

Srimad Bhagavatam - the natural commentary on Vedanta-sutra

*"Srimad Bhagavatam - the natural commentary on Vedanta-sutra", given by His Divine Grace Srila
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So to refresh the memories of those who were here yesterday and to bring up to date a little bit those who are new on this seminar, I would like to ask those who were attending yesterday if anyone from among you can please, in a few words, tell us what is this term, that is shown at the bottom of the board, 'sakti-parinama-vada', which is Lord Caitanya's doctrine of the cause of all causes. (Answer). Yeah, that's a very nice answer, in a few words he's explained...the answer very completely that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has established the most perfect explanation of causation. Those who were here yesterday will recall that we focused in on causation as being the essential feature of philosophy. Anything, which can be termed 'philosophy', must necessarily deal with the cause. If it does not deal with the cause then it is not philosophy. And this is what Vedanta is all about. As you may know, in Srila Prabhupada's purports, when he cites Vedanta-sutra , mainly he cites of course the first sutra - athatho brahma-jijnasa and then the second sutra - janmady asya yatah. This again and again and again we find... So what is Brahman? The first sutra says 'We are human beings, supposed to inquire into Brahman. And how the Brahman is defined? As the source of everything, the cause. So this is what Vedanta is all about - searching out the cause. The cause is Brahman.

So Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has explained teaching from Srimad Bhagavatam, which is the natural commentary on Vedanta-sutra, that Krsna is the cause of all causes by sporting with His energies, His saktis. Krsna as the Supreme Lord, Paramesvara, He is the controller of these energies, so by His Divine influence His saktis, energies... they transform. From this transformation comes out this entire material manifestation.

Now who can remember, this is an easy question, who can remember the example from Srimad Bhagavatam, very nice, easy to understand example from Srimad Bhagavatam, which illustrates how Krsna plays with His energies, how He manifests them and plays with them and (winds?) them back up and how He fulfils these fourfold requirements of causation, what is the example? Yes, mataji? (Answer) The spider with the web. Yes. We gave one reference, there are actually many references, many verses in Bhagavatam, which present the same example. So this is an example obviously worth remembering since Bhagavatam presents it again and again.

So the spider is the nimitta-karana, the operative or efficient cause, but the spider is also the ingredient cause or material cause. He is the source of the ingredients too. He is not only the one who puts the web together but is the one who gives the ingredients for the web. And thirdly, the spider gives the form to the web, the web is his own design. And fourthly, the function of the web is understandable only in relationship with the spider. The spider is determining the function, the final cause or the purpose of the web. So this example can help us, can make very clear how Krsna is manifesting the material energy from His own transcendental self, how He is putting it together as the operative cause, how He is giving it form, svarupena-pradhana-rupena means from the Lord's own form. Svarupena means His own form, pradhan - material nature, rupena - has its form. Therefore this entire universe, Visvarupa, is explained in Bhagavatam as the form of the Lord. Sometimes it is compared to the shadow of Krsna. Just as we have our physical form and this physical form has a shadow. The only reason the shadow has a form is that we have original physical form. And Krsna is the purpose of the creation, we explained this yesterday too. Srila Prabhupada says that this material existence is a chance offered to the living entities to become Krsna conscious. So that's a review. Now... Oh, yes, there was one other thing I wanted to know, that this 'sakti-parinama-vada' philosophy, that is actually the subject of the Catuh-sloki, the famous Catuh-sloki of Srimad Bhagavatam, the four nutshell verses in Second Canto, Chapter 9, 33 till 36, I believe. So this is the Catuh-sloki. So we are not going to go into Catuh-sloki, that's very vast subject matter (.....?) but just for your own study, your own reference find that these four verses, nutshell verses, are explaining the same 'sakti-parinama-vada' philosophy.

So now we want to turn our attention in today's seminar to challenges against Vedanta philosophy or Bhagavata philosophy coming from the side of the atheistic Sankhya philosophy. Now, I explained yesterday what the atheistic Sankhya philosophy is based on. You may be wondering: "Well, what is the relevance of that? That's very nice that in Vedic culture, in ancient India there were some philosophers, called sankhya philosophers, and they made arguments against the Vedantists. But what does this have to do with anything today? But it has very much to do with today because as you will find in Srila Prabhupada's books, he very often compares Sankhya philosophy to modern science. And there are some very, very fundamental correlations, very, very fundamental, basic similarities. One of them, which is quite interesting actually, is a concept of a very intimate connection or very intimate relationship between consciousness and matter. The Sankhya philosophers, they of course say reality is ultimately just two things, reality can be analyzed and broken down and finally categorised in two tattvas, two truths. One they call 'purusa', which means the conscious soul... there are many, unlimited conscious souls. And the other is 'prakrti', material nature. And they say the two are intimately connected. For instance, purusa cannot act by itself, consciousness cannot act by itself it needs matter. Consciousness requires matter in order to accomplish anything. And then the other side, matter can only act... matter is the active principle... but it will only act when it is in union with consciousness. So I don't want to get too much into detail but it's just some points to help you understand this relationship according to the Sankhya philosophers. The sankhya philosophers say that matter become active, that matter manifests as the forms and features of this world only due to the influence of consciousness, only when consciousness comes near matter, then matter starts to manifest everything, matter changes, transforms. The Sankhya philosophers also accept parinama, transformation and this is how they say it comes about: when the soul comes in contact with matter, then matter transforms.

Now, in the modern world atheistic material scientists, specifically the scientists, who are known as the quantum physicists, you may have heard this - quantum mechanics or quantum physics. So they have a very, very similar understanding of the relationship between consciousness and matter. They say that whenever you observe anything, whenever matter is observed by a conscious witness, then matter transforms, it becomes changed. There is no way you can stop that. By the act of observing matter then there is some change. Actually they explain in this way that matter is always in a kind of potential state. There is no telling, there is an equal chance of one thing happening or another thing happening, but it is the effect of consciousness that determines whether one thing or another thing will happen. ...think of so many examples. For instance, I'll just tell one example. This is the famous 'alive cat - dead cat' example. You put a cat in a box. Then in the box there is a bile of poison. And whether or not the poison, that poison bile go break open... there is some mechanical arrangement, the hammer is supposed to break the glass... so whether or not that will break, that depends on some... there is some radioactive material in there, which is emanating electrons or whatever, emanating atomic particles. So there is fifty-fifty chance whether that particle, will emanate which will set into motion this machinery which will break the bile. And when the bile is broken, the cat will be dead. So according to quantum physics until the observer opens the box and looks inside, nothing happens. It's just a potential state. Fifty percent possibility of the cat living, fifty percent of it dying, fifty percent of the poison breaking and dying. So everything just remains in a potential state until the observer opens the box and looks in and then suddenly, as they say in their lingo, the scientific jargon, the (way, wave?) function collapse and suddenly everything is there. You see either alive cat or dead cat. So it's the observer that determines. Anyway, I don't want to get too much into this. You may not understand this and I can tell you there is no worth in this. These are the kind of things they say. The point is... All they are saying is that whatever is happening in matter is due to the presence of consciousness. The consciousness impinging on matter and then matter reacts. So in this way modern science and atheistic Sankhya philosophy, they are very similar. Now, this raises a problem, here we have our first problem, which only the Bhagavatam can solve. The first problem is what is matter really? If the matter is always transforming, changing its shape, things are happening because I look at, then what is matter in itself, how can that be determined? Because as soon as I or any other conscious observer looks at matter, then matter starts to do things, it starts to change in so many ways... So what is it? So the atheistic Sankhya philosophers, actually they have no real answer, neither do the scientists. Because they have no higher authority. There is only two things: the observer and matter. But Bhagavat-philosophy says there is higher principle, the Supreme, on whom both observer and matter are dependent. So the Supreme Lord came as Kapila-deva to explain what is matter, so let us hear this verse (SB 3.26.10)

*sri bhagavan uvaca
yat tat tri-gunam avyaktam
nityam sad-asad-atmakam
pradhanam prakrtim prahur
avisesam visesavat*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The unmanifested eternal combination of the three modes is the cause of the manifest state and is called pradhana. It is called prakrti when in the manifested stage of existence."

Now I'll just read a few lines from the Purport: The Lord points out material nature in its subtle stage, which is called pradhana, and He analyses this pradhana. The explanation of pradhana and prakrti is that pradhana is the subtle, undifferentiated sum total of all material elements. Although they are undifferentiated, one can understand that the total material elements are contained therein. When the total material elements are manifested by the interaction of the three modes of material nature, the manifestation is called prakrti."

So there is pradhana and prakrti. So pradhan is the root, the unmanifested material nature, matter in its potential or original form. It is also called mula prakrti, the root of matter. And that is avyakta; that is unmanifested. It cannot be seen! We cannot know it, jiva cannot know it. So... But the Lord knows it because it is His own energy, therefore the Lord can explain it. And what we are seeing that is called prakrti. You see, prakrti, the word 'pra' means very great and 'krti' is the root form of (.....?) the word 'karma'. Kṛta. Kṛta means to do. Karma means action. So material nature acts. You see in material nature so many wonderful activities. Therefore it is called prakrti. So material nature is acting when the three modes of nature - goodness, passion, ignorance - are agitated and are set into motion. Otherwise in pradhana-state they are not moving. The three modes are there but they are inert. (.....?) But with the touch of consciousness they are set into motion. And this takes place, this setting into motion takes place in this phase of creation, called mahat-tattva. So out of the pradhana comes the mahat-tattva, the three modes are set into motion and everything comes up. So this is what matter is actually. Ultimately the root is called pradhana, it is an inert, potential state of the Lord's own energy.

So, now, these Sankhya philosophers, they admit to the existence of pradhana. And they say that when the living entity comes to know pradhana, then he will be liberated from it. This is their doctrine of liberation. Now, this is also very similar to the modern scientists. Modern scientists, they are investigating matter because... this is what Sankhya is all about too, investigation, analysis... you analyze matter, analyze matter, analyze matter till you come to its original, primordial state. This is why the modern scientists, for instance, they are breaking atoms into particles and (are) trying to break these particles smaller and smaller, trying to come to some original state, primordial state. And they think by doing this they will become the masters of matter. They want to uncover the final principle behind everything, the final material principle. They think when they have that, then they will become the masters of matter and then, they say, then our civilization will become so nice because there will be complete control over the material energy. So in this way they have a kind of materialistic conception of liberation.

Maybe you recall, I recall when I was young, seeing these futuristic science magazines or science-fiction magazines, on the cover there would be some very idealistic painting. There would also be a date there like 1990, back in 1965, so there would be a date 1990. Everything is very shining and beautiful, very wonderful crystal towers, the cities are very perfectly clean, robots are doing all the work, every family has its own rocket-car and somewhere you see an advertisement on the picture: "Moon excursions - only 2000 \$". So 1990 has come and gone... (laugh)... and things are not quite like that yet. So anyway, this is their idea of material progress - that as we understand matter more and more and finally come to understand its primordial root state, from which everything is coming, that original, potential state, which is pradhana, then we will become masters, we will be liberated.

So the Sankhya-philosophers have a parallel conception. Their idea is that somehow we blundered into matter, set it all into motion, all these things are happening to us - birth, old age, disease, death. We are suffering and what should we do? We should research, investigate, analyze and understand matter as pradhana, in its primordial state again, then it becomes inert and we are no longer attached or attracted to it and we are liberated. That's their idea.

Now, Bhagavatam rejects this whole premise. Bhagavatam says 'pradhan cannot be known'. The sankhya-philosophers and the scientists, they are saying: 'This is our goal - to know primordial matter'. Bhagavatam says: 'Sorry! It cannot be known'. Again for the reason that it is Krsna's energy. It's Krsna's own sakti and therefore we cannot know it apart from Krsna consciousness. The endeavour of the atheistic scientists and the atheistic sankhya-philosophers is to try to grasp this energy, of course independently from Krsna, they don't admit the existence of Krsna. So therefore pradhana, or the material nature remains actually ever unknown to them.

