps of Śrīdhara Svāmī will be honored and accepted by everyone.

The Lord also said that anyone who does not accept Śrīdhara Svāmī is like a prostitute. Yet we see from the writings of Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī that they did not accept everything from Śrīdhara Svāmī as *siddhānta*. The reason is that Śrīdhara Svāmī added some Māyāvāda concepts in his writings just to attract the Māyāvādīs to the philosophy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This tactic is called *badisāmiṣa nyāya*, using bait to attract fish. This is evident from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's statement in *Tattva-sandarbhā* (27):

*Bhāṣya-rūpā tad-vyākhyā tu samprati madhya-deśādu vyāptān advaitvādino
nūnān bhagavan-mahimānam avagāhayitum tad-vādena karburit-lipinām
parama-vaiṣṇavānām śrīdhara-svāmī-caraṇānām śuddha-vaiṣṇava siddhāntānugatā
cet tarhi yathavad eva vilikhyate. Kvacit teṣām eva anyatra-drṣṭa-vyākhyānusāreṇa.*

The *Bhāgavatam* commentary of the great Vaiṣṇava, Śrīdhara Svāmī contains some monistic ideas to attract the minds of impersonalists towards the glories of the Lord. At present these impersonalists are very popular in the middle region. Whenever his commentary is in accordance with the pure Vaiṣṇava principles, we will quote it as it is. That will be like the *bhāṣya* of our *sūtras*. Sometimes we will accept his views found elsewhere.

By Lord Caitanya's verdict about Śrīdhara Svāmī, we should accept everything he wrote. Yet from the above statement, it appears that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is disregarding the words of Lord Caitanya and rejecting Śrīdhara Svāmī. Such is not the case. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī understood that Śrīdhara Svāmī's monistic statements were merely a preaching technique. When one uses bait, the purpose is not to feed the fish, but to catch them. Similarly, these mixed presentations are not for nourishing the opposing party, but to attract them or keep them on the path of *bhakti*.

In *Krama-sandarbhā*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's commentary on the *Bhāgavatam*, as well as in the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*, he has revealed the real intention of Śrīdhara Svāmī. By doing this, he has followed Lord Caitanya in the true sense. If he would have blindly followed Śrīdhara Svāmī, then he would have been faithful neither to Lord Caitanya nor Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda taught that philosophy and fanaticism go ill together. One has to understand the spirit and intent of his *ācārya*, just as Śrīla Prabhupāda understood the spirit and intent of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta better than any of his peers. In this connection the example of

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī should be noted. In *Tattva-sandarbha*, he decided that the method to determine the ultimate message of the *Bhāgavata* was to find out the spirit and intent in the heart of the author or speaker. This he did by careful analysis of each person's words. Thus a blind follower cannot be a true disciple. Blind following, technically called *niyamāgraha*, is one of the obstacles on the path of *bhakti*. Of course, once one knows the *siddhānta* then he blindly follows. That is recommended; however, blind following without knowing the *siddhānta* can only lead to disaster.

The conclusion of this whole analysis is that an expert preacher preaches according to time, place, and circumstance. Sometimes he appears to adjust the *siddhānta* for the sake of his preaching or to keep unqualified disciples enlivened on the path. In this way, preaching does not always mean presenting the *siddhānta*, for as Lord Kṛṣṇa indicates in the verse *na buddhi-bhedam janayed*, the real *siddhānta* is to engage the bound *jīvas* in the process of purification. Preaching is the essence. Preaching widely means attracting the masses to the process even if they do not grasp the nuances of philosophy. As Śrīla Prabhupāda recommends quoting Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Cc. *Adi*. 7.37, purport):

*yena tena prakareṇa manaḥ kṛṣṇe niveśayet
sarve vidhi-niṣedhā syur etayor eva kinkarāḥ*

An *ācārya* should devise a means by which people may somehow or other come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. First they should become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and all the prescribed rules and regulations may later gradually be introduced.

This is the special feature of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava preachers. Of all preachers, the followers of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu are concerned first and foremost to distribute the mercy of devotional service. Out of compassion, therefore, they may be flexible on certain points—such as the *jīva* issue—and more eager to engage people in the purification process. This they gauge as their true achievement in the preaching field. Therefore, it should be considered a special boon from Śrīla Prabhupāda that he spoke of fall from Vaikuṅṭha so as not to divert anyone from willfully taking up the process of *bhakti*.

In this connection, there is no denying the fact that virtually everyone in the West is familiar with the Judeo-Christian concept of the fall from the kingdom of God. A preacher in the field may decide to dovetail that belief with his preaching. On the principle of *na buddhi-bhedam janayed* this is very conceivable. Dovetailing this belief with the concept of fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha gives one a sense of attachment to Kṛṣṇa because a devotee feels he has already lived with Kṛṣṇa. Accepting the fall-*vāda*, a neophyte can easily understand that he himself is the cause of his suffering and thus the onus to get out is on his shoulders. These are some attractive features of the fall-*vāda* from the preaching point of view. Later on, when a devotee matures he can understand the *siddhānta* properly.

If a preacher is very rigid with neophytes, he cannot be successful. This is the experience of every successful preacher. That's why newcomers are given lenient treatment at first. Later on, when they have developed some faith, they are sometimes chastised heavily for their betterment. This does not mean the preacher is deviating, cheating, or is in ignorance. He is serving the will of the Lord, which is to engage the fruitive workers in works of devotional service. Through this purificatory process, gradually all understanding comes.

By careful analysis of the contradictory statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda concerning the bondage of the *jīva*, we conclude—based on the principle of conformity of guru, *śāstra* and *sādhu*—that he spoke of fall from Vaikuṅṭha as a preaching technique. The real *siddhānta* is that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER TWO

LOGIC BASED ON ŚĀSTRA IS ONE OF OUR PRAMĀNAS

To reconcile any real or apparent contradiction in our philosophy and to reveal the *siddhānta*, we have to resort to logic. Sometimes people raise objections against logic, not knowing its importance. The problem arises because they do not distinguish between logic based on *śāstra* and other types of logic, called *kutarka*, bad logic. In fact logic plays a crucial role in understanding the scripture and the statements of our *ācāryas*. Indeed, such use of logic is unavoidable, especially in reconciling contradictions in the scriptures or comments of the *ācāryas*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has shown this by his brilliant analysis of *sambandha jñāna*, *abidheya* and *prayojana* in the *Sandarbhās*.

Ironically, persons who have voiced disdain for our use of logic have used it extensively themselves in attempting to establish that *nitya-muktas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha. It is evident, however, that they do not have a good grasp of logic, because their seemingly logical arguments find no support in the *śāstra*.

Just to show that logic is unavoidable, I cite an example from one of the many texts that came on COM about the *jīva* issue. Under the sub-heading *Insubstantial Logic (tarko apratistha)* this author wrote:

I'm not putting my hand on my heart for blind faith here. We all want to understand Srīla Prabhupada's instructions on a deeper level, both for our individual spiritual progress and for progress in our preaching. But, *tarko apratistha*—logical argument is not the basis of that understanding. One must follow the *mahājana* Srīla Prabhupada. Thus the truth hidden in his heart will become revealed to us by the grace of guru and Kṛṣṇa. *Yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deva tatha gurau*.

After a statement like this, one might expect that this author would not use any logic in his presentation, which would be very interesting to see. But sure enough he uses logic many times in the course of his ensuing argument. Actually, even if one only quotes “the *mahājana*” one arranges his quotes in some semblance of logical order. So from this text it is clear that the author does not understand the meaning of *tarko apratistha*, which we shall explain a little further along. In the very next paragraph following the one above, the author writes:

I've failed to devise a logical framework into which every one of Śrīla Prabhupada's statements on the origin of the *jīva* fits, seamlessly resolving all apparent contradictions. I admire the devotees who continue to put forward some such frameworks. They seek the truth. But the logic of "whenever Srīla Prabhupada said the *jīva* originates in Vaikuntha, it was part of strategy to get Western people to have faith in his overall message" is flawed. This claim is *tarka* of the most insubstantial kind. Here's some reasons why.

If, as he says, all we have to do is “follow the *mahājana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda,” why even attempt to devise a logical framework in the first place? Just accept all Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements lock,

stock, contradictions and all. Why not? After all , *yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau. . . .*

Here are some other points to be gleaned from his second paragraph: (1) This author expresses admiration for those who seek the truth in this matter, and further declares that by following Śrīla Prabhupāda “the truth hidden in his heart will become revealed to us by the grace of guru and Kṛṣṇa.” Yet he also intimates that because he has failed to logically devise a framework to resolve the *jīva* issue, no one else has solved it and maybe no one else ever will. But what if the truth hidden in Prabhupāda’s heart has been revealed to someone other than him? (2) He makes a strawman out of the view that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements about fall from Vaikuṅṭha were part of his preaching strategy. Then he proceeds to shred that view. We can say this because at the time he in fact did not know our arguments and evidence on this point. This, however, must be no bother to one who is opposed to logic in the first place. (3) First he decries the use of logic and denounces—as insubstantial logic—the view that Śrīla Prabhupāda could not make adjustments in the *siddhānta* for the sake of preaching. Then he proceeds to give four “logical” reasons why he holds this belief.

We will not cite his reasons, because we think our point is quite clear: logic is unavoidable. He says our claiming that Śrīla Prabhupāda used a preaching strategy on the *jīva*-whence issue is based on “flawed” logic and there is no evidence that Prabhupāda had such an intention. This is our response. The mere fact that Prabhupāda gave contradictory statements on this issue is a clear indication that he had a strategy, because both cannot stand. One type of statement has to be primary and the other taken as secondary. Our task is to determine which is which. This we have done in the first ten chapters of this book. It is now clear which version has to be considered as strategy.

As for his assertion that Prabhupāda gave no hint of having a strategy, not even to “one or two intimate disciples,” we present the relevant portion of a conversation between Śrīla Prabhupāda and three disciples (August 17, 1971):

Revatinandana: Sometimes people ask...

Prabhupāda: These questions are not to be discussed in public. These are very higher understanding. For public should be, “This is matter, this is spirit.” That’s all.

The topic of this conversation is the *jīva* and many different points were brought out. We refer interested readers to this conversation and suggest it be read carefully. Prabhupāda said that this “higher understanding” is not for the public. The clear meaning of the above quote is that Prabhupāda had a strategy for presenting some points of the philosophy.

Now a question may be raised: Śrīla Prabhupāda’s conversations, lectures, and letters are the primary places where he gave the opinion that once we were in the *nitya-līlā* of Kṛṣṇa. When he discussed the *jīva* issue in these forums, did he include his disciples as part of that public? We think the answer is self-evident, because ample instances appear in his books where he unequivocally states that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, which we have shown to be in line with the true *paramparā siddhānta*.

We return now to the main discussion, namely the validity of using logic in trying to understand what is the *siddhānta* when there is a contradiction. The verse the fall-*vādīs* commonly cite to decry our use of logic is from the *Mahābhārata*:

*tarko’pratiṣṭhaḥ śrutayo vibhinnā
nasav ṛṣir yasya matir na bhinnam
dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhāyam
mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthaḥ*

Dry arguments are inclusive. A philosopher whose opinion does not differ from others is not considered a great thinker. Simply by studying the *Vedas*, which are variegated, one cannot come to the right understanding of religious principles. The truth of religious principles is hidden in the heart of the self-realized souls. Consequently, as the *śāstras* confirm, one should follow in the footsteps of the *mahājanas*.

While enthusiastic to accuse us of dry logic, the spokesman for the fall-*vādīs* never defined the difference between dry logic and real logic. Nor does he pay heed to the statement “one should follow in the footsteps of the *mahājanas*,” which is in the plural, for he interprets it to mean only Śrīla Prabhupāda. Of course, when it suits him to quote another *mahājana*, like Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura or Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, he expands it to the plural, then immediately collapses it again.

To dispel the false arguments lodged against using logic, we will now discuss the role of logic in reconciling the philosophical controversies that sometimes come up. As far as following the path advocated by the *mahājanas*, we have already followed in their footsteps in the preceding chapters of this book. This we have done by citing numerous references supporting the conclusion of no fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha, and explaining the *anādi* nature of the *jīva*'s bondage. In Chapter Four we will give the example of how Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura dealt with the *parakīyā/svakīyā* controversy.

In the *Tattva-sandarbha* Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, while establishing the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava epistemology, accepted three *pramāṇas*, or types of evidence—*śabda*, *anumāna*, and *pratyakṣa*. All evidence from *śabda* clearly indicates that the *jīva* does not fall. *Pratyakṣa*, direct perception, is obviously ineffective for deciding transcendental matters, but *anumāna*, inferential reasoning or logic, must be used in analyzing the scripture. All logic that agrees with and confirms the *śāstra* is acceptable. Such logic is called real logic. It is not counted as dry logic. All our *ācāryas* used such logic.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī lists logic as one of the symptoms of an *uttama adhikāri* (BRS 1.2.17):

*śāstra yuktau ca nipuṇaḥ
sarvvathā dṛḍha niścayaḥ
praudha-śraddho'adhikāri
yaḥ sa bhaktāvuttamo mataḥ*

A person who is expert in logic, argument, and the revealed scriptures, who has strong determination, and firm faith in Kṛṣṇa, is most eligible to achieve *bhakti*.

Here *yukti* means logic and argument. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the logic referred to here is that which follows scripture. To clarify, he quotes a verse from the Vaiṣṇava *tantra*.

*pūrvāparānurodhena
ko 'nvartho 'bhimato bhavet
ity ādyam ūhanam tarkaḥ
sūśka tarkam tu varjayet*

Proper logic is that which is used to reach the proper conclusion on the strength of understanding the former and latter statements of *śāstra*. Dry logic should be rejected.

This verse clearly states the difference between proper and dry logic. Proper logic is that which

helps to reconcile the various parts of a book and thus aids in understanding the real conclusion of scripture. Dry logic is not supported by *śāstra*, rather it contradicts the scripture and has to be rejected. No one can be a Vaiṣṇava in good standing without use of proper logic. In the laws of Manu it is explained that without the aid of logic nobody can understand the true meaning of religion (*Manu Smṛti* 12.106):

*ārṣaṁ dharmopadeśaṁ ca
veda-śāstrā'viordhinā
yas tarkeṇānusandhatte
sa dharmam veda netaraḥ*

Only a person who uses logic which is not against the *Vedas* and the works and religious teachings of the great sages can understand the real meaning of religion. Others cannot.

The important point to be noted here is that without logic, a person cannot understand the real purpose of religion, but this logic should not be contrary to the *Vedas*, *veda-śāstrāvirodhinā*. Those who do not resort to the logic supported by *śāstra* can never understand religion, *netaraḥ*. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa personally recommended logic as one of the means of gaining knowledge (*Bhāg.*11.28.9):

*pratyakṣeṇānumānena
nigamenātma-saṁvidā
ādy-antavad asaj jñātvā
niḥsaṅgo vicared iha*

By direct perception, logical deduction, scriptural testimony and personal realization, one should know that this world has a beginning and an end and so is not the ultimate reality. Thus one should live in this world without attachment.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu was Himself a logician before He manifested His devotional mood. He even wrote a book on neo-logic. He threw it into the Gaṅgā because His friend, Raghunātha Śiromaṇī, felt that the Lord's book would become so popular people would have no regard for his book called *Dīdhiti*. In neo-logic, *Dīdhiti* is considered supreme. So one can imagine the supremacy of the Lord's own book. He instructed Sanātana Gosvāmī that expertise in logic is one of the characteristics of a topmost devotee (*Cc. Madhya.* 22.65):

*śāstra-yuktye sunipuṇa, dṛḍha-śraddhā yānra
'uttama-adhikāri' sei tārāye saṁsāra*

One who is expert in logic, argument, and the revealed scriptures and who has firm faith in Kṛṣṇa is classified as a topmost devotee. He can deliver the whole world.

Thus logic and argument are not useless, but are very important. Logic can help us to understand the conclusion of the scriptures and to resolve apparent contradictions, for it is not uncommon to see contradictory statements in the scriptures. That is why Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāja says controversy should not be avoided for it strengthens the mind. Logic is the primary tool for resolving controversy, but it must be based on the *śāstra*. That is to say, it must fulfill the *siddhānta*.

For example, the *Vedas* say *akṣayyam ha vai cāturmāsya yājīṇaḥ sukṛtaṁ bhavati*, “One who observes the vow of Cāturmāsya attains imperishable merit.” Yet in another place we find, *tat yatheha karma-jito lokaḥ kṣiyate, evam evāmutra puṇyajito loko kṣiyate* (*Chāndogya* 8.1.6), “Just as the results of material activities are temporary, so are the results attained in heaven by the

performance of good deeds.” Naturally, both statements cannot be absolute. A secondary meaning must be applied to one of the statements in order to reconcile the contradiction.

By understanding the speaker’s intention, deliberating on the results of *sakāma karma*, and studying the many statements indicating the temporary nature of heavenly existence, one can understand that the first statement is not absolute. It is meant to inspire lazy people to observe Cāturmāsya. If they make this sacrifice, they will gradually reach the level of pure knowledge. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms this principle (Bg. 4.33) when He says “All sacrifices of work culminate in transcendental knowledge.”

People in general are attached to the fruits of their activities, and if one preaches that they should engage in the activities of pure devotion, they may lose faith even in *karma-yoga*. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa advises (Bg. 3.26) *na buddhi-bhedam janayed ajñānām karma-saṅginām*, that it is best not to disrupt the minds of the ignorant, but get them to work in the spirit of devotional service.

So it is clear that mere citing of references will not establish the conclusive truth. One has to analyze the scriptures thoroughly to understand the true intent behind the numerous recommendations and the various apparent contradictions. One must successfully remove all apparent contradictions by properly understanding the strength of different scriptural statements. One should reconcile them in clear, unambiguous conclusions that fulfill the ultimate spirit and intent of the scripture. Then the results may be said to be authoritative. To do this one must apply logic.

All scriptural statements do not carry equal weight or authority. Some override others. For example, in the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī shows that the statement *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* (*Bhāg.*1.3.28), “But Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead,” is the emperor statement, or *mahā-vākya*, for the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It overrules all statements which describe Kṛṣṇa as an incarnation of someone else. This conclusion is not reached whimsically, but only after the most rigorous analysis involving logic, relevant grammatical rules, and pertinent scriptural references.

In the four chapters of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, the first is called *Samanvyādhyāya*, or the chapter on reconciliation. This hints at the extent of apparent contradictions in the *Upaniṣads*. These are all reconciled through use of logic. Throughout the *Sandarbhas*, Jīva Gosvāmī makes extensive use of logic, and his conclusions in every case do not contradict the intent of the scripture. Hence, logic that’s faithful to the *siddhānta* has an important role, and thus Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has rightly accepted it as one of our *pramāṇas*.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER THREE

ALL KNOWLEDGE MUST REST ON ŚĀSTRA

This is a brief chapter in our discussion as we build towards the reconciliation of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s secondary statement about the *jīva*’s bondage. The way to verify a philosophical conclusion is by seeing its conformity to guru, *śāstra*, and *sādhu*; and as shown in the previous chapter logic also has a role in this. Without *śāstra* we cannot even know the proper definition of the other two. Thus of the three, *śāstra* is supreme.

Śāstra is so powerful that it even rules over God. Although Lord Buddha is an incarnation of Viṣṇu, his teachings are rejected because they are not supported by the *śāstra*. One of the sixty-four qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa is that He is *śāstra cakṣuḥ* (*BRS* 2.1.25). Although He is

supremely independent and has no need to follow anything, He acts according to the injunctions of the scripture. He never speaks or acts against the conclusion of the scriptures. If it appears that God does not follow the *śāstra*, one has the right to raise doubts even against Him. After hearing about the Lord's dealings with the *gopīs*, Parīkṣit Mahārāja raised such a doubt (*Bhāg.* 10.33.27-28):

*sa katham dharmā-setūnām
vaktā kartābhirakṣitā
pratīpam ācarad brahman
para-dārābhimarśanam*

*āpta-kāmo yadu-patiḥ
kṛtavān vai jugupsitam
kim-abhiprāya etan naḥ
śaṁśayaṁ chindhi su-vrata*

Indeed, He is the original speaker, follower and guardian of moral laws. How, then, could He have violated them by touching other men's wives? O faithful upholder of vows, please destroy our doubt by explaining to us what purpose the self-satisfied Lord of the Yadus had in mind when He behaved so contemptibly.

To remove this doubt Śukadeva Gosvāmī explained (*Bhāg.* 10.33.29):

*dharmā-vyatikramo dṛṣṭa
īśvarāṇām ca sāhasam
tejīyasām na doṣāya
vahneḥ sarva-bhujo yathā*

The status of a powerful controller is not harmed by any apparently audacious transgression of morality we may see in them, for they are just like fire, which devours everything fed into it and remains unpolluted.

If one can question the Supreme Personality on the basis of *śāstra*, then what to speak of a human's obligation to abide by the *śāstra*.

Of course, whatever the Lord does is for the welfare of others and whatever He says is for the good of others. Yet not all of His words and deeds are meant to be adopted by everyone. While *śāstra* is the last word, we must not forget that it is understood through the medium of guru and *sādhu*. Thus the process is not as simple as it appears, for without taking instruction in a bona fide *paramparā*, one will be lost in the jungle of scripture. Therefore the *śāstra* says *adau guru pādāśraya*. The first step is to accept the shelter of a guru. So one needs guru and *sādhu* to understand *śāstra* properly. And both must come in *paramparā*. Even so, the utterances of guru and *sādhu* must be backed up or reconciled with the *śāstra*. If they are not reconcilable, then a secondary explanation for their statements must be sought, or otherwise those statements cannot be accepted as *siddhānta*.

Even if one starts a new branch of the *sampradāya*, the justification for the new understanding must be firmly rooted in the *śāstra*. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa had to write his commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*, *Śrī Govinda-bhāṣya*, just because of this fact. In Vṛndāvana the various Vaiṣṇavas would not accept the conclusions of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas because they had not based their *siddhānta* on a commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. Of course the reason for this is that Lord Caitanya's followers accept the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the natural commentary on the *sūtras*. Still, Baladeva had to write *Govinda-bhāṣya* to establish the authenticity of the

acintya-bhedābheda tattva. The conclusion is that we cannot allow spontaneous new ideas to appear in our *siddhānta* on the plea of it being the guru's utterance—and therefore absolute—without seeking solid *śāstric* support for such conclusions. Śrīla Prabhupāda stood by this understanding when he wrote, “The process of speaking in spiritual circles is to say something upheld by the scriptures. One should at once quote from scriptural authority to back up what he is saying.” (Bg. 17.15, purport). But this is no scriptural authority for fall-*vādīs*.

Interestingly some argue that, “Once we accept a guru and become a disciple, then for us, guru has more weight of evidence than *śāstra*. *Śāstra* has more weight when choosing a guru and guru has more weight thereafter.” Of course, the utterances of the guru are highly significant to the disciple, but “more weight” does not mean the guru can go against *śāstra*. Such a conclusion finds no support either in the *śāstra* or in the utterances of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He says that the procedure when speaking in spiritual circles is to back up one's statements with scriptural reference. Prabhupāda rigidly applied that principle to himself in all his writings. He never said that the guru's words surpass the *śāstra*. Hence it is highly inconsistent to accept something from him as the *siddhānta* of our line if it has no support from the *śāstra*. This would be fanaticism.

Prabhupāda was not in favor of that. It's true that quite often throughout history, people lacking good philosophical education misconstrue fanaticism as faith, but such emotionality blinds the intelligence. This is not recommended. In spiritual life the clearer one's intelligence the better. In this connection, Śrīla Prabhupāda has advised in the *Nectar of Instruction* that our enthusiasm must be tempered by our intelligence.

Still, even if we go along with the argument that the guru's word is final no matter what the *śāstra* says, then we say the guru also has his guru, who had a guru. In this way, going back up the chain of succession ultimately one will reach Kṛṣṇa, the original guru, from whom the *śāstra* comes and who Himself sticks to *śāstra*. So one is back where he started: with the *śāstra* as the ultimate *pramāṇa*. Therefore, one has to follow Kṛṣṇa, which means following His words, which are nothing but *śāstra*.

So ultimately we have to depend on *śāstra*. True, the fall-*vādīs* have worked hard to interpret sections of the *Bhāgavatam* to prove that fall-down from the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord is in the *śāstra*, but no previous *ācārya* confirms their analysis. Indeed, our *ācāryas* contradict the fall-*vāda* and so does the Vedic literature. Therefore, we see no option but to accept the fall-down statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda as his preaching strategy.

The *śāstra* says that everyone in the spiritual world is infallible and everyone in this world is fallible. It defies logic that the liberated souls, being infallible, could fall from the spiritual world. Typically the response to this is to raise some argument about free will. Unfortunately, misconceptions about free will abound; however, a correct understanding of free will be presented in later parts of this book.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER FOUR

THE SVAKĪYA / PARAKĪYA CONTROVERSY

Controversy is not new in our line. During the time of the six Gosvāmīs it was very difficult for people to understand *parakīya rasa*, (paramour relationship with Kṛṣṇa). Many Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, even though contemporaries of the Gosvāmīs, were not comfortable with the idea that it was higher than *svakīya* (marriage with Kṛṣṇa). Thus there was reluctance to accept the superiority of *parakīya* as the ultimate *siddhānta*. Some of these objectors were the direct

disciples of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.

The Gauḍīya's agreed that Kṛṣṇa's relationship with Śrīmatī Rādhārānī demonstrated the epitome of devotion, and on this basis some argued that *parakīya rasa* was the highest. The popular understanding, however, was that Kṛṣṇa was actually married to Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, and this seemed to prove that *svakīya* was superior. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, knowing his audience, thus wrote a mixed commentary on *Ujjvala Nīlamanī*. Had he insisted on the *parakīya siddhānta*, that would have been a great disservice to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and ultimately to Lord Caitanya. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism was just in the budding state and it was not yet recognized as a full-fledged *sampradāya*. There was a chance that the other Vaiṣṇavas and scholars would reject the Gauḍīyas for advocating ideas the larger community of Vaiṣṇavas did not accept.

But Lord Caitanya came to give something no one else had given, *anarpita-carīm cirāt*. This is definitely the principle of *parakīya* relation, because *svakīya* was accepted even before He appeared. It was up to the Gosvāmīs to make His principle of *parakīya* acceptable. Therefore, to present the *siddhānta* and yet keep his contemporaries pacified, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī wrote a mixed commentary. He hints at this in the following enigmatic verse (*Locana Rocinī Tikā* on *Ujjvala Nīlamanī*. 1.18):

*svecchayā likhitam kiñcit kiñcid atra parecchayā
yat purvāpara sambandham tat pūrvam aparam param*

Some things I have written here by my own will, and some due to the will of others. The part which is coherent is by my will, and the rest is due to others.

The key point he makes in this verse is *yat-purvāpara-sambandham*, “that which is coherent.” In other words, the statements in his commentary which are reconciled by previous and later statements are written by his own will. Proper reconciliation is essential if one is to understand the actual intention of an author or preacher. This, of course, requires scriptural vision and necessitates the hard work of discriminating.

We must guard against taking the easier route, which is simply to accept one side and reject the other based on a superficial understanding of the evidence. That is not advised by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. His example throughout the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās* is that of rigorous logical analysis always concluding with reference to the *śāstra*. As a result, the *Sandarbhās* are hailed as his greatest work and the greatest philosophical work in our line. In almost five centuries no one has made a respectable attempt to refute his conclusions and it is not imaginable that anyone will do so in the future.

In some places it is not an easy task to determine what is Jīva Gosvāmī's true verdict on *svakīya/parakīya*, because even when he gives the wrong conclusion his arguments are backed with strong logic and *śāstric* evidence. He did this to hide the truth from those of his disciples who could not accept the *parakīya rasa* explanation. Later on Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura came and waged war against all statements claiming the superiority of *svakīya*. He says that the verse *svecchayā likhitam kiñcit* (cited previously) dispelled his doubts:

*tebhyah śrī jīva-gosvāmī-caraṇebhyo namo namaḥ
sindhūkoṭi-gabhirāṇām matarṇ yeṣāṁ kṛpāmṛtam
ekā tadīya-tikāyām kārikā samśayaughabhit
atraiva-paramotkarṣate'ty atra sphuṭamīritam
(Ānanda-candrikā tikā 1.1)*

I pay my obeisances at the lotus feet of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī again and again. His

intelligence is deep like millions of oceans and his conclusion is the nectar of his mercy. One verse written in the commentary to the verse *atraiva paramotkarṣa* (UNM 1.18), which clearly states his opinion, destroyed the waves of my doubts.

After this he quotes the *svecchayā likhitam kiñcit* verse. From this we understand that even Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura was in a dilemma about Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's definitive opinion on *svakīya/parakīya* until he came across the *svecchayā* verse. This is because of the rigorous logic and *śāstric* evidence which Jīva Gosvāmī used in hiding the true *siddhānta*.

From Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on *Ujjvala Nilamanī*, it appears that he had no regard for Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, because he argued with strong logic and scriptural analysis against those statements which claim that *svakīya* is superior to *parakīya*. Surely it would not be easy to refute Jīva Gosvāmī even if he was wrong. Therefore, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura had to write powerfully, but this does not mean that he was against Jīva Gosvāmī or that he rejected him.

Actually, Viśvanātha removed the veil shrouding the real intention of Jīva Gosvāmī and ultimately exalted him for his genius in protecting the *siddhānta* while not alienating his contemporaries. In this way, he established the glory of our *paramparā* message and the glory of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Nevertheless, Śrīla Viśvanātha had to endure a hail of criticism claiming he was deviant and whimsical. Opponents even attempted to take his life. Had he not stood up to all this, however, Lord Caitanya's whole mission would have been deviated, for the *svakīya* version would have prevailed as the Gauḍīya *siddhānta*.

The controversy is well documented. Haridāsa Gosvāmī was the chief *pujāri* of Govindajī, a contemporary of the six Gosvāmīs, and an associate of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. His disciple, Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, wrote a book called *Śrī-Sādhana Dīpikā* in which he confirms that the *svakīya siddhānta* is not Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's personal opinion (9.46):

śrīmad-rūpādīnām aprakāte parakīyātvaṁ svakīyātvaṁ ca mataṁ svagranthe likhitam tena. Tatra svakīyātvaṁ śrīmad-raghunātha-dāsa-prabhṛtayaḥ śrī-caitanya-pārsadāḥ śrī-rūpadi-saṅgino'naṅgikṛtavantaḥ. Śrī jīvapādasya tat tu svecchalikhanam na bhavati, kintu parecchālikhanam. Tat paṇḍītya-balāt likhan-paripāṭi-darśanena paṇḍita-jaṅgastat svīkurvanti. Ye ca labdha-śrīmahāprabhu-kṛpā labdha-śrī rūpādīkṛpāste tu sarvathā nāṅgīkurvanti. Etan mat-pravarttanam tu kālakṛtam eva. "Tat tu sarvaṁ kāla kṛtam manye" ityādi, "śreyāmsi bahu-vighnāni 'ityādica."

After the disappearance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and others, Jīva Gosvāmī wrote regarding the *svakīya* and *parakīya siddhānta* in his books. Of these two, *svakīya* was not accepted as superior by persons like Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who were associates of Lord Caitanya and who associated with persons like Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī did not write this out of his own will, but because of others. Because of the erudite style of his writing, scholars accept the *svakīya* principle. But those who have the mercy of Lord Caitanya and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī never accept it. Propagation of such a principle was done under the influence of time and circumstances. As it is said, "I consider it all as the influence of time", and "There are many obstacles to good work."

Therefore, one should not think that all the logic and scriptural analysis employed in this and the other chapters of this book is for rejecting Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements about the *jīvas* falling from Vaikuṅṭha. Rather, those who accept his statements that the *jīva* falls and offer no

satisfactory explanation for statements to the contrary, are the ones who promote confusion and bring potential harm to the integrity of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

In concluding, we want to point out two things to be gleaned from this chapter. First, the work of reconciling the words of Śrīla Prabhupāda is a very grave concern, and it cannot be done strictly on the basis of his words. It has to be done by careful analysis of his words and those of the previous *ācāryas*. Second, the onus is squarely on those favoring the fall position to show that their position conforms with the statements of guru, *sādhu*, and *śāstra*.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER FIVE

ON RECONCILIATION AND PREACHING STRATEGY

In the chapter called *Preaching Does Not Always Mean The Siddhānta*, we have made several important points about preaching strategy and about the need for reconciliation. In this chapter we offer some additional points that will help our reader further appreciate the need for such practice.

About reconciling contradictory statements, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives the following advice (*Laghu-bhāg*. 1.232):

*virodho vākyayor yatra nāprāmānyam tad īsyate
yathāviruddhatā ca syāt tathārthaḥ kalpyate tayoh*

When two scriptural statements contradict each other, one is not taken as inauthentic. One should give the meaning in such a way that the contradiction is removed.

To accept only one side is called half-hen logic. It is not unusual to see contradictory statements in the *śāstra*. And there are standard methods to resolve them.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave guidelines for resolving philosophical controversy in his purport to the verse *siddhānta baliya citte na kara ālāsa iha ha-ite kṛṣṇe lage sudṛḍha mānasa*, “A sincere student should not neglect the discussion of such conclusions, considering them controversial, for such discussions strengthen the mind. Thus one’s mind becomes attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” In his comment he indicates that the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās* of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī should be consulted for resolving philosophical controversy:

Similarly, other false devotees think that studying books of the previous *ācāryas* is inadvisable, like studying dry empirical philosophies. But Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, following the previous *ācāryas*, has inculcated the conclusions of the scriptures in the six theses called the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*. False devotees who have very little knowledge of such conclusions fail to achieve pure devotion for want of zeal in accepting the favorable directions for devotional service given by self-realized devotees.

The last sentence is very important because it talks about “false devotees” who have little knowledge of *śāstra* for lack of zeal, but it is not unusual that such persons exhibit great zeal while professing to have a firm grasp of the spiritual master’s teachings. In institutions throughout

history, it is not uncommon for such persons to create havoc by claiming greater faith in the words of the spiritual master or leader and to have a monopoly on the true meaning of his words. Typically their method is to loudly assert undying faith in the leader. By so doing, anyone who dares to disagree with them is backed into a corner and comes under the shadow of doubt. This usually stems from a presumption that they have a monopoly on the leader's true intention.

In effect they say, "You may say whatever you want, but we know what our leader—in this case, Śrīla Prabhupāda—means." This is no fair means to resolve a controversy in a Kṛṣṇa conscious way. The only acceptable way is the system of guru, *śāstra*, and *sādhu*.

In *Ādi-līlā*, (6, 14-15 purport), Prabhupāda quotes Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa about resolving contradictions:

The system for adjusting two contradictory scriptures is to refer to the *Vedas*, for references from the *Vedas* are accepted as final judgments. When we refer to a particular scripture, it must be authorized, and for this authority it must strictly follow the Vedic injunctions. If someone presents an alternative doctrine he himself has manufactured, that doctrine will prove itself useless, for any doctrine that tries to prove that Vedic evidence is meaningless immediately proves itself meaningless.

The point is that in reconciling we have to be careful to stay within the boundaries of the *paramparā siddhānta* based on the *śāstra*. A reconciliation not supported by the *siddhānta* can cause us untold internal problems for generations into the future, because there will be other scholars and thinkers after us who will form their own judgment based on how we dealt with Prabhupāda's teachings in relation to the *paramparā*. It can compromise the reputation of Śrīla Prabhupāda and ISKCON in untold ways, not the least of which is by making us *apa-sampradāya*. The conclusions of a bonafide *sampradāya* are based on the *Vedānta-sūtra*, *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, not on any individual person. *Apa-sampradāyas* give importance to their founder while compromising the *siddhānta* given in the scriptures. The Christians made a mistake and for political reasons ruled transmigration of the soul out of their doctrine. Sixteen hundred years later, because of this error, the Christian Church cannot explain karma, which has greatly compromised the Church's credibility.

In a similar vein, if we take the wrong thing from Śrīla Prabhupāda as his primary teaching, we could create havoc in the philosophy the extent of which we cannot envision at present. Such a predicament would be a great embarrassment, especially if perpetrated by his direct disciples.

One response to this has been an attitude of "We don't care what others may say or think, either now or in the future. We are following Śrīla Prabhupāda and that's all that matters to us." Apart from this being a terribly cavalier posture, one has to really examine himself to see if this attitude is in fact favorable service to Śrīla Prabhupāda. He did not deviate from *paramparā*, and he certainly cared a great deal for the philosophical integrity of ISKCON. So to follow him means to care for these things as well.

To follow, one has to know the real intention of Prabhupāda's statements. For that we have to consult the scripture and previous *ācāryas*. To this some devotees respond, "Whether Prabhupāda is right or wrong, we are right if we are with him." This unflinchingly loyal sounding statement is in fact a dangerous sentiment. Mature devotees will know better than to be swayed by it. The major flaw in it is the speaker's assumption that Prabhupāda could be wrong. And even if accepted that it is possible, then how could the follower be right? Where is it established that two wrongs make a right?

Our proposal is that Prabhupāda is not wrong. We do not even want to assume that he could be wrong. We do not even want to think it for a moment. But when there are contradictory

statements, we consider it our grave duty to try to resolve them by reference to the previous *ācāryas* and by careful attention to the scriptural statements. For such reconciliation, we see no alternative to this system of guru, *sāstra*, and *sādhu*, which is recommended throughout Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. The method of speculation—which is condemned throughout Prabhupāda’s books—is hardly an acceptable alternative. Even if another method exists, fanatical zeal is definitely not the solution.

In regard to strategy and reconciliation, let us consider an example from the preaching of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, which was only briefly touched on in an earlier chapter. All *ācāryas* before him accepted the literal meaning of *anādi* in *anādi-baddha* or *anādi karma*—bondage without any beginning—and did not elaborate much. But Bhaktivinoda gave a novel explanation. He said that the *jīvas* fall from the *taṭastha* region where they made the choice to serve *māyā* instead of Kṛṣṇa. This is novel because there is no *taṭastha* region as such. *Taṭastha* is what the *jīva* is constitutionally and nothing else. *Jīvas* are *taṭastha* and they are conditioned *anādi*. Even while in the conditioned state, they are still *taṭastha*. Hence, in essence, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda’s explanation is really no different from that given by the *ācāryas* preceding him, that the *jīva*’s were conditioned without beginning. Yet it satisfies the mind that would not accept *anādi-baddha* at face value.

A reasonable explanation for Bhaktivinoda resorting to this version is that up to the time of Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the educational system in India had been traditional. In the time of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura things changed considerably. In 1834 Lord Macaulay came to India and took charge of the educational system. By 1838 (the year of Bhaktivinoda’s appearance) he had instituted English medium education throughout India and Indians learned to favor English over Sanskrit. Not only did they favor the language, but the educated class came to favor everything British. And it did not end with the language. English medium education affected the mind-set of the Indian. In a letter to his father (date unavailable), Macaulay reported the effect of the British education on the Indians:

No Hindu who has received English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion. Some continue to profess it as a matter of policy, but others profess themselves pure atheist and some embrace Christianity. We desire to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, opinion, in morals and intellect.

By the time Bhaktivinoda began actively preaching, Macaulay’s Anglicization of the Hindu was entrenched. Indeed, Bhaktivinoda himself was educated in it, and, by his own admission, was for years influenced by the speculative trend in Western thought. One result was it became difficult for people educated in the English medium to grasp the meaning of Sanskrit philosophical terms such as *anādi*. Therefore for his preaching Bhaktivinoda, even in his Bengālī writing, had to address the shift in taste, opinion, morals, and intellect in the outlook of his countrymen. Thus he attempted to explain *anādi* to an audience that had essentially lost its moorings in pristine Vedic thought and was ill-equipped to grasp the essentials of their own tradition unless presented in the guise of the rational, scientific method adopted from the British. His “fall from the *taṭastha* region” explanation was one result. He tried to give a rational explanation to something that is beyond logic. It is inconceivable, because the *jīvas* do not fall from anywhere; indeed they are *anādi-patita*, fallen without beginning. This is discussed in detail in the Third Wave, Chapter Six (*What Does It Mean We Are ‘Fallen’ Souls?*).

The concept of fall from the *taṭastha* region was not the only innovation in the Ṭhākura’s preaching. According to the BTG (Jan/Feb ’94) article, *Rational Mythology*, by Sadāpūta Dāsa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda cut other corners in order to preach to his audience. In this article, Sadāpūta Dāsa confirms that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was confronted with a hostile intellectual climate in his

efforts to present spiritual knowledge to the young educated Bengālīs of his day:

After drinking in from their British teachers the ideas of William Jones and other Western orientalisists, these young people were not at all inclined to give credence to old myths. How then could the teachings of Kṛṣṇa on love of God be presented? Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura judiciously chose to give a partial picture of the truth that would introduce important spiritual ideas without invoking rejection due to deep-seated prejudices. . . .

This is the typical sort of challenge preachers have to face and respond to according to time and place. A preacher has to tailor his preaching according to the audience so that nothing vital is lost in the transmission; but even more important in the beginning is that people become attracted to the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This purifies their hearts and gives them the opportunity to progress to higher understanding. Hence preaching is not always a simple matter of presenting the *siddhānta*. Experienced preachers in the field know this fact. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura knew well the severe prejudice ingrained by the British. In the name of the rational, scientific method, they rejected out of hand the Vedic literature as mythical accounts. Therefore, he sought to gain credibility for his preaching by denying the reality of the descriptions of hells and heavens, to maximize the presentation of the philosophy. In other words, for preaching purposes, Bhaktivinoda minimized those portions of the *Bhāgavatam* that could be too easily relegated as myth. In Sadāpūta's words:

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura chose to sidestep these “mythological” aspects of the *Bhāgavata* in an effort to reach an audience of intellectuals whose mundane education ruled out such myths as absurd fantasy. Indeed, he went even further. In 1880 he published a treatise entitled *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Saṁhitā* in which he elaborately explained the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this book he also put forth a reconstruction of Indian history similar to the one introduced by Sir William Jones to bring Hindu chronology into line with the Mosaic timetable of the Bible. This involved converting demigods and Manus into human kings and reducing their total span of history to a few thousand earthly years.

Now what if upon Bhaktivinoda's passing his followers claim that his denial of hell and demoting of the demigods and Manus was his actual philosophy, and not his preaching strategy. Such people, making a show of fidelity to Bhaktivinoda, might argue, “Whether Bhaktivinoda is right or wrong, we are right if we are with him. We do not care for others, we stick to him. Guru has more weight than *śāstra*.” Would they be right? Obviously not. But if such a verdict was somehow to prevail as the true teachings of Bhaktivinoda, it would be a disaster for the *sampradāya*.

Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda's dilemma in explaining *anādi* to us was perhaps even more profound than that of the Ṭhākura. He was preaching mainly to Westerners, who had no background at all in the Vedic culture, the Sanskrit language, or Vedic logic. Whatever we thought we knew about Vedic thought was invariably bogus, gummed up with Māyāvāda or Buddhism or some specious variety of hodgepodge Hinduism.

Prabhupāda had a sense of urgency about his mission. After all, coming to the West at age 70 and braving two heart attacks in the process, he was understandably anxious to establish his mission before it was too late. The years from 1965-1977 passed too quickly for everyone. Practically he had to teach us everything in a very short time. So he had to set priorities. The origin of the *jīva*'s bondage is a difficult subject to grasp, and as all readers of his books know, he did not consider it high on his agenda. He considered getting out of the material world far more

important than answering the question of how we got here.

This is not a particularly difficult point to grasp. As Prabhupāda himself often said with respect to the *jīva*-bondage question, “Don’t try to figure out how you got into this condition. The real question is how to get out.” In the purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 13.20, he wrote:

It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature. The Supreme Personality of Godhead knows, however, how and why this actually took place.

He believed this and applied it in his preaching by daily emphasizing the solution to our suffering—pure devotional service. Understandably, laying a foundation in Sanskrit and in something as rigorous as *nyāya* was not a pressing concern for him.

Of course he expected our detailed knowledge would come later, as the seed he had planted sprouted and grew and we continued to refine our understanding. Part of that was for us to go further in the literature of our line, particularly the works of the Six Gosvāmīs. As we progressed, we would gain a better understanding of the details as well as the apparent contradictions in the philosophy. In so doing, we would inevitably come to understand the complete meaning of *anādi* and the complete answer to the *jīva*-bondage question.

Furthermore, while the correct answer to this question is very involved and difficult to convey, not knowing the correct answer poses no impediment to one’s spiritual success, so Śrīla Prabhupāda opted to keep things simple. He took his preaching on this point a step further than Bhaktivinoda and said we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. It made things a lot simpler. The alternative was to get mired in a lengthy explanation that would have led to more and more questions. This entails the risk of devotees becoming distracted from the central focus of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as we are presently experiencing in our society. The central focus should be how we got into our predicament, but how do we get out of it.

Our explanation of Prabhupāda’s strategy on the *jīva* issue is supported from the example of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta. Although he clearly wrote in his books that the *jīva*’s bondage is *anādi*, in his dialogues with foreigners he spoke as if we fell down. We cited an example of this in the third chapter of the First Wave.

As disciples we may like to think, “Well, I don’t see the problem. I was ready to accept whatever Śrīla Prabhupāda said on this issue.” As one COM letter stated:

I think many Prabhupada disciples who are still with ISKCON will agree that in some respects, the mood of the Society was much more innocent than now. Any word emanating from Srila Prabhupada was nectar, pure and simple. We were all falling all over ourselves to lap that nectar up without questioning it. Here’s where the provisional strategy theory just doesn’t add up. If Prabhupada had declared once and for all that the jivas originated in the brahmajyoti, I would have accepted it without thinking twice. Even if he had declared that the *jivas* originated off of Mother Yasoda’s kitchen stove, I would have accepted that without thinking twice also. No problem. Likewise if Prabhupada had said once and for all that the jivas were never in Vaikuntha. Again, no problem.

But if that was indeed the case, that we were all so qualified as disciples, why is it that more than seventy-five percent of his disciples have left his mission? Why is there so much controversy on this question when we have so many clear, declarative statements in Prabhupāda’s *Bhāgavata* purports that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha? And it is not a question of just being ready to accept whatever Prabhupāda said, but the qualification to assimilate it. Our personal

experience is that even devotees who have been in the movement for two decades and have studied Sanskrit find it hard to understand and accept the direct meaning of *anādi* in the term *anādi-baddha*. They prefer to interpret it. But from all the evidence we have cited in the first ten chapters, it is clear that the direct meaning is the only one intended by the *ācāryas* and the Lord Himself.

All this goes to show that Śrīla Prabhupāda had ample reason to simplify the answer to this question. Besides, as already pointed out, he would have also expected that one day we would have access to the Gosvāmī literature and thus have to face the *siddhānta* as it is and surrender to it. High on that list was the *Sandarbhās* of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, whom Prabhupāda counted the greatest philosopher in our line. Here are but two out of many of his statements praising Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī:

Jīva Gosvāmī has got six *Sandarbhās*, thesis. *Bhagavat-sandarbha*, *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, *Bhakti-sandarbha*, *Prīti-sandarbha*, like that. So these books are... I don't think it is published in English. So these *Sandarbhās* so philosophically discussed that throughout the whole world there is not a single philosopher who can defy Jīva Gosvāmī's six *Sandarbhās*. (*Bhāg.* Lecture, London, 1971)

And Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, the nephew of Rūpa Gosvāmī, in the learned circle, still, in Bengāl, they say such a big scholar and philosopher, there was none, and nobody expects a similar philosopher and learned scholar in the future. He was such a big personality, Jīva Gosvāmī. Big, big Māyāvādīs, they were afraid of Jīva Gosvāmī's logic and argument to establish the Vaiṣṇava philosophy. (*Bhāg.* Lecture, Detroit, 1976)

So, Prabhupāda expected that we would sooner or later read Jīva Gosvāmī and then the answer to the *jīva*-bondage question would be unambiguous. But so many devotees react with shock at the idea that Śrīla Prabhupāda would have simplified his preaching to us on a particular point. They find it unbelievable that he would "preach down" for us. This they find so detestable that they prefer to accuse us of implying that Prabhupāda "fibbed" than entertain the more realistic thought that maybe he did not see us as so qualified and so he used a preaching technique with regard to the *jīva*-bondage question. And in fact, this was his great mercy on us.

But, as we have seen in earlier chapters, even stalwart *ācāryas* like Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīdhara Svāmī had to adopt a preaching strategy. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī had to do it even in preaching to his own disciples. We are talking about highly qualified scholars in Sanskrit, logic, poetics, and even in *rasa* theology. Still he had to adopt a preaching technique for them. Furthermore, if our suggestion is so outlandish, then why is it that in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, when Śrīla Prabhupāda had ample opportunity to settle this question right in his purport, he raises the question himself and says here is the answer? He then proceeds to explain that unless one is in Vaikuṅṭha, he is prone to fall down. Which, conversely, means that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha:

Sometimes it is asked how the living entity falls down from the spiritual world to the material world. Here is the answer. Unless one is elevated to the Vaikuṅṭha planets, directly in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is prone to fall down, either from the impersonal Brahman realization or from an ecstatic trance of meditation. (*Bhāg.* 3.25.29, purport)

This is supported by many other similar quotes which appear in other parts of this book. The conclusion is that in his letters and conversations Prabhupāda used a preaching technique, whereas in his books, which are the primary evidence in all matters of the philosophy, he states the true *siddhānta*. Dr. O.B.L. Kapoor, the godbrother and friend of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has confirmed that Śrīla Prabhupāda used strategy in preaching, “Yes. Bhaktivedanta Svāmī told me it in so many words. I asked him once a delicate question about a specific statement made by him, and after laughing he told me, ‘Well, you see, for preaching it was necessary,’ and that means to say that preaching is different from *siddhānta*.”

Considering the example of Śrīdhara Svāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and our own beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, using preaching techniques is not something new or extreme in our line. It need not be shocking. When one comes upon a contradiction, one simply has to sift through the *śāstra* with a determination to figure out which version is in line with the previous *ācāryas*. The version which is in accord with the previous *ācāryas* becomes the primary or absolute meaning and the other is secondary, the strategy. Lord Śīva was ordered directly by Lord Kṛṣṇa to hide His glories by preaching Māyāvāda, (*Padma Purāṇa, Uttarakhaṇḍa* 17.107):

*prakāśam kuru cātmānam aprakāśam ca mām kuru
svāgamaiḥ kalpitaistvañca janān mad-vimukhān kuru*

Expand your own glories and hide My personality. By your own imaginary literature make people averse to Me.

In this Śaṅkara was so successful that his followers completely missed his real message—*bhaja govindam, bhaja govindam*—and were misled, but we know better. This was also a preaching technique. Although it appeared that the Lord was very cruel to order Śīva to make people averse to Him, it was effective in enabling people to give up Buddhism.

Similarly Lord Buddha’s preaching was to wean the populace away from the *Vedas* in order to stop abuse of the Vedic principles governing animal slaughter. He was an incarnation of the Lord, but if we say that Buddha’s preaching was in fact the true spirit and intent of the Supreme Lord and the *Vedas* were worthless, what a mistake that would be.

Our conclusion after studying this matter is that Śrīla Prabhupāda considered the needs of preaching different from the *siddhānta* on certain matters such as the *jīva*-bondage issue. We find it to be the only plausible reason for his preaching on certain occasions that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. If, however, someone has a more plausible explanation, we will not object as long as it does not lead to a conclusion that puts us in conflict with the *śāstra* and our predecessor *ācāryas*. In many lectures and in many purports in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Prabhupāda stressed the importance of understanding Kṛṣṇa consciousness in keeping with the previous *ācāryas*. This one from Cc. *Ādi* 8.7 is especially relevant:

If one is seriously interested in Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, he must be ready to follow the rules and regulations laid down by the *ācāryas*, and he must understand their conclusions. The *śāstra* says: *dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthaḥ* (*Mahābhārata, Vana Parva* 313.1 1 7). It is very difficult to understand the secret of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but one who advances by the instruction of the previous *ācāryas* and follows in the footsteps of his predecessors in the line of disciplic succession will have success. Others will not.

How could Śrīla Prabhupāda, after such a clear endorsement of our *ācāryas* have a different *siddhānta* than theirs? This is our sincere question to all who claim that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s statements—that we fell to this world from the *nitya-līlā* of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu—are the true

siddhānta. If they can convince us on this point on the basis of guru, *śāstra*, and *sādhu*, we will joyfully recant.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER SIX

WHY PRABHUPĀDA SAID WE FELL FROM VAIKUṆṬHA

A thorough consideration of the ten chapters in the *siddhānta* portion of this book leaves no room for doubt as to the conclusion of our *paramparā* on the *jīva*-bondage question. Nevertheless, a discussion on the subject would not be complete without addressing the question why Śrīla Prabhupāda gave contradictory instructions—that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha and that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. How could he leave us open to such potentially explosive controversy?

Especially dumbfounding is the fact that he consistently answered the direct question either in letters or in person in favor of the fall. This has led many devotees to believe that of the two versions, he ultimately favored the fall theory. All devotees don't agree with that view, however, because in his books, which they regard as the primary evidence, Śrīla Prabhupāda says again and again that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, that the residents there never misuse their free will, that fallen souls are eternally conditioned and so on.

Of course in many places his words could be interpreted either way. It is highly significant, however, that in his purports he made many declarative statements to the effect that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. If he had changed his view on this subject, he would have had his books changed, but he never even hinted at that.

In this chapter we throw some light on the reasons for Prabhupāda's preaching that we fell from the spiritual world. Before we begin we would like to remind the readers that Prabhupāda was a representative of the *ācāryas* and therefore cannot, as their representative, contradict them, except for the purpose of preaching. All *ācāryas* base their philosophy on the scripture. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.23) the Lord explains the danger of rejecting the *śāstra*:

*yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya
vartate kāma-kārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti
na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim*

He who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.

No *ācārya*, therefore, disassociates himself from the *śāstra*. In fact to contradict scripture is an offense against the holy name, unless done for preaching purpose. We have to ask ourselves if in Śrīla Prabhupāda's time he faced a dilemma for his preaching and therefore found it necessary to simplify the answer to the *jīva*-bondage question for his audience? One can read *Planting the Seed* to get a first hand picture of who Śrīla Prabhupāda's audience was in the latter half of the sixties and then in the seventies. We had many disqualifications, which need not be enumerated here. All of this posed a limitation to what Prabhupāda could teach us. The contrast between us and Jīva Gosvāmī's followers is stark, still Jīva Gosvāmī could not preach the *siddhānta* on *svakīya/parakīya* directly. We—without the benefit of a background in Sanskrit, no background in Vedic logic, and, for the majority of us, no formal background in any sort of philosophy or logic—may have gotten bogged down in the complete explanation. It is possible that

Prabhupāda decided not to risk that.

Another consideration is that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted us to accept full responsibility for being here and so he wanted to emphasize free will. He said it was our choice. We rebelled against Kṛṣṇa. We misused our free will. On the other hand, if we had heard that we were here *anādi*, we may not have felt that we were responsible for being here. We may have thought Kṛṣṇa is to blame. He also knew that as part of Judeo-Christian thought it is believed that we were cast out of the kingdom of God. It makes sense therefore, in terms of the *na buddhi-bhedam janayed* verse, that he would dovetail the whole thing and focus his students on the more vital concern—how to get out. This he did with extraordinary success, but he did lay down the verdict of the *siddhānta* in enough places, so there can be no doubt that he knew it. In so many places he has stated that we are eternally conditioned souls, *nitya-baddha*. Again, in so many places he said no one falls from the spiritual world. Both these statements openly contradict the idea that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. Nonetheless, the devotees sometimes come up with an interpretation to explain how the word *anādi* in *anādi-baddha* does not literally mean *anādi*, but this finds no support in the teachings of the previous *ācāryas*.

Prabhupāda knew we would have to go further in our understanding, and therefore he says many times in his books that if one desires to advance in his understanding of the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one must read the books of the six Gosvāmīs and other great *ācāryas*. He even encouraged us to study the conclusions of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* in the other *sampradāyas* as well. And as we have mentioned before, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *Sandarbhās* are at the top of his list of recommendations. Here is but one out of the many quotes from Śrīla Prabhupāda on the importance of the works of the *ācāryas*.

Many devotees of Lord Caitanya like Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrī Kavikarṇapura, Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and in this latter age within two hundred years, Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrī Śyāmānanda Gosvāmī, Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and at last Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (our spiritual master) and many other great and renowned scholars and devotees of the Lord have prepared voluminous books and literatures on the life and precepts of the Lord. Such literatures are all based on the *śāstras* like the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and other histories and authentic literatures approved by the recognized *ācāryas*. They are unique in composition and unrivaled in presentation, and they are full of transcendental knowledge. Unfortunately the people of the world are still ignorant of them, but when these literatures, which are mostly in Sanskrit and Bengālī, come to light the world and when they are presented before thinking people, then India's glory and the message of love will overflow this morbid world, which is vainly searching after peace and prosperity by various illusory methods not approved by the *ācāryas* in the chain of disciplic succession. (*Bhāg.* p. 5-6, Introduction)

There are many other statements in a similar vein from Prabhupāda. From all this it is clear that he did not consider that he had something new to present to us. He gave the example of old wine in new bottles. He did not like newness in the realm of our philosophy. He did not present himself as standing apart from our predecessor *ācāryas*; rather he presented himself as standing shoulder to shoulder in line with the previous *ācāryas*. Taking that as a fixed standard for us, if

we read in the literature of our predecessors something not in line with Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is really our understanding that has to be reconciled. We are not to resort to notions such as “This is the Prabhupāda *siddhānta*” to explain away something that is not in line with the previous *ācāryas*. There is no basis for this anywhere in the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Now, when it happens that Śrīla Prabhupāda says something that sticks out from the established version of the Gosvāmīs and even contradicts his own writings, we have no choice but to conclude that Śrīla Prabhupāda, according to time, place, and audience decided to preach that way. We may not be able to discern authoritatively his reason, but we have no alternative to this conclusion—that it was his preaching technique. And it is not that we have no basis to believe that Śrīla Prabhupāda would do such a thing. We have already cited the 1971 conversation, in London, in which he indicated that he had a preaching strategy in this regard, when he said “These questions are not to be discussed in public. These are very higher understanding. For the public it should be, ‘This is matter, this is spirit.’ That’s all.”

We can’t be sure to what extent Prabhupāda applied this with his own disciples, but judging from the conclusion of our previous *ācāryas*, he certainly did so on the *jīva*-bondage issue. In his letters and conversations, he said directly or indirectly that we were with Kṛṣṇa and we fell down due to misuse of our minute free will. In his books, however, in many places (listed in Chapter Four of the First Wave) he directly asserts that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. In this way he gave us the *siddhānta*, but for preaching he sometimes did not speak the “very higher understanding.” Readers should note that the topic of this 1971 conversation concerns the various aspects of the *jīva*. Later on Śrīla Prabhupāda says:

Revatinandana: I see. It was just making my head spin to think of so many fallen souls. If there (in the *brahmajyoti*) they also, to some extent they also fall. Here there are so many fallen souls. Then...

Prabhupāda: *Ananta*. You cannot say how many. *Ananta*. *Anantaya kalpate*. *Ananta* means unlimited number. There is no question of counting.

Śyāmasundāra: Our brain is so tiny.

Revatinandana: Yes.

Prabhupāda: Therefore *acintya*. Therefore *acintya*, inconceivable. (Pause.) Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Don’t try to understand Kṛṣṇa. Simply try to love Him. That is perfection. That’s all. You cannot understand Kṛṣṇa. Nobody can understand. Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot understand Himself. Yes. (Laughter.) He’s so *acintya*. And what to speak of us. Therefore our only business: how to love Kṛṣṇa, how to serve Kṛṣṇa. That’s all. That is perfection. You cannot understand Kṛṣṇa. Nobody can. Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot understand.

Revatinandana: The more we understand, the more we can convince others.

Prabhupāda: No. Better you understand this, that you cannot understand. This understanding is better.

Revatinandana: No, but what I said is that...

Prabhupāda: That “I cannot understand,” this understanding.

Hamsadūta: Then you have to give up. Then just simply love Kṛṣṇa.

Prabhupāda: Yes. This is real understanding, that “Kṛṣṇa cannot be understood. Simply let me love as far as possible, as I can, whatever is my, in my capacity.” That is perfection.

Śrīla Prabhupāda often said that we should understand the philosophy so we can convince others with logic and reference to the *sāstra*, but here, in response to Revatinandana saying “The more we understand, the more we can convince others,” Prabhupāda says, “No. Better you

understand this, that you cannot understand. This understanding is better.” Then Revatīnandana tried to explain what he meant and Prabhupāda cuts him off and insists, “That ‘I cannot understand,’ this understanding. . . . Yes. This is real understanding, that ‘Kṛṣṇa cannot be understood. Simply let me love as far as possible, as I can, whatever is my, in my capacity.’ That is perfection.”

The significance of the above is that Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly indicates that certain questions concerning the *jīva* are inconceivable and not important to understand. Better we understand that we cannot understand. To him it was not a matter of our becoming convinced and presenting the *siddhānta*. More important was to understand that whatever the *siddhānta* the fact remains that it is inconceivable. If that was his conviction, would it be surprising if he did not necessarily present the *siddhānta* on the *jīva* issue every time the question came up?

For precisely this reason—that the answer is inconceivable—we had worked out a policy with the BBT Trustees that we would say both things on the *jīva* issue in the *Sandarbhās*. After all, the *Sandarbhās* are the work of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī; we could not simply leave out his conclusion, which is the *paramparā siddhānta*. And considering that Śrīla Prabhupāda stated the *siddhānta* in his books, we saw no reason at all to present only one side—that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. We knew devotees were divided on this question, and so we wanted to follow in Prabhupāda’s footsteps and say both things. We thought this would be the most faithful way to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda. Nevertheless, controversy arose because some devotees, claiming to know what Prabhupāda meant, would not accept this policy. Thus the need arose to write this book.

Prabhupāda’s first concern was to attract people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way, as people developed their spiritual understanding, they would be able to understand which of his two statements is our *siddhānta*. We can react to this with alarm, horror, or shock. We can be peevish and opt to vilify those who point this out on the authority of our *ācāryas*; but none of this will change the truth of the matter. A better alternative, therefore, is to appreciate Prabhupāda’s genius in knowing how to coat the medicine for us and get us to take it. Preaching is ultimately the art of administering mercy, and in this Śrīla Prabhupāda was expert. Let us appreciate him for this.

It is very cumbersome to satisfactorily answer the *jīva*-bondage question in a terse statement and strictly according to the philosophy, yet in a fashion that could be easily grasped and accepted by the general public. To illustrate how difficult this is, let us look at a real situation. In the Sept/Oct 1994 BTG is a letter from a reader asking “Why are we here?” The reply, which is the stock we-were-with-Kṛṣṇa-and-we-misused-our-independence-and-we-fell, takes up just over two columns in the magazine.

Now, just imagine if we were to give this reader the full story, explaining *anādi* and how conditioned life is beginningless, the Vedic logic behind the word *anādi*, and that’s just the way the Lord is, because He is *līlāmaya*, etc. Then to get him to take the whole pill, another topic must be covered—that God is *acintya*. Explaining all this in the English language would take many pages. (Recall that we took three chapters to spell out the meaning of *anādi* in the First Wave.) Even so it would all come off as sheer dogmatism, which is highly unappealing to a modern audience, especially as Śrīla Prabhupāda greatly impressed us with his logical presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in every other sphere. This was surely one of the most attractive features of his preaching. No wonder he simplified the explanation of something that is out and out *acintya*.

Thus after pages and pages of a thorough *sāstric* explanation in BTG, in the end it is still doubtful that the average reader would have a tangible grasp of what was being said. Dissatisfied, he would be likely to have more and more questions. He would also be likely to keep his doubts to himself. Why should a preacher risk that when he knows very well that the solution to birth, death, old age, and disease is not the answer to this question per se, but to act in

one's constitutional position as the servant of Kṛṣṇa?

Mere reading of books, logical analysis, argument, and wrangling back and forth will not bring the infinite Absolute within the grasp of the infinitesimal *jīva*. By purification one comes to understand, and even then, only if the Lord supplies us the understanding. If one insists on understanding the Absolute with his infinitesimal intellect as a precondition for spiritual discipline, then that becomes his obstacle. A preacher knows this. Therefore, preaching does not always mean presenting the *siddhānta*. If someone says this is deception or something like that, the answer is no. Rather, from the preacher's viewpoint, it's a matter of choosing between the life and death of the patient. If the operation's a success but the patient is lost, what is the value? Similarly, if he gives the straight *siddhānta*, but people fail to take up the process, what is the value of his preaching?

So it is a judgment call for the preacher in the field how to answer this question yet keep the person wanting to progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. From all the evidence of the preceding chapters of this book, evidently Śrīla Prabhupāda made a choice and stuck to it pretty consistently, especially in his correspondence, public lectures, and conversations, although in many of the letters and conversations his answers are not clear and can be interpreted either way.

But in a few key places, most notably in his purports, by saying no one falls from the spiritual world and that conditioned life is eternal, he did flatly state the *siddhānta*, even if he did not go into a detailed explanation. While it is a fact that we may not be thoroughly familiar with the previous *ācāryas*, these same points are supported by direct and unambiguous statements from them and from the *śāstra*. It is difficult, therefore, to see how devotees can insist on fall-down as the *siddhānta* and no-fall as a secondary statement. That means they consider the lectures, conversations, and the indirect statements in Prabhupāda's books, which they interpret as proof of fall-down, as primary evidence. And they reject or relegate the direct statements about no-fall as secondary.

The logic behind this is that they say the direct question was asked to the guru and when the guru answers then the question is settled. This sounds reasonable enough. But the question comes, when a child asks the direct question to the mother, "Where do babies come from?" and the mother says that a stork brings them, is the question settled for life? If the mother gives the same consistent answer to all her children, does that mean that the expert opinion of doctors, as stated in various books on the subject, is now to be discounted by these children throughout their life? After all, we use the example that if we want to know who the father is, the best bet is to ask the mother. So if the mother says, "A stork brought you," is that the end of the discussion? If these children unite and continue to believe the stork story even when they grow up, are they faithfully following their mother? They may say, "We are right because, right or wrong, if we are with her we are right," but this is not very good reasoning, for it hardly does justice to the mother.

And if upon finding out the true answer to their question, these children conclude that their mother fibbed or did not know the answer to where babies come from, could these be very intelligent children? Clever children, humble children, faithful children will conclude, "My mother is very intelligent. She knew I would not understand the answer; so rather than frustrate me, she said that the stork brings babies. But she knew I would understand it when I was ready."

Obviously, the capacity to ask a question does not automatically mean the capacity to understand the answer. We assume that Prabhupāda gave us the ultimate answer to all our direct questions. But when you compare his answer to us on the *jīva* bondage issue with the answer of the *śāstra*, his statements in his purports and those of our previous *ācāryas*, it is obvious that He did not give us the ultimate answer even to the direct question. He must have felt our capacity to understand was not yet mature. It was certainly difficult for him to give an answer

straight from the *siddhānta* without laying a detailed foundation for us. He opted to skip that.

But in his Bhaktivedanta purports, he answered the question about fall down from the spiritual sky in clear, unambiguous language. For example, there are so many clear declarative statements where Śrīla Prabhupāda says no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* he even posed the question himself and directly answered it in a manner different than his lectures, letters, and conversations. And he also declares “The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world or Vaikuṅṭha planet, for it is the eternal abode.” (*Bhāg.* 3.16.26)

How can fall-*vādīs* minimize the value of such clear statements in the Bhaktivedanta purports? These statements conform to the *śāstra* and in any debate over the *siddhānta* they are in fact the primary evidence when held against Śrīla Prabhupāda’s letters, lectures, and conversations. How can they implicitly deny (or interpret) such verses as the Lord’s declaration to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.16):

*dvāv imau puruṣau loke
kṣaraś cākṣara eva ca
kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni
kūṭa-stho 'kṣara ucyate*

There are two classes of beings, the fallible and the infallible. In the material world every living entity is fallible, and in the spiritual world every living entity is called infallible.

Preaching is an art. An expert preacher is one who preaches so that people do not become confused or degraded and take to the path of devotional service. In this Śrīla Prabhupāda was eminently successful. The conditioned souls, being fruitive workers, naturally do not want to get out of the material world. A devotee of the Lord, on the other hand, preaches to get them to quit material existence. Hence, there is a clash of interests which causes a lot of resistance in the conditioned soul. Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes referred to this as “causeless unwillingness to serve.” “Causeless” also means beginningless. To overcome this unwillingness to serve, the preacher has to distinguish between what is essential and what is nonessential to convey in the philosophy. The topic of *anādi* has the potential to divert an audience from the essential understanding, as it has done in the case of this controversy. The preacher may certainly decide to simplify or sidestep such an issue for the sake of the more essential aspects of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy. For example, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes (Bg. 13.20, purport):

It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature. The Supreme Personality of Godhead knows, however, how and when this actually took place.

In short, the preacher must devise a technique to get people moving on the path of devotional service, and if he sugar-coats the pill for this purpose, that is part of his genius as a preacher. The *śāstras* also practice this method (*Bhāg.* 11.3.43, 44):

*karmākarma-vikarmeti veda-vādo na laukikaḥ
vedasya ceśvarātmatvāt tatra muhyanti sūrayaḥ
parokṣa-vādo vedo 'yaṁ bālānām anuśāsanam
karma-mokṣāya karmāṇi vidhatte hy agadaṁ yathā*

Prescribed duties, nonperformance of such duties, and forbidden activities are

topics one can properly understand through authorized study of the Vedic literature. This difficult subject matter can never be understood by mundane speculation. The authorized Vedic literature is the sound incarnation of the Personality of Godhead Himself, and thus Vedic knowledge is perfect. Even the greatest learned scholars are bewildered in their attempts to understand the science of action if they neglect the authority of Vedic knowledge. Childish, foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine.

Again we may consider the example of the BTG reader mentioned earlier. After some time on the path it may dawn on him what is the actual *siddhānta*, especially as he grows in his appreciation of the nature of the spiritual world as being an infallible place. But let's suppose he did not make this step. Let's suppose he remains firm in the belief that once we were with Kṛṣṇa. Better he believes that than not take to devotional service. He can serve and advance and free himself of material entanglement and he is all right. His Kṛṣṇa consciousness can still be a grand success. There is no loss for him at all. In this way, Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching technique was a tremendous success. He got people to accept the path of devotional service with full conviction, which was the essence of his mission. Now we have to grow in our understanding of what he gave us. Prabhupāda said that he gave us the framework and it is left to us to fill in the details. We just did not appreciate that this applied to our understanding of the philosophy as well.

SECOND WAVE: CHAPTER SEVEN

“I DID NOT DEVIATE AN INCH”

As pointed out in the previous chapter, Śrīla Prabhupāda must have known that in the course of time we would resolve the *jīva* issue on the basis of the *siddhānta*, keeping our understanding in line with the predecessor *ācāryas*. For us, Śrīla Prabhupāda's statements represent guru. To be sure of our understanding, they must be reconciled with *śāstra* and *sādhu*. This is the system Prabhupāda himself taught. Anything that he may have said that cannot find support or reconciliation in the *śruti* or *smṛti* or in the explanations of our *ācāryas*—in other words *śāstra* and *sādhu*—cannot be accepted as our *siddhānta*.

This was observed in the example of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who made contradictory statements about the hells, demigods and Manus, some of which cannot be reconciled with the *śāstras* or *sādhus*. In either case we understand and accept that they did it for their preaching. That is the only plausible alternative.

If we accept as primary the statements that one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, we neither can reconcile them on the basis of *śāstra* nor can we explain the statements that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha as a secondary statement. But when we accept no fall from Vaikuṅṭha as the primary statement and fall from Vaikuṅṭha as secondary, everything is reconcilable. But then the natural question arises: Why did Prabhupāda say that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha?

Here we find three alternatives: (1) He lied to us. (2) He didn't know the answer. (3) This was his preaching technique. The first alternative is obviously not acceptable for a bona fide

guru in *paramparā* does not deal in lies. The second is also not acceptable because there is no getting around the fact that he did make many statements on this matter that conform with *śāstra* and *sādhu*. By the process of elimination, therefore, we are left only with number three.

We may be or we may not be satisfied with this as the answer; nevertheless, it stands as the only reasonable conclusion, for to insist that Śrīla Prabhupāda had a new revelation on the *siddhānta* flies in the face of everything Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us. He said, “My only success is that I did not deviate an inch from the order of my Guru Maharāja,” which means he did not deviate an inch from the *paramparā*. He did not manufacture anything; he did not subtract anything. Of course, an *ācārya* can have new revelations but not something which goes against the *śāstra*.

In this connection, some devotees have coined the term ISKCON *sampradāya* with the apparent aim to establish Śrīla Prabhupāda as the first and last point of reference in understanding these matters. This is no doubt inspired by the misconception that such an idea adds to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s glory. Actually it is a disservice to Śrīla Prabhupāda to sever him from our predecessor *ācāryas* in this way. Prabhupāda identified ISKCON as a branch of the Caitanya tree. All the branches of that tree belong to the same *sampradāya*. If a branch is cut off from the tree, it will wither and become *asāra*, useless. History tells us that this is how many *sahajiyā* branches came out from the Caitanya tree which are only superficially attached to the tree. And history can repeat itself if we do not learn from it. In this connection, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has given a stern warning by relating the story of Advaitācārya and his useless sons. (Cc. *Ādi* 12.7-12):

*sei jala skandhe kare śākhāte sañcāra
phale-phule bāḍe,—śākhā ha-īla vistāra*

*prathame ta ’eka-mata ācāryera gaṇa
pāche dui-mata haila daivera kāraṇa*

*keha ta ’ācārya ājñāya, keha ta ’svatantra
sva-mata kalpanā kare daiva-paratantra*

*ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra
tānra ājñā laṅghi ’cale, sei ta ’asāra*

*asārera nāma ihān nāhi prayojana
bheda jānibāre kari ekatra gaṇana*

*dhānya-rāśi māpe yaiche pātnā sahite
paścāte pātnā uḍāññā saṁskāra karite*

At first all the followers of Advaita Ācārya shared a single opinion. But later they followed two different opinions, as ordained by providence. As the trunk and branches were watered, the branches and sub-branches spread lavishly, and the tree grew full with fruits and flowers. Some of the disciples strictly accepted the orders of the *ācārya*, and others deviated, independently concocting their own opinions under the spell of *daivī māyā*. The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless. There is no need to name those who are useless. I have mentioned them only to distinguish them from the useful devotees. Paddy is mixed with straw at first, and one must fan it to separate the

paddy from the straw.

In the purport to 12.8 Prabhupāda gives the reason for the failure of Gauḍīya Maṭh and success of ISKCON:

...and therefore our preaching work is going on successfully, inspite of the many impediments offered by antagonistic demons, because we are getting positive help from our previous *ācāryas*. One must judge every action by its result. The members of the self-appointed *ācārya's* party who occupied the property of the Gauḍīya Maṭh are satisfied, but they could make no progress in preaching. Therefore by the result of their actions one should know that they are *asāra* or useless, whereas the success of the ISKCON party, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which strictly follows guru and Gaurāṅga, is increasing all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly thinks of himself as lined up with the previous *ācāryas*. To found a new *sampradāya*, however, means to establish some new teaching not brought out by the previous *ācāryas*. If indeed the fall-*vādīs* want to establish the so-called Prabhupāda-*sampradāya*, they will have to prove that Śrīla Prabhupāda had something different from the *paramparā siddhānta* regarding the *jīva* issue. This will be no small feat for them, because, as this *jīva*-bondage debate is proving, they do not clearly know the *siddhānta* of the Gosvāmīs in the first place.

Later Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja writes (Cc. *Ādi* 12.67-68, 71):

*ihāra madhye mālī pāche kona śākhā-gaṇa
nā māne caitanya-mālī durdaiva kāraṇa*

*srjāila, jiyāila, tānre nā mānila
kṛtaghna ha-ilā, tānre skandha kruddha ha-ila*

*kevala e gaṇa-prati nahe ei daṇḍa
caitanya-vimukha yei sei ta'pāṣaṇḍa*

After the disappearance of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, some of the branches, for unfortunate reasons, deviated from His path. Some branches did not accept the original trunk that vitalized and maintained the entire tree. When they thus became ungrateful, the original trunk was angry at them. Not only the misguided descendants of Advaita Ācārya but anyone who is against the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu should be considered an atheist subject to be punished by Yamarāja.

In the purport to 12.73 Śrīla Prabhupāda says:

In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in his *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya*, gives this short note: “Śrī Advaita Ācārya is one of the important trunks of the *bhakti-kalpataru*, or desire tree of devotional service. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, as a gardener, poured water on the root of the *bhakti* tree and thus nourished all its trunks and branches. But nevertheless, under the spell of *māyā*, the most unfortunate condition of a living entity, some of the branches, not accepting the gardener who poured water on them, considered the trunk the only cause of the great *bhakti-kalpataru*. In other words, the branches or descendants of Advaita Ācārya who considered Advaita Ācārya the original cause of the

devotional creeper, and who thus neglected or disobeyed the instructions of Śrī Mahāprabhu, deprived themselves of the effect of being watered and thus dried up and died. It is further to be understood that not only the misguided descendants of Advaita Ācārya but anyone who has no connection with Caitanya Mahāprabhu—even if he is independently a great *sannyāsī*, learned scholar or ascetic—is like a dead branch of a tree.

Considering this, who would dare insist on the Prabhupāda-*sampradāya*? Those who show enthusiasm for this idea must be unaware of what a *sampradāya* is and what it means to be the founder of a *sampradāya*. To be considered a new *sampradāya*, as for example, Mādhavendra Purī, who is the founder of the Gauḍīya branch of the Mādhva-*sampradāya*, one must teach some additional tenet over the previous *siddhānta* of that line. That new tenet must be based on the *prasthāna trayī*—*nyāya*, *śruti*, and *smṛti*. The founding of a new institution, however, does not constitute a new *sampradāya*; otherwise the Gauḍīya Maṭh should also be considered a different *sampradāya*.

It is inconceivable that in our line anyone will surpass the teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and found a new *sampradāya*.

Another new coinage is “ISKCON *siddhānta*” or “Prabhupāda *siddhānta*.” Again, these words appear laden with enthusiasm and sentiments of fidelity to Śrīla Prabhupāda and ISKCON, but upon closer examination are found to be meaningless. In fact such language can bring discredit to ISKCON and Śrīla Prabhupāda. “ISKCON *siddhānta*” implies that Lord Caitanya, the Gosvāmīs and other *ācāryas* such as Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and others, even Śrīla Prabhupāda’s own spiritual master, did not know the current so-called ISKCON *siddhānta*. Would Prabhupāda agree to that? Certainly not. He would be furious.

We find nothing in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings or demeanor to indicate that he considered himself the initiator of a new *sampradāya* nor do we find that he gave us any new *siddhānta*. Rather he was against such ideas and attacked them vehemently, and he wanted his followers to attack all bogus ideas as well. He also criticized us that our disease is that we wanted to unnecessarily change things. The talk of an ISKCON *siddhānta* is an example of such a diseased condition; this attempt to make us distinct from the bona fide *sampradāya* however, will only go to establish us as *apa-sampradāya*. We are known as the Brahma-Mādhva-Gauḍīya Sampradāya and that is our glory.

Yet another way of looking at the matter: No scriptural statements and no previous *ācāryas* have given us any conclusive evidence for the concept that *jīvas* fall from the spiritual world. As stated before, a *sampradāya* is based on the conclusions of *prasthāna trayī*, or *śruti* (*Upaniṣads*), *smṛti* (*Bhagavad-gītā*), and *nyāya prasthāna* (*Vedānta-sūtra*). We have shown in the first part that the *prasthāna trayī* does not support that the *jīva* fell from Vaikuṅṭha. In Vedic culture every bona fide *sampradāya* establishes their *siddhānta* based on *prasthāna-trayī*, and any conclusion against this is considered *apa-siddhānta*, a faulty conclusion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has certainly studied *prasthāna trayī*, the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhās*, and other works of our previous *ācāryas*. He wrote commentaries on all three—*Bhagavad-gītā* (*Smṛti*), *Īṣopaniṣad* (*Śruti*), and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Nyāya*, being the natural commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra*)—as is customary for every prominent *ācārya*. It is unimaginable that he would not conform to the view of the *sāstra* and the predecessor *ācāryas*. A more reasonable conclusion, therefore, is that for the purpose of preaching he sometimes spoke contrary to the *sāstra* on the *jīva*-bondage question.

This conclusion is supported by the excerpt from the 1971 conversation quoted in the previous chapter:

Revatinandana: Sometimes people ask...

Prabhupāda: These questions are not to be discussed in public. These are very higher understanding. For public should be, “This is matter, this is spirit.” That’s all.

From this it is clear that Prabhupāda used preaching techniques. Public preaching may be different from conversations with devotees and similarly his books may have statements different from his letters and conversations. Our view is given support by the fact that most of the statements favoring fall from Vaikuṅṭha are found in Prabhupāda’s letters, lectures, and conversations. In the books he mostly supports the no fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha, and sometimes his statements seem ambiguous.

Some devotees are convinced that the answers to direct questions put to Śrīla Prabhupāda weigh more heavily than those in his books. This sounds reasonable, but on second thought it does not add up. Śrīla Prabhupāda certainly carefully considered every phrase he put in his books. What is there has to be considered the *siddhānta*. His purports are his primary statements on all essential tenets of the philosophy. Prabhupāda wrote all his books with an eye on the future and his letters and so forth cannot override the teachings in his books.

In this connection, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Chapter Eight, there is an instructive episode about the process of imparting knowledge. Prajāpati once said that one must know the self, who is free from sin, decrepitude, death, sorrow, hunger, and thirst. This message reached both the demigods and demons. Lord Indra and Virocana, the king of the demons, approached Prajāpati with a desire to learn about the self. After both had served him and observed celibacy for thirty-two years, Prajāpati asked them to state their purpose and they both expressed a desire to know the self.

Prajāpati said, “The person who is seen within the eye, who is immortal and fearless, is to be known as the self.”

They both asked, “Of the one seen reflected in the water, and the one reflected in the mirror, which is the self?”

Prajāpati answered, “This very one is clearly seen in both.” Then Prajāpati asked them to look at their reflections in the water and said, “Tell me what do you understand about the self?” Then he asked them to decorate themselves and again look at their reflections in the water. He then said, “This is the immortal and fearless self.” Indra and Virocana were both satisfied and left.

Virocana returned and informed the demon community that the body was the self. Indra, however, was doubtful of this conclusion and returned to inquire further from Prajāpati, who gave him more instructions on the subject. Indra then returned to his kingdom, but again doubts brought him back to Prajāpati for further instruction. This time Indra served as a celibate student for 100 years, then Brahmā imparted real knowledge about the self to him.

This story is instructive regarding both the procedure for imparting and receiving knowledge. It’s not that Brahmā did not know what is the self, nor did he lie to Virocana. He spoke in such a way that Virocana mistook the body as the self. Lord Brahmā had no intention to cheat Virocana, but he knew that the demons could not understand the self properly because of too much attachment for the body. So he used the process of indirect speech. Sometimes a child asks the parent, “Where do babies come from?” The answer is surely beyond the grasp of the child. It is “higher understanding” as Prabhupāda said, but to pacify the child a simple answer is given, such as, “The stork brought you,” because no answer or giving the real answer will not satisfy the child. The point is that the teacher speaks according to the ability of the student, and he expects the student to be inquisitive.

The guru is like a cow, who does not release milk until the calf has persisted eagerly for some

time. Generally, the milk does not flow on its own accord, otherwise it will be wasted. The more the calf pulls on the teat, the more the milk flows. When the calf is hungry and eager, it pulls hard and more milk comes. The relationship between teacher and student is sometimes like this. The teacher answers and the unsatisfied students persist, seeking further clarification, and the teacher tries to satisfy their curiosity in proportion to the disciples capacity to understand. Anyone who has experience as a teacher or spiritual master knows this experience.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, we find that Kṛṣṇa did not immediately give the ultimate instruction to Arjuna. By Arjuna's persistent questioning, the Lord gradually revealed a finer and finer understanding. People who fail to appreciate this read the *Gītā* and come away with a conclusion different than Arjuna's. Some think the Lord gave many different answers to Arjuna's question, but devotees know that there is really only one message in Kṛṣṇa's mind: pure devotional service.