Now, Sukadeva Goswami, he explains what pradhana is like in this verse, two verses from 12th Canto, Chapter 4, 20 and 21:

*na yatra vaco na mano na sattvam
tamo rajo va mahad-adayo'mi
na prana-buddhindriya-devata va
na sannivesah khalu loka-kalpah*

*na svapna-jagran nacatat susuptam
na kham jalam bhur anilo'gnir arkah
samsupta-vac chunya-vad apratarkyam
tan mula-bhutam padam amananti*

Srila Sukadeva Goswami says: *"In the unmanifested stage of material nature, called pradhana, there is no expression of words." So how any scientist writes a book about the primordial state of matter? Sukadeva Goswami says: "There is no expression of words. There is no mind to understand pradhana. There is no manifestation of the subtle elements, beginning from the mahat, nor are the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There is no life air or intelligence, nor senses, nor demigods. There is no definite arrangement of planetary systems, nor are there present the different stages of consciousness - sleep, wakefulness and deep sleep. There is no ether, water, earth, air, fire or sun. The situation is just like that of complete sleep or of voidness. Indeed it is indescribable. Authorities in spiritual science explain however that since pradhana is the original substance, it is the actual basis of material creation."*

So this brings us to another point. Now, I just want to say this again, so you understand, before moving to the next point I want to stress this. According to Bhagavatam, pradhana is unknowable, so therefore the whole effort of the atheistic sankhya-philosophers and materialistic scientists is futile. The scientists may break atoms or molecules unto atoms, atoms unto particles, particles unto subparticles, unto mullons(?) and (quarks ?), whatever else they call it and keep breaking them down, breaking them down, but they never reach any end. Because the end that they are searching for is unknowable, unexplainable. This is maya. This is maya. They are just running after impossible hope that remains ever outside of their reach. And similarly the Sankhya-philosophers, they think by understanding pradhana, they will become liberated. But it is beyond all hope. They will never be liberated. So they just go on analyzing matter, analyzing matter, analyzing matter, without end and Maya-devi will keep (pecking?) them: "Yes, yes, you are very close, keep researching, come on, come on, come on..." and thus the world goes on.

So now in the verse we just read... to move on to the next point, the next problem that we are going to look at of Sankhya philosophy... tan mula-bhutam padam amananti: "Authorities in the spiritual science explain, however, that since pradhana is the original substance, it is the actual basis of material creation." So, yes, there are statements in the Vedic scriptures which refer to pradhana, or the Lord's sakti, as the original vastu, original substance, because it is the Lord's energy. Now, the sankhya-philosophers, they interpret these statements to mean that pradhana, being original or beginningless, is therefore independent. Therefore they come to their dualistic conclusion... the Sankhya philosophy is dualistic, it is not monistic like Mayavadi philosophy, dualistic, there are two ultimate truths - there is consciousness and there is matter. So the sankhya-philosophers say... and you recall yesterday I was saying the difference between Vedanta- or Bhagavata-philosophy and these other Vedic philosophies like Sankhya, Yoga and so on is to be found in the explanation of the cause. So the Sankhya-philosophers, they say... [pause]... of course there is no God behind, controlling pradhana, this pradhana or primordial matter is the truth into itself. This is their philosophy and, as I said, there are Vedic statements, which the Sankhya-philosophers take to support this view,

for instance, that material nature is anadi, without beginning. So how to understand this? This mystery is solved in the Srimad Bhagavatam. Srila Prabhupada has entitled one chapter in the Second Canto of Bhagavatam "Bhagavatam gives answer to all questions". To all these very difficult, technical, philosophical questions, whatever anyone can think of, the answer is in Srimad Bhagavatam. So here is the answer to this problem - how is it that pradhana is said to be original and sometimes is even said to be the basis or the ingredient cause of material nature. So here is a verse from Canto 10. 87. 31:

Translation: "Neither material nature nor the soul who tries to enjoy her are ever born,...". The word here is 'aja' - material nature is never born, it is beginningless. "...yet living bodies come into being when these two combine, just as bubbles form where water meets the air. And just as rivers merge into the ocean or the nectar from many different flowers blends into honey, all these conditioned beings eventually merge back into You, the Supreme, along with their various names and qualities."

Purport: "Prakrti thus serves as the upadana-karana, or ingredient cause, of creation. In the ultimate issue, however, since she is also an expansion of the Supreme Lord, it is the Lord alone who is the ingredient cause as well as the efficient cause."

So although the pradhana or the material nature is unborn, without beginning, still she is dependent upon the Lord as His energy. So therefore she cannot act independently in any way. And the jiva is also ... the living entity is also, although beginningless, aja - unborn, is dependent upon the Lord. And it is the Lord who is the controller of both, the Lord, who is bringing the two together, the Lord, who is causing the interactions to take place and ultimately both are merging back into the Lord at the time of devastation. This is very nice example here comparing the manifest world to a garden of flowers, so within a garden of flowers there are so many different scents, you see, each flower has its own particular nice smell, nice flavor. But when all these scents are taken together in the form of honey, you see, then their individuality is merged. Although it is merged in one sense, but why is honey sweet? Because all these individual, different sweetnesses of the flowers are combined, different flowers are combined, you see. So individuality is still there but it's merged together. So, anyway, these are different ways of understanding this philosophy acintya-bhedabheda-tattva. So all the individual features of material nature and the living entities, they merge into the body of the Lord at the end because He is their origin and controller and again later on He manifests them both. So this is the proper understanding, not that the pradhana is some... the Vedas are calling pradhana 'aja', or unborn, or original. This does not mean that pradhana is independent. This is the mistake of the Sankhya philosophy. So, yet, although the Lord is ultimately the controller of material nature and the jiva, as Prabhupada explains in the Purport, we should not think... we should not compare Krsna to that old Greek deity Atlas. Remember Atlas holding up the world? So the Lord is the controller of His energies but it does not mean that He is laboring hard, struggling with His energies, struggling, bringing material nature with the jivas together, combining them, doing so much work. No. The Lord, although He is the controller, He is yet independent, svarat. He is independent from material nature. And that's why it seems that material nature works independently from the Lord. It seems that way. The material nature is actually dependent upon the Lord but it is the Lord, who is independent. This is again acintya-bhedabheda-tattva, simultaneously one and different. Material nature can never be separated from Krsna, so in that sense there is oneness, but Krsna is ever-independent from material nature, so therefore there is difference and they are simultaneous, you cannot separate them. That's why it is called 'acintya' - inconceivable. It is like... to get a nice understanding of this acintya... maybe some of you have seen, there is a diagram, that's used in psychological tests. It's a simple silhouette, you know, silhouette means black and white drawing. So two faces, two human faces, seen from the side view of silhouette against white background and the noses are almost touching. So in psychology this diagram is shown and the mind, our mind, human mind, can see this either as two faces by looking at the... by focusing on the black silhouettes or if it looks on the white background it sees a vase or a drinking glass, a goblet. So simultaneously within this diagram there are two things: there is a picture of faces and there is a picture of wine glass or drinking goblet. Another thing is... this is a psychological test, which shows that the mind cannot grasp both concepts together. So if you want after the class, you can go and draw such diagram and look at it (.....?) yourself that you can either see only the two faces or only the glass but you can't see everything together. That's the meaning of acintya - inconceivable to the mind. So similarly this relationship of oneness and difference between the Lord and His energy, it is acintya. You can speculate, speculate, speculate, speculate on it but your mind will never be able to grasp it. Therefore we have to accept finally the authority of Srimad Bhagavatam to understand this point.

So the Lord is not like Atlas, He is independent. And that is substantiated here from SB 2.10.45: Translation: "There is no direct engineering by the Lord for the creation and destruction of the material world. What is described in the Vedas about His direct interference is simply to counteract the idea that material nature is the creator."

So, again, material nature is active but she is acting only under subordination, she is an empowered servitor of the Lord. This is very important. She is the empowered servitor. Maya-devi or material nature is the Lord's devotee. The Lord glances at her and empowers her to become prakrti, the manifested... yes, the manifester of so many wonderful things in this material world. And she seems to be doing this independently. The Lord is never touching her directly. So she is acting out of sense of devotion to Krsna. Now, the atheistic sankhya-philosophers, because they don't accept Krsna, they don't accept God, they can never understand this. Therefore they have great difficulty in conceiving the relationship between the Lord, or we can say the Purusa and His prakrti. They end up speculating in so many wrong ways.

So here is another very important point to understand about causation... these four points, fourfold points you see on the board... that in every case the Lord is the remote cause, this is very important. Although the Lord is the cause, He is the cause in every case, He is the operative cause, the ingredient cause, the formal cause, the final cause, He is in every case also the remote cause, He is independent. He is not actually... here in this verse: nasya karmani janmadau, He is not actually doing anything Himself but He is being served by His energies, which are empowered by His transcendental influence. This is Bhagavata-philosophy. So the relationship between the Lord and His material nature is a relationship of lila. This is very important. Here we have a verse - SB 3.26.4:

*sa esa prakrtim suksmam
daivim gunamayim vibhuh
yadrcchayaivopagatam
abhyapadyata lilaya*

"As His pastime, that Supreme Personality of Godhead, greatest of the great, accepted the subtle material energy, which is invested with the three material modes of nature and which is related with Visnu".

So as far as Krsna is concerned, He is playing, He is sporting with His material nature. So He is simply playing with His material nature and, out of a sense of devotion and service to the Lord, she is manifesting this material world. So the Lord's own relationship with this material nature is as lila-purusa. He is the Purusa, the enjoyer, but He is a lila-purusa, His enjoyment is one of sport. It is a pastime. Now, we are purusa, the jivas are purusa. In Sankhya philosophy when they use the term 'purusa' they mean the jiva. But our relationship with the material nature is different, we are... Karma. We are trying to enjoy the material nature but we are coming under karma, we are coming under the law of karma. It is not sport. Of course some rascals argue that 'This is my pastime. This is why I have come here as the mlechha incarnation of Godhead'. This is nonsense. In actual fact is that we are under the thumb or under the foot of material nature, being pushed down always. So why is this, why is our relationship with the Lord's energy different from His? Because we have given up the service to Krsna, we are thinking of ourselves as independent. So again, remembering the example of the spider's web, the Lord manifest the spider's web, He is playing with it, He can go anywhere He likes on the spider's web but when a fly comes along ceiling into the spider's web, happy goes lucky, what happens with him? He is captured. He is not (...?) do what he likes, he's caught. So, now, not all the living entities are captured. Those who are Krsna conscious, those who are surrendered to Krsna, engage only in His devotional service, not thinking of themselves as independent enjoyers, they can also act as the Lord acts, freely in this material nature in devotional service.

So now, let's look a little more closely at the relationship, at this lila between the Lord and the material nature. I'm going to be referring to some verses: SB 3. 26. 3, 4, 9, 16, which explain that material nature is Krsna's sakti. Actually just as the internal potency, the spiritual potency is Krsna's sakti... Actually they are one. Krsna's sakti is one. But they are relating with Krsna in different ways. The Krsna's sakti, which is known as internal potency, the antaranga-sakti, is sporting with Krsna directly, personally. Just as we see the beautiful Deities of Sri Sri Radha-Madhava and Asta-sakhi, the eight gopis. So Krsna is there personally and He is personally enjoying the service of Srimati Radharani and

the gopis. But the material energy is relating with Krsna impersonally, the brahmajyoti. She is enacting her service to the Lord impelled by the influence of the rays of Brahman. As it's seen when Lord Maha-Visnu glances at maya, you see, maya or pradhana is inert until Krsna glances at her. And that glance, that glance is the glare, the impersonal effulgence of brahmajyoti, which is surcharged with living entities and time-energy. So this infuses maya with potency and then she begins to act. So she is relating with the Lord's impersonal feature. So therefore you will find in the Vedic scriptures and these verses, which I referred to just now, which I'm not going to read in full because it's taking a little long, you will find that the background of the material manifestation is the brahmajyoti. You will find it that it is explained that the universes manifest out of the brahmajyoti. That is the Lord's glance. And the Lord, after glancing at material nature, infusing her this way, then he engages in His pastime of yoga-nidra as Maha-Visnu, He is sleeping. And while He is sleeping, material nature is making all arrangements, the universes are coming out, Brahma is appearing on the lotus flower, he is creating, giving the living entities their bodies, the whole material manifestation is coming about. As if in a dream, the Lord is sleeping and all of this is taking place as if a dream. So Srila Prabhupada says... Yes, this whole material manifestation is Krsna's own dream in His pastime of yoga-nidra. Now, Yoga-nidra is actually a goddess. Goddess Yoga-nidra. And she is an expansion or reflection of Goddess Yoga-maya. So while Maha-Visnu is sleeping and Yoga-nidra is serving Him by manifesting this creation, actually internally Krsna is enjoying with Yoga-maya in the spiritual world. So this is the complete understanding given in Srimad Bhagavatam. So, yes, this material existence is actually being supported by the rays of Brahman, the rays of brahmajyoti, which are emanating from the Lord's glance. Now, that Brahman is called in SB 4.9.16 "undivided, original, changeless, unlimited and blissful". Now someone may ask: "But we are also Brahman, the jiva is also Brahman. The jiva is a spark within that Brahman energy, so why we are (not ?) experiencing this blissful stage? Why we are (not ?) understanding ourselves to also be undivided, original, changeless, unlimited and blissful?" Here is a mystery. If that is what we are, aham brahmasmi - I am Brahman, then why I'm thinking that I'm this body, why I'm thinking that I'm suffering? So Bhagavatam answers that question, this is SB 1.3.31:

"Clouds and dust are carried by the air, but less intelligent persons say that the sky is cloudy and the air is dirty. Similarly, they also implant material bodily conceptions on the spirit self."

So just as this whole material manifestation is based on the rays of Brahman, it is actually supported on the rays of unchanging Brahman, so also the clouds are supported by the air or the dust, which is blowing in the sky, is supported by the air. And the clouds and air are actually ever distinct, yet, as this verse says, less intelligent people, when they see this sky full of clouds, they say: "Oh, the sky has become cloudy" or "The air has become dirty". So it is really a matter of perception. If one is Krsna conscious, identifying himself with Krsna, the Supreme Brahman, then he will understand himself to be distinct from the material energy. Just as the pure devotees, who come to this material world, they always understand themselves... although they are acting within this material world, they are understanding themselves to be distinct from the material energy. But one, who is not Krsna conscious ... due to illusion he is separating himself from Krsna, then he becomes overwhelmed by the association with the material nature. And just as a foolish person thinks that the sky is cloudy, so he thinks that 'I am matter'. The sky is not cloudy. The sky is the sky. The sky is the support of clouds. The sky is not cloudy; the sky is not dirty. The sky is simply the support of some dust. The dust never mixes with the sky but a fool, a foolish person, he may think that way. So similarly that's what we mean by maya, it's all simply a matter of perception. When I'm not Krsna conscious, then my vision, my spiritual vision - avrtam jnanam etena, as Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita, jnanino nitya-vairina, my vision becomes covered by illusion, by lusty desires, and thus I identify myself foolishly with matter. So the whole of atheistic Sankhya philosophy is simply such a misconception, it's the same sort of misconception. The atheistic Sankhya-philosophers, as I said in the beginning of this lecture, they say there is very intimate relationship between matter and spirit. They actually give the example of iron and magnet. They say the two, matter and spirit, can't help but be attracted together and thus everything comes out of that. Now, this is where their philosophy completely breaks down, because if it is actually my nature as spirit to be attracted to matter, then what is the hope of liberation? How can I ever become liberated? This is where their philosophy breaks down completely. So in actual fact, let's read from Srimad Bhagavatam, what does Srimad Bhagavatam say about this. Yes, Bhagavatam says in 5.18.38 that it is the Lord, who brings the two together:

"O, Lord, You do not desire the creation, maintenance or annihilation of this material world, but You perform these activities for the conditioned souls by Your creative energy. Exactly as a piece of iron

moves under the influence of a lodestone, inert matter moves when You glance over the total material energy."

So here a magnet as example is also used but the magnet is the Lord Himself, He is the one, who exerts His influence over the both matter and spirit and brings them together, combines them to form the creation and separates them again. It is not going on independently, as the foolish sankhya-philosophers say. Actually, as SB 7.5.14 says our attraction is to Krsna: "O, brahmanas (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 Visnu, who carries a disc in His hand. Thus I have no independence."

And the Purport reads, Srila Prabhupada's Purport reads: ... "As soon as one is purified of material contamination, he is again attracted by Krsna. In the material world, everyone is contaminated by the dirt of sense gratification and is acting according to different designations, sometimes as a human being, sometimes a beast, sometimes a demigod or tree, and so on. One must be cleansed of all these designations. Then one will be naturally attracted to Krsna."

So actually we are only attracted to Krsna. The spirit soul's attraction is to Krsna, but when we foolishly try to be independent from Krsna, then that same attraction, that self-same attraction, is simply perverted and then we become attracted to some false bodily designation. But that is simply a perversion of our attraction to Krsna. In actual fact the living entity is never attracted to matter alone like Prabhupada gives this nice example of a dead body. You see, in the material world we see that men are attracted to women, women are attracted to men and people ordinarily think that this is... that they are actually attracted by these material forms. But that is not the fact. We are actually attracted by the spirit within and the proof of that, according to the Srila Prabhupada's nice example, is that when the body dies, when the life leaves and may be very beautiful man or woman, but if the life leaves that body and it is just a dead body on the ground, then it is horrible, who's attracted. You see a dead body, 'Oh!', you become disgusted. So in actual fact we are not attracted to this material nature, therefore the Sankhya philosophy is wrong. We are attracted to Krsna but due to our perverted desire for independence that attraction comes through the material nature and thus we think we are attracted to matter. It is also said in Bhagavatam that the maya is simply the Lord's smile, the potency of the Lord's smile reflected through material elements. So Krsna's smile is all-attractive, you cannot help but be attracted to Krsna's smile. But if you are pervertedly trying to be independent from Krsna at the same time, turn away from Krsna, then you will be attracted to Krsna's smile, which is shining through the material elements and thus one becomes entangled in the material nature. So I think we will stop here. As I said yesterday, in discussing this Bhagavata philosophy, we entered into some very deep theories. Now, in the next days that come I'm going to try to present themes which are a little more perhaps provocative, little more engaging, (I'll) try to get some response from all of you, back-and-forth debate form perhaps but today I wanted to thoroughly discuss this relationship between the Lord and His material energy. Because this is... this will help us understand this sakti-parinama-vada - how by the Lord's influence His energy is transforming to manifest this material existence and how we are captivated by this. I wanted to thoroughly discuss this today and refute this atheistic Sankhya philosophy, so I hope we will be able to stick to this points and follow them. Are there any questions? Yes?

(Devotee...) Mahat-tattva is the interaction, it is the staging ground of interaction between the jiva and material nature. It is where that interaction begins after the Lord glances on pradhana, pradhana becomes infused with the jiva-sakti and the kala-sakti, then the three modes of nature, which are laying inert within pradhana, they are activated. And as soon as they are activated, the first manifestation is called the mahat-tattva, out of mahat-tattva comes the total mind, which is manifested from goodness, total intelligence - from passion, and total ahankara - from ignorance and thus then it evolves further and finally the entire universe...

Third lecture:

"Understanding the term 'sat' and 'asat' from Srimad Bhagavatam". 22nd of March

These are very key words in Vedanta disputation with other systems of philosophy. So hopefully this session will not take so long so there will be time at the end for questions and answers. So the word 'sat', which appears again and again and again in the Vedic literature, especially in the Upanisads, I think you all probably know the meaning of the word. One meaning is 'eternal', another meaning is 'real'. So 'sat' meaning eternal, eternally real, the truth, this is actually a name of Krsna, a name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As it is seen in one very important verse, which we shall be discussing, from SB 10.2.26 - this is a prayer offered to Lord Krsna, while He was in the womb of Mother Devaki. This prayer was offered by the demigods. So I shall read it, it is a very nice prayer and as you will see the word 'sat' appear in Sanskrit repeatedly:

*satya-vratam satya-param tri-satyam
satyasya yonim nihitam ca satye
satyasya satyam rta-satya-netram
satyatmakam tvam saranam prapannah*

Translation: "The demigods prayed: O, Lord, You never deviate from Your vow, which is always perfect because whatever You decide is perfectly correct and cannot be stopped by anyone. Being present in the three phases of cosmic manifestation - creation, maintenance and annihilation - You are the Supreme Truth. Indeed, unless one is completely truthful, one cannot achieve Your favour, which therefore cannot be achieved by hypocrites. You are the active principle, the real truth in all the ingredients of creation and therefore You are known as antaryami, the inner force. You are equal to everyone, and Your instructions apply for everyone, for all time. You are the beginning of all truth. Therefore, offering our obeisances, we surrender unto You. Kindly give us protection."

And I'll read a few lines from the Purport. Srila Prabhupada writes: "*The demigods or devotees know perfectly well that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the true substance, whether within this material world or in the spiritual world. Srimad Bhagavatam begins, therefore, with the words om namo bhagavate vasudevaya... satyam param dhimahi. Vasudeva, Krsna, is the param satyam, the Supreme Truth.*"

So I think you can all immediately grasp Krsna as the sat, as the Supreme Truth, since He is sat-cit-ananda-vigraha, He has a form, which is eternal, full of knowledge, full of bliss, completely transcendental to the temporary manifestations of this material world. And He is the basis, the eternal basis of this material world. So this we can immediately understand, how Krsna is sat in that sense, but there is another sense of sat, which is given in this verse. Krsna is called 'satyasya yonim'. Now the word yoni means womb, just as a womb is the source of a child or in more general sense yoni means simply the cause, the source. And so, He is the source of all truth or, as Srila Prabhupada writes in the translation: "You are the beginning of all truth". Now, this truth, this sat, of which Krsna is the 'yoni', the womb or the source, actually refers to this cosmic manifestation. So this cosmic manifestation is also called 'sat' in the Vedic scriptures, because it is manifested from the Supreme eternal 'sat'. This is like Srila Prabhupada, you will find, he gives this argument against the mayavadi position. The mayavadis say that this world is asat, unreal. It has no truth at all. It is, as we were saying in an earlier class, puspakas - it is a flower in the sky, an imagination, a hallucination. It has no reality whatsoever. So Srila Prabhupada argues that this is actually an offence against Krsna, because Krsna is the author of this material world, He is the source of this world. So if you criticise something that someone has created, you say that this is unreal, this is absurd, if you criticise that thing, that a person has made, you are criticising the person also. So Srila Prabhupada gives this nice argument that in this way, by saying that the material world is just an absurd dream the mayavadis are actually blaspheming Krsna. So this material world is true, has truth, but we should remember that that truth can only be understood in relationship to Krsna, the origin. It is like this, to give an example, like paper money, you see, a nice crispy 100\$ bill. Everyone around the world thinks 'Oh, this is very nice, 100\$ bill'. But what is it? It's a piece of green paper. You can blow your nose on it and throw it away. It is just a piece of green paper but why it has a value? Because the American government stands behind it. And in America, you know, there is it... there is one big military encampment called Fort Knox where

all the gold is kept. It is in the army base. There are thousands of troops protecting the US gold reserves. Many tons of gold. So this gold, which we can say is the real, true valuable thing, is backing up the paper money. The paper money, the dollars, are derived from this gold. Therefore US dollars have value. Not in themselves, not this green paper. So similarly, this material world, it can be compared to US dollars. For instance, if the value is separated from the source then it is illusion, then there is no value. For instance, just as if we print our own dollars. Nareswara Prabhu, because he is the manager here, so he showed me how someone had taken... we thought it was someone from Russia, 1\$ bill and made it into 100\$ bill and paid their Mayapura feast with that. So if we make our own money, then that's *asat*, that's unreal, that actually has no value. And similarly, the modern scientists, these glorified technologists... actually the word, this is interesting, I will just explain the origin of the word 'technology'. Immediately it comes from Greek. And then this Greek root 'tekna' is derived from a Sanskrit word. The Sanskrit word means 'carpenter'. And actually in Greek also 'tekna' means, actually refers to carpenter, wood worker. So this is a *sudra* art. But in Kali-yuga the *sudras* become the *brahmanas*. So technologists, technological scientists, who are nothing more than glorified carpenters. They are now these *brahmanas*, the leading lights of wisdom in this world today.