Similarly, on the *jīva*-bondage question there was only one answer in Śrīla Prabhupāda's mind—the *śāstric* version, which is no fall-down. In his talks and letters he spoke of falling down which was proper according to the ability of his students. In all talks and letters we do not find a student persisting to know the truth like Indra did. Nobody is giving an argument like, "But Prabhupāda, in your purports you have written that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. How could we have been with Kṛṣṇa in His abode and fallen from there?" Therefore his answers in letters and talks are not the ultimate *siddhānta* if they contradict his own statements in his books where he is commenting on the original text. This is especially so when he gives the conclusion himself (*Bhāg.* 3.16.26): "The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world or Vaikuṅṭha planet, for it is the eternal abode."

Even if one discounts all the other statements in the Bhaktivedanta purports that establish no-fall from Vaikuṅṭha, this statement alone overrides all statements to the contrary in the letters, lectures, and conversations of Śrīla Prabhupāda, because he states the conclusion with no "ifs" and "buts." When someone else raises the question, he will answer according to the clarity of the question and the capacity of the questioner. When he himself states the conclusion in his lawbook, we can hardly expect that he is using a preaching technique on himself. And when his answer is confirmed by authorities and the *śāstra*, there is no room for doubt or debate.

Fall-*vādīs* would dearly love to have it another way, but it will not work. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books far outweigh his other statements made in other forums when it comes to the philosophy. It may be that on practical matters like management, he has given more valuable instructions in letters and conversations than those found in his books, but not when it comes to the philosophy. To deny this denies reason.

To take those statements explaining the fall theory as ultimate *siddhānta* is to risk ending up in the same situation as the followers of Śaṅkarācārya. He taught Māyāvāda philosophy to drive away the Buddhists, but what he taught was not what he carried in his heart. Once his mission was accomplished, his philosophy lost its utility. Thus it is no wonder that he composed verses praising Lord Kṛṣṇa, like *Bhaja Govindam* and *Govindāṣṭakam*. His followers stuck to his Māyāvāda doctrine, however, and ruined their lives. When Lord Caitanya addressed the Māyāvādīs in Benāres they admitted as much (Cc. *Ādi* 7.136):

ācārya-kalpita artha,—iha sabhe jāni

sampradāya-anurodhe tabu tāhā māni

We know that all this word jugglery springs from the imagination of Śaṅkarācārya, and yet because we belong to his sect, we accept it although it does not satisfy us.

Similarly, we may defy the truth of no fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha, thinking it is loyalty to Śrīla Prabhupāda and fall into a predicament similar to the followers of Śaṅkarācārya. In other words we may miss the real point of Prabhupāda's preaching and settle for something peripheral. While the followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda may not ruin their lives, still, as preachers coming in *paramparā*, it is our duty to know the correct *siddhānta* even if according to time, place, and circumstance it is not suitable to reveal it. Of course, it is not easy to admit that one was somehow mistakenly adhering to the wrong conclusion, but the alternative—to adamantly cling to the wrong conclusion, to fight for it, even after we know it is inconsistent with our previous *ācāryas*—is far worse, both in the short run and in the long run.

One may argue that if Śrīla Prabhupāda felt it necessary to sometimes say that the *jīvas* fell from Vaikuṅṭha, the same need still exists, so why change the well-tested strategy of our *ācārya*?

But is it really true that the circumstances are the same? If they are, then we should preach the same way, but if circumstances are different, then we have to adjust our preaching accordingly. At the present moment we see two reasons that indicate the circumstances within ISKCON are different. One reason is that the controversy has reached a feverish pitch, as indicated in the following quote from Drutakarma Dāsa's letter to the GBC, the entirety of which is in the introduction to this book:

1. pass the following resolution:

Srila Prabhupada's clear teaching is that the jivas in the material world originally existed with Kṛṣṇa in one of His spiritual planets directly engaged in His service. Their falldown into this material world is due to misuse of their free will. When they go back to Godhead, they regain their original positions as Kṛṣṇa's loving servants. This view is in harmony with both *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* and the previous acharyas in our line going back to Lord Caitanya. No other view shall be presented as conclusive in any BBT or ISKCON publications, courses, or classes. Any ISKCON member actively promoting an opposing view among ISKCON members shall be subject to sanctions, including removal from positions of authority (sannyasa, GBC, guru, temple president) and ultimately expulsion. The BBT is requested to publish Drutakarma's book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa* [names and exceptionally polemical statements removed] with adequate advertising and distribution to the devotee community. [This resolution would supersede any previous resolutions establishing study groups, etc. to research this question.]

The second reason is that the project to translate the *Sandarbhās* makes it unavoidable that the version of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī will come to light, unless we change the words of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī or give a twist to them that makes it ambiguous. But his words are not ambiguous; and why not resolve the controversy? One of the functions of the *Sandarbhās* is to settle controversies, because, as Prabhupāda explains, these six treatises contain all the conclusions of our philosophy.

For general preaching purposes we should clearly understand our audience and preach according to what will inspire them to make progress in spiritual life, while we ourselves do not

forget the actual *siddhānta*. Not that we accept those statements Prabhupāda made which agree with our preference, taking them as the *siddhānta* without considering *śāstra* and *sādhu*, and deny the other version.

For over a decade in the community of devotees there has been a controversy over the origin of the *jīva* in conditioned life, so much so that one of the assignments of a committee sanctioned by the GBC (the Philosophical Research Group) has been to resolve this question. After more than five years they have not produced a definitive answer. But devotees want an answer, and as already explained, the only basis for resolving such controversy is by referring to guru, *śāstra*, and *sādhu*, being careful to make sure all three are in agreement. This conforms to the teachings of our *ācāryas* and the *śāstra*. Here are a few examples:

The devotees of the Lord, however, never fall down. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.31), the Supreme Personality of Godhead assures Arjuna, *kaunteya pratijānihi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*: “O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.” Again in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40) Kṛṣṇa says:

*nehābhikrama-nāso 'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-ālpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt*

“In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous types of fear.” (NOI, Text 3)

A pure living entity in his original spiritual existence is fully conscious of his constitutional position as an eternal servitor of the Lord. All souls who are situated in such pure consciousness are liberated, and therefore they eternally live in bliss and knowledge in the various Vaikuṅṭha planets in the spiritual sky. When the material creation is manifested, it is not meant for them. The eternally liberated souls are called *nitya-muktas*, and they have nothing to do with the material creation. (*Bhāg.* 3.5.29)

They are all self-realized souls who are *nitya-mukta*, everlastingly liberated. Although they could conceivably declare themselves Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, they never do so; they always remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and serve the Lord faithfully. Such is the atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭhaloka. Similarly, one who learns the faithful service of Lord Kṛṣṇa through the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will always remain in Vaikuṅṭhaloka and have nothing to do with the material world. (*Bhāg.* 6.1.34,36)

But once one is engaged in the spiritual activities of *bhakti-yoga*, one does not fall down. (*Bhāg.* 8.3.11)

The living entities are divided into two categories—the eternally liberated and eternally conditioned. Those who are ever-liberated never come in contact with *māyā*, the external energy. The ever-conditioned are always under the clutches of the external energy. This is described in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā*. “This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.” (Bg. 7.14) The *nitya-baddhas* are always conditioned by the external energy, and the *nitya-muktas* never come in contact with the external energy. (Cc. *Madhya* 22.14-15)

Śrīla Prabhupāda made many more such statements. In all them one important point to be noted is that nowhere does he make a distinction between the *nitya-siddhas* who eternally reside in Vaikuṅṭha and the devotees who go there from the material world. Neither type of residents can fall. This agrees with the categorical statement of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *tato 'skhalanam*. The clear implication is that a resident of Vaikuṅṭha is a resident of Vaikuṅṭha eternally. This is in solid agreement with the *śāstras*.

Thus we should not insist that our *siddhānta* is that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. If we do so, then we have to reconcile those scriptural statements that no one falls from the kingdom of God. If we cannot make such a reconciliation then our *siddhānta* would be faulty. Factually such reconciliation, would be an impossible task considering that the *śāstra* says numerous times that the Lord's abode is infallible and that the bondage of the conditioned souls is *anādi*, causeless or beginningless. Logic dictates that a causeless or beginningless event cannot have a prior state of existence.

To conclude this portion of the book (the Second Wave), we present six possible reasons why Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching strategy entailed the idea of fall from Vaikuṅṭha. In doing so, we must take into consideration all that has been discussed in the First Wave as well, because the *ācāryas* and *śāstra* clearly explain that the soul cannot fall from the spiritual world and because Prabhupāda is a faithful follower of the previous *ācāryas*. These reasons are not stated in any particular order of preference:

1. We were unqualified to understand the abstract philosophical points because of our background and upbringing and due to lack of knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedic logic.
2. Prabhupāda expected us to sort it out as we grew spiritually and studied the Gosvāmī literature, which he recommended us to do in his purports and letters.
3. He was keen on extending his mercy to as many souls as possible. Therefore he simplified a point in the philosophy he did not consider vital for advancement in devotional service. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta used the same technique in preaching to Westerners. Bhaktivinoda Thākura did a similar thing in that he tried to explain *anādi* for the "rational" mind. Before him the *ācāryas* did not try to explain *anādi*, because their audience understood what was meant.
4. He also may have thought that the real answer, if not fully understood, may cause the beginner to blame Kṛṣṇa for his miseries. This would be an obstacle to progress in spiritual life.
5. The majority of Prabhupāda's audience were schooled in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which believes in the fall of man from the kingdom of God. On the principle of *na buddhibhedam janayed*, it may have been much easier to dovetail that understanding with Kṛṣṇa consciousness and not get mired in the complex *acintya* understanding.
6. Part of Prabhupāda's strategy was to divert the newcomers from this question, "What kind of God created this world of suffering?" It takes philosophical sophistication to appreciate the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas answer to this question: the Lord is *līlāmaya*. It takes

spiritual growth to fully appreciate the nature of the Lord and that He is not the least bit to be blamed for the *baddha-jīva*'s misery. Otherwise it is hard for the *tāmasic* conditioned soul to accept responsibility for getting out. Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us the spiritual equivalent of the-stork-brought-the-baby story.

Fall-*vāda* has no rational answer to another significant question: “If we are eternal, full of knowledge, and bliss in Vaikuṅṭha, why did we choose to come here?” The singular virtue of the fall-*vāda* version is that the position and character of Kṛṣṇa is not questioned. The *jīva* did it all by misusing his free will.

In the end we may not agree as to the reasons why Prabhupāda preached fall from the *nitya-līlā*. Whatever the reason or reasons, one thing is clear—because it differs from the *siddhānta*—it was a preaching strategy. That, as far as we can discern, is the only reasonable explanation. If others come up with a more reasonable alternative, we are open to suggestions that do not compromise the *siddhānta*.

THIRD WAVE: OBJECTIONS INTRODUCTION

Although what has been presented in the first two waves is conclusive, still, to leave no room for doubt and thus close all avenues for further controversy on this issue, in this Wave we refute the major arguments of the fall-*vādīs*. In the First Chapter we discuss the *Bhāgavatam* story of Vaidarbhī and the *brāhmaṇa*, the main scriptural evidence fall-*vādīs* cite to support their theory. In the Second Chapter we answer another principle argument of the fall-*vādīs*, based on the *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, that Gopakumāra returned to Goloka after falling down to the material world. In the Third Chapter we quote *Śrī Navadvīpa-Bhāva-Taraṅga* in which Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura takes the role of an ordinary *sādhaka* and demonstrated how one first attains to his *svarūpa*. As Kamala Mañjarī he indicates how the *sādhana-siddha* devotee enters Vraja and the service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa for the very first time.

The fall-*vādīs* have developed a “general / special principle” to explain the no fall-down statements made by Śrīla Prabhupāda. In the Fourth Chapter we refute this peculiar theory. In the Fifth Chapter we answer the fall-*vādīs* charges that contradict the meaning of the word *anādi*, based on statements such as the verse *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ* (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37). In Chapter Six we explain the real meaning of some verses which apparently say that *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Sometimes fall-*vādīs* argue that Śrīla Prabhupāda named his magazine *Back to Godhead* to indicate that we have fallen from Vaikuṅṭha. In Chapter Seven we give the reason according to Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. Chapter Eight dispels the doubt based on the *kṛṣṇa bhuli* verse (*Cc. Madhya* 20.117), which seems to describe the *jīva*'s fall from Vaikuṅṭha.

Fall-*vādīs* are fond of claiming that the *jīva*'s misuse of his free will is the reason for his fall-down. Chapter Nine reveals the defect in such reasoning. In the next chapter we refute the misconception that only those who attain Vaikuṅṭha from the material world are exempt from fall-down. In Chapter Eleven we explain that the words “fallen soul” do not imply that we fell from anywhere. One naturally wonders from where the conditioned souls have come. This is answered in Chapter Twelve. In the last chapter of this wave we give further refutations to arguments from the book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa*.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER ONE

WHAT ABOUT THE STORY OF VAIDARBHĪ AND THE BRĀHMAṆA?

Fall-*vādīs* ask, “But what about those *Bhāgavatam* verses that clearly state that the living entity was with the Lord and fell down?” Their favorite example is the allegorical story of Vaidarbhī and the *brāhmaṇa* in which the *brāhmaṇa* says (*Bhāg.* 4.28.52-54):

*kā tvaṁ kasyāsi ko vācyam
śayāno yasya śocasi
jānāsi kiṁ sakhāyam mām
yenāgre vicacartha ha*

*api smarasi cātmānam
avijñāta-sakham sakhe
hitvā mām pādān anvicchan
bhauma-bhoga-rato gataḥ*

*hāmsāv aham ca tvaṁ cārya
sakhāyau mānsāyanau
abhūtām antarā vaukaḥ
sahasra-parivatsarān*

Who are you? Whose wife or daughter are you? Who is the man lying here? It appears you are lamenting for this dead body. Don't you recognize Me? I am your eternal friend. You may remember that many times in the past you have consulted Me. My dear friend, even though you cannot immediately recognize Me, can't you remember that in the past you had a very intimate friend? Unfortunately, you gave up My company and accepted a position as enjoyer of this material world. My dear gentle friend, both you and I are exactly like two swans. We live together in the same heart, which is just like the Mānasa Lake. Although we have been living together for many thousands of years (*sahasra parivatsarān*), we are still far away from our original home.

There is no explicit mention of falling down from Vaikuṅṭha in these verses. The fall-*vādīs* interpret this passage to suit their theory. Further, the phrase “were with the Lord” does not mean that one was in the full-fledged *līlā* of the Lord. As described in Chapter Six of the First Wave, the living entities reside inside Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu during the period of annihilation. During creation they come out of His body and get material bodies, which are instruments for sense enjoyment. In the material body, the Supersoul and the *jīva* live like two swans. This is being described in the three verses. As spark-like part and parcel emanations from the Lord, it is neither inaccurate nor an overstatement to say that the living entities were with the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda clarified this when he wrote in a letter to Jagadīśa Goswami in 1970:

Regarding your second question, have the conditioned souls ever seen Kṛṣṇa? Were they with the Lord before being conditioned by the desire to lord it over material nature? Yes, the conditioned souls are parts and parcels of the Lord and thus they were with Kṛṣṇa before being conditioned. Just as the child must have seen his father because the father places the child in the womb of the mother,

similarly each soul has seen Kṛṣṇa or the Supreme Father. But at that time the conditioned souls are resting in the condition called *susupti* which is exactly like deep sleep without dream, or anesthetized state, therefore they do not remember being with Kṛṣṇa when they wake up in the material world and become engaged in material affairs.

Although Prabhupāda says the living entity was with Kṛṣṇa, by the end of his answer it is clear that he does not mean in the sense of being in His *nitya-līlā*. The comparison with the child knowing its father at the time of conception obviously does not imply being in the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord. And when Śrīla Prabhupāda goes on to mention *susupti* as the deep sleep or anesthetized state, that clinches the point. As in the verses by the *brāhmaṇa*, there is no mention of being in the *līlā* of the Lord. This explanation is consistent with all that has gone before in this book.

Further, his description fits with the passage from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, wherein Haridāsa Ṭhākura informs Lord Caitanya that if all the conditioned souls went back to Godhead, the universe would at once fill up with living entities who would be activated by the Lord.

It is possible to interpret the *Bhāgavatam* verses as evidence for fall from Vaikuṅṭha, although they do not state so directly. For example in Chapter One, page 2 of his book *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa*, Drutakarma Dāsa, while attempting to explain verses 4.28.52-54, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* writes:

The Sanskrit for you gave up My company is *hitvā mām*, which is quite straightforward. The Supersoul always accompanies the conditioned soul in the material world. So there is no question of a *jīva* giving up the company of the Supersoul to take up a position as enjoyer of the material world.

But no commentary of the previous *ācāryas* supports such an interpretation. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states, for example, that the above verses refer to the *jīvas* residing within Mahā-Viṣṇu during the time of the total annihilation, when the entire cosmic manifestation along with the living entities are held within the Lord.

Mām kiṁ jānāsīti nanu tvam eva vipro mama ka ity ata āha sakhāyam iti. Kathaṁ tvayā saha mama sakhyam ity ata āha yena mayā saha agre sṛṣṭeḥ pūrvaṁ vicacartha. Mayyeva militvā mat saṅgena sukham anubhūtavān tvam evāsīr ity arthaḥ (4.28.52).

The *brāhmaṇa* said, “Do you know Me?” The queen said, “You are a *brāhmaṇa*, but how are you related to me?” He says, *sakhāyam*, “I am your friend.” The queen asked, “How do you have friendship with me?” The *brāhmaṇa* replies, *yenāgre vicacartha ha*, “You associated with Me before the creation.” The meaning is that “being merged in Me, you experienced happiness by My association.”

Here “before creation” and “being merged in Me” refer to the time of dissolution when the living entities enter Mahā-Viṣṇu. Then in the next verse again the *brāhmaṇa* asks the queen about remembering him. Commenting on the words *hitvā mām*, “giving up my company,” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes, *sṛṣṭyārambhe prācīna-karma-vaśād evety arthaḥ*, “You gave up My company at the beginning of creation because of your past karma.” Here “past karma” refers to the karma accumulated in the previous cycle of creation. When the new creation occurs, one takes birth based upon this karma.

Then commenting on the words *sahasra parivatsarān* (4.28.54), “living together for many thousands of years,” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes *sahasram parivatsarān mahāpralayo yāvad ity artha*, “Until the end of the great dissolution.” The *jīva* remains within the Lord for this period.

From this it is clear that the friendship is between the Supersoul and the *jīva* and that their living together is during the annihilation. During the creation the *jīva* leaves the association of the Lord (as the Supersoul) to enjoy matter. This leaving simply means that the *jīva*, because of enthusiasm for enjoying matter, turns away from the Supersoul. During the dissolution he does not enjoy sense gratification. At that time he is aware of the Lord’s presence. Therefore, when the *brāhmaṇa*, who is the Supersoul, meets the queen, He asks if she remembers Him. There is absolutely nothing here about the *jīva* being with Kṛṣṇa in Vaikuṅṭha.

The above explanation is in agreement with the established *siddhānta* that the fallen *jīvas* have their source in Mahā-Viṣṇu and not in Kṛṣṇa. In this entire *Bhāgavatam* story there is no direct indication of a fall from Vaikuṅṭha, which would contradict the other scriptural statements asserting that no one falls from the Lord’s abode. Having cited the verdict of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, no further analysis of this story is needed; however, because the author of *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa* must have labored hard to write his book, for the rest of this chapter we give further rejoinders to his analysis of the Vaidarbhī story.

Commenting on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.54, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes:

During the period of creation we live in the Mānasa lake, but during *Mahāpralaya* our home (the material body) was without the *upādhi* in the form of material nature. The word *sahasra parivatsarān* is indicative of the great dissolution.

This means that during the period of creation, the Supersoul and the *jīva* live together in the heart like two birds. During the time of dissolution, the *jīva* lives within the Lord because everything is dissolved. The words *antarā vaukaḥ* mean without a house. In other words, at that time, they have no house (the material body) made of material *upādhis*.

This by no means refers to the living entity in Vaikuṅṭha. No previous commentator has explained it that way. All have identified the *brāhmaṇa* as the Supersoul. If someone wants to supply an original commentary with his own interpretation, without reference to the statements of our previous *ācāryas*, we suppose that could somehow gain acceptance in some quarters, but not among the strict followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Commenting on 4.29.53 Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “In the spiritual world there is no duality, nor is there hate.” Then further down he writes, “When the living entities desire to enjoy themselves, they develop a consciousness of duality and come to hate the service of the Lord.” Although he does not say it explicitly, these words seem to imply that the living entity falls from Vaikuṅṭha, but there is a problem. In the first part of the purport he writes, “In the spiritual world there is no duality, nor is there hate.” How can this be reconciled with the second statement, since there is no duality or hate in Vaikuṅṭha? The answer has to be that the living entity must develop these symptoms elsewhere and not in Vaikuṅṭha. He could not have developed it “in the spiritual world where there is no duality, nor is there hate.”

Prabhupāda writes later on (4.30.5, purport), “The conclusion is that the origin of all life is the bodily effulgence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed in *Brahma-saṁhitā: yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-anḍa-koṭi*.” In the purport of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 2.36) he writes, “Sañkarṣaṇa is the original source of all living entities because they are all expansions of His marginal potency. Some of them are conditioned by material nature, whereas others are under the protection of spiritual nature.”

About 4.28.55, Drutakarma Dāsa writes, “It is hard to get around the implication of this.

Kṛṣṇa and the *jīva* were friends before the *jīva* entered the material world. The *jīva* left Him and came to the material world.” The *jīva* was with Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu during the time of annihilation. Then he left Him to enjoy in the material world. This is what the *ācāryas* say. For example, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments:

sva-viṣṁṛtau hetumāh sa tvam iti sārddhaiḥ ṣadbhir manyase ity adhikāḥ. Tatra sa tvam iti yugmakam. Sthiti-samaye tu sa tathāvidhastam mām viḥyāhantā-mamatābhyām vyavadhāya mahim svapna-sahita-jāgrad-daśāṅgataḥ san vicaran paryālocayannity arthaḥ.

The *brāhmaṇa* explains the cause of the queen’s (*jīva*’s) forgetfulness in one and a half verses beginning with *sa tvam* (4.28.55). The two verses beginning with *sa tvam* are to be translated together. (He said:) “During the period of creation you gave up My company. This means that you created distance between us through the feelings of I-ness and my-ness. (During the period of annihilation this separation does not exist.) You are wandering on earth, meaning you are experiencing the wakeful state along with a dream.

By taking the context and by relying on our predecessor *ācāryas* it is clear that the implication that Drutakarma Dāsa claims so hard to get around is in fact nonexistent. Even a blind man has no trouble getting around a nonexistent obstacle. The fact that it is an obstacle for him does not make it a stumbling block for others.

About 4.28.64, Drutakarma Dāsa writes:

The translation is very clear. The living being was originally Kṛṣṇa conscious. And he lost this Kṛṣṇa consciousness because of material attraction. And when he is properly instructed he goes back to his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The clear identity between the original state of the *jīva* before fall-down with the position achieved after liberation is important. It rules out, for example, the theories that the *jīva* was originally with Mahā-Viṣṇu, or in the *brahmajyoti*, or in some borderline position between the material and spiritual worlds apart from a direct relationship with Kṛṣṇa. These theories would make this *Bhāgavatam* verse and others meaningless, in terms of the direct sense of the words. If the *jīva* was originally with Mahā-Viṣṇu, or in the *brahmajyoti*, or on the borderline, but goes to Kṛṣṇa upon liberation, how can it be said that he regains his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness? That only makes sense if the state before fall-down was also Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Furthermore, what about the statements *kṛṣṇa bahir mukha* and *nitya-siddha kṛṣṇa prema* given by our predecessor *ācāryas*? These also imply an original state of Kṛṣṇa consciousness before fall-down. The Sanskrit here in text 4.28.64 is also very clear.

The synonyms given by Prabhupāda are *naṣtam*—which was lost, *apa*—gained, *punaḥ*—again, *smṛtim*—real memory. In other words, that which was lost is regained. I do not see how anyone can argue with this. It is right there in the *Bhāgavatam*, in the Sanskrit. And the purport, naturally, goes right along with it. Drutakarma Dāsa does not believe that anyone can argue with this, but any of our readers

who have followed our references from the commentary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura can easily argue with it. The memory is of Mahā-Viṣṇu, which is lost during creation, and the queen, or *jīva*, regains it when the Supersoul disguised as a *brāhmaṇa* preaches to her. The real question is how can Drutakarma Dāsa argue with that? How is he going to argue with the words of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta when they say the *jīva* falls from the *taṭastha* region? (See First Wave, Chapter One) How can he argue with the verdict that conditioned souls emanate from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu? Following in the footsteps of our predecessor *ācāryas*, Śrīla Prabhupāda also writes:

Both the living entities and material nature existed before this cosmos was manifested. Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of *mahat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him, and because they are conditioned, they are averse to serving the Supreme Lord. (Bg. 13.20)

Fall-*vādīs* will try to wriggle out of this one, but the fact remains that it agrees with the previous *ācāryas*. Therefore we cannot see how anyone can argue with it.

As far as this particular verse (*Bhāg.* 4.28.64) is concerned, kindly read Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's conclusive remarks:

*svasthaḥ prādhānikāveśa-rahitaḥ san tad-vyabhicāreṇa pūrvam
īśvarākhyā-haṁsa-bahirmukha-tayā naṣṭāṁ tirohitāṁ smṛtiṁ jānāsi api kiṁ
sakhāyaṁ māmiti api smarasi cātmānam avijñāta-sakham ity atra pūrvoktaṁ
sakhyaṅanusandhānam punar āpa iti. Atra punaḥ śabdena smṛti-śabdena tad-vismṛter
nāśādi-khaṇḍanaṁ vivakṣitam. Kintu anādyāvṛtasyāpi sakhyasya svābhāvikatvād
anādītvam ityeva kṛtahānyakṛtābhyāgama-prasaṅgāt.*

Being *svasthaḥ* means "being free from the possession of material nature." *Tad-vyabhicāreṇa* means "not devoted to the swan called *īśvara*." Because of this the memory was lost—*naṣṭāṁ*. *Punar āpa* means "regained the consciousness of friends" as was stated in words such as *jānāsi kiṁ sakhāyam mām* (4.28.52), *api smarasi cātmānam avijñāta-sakham* (4.28.53). Here the use of the words *punaḥ* (again) and *smṛtiḥ* (memory) are used to indicate the disappearance or destruction of forgetfulness. But that forgetfulness is certainly beginningless although the friendship, which is also covered without beginning, is natural. If this meaning is not accepted then there will be two defects, losing what has been established and accepting what is not necessary.

Here Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has clearly explained that the meaning of the words *punaḥ* (again) and *smṛti* (memory) should not be misunderstood to mean that there was some previous existence of memory and then it was lost. It only means that the forgetfulness is without a beginning, *anādi*. Not that one had memory and then lost it. Otherwise two defects would result. First, it will contradict the principle that the *jīva's* conditioning is beginningless. We would have to accept that it has a beginning, which is defective—it goes against logic and against the *śāstra*. It goes against logic, because something that is *anādi* cannot have a prior state of existence. Therefore, to postulate further that conditioning has a beginning goes against the *śāstra*, because the precise word used by the *śāstra* and the *ācāryas* to describe conditional life is *anādi*. If we begin to question the precision of their use of *anādi*, then we can question the precise usage in any and all of their statements. Therefore Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī concludes, "If this meaning is not

accepted then there will be two defects, losing what has been established and accepting what is not necessary.” This is the verdict of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the greatest scholar on *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava siddhānta*, as Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *Gītār-gāna*:

*gosvāmī prabhur gaṇa āśraya sei śrī-caraṇa
anya mora kichu āśā nāi
tānra madhye je śrī-jīva ujjala ācārya-dīpa
diyāchena caranete thāi*

I have no yearning other than for the exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of the Gosvāmīs. Amongst all of the *ācāryas*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is the brilliant torch lamp of knowledge. He has very mercifully given me a residence near his lotus feet (in the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple).

Fall-*vādīs* also try to establish that the *brāhmaṇa* is actually speaking on behalf of Kṛṣṇa and not the Supersoul. In this connection, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, commenting on 4.28.62 says, *aham paramātmā bhavān jīvaḥ na cānyaḥ*, “I am certainly the Supersoul and none else, and you are the *jīva* and none else.” The word *eva* (certainly) after *Paramātmā* negates any other possibility. In his comment on 4.28.63 he writes *āvayoh paramātmā-jīvātmanoh*, “Of ours, the Supersoul and the *jīva*.” And later on, *jīvaḥ . . . sadaiva upādhi dharmagrastah*, “The *jīva* is always under the influence of *upādhis*,” which means he had no prior state to his conditioning.

From 4.29.26, Drutakarma Dāsa tries to prove that the word *bhagavantam* can only mean Kṛṣṇa. In so doing he completely ignores the first line of the verse: *yadā*—when, *ātmānam*—the supreme soul, *avijñāya*—forgetting, “When forgetting the Supersoul.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that *ātmānam* means *Paramātmā* or Supersoul, “*ātmānam paramātmānam*.” He does not comment any more. Once *ātmānam* is translated as Supersoul then according to Sanskrit *anvaya* rules, *bhagavantam*, *param*, and *gurum* all become adjectives limiting *ātmānam*. When the word *ātmānam* is used in the first line then the question arises which *ātmā*, since there are so many *ātmās*? The second line indicates which one by the three adjectives. This is supported by Śrī Vijayadhvaja Tirtha, *ātma-śabdasya sādharāṇatvena katham nirṇaya ityato bhagavantam ityādi-viśeṣaṇatrayam*, “*Ātma* is a general word, so how are we to know which *ātmā* is being mentioned in the verse? The answer is that there are three adjectives qualifying *ātmā*—*bhagavantam*, *param*, and *gurum*.”

Drutakarma Dāsa’s logic that the word *bhagavān* is used only for Kṛṣṇa is poor scholarship. He has quoted *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* but he forgot the adjective *svayam*. It is the phrase *svayam bhagavān* that is used only for Kṛṣṇa. Another important point to be noted is that *bhagavān* comes first followed by its adjective *svayam*. Similarly in the verse under discussion, *ātmānam* comes first followed by three adjectives. Let there be no doubt for our readers that there is any confusing Sanskrit analysis here. All the adjectives qualify *ātmānam* leaving no room for doubt that the Supersoul is the subject of discussion in the verse.

Actually *bhagavān* is used even for great personalities like Nārada Muni, then what to speak of the Supersoul. For example, in verse 1.19.40, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is called *bhagavān bādarāyaṇiḥ*. So his interpretation of *bhagavān* as applying exclusively to Kṛṣṇa is not supported by Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

Furthermore, he refers to verse 1.3.1 and says, “If we take Mahā-Viṣṇu as *Bhagavān*, then this renders meaningless the statement (1.3.1) that among all the incarnations of the Lord only Kṛṣṇa is *Bhagavān* (*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*).” The real meaning of the quote *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* is that only Kṛṣṇa is *svayam bhagavān*. And therefore taking Mahā-Viṣṇu as *Bhagavān* does not cause any problem to the meaning of *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* as Drutakarma Dāsa

has proposed. In fact Śrīdhara Svāmī has accepted such a usage. While commenting on verse 1.3.2 he writes, *ko'asau bhagavān ity apekṣāyām taṁ viśinaṣṭi*, “The word *bhagavān* was used in the previous verse (1.3.1). If someone raises the question “Who is this *bhagavān*?” then this verse (1.3.2) distinguishes Him.” And surely this verse is describing someone lying on the water, *yasyāmbhasi śayānasya*. That is certainly Lord Viṣṇu.

So 4.29.26 is talking about forgetfulness of the Supersoul and not Kṛṣṇa. Moreover, the word *avijñāya* (forgetting) literally means “not knowing.” Forgetting here means not knowing, not that He knew and then forgot. Nowhere in the purport does Prabhupāda mention that he was in *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* and now he has forgotten. The forgetfulness is beginningless, but for ease of understanding it is described as if it had a beginning.

Next Drutakarma Dāsa cites text 4.29.48. He is fascinated by the use of the words “return home, back to Godhead.” The very first line of this verse says that they never know their own home: *svam*—own, *lokam*—abode, *na*—never, *viduḥ*—know, *te*—such persons, *vai*—certainly, *yatra*—where, *devaḥ*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *janārdanaḥ*—Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu. The sentence reads, “Such persons certainly never know their own abode where the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa lives.” The present tense “never know” cannot refer to the future, but it does include both the past and present. So the meaning is that they do not know and have never known that abode, and that’s why they engage in fruitive activities. This is how the previous *ācāryas* have commented on the verse. How one can conceive this verse to mean that one fell from *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is truly amazing. Returning home does not necessarily mean that we were there. We have dealt with this question in the Third Wave: Chapter Eleven.

After his analysis, Drutakarma Dāsa jubilantly concludes, “On the basis of this section of the *Bhāgavatam* alone, the whole origin of the *jīva* can be settled.” He is right. Unfortunately, the settlement cannot be made on the basis of his analysis of the section, for the conclusion of our predecessor *ācāryas* is that the *jīva* came from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu, not from Vaikuṅṭha.

He has done a similar analysis of other verses in other Cantos. None of these verses state that the *jīva* fell from Vaikuṅṭha, but Drutakarma Dāsa has tried to prove otherwise. He tries to screw out a conclusion of fall-down, completely disregarding the primary meanings of the verses, and declares his analysis as the primary meaning, *mukhyā vṛtti*. But as in the story of Vaidarbhī and the *brāhmaṇa*, he did not understand the true meaning of the *Bhāgavatam* narration. To comment on the verses in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* one has to understand the real purpose of the speaker. We found *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa* wanting in this very important guiding principle, which is stated by Śukadeva Gosvāmī (*Bhāg.* 12.3.14):

*kathā imās te kathitā mahīyasām
vitāya lokeṣu yaśaḥ pareyuṣām
vijñāna-vairāgya-vivakṣayā vibho
vaco-vibhūtīr na tu pāramārthyam*

O mighty Parīkṣit, I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge.

In this way, Nārada related the allegorical story of Vaidarbhī to teach Prācīnabarhī detachment from fruitive activities; it was not Nārada’s purpose to teach the king that we fell from the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord. Nārada Muni uses this allegory to instruct King Prācīnabarhī in the science of self-realization. It cannot be taken literally, therefore, for it is a parable, as explained

by Nārada himself just a few verses later (*Bhāg.* 4.28.65):

*barhiṣmann etad adhyātman
pāroksyena pradarśitam
yat parokṣa-priyo devo
bhagavān viśva-bhāvanah*

My dear King Prācīnabarhi, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, is celebrated to be known indirectly. Thus I have described the story of Purañjana to you (indirectly). Actually it is an instruction for self-realization.”

The words *pāroksyena* “indirectly” and *parokṣayapriya* “who like indirect description” must be noted. The conclusion is that the story of Vaidarbhī and the *brāhmaṇa* has nothing to do with the fall of *nitya-muktas* from the spiritual world to the material world.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER TWO

DID SARŪPA FALL FROM GOLOKA?

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī does not write anywhere that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha, yet some devotees have tried to screw out such a meaning from his writings. As proof they cite *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam* 2.6.55 (translation by Kuśakrāta Dāsa):

O Śrīdāmā, now I have found my friend Sarūpa, who is a brilliant sun shining on the lotus of your family.

This verse, they argue, means not only that Gopakumāra had once been Kṛṣṇa’s friend in Gokula, but that he had a place in Śrīdāmā’s family.

Next they cite from Sanātana Gosvāmī’s commentary on 2.6.89, “Sarūpa is Gopakumāra’s original name in the spiritual world.” And finally, in 2.6.131, Sarūpa is referred to as “born in the family of Rādhā’s brother.” This means he is related to Śrīdāmā, they argue. This proves Gopakumāra was originally a friend of Kṛṣṇa named Sarūpa, who fell into the material world and then went back to Godhead.

But a careful reading of the story shows all these assumptions to be inappropriate. When Gopakumāra arrived in Goloka only Kṛṣṇa recognized him as a friend named Sarūpa. No one else knew this newcomer. The Lord had to introduce Sarūpa to everyone else, including Śrīdāmā, to whose family the newcomer supposedly belonged. If it is the case that Sarūpa had regained the *svarūpa* which he had prior to his fall—meaning that he is in the same form, mood and so on which he had before his fall—why is it that no one but Kṛṣṇa recognized him? When he was introduced to Śrīdāmā, they did not embrace each other like long-parted family members. In fact what would have been the need even to introduce him? In Vaikuṅṭha you do not lose your memory over a period of time.

Secondly, from the viewpoint of the residents of Gokula, it would not have been a long time since he left because they are beyond material time. All the *kalpas* of Gopakumāra’s stay in the material world may be just a second in Vrajadhāma. As Lord Brahmā says (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 56), *vrajati na hi yatrāpi samāyah*, “In the Lord’s abode there is eternal existence of transcendental time.” What to speak of recognizing Sarūpa, the *gopīs* thought that maybe he was a servant of Kāmsa come to harm Kṛṣṇa (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.63), *kamsasya māyāvi-varasya bhṛtyah*.

Lord Kṛṣṇa did not say that His friend Sarūpa had returned. Just because Lord Kṛṣṇa said, “I have found My friend Sarūpa,” does not mean that Sarūpa was in Vraja. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the friend of every living entity”—*suhṛdam sarva bhūtānām*. He uses the same word, *suhṛdam*, in the verse under discussion (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.55), so it is not unusual for Kṛṣṇa to recognize him as a friend and to address him as such even though Gopakumāra had never been in Goloka. That no one in Goloka knew Sarūpa—who was introduced and described as a newcomer rather than an old-timer coming back—indicates that he was not returning to some old familiar place.

Sarūpa never uttered anywhere that he had returned to his original place. Rather he described everything as if he had never been there. For example, it is Śrīdāmā who led Sarūpa to his house. Sarūpa could not go by himself (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.146), *śrīdāmnāgatya geham svam aham nītaḥ prayatnataḥ*, “Then Śrīdāmā came and respectfully led me to his house.”

After meeting Lord Kṛṣṇa for the first time, Sarūpa went to Kṛṣṇa’s house. Later on, Śrīdāmā took him to his house. Sarūpa did not go by himself. Sarūpa also said that Śrīdāmā took him to his house. He did not say that he took him to *their* house. In case someone doubts the meaning of the word *svaḥ* “his own,” Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says *svam* means *svakīyam* or his (Śrīdāmā’s) own. Sarūpa referred to himself as a newcomer, *nūtna* (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.359).

But then why did Kṛṣṇa say that Sarūpa belonged to Śrīdāmā’s family? The meaning is that when a *jīva* follows the path of *rāgānuga bhakti*, he has to think himself as a follower of some *nitya-siddha* or a *rāgātmika* devotee in Vraja. Those who are in *mādhūrya bhāva* will follow the *manjārīs* and those in *sākhya bhāva* will follow the friends of Kṛṣṇa, such as Śrīdāmā. When they attain perfection, they will join in their respective groups and are called family members. So the meaning of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s statement is that Sarūpa will be in the group of Śrīdāmā and will render service under his guidance. This is explained in detail in verses 1.2.270-307 of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and the commentaries of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura on these verses.

The spiritual planets are free from birth, death, old age and disease, so what is the meaning of the Lord saying, “He belongs to your family”? Was he born into his family? Of course not, but he is joining Śrīdāmā’s family of *sākhya* devotees.

If we have to conclude that Gopakumāra was in Goloka and fell down, then what about this verse (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.81)?

*śrī bhagavān uvāca
svāgataṁ svāgataṁ vatsa
diṣṭyā diṣṭyā bhavān mayā
sangato’tra tvadikṣāyām
ciramutkañṭhitena hi*

Lord Viṣṇu said, “Welcome, Welcome O dear one. I have been very eagerly awaiting to see for a long time. Now by great fortune I have met you.

The scene is Vaikuṅṭha. Here the Lord uses the word *ciram utkañṭhitena*—eager since a long

time. And in the next verse the Lord addresses him as *sakhā*, dear friend. According to the logic of the fall-*vādīs* this would be proof that Gopakumāra fell from both Vaikuṅṭha and Goloka. And to make the case for fall-down worse, consider this next verse (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.263):

śrī bhagavān uvāca
bho gopanandana suhṛttama sādhu sādhu
snehaṁ vidhāya bhavatā vijayaḥ kṛto'tra
viśramyatāmalam alaṁ bahubhiḥ prayāsai-
retair na duḥkhāya ciram nija-bāndhavaṁ mām

Lord Rāma said, "O Gopanandana, O My best friend, very well. You have come here out of affection for me. This is very auspicious. Please relax and do not give Me pain by paying obeisances. I am Your old friend.

This was how Lord Rāma addressed Gopakumāra when he arrived in Ayodhyā in the spiritual sky. Now, following the fall-*vādīs* logic, we must conclude that Gopakumāra fell from Rāma-*līlā* as well. This raises some pertinent questions: Did he fall sequentially from all these places? Or did he fall simultaneously? If he fell sequentially, then we cannot say that once attaining the spiritual world one does not return to this material world. If he fell simultaneously, where is the *sāstric* reference to substantiate that a *jīva* devotee can participate simultaneously in the Lord's pastimes in Goloka, Vaikuṅṭha, and Ayodhyā? And even if they can do this by expanding themselves, do they all fall simultaneously? We know on the authority of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī that devotees of Lord Caitanya get to be in His *nitya-līlā* and in Kṛṣṇa's simultaneously, but do we have other instances of this in the *sāstra*?

Fall-*vādīs* may come up with alternative answers: (1) Gopakumāra fell gradually from Goloka to Ayodhyā then to Vaikuṅṭha. He resided at each of these places, made friendship with the Lord, became envious of Him and fell to the next place. (2) Viṣṇu and Rāma made such statements only thinking of themselves as non-different from Lord Kṛṣṇa.

There is no *sāstric* proof for either of these explanations, and if a person becomes envious of Kṛṣṇa, Lord Rāma or Lord Viṣṇu would not consider him Their friend or give him shelter in Their abodes. The second explanation can be given only by those who do not know the difference between Vraja and Vaikuṅṭha *bhakti*.