So these technologists, their inventions, what they are doing by their inventions is simply copying the material nature, copying what is already there in material nature. For instance, you will see here in Mayapura and all over India how agriculture is done with bulls, with oxen. But in the western world to use a bull, bullock to plug your field is considered most primitive. You must have a nice, shiny tractor, built in some factory somewhere, Chicago or Smolensk or somewhere. And this is considered more advanced to have a tractor. Of course, bull and tractor are doing the same thing. But bull is actually valuable because it is given by God for that purpose. The bull is given by God within the total plan of nature. Anyway, we can talk the glories of farming with bulls but that's not the purpose here. So the tractor is something artificial. It has actually no real, intrinsic value. Actually we can see the tractor - farming has resulted in the increase of sinful activities. For instance, because the bulls are idled by the tractors doing their work in the field, therefore the people think 'Let us eat the bulls'. So the invention of the tractor has actually promoted very horrible sinful activities, very degrading sinful activities all around the world. So this is, you see, *asat*. There is no real value in such a thing as a tractor. So, anyway, in this way modern society is trying to invent again what nature has already provided or also we see things, which are provided by nature, the modern mentality places an artificial value on them. Just like, I was thinking because someone told a joke this morning. So this is like in the society there are men and women, so they have their place in society, given by God, but in modern society there is an artificial value, placed upon womanhood... (break)... "You can do what you like and then we will exploit you for sex life". That is the real purpose. So woman, man - these are creations of God and they have their value, they have their purpose, given by God in the *varnasrama*-system. But when due to lusty desires this original system is turned topsy-turvy and artificial value is placed upon, for instance, womanhood, then that also is *asat*, that's unreal.

So these two things are going on - either things are being completely... being produced completely artificial or an artificial value is being placed on natural things. So this is counterfeit, as I said, printing paper money. So the real value of a thing can only be understood in its relationship with *sat*, with Krsna. We have to understand His plan, His purpose, and then we can understand the real value of things.

Another point that is explained in Bhagavatam and Vedanta of the truth, the truth of this cosmic manifestation, is that the ingredient, the basic ingredient or the basic substance, which in Sanskrit is called '*vastu*', the basic substance of this material world, is real because the basic substance of everything is spirit. Srila Prabhupada in a very interesting, illuminating conversation explained that the basic building block of anything, whether in the in the spiritual world or in the material world is the spiritual atom, the spiritual spark, which is *atma* - *Paramatma*. So that is also the basic building block here in the material world. If everything is broken down, broken down, broken... finally you come to this spiritual particle. Therefore it is said '*brahma-satyam jagan-mithya*' or '*sarvam kalvidam brahman*', this is the quotation, everything is actually spirit. But these building blocks here, these building blocks of spirit here in the material world, when put together they form this temporary manifestation, instead of an eternal, full of knowledge, full of bliss manifestation, it is temporary, full of ignorance and full of suffering. Why it is different? Because as Srila Prabhupada said: "Here there is lack of Krsna consciousness ." Here there is the basic building block, the spiritual particle, the *jiva*, but unfortunately the *jivas* are not Krsna conscious. So therefore when we put these non-Krsna-conscious *jivas* together we end up with this material world and when Krsna conscious living entities are put together then that

is the spiritual world. But, here is the point, the basic ingredient is sat, even in this material world. So in this sense also the material world is real, although the forms of this material world are temporary. This is Vaisnava philosophy. Now, philosophers of the Nyaya, Vaisesika and Sankhya systems they object to this. They object to the Vedantic or Bhagavata position that Krsna is satyasya-yonim, He is the source of this cosmic manifestation. Or in other words, in terms here, He is upadana-karana, they object to that. So the argument they give is that this material world is imperfect, it is contaminated, it is impure, so if Krsna is the source of it and if at the end it goes back into Krsna, or into Lord Maha-Visnu, then that means that the Lord Himself is contaminated, is imperfect by association with this imperfect creation. Therefore their argument is that the upadana-karana, the ingredient source is pradhana. So therefore again we come back to this dualistic conclusion that there is spirit and separate from spirit, a separate tattva, is prakrti or material nature. So the ultimate truth is actually two, not one. If the ultimate truth is one, the Lord, then that means according to them, the Lord becomes implicated in His creation. The creation is imperfect, so when it is wound up and enters back into the Lord, then He will be contaminated, He will be tainted by that imperfection. But this is refuted by Srimad Bhagavatam. We will read the verse. This verse is worth noting down, at least the number - 4.7.26. This is a prayer by Prajapati Daksa:

Daksa uvaca
suddham sva-dhamny uparatakhila-buddhy-avastham
cin-matram ekam abhayam pratisidhya mayam
tisthams tayaiva purusatvam upetya tasyam
aste bhavan अपरि सुद्धा इवतमा-त्रा

Which means:

Translation: *"Daksa addressed the Supreme Personality of Godhead: My dear Lord, You are transcendental to all speculative positions. You are completely spiritual, devoid of all fear, and You are always in control of the material energy. Even though You appear in the material energy, You are situated transcendently. You are always free from material contamination because You are completely self-sufficient."*

So you see, although Krsna, He is the origin of the material nature, and the material nature therefore comes back and enters into Him, still He is always independent, He is always svarat, He is always transcendental. And one example, given by Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana, very nice, simple example is the example of the canvas, an artist paints on a canvas, so he puts oils, coloured oils on the canvas and creates a nice painting, but the canvas always remains the same. It is the support of painting. The canvas remains unchanged as the support. So similarly Krsna is the support, the origin, the support and the shelter of this material existence, but He is never tainted by it, He is always independent from it. So, yes, the Nyaya, Vaisesika and Sankhya philosophers, they posit the pradhana as the source. They say pradhana is asat, you see, these are... we said we are going to explain what is sat and asat. So sat means the Lord but sat also means this manifest material world and asat means the unmanifest state. So the unmanifest material energy, as I explained the other day, that is pradhana. So they argue that asat must be the cause of sat and asat means the pradhana. But actually according to Srimad Bhagavatam asat is also a name of Krsna. You are maybe surprised to hear this. Because we take one meaning of the word asat is unreal, so Krsna is not unreal but asat also means unmanifest. So Krsna is the unmanifest origin of this material world. So I will read a verse. This is 10.87.29:

Translation: *"O eternally liberated, transcendental Lord, Your material energy causes the various moving and nonmoving species of life to appear by activating their material desires, but only when and if You sport with her by briefly glancing at her. You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, see no one as an intimate friend and no one as a stranger, just as the ethereal sky has no connection with perceptible qualities. In this sense You resemble a void."*

Then in the Purport it is written: *"To attempt to a life separate from the Lord the rebellious souls must be provided with suitable bodies and an illusory environment in which to act out their fantasies of independence. The merciful Lord agrees to let them learn in their own way, and so He glances at Maha-maya, His energy of material creation. Simply by this glance, she is awakened and makes all required arrangements on His behalf."*

So we explained this point yesterday. The Lord is the remote cause. He activates material nature by glancing at her and as stated here, again, also yesterday, the Lord is like the eternal sky, which has no connection with perceptible qualities. Again this point, someone may say the sky is cloudy but the sky is never cloudy. The sky is actually the support or the basis of the clouds but the clouds never mix with the sky itself. This is a wrong perception to say that the sky is cloudy or the sky is dirty. The sky is never so. So although Krsna, He is the support of the material existence, He is never touched by it. Therefore this verse says: sunya-tulam dadhatah, 'You are like a void'. Therefore Krsna, He cannot be ... by this process of neti-neti, breaking down the material elements, that the jnanis do, He can never be found. So in that sense He is a void, unmanifest, that is the sense of the word asat, He is nmanifest. So this is interesting that this is a name of Krsna also - sat and asat. These are names of Krsna, which prove that He is the source of everything.

Now to continue this theme, this same theme how Krsna is the repose of the material nature, He is asat, that means He is behind this manifestation and when everything is dissolved, this manifestation enters into Him. Therefore the form that is seen in this material world actually comes about by Him, as a result of His own form, this is again 'sva-rupena pradhana-rupena'. Pradhana shows form only because that form of the material world is based on Krsna's unmanifest form, Krsna's eternal unmanifest form, which you cannot see with these material eyes. So I will read some very nice verses. This is SB 8.3.4:

I'll just read the Translation: "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, by expanding His own energy, keeps this cosmic manifestation visible and again sometimes renders it invisible. He is both the supreme cause and the supreme result, the observer and the witness, in all circumstances. Thus He is transcendental to everything. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead give me protection."

And SB 3.10.13: "This cosmic manifestation is as it is now, it was the same in the past, and it will continue in the same way in the future."

From the Purport, Srila Prabhupada writes: There is a systematic schedule for the perpetual manifestation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world, as stated in Bhagavad-gita (9.8): bhuta-gramam imam krtsnam/ avasam prakrter vasat. As it is created now and as it will be destroyed later on, so also it existed in the past and again will be created, maintained and destroyed in due course of time. Therefore the systematic activities of the time-factor are perpetual and eternal and cannot be stated to be false. The manifestation is temporary and occasional but it is not false as claimed by the Mayavadi-philosophers."

So the form of this world is based on the eternal form of Krsna. So therefore it can be said that the form of this world is also true. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura used to say that matter is a dictionary of spirit. This is like if you have a dictionary, you have a list of words and basic meanings, basic meanings to help you understand the English language or any other language. These are not complete meanings but they're basic meanings. If you want the complete meaning you have to turn to encyclopaedia.

So matter is the dictionary of spirit. By observing matter you can get a basic, a simple understanding of spirit. By observing material form you can get a basic understanding what the spiritual world is like. Of course, here is very easy because Mayapura is spiritual world. But anywhere, anywhere in this material world one will see trees, one will see birds, one will see ponds of water, one will see people - men women, one will see flowers. So why do these forms exist? Why are they created, maintained, destroyed and yet recreated again? This is also in western... we were speaking a couple days ago about Socrates. Srila Prabhupada said: "He is the only real philosopher in the West". Because he had the same understanding of form. He proposed that there is a spiritual world of forms and in this material world we see only reflections of these forms. So here in the material world the forms come and go, but they come again and again and again nonetheless, even after being destroyed. So why is that? You see, if there was no basis to existence, if there was nothing eternal behind this existence, then why are there perpetually trees in this world, this form of tree? Why isn't it after the trees are destroyed, let's say in some (... ..?) big forest fire all the trees are destroyed, so why doesn't some other things grow up, some fantastic, weird kind of entity that is never seen before, if everything is just kind of spontaneous, there is no plan behind it. No, but we see perpetually this form of tree in this world, even though in the material world things come and go, we see perpetually personal form.

Because these are based, these are derived from eternal, transcendental form. So this is Socratic philosophy. And Socrates, as Srila Prabhupada says, he obviously derived his understanding from the Vedas, from Vedanta. So let's hear some more on this, there are some more interesting verses - SB 6.3.12:

And from the Purport we learn that the Lord, He has another name - 'otam-protam'. Very interesting name. 'Otam-protam' means crosswise and lengthwise. The example is of a thread... If you see a tapestry, just like in Persia, they make beautiful tapestry, these big rugs with very beautiful designs. So the basic ingredient or material of the rug are threads, which run crosswise and lengthwise, up and down. And it is these threads that is the support of the design. That is seen in tapestry. So Sri Krsna in His form... , we have already heard the name 'Antaryami'. Antaryami is a name of the Supersoul. 'Antar-' means inner, 'yami' means ruler. Just like Yamaraja. Lord Yamaraja, the word 'yama' means ruler or giver of discipline. So he disciplines all living entities of the universe because he punishes them at the time of death, those sinful living entities. So the Supersoul is called Antaryami, inner ruler or inner force. So as Srila Prabhupada writes in the Purport: "The Supreme Lord is both vertical and horizontal to the cosmic manifestation. Like two threads, horizontal and vertical, of which a quilt is manufactured, Lord Visnu is situated as the vertical and horizontal cause of the cosmic manifestation."

So He is Antaryami, He is dwelling vertically and horizontally to this creation, within all atoms, everywhere, and from His form... we see this design because His form is there within everything therefore this material world has its form, has its design.

So from SB 12.4.27 and this is a verse that has a direct reference to Vedanta-sutra, we learn:

"My dear King, it is stated [in Vedanta-sutra] that the ingredient cause that constitutes any manifested product in this universe can be perceived as a separate reality, just as the threads that make up a cloth can be perceived separately from their product."

So this is interesting. You see the design on a Persian rug but separately, we can understand separately the existence of the thread, separately from that design. The threads are, of course, the cause of that design, but the design is dependent upon those threads. So, you see, in the same way the material world is nothing but the energy of the Lord, in that sense it might be said that the material world is the Lord because it is only the Lord's own energy, there is no other source than the Lord Himself, but yet, again, nonetheless the material world is always dependent upon the Lord. So this is again acintya-bhedabheda-tattva philosophy.

Now, finally, one last argument. The sankhya-philosophers say that: "Well, if you vedantists, you vaisnavas, if you followers of Srimad Bhagavatam say, you insist that the Lord is upadana-karana, He is the ingredient cause, He Himself is the ingredient of this material world, then what an effect you saying is that the Lord is His own emanation. So the jiva is also an emanation from Krsna. So you are saying... the conclusion, the logical conclusion of your position is that any living entity, any conditioned soul is also Krsna." This is how they argue. So Bhagavatam replies, this is SB 6.16.9-11, which explains the simultaneous oneness and difference between atma and Paramatma, how they are the same and how they are different. This is Canto Six, Chapter Sixteen, verses 9 to 11, very important verses because here Bhagavatam is very clearly explaining the oneness and difference of atman and Paramatma:

Verse 9, Translation: "The living entity is eternal and imperishable because he actually has no beginning and no end. He never takes birth or dies. He is the basic principle of all types of bodies, yet he does not belong to the bodily category. The living being is so sublime that he is equal in quality to the Supreme Lord. Nonetheless, because he is extremely small, he is prone to be illusioned by the external energy and thus he creates various bodies for himself according to his different desires."

Then in the Purport Srila Prabhupada writes: In this verse the philosophy of acintya bhedabheda - simultaneous oneness and difference - is described. The living entity is eternal (nitya) like the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the difference is that the Supreme Lord is the greatest, no one being is equal or greater than Him, whereas the living entity is suksma, or extremely small."

In the original verse, the original Sanskrit, esa nityo'vyayah suksma. So this word is used - suksma - means very, very fine or very, very small. So this is the particular quality, which differentiates the jiva from the Paramatma.

So then, I want to go ahead because I want to (.....?) up. Srila Prabhupada writes in the Purport to verse 11th:

"We should also understand that udasina, neutral..." - this is referring to the Supersoul, this verse describes the Paramatma, He is called udasina, neutral - "...does not mean that Paramatma takes no action. Rather, it means that He is not personally affected. For example, a court judge is neutral when two opposing parties appear before him, but he still takes action as the case warrants."

So this is actually the answer to this objection of the sankhya-philosophers, the nyayas, vaisesikas, who say that if you, vaisnavas, say the Lord is upadana-karana, then that means He is His own emanation, therefore He is also the jiva. No, the Lord is udasina, He is neutral. Again, it means that He is unaffected, He can emanate... He emanates matter, He emanates the jivas, but He Himself remains udasina, He is neutral. And as Prabhupada so nicely explains here that does not mean that He doesn't act, neutrality does not mean He doesn't act. He gives the example of a court judge. A court judge acts, he decides a case, he makes a decision but still he is neutral. This is a very nice example. Krsna is ever neutral. He is emanating matter, He is emanating spirit in the form of jivas, but He Himself remains neutral and thus unaffected. And how can He do this? Because He is vibhu, He is the greatest. The jiva cannot do this. This is in Vedanta-sutra commentary by Baladeva Vidyabhusana. He points out this difference between the anu-atma, the jiva, and the vibhu-atma, the Supersoul. That the jiva cannot independently manifest anything. Just like if a man wants to have children. He cannot do this independently. Or a woman, if she wants a child. She cannot do this independently. The man has to take a wife, woman has to take a husband and then they can conceive children. But even here the children are not their emanations. They do not make these children out of their own energy somehow. Whose energy is that, whose energy is utilized to give the body of the child in the womb? That is Krsna's energy. Where does the life force come from in that embryonic body? That is Krsna's emanation, the jiva. So the jiva has no such independent power. So, you see, the Sankhya-philosophers, again Sankhya and these others, because they are atheistic, because they refuse to accept and they refuse to therefore understand the position of the Supreme Lord, therefore whenever they hear the Vedanta philosophy or Bhagavata philosophy they always try to understand it in a mundane way. They try to understand the Lord as an ordinary living entity and thus they become so bewildered and they give these foolish arguments.

So this is all what I'll present today. Tomorrow, as promised, we are going to get into refutations of Buddhism, examining the mental platform of the Buddhist philosophy. There are four schools of Buddhism, which we will discuss tomorrow and you will see how, practically speaking, these four schools constitute all the thinking, all the ideas, all the philosophy of the modern world today, which is completely mental. At least these systems of philosophy like Sankhya, yoga and so on, they have their reference to the Vedic scriptures. So they are not completely mental. But Buddhism, because it rejects the Vedas, it relies purely on what is called anumana, mental speculation. So are there some questions?

(Devotee: the material energy is also spiritual?)

No, it is not that it is wrong to conceive the material energy, because, why it should be wrong when that is the explanation of Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad-gita and Vedic scriptures. There is material energy, prakrti, but the basic ingredient, the vastu, vastu means the basic ingredient or building block of the material energy, is spirit. Therefore... (break)

... We can imagine a double plug. There is in the same plug, from the same current, there is running a refrigerator, a freezer, which is making things very cool. So the effects are completely opposite but the energy involved is the same, one. So similarly the spiritual energy is the basic building block of both the material world and the spiritual world but the effects are opposite. (Devotee... In Bhagavad-gita Krsna says separate...). Yes, and that separate, why separate, that we have been hearing, because the Lord's internal energy, He sports with directly. Just as Krsna is enjoying pleasure pastimes with Srimati Radharani directly. The relationship between Radha and Krsna is personal, there is a direct, personal loving exchange. Whereas Krsna's relationship with Durga, Maha-maya, is indirect,

impersonal. She is activated not by the Lord's personal touch, but by His glance, from a distance, and, we explained yesterday that this glance means the rays of Brahman. So the background of this whole material world is therefore impersonal, the immediate background is impersonal. Therefore this world... Srila Prabhupada explains so nicely in several lectures that it is this world that is actually nirvisesa. The mayavadi philosophy speculates that it is the spiritual world that is nirvisesa. But actually the spiritual world is avisesa, is full of variety eternally. And it is this material world that is actually nirvisesa, without any real variety. Why? Because this variety here is temporary. Whatever you see here in the way of variety - shapes, form, colour and so on, you can take it for granted that it will not last. Ultimately all variety in this world will be dissolved and will merge into the body of Maha-Visnu. In actual fact this world is nirvisesa.

Another way of understanding, Srila Prabhupada said, you take anything that seems to have quality, any object like this, anything, you can break it down, any material object, you can break it down and then the quality, the form, everything is lost. You just break it down smaller and smaller, you come to atoms, particles, and then finally what you come? You come to the spiritual substance, Brahman, brahmajyoti. So this is why the impersonalists-philosophers are called 'mayavadis'. They are speculating on the impersonal state as the goal of their meditation but that impersonal state, that nirvisesa state is just another form of maya. (Devotee...) The forms of the spiritual world are eternal, they are changing also, obviously, because the spiritual world is dynamic not static. Not that everything in the spiritual world is just frozen in the eternality. Sometimes people posit that if you say that the spiritual world is eternal then how can anything happen there? But no, the spiritual energy is dynamic not static. (Devotee...) Yes, that is a good point, it is irreducible. Because the principle of everything there is Krsna's enjoyment. So we heard in the first verse we read Krsna has a name 'satya-vrata', which means whatever Krsna wants, is. So the spiritual world is what Krsna wants. Therefore it is the way it is. And that's the way it is. And you can't ask why. One devotee was pestering Srila Prabhupada with these 'why'-questions - why the things are like this in Krsna consciousness, why this, why that. And Srila Prabhupada said: "There is no question of 'why'. You must accept it and you must surrender." So this person was not very satisfied. Actually he left the movement. Actually Srila Prabhupada invited him to leave the movement. Because ultimately we have to surrender to Krsna. You cannot ask why does Krsna wear peacock feather on His head, why not swan feather or flamingo plume. (Devotee...) There might be, yeah, there are nice stories and all of that but this is ultimate truth. 'Why does Krsna wear crown, why not a baseball hat. Why does He play a flute, why not an electric guitar.' You cannot ask these questions. Because the spiritual world is the way it is because Krsna is satya-vrata. Satya-sankalpa, that is another... Satya-sankalpa. 'Sankalpa' means desire of mind. So whatever Krsna wants, whatever He desires, it is. It is not that it becomes or will be, it IS. What Krsna wants, is, that's the reality. Therefore He is the Supreme Lord. And we have to accept to come to that platform of 'sat' ourselves, of reality ourselves, we have to surrender to Krsna and accept His desires as being paramount. We have to become servants of His desires, that is the meaning of devotional service. Yes?

(Devotee...)

Well, you see, Prabhupada in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta says that spirit is infinite. So infinite has two aspects. There is unlimitedly great and infinitesimal, unlimitedly small. So the Lord, Krsna, He is vibhu, He is the Atman - the being, who is unlimitedly great, and the jiva, who has all the same qualities as the Lord, he is the Atman, the aspect of the Atman or the self, who is unlimitedly small. Therefore in the Upanisads we find the statement: anor aniyah mahato mahiyan/ atmasya jantor nihito guhayam, which says the Atman is both 'anu' and 'mahat', it is both atomic, infinitesimal and the greatest of the great, the one's self. So the jiva is also non-different from Krsna. So, but jiva has the power of independence. So when the jiva tries to become independent, tries to become actually the Lord Himself, then he falls down, then his difference, the difference between jiva and the Lord is accented because Maya comes between and cuts off his relationship.

(Devotee...)