When Gopakumāra reached Vaikuṅṭha and saw Lord Viṣṇu, he called Him "Gopāla" and ran to embrace the Lord, but the Lord's associates stopped him (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.76-77). The Lord did not respond as if He was Gopāla. Therefore, Lord Viṣṇu was neither considering Himself as Kṛṣṇa nor did He address Gopakumāra as a friend of Kṛṣṇa. The actual explanation is that because Kṛṣṇa is *svayam bhagavān*, He can assume the mood of any other incarnation, but no other expansion or incarnation can assume His mood. Indeed, the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa have no attraction for any other incarnation. If Gopakumāra was originally in Goloka, then he would not be attracted to Viṣṇu, and especially he would not mistakenly call Him Gopāla.

Then why did Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Rāma, and Lord Kṛṣṇa address Gopakumāra as friend? The reason is that the Lord is a friend of His devotee. All the incarnations come to establish religion, *dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya*. When a *jīva* becomes a devotee, They feel happy. Such a devotee is automatically very dear to the Lord. Every *jīva* has an eternal relation with the Lord as servant, and when he realizes this, the Lord feels ecstatic. The Lord is naturally englanded to meet such a friend. Therefore, wherever Gopakumāra was in Vaikuṅṭha, he was received by the Lord with great joy.

Otherwise, if the declaration of friendship by both Rāma and Viṣṇu is an indication of a previous relationship, then why did They allow him to leave for Goloka? They did not even

inquire from their servants about Gopakumāra's departure. They considered him a *sakhā* because in all His forms the Lord is a well-wisher of the living entity. In fact He manifests various forms for the pleasure of His devotees.

The conclusion of this is clear, but the following statement of Gopakumāra gives added weight to what's been said so far, *cirādr̥ṣṭa-prāṇa-priya-sakhāmivāvapyā* (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.5.76), "Lord Kṛṣṇa took my hand in His as if He had found His dearest friend whom He had not seen for a long time." Here the word *iva* (like) is very important. It clearly means that the Lord never met Him before because Sarūpa was never in Goloka. The Lord greets him *like* an old friend and not simply an old friend because Sarūpa was never in Goloka before.

One who reaches Goloka is a very rare and special soul. *Prema-bhakti* is rarely understood and very rarely achieved. If Sarūpa had already been in Vraja, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī would not use the word *iva* in this verse. Instead he could have used the words *anu*, *punar*, *bhūya* and so on which mean again. Sanskrit does not lack words for expressing these matters and Sanātana Gosvāmī does not lack knowledge of them.

The fall-*vādī*'s second argument is based on the commentary to Text 2.6.89, "Sarūpa is Gopakumāra's original name in the spiritual world." Actually there is no such statement in the commentary. Apparently the phrase "original name in the spiritual world" was assumed and added by the translator, who was himself a fall-*vādī*, and out of natural enthusiasm for having Sarūpa return, he included that in his translation to Text 89. What the commentator does say is, "Because the Lord called Gopakumāra by the name Sarūpa, from now on I will refer to him by this name." The text reads, *gopakumārasyāsyā bhagavata sarūpeti nāmokti ritāḥ prabhṛti tannāmnaiva nirddeśaḥ*. The author had been writing *gopakumāra uvāca*, but once Kṛṣṇa gave him the name Sarūpa, the author changed it to *sarūpa uvāca* in place of *gopakumāra uvāca*. Because he did this for the first time in verse Text 89, he explained his reason.

The answer to the third proof based on verse 2.6.131 in which the Lord refers to Sarūpa as born in the family of Rādhā's brother has been given previously. Here we will make some additional points. The words *tad-bhrāṭṛ-vaṁśa-jātasya*, mean "Born in the family of Rādhā's brother." This infers that Sarūpa will be part of Śrīdāmā's group. The word *jātasya*, although meaning "of the one born," comes from the root *jani*. The original meaning of the root is *jani prādurbhāve*, "to appear." Therefore, the meaning of the above phrase is one who has appeared in the family of Rādhā's brother, for it cannot be taken literally as birth in that family. And this appearance is not a previous appearance but current. The past tense, used in the word *jātasya*, "one who has appeared," does not refer to some event in the distant past before the supposed fall-down; it refers to the immediate past. In fact that very phrase proves that he was never in Goloka before, otherwise why does the Lord have to repeat it again and again. He repeats it because no one knows Sarūpa's identity because he is a newcomer. The same point is apparent in Chapter Three of the Third Wave where Śrīla Bhaktivinoda describes his entrance into Goloka as Kamala-mañjarī. She is introduced to everyone not as an old associate returning, but as a newcomer. If the phrase *tad-bhrāṭṛ-vaṁśa-jātasya*, "born in the family of Rādhā's brother," is not understood in this way, then the fall-*vādīs* have to explain *jātasya*, how one can be born in Vaikuṇṭha.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given a description of Śrīdāmā's family (*Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 2.37-39):

*śrīdāmā śyāmara-ruciraṅga-kāntir manoharā
pīta-vastra-paridhāno ratna-mālā paramojvalaḥ
śrī kṛṣṇasya priyatamo bahukeli-rasākaraḥ
vṛṣabhānuḥ pitā tasya mātā ca kirttidā satī
rādhānanga-mañjarī ca kaniṣṭhā bhagini bhavet*

Śrīdāmā has an attractive blackish bodily hue. He wears yellow garments and is decorated by necklaces made of gems. He is sixteen years old and a very effulgent young boy. He is the dearest friend of Kṛṣṇa and is the storehouse of various playful moods. His father is Vṛṣabhānu and his mother is the chaste lady, Kīrttidā. He has two younger sisters, Rādhā and Anāṅga-mañjarī.

Śrīdāmā was not married, and it is inconceivable that Sarūpa (Gopakumāra) was born in the family of Śrīdāmā. He could not be one of Śrīdāmā's uncles because he is of Śrīdāmā's age. And the most dangerous proposition is that if Sarūpa, who belongs to Rādhā's family, could fall, then anyone could fall. How about Śrī Rādhā Herself? If Sarūpa could fall from his eternal post as a member of this family, then fall-*vādīs* must explain why She could not fall? By their logic She must be a prime candidate because She sees Kṛṣṇa enjoying all the time and She must have more free will than the remote devotees. Thus She has more facility to become envious and thereby misuse Her free will. But no Vaiṣṇava would accept this line of thinking.

Besides the above points, Gopakumāra describes himself as a "newcomer" in Goloka (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.3.359):

*dure'stu tāvad vārtteyaṁ tatra nitya-nivāsinām
na tiṣṭhed anusandhānam nūtnānām māḍṛśāmapī*

What to speak of the eternal residents of Goloka, even newcomers like me cannot ascertain this (whether a particular pastime has been performed earlier or not).

In this verse the words *nitya-nivāsinām* and *nūtnānām* are very important. The first means eternal (no beginning and no end) residents and *nūtna* means the newcomers. If Gopakumāra was ever in Goloka and fell down, then this verse would make no sense at all.

The dictionary meanings of *nūtna* are: new, fresh, young, present, instantaneous, recent, modern, curious, and strange. In the present context, especially because the word has been used in contrast to eternal residents, the word can mean a new, fresh, recent or modern resident. In his commentary on this verse, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explains the word *nūtna* as *ādhunikā bhagavat-kṛpayā sādhakāḥ*, "the modern devotees who have reached there by the mercy of the Lord." In this part of the book, he explains that the Lord performs His pastimes repeatedly, yet they appear novel to the eternal residents. Someone may think that the devotees who arrive from the material world remember that the Lord repeats His pastimes because devotees in the material world know the Lord does so. The author says that even they do not remember. (This is the proof that devotees who reach Vaikuṅṭha from the material world do not carry their material memories. Therefore the logic that such devotees do not fall down because they remember their material miseries is not supported by the *śāstra*. The reason they do not fall is that they are engaged in *bhakti*, not that they are scared to fall.) The word *ādhunika*, which is used for devotees like Sarūpa, means modern, of recent origin, new and so on. Therefore it completely upsets the fall-down theory.

Even after all this, fall-*vādīs* may feel this is just our interpretation. Then, please consider the following verse (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.366):

*tallokasya svabhāvo'yaṁ kṛṣṇa-saṅgaṁ vināpi yat
bhavet tatraiva tiṣṭhāsā na cikīrṣā ca kasya cet*

Indeed it is the nature of that planet (Goloka) that even without the association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa one desires to live there. No one even desires to go anywhere else.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says two things: (1) one wants to live there and (2) one never desires to leave. So He confirms the no-fall *siddhānta* both positively and negatively, leaving no loopholes. In case one misinterprets that some of them may like to leave, he uses the word *kasyacit*—no one. No loopholes again. Even if Kṛṣṇa leaves Goloka, the residents will not leave. Forget about leaving, they will not even entertain such a desire. Although the verse is self-explanatory, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī comments upon it to make it explicit. *Kṛṣṇasya saṅgam vināpi tatra śrī goloka eva tatradya vraja-bhumau vātiṣṭhāsā sthātumicchā bhavet*. "Even without the association of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Vrajavāsīs desire to stay only in Goloka or Vraja-bhūmi." This makes it impossible to juggle words. And if one doubts, thinking, "How will Vrajavāsīs tolerate the misery of separation from Kṛṣṇa?" in the next verse Sanātana Gosvāmī says that this misery dances on the heads of all other pleasures. So without doubt Vrajavāsīs will not even think of leaving Vraja.

From these verses by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī it is very clear that he has not the least inclination towards the fall-down theory. Here it may be noted that the *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* is the prime book of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. The other Gosvāmīs drew from this book for the philosophical tenets. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī was the senior-most of the six Gosvāmīs and was an authority on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Indeed, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was his worshipable deity. Furthermore, he was personally instructed by Lord Caitanya for two months in Benāres. Therefore it is expected that none of the other Gosvāmīs would write anything that contradicts the *siddhānta* set forth in the *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*. Later on we will give more evidence (*pramāṇas*) from this book in support of the no fall-down *siddhānta*.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER THREE

ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA BHĀVA-TARAṄGA

The fall-*vādīs* say that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha, and only after perfecting the process of devotional service does he return to the transcendental abode. At that time the *jīva* attains his *svarūpa* which he had prior to his fall-down and then he does not fall again. They say this is the reason the *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*'s account of Sarūpa's (Gopakumāra) arrival in Goloka has the Lord greet him as a long lost friend. We have already analyzed this story and pointed out the many inconsistencies that result if Sarūpa did fall from Goloka. The truth is that this was Sarūpa's first experience of the eternal *dhāma*.

In the *Kṛṣṇa Book*, Chapter Twenty-eight, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that those who perfect the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness meet Kṛṣṇa for the first time:

The mature devotees, who have completely executed Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are immediately transferred to the universe where Kṛṣṇa is appearing. In that universe the devotees get their first opportunity to associate with Kṛṣṇa personally and directly.

Unfortunately, the fall-*vādīs* take a statement like this as insignificant because, as they say, Prabhupāda said this only one time and he explained fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha many times. Our point, however, is that the numerical difference notwithstanding, if this one time agrees with the *siddhānta* then that is significant. The many fall statements, just because they disagree with the *siddhānta*, cannot change the *siddhānta*.

If fall-down was the true message of Śrīla Prabhupāda, why would he contradict it? If we accept his statements of fall-down as absolute, then we have to reconcile all his no-fall statements by saying they were preaching strategy, but who is willing to come right out and say that? No one. And the reason is that we all know that to say his no-fall statements are merely a preaching technique would go against the *śāstra*. Thus no plausible accounting can be given for his no-fall statements.

To further support the no-fall *siddhānta* and that those who become liberated from the material world have never been in Vaikuṅṭha, we cite in this chapter an example from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In the *Navadvīpa Bhāva-Taraṅga*, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda gives this account of his vision while in trance:

While devoid of external consciousness in a dreamlike state of *samādhi*, a wondrous figure will appear performing her constitutional service. I will recognize that it is I, Kamala-mañjarī, the eternal assistant of Anaṅga-mañjarī, the goddess of my heart. (147)

Although Bhaktivinoda uses the words eternal assistant, it soon becomes clear that Kamala-mañjarī is a newcomer to Vṛndāvana. The word eternal assistant means that from now onwards she will eternally render service to Anaṅga-mañjarī. A number of statements give us the clue to her being a newcomer:

Anaṅga-mañjarī will introduce me to all her companions, and will give me the service of preparing camphor for Their Lordships. She will reveal to me the pastimes of the divine couple. (148)

A former resident of Goloka would need no introduction. Instead Kamala would have been welcomed back.

Near Śrī Pulina is the *Rāsa-maṇḍala*, where Gopendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by a billion *gopīs*, steals the hearts of all by His dancing with Śrī Rādhā, the predominating goddess of the *rāsa* dance. (149) Such graceful dancing does not exist within the material world ! By great fortune, whoever sees this pastime at once drowns in that nectar. And whoever attains such a transcendental trance will be unable to give up the happiness of that astounding sight! (150)

In this verse Śrīla Bhaktivinoda indicates that no one falls from the abode of the Lord when he says, “By great fortune, whoever sees this pastime at once drowns in that nectar. And whoever attains such a transcendental trance will be unable to give up the happiness of that astounding sight!”

I will be unable to describe the sight I will behold. I will lock it in my heart, and gaze upon it eternally. In my own grove, while cultivating that sight in my heart, I will serve constantly under the direction of the *sakhīs*. (151) Anaṅga-mañjarī, the younger sister of Rādhārānī, will bestow her mercy on me and personally show me the *dhāma*. We will go west of the *Rāsa-maṇḍala* to Śrī Dhīra-samīra, and then a little further to Vamśī-vaṭa and the bank of the Yamunā. (152).

From this and other verses that follow it will be clear that Kamala is a newcomer to Goloka, and she will first serve an apprenticeship under Anaṅga-mañjarī so she is properly trained for her

service. This is supported by the teachings of our philosophy which state that the aspiring devotees must eventually take shelter of a resident of Śrī Goloka Vṛndāvana and under that devotee's guidance become trained up in the perfectional stage of devotional service.

*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-praśne īśvarī āmāra
balibe e nava-dāsī sakhī lalitāra
kamala-mañjarī-nāma gaurāṅgera-gati
kṛpā kari deha ebe rāga-mārga gati*

Rūpa-mañjarī will question my mistress, Anaṅga-mañjarī, who will reply, “This new maidservant will be engaged under Lalitā-sakhī's direction. Her name is Kamala-mañjarī, and she is fixed in devotion to Śrī Gaurāṅga. Be merciful and give her spontaneous devotion to our Lordships. (153)

In this *Payāra* (Bengālī verse) the word *nava-dāsī*, “new maidservant” is very significant. If Kamala-mañjarī was originally from Vraja, then the word *nava-dāsī* would be an improper reference.

Hearing this, Rūpa-mañjarī will touch my body with her merciful hand, suddenly imparting to me sublime spiritual emotions and the intense desire to worship in her footsteps. (154). My complexion is like lightning, and my ornaments and dress sparkle like the midnight stars. I will appear with a camphor tray in my hand, and I will fall flat at her feet and beg for the unalloyed shelter of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. (155) Rūpa-mañjarī and Anaṅga-mañjarī will take me to the private grove of Lalitā, the charming mistress of Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, who is dwelling inside meditating on the service of Rādhārānī's lotus feet. (156) I will pay my full obeisances at her lotus feet, and Viśākhā will explain to her my identity, “This is one inhabitant of Navadvīpa, who wants to serve you and thereby serve the feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” (157) Lalitā will be very pleased and will say to Anaṅga-mañjarī, the consort of Śeṣa, “Give her a place beside yours, and carefully arrange her desired service. Take her along when you go to perform your service, and gradually she will receive the mercy of Śrī Rādhā. Without Rādhā's mercy, how can the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa be attained?” (158-159) Hearing Lalitā's words, Anaṅga-mañjarī will take me to her grove and make me her own maidservant. She shows her affection by graciously allowing me to accompany her when she goes to serve the divine couple. (160) While performing my service, I will catch a glimpse of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the distance. Then perhaps Śrī Rādhā will display Her mercy by giving me an order and the shade of Her lotus feet. (161) Remaining always engaged in that service, I will gradually become expert. Thus I will please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who will sometimes give me Their ornaments as a reward. (162)

The Ṭhākura's conclusion is that by such guidance she will “gradually become expert,” *krame sevā-kāryya āminaibe pravīṇa*. This is yet another indication that Kamala-mañjarī was never in Goloka before. If she had previously been there, she would have been expert. And because her stay in the material world may be hardly a moment in terms of spiritual time, she would not have forgotten her expertise because expertise is part of the *svarūpa*. Moreover, if she revived or regained her *svarūpa*, she would have regained her expertise. Someone may argue that Bhaktivinoda is a *nitya-pārṣada* of the Lord; therefore, this account of him being a newcomer

to Goloka should be disregarded. Our response is that in this story he has given a description of the entrance of the newly qualified *pārṣada* using himself as the example in the same way that he used himself to typify the ordinary conditioned soul in his songs, such as *āmāra jīvana*. Therefore our point stands—*sādhana-siddha bhaktas* were never before in the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord, because *tato 'skhalanam*, no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. This agrees with the descriptions given of Sarūpa in *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* and Śrīla Prabhupāda's statement from *Kṛṣṇa Book* that the mature devotee, after perfecting his Kṛṣṇa consciousness, meets Kṛṣṇa for the first time.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER FOUR

WHAT ABOUT THE GENERAL / SPECIAL PRINCIPLE?

In the Second Wave we have shown how there are precedents in our line for an *ācārya* veiling his true intention and not preaching the *siddhānta*. We have also shown how it fell to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura to carefully analyze the statements of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and bring out his true intention with regard to the *siddhānta* of *parakīya rasa*. In this way the true intention of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was handed down intact in the system of *paramparā*. By this we have established the need for reconciling the contradictory words of Śrīla Prabhupāda on the *jīva*-whence question and the conclusion is clear.

One of the arguments given by those who oppose the no-fall position is the general/special principle. The logic given is that devotees personally asked Śrīla Prabhupāda and he always answered in favor of fall-down. His answer is the final verdict. And by their analysis this is also supported by scripture and our *ācāryas*. Therefore, the “few statements” favoring no fall-down found in Prabhupāda's books are general statements and his direct answers in favor of fall-down are the special statements based on which no one should doubt the true answer to the *jīva*-whence question. In fact no one even has the right to raise any more questions, because Prabhupāda personally gave his verdict whenever he was questioned on the issue. To question again indicates lack of faith.

But this solution does not give any satisfactory explanation towards reconciling so many statements found in the scriptures and in the writings of our *ācāryas* which clearly favor the no fall-down *siddhānta*. It also does not reconcile or explain the need for the “general statements.”

According to the general/special theorists, the no fall-down statements are very few. In practical terms general means that which applies in the majority of situations whereas special means that which applies for a particular purpose or occasion. Therefore, if the no fall-down statements are “general” and the fall-down statements are “special”, we would expect the general statements to be more frequent and the special statements to be fewer. By this common sense approach we find that the general/special theory as stated by the fall-*vādīs* is not logical. It does not support the fall position; rather, it supports the no fall-down *siddhānta*, because the no fall-down statements, being fewer, are the special statements and they override the fall-down statements, which are general.

Secondly, the fall theory in fact gets no support from scripture or from our *ācāryas*. This has already been clearly established in the First Wave and throughout this book. Thirdly, although devotees personally asked Prabhupāda about the bondage of the *jīva*, no one ever asked him the reason for the categorical statements about no-fall from Vaikuṅṭha found in his books. If that had happened then perhaps one could argue that it is wrong to raise the question again; but, as we

have shown in an earlier chapter in the First Wave of this book, Śrīla Prabhupāda has himself raised the question and answered in favor of no-fall down. That is highly conclusive. The difference between a disciple raising the question and himself raising it is that in the former case he has to take into account the ability of the questioner. When he raises the question himself, he has no such restriction; rather, an author raises the question himself and answers it just to remove any lingering doubts over the issue.

For example, there is a physicist who also teaches a primary school class. One of the properties of light, he explains to his students, is that it travels in a straight line. He even proves it by doing a simple demonstration with a piece of cardboard with a hole punched in it. All the students see the pencil of light come through the hole and are convinced that light travels in a straight line. Simultaneously, the physicist is writing a book for college level students. In his book he explains how light travels in waves, which is a fact. Years later the physicist is dead. His primary school students, now grown up, continue to believe that light travels in a straight line. Then they meet a student from their former teacher's advanced class, who disagrees with them. A debate ensues. The students bring their notes with many quotes from the deceased teacher to prove that light travels in a straight line. They even perform the cardboard experiment to prove it. In this way, they try to prove that statements in the book of their teacher have secondary importance, because whenever the teacher was questioned he consistently answered them that light travels in a straight line. But this does not stand up, because the statements written in the book are taken as well-considered and conclusive.

The argument given by fall-*vādīs* is similar to the student's claim—that whenever Prabhupāda was personally asked about the *jīva's* bondage, he consistently supported the fall-down theory. Therefore the statements in his books and by other *ācāryas* must be interpreted to support the fall-down theory. Actually, the opposite is true as has been proven from many angles of analysis in this book. In light of all this, the general/special theory does not solve the problem, but the no fall-down view gives the proper reconciliation. And if it is accepted that everyone has fallen from Vaikuṅṭha, then consider the following verses (Cc. *Antya* 3.78-80):

*haridāsa bale—tomāra yāvat martye sthiti
tāvat sthāvara-jaṅgama, sarva jīva-jāti
saba mukta kari' tumi vaikuṅṭhe pāṭhaibā
sūkṣma-jīve punaḥ karme udbuddha karibā*

*sei jīva habe ihāṅ sthāvara-jaṅgama
tāhāte bharibe brahmāṅḍa yena pūrva-sama*

Haridāsa said, “My Lord, as long as You are situated within the material world, You will send to the spiritual sky all the developed moving and non-moving living entities in different species. Then again You will awaken the living entities who are not yet developed and engage them in activities. In this way all moving and non-moving living entities will come into existence, and the entire universe will be

filled as it was previously."

This would have been an opportune moment to mention the fall of the *jīva* from *Vaikuṅṭha*, but there is no mention at all. Rather there is a talk of awakening the living entities who are not yet developed. These are surely not the *jīvas* in *Vaikuṅṭha*, who all have body, mind, intelligence, and senses. We spoke about the “not yet developed” already. From this the only reconciliation is that the living entities’ bondage in the material world has no beginning. They are here by the will of the Lord and there is no possibility of their having fallen here from *Vaikuṅṭha*.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT ABOUT STATEMENTS LIKE “FORGETTING KRṢṆA, THE LIVING ENTITY . . .?”

What about this verse by Kavi Yogendra (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37):

*bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo ‘smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā*

Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. This bewildering, fearful condition is effected by the potency for illusion, called *māyā*. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

The verse mentions “turning away from the Lord,” does that mean the living entity was in *Vaikuṅṭha*? This verse certainly does not say that one falls from *Vaikuṅṭha*. It is explaining the cause of our bondage, which is non-devotion. The purpose is to know the cause and then find a solution. The last part of the verse gives the solution—devotion to the Lord, *bhaktiā ekayā īśam guru-devatātmā*. No previous commentator explains this verse as indicating fall from *Vaikuṅṭha*. King Nimi asked about the ultimate welfare (*Bhāg.* 11.2.29). The sage replied that pure devotion is the ultimate welfare, because it will dispel the root cause of all problems, non-devotion. Nimi did not ask from where we fell or how we got bound and when. Therefore to screw out such a meaning is a deviation from the topic under discussion.

A further doubt is raised that the verse is talking about the *jīva*’s loss of memory of the Lord and we do not forget something if we have not experienced it. So we must have been in *Vaikuṅṭha* and now we have forgotten. In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments:

The devotees should not fear material bondage. For one who engages in devotional service, fear is dispelled automatically. To convey this the sage speaks this verse. By being absorbed (*abhiniveśataḥ*) in the second (*dvitiye*) or sense enjoyment such as the body, house, garlands, sandalwood, and young damsels, the *jīva* who is not a devotee of the Lord (*iśādapetasya*) is overcome by fear (*bhayam*) in the form of material bondage. This is not so for a devotee of the Lord as Brahmā says (*Bhāg.* 10.14.36):

*tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās
tāvat kārā-grham grham
tāvan moho 'nghri-nigado
yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ*

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, until people become Your devotees, their material attachments and desires remain thieves, their homes remain prisons, and their affectionate feelings for their family members remain foot-shackles.

Fear is of two types, *viparyayo'smṛtiśca*. *Viparyaya* means to misapprehend something for which it is not, such as to consider the body as the self. *Asmṛtiḥ* means loss of memory. It is the want of knowledge about the past or future which is expressed in such questions as: "Who am I?" "What shall I do?" "What was I before?" and "What will I be in the future?" This indeed is the fear caused by the *māyā* of the Lord. As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, "By loss of one's memory his intelligence is lost, which leads to destruction." Therefore having attained discrimination by the mercy of guru, one should worship the Lord. . . .

Here Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that *asmṛti*, or forgetfulness, is of one's own self and not of Kṛṣṇa. There is absolutely no talk of fall-down nor of losing one's memory of Kṛṣṇa. The verse (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) is simply analyzing the cause of the fear of a conditioned soul and how to get rid of it.

The translation also says, "He forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord." Forgetting one's constitutional position as a servant of God does not mean one was formerly in a relationship with the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha. The part and parcel *jīvātmā* is automatically a servant of the Lord, and his not being engaged in service automatically constitutes forgetfulness of his constitutional position. A part is always a servant of the whole. The part has to be in contact with the whole and thus render some service. This is the *acintya* nature of the Lord. But in the case of the *jīva*, he is part of the Lord's energy and not His body. So it is possible to remain a part and yet not be connected to the whole. This forgetfulness is *anādi*; it has no beginning. This is the explanation of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, which we have presented in the chapter on the meaning of *anādi* and in the chapter on the story of Vaidarbhī and the *brāhmaṇa*.

Again, words such as "when a living entity misidentifies," "when the living entity thus turns away" and "forgetting Kṛṣṇa" do not signify any particular time or sequence in the bondage of the *jīva*. The verse does not have any Sanskrit equivalent words for "when." It has been used in the translation simply for ease of understanding.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER SIX

WHAT ABOUT STATEMENTS THAT EVEN LIBERATED SOULS FALL?

“But,” the fall-*vādīs* say, “there are clear statements that even liberated souls fall.” For example, *Bhakti-sandarbha* (121):

*muktā api prapadyante punaḥ saṁsāra-vāsanām
yady acintya-mahāśaktau bhagavaty aparādhinaḥ*

If liberated souls commit an offense to the Lord who possesses inconceivable supreme power, even they will again become possessed by material desires.

This appears like a solid proof of fall-down. Unfortunately it is not so. The verse has the word *punaḥ*, or again. Therefore, it cannot be applied to *nitya-mukta* devotees because they never had material desires, *saṁsāra-vāsanā*. The statement “they will again become possessed by material desires” assumes that they had material desires, became liberated and will again get material desires if they offend the Lord. Because *nitya-siddhas* have never been in the material world, they have never had material desires. Furthermore, the devotees in *Vaikuṅṭha* never commit offense to the Lord. This will be shown later on. Therefore, the above verse and verses like it are not talking about the eternal residents of the *Vaikuṅṭha* planets.

Then, is it applicable to those who have gone to *Vaikuṅṭha* from the material world? Again the answer is no. No party in this controversy accepts that upon reaching *Vaikuṅṭha*, one returns here, because Lord Kṛṣṇa categorically denies the possibility of that in the *janma karma ca me divyam* verse and in other verses as well.

Then is the above verse from *Bhakti-sandarbha* confusing? No. The verse actually refers to *jīvan-muktas*, those who became liberated while embodied, but have not yet attained *parā-mukti*, or ultimate liberation. In fact this verse refers to impersonalist *jīvan-muktas*, not devotees. Just before this verse, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī cites *Bhāg.* 10.2.33 to explain that *bhakti* destroys all inauspiciousness and all obstacles:

*tathā na te mādharma tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhrdāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānikapa-mūrdhasu prabho*

O Mādhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune, if devotees completely in love with You sometimes fall from the path of devotion, they do not fall like non-devotees, for You still protect them. Thus they fearlessly traverse the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service.

While explaining this verse he writes, “Previously, in the explanation of the verse (10.2.32) *ye’nye’ravindākṣa*, it was said that even liberated souls (impersonalists) can fall from their supreme goal if they disrespect the Lord, but devotees never fall down.” Therefore, this verse does not refer to devotees falling from *Vaikuṅṭha* or even while executing devotional service in the material world, but to liberated impersonalists, *jīvan-muktas*, falling into materialistic

activities owing to offenses. Although Citraketu offended Mother Pārvatī, he did not fall into material life. Even in a demon’s body, as Vṛtrāsura, he recited wonderful prayers to the Lord. Parīkṣita Mahārāja was astounded to hear those prayers. Thus he inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī (*Bhāg* 6.14.1):

*rajas-tamaḥ-svabhāvasya
brahman vṛtrasya pāpmanaḥ
nārāyaṇe bhagavati
katham āsīd dr̥dhā matiḥ*

O learned brāhmaṇa, demons are generally sinful, being obsessed with the modes of passion and ignorance. How, then, could Vṛtrāsura have attained such exalted love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa?

Then where is the possibility of a devotee falling from Vaikuṅṭha?

Thus Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī emphatically states, *yathā pūrve ārūḍha-parama-pādatvāvasthāto’pi bhṛśyanti, tathā tāvakā mārḡāt sādhanāvasthāto’pi na bhṛśyanti, kimuta mṛgyāt tvatta ityārthaḥ*, “As the impersonalists fall even if they have attained the Supreme goal, Your devotees do not fall even from the stage of practice, *sādhanā*. So where is the possibility of falling for those who have attained You.”

And of course the *nitya-muktas* have eternally attained the Lord, so there is no possibility of them falling down. Similarly, there is a verse in the *Viṣṇu Bhakti Candrodaya*:

*nānurvrajati yo mohād vrajantam parameśvaram
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmmāpi sa bhaved-brahma-rākṣasaḥ*

If a person out of delusion does not follow the Lord, who is going on a chariot (*Ratha-yātrā*), he will become a *brahma-rākṣasa* even if he has burnt all his karma in the fire of knowledge.

The idea is that even if one cultivates knowledge and becomes a *jīvan-mukta*, he is prone to fall down if he disrespects the Lord. But devotees never fall even if they have not attained *parā-mukti*. This is confirmed in the verse below (*Vāsanā bhāṣya*):

*jīvan muktā prapadyante kvacit saṁsāra-vāsanām
yogino vai na līpyante karmabhīr bhagavat-parāḥ*

Sometimes the *jīvan-mukta* (*jñānis*) can fall down into materialistic life, but the *yogīs* (devotees) who are surrendered to the Lord never become tainted by karma.

This verse clearly says that *yogīs* who are devoted to the Lord do not become enamored by material desires. This covers both the *sādhana-siddhas* as well as the *nitya-siddha* devotees.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explained these three verses in the *Bhakti-sandarbha* (111). He quoted these verses while explaining the *ye’nye ’ravindākṣa* verse (*Bhāg*. 10.2.32) which talks about the fall-down of those impersonalists who disrespect the lotus feet of the Lord. Jīva Gosvāmī concludes that, unlike the impersonalists, the devotees never fall.

Ironically, in an amazing feat of dry logic, this verse (*muktā api prapadyante*) cited by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī to show the infallibility of devotees, is quoted by the fall-*vādīs* to prove that *nitya-muktas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha. They misinterpret the word *muktā api* as eternal devotees and completely overlook the word *punaḥ*, again. Such mistakes are possible when a person has no

idea of the context of the verse being cited and what the verse actually means.

Fall-*vādīs* are on the look out for words such as “falls down” and try to use it to support their theory. They have similarly cited *Bhāg.* 11.5.3 in their support because the verse has the words *patanty adhaḥ*, fall-down. (*Bhāg.* 11.5.3):

*yo eṣāṁ puruṣaṁ sākṣād
ātma-prabhavam īśvaram
na bhajanty avajānanti
sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ*

If any of the members of the four *varṇas* and four *āśramas* fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life.

This verse is only talking about fall from one’s *varṇāśrama* status. This is clear from the translation as well as from the purport, and also from the context, but fall-*vādīs* disregard all three and interpret the verse to suit their purpose. This is a good example of the most prominent defect among the four defects of human beings. Besides that, one runs the risk of *śruti sāstra nindanam*, making offense against the Vedic literature.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER SEVEN

WHY DID ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA CALL HIS MAGAZINE BACK TO GODHEAD?

Yet another argument of the fall-*vādīs* is that since Śrīla Prabhupāda used the term “going back home” and named his magazine *Back to Godhead*, he surely accepted that the *jīvas* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. We could accept such a logic if it were supported by scripture and all statements to the contrary were satisfactorily reconciled. But this is impossible in light of all the above discussion. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate source of everything and everyone. So although we have always been in the material world, when we go to Kṛṣṇa and join in His *līlā* it is not improper to say that we go back to Godhead.

For example, the American Ambassador to India lives in Delhi. Suppose his wife gives birth to a son in Delhi and after a few years the Ambassador is called back to the States. If the Ambassador’s young son tells his local friends that he is going back home, back to America, there is absolutely nothing wrong in his statement, even though he has never before been in America. Or a child takes birth in a hospital’s maternity ward and after some days the mother and child go back home. This does not imply that the child was in the home previously. The child is simply claiming his birthright.

The case of the *nitya-baddha* living entities is similar. They did not fall here from Vaikuṅṭha; they were here *anādi*, always. *Jīvas* are parts of the Supersoul, who is an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. He is like an ambassador of Vaikuṅṭha and representative of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore *jīvas* are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, and are His servants. So it is proper to say that they go back home, back to Kṛṣṇa or back to Godhead at the time of liberation. This is coherent with the *sāstra*.

Having said all this, however, we find that Śrīla Prabhupāda himself explained the origin of the name for his magazine *Back To Godhead* in the very first BTG back in 1944, in an article entitled *Back To Godhead*. Here is the relevant quote from the original article:

Archbishop of Canterbury: In every quarter of earth men long to be delivered from the curse of War and to find in the world which has regained its peace, respite from the harshness and bitterness of the world they have known till now. But so often they want the Kingdom of Heaven without its King. The kingdom of God without God. And they cannot have it.

OUR RESOLVE MUST BE BACK TO GOD. We make plans for the future for peace amongst the nation and for civil security at home. That is quite right enough and it would be wrong to neglect it. But all our plans will *come to ship-wreck on the rock of human selfishness unless we turn to God.* BACK TO GOD, that is the chief need of England and of every nation.

The Archbishop spoke these words in a radio broadcast in 1944. Following this Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes a number of other influential leaders to show that they all agree that the need of the moment is to increase religion in the hearts of men. He quotes one John Younghusband saying words to that effect. Then he quotes Dr. Radhakrishnan, “We have to defeat tyranny in the realm of thought and create a will for world peace,” which Prabhupāda incorporated as the slogan on the masthead. Prabhupāda continues:

These psychological movements of the leaders of all countries—combined with the orders of my Divine Master Sri Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada has led me to venture to start a paper under the above name and style “BACK TO GODHEAD,” which implies all the words that we may intend to say in this connection.

There can be little doubt that the Archbishop of Canterbury had not even the remote intention of implying that the souls fall down from the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord, and now here he was advocating that we go “back to God.” The real point of the expression was that we need to establish a theistic society here on earth. Secular society needs to become God-centered. People were more religious before, and by the influence of time the populace was turning atheistic. So the Archbishop is appealing for a turn back to God. Śrīla Prabhupāda simply took advantage of what seemed to be emerging as a popular sentiment to launch his preaching periodical. He was an expert preacher according to time, place, and circumstance. No one can deny that. The idea that the expression *Back To Godhead* is pregnant with meaning stating our ultimate *siddhānta* stretches the true story a bit thin. But even if one insists that Prabhupāda had a deeper meaning than the Archbishop, still, our explanation given in the first part of this chapter will surely suffice.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT ABOUT THE SEQUENTIAL STAGES OF THE JIVA’S FALL?

Lord Caitanya clearly says that the *jīva* forgot Kṛṣṇa and then became a fallen non-devotee (Cc. *Madhya* 20.117):

*kṛṣṇa bhuli’ sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha*

Forgetting Kṛṣṇa, the living entity has been attracted to the external feature from time immemorial. Therefore the illusory energy [*māyā*] gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence.

From this it appears that first he forgot Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa bhuli*) and then he became indifferent to Him (*anādi bahirmukha*). Because he forgot Kṛṣṇa, he must have known Him, and for that he must have been in Goloka.

It is not consistent with our philosophy to presume that all fallen souls have a relationship with Kṛṣṇa in Goloka. But that point notwithstanding, the point is this: The *jīva* is *anādi bahirmukha*, “indifferent to the Lord without beginning,” and therefore his forgetfulness has to be *anādi* as well. If a result is *anādi* then the cause has to be *anādi*, and *anādi* means which has no beginning. Therefore, the *jīva*’s forgetfulness and his non-devotion are both beginningless. Things that are beginningless cannot have a relation of cause and effect. They exist simultaneously, like the sun and its rays.

In this verse (Cc. *Madhya* 20.117) forgetfulness is first, then comes non-devotion to Kṛṣṇa, and then the *jīva* is troubled by *māyā*. There is no mention of becoming envious of Kṛṣṇa or falling from Vaikuṅṭha. This forgetfulness is not of Kṛṣṇa, but of one’s constitutional position. As Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “When the living entity forgets his constitutional position as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, he is immediately entrapped by the illusory external energy.” This entrapment by the illusory energy is *anādi*. The purport (Cc. *Madhya* 2.118) further confirms that the *nitya-mukta* cannot forget Kṛṣṇa:

From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and his only attempt has been to serve Kṛṣṇa. Thus he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.

This explanation of forgetfulness is in line with Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s comment on the *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ* verse (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) cited in Chapter Five. Indeed, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja cites this verse as 20.119 in support of 20.117 and 20.118 of *Madhya-līlā*.

Moreover it is possible to use the words “he forgets Kṛṣṇa” even without a person ever being in His personal association. Sometimes devotees leave ISKCON and take to their old lifestyle. Devotees remark about such people, “Oh, he has completely forgotten Kṛṣṇa. He is in *māyā*.” This certainly does not imply that the fallen devotee knew Kṛṣṇa personally and then forgot Him.

And in the *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ* verse (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) there is turning away from God, then absorption in matter, then fear, and then forgetfulness. The sequence is different from the *kṛṣṇa bhuli* verse of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. This apparent discrepancy cannot be resolved unless we accept that turning away from God, forgetfulness, fear, and bondage are all *anādi* and therefore non-sequential. And as explained earlier, *anādi* objects are described as having a cause/effect relation for easy understanding and to show that everything depends on Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate *āśraya*. Similarly, no sequence can be attributed to *anādi* events. As Prabhupāda writes (Cc. Introduction), “Although we speak of ‘when’ Kṛṣṇa desires, just when He did desire we cannot say. We only speak in this way because in conditional life we take it that everything has a beginning; however, in that absolute or spiritual life there is neither beginning nor end.”

So it is not true that the *jīvas* knew Kṛṣṇa personally and forgot Him. Rather they are in forgetfulness of their constitutional position as minute parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa and therefore *māyā* gives them distress, *samsāra duḥkha*, as stated in the second line. This is confirmed by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī in his *Vivṛti* (*Bhāg.* 2.9.35). About forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa he says, *vyatireka buddhite kṛṣṇa-vismaraṇa ghaṭe*, “The forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa is in the negative sense, or

vyatireka buddhi.” Negative sense here means that because he is completely absorbed in the concept of I and My and has no Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is therefore, said that he has forgotten Kṛṣṇa. The word means exclusion or separation. It is a term used commonly in *nyāya śāstra* where it is defined as follows: When by noticing the absence of one object, the absence of something else is inferred, it is called *vyatireka*. For example, because one does not see fire on the mountain, one can surmise that there is no smoke. Such an inference does not imply that there was smoke in the past. Similarly, by seeing the living entity engaged in sense gratification (i.e. devoid of devotional service) one can easily deduce that the living entity is in forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa. This forgetfulness does not in any way imply that he knew Kṛṣṇa in the past. To clarify this point Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī further writes:

Jivādhīna īśvara, prakṛtyadhīna īśvara, kālādhīna īśvara, karmādhīna īśvara ei achidvṛtti yekhāne prabala, sei jīva bhagavad-vimukha, baddha duṣṭa-jīva sañjaya kathita hoyā.

A living entity is called *bhagavad-vimukha*, non-devotee, conditioned, or rascal when one of the following material conceptions become prominent: to think that the Lord is under the control of the *jīva*, that He is under the control of *prakṛti*, that He is under the control of time, or that He is under the control of karma.

He did not assume here that one falls from Vaikuṅṭha and then becomes a non-devotee. Rather anyone who has any of the above misconceptions about the Lord is *bhagavad-vimukha*. The word *bhagavad-vimukha* and *kṛṣṇa bahirmukha* are synonyms. Anyone who is not serving Kṛṣṇa is *kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha* and it does not mean that he was a devotee to begin with.

Similarly, in the *Prema Vivarta* (6.2) is the verse:

*kṛṣṇa bahirmukha hañā bhoga vāñccha kare
nikaṭastha māyā tāre jāpaṭiyā dhare*

Turning away from Kṛṣṇa, a *jīva* desires sense gratification. Then *māyā*, which is situated nearby, grasps him.

Here first he becomes a non-devotee, then he desires to enjoy, and then *māyā* captures him. But according to Sanātana Gosvāmī (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.2.187), first the *jīva* is captivated by *māyā*, then he forgets his *svarūpa*, and then he falls into the material world. The *bhayaṁ dvitīyabhīniveśataḥ* verse (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) states that he becomes indifferent to Kṛṣṇa, then he is absorbed into *māyā*, and then he suffers forgetfulness of his *svarūpa*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī said the same thing (*Paramātmā-sandarbhā* 46). These appear to be contradictory statements. But how can *mahājanas* contradict each other? The actual meaning is that *bahirmukhatā*, *vismṛti*, *māyā-āsakti*, and *bhoga-vāñcchā* are all *anādi*—beginningless or causeless. Therefore, there is no sequential cause/effect relation among them, but for our easy understanding they have related them as cause and effect. Therefore the word *anādi*, the significance of which we tend to overlook, is used in these verses. Because it is difficult to catch the sense of *anādi*, Śrīla Prabhupāda translated it as “since time immemorial” for simplifying the matter. If we pay attention to the word *anādi*, however, then we know the reality.

Otherwise, since *māyā* is not in Vaikuṅṭha, what is the sense of the words *nikaṭastha māyā* (in the verse from *Prema Vivarta*), *māyā* standing nearby. *Māyā* is only on this side of the Virajā river, which divides the spiritual and material creation. So if *māyā* is standing nearby, that means

the *jīva* whom she clasps is not on the other side of the Virajā river. The disease is *kṛṣṇa bahirmukha* and the solution is to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa. The above verse is not applicable to the devotees because they are under the shelter of the controller of *māyā*, *mām eva ye prapadyante*.

One characteristic of a first-class devotee is that he reminds others of Kṛṣṇa. In the infallible abode of the Lord there are only first-class devotees. How will a devotee become *kṛṣṇa bahirmukha*, by misuse of free will? This we answer in the next chapter.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER NINE

WHAT ABOUT OUR FREE WILL?

A liberated soul in the spiritual world is technically called a *nitya-siddha*, an eternally perfected being. Such a perfect devotee of the Lord has free will. That free will, however, is never misused. The *nitya-siddhas* always use their free will for rendering service to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His servants, not for doing nonsense. This is confirmed by Śrīla Prabhupāda (*Bhāg.* 6.1.34-36, purport):

All the residents of Vaikuṅṭhaloka know perfectly well that their master is Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa, and that they are all His servants. They are all self-realized souls who are *nitya-mukta*, everlastingly liberated. Although they could conceivably declare themselves Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, they never do so; they always remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and serve the Lord faithfully.

The living beings are given as much freedom as they deserve, and misuse of that freedom is the cause of suffering. The devotees of the Lord do not misuse their freedom, and therefore they are the good sons of the Lord. (*Bhāg.* 1.8.28, purport)

They are fully surrendered to the Lord. Surrendering means surrendering their will for the sake of serving Kṛṣṇa. They place their will completely at the disposal of Kṛṣṇa. If they have free will to do otherwise, then where is the surrender?

According to Webster's Dictionary surrender means: (1) to give up possession of or power over; yield to another on demand or compulsion; (2) to give up claim to; give over or yield, esp. voluntarily, as in favor to another; (3) to give up or abandon; (4) to yield or resign (oneself) to an emotion, influence, etc. Surrender, therefore, is either out of force or by choice. In *bhakti* surrender is out of choice and thus it does not mean one serves out of force. The *nitya-muktas* voluntarily give up their free will—eternally—in order to serve the Lord for His pleasure. And according to the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the pleasure they derive is greater than that of the Lord.

Some have argued that if there is no free will in Vaikuṅṭha, then it is like jail. Such ideas come from our material experience and a lack of spiritual insight. Devotees have unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa. And in love they naturally use their free will to serve Kṛṣṇa. By this, the devotee experiences ever-increasing pleasure which, like an ocean, keeps on welling up, *ānandāmbudhi vardhanam*. That pleasure in turn drives the devotee to render more intense service. This is the very nature of the Vaikuṅṭha atmosphere. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays, therefore, to have more tongues and more ears to engage in more intense hearing and chanting of the Lord's names.

Besides, the *māyā-śakti* never enters the Vaikuṅṭha atmosphere. The residents there have the direct association of Kṛṣṇa; they have all favorable situations for devotional service; their love

for Kṛṣṇa is always increasing; they have association only of pure devotees; and they never contact *māyā*. In fact according to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, they do not even know *māyā*; then how could they fall? Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “The living entity cannot be forgetful of his real identity unless influenced by the *avidyā* potency.” (*Bhāg.* 3.7.5, purport). There is no *avidyā* potency in Vaikuṅṭha so how can a *nitya-mukta* misuse his free will? In another place he refers to the misuse of free will as *māyā*, but *māyā* does not exist where Kṛṣṇa exists, *yāhān kṛṣṇa tāhān nāhi māyara adhikāra* (Cc. *Madhya* 22.31).

The material world is a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. Therefore, free will in the material world is but a perverted reflection of the free will in the spiritual world. What is highest in the spiritual world is lowest in the material world. For example, the paramour relation in the spiritual world is considered the highest, but in the material world it is the lowest. Similarly, free will in the material world is the source of misery, but in Vaikuṅṭha it is the other extreme—it is the source of all pleasure. That’s because in the material world we misuse it to engage in material affairs, and in the spiritual world we use it rightly—to serve Kṛṣṇa.

Actually the adjective “free” in free will is redundant. There is no such thing as non-free will, for it comes of its own accord. So it is will. No one else has control over our will and therefore we call it free will. This will is of two types—we will to acquire something and we will to give up something. This faculty is in turn guided by feelings of happiness and distress. Instinctively a person wills for things that give pleasure and wills to avoid things that cause pain. Therefore, will is based upon a person’s nature, knowledge, and sense perception. One cannot will for something he has no idea about. For example, one cannot desire to go to Chimanagar unless one has heard about it.

Desires also come because of one’s nature. People in different modes have different desires. The nature and psychology of the residents in Vaikuṅṭha is to render service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and their knowledge is about the spiritual world. They have no knowledge of the material world. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that *nitya-mukta* devotees have no knowledge of *māyā*. Their direct perception is only about the spiritual world. Even those who have attained Vaikuṅṭha after material life have no knowledge of the material world because that was lost when the subtle body was dissolved by devotional service. So no one in the spiritual world is aware of the material world. Considering that they are fully surrendered to the Lord, have transcendental love for him, and have no knowledge of the material world, it is impossible for them to have material desires. Thus it is illogical and *aśāstric* to say that Vaikuṅṭha devotees fall down by misusing their will.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda said we were here by misuse of our free will, he simply meant that as conditioned souls, even though we are here beginninglessly, we always have the choice to turn towards Kṛṣṇa or away from Him. Because we have been making the wrong choice perpetually, it is proper to say that we are here because of misuse of our free will. Why do we interpret it to mean that the misuse was in Vaikuṅṭha, as if we are not misusing it now? As we have already shown in the beginning of this chapter, no Vaikuṅṭha residents misuse their free will. As Prabhupāda wrote, “Although they could conceivably declare themselves Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, they never do so; they always remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and serve the Lord faithfully.”

When a boy loves a girl, he wants to please her, and no one has to force him to do that. It springs from his own will. He does not envy her. In the material world the love may come to an end because it is material love and thus temporary and imperfect. Spiritual love, on the other hand, is eternal and perfect. Love means service. In love one derives pleasure by giving service—the more service the more pleasure and then more service and then more pleasure. This is mutual between lover and the beloved. This is the very nature of love even in the imperfect material world. It is very difficult to give this up even if it is our material nature; as Lord Kṛṣṇa says (Bg. 3.33), it is difficult to repress one’s nature. If this is true for one’s conditional nature, which is extraneous to the living being, how can one give up one’s spiritual

nature—love for Kṛṣṇa—which is intrinsic to one’s very self?

Rather, this love is always increasing, it is neither static nor diminishes, and there is no possibility of it becoming destroyed. It cannot be covered by *māyā* because there is no *māyā* in Vaikuṅṭha and furthermore *māyā* has no power to cover the love of a Vaikuṅṭha devotee because love is the internal potency.

A *nitya-mukta* devotee never forgets Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes this in his comment to the verse following the famous *kṛṣṇa bhuli* verse (Cc. *Madhya* 20.118):

In the Vedas it is stated, *asaṅgo 'yam puruṣah*: the living entity is always free from the contamination of the material world. One who is not materially infected and who does not forget Kṛṣṇa as his master is called *nitya-mukta*. In other words, one who is eternally liberated from material contamination is called *nitya-mukta*. From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and his only attempt has been to serve Kṛṣṇa. Thus he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.

We cited this passage in the first of the three chapters on the word *anādi*. Here we repeat our comments on the same passage:

Those who criticize us for saying that *anādi* means beginningless or causeless and that Śrīla Prabhupāda intended that very meaning when he said “since time immemorial” should note that in the above passage he is using “time immemorial” to refer to the *nitya-mukta* residents of the spiritual world, “From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.” This means Prabhupāda did not have in mind some remote time in a past beyond recall, but a nonexistent time and therefore a nonexistent memory, because the literal meaning of “time immemorial” cannot apply to the eternal associates of the Lord in the spiritual world.

Prabhupāda says in the same passage, “always been a devotee” and “he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.” This means that he equated “time immemorial” with *anādi* in the same literal sense that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī used it, as explained in the previous chapter. That is to say, for Śrīla Prabhupāda, “time immemorial” meant non-existent. Otherwise the above paragraph would be contradictory with phrases such as “eternally liberated,” “always been a devotee” and “he never forgets” used to refer to the very same entity he describes as having been a “*nitya-mukta* devotee from time immemorial.”

About forgetfulness, Prabhupāda writes in many places that it pertains to one’s spiritual identity and not to one’s relationship in the eternal *divya-līlā* of the Lord. For example, while commenting on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.5, the verse in which Vidura asked about the bondage of the *jīva*, Prabhupāda writes:

How then can the living entity become forgetful of his real identity as pure spirit soul and identify with matter unless influenced by something beyond Himself? The conclusion is that the living entity is influenced by the *avidyā* potency, as is confirmed in both the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. . . . The living entity cannot be forgetful of his real identity unless influenced by the *avidyā* potency.”

Remembering Kṛṣṇa is not like remembering some complicated mathematical formula or

quantum mechanical equation which one forgets easily. When a devotee lives only with devotees, has no contact with *māyā* and is always rendering service to Kṛṣṇa, how could he forget Kṛṣṇa, and what would make him will to forget Kṛṣṇa? Can a devotee who is continuously rendering service in ISKCON suddenly forget Prabhupāda? Even if he takes to material life, it would be hard to forget Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupāda for the rest of his life. Then, how is it that a *nitya-mukta* could forget Kṛṣṇa instantaneously, without any external influence, like turning off a switch?

Further, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī accepts two types of residents of Vaikuṅṭha (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.194):

*vaikuṅṭha-vāsino hy ete kecid vai nitya-pārśadāḥ
pare kṛṣṇasya kṛpayā sādhayitvemamāgatāḥ*

Among the residents of Vaikuṅṭha some are eternal associates, *nitya-pārśadas*, and others have come here after performing *sādhana*, through the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

If those who have come to Vaikuṅṭha were originally there, then he would have said that there are two types of residents: those who have never fallen (but may fall) and those who will never fall again (because they fell and have come back); but the word *nitya* in *nitya pārśada* means that their association with the Lord has no beginning and will never come to an end.

About the word *sādhayitvemamāgatāḥ*, Sanātana Gosvāmī comments that this means the new associates, who have attained Vaikuṅṭha after being *sādhakas*. In six verses, beginning with this one, he shows that both types of devotees in Vaikuṅṭha have a relation of servant and master with the Lord. They are not on a par with the Lord in all respects, although they have many qualities like the Lord. One should know this difference between the Lord and His devotees.

Again, while commenting on 2.4.196, Sanātana Gosvāmī mentions two types of devotees—new and *nitya*. *Evam ādhunikānām bhagavatā saha bhedaḥ siddhaty eva nutanatvāt*, “In this way the modern associates are different from the Lord because they are newcomers.” The idea is that if there was no difference between the Lord and newcomers, then they would not have been in the material world. Then further along he says *nityānām ca ko bhedaḥ?* “What is the difference between the eternal associates and the Lord?”

The idea behind this question is that just as the Lord resides eternally in Vaikuṅṭha and never becomes a resident of the material world, similarly the *nitya pārśadas* are eternal residents of Vaikuṅṭha. If it is assumed that *nitya pārśadas* could fall, then these verses and their commentaries make absolutely no sense.

Moreover one should not think that the *nitya pārśadas* mentioned here do not include *jīvas*. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says in his commentary that these include persons like Śeṣa and Garuḍa. In the *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* (47), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has counted Garuḍa among the *jīvas* who are eternally devoted to the Lord. Such faithful devotees only use their will power for rendering service to the Lord in love and devotion. They never use their will for any other purpose.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER TEN

ONLY THOSE WHO GO BACK NEVER FALL DOWN

Despite the evidence in the preceding chapters, one may say that most of the verses cited as proof

of no-fall refer only to those who reach Vaikuṅṭha from this material world. Those devotees never return, but those who have never fallen can and do fall. The logic here is that those who achieve Vaikuṅṭha have experienced the miseries of the material world, and once going back to Godhead, they never return to this place of misery. Their bad memories are enough to inspire them to remain always with Kṛṣṇa. The *nitya-siddhas*, on the other hand, are ignorant of these miseries and are subject to fall.

This idea has serious flaws and is offensive to *nitya-muktas*. First, we have no scriptural evidence that establishes a distinction between the knowledge or security of those devotees who were always residents of Vaikuṅṭha and those who attain Vaikuṅṭha by *bhakti-yoga*. On the contrary, from the *Bhagavat-sandarbha* (63, 64), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, while describing the infallible characteristics of Vaikuṅṭha, does not distinguish between the *nitya-siddhas* and the *sādhana-siddhas* on this basis. Hence, to infer that those who attain Vaikuṅṭha are somehow more secure than those who have never left the Lord's service is in the realm of speculation.

Second, it is offensive because it places *nitya-muktas* as inferior to *baddha-muktas*. *Nitya-muktas* have to come to the material world to become really fall-proof. So the material world becomes a better place of education. It is like saying that unless one visits a prison one cannot be a gentleman. It also implies that eternal residence in Vaikuṅṭha results because of fear of past miseries and not because of loving Kṛṣṇa. In other words, the devotion produced by fear or suffering, *bhaya-bhakti*, is superior to *prema-bhakti* for only the former gives complete protection to a devotee. It also means that a *prema-bhakta* should convert himself into a *bhaya-bhakta* to secure a place in Vaikuṅṭha eternally by falling as soon as possible into the material world. It also implies that *nitya-muktas* are so foolish that they cannot learn from other's experience. They must suffer the experience themselves. It also means that Kṛṣṇa can only protect His eternal associates like Rādhā, but not the *nitya-mukta jīvas*. Why Śrī Rādhā cannot fall and why *nitya-muktas* like Garuḍa can, fall-*vādīs* do not explain.

Another consideration is that conditioned souls who have attained liberation in *bhakti-yoga* cast off their subtle and gross bodies before reaching Vaikuṅṭha. All the memories of their material experiences are stored in the subtle body which is shed before they reach Vaikuṅṭha. Lord Kapiladeva explained to Devahūti how this process works (*Bhāg.* 3.25.33):

*jarayatyaśu ya kośam
nigīrṇam analo yathā*

Bhakti, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate effort, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat.

The conclusion is that pure devotees cannot take their store of material memories with them to the spiritual world. If this was the case, then the spiritual world could not be said to be all-blissful, because the mere recollection of one's sufferings in countless births in 8,400,000 lifeforms would mar their spiritual bliss and happiness and distract the devotees from their transcendental fixation on the Lord's service even in Vaikuṅṭha. They would also remember and lament for their relatives or countrymen who may still be in the material world. They would be like people in Satyaloka whose only misery is their feeling of remorse when they think of the living beings suffering in the lower planets. Neither logic nor scriptural evidence supports such an occurrence.

In fact Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.359) says that devotees newly attained to Goloka do not remember the repetitive nature of the Lord's pastimes. This is significant because these same devotees, while in the stage of *sādhana* within the material world, performed constant remembrance and meditation upon those pastimes. If they don't remember some of the common

characteristics of the Lord’s pastimes, how and why should they remember their material activities? Then he goes on to say that they forget everything out of excessive love. If it is accepted that *sādhana-siddhas* remember their material experience upon attaining Vaikuṅṭha, it gives rise to serious philosophical defects, such as that the material experience is part of the *jīva’s svarūpa*. That would mean liberation is impossible. Lord Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.7) that material miseries are part of *kṣetra*, or the material body. *Mukti* means abandoning both the subtle and gross body, *muktir hitvānyathā rūpam svarūpeṇa vyavasthitih* (*Bhāg.* 2.10.6). But the fall-*vādīs* in their zeal to make *nitya-muktas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha, have no concern for philosophical integrity.

The reason most of the verses use verbs like “having attained,” or “after reaching” is that these instructions refer to conditioned souls. The Lord has no need to reassure *nitya-siddhas* that they will never fall for they are not in ignorance of spiritual knowledge. Second, when something is denied in a particular case it indicates the possibility of it happening. For example, if the Lord tells a particular *nitya-siddha*, “You will never fall from My abode,” this implies the possibility of others falling, but the Lord never speaks like this to any resident of Vaikuṅṭha, because there is no need to give such assurance. He only gives that assurance when preaching transcendental knowledge in this world. Even then His statement is emphatic. He assures the conditioned souls, “Once you reach My abode, you will never fall.”

From this, any sane man would conclude that those who are already in the Lord’s abode will also not fall. If someone comes from America and invites an Indian, “If you come to the USA, you will be immune to cholera.” It naturally means that those who have never left the USA are immune to cholera. But fall-*vādīs* will not accept this. They will attempt to prove that only those who go there from outside are immune, but those who are already living in the USA can catch the disease.

For the *nitya-siddhas*, however, there is no need of such reassurance. For those getting out of the material world the Lord gives assurance that His abode is distinct in nature from this world—that it’s a place of no return—because conditioned souls undergoing repeated birth and death are ignorant about the nature of transcendental reality. They know from scripture that one falls even from the heavenly planets, and so it is imperative that the Lord instruct them about His abode. The scriptures inform us about subjects unknown to us and which we are unable to know by ourselves, *sāstro’jñāta-jñāpakaḥ*. Such scriptural instructions are meant for the conditioned souls. Perfected souls are called *nirgrantha* (*Bhāg.* 1.7.10) and *dure-yamā* (*Bhāg.* 3.15.25), meaning they are beyond scripture. Lord Kṛṣṇa says (*Bg.* 2.52) *tadā gantāsi nirvedam śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*. Pure devotees hear scriptures to relish the Lord’s pastimes, not to get assurance that they will not fall. They already know that by direct experience.

The conclusion is that those who go to the spiritual world never return to the world of repeated birth and death, and those already in Vaikuṅṭha never come here as fallen souls.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WE ARE “FALLEN SOULS”?

Those who believe that fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha is possible say, “Conditioned souls are called *patita*, or fallen, and this implies that previously they were not fallen. When we say, ‘This is a mashed potato,’ it means that previously it was not mashed. So although we are unable to understand how we fell, we must have; otherwise we would not be designated as ‘fallen.’ And

they must have fallen from some place.

"An example would be that of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the Supreme Lord, but in the mood of a devotee, He says that He has 'fallen into the ocean of birth and death,' *patitam māṁ viśame bhavāmbudhau*. Fallen from where? The answer must be Vaikuṅṭha, because every other place is a fallen position."

The defect in this argument is the assumption that the fallen condition follows a non-fallen state. Conditioned souls are *anādi-patita*, fallen without any beginning. The adjective *anādi* is not always used but it is assumed. Sometimes the *jīva* is called *nitya-baddha* or *anādi-baddha* and sometimes only *baddha* or *patita*. When called *baddha*, it is understood he is *nitya* or *anādi-baddha*. Similarly *patita* means *nitya* or *anādi-patita*. If one's fall-down has no beginning (*anādi*), for this is the version of the *śāstra*, then that person also has to be called *patita*, fallen, as there is no other word to describe his condition.

Being fallen was and is the conditioned soul's perpetual condition until achieving perfection in devotional service, and this fallen state does not in anyway imply a previously elevated state such as being in Vaikuṅṭha prior to the fall.

A good example of how it is possible to be fallen without being previously elevated is that of hell, which is a fallen place. No one thinks hell was elevated and then became fallen. Being fallen is the perpetual condition of hell; it is fallen, was always fallen, and always will be fallen. So hell is *nitya-patita*. Similarly, being fallen is the perpetual status of conditioned souls, whose fallen, conditioned state is describe in the *śāstras* as *anādi*, beginningless.

Another way of understanding the concept of being *anādi-patita* is by grammatical analysis. *Patita* is formed when the suffix *kta* is added to the root *pat* (to fall). This suffix is called a *niṣṭhā* (*Pāṇini* 1.1.26) and it is applied in various ways:

- (1) To indicate something done in the past, as in *bhuktam*, eaten (*Pāṇini* 3.2.102).
- (2) When it is used actively, it indicates the beginning of an activity. For example *prakṛtaḥ kaṭam devadattaḥ*, Devadatta begins to weave the mat (*Pāṇini* 3.2.102 *vārtika* 3).
- (3) To indicate the sense of activity in the present tense, applied to roots marked with mute *ñ* (these are the roots which end in *ñ*) as also to the roots which are used in the sense of desire, knowledge, and worship (*Pāṇini* 3.2.187-88). For example, *rājñām iṣṭa*, desirable of kings. Here *iṣṭa*, desirable, does not mean that it was undesirable once upon a time but it is always desirable.
- (4) To indicate the sense of mere verbal activity such as *hasitam*, laughs, which is always used in the neutral gender (*Pāṇini* 3.3.114).
- (5) To indicate the sense of benediction when the word ending in *kta* is used as a name, as in *Devadatta* (*Pāṇini* 3.3.174 and its *Kāśikā vṛtti*).

The suffix *kta*, therefore, is not always used to indicate the past. In the word *patita*, when used to describe the *jīva's* bondage, the suffix *kta* is used in the present tense. The *kāśikā vṛtti* gives examples such as *suptaḥ*, sleeping, and *śayitaḥ*, lying down, etc. These words are also formed with the *kta* suffix, but the meaning is in the present tense. *Suptaḥ* and *śayitaḥ* should mean that one slept or layed down only if the meaning is taken as per rule No. 1 (past tense). But such is not the case. These words are formed with rule No. 3. When *patita* is used to indicate a conditioned soul, therefore, it is present tense and it means he is eternally fallen (i.e. without beginning).

Commenting on *Ujjvala Nīlamanī* (19.2), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains the meaning of *sannihita*, also formed by adding the suffix *kta* to the root *dhā*, in the same sense. He is trying to prove the eternality of the Lord's pastimes. He says the *kta* suffix is used in the sense of present

tense, *laṭ-pratyayavat ktapratyayasya*. To substantiate his view, he gives an example from the *Śruti*, *ayamātmā apahata pāpmā*, “The Lord is free from sin.” *Apahata* is formed with the *cta* suffix and when combined with *pāpmā*, it literally means, “He has kicked away sins.”

Does this mean that the Lord was previously sinful? No. Here the *cta* suffix signifies eternity, something without any beginning. Thus the meaning is that the Lord is eternally free from sins. Similarly, the *cta* suffix is applied to the term *pratilabdha* (lit. acquired) in this verse (*Bhāg.* 3.16.7):

*yat sevayā caraṇa padma pavitra renurñ
sadyah kṣatākhilamalaṁ prati labdha śīlam
na śrīrviraktam api māñ vijahāti yasyāḥ
prekṣālavārtha itare niyamāñ vahanti*

Because I am the servitor of My devotees, My lotus feet have become so sacred that they immediately wipe out all sin, and I have acquired (*pratilabdha*) such a disposition that the goddess of fortune does not leave Me, even though I have no attachment for her and others praise her beauty and observe sacred vows to secure from her even a slight favor.

Here the Lord says that He has acquired such a disposition, *pratilabdha-śīlam*. This certainly does not imply that at some time He did not have such a disposition.

The word *bhakta* is also made by putting the *cta* suffix on the root *bhaj*, “to worship.” This does not necessarily mean that previously a devotee was a non-devotee. Eternal associates of the Lord, like Nanda Mahārāja, are *bhaktas*. Does it automatically mean they were formerly non-devotees? Certainly not. The eternal associates of the Lord such as Mother Yaśodā are liberated persons, *nitya-muktas*. *Mukta* is also formed with the *cta* suffix; however, it does not imply that liberated persons were previously fallen. The word *patita* is a similar instance of the *cta* suffix being used in the present tense. Therefore, it is incorrect to assume that in referring to the conditioned souls as *patita* it implies a previously liberated state.

Similarly, *baddha* (bound), which is also formed with *cta*, signifies eternal conditioning when used to describe the *jīva* in the material world. It does not mean that those who are fallen were previously liberated. Śrīla Prabhupāda is a *mukta puruṣa*. Does it mean he was fallen at one time? He is also a *nitya-mukta*. Does it mean he could fall in the future? Of course not, but the fall-*vādis* theory has many such inconsistencies.

In the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, when Lord Caitanya takes the role of a *jīva* and says He has fallen into the ocean of birth and death, it is assumed that the fallen position has no beginning. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has translated this verse into the famous song, *anādi karama phale, padī bhāvarṇava jale*, “I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death as a result of beginningless karma.” If someone insists that in the verse of Lord Caitanya we should take the literal meaning and that *anādi* should not be understood, then we should also accept that Lord Caitanya Himself has fallen into the ocean of birth and death.

The conclusion is that fallen souls are beginninglessly fallen. As one saintly person put it upon being asked about the origin of the *jīva*, “Those who are here have never been there; and those who are there never come here.” Hence, except as a preaching strategy, there is no need to stipulate that conditioned souls were formerly in the spiritual world in their *nitya-svarūpa* or *siddha-deha*.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER TWELVE

WHERE DO THE NITYA-BADDHAS COME FROM IF NOT FROM VAIKUNṬHA?

Some fall-*vādīs* say, “The cycle of creation and destruction of the material world is beginningless, and thus it has occurred innumerable times. During the maintenance period, occasionally some *jīvas* attain liberation. If living entities only exit the material world, and none enter by falling from Vaikuṅṭha, then the universe would be empty in the course of time. But the cycle of material creation is eternal; thus, it is logical to assume that souls fall from Vaikuṅṭha to replace those who achieve liberation from the material world.”

Logical as their reasoning may seem, the *sāstra* offers another explanation. In the prayers of the personified *Vedas* it is acknowledged that unlimited living entities exist in the material world (*Bhāg.* 10.87.30):

*aparimitā dhruvās tanu-bhṛto yadi sarva-gatās
tarhi na śāsyateti niyamo dhruva netarathā
ajani ca yan-māyṁ tad avimucya niyantr bhavet
samam anujānatām yad amataṁ mata-duṣṭatayā*

If the countless living entities were all-pervading and possessed forms that never changed, You could not possibly be their absolute ruler, O immutable one. But since they are Your localized expansions and their forms are subject to change, You do control them. Indeed, that which supplies the ingredients for the generation of something is necessarily its controller because a product never exists apart from its ingredient cause. It is simply illusion for someone to think that he knows the Supreme Lord, who is equally present in each of His expansions, since whatever knowledge one gains by material means must be imperfect.

In this verse the word *aparimita* means immeasurable, countless, and unlimited. The problem is that we see these words but don’t take them literally, because “countless living entities” is inconceivable to us. But it is to be taken literally. There are unlimited living entities because the Lord is unlimited and His *jīva-śakti* potency is also unlimited. Hence the unlimited Lord has His unlimited marginal potencies which are compared to sunshine molecules, and these unlimited *jīvas* are forever taking birth and some are becoming liberated forever. Even so, an unlimited quantity is left behind and this process is going on *anādi*. It is a beginningless and never-ending process. And that is the whole story—simply inconceivable. But that is precisely what the Absolute Truth is—inconceivable in every respect. Hence it can be understood only through the revealed word of the *sāstra*.

Commenting on the verse by the personified *Vedas*, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī quotes a question posed to Mārkaṇḍeya in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* (1.81.12):

*ekaikasmin nare muktīm kalpe kalpe gate dvija
abhaviṣyaj jagac chūnyam kālasyāder abhāvataḥ*

O Brāhmaṇa, because time has no beginning, even if one person achieved

liberation in each of the bygone *kalpas*, by now the world would be empty.

Mārkaṇḍeya replied (1.81.13-14):

*jīvasyānyasya sargeṇa
nare muktim upāgate
acintya-śaktir bhagavān
jagat pūrayate sadā*

*brahmanā saha mucyante
brahma-lokam upāgatāḥ
srjyante ca mahā kalpe
tad-vidhāścāpare janāḥ*

When someone is liberated, the Supreme Lord, who has inconceivable potency, creates another *jīva* and thus always keeps the world full. Those who achieve Brahmaloaka become liberated along with Brahmā. Then in the next mahā kalpa the Lord creates similar beings.

These verses explain that liberated souls are replaced with the stock of sleeping souls. These souls exist within Mahā-Viṣṇu. The first verse explains the replacement of the liberated souls during the period of creation. The second explains the replacement of all the souls who get liberation along with Brahmā at the end of their lives.

Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura told Lord Caitanya that if all the conditioned *jīvas* were liberated by His mercy, He would replace them all (Cc. *Antya*. 3.78,79):

*haridāsa bale— "tomāra yāvat martye sthiti
tāvat sthāvara-jaṅgama, sarva jīva-jāti*

*saba mukta kari' tumi vaikuṅṭhe pāthaibā
sūkṣma-jīve punaḥ karme udbuddha karibā*

Haridāsa said, “My Lord, as long as You are situated within the material world, You will send to the spiritual sky all the developed moving and nonmoving living entities in different species. Then again You will awaken the living entities who are not yet developed and engage them in activities. In this way all moving and nonmoving living entities will come into existence, and the entire universe will be filled as it was previously.

Therefore there is no need to assume that living entities fall from Vaikuṅṭha to replace the liberated souls. There is no hint of that in these two verses by Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Rather, “indolent souls,” as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta calls them, will be awakened and they will fill the material universes. The supply of such indolent souls is unlimited, being manifestations of the *taṭastha śakti* of the unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The important word in Mārkaṇḍeya’s answer is *acintya-śakti*, the nature of which has been described in detail in the first part of *Bhagavat-sandarbhā*. Without accepting the existence of this most amazing energy of the Lord, one can never hope to understand Him properly. When a living entity insists on understanding the *acintya* performance of the Supreme Lord without surrendering to the version of the *śāstra* or *śabda*, he wastes his time; but if he simply accepts the version of the revealed scripture and renders devotional service to the Lord, he can progress on

the path of God realization. By the mercy of the Lord, he may come to understand some small drop of the ocean of the Absolute Truth. Without this mercy, the infinitesimal *jīvātmā* cannot grasp the infinite Personality of Godhead. This was confirmed in the prayers of Lord Brahmā after he returned the cowherd boys and calves (*Bhāg.* 10.14.29):

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānuḡṛhīta eva hi
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvaṁ*

My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate to know You are unable to do so even though they may speculate for many years.

In this regard, the story of the cobbler and the *brāhmaṇa* best illustrates the difference in mentality between a devotee and a non-devotee. The cobbler had no trouble accepting that the Lord acts in inconceivable ways, and therefore when he heard that the Lord was threading an elephant through the eye of a needle, he was filled with joy to hear the wondrous pastime of the Lord. The *brāhmaṇa*, on the other hand, was not so englanded. He wanted to know how it was possible for the Lord to thread an elephant through the eye of a needle. Actually, for the Lord it is not such a wonderful feat. This was pointed out by the cobbler when Nārada Muni asked him how he could believe that the Lord was doing such an unimaginable thing. He replied, “For the Lord, who has put a great banyan tree inside of a tiny seed, it is not at all amazing to pass time by threading an elephant through the eye of a needle.”

Just as within a tiny seed lies the full potential for a banyan tree, so within the indolent souls, whose covering by the material energy is *anādi*, lies the full potential for a loving service relationship with the Lord in the variegated spiritual sky. This is so even though they were never before in such *lilā*, just as the banyan seed was never before a tree .

But a natural doubt arises here: “Living entities are said to be beginningless, *anādi* (Bg. 13.20). Then why does the above verse say that the Lord creates others?”

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī answers that there are unlimited inactive living entities activated by the Lord as He desires. This is what is meant by the term creates in the above verse. Actually *srjyante* is the word used to indicate “creates,” and it comes from the root *srja visarge*, which means to create, or release. Here we must take the second meaning because the first meaning will contradict verses which state that the *jīva* is never created. *Srjyante* then means to release the *jīvas* from the inactive state into the active state, as was mentioned by Haridāsa Ṭhākura (Cc. *Antya* 3.80): “Then again You will awaken the living entities who are not yet developed and engage them in activities.”

Another way of understanding this phenomenon is that living entities constitute the bodily effulgence of the Lord, and constantly emanate from Him like rays of sunshine emanate from the sun. These cannot be said to be created in the ordinary sense that one creates or produces a material thing. Just like we don't say the sun creates sunshine. The sun and its light co-exist, and while one is dependent on the other, we don't say the sun creates its rays. Rather the rays perpetually emanate from the sun and there is no beginning to that process. We cannot single out a particular ray and say it began on such and such a day at such and such a time, for it is an ongoing process. This is a material example. Yet it is inconceivable. How much more inconceivable is the functioning of the Supreme Lord, who has got *acintya-śakti*?

Once again the conclusion is that nobody, whether *nitya-siddha* or *sādhana-siddha*, ever falls

from Vaikuṅṭha. Naturally, then, the question arises, “Where do we come from?” We emanated from the Lord as a spiritual spark, *aham sarvasya prabhavo*, as part of His effulgence. And just as the Lord is beginningless, so is our existence. Since this entire process is *acintya* and *anādi*, it is useless to ask when this happened. We have always been in a fallen condition, and owing to our desire to enjoy, which has no beginning, we are undergoing the cycle of repeated birth and death.

Why are some of the Lord’s *jīva-śakti* potencies in the spiritual sky, the unlimited potency of the Lord, while others are in the material sky, the limited potency of the Lord? The answer is that if the Lord did not display this feature He could not be said to be complete, unlimited and omnipotent. Since this condition is inconceivable, causeless, and without origin, it is described in the *śāstras* as *anādi*, beginningless.

THIRD WAVE: CHAPTER THIRTEEN

MORE REFUTATIONS TO ONCE WE WERE WITH KṚṢṆA

In all his analysis Drutakarma Dāsa did not cite one verse which explicitly says that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. This was not an oversight or defect in his research. He did not cite such a verse because none exists. We have already given the refutation to his analysis of the story of Vaidarbhi and the *brāhmaṇa*, which pulled down the central pillar in the edifice of his argument for the fall-*vāda* theory. We find it unnecessary, therefore, to refute him point by point, having already presented the true *paramparā siddhānta* based on guru, *sādhu*, and *śāstra*. Yet to uproot any lurking doubts we present a few sample refutations to what seem to be compelling points in favor of the fall position.

For example, he quotes Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī to prove that the *bhayaṁ dvitīyabhīniveśataḥ* verse (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37) describes that the reason the conditioned souls are in the material world is because of reversing their *original* relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never says explicitly that the conditioned souls were in Vaikuṅṭha. Rather, in *Jaiva Dharma* he clearly says that they come from Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu and describes them as on the border, “That is known as the border potency which lies between the *cit śakti* and *māyā śakti*.” This is certainly not Vaikuṅṭha, yet Drutakarma Dāsa has taken it that way due to his bias. Therefore the *śāstras* say, *ātmavān manyate jagat*, that one sees things according to his state of mind.

His quote from Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī says, “The sense of fear comes upon the *jīva* only when he turns his face towards the external power. It is due to the reversal of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa.” (From an article entitled *The Gauḍīya Catechism*) Drutakarma Dāsa claims that this statement is based on *Bhāg.* 11.2.37. Bhaktisiddhānta does not use the word “original” as Drutakarma Dāsa alleges. Furthermore, the words “reversal of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa” do not appear anywhere in the commentary. In fact, the word Kṛṣṇa appears only once in the entire commentary and in a different context. In contrast to the fall theory, we find that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta begins his comment with the following statement: *Advaya-jñāna vrajendra-nandana svayam-rūpa tattva. Tadāśrita janaganera sva-svarūpe avasthiti-kāle kona apriya vṛti āvāhana karibāra avakāśa haya nā.* “Vrajendra-nandana, the non-dual consciousness, is the *svayam-rūpa tattva*. Those who have taken shelter of Him, being situated in their own *svarūpa*, have no opportunity to invoke any kind of inauspiciousness.” In any case the reversal of the relationship has no beginning.

Next Drutakarma Dāsa quotes *Bhāg.* 11.14.25 in an attempt to drive home his point. The translation in the BBT edition is:

Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities and returns to its pure brilliant state, similarly, the spirit soul absorbed in the fire of bhakti-yoga, is purified of all contamination caused by previous fruitive activities and returns to its original position of serving Me in the spiritual world.

The purport of the BBT commentators states:

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this verse indicates that the devotee goes back home, back to Godhead, and there worships Lord Kṛṣṇa in his original spiritual body, which is compared to the original pure form of smelted gold.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura does not use the words “goes back home, back to Godhead” anywhere in his comment on this verse. The exact Sanskrit is:

kiñca bhaktyaiva ātmaśuddhiḥ nānyat eveti sadṛṣṭāntamāha yatheti. yathāgninā dharmātaṁ dharmāpitameva hema suvarṇam antarmalaṁ jahāti na kṣālanādibhiḥ svaṁ nijarṇ rūpaṁ ca bhajate tathaiva ātmā jīva'sḥ karmānuayaṁ karma-vāsanātmakaṁ malam vidhūya atho madīya loke mām bhajati sāksāt sevate.

Moreover, the purification of the self occurs only through *bhakti*, not by any other means. [Lord Kṛṣṇa] speaks this with an example in the verse beginning with *yathā* (11.14.25). Just as gold gives up its impurity only when in contact with fire—not by any other means such as washing—and attains its original form, similarly the *jīva* is rid of its impurities in the form of material desires and serves Me in My planet. He serves Me directly.

Here the words “original form” do not imply that the gold was pure to begin with. When gold comes from the mine, it is impure. Then it is purified by fire and the gold attains its original form. All it means is that the gold is in its *svarūpa*, without any impurity. Similarly, when it is said that the *jīva* attains his original form, all it means is that he is free from the contamination of *māyā*, which was *anādi*. It does not mean that he was pure, then became impure, and then pure again. Drutakarma Dāsa did not understand the example properly and therefore he sought to impose his own ideas upon his readers when he writes:

One might argue that the gold is originally in an impure state (as ore), and that it is purified by smelting. But the word *punaḥ* (again) rules out this interpretation. In this analogy, the gold must have originally been in a pure state and become

contaminated. And by the smelting process it regains its original state.

By such comments it is clear that Drutakarma Dāsa does not understand the wonderful principle of analogy, which is to use what is known to the common man to teach something unknown. *Laukika-parīkṣakānāṁ yasminnarthe buddhi-sāmyam sa dr̥ṣṭāntaḥ* (*Nyāya Sūtra* 1.1.25), “An example or analogy is that which is properly understood by a common man as well as by the man who has the eye to test things.” Here the analogy is very clear. The iron ore is impure to begin with. The common man has no experience that gold is pure and then it becomes impure. When the ore comes from the mine it is impure; it is made pure by smelting. This is known to the common man. This analogy is then applied to the conditioning of the *jīva*. The *jīva* is conditioned or impure to begin with. His condition is therefore called *anādi-karma*, *anādi-patita*, or *nitya-baddha*. The logic of this is simple. Having made his beginningless appearance outside of the spiritual world, the *jīva* is automatically fallen and impure. Therefore, the analogy of the *jīva* with the impure gold in the mine is quite appropriate.

Bhakti is like a fire which purifies the *jīva* as fire purifies the gold ore. After that the *jīva* is instated in his original status just as gold attains its true nature once the impurities are burned up. Any common man can follow this analogy. Our explanation is supported by Śrīla Vijayadhvaja Tīrtha. He comments, *jīva anādy avidyā-karma-kalilam karma anuśayāntaḥ karanam bhakti-yogena vidhyāya nirmalikṛtya atho maṅgal mūrti māṁ bhajati*, “The *jīva* is impure because of *anādi kāma* and karma. His heart is purified by devotional service, and then he worships the auspicious form of the Lord.”

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s statement in *Jaiva Dharma*, as quoted in the first chapter of this book, concurs with Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s commentary on this verse. The impure gold comes from the mine. Otherwise gold, once purified, does not become impure. It may get dirty on the outside, but to clean it will not require re-smelting. No one uses fire to clean the dirt off of a golden ornament, but it is a well known fact that gold ore is purified by smelting. Drutakarma Dāsa rests his entire explanation of this verse on the meaning of the word *punaḥ* (again). By his own admission, he concludes that the gold may be assumed originally to be in an impure state (as ore). He then discounts this possibility because of the word *punaḥ* (again). Owing to an incomplete understanding of this word and its application in this verse, he has side-stepped the simple and obvious meaning of the analogy.

Although the general meaning of the word *punaḥ* is “again,” it also means “then,” “after,” “further,” and so on, according to the *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* by Monier Williams. The meaning “then” may be taken here to keep the meaning of the verse consistent with other statements that the *jīva* is *anādi-baddha*. This meaning has also been given by Śrīdhara Svāmī as will be seen later on in this chapter. This has already been discussed earlier in connection with verses such as the one that describes knowledge and ignorance as beginningless and perpetually awarding liberation and bondage to embodied living beings. (*Bhāg.* 11.11.3)

Yet another explanation of the word *punaḥ* has been given by Bhakti Viveka Bhārati Maharāja, a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He has published a book called *Uddhava-Samvāda* which comprises Chapters Six to Twenty-nine of the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Herein he has included the Sanskrit commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and his own *Anudarśinī* commentary in Bengālī, which follows the commentary of Śrī Cakravartīpāda. According to him the word *punaḥ* is applied to the process of cleaning and not to the attainment of the pure state. By this understanding the verse means, “By performing *bhakti* again and again, he attains to the pure state.” In support of this he quotes, *dagdham dagdham punar api punaḥ kañcanam kānta-varṇa prāpta haya*. The meaning is that when gold is smelted in fire again and again, it attains a very beautiful color. He further comments:

ei dr̥stānte dekhā yāya ye-yemana agni svarṇera antarmala nāsā kariyā thāra nija-rūpa dhārama karāya, anya kona vastu-dvārā vā prakriyāya svarṇera svābhāvika rūpa-prāpti haya nā tad rūpa bhakti vyatīta karma jñānādi kona-o upāye-i jīvera kasma-vāsanātmaka mala vidhauta haiyā ātma śuddhi vā sva svarūpa prāpti haya nā.