Yeah, but this is given, this 1/10 000 of the tip of the hair, it is given in the Upanisads. Prabhupada explains in a lecture... to demonstrate to us that this is impossible to calculate the size of the soul because it is infinitesimally small... Prabhupada in a lecture explains: "You take a hair, take a tip of a hair, divide it... see if you can divide it even unto 100 parts, and take one of those 100 parts and see if

you can divide that to 100 parts". Now, maybe, you see, after understanding that, we have to keep in mind that the Upanisads were written for persons of the Vedic culture, who had better things to do than to invent instruments that could actually divide the hair tip unto 10 000 parts, maybe now there are devices, that can do that and some scientist will come very proudly and say: "Here I have 1/10 000 of the tip of a hair. Do you really mean to tell me that this is the size of the soul?!" But that's not the point. The point is that it is infinitely small and to help us understand how small it is, this example, which for Vedic culture is ridiculous, you know, someone dividing the hair unto 100 parts and again, it is given like that. You understand?

(Devotee...)

No, no, think of the example of the spark and the fire, this also pertains to size. The spark and the big fire have the same quality - heat and light, but because the spark is small when it is separated from the fire it loses its brilliance. If it falls unto dry earth it will go out, it will not anymore exhibit heat and light. But if the spark remains within the fire it glows and dances. (Devotee...) Yes, because it is small. Another example, simple example Prabhupada gives, is the sun being covered by clouds. The sun is never covered by clouds but we see it that way because we are small. It again comes down to that point of perspective. Just like the perspective of saying the sky is cloudy or the sky is dirty, it is the same thing. Because of this perspective we have as jivas, we are very, very small, very, very insignificant, therefore we see things that way.

(Devotee...)

Well, you know, when referring to the Bhagavatam we have to refer to Srila Prabhupada's translation and purport. So here suksma is translated as being... suksma means subtle, but Srila Prabhupada gives a stress to the sense of being very small. Something which is very small is also subtle, can be taken as subtle. So, and then Srila Prabhupada explains in the Purport, it's because of the small size of the soul. But, you see, the thing is that we should not take the size of the soul in any relative sense, maybe that's the problem here. This is actually to be taken in an absolute sense. As Srila Prabhupada explains again in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, the Lord is unlimited. So unlimited has two aspects - unlimitedly great and unlimitedly small. So the unlimitedly small department that is taken up by the jiva. That's jiva's function to cover the infinitely small aspect of the Supreme and Krsna Himself is covering the infinitely great. He is so great, He is also smaller than the smallest. Yes?

(Devotee: ...the mayavadis say this material world is a dream... the liberated souls... Maha-Visnu's dream. Again, also dream)

Yes, but it is the God's dream. But mayavadis take it to be my dream and that is the problem. It is God's dream therefore it is real also. We have been just hearing that. "Therefore this cosmic manifestation can also be called sat in relationship with the sat, with Krsna". Any other relationship - no. Again the example of paper money. If the paper money comes from the government printing press and are supported by the gold bullion, then it has real value; if it comes from my basement printing press it has no value. Yes?

(Devotee: We just heard of Krsna's being asat and I want to ask how is that possible that all material forms originated or they are reflection of something unmanifested ?)

Yes, the term asat means unmanifest. So unmanifest can have two senses. First of all that behind this manifest material world there is unmanifest cause or unmanifest basis which is Krsna. In this sense unmanifest just means that we cannot see Krsna with these blunt material senses. Atah sri krsna namadi /na bhaved grahyam indriyaih. By these blunt material senses you cannot see Krsna. Therefore with material senses, material mind we cannot trace out the cause, it's not possible. So the cause is therefore asat, invisible to us. Another sense of the term asat is that this cosmic manifestation in the future will dissolve completely and be withdrawn into the body of Maha-Visnu. So that stage of material existence is also called asat. The potential from material existence is still there because it is Krsna's energy but now it is withdrawn within Krsna, it is unmanifest. So in that sense Krsna is also asat. Because He is the repose, the shelter of the material manifestation when it is dissolved. The design, as we read some verses, the design or the plan of material existence is always there in Krsna's own mind, therefore the material world is coming out, the material manifestation is coming out

again and again and again throughout whole infinity of time. It is always the same, we heard this verse - the material world is as it is now, it will be in the future the same way and in the past it was the same, in previous ... That means in future manifestations there will still be this basic design of the universe just as it was in the previous manifestations. It is not that every time the universes come out completely different: the sky is sometimes like a checkerboard in colour or people have feet growing out of their heads or ears on the ankle bones. It's not that every time in the creation the things are mixed up, haphazard; everything follows the same basic scheme (Devotee...) Sat and asat? Just keep to simple definition: sat means manifest, asat means unmanifest. Yes?

(Devotee... ... what is the relation between soul and matter?)

Your particular question is what is the connection of the soul to this body? Yes. You are right about prana. Prana is the life force. So this prana, as explained in Bhagavatam ,is a life force, which contains within it the subtle mind and senses, again in this sense 'subtle' means very, very small or sometimes said to be atomic. Within the prana or the atomic, you can say, root of our knowledge-acquiring senses, our active senses and our mind - all of this is in the prana. So this prana accompanies the soul. Just as when we die the soul moves from one body to the next, so the same prana is always following that soul and it is always the root or we can say the basic fundamental mechanism, by which the soul interacts with whatever body it gets. Because in all bodies there are some form of eyes, ears, nose, mouth, some form of tongue, hand, leg, rectum, genital. These organs are there in some form or other, you know, quite maybe distorted forms, strange, bizarre, insect-like form, whatever. They can look very horrible but these organs are there. So the basic mechanism, by which these various organs in different bodies are operated it is through the prana. Now, how does the soul manipulate the prana? Actually the soul doesn't. The soul simply desires and the prana is manipulated by the Supersoul, Who accompanies the soul wherever he goes. Therefore the Supersoul, Paramatma, is called 'prana-sarira'. He has the name 'prana-sarira', means the prana is actually His body, sarira means body. So the total prana of the universe, total life force of the universe, is actually the body of the Paramatma, because that means that He is actually directing the prana according to the desire, but not only the desire, also the karma. It shows that the living entity is not independent in exercising of his desire. He may have a desire to move his senses in this way or that, but if the karma doesn't permit it then he cannot. Like if by karma someone loses his power to lift his arm. So he may have the desire 'I want to... ', you know, he feels this itching behind his ear and he has such a strong desire to scratch behind his ear but the karma does not permit it, you cannot lift your arm.

(Devotee: ...Did I understand right that the first verse... three dimensional... Brahma on Brahma-loka and the second is ...)

Yes, to reside on Brahma-loka is in one sense considered still to be at liberated platform. Because those who reside on Brahma-loka, Brahma and his sons, the residents of Brahma-loka are not actually caught in the wheel of samsara. They live for as long as the universe exists. So samsara means the wheel of birth and death within the universe among 8 400 000 species of life. So souls who live on Brahma-loka, actually you will find in Second Canto there is a verse which speaks of Satyaloka, Bramhaloka, how there are great sages and rsis who are completely transcendently situated but sometimes they feel compassioned for the living entities on the lower planets and they descend, Srila Prabhupada says in the Purport, as Messias, he was actually referring to the personalities as Jesus Christ. They come down from the Bramhaloka to Earth and they teach some doctrine, some dharma and then they return. So, although they live on a planet within the material world they are still considered to be liberated souls, like the four Kumaras. So at the time of devastation of the universe they only die in the sense of they give up their prakrti-bodies, the bodies within the material universe but their consciousness is not broken and they go back to Maha Visnu consciously. That's why it is explained that the mystic yogis who follow the path of yoga called brahma-pantha, a path of elevation, which we will be talking about in a day after tomorrow, the last day of the seminar, or the devayana-pantha, it has different names, these mystic yogis they ascend to the Brahmaloka and when the universe dissolves they merge into the body of Lord Brahma by their meditation and they take a kind of free ride with him back to Maha Visnu. So on Brahma's coattails they go to Maha Visnu. So Brahma's consciousness is unbroken even in the time in devastation. Although it is said he dies, it just means he leaves the body that is within the material world. But he is the greatest of the yogis in this universe so he passes through the layers of the universe and goes back to Maha Visnu. And if he remains attached to his position of Brahma he can come back again later on. So it's not really correct to say they take birth on the Bramhaloka, we could say they appear there. They are offered forms on

the Bramhaloka at the second instance when they are attached enough to the creation to choose not to enter Vaikuntha upon the emanation from Sankarsana. So that's the second position. And if they, you see, the residents of Bramhaloka they have no sense gratification. Brahmaloka, or Satyaloka, means... it also includes Jnanaloka, the Tapoloka, these are the planets of great yogis and mystics. So in these highest regions, above the Devaloka, the planets of the demigods, there is no sense gratification. There is some mental speculation, that's going on, but there is no sense gratification. Their qualification for entering Satyaloka, or Jnanaloka, or Tapoloka is, if one has lived on earth, to enter there one has to practice strict brahmacarya. Strict brahmacaries they can enter because there is no inclination to sense gratification. One who goes through life with mind completely controlled so that there is no even slightest interest in sensual enjoyment, then Srila Prabhupada says, just by that he can go to Bramhaloka. He is brahmacary so he can go to Bramhaloka. So there is no sense gratification. So if one is interested in sense gratification then, the third instance, he comes here and gets a human body. Then he can follow the Vedic principles, engage in regulated sense gratification as directed by the Vedic scriptures and the varnasrama-dharma and if he follows these rules and regulations properly then by that he can be liberated. But if he deviates from those rules and regulations, falls down, then he gets caught in samsara.

(Devotee...)

Well, that statement is there that the living entity when he first comes into material existence he is offered the post of Lord Brahma, offered the post of this service, but in another reference it is stated that those living entities who at the second instance they become worshipers of the Hiranyagarbha-form, that means the Garbhodakasayi Visnu form of Visnu within the universe. In other words they didn't become devotees of Lord Sankarsana but of His expansion Garbhodakasayi Visnu within the universe. There they thought: 'Oh, now I better start worshiping the Lord. Now, when I'm within this universe, now I'll worship Him'. So it is said that there they are posted on the Satyaloka or Brahmaloka. It doesn't say they become Brahma. It is said they live on Bramhaloka. So there are these two statements. Anyway, as it is said, like father like son, if one is Bramha or son of Bramha - it's more or less the same position. (Question:...brahmacarinies...is it possible for them to go...) Yeah, there are women on Brahmaloka too. There are stories in the Puranas of the... Because Lord Brahma he worships the Maha-purusa, he worships again Garbhodakasayi Visnu, who has also expanded as the universal form, so he worships this Maha-purusa universal form. This form of the Lord is addressed in the Purusa-sukta Vedic prayers. So in worshiping this Deity Lord Bramha has...he offers the services of deva-dasis, beautiful dancing girls on the Brahmaloka... (break)

(Devotee)

Well, Bramha... you see, there are unlimited universes, therefore there are unlimited Brahmas. And Brahma may be a devotee, he may be a karmi, he may be a jnani. Karmi in the sense of... that is his interest, in the karma-khanda section of the Vedas, or his interest may be in the jnana-khanda section. His own interest. Or he may be a devotee. It is not that necessarily every Brahma in every universe is a pure bhakta. Of course to become Brahma you must be some kind of bhakta but it might be jnana-bhakta-misra, mixed with interest in jnana or karma-bhakta-misra. In the Bhagavatam it says if one follows varnasrama-dharma perfectly for 100 births he can become Brahma. So this would mean a karma-bhakta-misra. He got Brahma by that process, to the position of Bramha. But Brahma who spoke the Brahma-samhita, our Brahma in this universe, he is a devotee, he came as Haridas Thakura. So he worships Garbhodakasayi Visnu but he knows that Krsna is sarva-karana-karanam, He is the Adi-purusa, the original purusa. So he is worshiping Garbhodakasayi Visnu, whom he can see because Garbhodakasayi Visnu is his source. The lotus flower comes from Garbhodakasayi Visnu's navel. So he has the direct darsan of Garbhodakasayi Visnu, but he is worshiping Garbhodakasayi Visnu in that mood of a Krsna-bhakta. But other Brahmas may worship more in the mood of jnanis or karmis. They are not so much interested in Krsna consciousness. Although nonetheless the whole Vedic knowledge comes through them. Prabhupada says that's the qualification - whatever Brahma may be he is the acarya, Prabhupada said. The knowledge that comes from his four mouths is perfect. So even though he may not be personally so inclined...have so much taste for the bhakti sastras, they still come through him. Yes?