From this example it is seen that only fire destroys the internal impurities of gold and causes it to attain its own form. There is no other object or process which can bring gold to its natural inborn state. Similarly, other than *bhakti*, no other process—such as karma or *jñāna*—can cleanse the *jīva* from the dirt of material desires (*karma vāsanā*) and cause him to attain complete purification of the self (*ātma-śuddhi*) or in other words, the attainment of his own constitutional form (*sva-svarūpa*).

His use of the words “*antar mala*” (internal impurity) and “*anya kona vastu-dvārā vā prakriyāya. . . nā*” (by no process or object other than fire) rule out the type of misinterpretation suggested by Drutakarma Dāsa.

Next, Drutakarma Dāsa cites 11.14.26 as evidence in his support. Unfortunately the translation is defective and therefore Drutakarma Dāsa’s analysis is naturally defective. Here is the translation with the Sanskrit word synonyms (in the BBT edition¹):

By hearing (*śravaṇa*) and by chanting (*abhidhānaiḥ*) the pious narration of My glories (*mat-punya-gāthā*) as much as (*yathā yathā*) he (*asau*), the spirit soul, the conscious entity (*ātmā*) is cleansed of material contamination (*parimṛjyate*) exactly in that proposition (*tathā tathā*) he sees (*paśyati*) the Absolute Truth (*vastu*), (which is) subtle, being non-material (*sūkṣmam*), just as (*yathā*) the eye (*cakṣuḥ*) certainly (*eva*) (sees the subtle objects when) treated (*samprayuktam*) with medical ointment (*añjana*).

In his explanation of this verse Drutakarma Dāsa writes:

One might object that the analogy refers to a person who is blind from birth and whose blindness is cured by some medical treatment. Therefore, it is incorrect to speak of one regaining one’s vision, since in the Sanskrit text there is no direct mention of regaining either material sight or spiritual sight. This is certainly a valid objection, if one simply takes this verse on its own. But because this text directly follows the text above, where the analogy does speak about regaining an original healthy or pure condition, it is reasonable to extend the concept of regaining something to this analogy as well. This is the way the analogy would most fairly be understood in any case.

If the ground floor of a building collapses, then one cannot expect the second floor to hang in the air. We have already shown that the previous verse does not support fall from *Vaikuṅṭha*, therefore, the analogy referring to a blind man whose blindness is cured is still a valid objection, whether one reads this text in the light of the previous text or on its own. Drutakarma Dāsa writes, “This is the way the analogy would most fairly be understood in any case,” but he does not say why this is so. The purport to this verse states in part: “A blind person feels perpetual gratitude to a doctor who restores his sight. Similarly, we sing *cakṣudāna dila yei janme janme prabhu sei...*”.

And Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments: *prathamam andhāt kāṇo'py uttamastamācchakṣmān cakṣuṣmato'pi siddhāñjana-rasāñjita-netraḥ sūkṣmam paśyati*, “A one-eyed man is superior to one who is blind to begin with. Better than a one-eyed person is one who has both eyes, and better than him is one whose eyes are smeared with the perfect salve, because he can see very subtle objects.” He gives this analogical explanation because earlier he wrote the verse explaining the gradual progress of a devotee from the beginning stage up to perfection where one actually experiences the Lord’s sweet pastimes. Again the implication is that one has never seen the Lord’s pastimes, like a blind man, and by devotional service in the form of hearing and chanting, one attains transcendental vision. This surely is the most fair way to understand the analogy.

Out of zeal the author of *Once We Were with Kṛṣṇa* has misinterpreted the phrase, “attains his original form” in many other similar instances. In any case, none of these instances state clearly that the *jīva* was situated in his original *svarūpa* in the *nitya-līlā* of the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha. The author extrapolates such meaning just to serve his purpose. To this end he applies logic and other means. Since his logic does not in fact serve the conclusion of the *śāstra*, his whole analysis serves as a wonderful example of dry logic, which the *Mahābhārata* verse, *tarko 'pratistha*, has warned us to avoid. To refute his arguments, we have simply stuck to the principle described in the second half of the verse, *dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitam guhāyāṁ mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*.

In the same vein that fall-*vādīs* misinterpret phrases such as “original form,” they also misinterpret the verses with words such as “Do you remember me,” “regained his memory,” “lost his memory” and so on, citing them as proof of being in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* prior to conditioned life.

One such sample example is (*Bhāg.* 3.31.15) cited by Drutakarma dāsa:

*yan-māyayoru-guṇa-karma-nibandhane 'smīn
sāmsārike pathi carams tad-abhiśrameṇa
naṣṭa-smṛtiḥ punar ayam pravṛṇita lokam
yuktyā kayā mahad-anugraham antareṇa*

The human soul further prays: The living entity is put under the influence of material nature and continues a hard struggle for existence on the path of repeated birth and death. This conditional life is due to his forgetfulness of his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, without the Lord’s mercy, how can he again engage in the transcendental loving service of the Lord?

Drutakarma Dāsa comments:

This passage is from the prayers spoken by the soul within the womb, as explained by Lord Kapila to His mother Devahuti. So this information is being related by the Supreme Lord Himself, as part of His teachings to Devahuti. Who can be a greater expert about the original condition of the *jīva* than the Supreme Lord Himself?

The key synonyms are: *naṣṭa*—lost; *smṛtiḥ*—memory; *punaḥ*—again; *ayam*—this living entity; *pravṛṇita*—may realize; *lokam*—his true nature.

If the *jīva* had never before experienced his true nature, there would be no question of using the terms *naṣṭa-smṛtiḥ* (lost memory) and *punaḥ pravṛṇita* (again realize). In other words, when we attain realization of our eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, this is something we had before and have forgotten. We attain what we once had. This rules out, for example, the theory that the *jīva* was originally

with Mahāviṣṇu and that when the *jīva* is liberated, it goes to Kṛṣṇa or Nārāyaṇa. This Mahāviṣṇu theory is a rather desperate attempt on the part of some confused individuals to keep both their idea that we were never with Kṛṣṇa and their adherence to Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings. These two things are, however, incompatible. Eventually, the confused persons are going to have to make a choice. I hope they make the right one.

In his purport to the above text (3.31.15), Śrīla Prabhupāda states:

It is clearly said herein that our memory is lost because we are now covered by His material energy. Arguments may be put forward as to why we have been put under the influence of the material energy of the Lord. This is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, where the Lord says, 'I am sitting in everyone's heart, and due to Me one is forgetful or one is alive in knowledge.' The forgetfulness of the conditioned soul is also due to the direction of the Supreme Lord. A living entity misuses his little independence when he wants to lord it over material nature. This misuse of independence, which is called *māyā*, is always available, otherwise there would be no independence. Independence implies that one can use it properly or improperly. It is not static; it is dynamic. Therefore, misuse of independence is the cause of being influenced by *māyā*.

(Drutakarma Dāsa continues):

Note that it is not *māyā* that causes the misuse of independence. Independence is an eternal spiritual quality of the marginal potency, and its misuse is therefore not due to any material influence in Vaikuṅṭha. The ability to choose to serve or not serve Kṛṣṇa is an inherent spiritual quality of the marginal potency. Only when independence is misused does one come under the influence of *māyā*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda makes an important point in his purport which completely upsets Drutakarma Dāsa's analysis. He writes, "This misuse of independence, which is called *māyā*, is always available, otherwise there would be no independence." Here he clearly says that misuse of independence is *māyā*. There is no *māyā* in the spiritual world, *na yatra māyā* (2.9.10). That means there is no misuse of independence in the spiritual world. Independence is there, but no misuse. This is the difference between the spiritual and the material world. Just like two sons of a father; one of them is well-behaved and the other is an upstart. Both sons have independence, but use it differently. The well-behaved son is voluntarily well-behaved and does not misuse his independence. The liberated soul is like that, but even more so.

Later on Prabhupāda writes, "Independence implies that one can use it properly or improperly." And this is the difference between Vaikuṅṭha devotees and conditioned souls. The former use it properly and the latter improperly. A person has the independence to jump from the roof of his house. But he never misuses this independence unless he is insane. Certainly the Vaikuṅṭha devotees are not insane. It would be foolish to think so. In this connection Prabhupāda writes (*Bhāg.* 1.8.23, purport), "The living beings are given as much freedom as they deserve, and misuse of that freedom is the cause of suffering. The devotees of the Lord do not misuse their freedom and therefore they are the good sons of the Lord." The principle of *ātmavan manyate jagat*, or seeing the world according to one's own consciousness, should not be projected onto the Vaikuṅṭha residents because they are not part of the *jagat*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has warned us that we must be careful not to impose the limitation of this temporal world on the eternal reality of the spiritual world.

Drutakarma Dāsa concludes, “Note that it is not *māyā* that causes the misuse of independence.” This is one of the few accurate statements in his analysis. Unfortunately he does not understand the meaning. *Māyā* does not cause the misuse of the *jīva*’s independence, but the misuse is itself *māyā*. This tiny fact he has overlooked. Śrīla Prabhupāda says, however, that the misuse of independence “which is called *māyā*” is the reason the *jīva* is in conditioned life.

In addition, Śrīdhara Svāmī has given a different meaning to the word *punaḥ* (again). He writes:

*yasya māyayā naṣṭa-smṛtiḥ san saṁsāra-sambandhini pathi tadabhimiśreṇa
tat-kṛteṇa kleśeṇa carannayaṁ jīvo mahatstasyaiveś-varasyānugrahaṁ vinā punaḥ
kayā yuktyā lokaṁ nija-svarūpam pravṛhita bhajet.*

By the Lord’s *māyā*, the *jīva* loses his memory and wanders on the path which binds him to the material world. He thus suffers the miseries given by *māyā*. Then (*punaḥ*) without the mercy of that same person (the Lord) how can he realize his self?

Here the word *punaḥ* is defined as “then” or “thereafter.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura accepts this usage. The meaning is that the *jīva* is in the state of forgetfulness, *naṣṭa-smṛti*, which has no beginning. Then (*punaḥ*) by the mercy of the Lord he is able to know his own self. This is how the word *punaḥ* is being used here.

In addition, the word *naṣṭa-smṛti* (lost memory) does not mean previous existence in Vaikuṅṭha. It means one who does not know one’s own self. He is in forgetfulness of his constitutional position and this forgetfulness has no beginning. Similarly, attaining one’s *svarūpa*, or original nature, does not mean one had the original nature, lost it, and then realized it again. He is always covered by *māyā* and by engaging in devotional service, one realizes that he is a servant of Kṛṣṇa once and for all. It is the awarding of something that was never there to begin with, like cleaning the golden ore to bring it to its pure state or a blind man getting sight by a medical operation. We would say his sight was restored, or love of God was awakened, or brought to his original condition, but it does not mean that one had these things before.

On page nine of his book, Drutakarma Dāsa says, “In his *Śrī Sanmodaya-Bhāṣya* commentary on Lord Caitanya’s *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Text Five, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura quotes this verse from the Sixth Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*.” (Actually it is *Sanmodana-Bhāṣya*, and the verse is quoted not from his commentary but from the *Bhajana-rahasya* verses given in support of the commentary). Then he quotes *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.11.24. In this verse Vṛtrāsura prays to the Lord, “Will I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your feet?”

According to Drutakarma Dāsa the word again (*bhūyah*) refers to the original state of the *jīva*, but the fact is that Vṛtrāsura was King Citraketu, a great devotee of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. He was cursed to become a demon by Pārvatī Devī. He is still a devotee, but has an unsuitable body. Therefore, he is praying for the association of the devotees. Vṛtrāsura was never a fallen conditioned soul. His actual position is clear from the comment of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda which accompanies this verse. He says, *bhāvodgame dāsyā ratira udaya sāhajika*, “When *bhāva* manifests in the heart, then *dāsyā rati* is easily awakened.” In other words, the verse spoken by Vṛtrāsura is being given as an example of the mood expressed by a devotee situated in the stage of *bhāva-bhakti*. Drutakarma Dasa’s citing Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda’s comment here exposes the paucity of realization on the part of the protagonists of fall-*vāda* and the extent to which they are willing to stretch their imagination to support their theory. The Ṭhākura cited this verse as an illustration of *bhāva-bhakti* whereas they try to make it out as a case for fall-down from

Vaikuṅṭha.

In his commentary Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura does not say a word about falling down from or going back to the spiritual world. For every *śloka* he composed a song. The song for *śloka* five is the *anādi karama phale, padi bhavārṇava jale*, "I am drowning in the ocean of material world as a result of my karma which is *anādi*, beginningless." And this is the meaning of Lord Caitanya's words, *patitam mām viśame bhavāmbudhau*.

As far as his analysis for proving that *nitya-muktas* fall down to become *nitya-baddhas*, none of it stands up to close scrutiny. His whole analysis is based on verses with words such as *svarūpa*, *punaḥ*, *vismṛti* and so on. From these words he tries to show that the *jīva* was originally in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* and then fell down, but when these words are studied in the proper context they do not have any such implication. We find that no previous *ācārya* has commented on them to conclude that *jīvas* fall down from the spiritual world. In light of all this, we find that the onus is squarely on the shoulders of the author of *Once We Were With Kṛṣṇa*, or those who agree with him, to prove that *nitya-muktas* can fall down from the direct association of the Lord. If he and his supporters are interested in *vāda*, however, we think there will be no difficulty in recognizing that he made a mistake; for it would be difficult indeed to overturn the verdict of all our *ācāryas*, which is that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Again he has not given any scriptural reference that directly states *nitya-muktas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha.

FOURTH WAVE INTRODUCTION

In the Fourth Wave we give further evidence based on *sāstra* and logic to show how no one can fall from Vaikuṅṭha. There are seventeen chapters in this Wave. Each one explains a different aspect of the philosophy relating to the nature of the Lord, His devotees, His internal potency, and His abode. We explain the eternal nature of *bhakti*; the loving relation between the Lord and His devotees; that a devotee never becomes envious of the Lord or His devotees; there is no mention of fallen *nitya-muktas* in the scriptures; a devotee never falls, trips, or jumps; the Lord is controlled by His devotees and they enjoy supreme bliss in rendering service to Him; devotees are so glorious that without their mercy nobody can become liberated; the material nature cannot control the devotees; the Lord protects even the relative of a devotee, and He acts as a devotee of His devotee; everything spiritual is eternal, and there is no matter in the spiritual world; the eternal associates of the Lord have qualities just like the Lord and thus cannot fall; the Lord nourishes His devotees just as a mother nourishes her baby; He protects His devotees even if He has to undergo suffering or criticism; even if *bhakti* is performed once, it gives eternal result, what to speak of those who are eternally engaged in *bhakti*; one should not think that Jaya and Vijaya fell down and we have similarly fallen; in Vaikuṅṭha one always has the exclusive association of devotees, which is like a tonic; if those who have attained Vaikuṅṭha after suffering in the material world never fall, how can the eternal associates fall; and the free will of a pure devotee cannot be the cause of fall-down. All these points soundly prove that a devotee in Vaikuṅṭha—whether *baddha-mukta* or *nitya-mukta*—never falls.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER ONE

BHAKTI IS ETERNAL

A devotee cannot fall from Vaikuṅṭha because *bhakti* is never lost, diminished, or covered by

anything. Lord Kṛṣṇa confirmed this to His two prime disciples Arjuna and Uddhava. To Arjuna He said (Bg. 2.40):

*nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-ālpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt*

In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear.

Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “Even a small beginning of such activity finds no impediment nor can that small beginning be lost at any stage.” The Vaiṣṇava residents do not have a “small beginning,” they are fully immersed in it. They do nothing else. To Uddhava Lord Kṛṣṇa said (Bhāg. 11.29.20):

*na hy aṅgopakrame dhvaṁso
mad-dharmasyoddhavāṅv api
mayā vyavasitāḥ samyaṅ
nirguṇatvād anāśiṣaḥ*

My dear Uddhava, because I have personally established it, this process of devotional service to Me is transcendental and free from any material motivation. Certainly a devotee never suffers even the slightest loss by adopting this process.

It may be possible that offenses sometimes cover *sādhana-bhakti*, but perfect *bhakti* cannot be covered by anything. Lord Kapiladeva says that a devotee’s mind flows towards the Lord just as the Ganges flows to the ocean, without any break. This He says is the symptom of pure devotion (Bhāg. 3.29.11-12):

*mad-guṇa-śruti-mātreṇa
mayi sarva-guhāśaye
mano-gatir avicchinnā
yathā gaṅgāmbhaso 'mbudhau*

*lakṣaṇam bhakti-yogasya
nirguṇasya hy udāhṛtam
ahaituky avyavahitā
yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame*

The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one’s mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone’s heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord.

The word *avyavahitā* (without cessation) and *avicchinnā* (continuous) indicate that nothing can cover or obstruct pure *bhakti*.

According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, *avicchinnā* means continuous or unending. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says it means that which cannot be disturbed by any other subject, and *avyavahitā* means direct,

not imposed, because it is part of the *svarūpa* of the devotee: *svarūpa-siddhatvena sāksād rūpā na tu āropādisiddhatvena vyavadhānātmikā*. Here the word *svarūpa-siddha* is very important. Just as fire has the potency to burn, which is inseparable from fire, similarly *bhakti* is implicit in the nature of a perfected devotee. You cannot separate the *bhakta* and *bhakti*. That is why it is called *avyavahītā*, or without any obstruction, or separation, or cessation. A person and his *svarūpa* cannot be separated by anything. Therefore it is impossible for a devotee to lose *bhakti* or give it up and fall from the spiritual world.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has done a minute analysis of *anarthas* in his book, *Mādhurya Kādambinī*, Third Chapter. He has divided them into four groups, arising from past sins, past piety, offenses, and *bhakti*. He says that when a devotee attains *bhāva*, or *rati*, the eradication of *anarthas* is almost complete. With the appearance of *prema*, the *anarthas* are completely eradicated. When a devotee attains the Lord, the eradication of *anarthas* is absolute and there is no possibility of their reappearance. The implication is that devotees residing in Vaikuṅṭha have no possibility of being influenced by any *anartha* of any type.

When Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that souls make a choice either to come to *māyā* or go to Vaikuṅṭha, at that time they are not devotees; otherwise, they would never be allured by *māyā*'s glare. The choice is always there—to choose spiritual life or material life. This choice is available to all conditioned souls all the time.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says that all the manifestations of the internal potency are stable and real (*Bṛhad-Bhāg. 2.4.183*), *śaktyā sampāditam yat tu sthiraṁ satyaṁ ca drśyate*. The significance is that once one attains *bhakti*, it becomes part of the devotee's essential nature. Then it can neither be destroyed or reduced. The material energy can only cover the marginal energy but not *bhakti*, which is the internal potency and which is infallible like the Lord Himself. There are no scriptural statements which say that *bhakti* of a pure devotee becomes covered by the material energy. Even in cases such as King Citraketu being cursed, his *bhakti* was not covered as is clear from his prayers as Vṛtrāsura. And, of course, the devotees in Vaikuṅṭha cannot get cursed. Sometimes there are stories of devotees getting cursed such as Jaya and Vijaya. That is considered as *lilā*. Such curses never result in fall down.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER TWO

THE LOGIC OF LOVE

In this world it is seen that sometimes people give up their life for their object of love—a pretty girl, a family member, one's country, religion, or some similar cause. Kṛṣṇa is the supreme object of love, and love for Him is not material. If people make such sacrifices for such inferior reasons, how much more will a devotee sacrifice for the love of the Lord, who is irresistible charm personified, being more attractive than millions of cupids? How can anyone give Him up?

In Vraja every person feels that he is most dear to Kṛṣṇa and thus feels fully satisfied (*Bṛhad-Bhāg. 2.6.211*):

*bālakāstaruṇā vṛddhā gopāste koṭi-koṭīśaḥ
sarve vidur mahā preyān ahaṁ kṛṣṇasya netaraḥ*

Whether boys, youths, or grown-up persons—every one of the millions of cowherd residents of Vraja feels himself the dearest to Kṛṣṇa.

A *nitya-mukta* devotee in Vaikuṅṭha has a fully purified mind, body, and senses. To come to the material world from Vaikuṅṭha, that spiritual body has to be covered by matter. Not only must it be covered, but it has to become unmanifest and contract into atomic size. This implies that the spiritual body has to undergo a change or transformation. This is against the nature of spiritual objects, which are *avikāri* (not transformable). This also means that matter has to cover the *śuddha-sattva* spiritual body and make it impotent. This causes some logical problems because here again we have to accept that *māyā* covers the spiritual energy of the Lord. This lodges us again in a slight variation on the Mayāvāda philosophy. But just as Brahman is the energy of the Lord and cannot be covered by *māyā*, so the *śuddha-sattva* bodies of the *nitya-mukta* devotees are pure spiritual energy belonging to the *parā-śakti* of the Lord.

Even if such a devotee is covered by matter, he would remain spiritual within and retain his Vaikuṅṭha knowledge and consciousness. If a bulb is covered from outside, it does not stop giving light. The light is contained within. It does not lose its luminous characteristic. How can the spiritual consciousness of a Vaikuṅṭha devotee be lost even if he gets a material body? It is not lost. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says, therefore, that when Jaya and Vijaya became demons, within they knew themselves and kept their spiritual form (*Prīti-sandarbha*, 7).

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER THREE

“BAHIRMUKHA” DOES NOT MEAN ENVIOUS

An important point to be noted is that the phrase *kṛṣṇa bahirmukha* does not mean a person is envious of Kṛṣṇa. Literally it means one whose face is turned away from Kṛṣṇa. It implies a person who is not devoted to Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained in *Paramātmā-sandarbha* (47) and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has explained in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that this condition of non-devotion is *anādi*. Thus in some places the statement reads *kṛṣṇa anādi bahirmukha*. When *anādi* is not mentioned, it is understood. Just like we are discussing the theory of fall from Vaikuṅṭha. When we refer to it as the fall theory, the words “from Vaikuṅṭha” are to be understood.

In the writings of the Gosvāmīs the conditioned soul is said to be *kṛṣṇa bahirmukha*, “turned away from Kṛṣṇa.” That is understood to be *anādi*, a condition that always was. If he had fallen by becoming envious of Kṛṣṇa while in Vaikuṅṭha, the conditioned soul would be described as *kṛṣṇa vidveṣīna*, envious of Kṛṣṇa; but nowhere has this word been used to describe the conditioned living entities. The *jīvas* already in conditioned life may be described as envious of Kṛṣṇa. The Lord Himself says that the living entities are overcome by *icchā* and *dveṣa*, desire and hate, which can be summed up as envy, but that envy did not and could not originate in the Vaikuṅṭha atmosphere where the very qualification for entrance or residence is no envy. Both Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa have commented on the *Gītā* verse (7.27) that this *icchā* and *dveṣa* are beginningless.

And the envy described in verses such as *icchā-dveṣa-samutthena* is not envy of Kṛṣṇa. To envy a person one has to know him. Nobody can love or envy a person whom he does not know. No one in the material world knows Kṛṣṇa, otherwise there would be no need for preaching. People only come to know of Kṛṣṇa from devotees. Anyone who knows about Him becomes liberated, *janma karma ca me divyam*. One may say that there are many non-devotees who hate Kṛṣṇa. Factually they hate devotees, whom they know, because they feel them a threat to their sense gratification. The non-devotees, angered by the devotees following Kṛṣṇa, express their

hatred toward Kṛṣṇa without actually knowing Him. If they actually hated Kṛṣṇa, they would not be able to avoid thinking of Him. This would purify their heart and ultimately they would become liberated. This is the principle described by Nārada Muni in the Seventh Canto. The non-devotees who have so-called hatred for Kṛṣṇa are like Vena, whom Nārada Muni said did not fit into any one of the six categories of people who have lust, fear, envy, relation, affection, or devotion for Kṛṣṇa (*Bhāg.* 7.1.31):

*gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṁso
dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ
sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād
yūyaṁ bhaktyā vayaṁ vibho*

My dear King Yudhiṣṭhīra, the *gopīs* by their lusty desires, Kāmsa by his fear, Śīsupāla and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you Pāṇḍavas by your great affection for Kṛṣṇa, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

The conclusion is that envy, which is part of material dualism and a symptom of the conditioned souls, is *anādi*, just like their conditioning itself. Therefore, this envy did not have its origin in the transcendental abode of the Lord.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER FOUR

NO SANSKRIT TERM FOR FALLEN DEVOTEES

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī, commenting on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.87.32, says that there are four types of living beings:

Te ca megho pamayā avidyayā āvṛtā baddha-jīvā eke, anye bhakti-maj-jñānena tad-āvaraṇonmuktā mukta-jīvāḥ anye kevalayā pradhānibhūtayā vā bhaktyā tadāvaraṇonmocita-prāpīta-cidānanda-māy-bhajanopayogi-śarīrah siddha-bhaktā anye avidyā-yoga-rahitā eva nitya-pāṛṣadā iti caturvidhāḥ.

1. *Baddha*—those under the influence of the *avidyā* potency.
2. *Mukta*—those liberated from the covering of *avidyā* by *bhakti*, but who have not yet attained a spiritual body. These are also called *jīvan-muktas*, or liberated while living in the material body.
3. *Siddha*—those who have attained a spiritual body by the influence of *bhakti*. These are called *baddha-muktas* or liberated after being in bondage.
4. *Nitya pāṛṣada*—those who are eternally free from the association of *avidyā*. They never become conditioned. They are also called *nitya-muktas* or *nitya-siddhas*.

He does not have a fifth category for residents of Vaikuṅṭha who then fell down. In all the Vedic literature no such concept is found. One can see words such as *nitya-baddha*, *nitya-mukta*, and

baddha-mukta, but nothing like *mukta-baddha*, indicating someone who was liberated then bound.

Similarly, commenting on *Vedānta-Śyāmantaka* (3), a book by his spiritual master, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa divided *jīvas* in three classes:

1. *Nitya-mukta*—eternally liberated.
2. *Baddha-mukta*—were conditioned but became liberated.
3. *Baddha*—conditioned living entities.

Again, there is no mention of a class called *mukta-baddha* or something akin to that. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja (Cc. *Madhya* 22.10) and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī (*Vaiṣṇavism—Real and Apparent*) mention only two classes, *nitya-mukta* and *nitya-baddha*. If so many living entities have indeed fallen from Vaikuṅṭha, one would expect to read something about them and find a word or phrase describing this class of living entities in common usage. But no Vaiṣṇava philosopher has ever used such a word in his writing. There are no explicit statements in the Vedic literature which explain that a *nitya-mukta* falls. One may try to screw out such meanings from some allegorical verses such as in the story of Purañjana or by misinterpreting words like remembrance, original relationship, forgetting Kṛṣṇa, and so forth; still the fact remains that there are no clear statements in the scriptures to support such conclusions. But there are many statements that establish another conclusion; namely, that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha and the conditioned soul's existence is *anādi*, or beginningless.

Although attaining liberation is such a rare thing, we have many statements and stories describing how *nitya-baddhas* become liberated. In contrast, we find that there is not a single historical account of fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha in the many volumes of Vedic literature. This is indeed striking considering the vast number of fallen *jīvas* in this one universe alone. We stipulate that there is only one reason why we find no such description in the *śāstra*—because no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER FIVE

A DEVOTEE NEVER SLIPS OR FALLS AND HE IS NOT INSANE TO JUMP

Someone may argue that one possibility of falling down from Vaikuṅṭha is because of obstacles. Such an obstacle can be caused by someone else or by one's own mind; however, Drumila Yogendra says that devotees cross over all obstacles (*Bhāg.* 11.4.10):

*tvām sevatām sura-kṛtā bahavo 'ntarāyāḥ
svauko viraṅghya paramam vrajatām padam te
nānyasya barhiṣi balin dadataḥ sva-bhāgān
dhatte padam tvam avitā yadi vighna-mūrdhni*

The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned shares in sacrificial performances

encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the demigods place before him.

These obstacles are not imposed on the *nitya-mukta* devotees residing in Vaikuṅṭha *dhāma* because the demigods do not exist there. There are only devotees in Vaikuṅṭha and devotees do not put obstacles on the path of other devotees. The demigods themselves confirm that devotees never fall because they cross over all obstacles (*Bhāg.* 10.2.33):

*tathā na te mādharma tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāttvayi baddha-sauhṛdāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānikapa-mūrdhasu prabho*

O Mādhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune, if devotees completely in love with You sometimes fall from the path of devotion, they do not fall like non-devotees, for You still protect them. Thus they fearlessly traverse the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service.

Śrīdhara Svāmī writes, *tvadiyāstu na kadācid api patanti ity āhuh*, “But Your devotees never fall. To say this, the demigods speak this verse to Lord Kṛṣṇa.” The important point is that Śrīdhara Svāmī makes a categorical statement, “But Your devotees never fall.” This includes the *nitya-muktas*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments, *tvad rūpapāsakāstu ātma-tattvādi-jñānābhāve’pi svadharmā-parityāge’pi kathañcit pātakāpāte’pi naiva patantiyāhu*, “But those who worship Your form do not fall even if they lack knowledge of *ātma-tattva*, have abandoned their *svadharmā*, or sometimes engage in sinful activities.” This verse is speaking about devotees in the material world. By contrast, the devotees in Vaikuṅṭha are situated in knowledge of *ātma-tattva*, engaged in their *svadharmā* of devotional service, and commit no sins, so where is the possibility of such pure devotees falling from Vaikuṅṭha?

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura reiterates the same point and adds a little more:

*Yadi vā bhraśyanti tadāpi tvayi baddha-sauhṛdā eva bhavanti
citraketu-bharatendradyumnādinām bhraṁśe sati vṛtrādītve premṇaḥ
śataguṇibhāva-darśanāt bhaktānām bhraṁśo’pi premādhikyo-heturvā drṣṭaḥ.*

Even if they fall, they become more attached to You. Just as when King Citraketu, Bharata Mahārāja, and King Indradymna had a so-called fall down, then in their fallen forms such as Vṛtrāsura (previously King Citraketu), their love multiplied hundreds of times. Therefore the fall of a devotee causes his love to increase.

Naturally such a fall is not really a fall but a promotion. It is not the proposed fall down of a *jīva* from Vaikuṅṭha, in which he completely forgets the Lord and becomes conditioned by the modes of nature. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself assures Uddhava (*Bhāg.* 11.2.35):

*yān āsthāya naro rājan
na pramādyeta karhicit
dhāvan nimīlya vā netre
na skhalen na pated iha*

O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall.

This verse also explains that there are no obstacles on this path. Even if he runs with both eyes closed, he neither slips nor falls, *na skhalen na pated iha*. The two eyes are compared to *Śruti* and *Smṛti*. The word *iha* refers to this material world. If one does not fall while executing devotional service in this material world, which is full of unfavorable circumstances, how could one fall in Vaikuṅṭha where everything is conducive to devotional service and there are absolutely no obstacles? In fact this is the reason that a devotee wants to go to Vaikuṅṭha (the place of no anxiety)—to execute devotional service peacefully. This is confirmed by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.3.131-132):

*tathāpi sarvadā sākṣād anyatra bhagavastathā
na drśyete vaikuṅṭho'vaśyam bhaktairapekṣyate
sarva-prakārikā bhaktistādrśī ca sadānyataḥ
na sampadyeta nirviḥnā tanniṣṭhair bahubhiḥ saha*

In the material world the devotee does not always see the Lord. Therefore the devotee certainly wishes to be in Vaikuṅṭha. Devotional service cannot be performed without disturbance in any place other than Vaikuṅṭha and in the association of like-minded devotees.

Sanātana Gosvāmī comments, *vaikuṅṭhe kālādikṛta-viḥnābhāvāt*, “In Vaikuṅṭha there are no obstacles to *bhakti* created by elements such as time.” Time here indicates that obstacles never come in the past, present, or future.

This makes it clear that there are no obstacles posed by external factors in Vaikuṅṭha. Indeed, the symptom of a pure devotee is that he never forgets the Lord even for a second and never abandons the Lord’s feet (*Bhāg.* 11.2.53):

*tri-bhuvana-vibhava-hetave 'py akuṅṭha
smṛtir ajitātma-surādibhir vimṛgyāt
na calati bhagavat-padāravindāl
lava-nimiṣārdham api yaḥ sa vaiṣṇavāgryaḥ*

The lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are sought even by the greatest of demigods, such as Brahmā and Śiva, who have all accepted the Supreme Personality as their life and soul. A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstance. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single moment—indeed, not for half a moment—even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the Vaiṣṇavas.

In Vaikuṅṭha there are only first-class devotees, *bhāgavatottama*, possessing the characteristics described in this verse. From this verse it is clear that they do not have the chance to forget the Lord even for half a moment. This means they have no obstacles in their service and they never forget the Lord. It is offensive to think that devotees situated in love of God would ever become envious of their Lord. What to speak of these devotees who have attained *bhāva*, even those who are just practicing, but cannot yet control their senses generally do not fall down. Lord Kṛṣṇa states this (*Bhāg.* 11.14.18):

*bādhyamāno 'pi mad-bhakto
viṣayair ajitendriyaḥ
prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā
viṣayair nābhibhūyate*

My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his senses, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification.

In case a devotee makes a mistake somehow, the Lord gives him all protection, as Sage Karabhājana said (*Bhāg.* 11.5.42):

*sva-pāda-mūlaṁ bhajataḥ priyasya
tyaktānya-bhāvasya hariḥ pareśaḥ
vikarma yac cotpatitaṁ kathañcid
dhunoti sarvaṁ hr̥di sanniviṣṭaḥ*

One who has thus given up all other engagements and has taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to the Lord. Indeed, if such a surrendered soul accidentally commits some sinful activity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone's heart, immediately takes away the reaction to such sin.

Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms this in the *api cet sudurācāro* verse. As is said above, in Vaikuṅṭha there are only devotees. This is confirmed by Lord Brahmā (*Bhāg.* 2.9.10) *na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer anuvrata yatra surāsurārcitā*, "In Vaikuṅṭha there is no māyā, what to speak of its products. The devotees of Lord Hari, who are worshipable to both demigods and demons, reside there." One should know that a devotee does not fall because of committing an offense to the Lord. The Lord does not take offense at the behaviour of His devotees (*Cc. Antya* 1.107-108):

*īśvara-svabhāva'—bhaktera nā laya aparādha
alpa-sevā bahu māne ātma-paryanta prasāda*

Characteristically, the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not take seriously an offense committed by a pure devotee. One example is that of Bhṛṅgumuni kicking Lord Viṣṇu on the chest. The Lord accepts whatever small service a devotee renders as being such a great service that He is prepared to give even Himself, not to speak of other benedictions.

*bhṛtyasya paśyati gurūn api nāparādhān
sevām manāg api kṛtām bahudhābhyupaiti
āviṣkaroti piśuneṣv api nābhyasūyām
śilena nirmala-matiḥ puruṣottamo'yam*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Puruṣottama, the greatest of all persons, has a pure mind. He is so gentle that even if His servant is implicated in a great offense, He does not take it very seriously. Indeed, if His servant renders some small service, the Lord accepts it as being very great. Even if an envious person blasphemes the Lord, the Lord never manifests anger against him. Such are His great qualities.

A devotee will never create an obstacle for another devotee. Therefore, there is no possibility of obstacles of any kind. An obstacle may come from one's mind if another activity exists which gives more pleasure than rendering devotional service. In such case, one's mind may become attracted to that activity and cause one to give up *bhakti*, but in the spiritual world there is nothing more pleasurable than rendering devotional service. Indeed, there is nothing else but devotional service there; and *māyā* is not present. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that even if one multiplies the bliss of Brahman realization a million times, it cannot be compared to even one drop from the ocean of the bliss of *bhakti*. (BRS. 1.1.38). Who, therefore, will give up the higher taste of *premānanda*, which is unlimited, for the lower taste of conditioned life? It is inconceivable that this would happen even if the choice was there in Vaikuṅṭha.

An obstacle can also arise if *bhakti* results in misery. Then one may want to abandon it to avoid pain. In the case of *bhakti*, however, the opposite is true—nothing is more pleasurable than *bhakti* and nothing is more miserable than giving it up. Śukadeva Gosvāmī confirms this (Bhāg. 12.4.40):

*saṁsāra-sindhūṁ ati-dustaram uttiṣṭor
nānyaḥ plavo bhagavataḥ puruṣottamasya
līlā-kathā-rasa-niṣevāṇam antareṇa
puṁso bhaved vividha-duḥkha-davārditasya*

For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes.

So no one would give up devotional service because it causes suffering or is a waste of time. Rather devotional service is the only antidote to suffering. *Mano 'bhirāmam: bhakti* makes the mind blissful. It gives *brahma saukhyam tu anantam*, unlimited spiritual happiness. Lord Caitanya says that spiritual bliss is ever increasing, *ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam*. Indeed, Sūta Gosvāmī says that unless one engages in devotional service, one has to suffer repeatedly (*Padma Purāṇa, Pātala khaṇḍa* 85.33):

*yāvajjano sṛṇoti na bhūvi viṣṇubhakti-vārtā
sudhārasam aśeṣarasaikasāram
tāvaj jarā-maraṇa-janma-śatābhighāta
duḥkhāni tāni labhate bahu-dehajāni*

Unless a person engages in hearing about the nectar of devotional service to Lord Viṣṇu, the only essence of all edible objects on the earth, he continues to suffer the various types of miseries in the form of birth, death, old age and hundreds of diseases coming in various species of life.

For this reason Lord Kṛṣṇa calls the material world a place of misery, *duḥkhālayam*. But *bhakti* is so powerful that if one engages in devotional service this place of misery becomes Vaikuṅṭha, free from all anxiety and misery. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says (*Bṛhad-Bhāg. 2.3.120*):

*yadyapy etādṛśī bhaktir yatra yatropapadyate
tat tat sthānam hi vaikuṅṭhas tatra tatraiva sa prabhuḥ*

Wherever such *bhakti* is performed, that is Vaikuṅṭha because the Supreme Lord

resides there.

From this it is clear that in *Vaikuṅṭha*, which is the place of unlimited spiritual bliss, there can be no obstacles to devotional service caused by *bhakti* itself. Hence no one can fall from *Vaikuṅṭha* for this reason.

According to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, when one does not engage in *bhakti*, he suffers life after life (*HBV*. 11.507,508):

*nāma-saṅkīrtanāj jātaṁ puṇyaṁ nopacayanti ye
nānā-vyādhi-samāyuktāḥ śata-janmasu te narāḥ
sā hānis taṁ mahac chidraṁ sa mohāḥ sa ca vibhramāḥ
yan muhūrtaṁ kṣaṇaṁ vāpi vāsudevaṁ na kīrttayet*

Those who do not accumulate the piety born of chanting the Lord's names have to suffer birth after birth with various types of bodily diseases. The hour or moment in which one does not glorify Lord Vāsudeva, is considered as a great loss, a major defect, delusion and bewilderment.

The conclusion is that it is the very nature of pure devotional service to give ever-increasing bliss and satisfaction to the performer. And there is no higher misery than abandoning devotional service. Thus in no way can *bhakti* be an obstacle to cause the performer to give up his eternal relationship with the Supreme Lord.

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.8.1) there is a comparison of various types of bliss, beginning with *mānuṣānanda* or the bliss of a young, healthy, strong man, who has control over the wealth of the whole earth. *Mānuṣānanda* is the lowest of pleasures in this comparison. *Brahmānanda* is the highest. Although *Brahmānanda* is indescribable, *yato vācā nivartate*, it is no match for *bhaktiānanda*. The implication is that a devotee is fully satisfied and nothing can disturb his mind. Therefore a pure devotee does not desire even the five types of *mukti*, what to speak of conditional existence.

Maitreya also told Vidura that devotees do not want anything except service to the Lord, *tad-dāsyam* (*Bhāg*. 4.9.36):

*na vai mukundasya padāravindayo
rajo-juṣas tāta bhavādrśā janāḥ
vāñchanti tad-dāsyam rte 'rtham ātmano
yadrcchayā labdha-manah-samṛddhayaḥ*

My dear Vidura, persons like you, who are pure devotees of the lotus feet of Mukunda and who are always attached to the honey of His lotus feet, are always satisfied in serving at the lotus feet of the Lord. In any condition of life, such persons remain satisfied, and thus they never ask the Lord for material prosperity.

Therefore, unlike other processes, *bhakti* is both the means as well as the end. In all other processes, a *sādhaka* gives up the process once he has achieved the result, but in *bhakti* he becomes more absorbed, serious and fixed after he has attained perfection. Even Śaṅkarācārya, in his commentary on *Nṛsimha-tāpani Upaniṣad*, has confirmed that perfect souls engage in devotional service, *muktā api līlayā vigrahaṁ kṛtvā bhagavantaṁ bhajante*. This perfection is ever-increasing and there is no question of it decreasing or ceasing. Thus how could a devotee desire to give up devotional service? A devotee desires only to be a servant of the servant. He does not even desire to serve or enjoy with the Lord directly. Where is the scope to envy Kṛṣṇa,

who is the very life and soul of the devotees, and fall down to material life?

Therefore, the verdict of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is *tato 'skhalanam*—that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER SIX

THE LORD GIVES BLISS AND IS CONTROLLED BY HIS DEVOTEES

That one may choose to abandon Vaikuṅṭha because he feels dissatisfied or bored after performing devotional service for a long time is inconceivable. The nature of devotional service in love of God is that the devotees are always completely satisfied by rendering service to the Lord and His devotees. They feel not just satisfaction, but bliss. And that bliss is always increasing, as Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī confirms (*Bṛhad-bhāg.* 2.2.193):

*tat sukhaṁ varddhate 'bhikṣaṇam anantam paramaṁ mahat
na tu brahma-sukhaṁ muktau varddhate simavad yataḥ*

Although the bliss of devotion is supremely great and unlimited, it is always increasing, but the pleasure in Brahman in the liberated stage is limited and it does not increase.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is described that the *gopīs* derive more pleasure by seeing Kṛṣṇa than He derives by seeing them. (*Ādi* 4.187):

*gopikā-darśane kṛṣṇera ye ānanda haya,
tāhā haite koṭi-guṇa gopī āsvādaya*

The *gopīs* taste a pleasure ten million times greater than the pleasure Lord Kṛṣṇa derives from seeing them.

They derive this pleasure even though they do not desire it (*Cc.Ādi.* 4.186). The reason is that the *gopīs* have no conception of their own pleasure. The material disease is that one wants to make oneself happy, but devotees work only for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. This is the nature of love, as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says (*Cc. Ādi* 4.199):

*prīti-viṣayānande tad-āśrayānanda,
tānhā nāhi nija-sukha vāñchāra sambandha*

The happiness of the abode of love is in the happiness of the object of that love. This is not a relationship of desire for personal gratification.

It is not that only the principal *gopīs* experience this pleasure; even the *mañjarīs* feel such bliss. In the book called *Muralī-vilāsa* by Ramāi Ṭhākura, the adopted son of Śrīmatī Jāhnvā Devī, who is the consort of Lord Nityānanda, she explains that the *mañjarīs* experience seven times the pleasure Śrī Rādhā experiences by associating with Kṛṣṇa. This certainly does not support the idea that the *nitya-muktas* become envious of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa. Indeed the very

nature of a pure devotee is to feel happy when other devotees are happy and to feel sorry to see other devotees are suffering. This was stated by Śrī Rādhā in a dialogue with Lord Kṛṣṇa (*Govinda-līlāmṛta* 13.113):

*trptāvanya-janasya trptimayitā duḥkhe mahā dukhitā
labdhaiḥ svīya-sukhāli-duḥkha-nicayair no harṣa-bādhodayāḥ
sveṣṭārādhana-tatparā iha yathā śrī-vaiṣṇava-śreṇayah
kāstā brūhi vicāryya candravadane tā mad-vyasyā imāḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa: O Rādhā, whose face is as beautiful as the moon, consider carefully and tell Me who are those who feel extremely elated by seeing others satisfied and who feel immensely miserable by seeing others suffer; who do not feel happy when enjoying opportunities grace them; who are not disturbed at all when miseries befall them; and who, just like the Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana, are engaged very attentively in the service of their worshipable Lord?

Śrī Rādhā: They are My friends like Lalitā.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has captured the mood of the Vrajavāsīs. The important point in this verse is that a Vaiṣṇava does not feel happy when the opportunity to enjoy comes to him. He feels happy only when the Lord and His devotees are happy. He does not have any conception of happiness and distress independently. This is full surrender. Although Śrī Rādhā points only to Her associates, it is applicable to all other residents. This is clear from the words *yathā śrī-vaiṣṇava-śreṇayah*. This is the mood one has to cultivate in *rāgānugā-bhakti*, without which one cannot enter into Vraja. This is called *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu śīlanam*, the definition of an *uttama-bhakta*. The *gopīs* and *mañjarīs* do not want to enjoy directly with Kṛṣṇa. If they are put in such a situation, they beg Kṛṣṇa not to enjoy with them. Their only desire is to give pleasure to Śrīmatī Rādhārānī. This is confirmed in *Govinda-līlāmṛta* (10.65):

*nidhāya kubjī-kṛta-pāṇi-śikhā
nijānane sābruvatatidīnā
hā hā kṛpālo tyaja mām ayogyām
nirmmañcchanaṁ yāni tavāsmi dāsī*

Lord Kṛṣṇa's flute was stolen and on the pretext of searching for it He wanted to enjoy with the *gopīs*. He caught Śrī Rādhā, but by a trick She got out of His clutches and Tulasī Devī was pointed out as the thief. Lord Kṛṣṇa caught hold of Tulasī and started searching her person. In this way He was touching her body, including her private parts, which should give pleasure to her. But such was not the case. Tulasī folded her fingers and kept them in front of her face (this is a pose of utter humility made while begging another person) and spoke in a most pitiable manner. "O merciful one, please leave me. I am not fit for You. I am Your maidservant. I worship You."

In other places Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja writes that the *gopīs* and *mañjarīs* feel so happy to see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa associate with each other that they manifest ecstatic symptoms in their body although they are not directly associating with Kṛṣṇa. These descriptions reveal the hearts of Vraja residents. It is beyond our imagination that these devotees would become envious of Lord Kṛṣṇa or of any other devotee, or be forced to leave.

Kṛṣṇa is not a miser nor is His pleasure limited. Therefore, He grants bliss to His devotees

even though they have no desire for it. When Lord Kṛṣṇa visited Mathurā, He met the florist Sudāmā who offered garlands to both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Sudāmā then asked the Lord for *bhakti*. The Lord granted his wish but also gave many opulences without Sudāmā's asking for them (*Bhāg.* 10.41.52):

*iti tasmai varāṁ dattvā
śriyaṁ cānvaya-vardhinīm
balam āyur yaśaḥ kāntim
nirjagāma sahāgrajaḥ*

Not only did Lord Kṛṣṇa grant Sudāmā these benedictions, but He also awarded him strength, long life, fame, beauty and ever-increasing prosperity for his family. Then Kṛṣṇa and His elder brother took Their leave.

The same liberal behavior by the Lord is seen in the history of Dhruva Mahārāja and in the story of Sudāmā Vipra, who was the Lord's classmate. What to speak of devotees, He grants bliss even to those who want to kill Him. Uddhava glorified this characteristic of the Lord (*Bhāg.* 3.2.23):

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭam
jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitām tato 'nyam
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇam vrajema*

Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon (Pūtanā) although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?

If Kṛṣṇa elevates to the post of nurse a demoness like Pūtanā, whose intention was only to kill Kṛṣṇa, then how can He allow His devotees to fall? How can one desire to leave the shelter of such a benevolent Lord? The Lord promises that He protects what a devotee possesses and grants what he lacks (*Bg.* 9.22):

*ananyās cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhīyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

Those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.

He grants bliss to His devotees even without their desiring it. If someone desires it, He gladly grants it, as He says (*Bhāg.* 11.20.32-33):

*yat karmabhir yat tapasā jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāna-dharmaṇa śreyobhir itarair api
sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena mad-bhakto labhate 'ñjasā
svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma kathañcid yadi vāñchati*

Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic *yoga*, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting

life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions.

Again, the Lord is referring to the devotees in the material world, so what to speak of His eternal associates? There is no chance of them falling down from His service in His abode.

Moreover, the Lord is completely under the control of His devotees. In this regard Śukadeva Gosvāmī said (*Bhāg.* 10.9.19):

*evaṁ sandarśitā hy aṅga
hariṇā bhṛtya-vaśyatā
sva-vaśenāpi kṛṣṇena
yasyedaṁ śeṣvaraṁ vaśe*

O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, this entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yet the Supreme Lord has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees. This was now exhibited by Kṛṣṇa in this pastime.

While glorifying the devotees, Lord Brahmā also stated that the Lord is controlled by His devotees (*Bhāg.* 10.14.3):

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadiya-vārtām
sthāne sthītāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān manobhir
ye prāyaso 'jīta jīto 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.

Indeed, the Lord personally told Durvāsā Muni that He is not independent because He is controlled by His devotees (*Bhāg.* 9.4.63), *ahaṁ bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija*. He further said that He is controlled by His devotees just as a loving wife controls a gentle husband (*Bhāg.* 9.4.66), *vaśī kurvati mām bhaktyā satstriyaḥ satpatim yathā. Kathaṁ tāmś tyaktum utsahe*, “Therefore how can I ever have the courage to abandon My devotees?”

If the Lord of all the worlds is under the control of His devotees, then certainly they also control His opulence. Why would they want to give up such a position and become a pauper in the material world? Surely the *nitya-muktas* are not insane or foolish; although, amazingly, some fall-*vādīs* have argued for that in the course of this controversy concerning the origin of the *jīva*.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER SEVEN

THE GLORIES OF DEVOTEES

The devotees of the Lord have been glorified by saintly persons and learned philosophers. Even by associating with them, one becomes liberated, as Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms (*Bhāg.* 10.10.41):

*sādhūnām sama-cittānām
sutarām mat-kṛtātmanām
darśanān na bhaved bandhaḥ
puṁso 'kṣṇoḥ savitur yathā*

When one is face to face with the sun, there is no longer darkness for one's eyes. Similarly, when one is face to face with a *sādhū*, a devotee, who is fully determined and surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will no longer be subject to material bondage.

Prahlāda Mahārāja says that one cannot become free from material bondage unless he takes the dust from the feet of devotees on his head (*Bhāg.* 7.5.32):

*naiṣām matis tāvad urukramānghriṁ
spṛśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ
mahīyasām pāda-rajo-'bhīṣekam
niṣkiñcanānām na vṛñita yāvat*

Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.

Even Lord Kṛṣṇa wants to take the dust of His devotee's feet on His head. He stated this to Uddhava (*Bhāg.* 11.14.16):

*nirapekṣam munim śāntam
nirvairam sama-darśanam
anuvrajāmy aham nityam
pūyetye aṅghri-reṇubhiḥ*

With the dust of My devotees' lotus feet I desire to purify the material worlds, which are situated within Me. Thus, I always follow the footsteps of My pure devotees, who are free from all personal desire, rapt in thought of My pastimes, peaceful, without any feelings of enmity, and of equal disposition everywhere.

Then is it possible that devotee could fall from Vaikuṅṭha without the Lord doing something to stop Him? Can He enjoy peacefully seeing unlimited devotees who are His personal associates fall from Vaikuṅṭha, from His association and from His pastimes? No, it is impossible, because the Lord never wants to enjoy without His devotees.

Ultimately, there is no scriptural support for the fall-*vādis* assertion, but there are numerous scriptural references to support that no one falls from the abode of the Lord. As pointed out in

the First Wave, fall-*vāda* is nothing but Māyāvāda with a twist, for they believe *māyā* covers Brahman and thus creates the *jīva*. The concept of fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha is similar in that it has the material energy of the Lord cover His *svarūpa-śakti* in order to get the *nitya-mukta* devotee to fall down from the infallible kingdom of God. This implies that the material energy is more powerful than the *svarūpa-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa. As with the Māyāvāda theory, this has no scriptural support.

Anyone who chants the name of the Lord even once makes the Lord indebted to him. In this regard Lord Kṛṣṇa told Sañjaya (*MB.Udyog Parva 59.22*):

*ṛṇam etat pravṛddham me hṛdayan nāpasarpati
yad govindeti cukrosā kṛṣṇā mām dūravāsinam*

When Draupadī was being insulted in the assembly of the Kauravas, she called out “Govinda.” I was far away from Hastināpura. Because of her calling out My name, I have become indebted to her. I cannot get rid of this debt from My heart (unless the offenders are punished).

Therefore, anyone who has chanted the Lord’s name even once becomes liberated, as is said:

*sakṛd uccaritaṁ yena harir ity akṣara-dvayam
baddaḥ parikaras-tena moksāya gamanaṁ prati*

A person who has uttered the two syllabled word ‘Ha-ri’ even once is ready to attain liberation.

And the *Viṣṇudūtas* said (*Bhāg. 6.2.15*):

*patitaḥ skhalito bhagnaḥ
sandaṣṭas tapta āhataḥ
harir ity avasēnāha
pumān nārhati yātanāḥ*

If one chants the holy name of Hari and then dies because of an accidental misfortune, such as falling from the top of a house, slipping and suffering broken bones while traveling on the road, being bitten by a serpent, being afflicted with pain and high fever, or being injured by a weapon, one is immediately absolved from having to enter hellish life, even though he is sinful.

The devotees of the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha always chant the name of the Lord directly or incidentally. Their chanting is not *nāmāparādha* because there is no such thing in Vaikuṅṭha. Therefore, on the authority of the above verse such exalted devotees of the Lord cannot fall down to the material world.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LORD PROTECTS EVEN THE RELATIVES OF A DEVOTEE:

There is no possibility that a Vaikuṅṭha devotee would develop envy of the Lord or the desire to enjoy independently in the material world. Even if such a thing were to happen, the Lord would protect him because he is a devotee, and the relative of devotees. This is seen in the life of the great demon Hiranyakaśipu. He tortured his devotee son Prahlāda so much that the Lord personally came to slay him. Prahlāda Mahārāja was in anxiety about the welfare of his father and prayed to the Lord on his father’s behalf. The Lord replied (*Bhāg.* 7.10.18):

*triḥ-saptabhiḥ pitā pūtaḥ
pitṛbhiḥ saha te ‘nagha
yat sādho ‘sya kule jāto
bhavān vai kula-pāvanaḥ*

My dear Prahlāda, O most pure, O great saintly person, your father has been purified, along with twenty-one forefathers in your family. Because you were born in this family, the entire dynasty has been purified.

From this we understand that twenty-one generations of a devotee’s family, even if they include demons, get liberated. Even if a devotee becomes envious of the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha, his family members remain devotees and the Lord will protect such a deviant devotee. Thus, such a devotee is in no danger of falling from the abode of the Lord.

When Dhruva Mahārāja was going to Vaikuṅṭha, he was worried about his mother. The Viṣṇudūtas informed him that she was proceeding to Vaikuṅṭha ahead of him. So the Lord is not miserly and there is no lack of accommodation in Vaikuṅṭha. Just by being favorable to a pure devotee, one gets the mercy of the Lord. Devotees in Vaikuṅṭha are not alone but belong to particular families, and since there is no difference between the manifest and unmanifest pastimes of the Lord, the same principles that apply to His manifest pastimes apply to His unmanifest *līlā* as well. Therefore, the Lord’s protection of the relatives of the *nitya-muktas* is guaranteed.

In connection with the equality of the Lord’s manifest and unmanifest pastimes, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes in his *Brahma-saṁhitā* commentary (37), “Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana say that there is no real and essential distinction between the *līlās* visible and non-visible, the only distinction lies in that one is manifest in the mundane sphere where as the other is not so.” It is clear from the manifest pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma that Their devotees in Vraja, Dwārakā, and Ayodhyā are family members. This is also confirmed from Lord Brahmā’s description of Vaikuṅṭha (3.15.17):

In the Vaikuṅṭha planets the inhabitants fly in their airplanes, accompanied by their wives and consorts, and eternally sing the character and activities of the Lord, which are always devoid of all inauspicious qualities.

Brahmā made a similar statement while relating his experience of Vaikuṅṭha to Nārada (2.9.12), *vidyotamānaḥ pramadottamādyubhiḥ*. Gopakumāra also confirms this while describing his experience of Vaikuṅṭha (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.2.34):

*kecit saparivārās te kecicla saparicchadāḥ
kecid bahirdhṛta-svīya-parivāra-paricchadāḥ*

Some of them were going to see the Lord along with their family members and some were carrying the paraphernalia for the Lord’s service. Some were entering,

leaving their family members and paraphernalia outside.

If one of them begins to fall into *māyā*, the Lord will protect him because the merciful Lord gives protection to His devotees and to the relatives of His devotees. Therefore, the *nitya-siddha* devotee is under the double blanket protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. How can he fall from the care of one who is infallible?

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER NINE

THE LORD IS A DEVOTEE OF HIS DEVOTEES

The Supreme Lord is *bhagavān bhakta-bhaktimān* (*Bhāg.* 10.86.59), a devotee of His devotee. The Lord is eternal and so is His devotion to His devotees. Then how can the object of devotion, the devotee, lose the post of being the object of the Lord's devotion? In pure *bhakti* everything is *nitya*. It is inconceivable that this eternal nature of the Lord's relationship with His pure devotee could be compromised, for the Lord is called *satya saṅkalpa*—one whose determinations never fail.

The statement that the Lord is the devotee of His devotees is not allegorical. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 7.145), Lord Caitanya informed the Māyāvādīs in Benāres:

*premā haite kṛṣṇa haya nija bhakta-vaśa
premā haite pāya kṛṣṇera sevā-sukha-rasa*

The Supreme Lord, who is greater than the greatest, becomes submissive to even a very insignificant devotee because of his devotional service. It is the beautiful and exalted nature of devotional service that the infinite Lord becomes submissive to the infinitesimal living entity because of it. In reciprocal devotional activities with the Lord, the devotee actually enjoys the transcendental mellow quality of devotional service.

The famous example of this quality in the Lord is that He drove the chariot of Arjuna into battle. In that role He had to constantly take orders from Arjuna. This in fact gave pleasure to the Lord. The *Mahābhārata*, *Śānti parva*, Chapter 47, describes that one day King Yudhiṣṭhira went to see Lord Kṛṣṇa in Hastināpura after the battle of Kurukṣetra. Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja saw the Lord sitting in meditation early in the morning. After some time Kṛṣṇa opened His eyes. The King, curious to know what was the object of His meditation, enquired about it from the Lord. Kṛṣṇa replied that He was meditating on Bhīṣma, who was lying on the bed of arrows at Kurukṣetra.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotion to His devotees is also described in *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam* (1.6). One day when Kṛṣṇa heard talks about Vraja's residents, He started crying out of love (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 1.6.63):

*idam ākarṇya bhagavān utthāya śayanād drutam
priya-prema-parādhīno rudannuccair bahirgataḥ*

Hearing all this talk (about the love of Vrajavāsīs), Lord Kṛṣṇa got up from His bed. Being controlled by the love of His devotees, He cried loudly and went out.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa declares, *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*. He uses the word *bhajāmi*, “I render service.” Again, this is not some allegorical statement which needs interpretation. He willingly does menial service to His devotees although He is the most opulent person. For example, He even became the night guard and chauffeur for the Pāṇḍavas (*Bhāg.* 1.16.16):

*sārathya-pāraśada-sevana-sakhya-dautya-
vīrāsanānugamana-stavana-praṇāmān
snigdheṣu pāṇḍuṣu jagat-praṇatīm ca viṣṇor
bhaktīm karoti nṛ-patīś caraṇāravinde*

Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard that out of His causeless mercy Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), who is universally obeyed, rendered all kinds of service to the sons of Pāṇḍu by accepting posts ranging from chariot driver to president to messenger, friend, night watchman, etc., according to the will of the Pāṇḍavas, obeying them like a servant and offering obeisances like one younger in years. When he heard this, Mahārāja Parīkṣit became overwhelmed with devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa could have engaged others to do these services because He had thousands of assistants, but He did them personally, in line with His words *bhajāmy aham*.

Fall-*vādīs* may argue that when a devotee falls from Vaikuṅṭha to the material world, Bhagavān comes as Paramātmā and thus their relation is not lost, but in the quote above (*Bhāg.* 10.86.59) it is said, *bhagavān bhakta-bhaktimān*, “Bhagavān has *bhakti* for His *bhakta*.” It did not say *paramātmā bhakta-bhaktimān*, that the Supersoul is a devotee of His devotee. Furthermore, a conditioned soul is not a *bhakta* nor is Paramātmā a devotee of a conditioned soul. Therefore, the above argument does not solve the problem even if one argues that *Paramātmā* is non-different from *Bhagavān*.

Lord Kṛṣṇa made similar statements about the Vraja residents, and He said that sometimes He even cries for them. In fact the most glorious form of the Lord is when He comes as a devotee. Just as a devotee is the *āśraya* of *bhakti* and the Lord is the *viṣaya*, the Lord is the *āśraya* for the *bhakti* of His devotee and the devotee is the *viṣaya*. And in *bhakti*, both *āśraya* and *viṣaya* are eternal. Thus there is a mutual exchange of *rasa* between the devotees and the Lord in which both of them take the position of *āśraya* as well as *viṣaya*; and although there are various grades of devotees, everyone feels completely satisfied in His relation with the Lord. This is confirmed by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.154):

*yathākāmaṁ sukhaṁ prāpuḥ sarvato 'pyadhikaṁ sukhāt
teṣāṁ sva-sva-rasānaikyāt-tārtamye'pi tulyatā*

In Vaikuṅṭha the devotees feel more pleasure than in the material world. Although according to their relation and *bhāva* they have gradations, yet according to their own mellows they feel complete bliss.

Thus there is no cause for any *nitya-mukta* devotee to feel dissatisfied. In fact every devotee feels that he has the best relation with Kṛṣṇa.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER TEN

SPIRITUAL NATURE IS ETERNAL

We hear again and again from the *śāstra* and from saintly devotees that the spiritual nature is eternal. How then can one give up one's spiritual nature, love for Kṛṣṇa? Rather this love is always increasing; it is neither static nor diminish and there is no possibility of it being destroyed. *Māyā* cannot cover it because there is no *māyā* in Vaikuṅṭha and furthermore *māyā* has no power to cover the love of a Vaikuṅṭha devotee because love is the internal potency, the *parā-śakti*. *Māyā* can only cover the *taṭastha-śakti*. A *nitya-mukta* devotee never forgets Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes this in his comment to the verse following the *kṛṣṇa bhuli* verse (Cc. *Madhya* 20.118):

One who is not materially infected and who does not forget Kṛṣṇa as his master is called *nitya-mukta*. In other words, one who is eternally liberated from material contamination is called *nitya-mukta*. From time immemorial the *nitya-mukta* living entity has always been a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and his only attempt has been to serve Kṛṣṇa. Thus he never forgets his eternal servitorship to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives the following definition of a *siddha* or perfect devotee (*BRS* 2.1.280):

*avijñātākhila-kleśāḥ sadā kṛṣṇāśrita-kriyāḥ
siddhāḥ syuḥ satata-prema-saukhyāsvāda-parāyaṇāḥ*

The perfect devotees have no material miseries, they are always engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa's service and they are always tasting the bliss of love.

From this definition of a *siddha* devotee it is clear that he is eternally in bliss and always rendering service. If such a *siddha* devotee has to fall, the words *sadā* and *satata* in this verse would be meaningless.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER ELEVEN

NITYA-SIDDHAS ARE AS GOOD AS KRṢṆA

Perfected devotees are of two types, those who have attained perfection and those who are eternally perfect. This is stated in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.1.281), *samprāpta-siddhayaḥ siddhāḥ nitya-siddhāś ca te dvidhā*, "The *samprāpta-siddhas* are those who have become perfect by performing *bhakti* and *nitya-siddhas* are those who have never been conditioned and thus are eternally *siddhas*." A few verses later the characteristics of *nitya-siddhas* are defined (*BRS* 2.1.290):

*ātma-koṭi-guṇam kṛṣṇe premāṇam paramam gatāḥ
nityānanda-guṇāḥ sarve nitya siddhā mukundavat*

The *nitya-siddha* devotees love Kṛṣṇa millions of times more than their own selves. They all have eternal, blissful qualities just like Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the prime characteristic of *nitya-siddha* devotees is that they love Kṛṣṇa millions of times more than their own body or self. And this quality is eternal. That's why they are called *nitya-siddha*. How could such a devotee become envious of Kṛṣṇa, desire to enjoy like Him, and subsequently leave His association?

While describing Lord Kṛṣṇa's entrance into Dvārakā, Sūta Gosvāmī said that it was protected by the Vṛṣṇis, Bhojas, Madhus and so on, who were as strong as Lord Kṛṣṇa (*Bhāg.* 1.11.12): *ātma-tulya-balair guptām*.

To establish the position of the Lord's eternal associates, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī cites these verses in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. They are a continuation of the description beginning with 2.1.290 cited above.

(291-292)

*atha brahmādi devānām tathā prārthanayā bhuvah
āgato'ham gaṇāḥ sarve jātaste 'pi mayā saha*

*ete hi yādavāḥ sarve mad-gaṇā eva bhāmini
sarvadā mat-priyā devī mat-tulya-guṇasālinah*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to Śrī Satyabhāmā devī: O passionate woman, in response to the prayers of Brahmā, the demigods, and the earth personified, I have descended, and all My associates have appeared along with Me. O Devī, all these Yādavas are My associates. They are very dear to Me and I am also dear to them. They possess qualities just like Mine.

(293)

*aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam nanda gopa vrajaukasām
yan-mitram paramānandam pūrṇam brahma sanātanam*

How fortunate! How fortunate indeed are the *Vrajavāsīs* like Nanda Mahārāja, the *gopas*, and even the birds and beasts situated in Vraja, for the complete Absolute Truth and the personification of divine bliss is their eternal friend.

(294)

*dustyajaś cānurāgo 'smin sarveṣām no brajaukasām
nanda! te tanaye 'smāsu tasyāpy autpattikah katham*

(When Śrī Kṛṣṇa raised Govardhana Hill, the elderly *gopas* became astonished, and, approaching Śrī Nanda Mahārāja, they inquired in the following way:) O Nanda! How is it that all of us *Vrajavāsīs* have irrepressible love toward your son and He also has natural inborn love toward us?

(295)

*sanātanam mitram iti tasyapy autpattikah katham
sneho 'smāsviti caiteṣām nitya preṣṭha tvam āgatam*

By saying the words *sanātana mitra* (eternal friend), and the phrase “Why does He have natural inborn love toward us?” it is established that the *Vrajavāsīs* are eternally dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

(296)

*ityataḥ kathitā nitya priyā yādava ballavāḥ
eṣāṁ laukikavac ceṣṭā līlā murarīpor iva*

For this reason the Yādavas and the *gopas* of Vraja are said to be eternally dear (to the Lord). Just as the pastimes of Murāri, although fully transcendental, appear just like ordinary worldly activities, the activities of the Yādavas and the *gopas*, although completely spiritual, resemble worldly activities.

(297)

*yathā saumitri bharatau yathā saṅkarṣaṇādayaḥ
tathā tenaiva jāyante nija-lokādy adṛcchayā*

(298)

*punastenaiva gacchanti tat-padam śāśvataṁ param
na karma bandhanam janma vaiṣṇavānām ca vidyate*

In the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* it is described that just as Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Saṅkarṣaṇa, and others appeared along with the Supreme Lord, similarly the Yādavas and Vraja-*gopas*, by their own free will appeared along with Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the eternal abode. When the Lord returned to His eternal abode, His associates all accompanied Him. Therefore, the Vaiṣṇavas do not take birth due to the bondage of karma or due to the influence of previously accumulated material reactions (*prārabdha*).

The implication of this is that Māyā cannot touch such devotees, just as she cannot touch the Lord. Māyā has influence only over those living beings who have never been in a full-blown relationship of pure devotional service in the spiritual abode of the Lord. In fact Māyā becomes the servant of the devotee, as shown in the pastime of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Māyā became his servant. (Cc. *Antya* 3.259):

*eta bali bandila haridāsera caraṇa
haridāsa kahe kara kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana*

After speaking in this way, Māyā worshiped the lotus feet of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who initiated her by saying, “Just perform chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.”

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has explained that the associates of the Lord are as good as the Lord, except that they do not have the *Śrīvatsa* and *Kaustubha*, *ātma tulyaiḥ ṣoḍaśabhīr vinā śrī-vatsa-kaustubhau* (*Bhāg.* 6.9.29). Māyā will never influence such powerful devotees. Rather she serves them.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER TWELVE

THE LORD NOURISHES HIS DEVOTEES

Surrender implies that a devotee accepts the Lord as His protector, *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso gopīṛtve*

varaṇaṁ tathā (*Vaiṣṇava Tantra*). The Lord, who reciprocates with the devotee, actually gives all protection and nourishment to His devotees. He is called *bhakta-vatsala*. *Vatsa* means calf. *Bhakta-vatsala* means that the Lord nourishes His devotees just like a cow nourishes her calf. Indeed, after killing the demon Hiranyakaśipu, Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva took Prahlāda in His lap and licked his body. *Lilihe tasya gātrāṇi sva-potasyeva keśarī* (*Bṛhan-narasimha Purāṇa*), “Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva licked the limbs of Prahlāda just as a lion licks his cub.”

The *Hari-bhakti Vilāsa* 10.161, quoting the *Padma Purāṇa*, says that the Lord personally nourishes His devotees:

*darśana-dhyāna-saṁsparśair matysa-kūrmma-vihaṅgamāḥ
puṣṇanti svānyaptyāni tathāham api padmaja*

O Brahmā, fish, tortoise, and birds nourish their babies by glancing, meditating, and touching respectively. Similarly I nourish My devotees by all these three processes.

The Lord appears to give protection to His devotees, *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām*. Lord Kṛṣṇa asked Arjuna to declare boldly that His devotees will never perish, *na me bhakta praṇaśyati*. He personally demonstrated it on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra when He ran to kill Bhīṣma although He had taken a vow not to participate in the war. He says He gives intelligence to His devotees, *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ*, and He preserves what a devotee has, *yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*. Actually *poṣaṇam*, or nourishment, is one of the ten subjects described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This means *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is full of the Lord’s pastimes nourishing His devotees. This is evident from the very beginning with Suta Gosvāmī describing the Lord’s protecting Parīkṣit Mahārāja, the Pāṇḍavas, Bhīṣma, and so on. From their part, the devotees are submerged in the ocean of bliss; thus they have no other desires except to serve the Lord (*Bhāg.* 8.3.20):

*ekāntino yasya na kañcanārtham
vāñchanti ye vai bhagavat-prapannāḥ
aty-adbhutaṁ tac-caritaṁ sumaṅgalaṁ
gāyanta ānanda-samudra-magnāḥ*

Unalloyed devotees, who have no desire other than to serve the Lord, worship Him in full surrender and always hear and chant about His activities, which are most wonderful and auspicious. Thus they always merge in an ocean of transcendental bliss. Such devotees never ask the Lord for any benediction.

Because the Lord nourishes His devotees and devotees are always in bliss by rendering service to their beloved Lord, there is no possibility of their separation.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE LORD PROTECTS HIS DEVOTEE

The Lord is kind to the surrendered souls and gives them full protection. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī lists this as one of the 64 qualities of Lord Hari, Kṛṣṇa, *pālayan śaraṇāpannān saraṇāgata pālakaḥ* (*BRS.* 2.1.143). When Vibhīṣaṇa approached Lord Rāma for shelter, His associates discouraged

the Lord saying that Vibhīṣaṇa belonged to the enemy's camp. Upon hearing their opinion, Lord Rāma gave this verdict (*Rāmāyaṇa*. 6.18.33):

*sakṛd eva prapannāya tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayaṁ sarva-bhūtebhyo dadāmy etad vratam mama*

Once a person takes shelter of Me saying, "I am Yours," I give him fearlessness from all living beings. This is My vow.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī confirms this (*Bhāg.* 6.1.19):

*sakṛn manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor
niveśitaṁ tad-guṇa-rāgi yair iha
na te yamaṁ pāśa-bhṛtaś ca tad-bhaṭān
svapne 'pi paśyanti hi cīrṇa-niṣkṛtāḥ*

Although not having fully realized Kṛṣṇa, persons who have even once surrendered completely unto His lotus feet and who have become attracted to His name, form, qualities and pastimes are completely freed of all sinful reactions, for they have thus accepted the true method of atonement. Even in dreams, such surrendered souls do not see Yamarāja or his order carriers, who are equipped with ropes to bind the sinful.

And the *Vedas* personified prayed to the Lord (*Bhāg.* 10.87.35):

*bhuvi puru-puṇya-tīrtha-sadanāny ṛṣayo vimadās
ta uta bhavat-padāmbuja-hṛdo 'gha-bhid-aṅghri-jalāḥ
dadhati sakṛn manas tvayi ya ātmani nitya-sukhe
na punar upāsate puruṣa-sāra-harāvasathān*

Sages free from false pride live on this earth by frequenting the sacred pilgrimage sites and those places where the Supreme Lord displayed His pastimes. Because such devotees keep Your lotus feet within their hearts, the water that washes their feet destroys all sins. Anyone who even once turns his mind toward You, the ever-blissful Soul of all existence, no longer dedicates himself to serving family life at home, which simply robs a man of his good qualities.

In the *Nārada Purāṇa* it is said (*Uttarakhaṇḍa* 6.3):

*eko'pi kṛṣṇasya kṛtaḥ praṇāmo
daśāśvamedhāvabhṛthair na tulyaḥ
daśāśvamedī punareti janma
kṛṣṇa-praṇāmī na punar bhavāya*

The result of paying obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa even once cannot be compared to that of ten horse sacrifices. A person who has performed ten horse sacrifices will take birth again but not one who has paid obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa just once.

Similarly, the *Hari-bhakti-śuddhodaya* says that one who circumambulates the Lord just once never returns to the material world. All the above verses are referring to people in the material

world. The eternal devotees of the Lord, who have never abandoned Vaikuṅṭha, have definitely taken shelter of the Lord, chant the names of the Lord, and pay obeisances to Him. How can they fall into the cycle of birth and death?

One becomes free from all sins simply by remembering devotees (*HBV*. 10.99). A devotee can purify others simply by his glance. Lord Kṛṣṇa said (*Bhāg.* 10.86.52):

*devāḥ kṣetrāṇi tīrthāni
darśana-sparśanārcanaiḥ
śanaiḥ punanti kālena
tad apy arhattamekṣayā*

One can gradually become purified by seeing, touching and worshipping temple deities, places of pilgrimage and holy rivers. But one can attain the same result immediately simply by receiving the glance of exalted sages.

Because the devotees in Vaikuṅṭha are always engaged in devotional service in the association of pure devotees and have no association of non-devotees, it is impossible for them to be bereft of the Lord's protection which is promised in the above verses. Such *nitya-siddha* devotees can never fall down to material life.

Staunch fall-*vādīs* will say that such protection nullifies the free will of the *jīva*. Fall-*vādīs* like to invoke arguments for free will, even though it is evident that they don't have a clear understanding of what it is. They say that if one is not free to fall down from Vaikuṅṭha, because of it being the infallible abode of the Lord or because the Lord protects His devotee, then Vaikuṅṭha is no different from a prison house and a *nitya-siddha* no better than a slave. Such arguments are based on an impoverished understanding of free will.

If doting parents are watchful and protective of their child, does that mean the child is reduced to a prisoner or a slave? Does that mean the child has no free will? If the child has so much love for the parents that he never thinks of associating with others, which is the position of the *nitya-siddha* devotees of the Lord, does it mean he has no free will? Rather it is the natural instinct of love that one protects the object of love from coming to harm. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, commenting upon *Śikṣāṣṭaka* (8), writes:

“In the state of *prema* the devotee's very life is Kṛṣṇa. As said (*Bhāg.* 11.29.34):

*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service unto Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences.

In the state of *prema* the supreme religion in the form of the mutual attraction between the devotee and Kṛṣṇa shines. As said (*Bhāg.* 7.5.14):

*yathā bhrāmyaty ayo brahman
svayam ākarṣa-sannidhau
tathā me bhidyate cetaś
cakra-pāṇer yadr̥cchayā*

O brāhmaṇas [teachers], as iron attracted by a magnetic stone moves automatically toward the magnet, my consciousness, having been changed by His will, is attracted by Lord Viṣṇu, who carries a disc in His hand. Thus I have no independence."

Here Prahlāda Mahārāja says that he has no independence, and the Lord also says He has no independence, *aham bhakta-parādhino hy asvatantra iva dvija* (Bhāg. 9.4.63). But this loss of independence is out of love. It is not like slavery nor do they become inert. They have free will but use it only for mutual loving affairs.

It is on this basis that the Supreme Lord says emphatically that those who attain His abode never fall down being fully under the protection of His internal energy, *daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ*. The same goes for those who have always been in His abode.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER FOURTEEN

POWER OF BHAKTI PERFORMED ONCE

Even if one worships the Lord just once, one never becomes bound by *māyā*; what to speak of those who always worship Him in complete love and devotion? In this regard, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī writes (HBV 11.240):

*akāmād api ye viṣṇoḥ sakṛt pujaṁ prakurvate
na teṣāṁ bhava-bandhas tu kadācid api jāyate*

Those who worship Lord Viṣṇu just once, even unwillingly, will never ever be bound by *māyā*.

In this verse the word *kadācid api* is very important. It means never ever. The devotees in Vaikuṅṭha have no business other than the worship and service of the Lord, and they do it willingly.

Recital of one name of the Lord burns all past, present, and future sins (HBV 11.339):

*vartamānan tu yat pāpaṁ
yad bhūtaṁ yad bhaviṣyati
tat sarvaṁ nirdahaty āsū
govindānala-kīrtanāt*

The fire of chanting the name of Lord Govinda immediately burns all sins committed in the past, present or those which the chanter may commit in the future.

If one says that the name can burn only sins but not offenses to the Lord, the Lord gives the following assurance (*Viṣṇu Yāmala Tantra* cited in HBV 11.375):

*mama nāmāni loke 'smin
śraddhayā yas tu kīrtayet
tasyāparādha-koṭis tu*

kṣamāmy eva na saṁśayaḥ

I forgive millions of offenses committed by a person in this world who chants My names with faith. There is no doubt about this.

Anyone who doubts this, of course, cannot be forgiven. This is said in *Bhakti-rasmāmṛta sindhu* (2.1.138):

*bhṛtyasya paśyati gurūn api nāparādhān
sevām manāg api kṛtām bahudhā abhyupaiti
āviṣkaroti piśunesv api nābhyaśyām-
śilena nirmala matiḥ kamalekṣaṇo 'yam*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Puruṣottama, the greatest of all persons, has a pure mind. He is so gentle that even if His servant is implicated in a great offense, He does not take it very seriously. Indeed, if His servant renders some small service, the Lord accepts it as being very great. Even if an envious person blasphemes the Lord, the Lord never manifests anger against him. Such are His great qualities.

There are many verses which say that if a person chants the name of the Lord just once he attains *mukti*, he is never touched by *māyā* and so on. Here is a sample verse (*HBV* 11.461):

*sakṛd uccāryanty eva harer nāma cidātmakam
phalaṁ nāsty eva kṣamo vaktuṁ sahasra-vadano vidhiḥ*

The benefit one gets by chanting the transcendental name of Lord Hari just once cannot be explained by Lord Ananta with his one thousand mouths or by four-headed Brahmā.

To consider these verses as mere exaggeration or false glorification is an offense to the holy name. We should also know that this chanting must be offenseless. In Vaikuṅṭha devotees are always chanting the names and glories of the Lord offenselessly. Such devotees are definitely protected by the assurance given in this verse. The Lord will definitely forgive them if they commit any offense which—in any case—is impossible in Vaikuṅṭha. As it is written in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 1.107:

*iśvara-svabhāva'—bhaktera nā laya aparādha
alpa-sevā bahu māne ātma-paryanta prasāda*

Characteristically, the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not take seriously an offense committed by a pure devotee. The Lord accepts whatever small service a devotee renders as being such a great service that He is prepared to give even Himself, not to speak of other benedictions.

In the *Gautamīya Tantra* it is said that if a pure devotee offers a little water and some Tulasi leaves to the Lord, who is very merciful to His devotees, He sells Himself to such a devotee, *tulasī-dala-mātreṇa jalasya culukena ca vikriṅṅite svam ātmānam bhaktebhyo bhakta-vatsalaḥ*. "Sells Himself" means that He becomes the property of His devotee. If such a devotee has to fall down then the Lord must also fall because He is sold out to His devotee. Just as when a king is

defeated, his wealth comes under the possession of the conqueror; similarly, if a devotee comes under the control of Māyā by falling, then his property—the Lord—must also come under Māyā's care.

Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva assured Prahlāda Mahārāja that anyone who has seen Him once does not suffer again (*Bhāg.* 7.9.53):

*mām aprīṇata āyusman darśanam
durlabham durlabham hi me
dṛṣṭvā mām na punar jantur
ātmānam taptum arhati*

My dear Prahlāda, may you live a long time. One cannot appreciate or understand Me without pleasing Me, but one who has seen or pleased Me has nothing more for which to lament for his own satisfaction.

The *nitya-mukta* devotees are entitled to all these assurances because they continuously engage in the Lord's service. Thus there is no chance of their falling from Vaikuṅṭha despite their having free will.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER FIFTEEN

JAYA AND VIJAYA DID NOT FALL

Jaya and Vijaya did not really fall into the material world although cursed by the Kumāras. They came to participate in the Lord's pastimes. Therefore Prabhupāda writes (*Bhāg.* 3.16.27, purport):

The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha never return to the material world, but the incident of Jaya and Vijaya was a different case. They came to the material world for some time, and then they returned to Vaikuṅṭha.

In *Prīti-sandarbha* (7), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes that the feeling of enmity which Jaya and Vijaya acquired for the Lord was not because of the Kumāras' curse, rather it was by the will of the Lord. Even so, the Lord did not consider them His enemies. The inimical behavior of Jaya and Vijaya could not incite enmity in the Lord. He has free will, *svecchāmayasya* (10.14.2). By His sweet will, He wanted to enjoy fighting with them. Moreover, the Lord does not consider anyone as His enemy because He is free from all dualities.

The Lord also generates distaste for materialistic activities in His *sādhaka* devotees (*Bhāg.* 6.11.23):

*traī-vargikāyāsa-vighātam asmat-
patir vidhatte puruṣasya śakra
tato 'numeyo bhagavat-prasādo
yo durlabho 'kiñcana-gocara 'nyaiḥ*

Our Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, forbids His devotees to endeavor uselessly for religion, economic development, and sense gratification. O Indra,

one can thus infer how kind the Lord is. Such mercy is obtainable only by unalloyed devotees, not by persons who aspire for material gains.

Then, how could the Lord behave inimically towards His associates? Rather He is always merciful. One should not think that Jaya and Vijaya chose to become enemies so that they could finish the curse quickly, because great devotees like them do not desire even *sālokya mukti* without *bhakti*. And with *bhakti* they are willing to go even to hell (*Bhāg.* 3.15.48):

*nātyantikam vigaṇayanty api te prasādam
kimv anyad arpita-bhayam bhruva unnayais te
te'ṅga tvad-aṅghri-śaraṇā bhavataḥ kathāyāḥ
kīrtanya-tīrtha-yaśasaḥ kuśalā rasa-jñāḥ*

Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom.

Jaya and Vijaya wanted to please the Lord by fighting with Him, but one should not think they literally chose to become enemies so they could give pleasure to the Lord. Such a desire is against the definition of *bhakti*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains further that even the inimical feelings of Jaya and Vijaya were not real but only an *ābhāsa*, a shadow. They entered into demoniac bodies but remained untouched within. They remained devotees.