(Devotee: Maharaja, could you say something about the Vedic conception of the atom...)

Yeah, well, the most important thing to understand is that atom finally means in Vedic terms, that word *anu* refers to the smallest indivisible particle, that which can't be divided any further. So the western material scientists have not found that. So they don't know it really what an atom is as it is explained in *Srimad Bhagavatam* and other Vedic literature. Atom means you can't divide it any further. So that's all what I will say about that.

Fourth lecture: "The philosophy of Buddhism" March 23rd

So today is March 23, class of the seminar '*Srimad Bhagavatam - the natural commentary on Vedanta-sutra*'. In today's class we shall be looking at the philosophy of Buddhism. This examination of Buddhism and its refutation from *Srimad Bhagavatam* will also carry over until the next class which is not tomorrow because tomorrow is Ekadasi, but the day after tomorrow, March 25, we shall continue our examination of this topic.

So by way of introduction, as you know Lord Buddha is an incarnation of Krsna who came for particular purpose to stop animal slaughter which was being performed in the name of Vedic injunctions. In the beginning of Kali yuga the Vedic priests, they lost their potency to promote sacrificed animals...to promote their souls to a higher station. There are mantras in the Vedas, which are to be chanted by the priests, which rejuvenate the animals that are sacrificed so that the animals get a new body. Even there are mantras, which can promote the souls of the sacrificed animals to heaven. So with the beginning of Kali yuga these brahmanas had lost that potency so their chanting of these mantras was ineffective. So consequently these Vedic ritualistic sacrifices were nothing more than animal slaughter. So this is very sinful and it pained Lord Krsna to see that in the name of the Vedic scriptures, which He gave in order to deliver living entities from sinful life, so in the name of Vedic literature sinful life was being propagated. So therefore, taking great compassion upon the innocent animals He descended about 2500 years ago as the Buddhadeva and Lord Buddha's purpose was to stop these animal sacrifices by rejecting the Vedic scriptures and establishing His own dharma, a dharma of ahimsa, non-violence. So actually Lord Buddha's teachings were very basic. Lord Buddha, as the Buddhists themselves admit, was not fond of speculative philosophy. He came to teach a path by which mankind can become free from sin and suffering. So when Buddha was asked, for instance one philosopher came to Buddha and asked him: "I've heard your lectures and sometimes you seem to indicate that there is a soul, sometimes you seem to indicate that there is not a soul, sometimes you seem to indicate that the universe is real, sometimes you seem to indicate that it is not real. I hear so many contradictions in your different lectures about what is the ultimate nature of things. So can you please tell me is there a soul, is there not a soul". So Buddha was actually silent. He didn't answer. Because he didn't want to become involved in speculation. And his answer to such questions, when he did give it, was simply... another example, actually someone else asked similar question and Lord Buddha gave this example of the arrow. When one is hit by an arrow and the arrow is stuck in your body and you are bleeding, then do you ask: "Oh, where did this arrow come from? How fast was it travelling when it hit my body? Who fired this arrow?" No, you have the arrow removed and you get your body healed. So Lord Buddha said: "This is my mission". So therefore the very essential questions, especially what is the most essential question of the philosophy, as we have been hearing over the last days, that is what is the cause, this essential question and other very important questions are neglected in Lord Buddha's teachings. He did not bother to touch on them. Actually he turned such questions as *avyakrta*. *Avyakrta* means these are not to be discussed. Inexpressible. So therefore there are many points of philosophy which are called in Buddhist thinking *avyakrta-vastuni*, we just don't touch on these things. But then when the Buddhist philosophers were challenged, because Buddhism begun to spread through India, especially when it (was ?) the patronage of Maharaja Asoka, so the Buddhist philosophy was challenged by other philosophers who were following the Vedic tradition, for instance the sankhya philosophers and so on, karma-mimamsa, so the Buddhists therefore had to come up with some answers. So therefore different schools of Buddhism arose. So first of all let us talk about what essentially is Buddhist philosophy and then we will look at the Buddhist schools.

So essentially Buddhist philosophy consists of four principles, the so called 'fourfold noble truths'. And these are: first of all, dukkha. I think most, if not all, of you know this word - dukkha means suffering. So the first principle of Buddhism is that there is suffering, suffering exists. Or existence means suffering. Or that which we call reality it is simply suffering. And hetu is the second principle. Hetu means there is a cause of this suffering. And what is the cause of suffering? Well, in Buddhism it is simply that you exist. This world exists as a place of suffering and because you exist in it therefore you suffer. So then if there is a cause to suffering, which is existence, then that means that there must be a way of negating suffering and that is nirodha. Nirodha means annihilation, extinction. This is the way you solve the problems of life - you extinguish yourself, cease to exist. And how do I extinguish the self? I just put a gun against the head and pull the trigger? No, no, no. Therefore the fourth principle is marga. There is a path given by Buddha by which you can attain nirvana. And this is path known as 'the eightfold noble paths'; it consists of eight steps. But these have been condensed by Buddhist philosophers into two - ahimsa and sunyata. Ahimsa means of course non-violence. So why are we suffering in this world? Because this world is a world of violence. Everyone is doing harm to others or as Bhagavatam also says jivo jivasya jivanam - to live in this world means to live at the expense of other jivas. In order for me to live, to survive, I must eat the bodies of other living entities. Whether vegetable or animal but I must live at their expense. In fact every step I take in this world is causing harm to other living beings. So this is the reason for suffering, so therefore I should practice ahimsa, non-violence. And ultimate ahimsa means sunyata. Sunyata means to cease to exist. Sunya means void. So I become perfect in ahimsa when I simply cease all activity, cease to be. So out of this eightfold noble path these are the essences - ahimsa and sunyata.

So now, the Buddhist schools came about as I said in struggling with the question what is the cause. Dukkha - everything is suffering but why, what is the cause of that? Well, the first school of Buddhists who are known as ksotrāntika, they are known in terms of western philosophy as direct realists. This means they just accept everything as it is. Everything is full of suffering because that's the way it is. But that's not a very satisfactory answer as to the cause. So there was a later group of philosophers known as representationalists. That simply means that there is something out there but the mind is representing it within. That representation is wrong therefore we have to correct that. So this second school admitted that there is matter outside and there is mind within and the problem is this mind. This mind has to be adjusted correctly to deal with the outside world. But that also did not satisfy everyone so then a later school came out, called the vijñāna-vāda school or yogācārya, subjective idealists. They say everything is mind only. There is a term in western philosophy 'solipsism'. This means you think 'I am the only one who exists. Everything is just my own mind'. But then the question is if everything is just a product of my own mind then why do I will myself to suffer? You see, still can't get around this question why is there suffering? So if everything is just my own mind, then why don't I say: "All right, I think everything is nice" and then everything should be nice, it doesn't work that way. So what we are seeing here is a progression of frustration, as it is seen also in western philosophy. And this is why I bother to put these Buddhist schools up here on the board with their western philosophical equivalents. Because the appearance of these Buddhist schools actually marks the same progress of thinking... or maybe we should say degradation of thinking rather than progress... progress of thinking in atheistic western philosophy. First of all western philosophers started of thinking everything is the way it is and then they realized but that doesn't explain suffering. So then they came up to the duality of mind and matter. But that also wasn't satisfactory. So everything is mind only, become completely subjective. And then finally what is the last stage - voidism. A total frustration. So we don't have time to go into the correlation between these Buddhist schools and western philosophical schools but there is very, very marked similarity. If you read that book of Srila Prabhupada "Dialectic Spiritualism", Srila Prabhupada's answers to western philosophy, you trace out the history of western philosophy from that book and you'll see the same pattern. So as I've indicated previously, what we are actually seeing here is not really philosophy, it's just psychology. The psychology of frustration. So therefore Buddhist so called philosophy is really just the mind that works, it's just the mental plane. It's not really philosophy at all. It's just the mind going through its phases of first of all trying to accept the world as real and interact with it, becoming frustrated. Then there is some problem between mind and the world. And then the mind tries to completely take over everything by saying: "Everything is only mind". And then finally becoming totally frustrated - everything is zero, nothing.

So tomorrow we'll be looking more at these ideas that everything is mind and everything is nothing. These ideas are very prominent in the west today. So I want to spend tomorrow to examine these carefully and refute them from Srīmad Bhagavatam. But today we are going to be looking at some

basic principles of the Buddhist philosophy which... these principles are more or less accepted by all Buddhist schools.

So first of all we will look at the question of dukkha, suffering. Why is there suffering? The Buddhists don't really have an explanation for that. Buddha just said there is suffering, dukkha. That's the way things are, but Srimad Bhagavatam explains why there is suffering. First of all Srimad Bhagavatam informs us that suffering is not the ultimate reality. This is the unfortunate conclusion of Buddhism. That the ultimate state of things is suffering and the only thing you can do about that is negate yourself, you have to just cease to... Existence means suffering so if you want to get out of suffering then you have to cease to exist, which is actually not very pleasant alternative. It's rather hard to comprehend that. That this will be my final state - non-existence. And this non-existence, you must understand, in Buddhism it is absolute. It is not that you are existing but without perception of pain, without perception of name, form, quality. No. You don't exist anyway. You just are not there anymore. That's the Buddhist conclusion. So this is not very attractive. Except for, as I said, people who are totally frustrated, totally finished. Then this philosophy would appeal to them. But Srimad Bhagavatam says the natural state of affairs is ananda, full of bliss. So that is in the state of ultimate reality. So there is a very nice verse - SB 10.87.19:

*sva-kṛta-vicitra-yonisu visann iva hetutaya
taratamatas cakassy anala-vat sva-kṛtanukṛtiḥ
atha vitathasv amusv avitatham tava dhama samam
viraja-dhiyo'nuyanty abhivipānayaḥ eka-rasam*

Eka-rasam means unchanging bliss.

So the translation is:

"Apparently entering among the variegated species of living beings You have created, You inspire them to act, manifesting Yourself according to their higher or lower positions, just as fire manifests differently according to the shape of what it burns. Therefore those of spotless intelligence, who are all together free from material attachments, realize Your undifferentiated, unchanging self to be the permanent reality among all these impermanent life forms".

So this is a very nice continuation of what was established in yesterday's class. You remember how Lord Kṛṣṇa is the... otam-protam, He is the thread, the weave behind the design of existence. He is the unchanging basis of everything, He is the sat, the eternal truth behind the sat, in the other sense of the word sat which means this cosmic manifestation. He is the eternal form behind the temporary forms of this world. These temporary forms come and go, come and go, come and go. And they come and go and return again because they are based on an eternal reality, an eternal form. Now in this verse we hear that that eternal reality is eternally blissful, eka-rasam. So this material world, yes, is a place of dukkha. Why? Well, that is very easy to understand - because here the forms are temporary. And Kṛṣṇa's form is eternal - sat-cit-ananda-vigraha - eternal full of knowledge, full of bliss. So Kṛṣṇa is the form behind all forms, the existence behind this material existence. And He is full of bliss.

So from the Purport: " Even in the midst of material creation and destruction, the Lord of all creatures remains eternally unchanged, as expressed here by the word eka-rasam. In other words, the Lord eternally maintains His persona form of immeasurable, unalloyed spiritual pleasure".