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura writes that there is no birth or death for the eternal associates of the Lord (*Caitanya-Bhāgavata, Antya* 10.172):

*ata eva vaiṣṇavera janma mṛtyu nāi
saṅge āisena saṅge yāyena tathāi
karma bandha janma vaiṣṇavera kabhu nahe*

Therefore there is no birth or death for the Vaiṣṇavas (the eternal associates). They descend to the material world with the Lord and return to His abode with Him. The Vaiṣṇava is never bound by karma and thus does not take birth in the material world.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.4.191), *sparddhādyavṛttair-nikhilair-yathā-ruci prāpyeta sevā-sukhamantya-simagam*, “Devotees have no feeling of enmity or rivalry and they taste unlimited bliss.” Therefore Jaya and Vijaya did not become envious and fall down. From this and from the statement of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī it is clear that neither does the Lord desire His devotees to become materially conditioned nor do His devotees have any such desire. Once again, the conclusion is that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ASSOCIATION OF DEVOTEES

Some pure devotees come from the spiritual world for preaching and turn many conditioned souls into pure devotees. Such preachers want to deliver the suffering conditioned souls. Then how can millions of such pure devotees, while in Vaikuṅṭha, tolerate one of their own falling down? Prabhupāda said that it is more important to keep the old devotees than to make new ones. Does this reasoning not apply in Vaikuṅṭha?

In the association of devotees there is constant *bhagavat-kathā* which Kapiladeva says is *rasāyana*, a tonic against *māyā* (*Bhāg.* 3.25.25):

*satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-samvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.

Vaikuṅṭha is full of pure devotees. One can just imagine the amount of *rasāyana kathā* available there. Where is the possibility of these fixed-up souls becoming weak or infected with *māyā*? The association of devotees in the spiritual sky is assurance enough that no one can fall from there to the material world.

The glance of a pure devotee can purify even a *pukkaśa*, a low-caste person. This is confirmed in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (cited in *HBV* 10.171):

*darśana-sparśanālāpa-saha-vāsādibhiḥ kṣaṇāt
bhaktāḥ punanti kṛṣṇasya sākṣādapi pukkaśam*

A moment's association with the devotees of Kṛṣṇa either through glancing, touching, talking or living together purifies even a *pukkaśa*, a low caste person.

One must conclude that the association of devotees is a potent purifying agent. In Vaikuṅṭha, which is already a purified place, one cannot avoid the above types of good association. There is no association other than good association in Vaikuṅṭha. Indeed, such association is constantly available. So even if some contamination was to somehow enter, which is altogether inconceivable, the powerful association of devotees would immediately purify it.

Just as it is impossible for any kind of flammable object to contact the sun without bursting into flames long before it gets close, similarly it is inconceivable that any contamination can enter the potent association of *nitya-siddha* devotees or even the spiritual sky itself without becoming purified.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

KAIMUTYA NYĀYA

If a baby can lift a paper weight, then how much easier is it for a grown man to do so? If a grown

man cannot lift a trunk, then how can a baby do it? This is the logic called *Kaimutya nyāya*—the principle of how much more, or what to speak of. By this logic, if those devotees who go to Vaikuṅṭha do not fall, then how much more secure are those who have never left the service of the Lord? Similarly, if —according to fall-*vāda*—even *nitya-siddhas* can fall from Vaikuṅṭha, then what to speak of *sādhana-siddhas*?

For all statements that no one falls down from Vaikuṅṭha having attained liberation; that anyone who chants becomes liberated; that one who sees a devotee or sees the Lord even once becomes liberated, that there is no loss or diminution on the path of devotional service; that the Lord gives all assurance of no fall or return from His abode; and for all other such statements made about the glories of devotees in the material world, the *Kaimutya nyāya* should be applied. For example, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that once a person attains His abode, he never returns to the material world. Then by *kaimutya nyāya* it naturally follows that the eternal residents never come to the material world. To conclude that eternal residents fall is illogical, and *aśāstric* as well. When it is said that one who goes to Vaikuṅṭha does not fall this implies that either the eternal residents can never fall because of the *kaimutya nyāya* or that eternal residents do fall because they have been excluded from the statement of no-fall. Their fall down is supported neither by *śāstra*, *sādhu*, nor logic. So the first choice, which is supported by *śāstra*, *sādhu*, and logic, has to be accepted.

A similar analysis should be applied to all statements which say that one does not return by doing devotional service such as surrendering once, chanting the Lord’s name once and so on. The *kaimutya nyāya* is quite commonly used by Vedic philosophers including our predecessor *ācāryas*. It is generally used to show the importance of an object. For example, if a gurukula boy can defeat a university professor, then what to speak of His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Again the conclusion is that no one falls or jumps from Vaikuṅṭha.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON FREE WILL

Fall-*vādīs* are especially fond of arguing in favor of fall down from Vaikuṅṭha on the basis of misuse of one’s free will. They insist that the living entity has his minute independence and can misuse it to come to the material world from Vaikuṅṭha. But this is not possible. We have given some refutations of this in an earlier section of this book. Here we discuss it again from yet another angle.

Bhakti from its beginning stage in the material world is a process of surrendering. In the stage of *sādhana*, one sometimes uses his free will to serve Kṛṣṇa and sometimes misuses it to serve *māyā*. As one advances on the path of *bhakti*, he gradually gives up the propensity to misuse his will. When he reaches the stage of *siddha*, he has no more will to serve *māyā*. He gives up all independence to leave the service of the Lord. Now all his will power is focused on rendering devotional service to the Lord. Even from the very beginning stage when the propensity to serve *māyā* is prominent, one’s promotion to the highest stage is guaranteed for Kṛṣṇa gives such assurance to His devotees (*Ramāyaṇa* 6.18.33; and *Bhāg.* 5.19.27):

*sakṛd eva prapanno yas
tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai
dadāmy etad vratam mama*

It is My vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Me, saying, “My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours,” and prays to Me for courage, I shall immediately award courage to that person, and he will always remain safe from that time on.

*satyaṁ diśaty arthitam arthito nṛṇāṁ
naivārthado yat punar arthitā yataḥ
svayaṁ vidhatte bhajatām anicchatām
icchā-pidhānaṁ nija-pāda-pallavam*

Whenever Kṛṣṇa is requested to fulfill one’s desire, He undoubtedly does so, but He does not award anything which, after being enjoyed, will cause someone to petition Him again and again to fulfill further desires. When one has other desires but engages in the Lord’s service, Kṛṣṇa forcibly gives one shelter at His lotus feet, where one will forget all other desires.

Therefore, once he has made the choice to serve, he does not have the same choice again. As mentioned above, even if the devotee has other desires, Kṛṣṇa forcibly gives him shelter at His lotus feet.

Fall-*vādīs* cannot comprehend this simple fact: once you surrender your free will in favor of service, you cannot misuse it anymore. But this does not mean he loses his free will. It means he uses it properly for the service of the Lord. But he is not forced to do so, rather he never desires to give up the association of the Lord, as much as no sane man desires to jump from a plane in midflight after boarding it willingly. If someone argues that an insane man may want to jump, that is fine; but there is no insanity in Vaikuṅṭha, except that everyone there is crazy after the lotus feet of the Lord. In spite of that, Vaikuṅṭha is so nice that even if Kṛṣṇa leaves the residents want to remain there (*Bṛhad-Bhāg.* 2.6.366):

*tallokasya svabhāvo ’yaṁ kṛṣṇa-saṅgaṁ vināpi yat
bhavet tatraiva tiṣṭhāsā na cikirṣā ca kasyacit*

Indeed that is the nature of that planet (Goloka) that even without the association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa one desires to live there. No one even desires to go anywhere else.

Therefore being in Vaikuṅṭha is not like being captive in jail. The devotee's independence is for the sake of service, not for giving up serving. Some people think controlling the senses means not engaging them or destroying them, but the followers of Lord Caitanya know that this is foolishness, false renunciation. One has to engage the senses properly in devotional service, and that is the perfection of renunciation called *yukta-vairāgya*. One who has learned to control his senses in this way always uses his senses in devotional service. If he misuses his senses, we do not consider that he has truly become the master of his senses.

Similarly, surrender means choosing to use one’s free will in the service of the Lord. One who attains perfection in this aspect becomes a *nitya-siddha* devotee and once that is done he cannot choose to misuse it, because of his intense love for the Lord. This is confirmed in Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.1.34-36:

All the residents of Vaikuṅṭhaloka know perfectly well that their master is Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa, and that they are all His servants. They are all self-realized souls who are *nitya-mukta*, everlastingly liberated. Although they could conceivably declare themselves Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, they never do so; they always

remain Kṛṣṇa conscious and serve the Lord faithfully. Such is the atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭhaloka.

Also in the purport of (*Bhāg.* 1.8.28).

The living beings are given as much freedom as they deserve, and misuse of that freedom is the cause of suffering. The devotees of the Lord do not misuse their freedom, and therefore they are the good sons of the Lord.

They never misuse their free will to call themselves Nārāyaṇa and they don't misuse it to jump from Vaikuṅṭha either. As with proper sense control, however, in Vaikuṅṭha the residents perfectly exhibit their free will by rendering all varieties of pleasing service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When it is said that the soul has independence, it does not mean he is supremely independent, free to do anything. His free will is not absolute like the Lord's; it is minute. And his love for the Lord is not like material love, which one can give up when one finds a better object of love.

Moreover, even in the material world one does not give up the object of love unless he develops attachment somewhere else. The Lord is the supreme object of love, replete with six opulences. He is all-attractive, and because *māyā* cannot even enter Vaikuṅṭha, there is nothing that can deviate the mind of a devotee to leave the Lord's service. Even if *māyā* were to enter, it could not influence a devotee. Prabhupāda once told a devotee, "Just surrender to me and I will kick *māyā* with my boots." He spoke like this while being in the kingdom of *māyā*. In Vaikuṅṭha there is no need to speak this way. This is the reason why statements such as "once going there" and "having attained" are prominent in the *sāstra*. Conditioned souls need this assurance, whereas *nitya-muktas* do not. They have surrendered eternally. This is the implication of statements which say, "one who has fixed his mind once," "surrendered once," and so on, such as (*Bhāg.* 6.1.19):

*sakṛn manah kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor
niveśitam tad-guṇa-rāgi yair iha
na te yamaṁ pāśa-bhṛtaś ca tad-bhaṭān
svapne'pi paśyanti hi cīrṇa-niṣkṛtāḥ*

Although not having fully realized Kṛṣṇa, persons who have even once surrendered unto His lotus feet and who have become attracted to His name, form, qualities, and pastimes are completely freed of all sinful reactions, for they have thus accepted the true method of atonement. Even in dreams, such surrendered souls do not see Yamarāja or his order carriers, who are equipped with ropes to bind the sinful.

So surrendering to the Lord means giving up one's independence and this surrender is eternal—not for a few hours or few days. Otherwise it is cheating, and it is not possible to cheat the Lord. Pure *bhakti* is free from all cheating propensities, *dharmah projjhita kaitavo 'tra* (*Bhāg.* 1.1.2); it is free from all other desires, *anyābhilāṣita-śunyam*; and it is not covered by *jñāna* or karma, *jñāna-karmādy anāvṛtam*.

Because devotees, having once surrendered to the Lord, never give up His service, Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva assured Prahāda Mahārāja (*Bhāg.* 7.9.54):

*prīṇanti hy atha mām dhīrāḥ
sarva-bhāvena sādhaḥ*

*śreyas-kāmā mahā-bhāga
sarvāsām āśiṣām patim*

My dear Prahlāda, you are very fortunate. Please know from Me that those who are very wise and highly elevated try to please Me in all different modes of mellows, for I am the only person who can fulfill all the desires of everyone.

Nārada Muni said that a devotee never desires to give up the Lord's feet because he is a taste seeker (*Bhāg. 1.5.19*) *smaran mukundāṅghry upaghūhanam punar vihātum icchen na rasagraho yataḥ*.

In Vaikuṅṭha the devotees have free will for rendering service and this is part of their *svarūpa*. That is why they cannot fall. If one has free will to fall, then where is the surrender? Such surrender is not surrender at all. Surrendering can be either voluntarily or by compulsion. Surrender by compulsion is not *bhakti*. Voluntary surrender is *bhakti*, but once the devotee has surrendered fully and attained *uttama-bhakti*, he can never fall down. It is widely accepted that an *uttama-adhikārī* cannot fall down. It is also widely accepted that up to the stage of *bhāva* one may fall from the path of devotional service. Once attaining *prema-bhakti*, however, one does not fall down. This generally refers to great devotees who are still present in the material world. If such a devotee is accepted as infallible, where is the logic in believing that the devotees situated in the abode of the Lord can fall down?

Fall-*vādīs* also argue that free will is in the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*, so how can it be taken away? It cannot be taken away, but the object of the will is changed. In the material world, free will is used for enjoying independently of the Lord, but in the spiritual world it is used for giving pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. That's why the *jīva* is called *taṭastha*, because he can choose one or the other. But when the *jīva* is covered by *māyā*, he has no choice but to serve *māyā*. No one argues what has happened to his free will at that time.

Similarly, when the *jīva* becomes a *nitya-siddha* he is covered by *prema*, and then he has no choice but to serve the Supreme Lord eternally. Out of His mercy, the Lord arranges to rescue the fallen conditioned soul from ignorance; and when the *jīva* is in the internal potency, the Lord—out of His mercy—keeps the *jīva* eternally secure in His devotional service. If the Lord is merciful to the conditioned souls, why would He not be merciful to His associates? Would the Lord distribute *prasāda* to the fallen souls but starve the residents in His abode? Then that would not be Vaikuṅṭha, the place of no anxiety.

Once the *jīva* fixes his will on Kṛṣṇa's service then it is not changed for all eternity. The *jīva* does not desire to change, and Kṛṣṇa is not so cruel as to make him change it. In the material world we are serving Śrīla Prabhupāda, but one can change because of some external influence or offense; these do not exist in Vaikuṅṭha. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes (Cc. *Antya* 3.251, purport):

The verdict of the *śāstras* is that a pure Vaiṣṇava, or devotee of the Lord, never thinks of enjoying the material world, which culminates in sex life. He never thinks himself an enjoyer, instead, he always wants to be enjoyed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The will to serve Kṛṣṇa voluntarily is *bhakti*, which is eternal. Therefore this will is also eternal. That is why it is part of the *svarūpa* of the devotee. The seed for this is given by the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa, *guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija*. This seed is made mature by the process of *sādhana-bhakti*. Then the *bija* turns into a creeper of love. This creeper signifies the irrevocable will to please Kṛṣṇa. Once a devotee has this he never falls. The *nitya-siddha* devotees in Vaikuṅṭha have this creeper eternally, therefore they never fall.

To say that *sādhana-siddhas* do not fall because of their past material experience is illogical. Anyone who is *siddha*, either *sādhana* or *nitya*, has the creeper of love in his heart as part of his eternal nature. This means he has an irrevocable will to serve the Lord favorably. Therefore there is no question of fall down for him.

Does this mean that he has to serve out of force and is thus like a slave? No, such ideas come from our materialistic experience and lack of spiritual insight. A pure devotee has unflinching love for Kṛṣṇa. In love, he naturally uses his free will to serve and please his beloved Kṛṣṇa. This is his *svabhāva*, his very nature; it is inseparable from him.

FOURTH WAVE: CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE VERDICT OF OTHER VAIṢṆAVA SAMPRADĀYAS

No other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* accepts the fall-down theory. Here are some references from the other Vaiṣṇava Sampradāyas. In *Vedānta-kāmadhenu* (2), popularly known as *Daśa Ślokī*, Nimbārkācārya describes the various categories of *jīvas*, *anādi-māyā-pariyukta-rūpaṁ tvenam vidur vai bhagavat-prasādāt muktāṅca bhaktāṅca kila baddha-muktaṁ prabheda-bāhulyam athāpi bodhyam*, “The living entity is conditioned by beginningless *māyā*, but by the mercy of the Lord he can become liberated. There are various divisions of *jīvas* such as liberated, devoted, conditioned, and liberated after being bound.”

Puruṣottamācārya, a great grand-disciple of Śrī Nimbārkācārya, has written a detailed commentary on *Vedānta-kāmadhenu* called *Vedānta-ratna-mañjūṣā*. We cite part of his commentary on the above quote from Nimbārka:

jīvātmanas tāvad dvividhāḥ, baddha-mukta-bhedāt. Tatra baddho nāmānādi karma-vasanā-kāryabhūta-deva-tiryag ādyaneka-vividha-sarīra-tat-sambandhiṣu ātmavātmīyā-bhimānadārdhyavanto baddhāḥ.

The living entities are of two types, bound and liberated. Out of these, those who are bound tightly by the ego of considering the body and its by-products as I and mine are called bound. The body, which is of various types such as demigods and animals, is the result of the desire to act, *karma-vāsanā*. This *karma-vāsanā* is *anādi*, or beginningless.

After this he divides the bound souls into further categories such as those desiring liberation and those desiring to enjoy materially. But the point about the beginningless nature of the conditioning of the *jīva* is made clearly by Nimbārkācārya as well as by the commentator.

While describing the second group of *jīvas*, the liberated ones, Puruṣottamācārya writes:

muktā api dvividhā, nitya mukta muktaśceti. Tatra ādyāśca garbha-jaṅma-jarā-maraṇādi-prakṛti-tat-sambandha-tat-kārya-ṣaṣṭyāṅubhavaśun yatve sati nitya-bhagavadiya-darśanādi-bhajanānubhavānandaikarasāste’pyānantarya-pārṣad a-bhedena dvividhāḥ, tatrānantaryāḥ-kirīta-kaṭaka-kuṇḍala-varṇśyādayaḥ. Pārṣadāḥ-ṣaṣṭyāṅubhava-garudādayaḥ, “sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ” iti vacanāt. Muktaṅām anādi-karmātmika-vidyā-nirupīta-prakṛti-tat-kārya-sambandha-duḥkhādi-vinirmu ktāḥ.

The *muktās* are of two types, *nitya-mukta* and *mukta*. The *nitya-muktas* never experience miseries such as being in the womb, birth, old age, and death. They have no relation with matter or any experience related to matter. They are always enjoying only the bliss of devotional service such as seeing the Lord. They have two classes, *ānantaryya* and *pārsada*. The *ānantaryyas* are paraphernalia such as the helmet, bangles, earrings, and flute of the Lord. The *pārsadas* are associates such as Viṣvaksena and Garuḍa. This is confirmed in the *Rk mantra*, “the devotees always see Him.”

The *muktas* are those who have become liberated from misery and other results arising from a relation with material nature. Material nature is represented by *avidyā* or ignorance which is in the form of beginningless karma.”

This explanation of the *jīvas* given by Nimbārkācārya and his learned great grand-disciple agrees with the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* established by the six Gosvāmīs, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

Śrī Rāmānujācārya accepts that there are two categories of *jīvas*, *nitya-mukta* and *nitya-baddha*, and that bondage of the second class is their karma, which is beginningless. For example, in his *Gītā-bhāṣya* on Bg. 2.13 he wrote, *ātmanām nityānāmevānādi-karma-vaśyatayā tat-tat-karmocita-deha-saṁsṛṣṭānām*, “The eternal souls, because of the influence of beginningless karma, are endowed with bodies suitable to their karma.”

Similarly in his *Śrī-bhāṣya*, commenting on the first of the *Vedānta Sūtras* he writes, *tasmād anādi karma-pravāha-rūpājñāna-mūlatvāt bandhasya*, “Bondage is rooted in ignorance, which is the nature of karma-flow, which has no beginning.”

According to Śrī Madhvācārya the *jīvas* are limited by their own nature as well as by the external energy, but the external conditioning can be terminated. In this regard, B.N.K. Sharma writes in his authoritative work, *Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya* (p. 260):

Though essentially uncreated, they (conditioned *jīvas*) are nevertheless associated from eternity with a series of material coils known as *Āvarṇas*. They are: 1. *Līṅga-śarīra* or the subtle body or psychophysical mechanism of sixteen elements. This carries the causal potentialities that lead to a number of future lives, in fullness of time. 2. *Prārabdha-karma* or karma which has begun to bear fruit. 3. *Kāma* or desire which is the seed of activity and 4. Positive ignorance or *avidyā* which is both real and destructible.

Śrī Jayatīrtha (10th *ācārya* in our *paramparā*) has written about the fourth factor, *avidyā*, in *Nyāya Sudhā*, a commentary on *Anuvyākhyāna* of Śrī Madhvācārya. He says *ataḥ kāma-karmādyati-riktam māyāvidyā-prakṛtir ity ādi śabdābhidheyam anādy eva*, “Therefore, distinct from *kāma*, karma, and so on denoted by words such as *māyā*, *avidyā*, and *prakṛti*, it (ignorance of the *jīva*) is certainly beginningless.”

About the second type of *āvarṇa*, *prārabdha-karma*, Prof. B.N.K. Sharma writes (p. 260): “Such ignorance is beginningless but has an end.” Then he quotes the *śruti* in his support (*Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad 1.17*) *anādi māyayā supto yadā jīvaḥ prabudhyate* “When the *jīva* under the influence of beginningless *māyā* is awakened. . .”

Madhvācārya not only accepts *anādi karma*, he says that every soul has an *anādi-svabhāva*, a beginningless nature, from which karma flows as an outward expression (*Mahābhārata, Tātparyā Nirṇaya 22.84,85*). In this way Madhvācārya and his followers accept that the *jīva* is bound by karma, which has no beginning. He does not say anywhere explicitly or implicitly that *jīvas* fall from Vaikuṅṭha.

Viṣṇusvāmī's writings are not available. But there are a few verses attributed to him found in the writing of our *ācāryas*. For example, in *Bhāvārtha-dīpikā* Śrīdhara Svāmī cites Viṣṇusvāmī in his commentary on *Bhāg.* 1.7.5-6:

*hlādinyāḥ samvidāśliṣṭaḥ sac-cid-ānanda īśvaraḥ
sarvāvīdyāsamvṛto jīvaḥ saṅkleśanikarākaraḥ
sa īśo yad vaśe māyā sa jīvo yas tayārditaḥ*

The Lord is embraced by His *hlādinī* and *samvit* potency and is *sac-cid-ānanda* by nature. The *jīva* is the abode of all types of miseries and is covered by ignorance. The one who controls *māyā* is the Lord, and the one who is troubled by her is the *jīva*.

Saying that the Lord is embraced by His *hlādinī* and *samvit* potency implies that His eternal associates are under the protection of these energies. It is commonly known that *Māyā* cannot influence these potencies of the Lord. She can only influence the *jīvas* in the material world.

Vallabhācārya considers that the *jīva* is part of Brahman and he cites the *Upaniṣadic* statements such as *yathāgneḥ kṣudra viṣphuliṅgā vyuccharanti* (*Bṛhad Aranyaka Upaniṣad* 8.1.20) in his support. He does not write anywhere that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Rather he writes, *Bhagavadīchayā ānandaṁsastirobhavati. Tadā nirupādhiko 'nurūpo'kṣarāṁsāḥ citpradhānaḥ tirohitānando jīva śabda vācyobhavati* (*Subhōdini* 10.87.20), "By the will of the Lord His *ānanda* part becomes manifest at the beginning of creation. Such a spark of Brahman is called *jīva*."

To all this, fall-*vādīs* may say that these are all different *sampradāyas* so it does not matter to us. We hope no one is that cynical towards the bonafide *sampradāyas*. In any event, we should know that all Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* have some basic tenets held in common. Some of these are that Viṣṇu is the Supreme Lord, *jīvas* are eternal and different from the Lord (even in the liberated stage), *jīvas* are part and parcel of the Lord, *bhakti* is the *abhidheya* and is independent of all other processes, and *śruti*, *smṛti*, *Vedānta-sūtra*, the *Upaniṣads* and *Purāṇas* are authentic scriptures. Similarly, all agree that the bondage of the *jīva* has no beginning.

It would be quite bewildering if the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* were to disagree on this point, because there cannot be different ways in which the *jīva* is conditioned.

In all the criticism Śrīla Prabhupāda directed at the Gauḍīya Maṭha, he never indicated that they deviated philosophically. While it is a fact that we are institutionally separated from the Gauḍīya Maṭha, we have no reason to believe that they have changed the *siddhānta* of our *paramparā*. If we accept ourselves as a branch coming from the Gauḍīya Maṭha founder, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, we have to consider their understanding of the *siddhānta*. In the Gauḍīya Maṭha no one accepts fall from Vaikuṅṭha as our *siddhānta*. Otherwise we may belong to an ISKCON *sampradāya*, as some zealous persons have claimed, but this, of course, would mean having a different *siddhānta* than any Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. It would mean that we are not part of any bona fide *sampradāya*. How this could be pleasing to Śrīla Prabhupāda or any other predecessor *ācārya* we shudder to think.

FIFTH WAVE: CONCLUSION INTRODUCTION

In this wave we list a total of ten inherent defects in accepting the fall-down theory as our *siddhānta*. Among them is the fact that this theory is not supported by *śāstra*, by our previous

ācāryas, or by *ācāryas* in the other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*. Another major defect is that it makes ISKCON an *apa-sampradāya*. The theory cannot be supported by any logic and does not give any satisfactory explanation why residents of the Lord's infallible abode would fall down. Another major disadvantage is that the fall-*vāda* theory has a taint of Māyāvāda and thus is antagonistic to pure *bhakti*. The no fall-down *siddhānta* has no such problems. The only problem is that it is difficult to understand, and when not understood properly it seems to put the blame for our conditioned existence on Kṛṣṇa. But this is only due to our lack of understanding. The true conclusion— based on guru, *sādhu*, and *śāstra*—is that no one falls down from the infallible abode of the Lord.

FIFTH WAVE

FALL FROM VAIKUṆṬHA IS NOT OUR SIDDHĀNTA

From the clear analysis in the previous chapters it is evident that the fall-down theory is not supported by logic, guru, *sādhu*, or *śāstra*. Any statements from Śrīla Prabhupāda which favor this theory were part of his preaching technique. Other evidences, such as the Vaidarbhī story and the Gopakumāra story, have nothing at all to do with the theory of fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha. They are misinterpreted, in a bid to find support, by those who advocate fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha. Of the two types of statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda—that we fell from *kṛṣṇa-līlā* and no one falls from the abode of the Lord—some disciples made the unfortunate mistake of taking the wrong statement as the true *paramparā siddhānta*. Those who insist on the fall theory as our *siddhānta* must face the following problems.

1. It is not supported by *śāstra*.

We have seen that the fall-down theory is not supported by any direct statements from the scriptures. The fall-*vādīs* have tried to screw out support for their conclusion from the *śāstra*. Words such as remembering, coming back, going again, returning, original, constitutional position, *svarūpa*, even fall-down from one's *varṇāśrama* position, and repetition of birth due to *icchā-dveṣa* they understand as proof of fall-down from the spiritual world. Somehow they neglect to use statements about fall-down from the heavenly planets for their purpose. Still, in no instance did they find even one verse that clearly states one falls from Vaikuṅṭha or that one was previously in Vaikuṅṭha.

The statements that support the fall position made by Prabhupāda, which are mainly in his letters or talks, cannot override his statements in his books or in the books of our previous *ācāryas*. For prolific preaching an *ācārya* has to use some statements to attract the common masses which may not be the *siddhānta* in the ultimate sense. Such examples can be seen in the life of Śrīdhara Svāmī, Śaṅkarācārya, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Fall-*vādīs* have magnetic personalities, but not in the traditional sense. If there is a mixture of many pieces of gold and iron lying on a table and you pass a magnet over them, the magnet will attract only the iron bits. Fall-*vādīs* are like that. They are magnetic quoters in the sense that they only have eyes for words like again, back, remembrance, fall, return, and so on and they completely miss the truly significant words in the verses or sections of the *Bhāgavatam* narrative. They do not even see in what context a verse is being spoken. It seems they have no belief in

śāstra saṅgati, reconciling the scriptural statements, nor do they fear *śruti-śāstra nindanam*, offences committed to *śruti and śāstra*.

2. It is not supported by previous *ācāryas*.

We have shown that except for Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta (in his preaching to Westerners, which supports our thesis that Prabhupāda used fall-down as a preaching technique), no *ācārya* has said that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Yet, amazingly, the fall-*vādīs* declare that our *ācāryas* never say that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha, and this is in spite of the fact that the verdict of the *śāstra* is that no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. Fall-*vādīs* conclude that this is merely a general principle. The real story, or “special” principle, is that unlimited numbers of *jīvas* have fallen from the *līlā* of the Lord to the world of repeated birth and death. Who, then, is the subject of their general principle no one can fathom; but fall-*vādīs* remain convinced that there is merit in their view, and by quoting Śrīla Prabhupāda their conviction takes on extraordinary zeal.

According to the fall-*vādīs*, a person like Sarūpa, belonging to the family of Śrī Rādhā, can fall; then who is safe in Vaikuṅṭha? By the fall-*vādī*'s logic statements like "The conclusion is no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha" are merely a “general” principle—applicable only to a few selected persons like Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā, Nanda, Yaśodā, Balarāma, and so on. But they are not *jīvas*. So to whom does the no-fall general principle of the fall-*vādīs* apply? This needs to be clarified, and if some scriptural evidence for such a principle can be cited, that would be most welcomed by us. That is assuming the fall-*vādīs* have not faulted us for requesting scriptural support for their utterances.

3. Not accepted by *ācāryas* of other *Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas*.

In the last chapter of the previous wave we have presented the version of other *Vaiṣṇava sampradāya*'s with respect to the *jīva* bondage question. It is clear that they too accept the conventional meaning of *anādi* and do not consider that anyone falls from Vaikuṅṭha. We also point out that it cannot be argued that these *sampradāyas*' *siddhānta* is irrelevant, because all the *Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas* hold certain basic tenets in common. Just as they all agree that Viṣṇu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that service to Him is the goal of life, so they all agree that the *jīva*'s bondage is *anādi*.

4. Kṛṣṇa is unable to protect His eternal devotees.

If so many souls have fallen, then Kṛṣṇa is not really all that powerful, kind, loving, and merciful. His promise in the *Gītā* to give protection to His devotees rings hollow. If He could not protect us when we were with Him, rendering service in love, why should we believe Him now? Maybe He is just tricking us to serve Him but really He is not as big a hero as He boasts. So, why should we put our faith in Him? It is inconceivable to us how these implications of the fall-*vādīs* theory could be acceptable to any *Vaiṣṇava*!

5. Vaikuṅṭha is not free from anxiety.

If so many devotees have fallen from Vaikuṅṭha, and they must be continuing to fall, then the name Vaikuṅṭha should be changed to Sakuṅṭha, the abode of anxiety. We would then have to change all the wonderful descriptions of Vaikuṅṭha in the *śāstra* to make it reflect this new conception.

6. Vaikuṅṭha is not free from māyā.

There can be no fall down without the association of Māyā. “The living entity cannot be forgetful of his real identity unless influenced by the *avidyā* potency” (*Bhāg.* 3.7.5, purport). This means Māyā is in Vaikuṅṭha. So either we have to change verses such as *na yatra māyā* (*Bhāg.* 2.9.10) or give an interpretation such as “Māyā is almost not there.” Or maybe we have to resort to an incoherent general/special principle in which verses like 2.9.10 will be reduced to being general statements.

7. This conclusion makes ISKCON an *apa-sampradāya* organization.

As stated earlier, a *sampradāya* is based on the *prasthāna-trayī*—*śruti*, *smṛti*, and *nyāya*. The fall-*vādīs* would have to comment on them to establish the fall-down *tattva* or *siddhānta*, otherwise we become an *apa-sampradāya*. This means we will attain *apa-vaikuṅṭha* (*apa* means down, away, bad, wrong, opposite).

8. It is not supported by logic.

There is no proper reconciliation of the numerous statements saying no one falls from Vaikuṅṭha. These are simply too many to ignore. The fall-*vādīs* make a weak attempt at reconciling with their general/special principle. Unfortunately, it has no logical or *śāstric* support. Without proper reconciliation, we have logical inconsistencies or self-contradiction in our philosophy. This is not accepted by Śukadeva Gosvāmī (*Bhāg.* 10.77.30):

*evam vadanti rājarse
ṛsayah ke ca nānvitāḥ
yat sva-vāco virudhyeta
nūnam te na smaranty uta*

Such is the account given by some sages, O wise King, but those who speak in this illogical way are contradicting themselves, having forgotten their own previous statements.

In many places throughout this book we have shown how fall-*vāda* is riddled with defective logic, and as Śukadeva Gosvāmī pointed out, the philosophy of devotional service is not illogical. Sometimes people try to pass off illogical concepts as *acintya*, but such poor logic should not be confused with *acintya*. Something stated in the *śāstra* may be *acintya*, but at least it has *śāstric* support. Something without *śāstric* support and which is also illogical cannot gain acceptance by being passed off as *acintya*. The only thing *acintya* about the fall-*vādīs*' theory is their expectation that the Vaiṣṇava community will accept as *siddhānta* that *nitya-siddhas* can fall from Vaikuṅṭha.

9. No satisfactory reasoning for fall-down is given.

We have shown by appropriate scriptural reference and suitable logic that a *nitya-mukta* cannot fall out of envy of Kṛṣṇa, by being cursed, by his own sweet will or misuse of free will, by being bored of doing devotional service for a long time, by developing an attraction for *māyā*, just for a change of setting, out of curiosity and so on. Thus there is no reason for fall-down. One may say the fall is *anādi*, causeless. In that case, being on the eternal plane, this causeless fall will

never come to an end. Thus the falling devotee will never hit the boundary of the material world.

10. The worst problem of all: fall-*vāda* has the taint of Māyāvāda.

By far the most devastating implication of the fall-down theory is that the *svarūpa-śakti* must get overwhelmed by the Lord's *māyā-śakti*, which is His inferior energy, in order for *māyā* to drag the *nitya-mukta* resident out of the spiritual world. Not only does this have no *śāstric* support, but it has a taint of Māyāvāda doctrine to it. Māyāvāda propounds that Brahman can be covered by *māyā*, the Lord's inferior energy. That the superior energy of the Lord could ever be overwhelmed by the inferior energy is not supported by any Vaiṣṇava teaching and in fact it is repulsive to pure Vaiṣṇavas. This is but further proof that the fall theory could not be the *siddhānta* as taught by Śrīla Prabhupāda but something he used for preaching, because he was never in favor of the Māyāvāda theory in any aspect.

Considering all this, we cannot conceive that any person interested in *vāda*, or the truth of this matter, will accept as our *paramparā siddhānta* that the *nitya-mukta* residents of the spiritual world, who are direct associates of the Supreme Lord, can fall down to the material world and become conditioned souls. Indeed, even granting that we could have such a thing as a Prabhupāda *siddhānta* or Prabhupāda *paramparā*, we still cannot conceive that fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha would be the conclusion on the *jīva*-bondage, for there is no *śāstric* support for it.

In contrast to the fall-*vāda*, the *siddhānta* of no fall-down from Vaikuṅṭha causes no conflict or problem with our *paramparā* philosophy. True, because of its *acintya* nature, the no-fall *siddhānta* is difficult to understand, but so are many aspects of the Absolute Truth. This is no reason to reject no fall-down as our *siddhānta*, but it is reason to understand that Śrīla Prabhupāda preached a simpler version according to time, place, and circumstance. On the whole, the Absolute Truth is difficult to understand, nay, impossible for the minute *jīvātmā*. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa does not fully understand Himself. We can only grasp some of it by the mercy of the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, therefore, that we should understand that we cannot understand.

Some say that the no-fall *siddhānta* puts the blame for our conditioned existence on Kṛṣṇa. When not understood, the no-fall *siddhānta* seems to put the blame on Kṛṣṇa for our material conditioning. Actually Kṛṣṇa is above all blame. He is above fairness and unfairness. If it pleases Him to engage us in His *līlā* with the material energy, then we can hardly protest by invoking arguments about who is to blame. And in any case, even if fall-down is accepted, He can still be blamed for having the external energy or for not protecting His surrendered servants.

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, Lord Śiva tells Pārvatī (*Uttarakhaṇḍa* 227.51), *kṛīḍārtham deva-devena sṛṣṭā māyā jaganmayī*, “The Supreme Lord has created *māyā*, which manifests the universes for His play.” Blaming Kṛṣṇa would be proper if He had not given us the facility to get out of this material world. But He has given us that opportunity, and if we fail to take advantage of it then we are to blame.

Therefore, we should be in ecstasy that He gives us a chance for our deliverance. If He did not give us the chance to get out, what would be our alternative? We would have to deny *līlāmaya* Kṛṣṇa the right to have *līlā* with His material energy. But Kṛṣṇa is the *pūrṇa puruṣa*; why should He lack this type of *līlā*? Furthermore, our conditioning is causeless and has no beginning, so why blame Kṛṣṇa, who is only trying to get *jīvas* out of their beginningless, causeless miseries? Why not be thankful to Him?

Denying Him the right to manifest this *līlā* with His limited potency is tantamount to denying Him two of His energies, external and marginal. That means He should only have the internal potency. That denies Him the right to variety, like saying that He should eat only sweets—no

chillies, no sour objects, nothing pungent, or that He should have only pastimes of union but not separation. But He enjoys variety, so this is not acceptable.

Actually we should know that the topmost pastime of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the mood of separation from the *gopīs*, is displayed in the material world. And as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He invites us all to participate in this most wonderful *līlā*. We should feel fortunate for that opportunity. As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains in *Jaiva Dharma*:

Considering that various types of *līlās* will be performed under various situations, the Lord made the *jīva* competent for unlimited gradations of positions from the marginal state up to the topmost platform of *mahā-bhāva*. To facilitate the *jīvas* and make them firm in their competence for these various positions, He created many low levels associated with *māyā* which present unlimited obstacles in the attainment of the supreme bliss. These range from the lowest inert matter up to false ego. The living entities bound by *māyā* are in ignorance of their *svarūpa*, engaged in acquiring pleasure for themselves, and not devoted to Kṛṣṇa. In this state, as much as the *jīva* goes down, that much more the merciful Lord—becoming manifest before him along with His associates and abode—gives him the facility to attain the ultimate destination. Those *jīvas* who accept that facility try to achieve this highest destination. Gradually they reach the transcendental abode of the Lord and attain the exact same status as His eternal associates.

So in fact the *jīvas* have a wonderful opportunity, but those who do not want to accept responsibility to surrender want to blame Kṛṣṇa for their conditioned existence. Hence, rather than focus on the solution to the sufferings of material life, they prefer to raise questions about who's fault it is in the first place. In fact, the misery of material life is Kṛṣṇa's mercy on the fallen souls. It leads to their purification. Again, in the words of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in *Jaiva Dharma*:

Just as gold is purified by heating it in fire and beating it with a hammer, in the same way the *jīva* who is affected with the contaminations of sense enjoyment and non-devotion to Krishna is purified by putting him on the anvil of the material world and beating him with the hammer of miseries. The misery of the conditioned *jīva* ultimately brings him pleasure. Thus misery is an instance of the Lord's mercy. Therefore the misery that befalls *jīvas* as part of Krishna's *līlā* appears auspicious to the farsighted and miserable to the short sighted.

This purification leads to the ultimate bliss, but knowing the tendency in the conditioned souls to place blame elsewhere, Śrīla Prabhupāda preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness in such a way that the full burden of responsibility was clearly on our shoulders. One way he achieved this was by saying that we fell from the spiritual world by misuse of our free will. Thus we understood that Kṛṣṇa is never to blame. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has pointed out, however, that Kṛṣṇa is never to blame in any case, but Prabhupāda preached in such a way that we had no excuse whatsoever. This is the clever genius of the preacher.

Conclusion

We have presented the conclusion of the *śāstra* and Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. We have also tried to reconcile the views of Śrīla Prabhupāda by reference to the preaching and practical example of our predecessor *ācāryas*, but in the end it is difficult to know the mind of a great soul of Śrīla

Prabhupāda's stature. Subsequently, everyone is free to accept whatever reasoning satisfies himself. As we have stated in the introduction to this book, it is inconceivable that any resident of the spiritual world could fall down to become a conditioned soul; but it is not inconceivable that the the real explanation is that conditioned souls were always conditioned souls and that the reason for that is inconceivable.

In spite of all we have said, we believe that because Śrīla Prabhupāda said both things on the *jīva*-issue then any follower should be free to say either one or both if he so chooses. We go along with the general understanding that preaching can and is often different from the *siddhānta* and that all preaching should take into consideration time, place, and circumstance, but everyone should know the *siddhānta*. Still, despite the *siddhānta*, we see it as no crime if one preaches that we fell from Vaikuṅṭha. Either way, who can object to repeating what Śrīla Prabhupāda said? And so, in the end we have nothing against those who believe in the fall-down theory. The real challenge is how to get out. Therefore, instead of focusing on how we got here, we consider it real service to focus each other on how to get out. This will surely please Śrīla Prabhupāda, and pleasing him is the key to our success on this path. On this note, let us digest these two statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda and take them into our hearts:

It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature. The Supreme Personality of Godhead knows, however, how and why this actually took place. (Bg. 13.20, purport)

And this from the aforementioned room conversation in London on August 17, 1971:

Prabhupāda: Therefore *acintya*. Therefore *acintya*, inconceivable. (Pause.) Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Don't try to understand Kṛṣṇa. Simply try to love Him. That is perfection. That's all. You cannot understand Kṛṣṇa. Nobody can understand. Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot understand Himself. Yes. (Laughter.) He's so *acintya*. And what to speak of us. Therefore our only business: how to love Kṛṣṇa, how to serve Kṛṣṇa. That's all. That is perfection. You cannot understand Kṛṣṇa. Nobody can. Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot understand.

Om Tat Sat



HELP US DELIVER THE NECTAR

Dear Reader:

This book was put together in four months—research, writing, scholarship, lay-out, and printing. It gives a clear idea of the caliber of work we can do. If you appreciate our effort you can help us to serve you and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī by contributing towards the printing of the *Sandarbhas*. We have got the *Tattva-sandarbha* manuscript edited and ready for printing. This was for BBT-Sweden; and our translation and commentary was approved by the BBT's Sanskrit and English editors before the controversy over the *jīva* issue put an end to the project. We see no reason, however, why the devotee community should be deprived of or made to wait for this important work to come out. We started this project before the BBT got involved and we plan to continue. We took a loan to print this book in order to clear up the controversy over the *jīva* issue. Now we must pay the loan back as well as raise funds to print the *Tattva-sandarbha*. We appeal to all devotees to be our patrons and sponsor our work. All told we plan to present the *Sandarbhas* in fourteen volumes. The first volume of *Bhagavat-sandarbha* is almost ready. Kindly help us. Hare Kṛṣṇa.



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