So Kṛṣṇa says: "I am the life of all that lives". The name Visnu means He that exists everywhere, the all-pervading Absolute Truth and He is eka-rasam - He is full of bliss. So He is the ultimate Truth, He is the life of all that lives, He is eternally blissful. That means the ultimate reality is this eka-rasa - unchanging bliss. That is the truth, that is the fact. So this already refutes Buddhism. But nonetheless we have joined this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement ourselves to get free of dukkha, to get free of suffering, so we are left to explain: "All right, maybe the ultimate reality we can accept that as being bliss, but we have been suffering until now. Now we have taken up Kṛṣṇa consciousness to search out that unchanging bliss". So what is the cause of this perception of suffering? We still have to deal with this question. So that is explained in Srimad Bhagavatam. Here is a verse from Canto 11. 2. 37 - an oft-quoted verse by Srila Prabhupada which explains the cause of suffering:

*bhayaṁ dvitīyābhīnivesataḥ syad
isad apetasya viparyayo smṛtiḥ*

*tan-mayayato budha abhajet tam
bhaktyaikayesam guru-devatatma*

1) Translation from the lecture

"When the living entity is attracted by the material energy which is separate from Krsna he is overpowered by fear. Because he is separated from the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the material energy his conception of life is reversed".

This is important - viparyayo-smrtih. His conception of life is reversed. So the reality is eka-rasam... (break)...

2) translation given in Srimad Bhagavatam, not found in the lecture:

"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 maya. (continues)".

...completely mental. They think everything is in the mind, the liberation is in the mind. If I just feel good in the mind everything is OK. So they like to contemplate Buddhist philosophy that everything is actually nothing. This Zen Buddhism is very popular for this reason. Everything is actually nothing but somehow I am here anyway. So they think, by thinking about that, that they are actually free, they are liberated. But that's not even according to the real Buddhist philosophy itself. (break)

Fifth lecture:

"How the Srimad Bhagavatam explains perception and illusion"

March 25

...study of Srimad Bhagavatam as the natural commentary of Vedanta sutra. So today's session - March 25 is dedicated at examining how the Srimad Bhagavatam explains perception and illusion. These are very important considerations in philosophy. So as we mentioned in the last refutation of the Buddhist philosophy how one school, the third school called yogacarya, has a view which is very common. That view is called subjective idealism. Another term for the same thing is solipsism. This word 'solipsism', the root is a Latin word 'soles', from this word we get the English word 'sole', meaning to be alone. When you are the sole person in a room means you are the only person in the room. So there is a philosophy called solipsism or otherwise subjective idealism, which means that... the idea is that I am the only conscious being in existence and everyone else, all other beings are product of my imagination or my perception. So that's the philosophy of this yogacarya form of Buddhism, that is also the philosophy of... ultimately the philosophy of the mayavadis who say aham brahmasmi - 'I am Brahman'. But what is this Brahman? Ekam brahma dvitiam nasti - there is only one Brahman, only one being, one conscious being. Ekam brahma dvitiam nasti - there is no one else. So the mayavadi philosophers, in other words, they are understanding themselves to be Brahman: "I alone am Brahman, everything else and everyone else that I perceive is my maya, my illusion". And so the goal of mayavadi philosophy is to realize the pure self without illusion and that self is one, that's me. You are me. I am you... /break/

...He is loosing his breath and his vision is dimming and he feels his subtle body leaving the gross body for good. Then what does all this mean - it was like a dream, exactly like a dream - meaningless, having no real substance. So that is passionate life - it is like a big dream. And ignorance means susupti - total unawareness. Like the ignorant creatures - the trees the animals. They are not even aware of these dreamlike values of the materialistic karmis, so they are in ignorance. And sometimes also the materialistic karmis, the persons in the mode of passion, they become so frustrated that they take total shelter of the mode of ignorance and they give up their pursuit of wealth and fame and sense gratification and they just become alcoholics, for instance, that is very common. They just take to the bottle, drinking and remaining in complete drunken stupor. That is tamo-guna. So what is wakefulness then? Wakefulness means man in the mode of goodness, not necessarily a devotee but a man in the mode of goodness, he knows he is not the body and he knows that this passionate life is a dream, he doesn't identify with it, he is aloof from it. But a man in material mode of goodness, although he is awake, he is like a man who is still in bed, still in the bed of material nature. Sometimes

at night, you know, I find here in Mayapura that I'm always waking up at 12.30. So I've started now just getting up at 12.30 and chanting some rounds. Then I go back to bed at about 02.00. Because I just found... I wake up and look at the watch and it's 12.30. So anyway, this happens I think to most people. You sleep, it's time to take rest, you are sleeping and suddenly wake up and look at the clock and it's 12.30 or something like that, some strange hour, not time to get up. So you are wake but you are laying in bed. So what will happen? You will go back to sleep. The only way to make sure that you don't go back to sleep is to get up. Get up, take bath and become engaged in physical activities. So this getting up, that has been explained already, we heard in the Purport, this getting up, out of even the material mode of goodness means to engage in spiritual activities. To chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare and to engage all the senses in the service of Krsna. And this is what it means when we hear that a devotee is above the influence of the modes of material nature. Yes, he is because he is engaged in spiritual activities. Whereas the materialistic person, he may be in the mode of goodness so that he knows "I'm not the body" and he knows that these passionate affairs that one sees in New York, in Los Angeles, in Paris, in London, the big passionate centers of the world, he knows this is all nonsense. But he has no alternative. Just as there are so many thoughtful... well, maybe not so many but there are some thoughtful persons, poets and speculators who write thoughtful philosophical books and they lament how sad and cruel the world is, how people are running here and there and they have no time to contemplate about deeper things. Life is so superficial. So they lament like that in their poetry and writings. But they themselves are also not free from materialistic activities. They also get caught up, you see... Mister Poet... he sees a beautiful woman who likes his poetry and immediately then he is in a dream too. He thinks: "Oh, this is a nice woman, she loves me, she likes my poetry, so I should give her some money, I should take care of her...", he has to work so then he also adopts the same dream values.

So the real freedom from this means to wake up, get up, jiv jago, jiv jago gauracandra bole, Lord Caitanya is calling throughout the whole world: "You sleeping living entities, you have been sleeping too long in the lap of the witch Maya. Now wake up and chant Hare Krsna and engage in positive spiritual activities. So this... Anyway, we are coming back to the point what is illusion. So there are these three modes of material nature working in this world and our consciousness is being projected through them. So if we take this interaction of our consciousness with the three modes of nature to be real then we are in illusion. So how can we detach our consciousness from the three modes of material nature? By going back to the source. Our consciousness is like a light and the light is coming from the lamp of the Supersoul, the shelter of the jiva. So light belongs to the lamp, soul belongs to Supersoul. So our shelter should be in Krsna and while we are in this world then because these turning three modes of nature, that is Krsna's energy, we can use Krsna's energy in His service. And we will not be influenced by the three modes due to always remembering Krsna.

So now, we want to turn to the last subject today, which also comes under the heading of illusion. We want to look at the Srimad Bhagavatam's refutation of the doctrine of sunyavada, voidism, which as you can see here it's a Buddhist doctrine but this idea of voidism is not limited to Buddhism only, certainly not, there are voidists everywhere. As we have explained day before yesterday this voidist philosophy is simply a product of frustration, frustrated psychology, so it is seen in the West, in the West they have given the term nihilism, that there is no value in anything. Everything is just useless, zero. So in the Buddhist sunyavada logic they say that the cause is destroyed by effect. The cause being the source, effect being the product of the source. So as soon as an effect emanates from a cause, the cause is destroyed, the cause ceases to exist. So as an example looking at the cause of this body, this human body we have, the sperm from the father unites with the egg from the mother. So these two things cease to exist and there is the embryo. And the embryo develops until a baby is born. When the baby is born - the effect, then the cause, the embryo, ceases to exist. When the baby grows and becomes a youth then the baby has ceased to exist, when youth grows further becomes an adult then the youth ceases to exist. When the adult becomes an old person then the adult has ceased to exist. This is how the Buddhists look at the causation. So therefore their conclusion is that there is no chain of cause and effect, you cannot really speak of cause. Where is that cause? You see, because as soon as there is effect the cause is gone. So in other words, there is no point in looking for any cause. We have said in our first day of this seminar that philosophy means to seek out the cause but the sunyavadis said "What is the use of that - the cause is gone. If you want to search out the cause of this world - it's gone! You won't find it just as if you want to search out the cause of your body - it's gone. You won't find it". This is their idea. So therefore the chain of cause and effect it is just illusion. Therefore there is no point in thinking about it, there is no use of understanding the

world in terms of cause and effect. So what should we understand - just void, just nothingness. So from this sunyavadi philosophy has come out this very popular form of Buddhism called Zen Buddhism. The goal of Zen they say themselves is no mind, you see, no more mind, no thinking anymore, putting no value on anything, not understanding any cause and effect, any logical chain of events in the world. Everything is just the way it is. Don't impose any meaning on it, it just IS. And what is that? It is void, it is nothing. The Zen-Buddhists they just go through the life looking at everything and thinking 'It is nothing, it is zero, it has no meaning'. And that they consider to be enlightenment. But Bhagavatam refutes voidism in this way - a nice verse from 7.15.58:

*abadhito'pi hy abhaso
yatha vastutaya smrtah
durgatatvad aindriyakam
tadvad artha-vikalpitam*

Translation: *"Although one may consider the reflection of the sun from a mirror to be false, it has its factual existence. Accordingly, to prove by speculative knowledge that there is no reality would be extremely difficult."*

So Srila Prabhupada's Purport states: Speculative knowledge cannot give us reality as it is, but will continue to be nefariously imperfect. So called scientists try to prove that there is no God and that everything is happening because of the laws of nature, but this is imperfect knowledge because nothing can work unless directed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is explained in Bhagavad-gita (9.10) by the Lord Himself:

*mayadhyaksena prakrtih
suyate sacaracaram
hetunanena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

"This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kunti, and it is producing all moving and unmoving beings. By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again."

So once Srila Prabhupada was walking with some devotees in Stockholm and the sun... it was early in the morning... so the sun arose from behind Srila Prabhupada and the devotees and the sun was reflected in the windows of some buildings before them. So the blinding sun then was shining in the eyes of Srila Prabhupada and the devotees and Srila Prabhupada said: "This is maya. This is the example of maya. That actually the sun is here, but due to illusion we think the sun light is coming from there". So this verse we just heard states that 'although one may consider the reflection of the sun from a mirror to be false, it has its factual existence'. Why is that? Because the sun is there, behind us, therefore there is light there in front of us. Now if you take a stone, this is the Buddhists' process... I'll now explain the Buddhist meditation, what it really means. It means to take a stone and to smash the glass: "Ha, see, now it is gone. There is no light, that was all illusion, it is zero, there is nothing." No, the sun is still there. The actual source of that light is still there behind you. You may not be seeing it because you are ignorant of it, but you have not destroyed it by smashing the glass. So the sunyavada philosophy tries to negate this world by saying 'It is all an illusion' but as we already heard previously because this world emanates from the real therefore it is also real but temporary. So we can say that the world is temporary and therefore we should not be attached to it. But we cannot say that the world in itself is unreal. So again this Buddhist philosophy, or all materialistic philosophies, it is a result of attachment, this is the philosophy of attachment, the philosophy of egoism, the philosophy of thinking myself to be the center of everything and yet becoming frustrated, you see. They want to be the center, they want to be God, they want to be the supremely conscious being, but they are frustrated so therefore they've concocted this ideology of nothingness, of sunyavada.

So I'm going to stop here. Tomorrow, our last session, we shall be speaking on liberation, the path of liberation as explained in Srimad Bhagavatam. And I'm sure you will find this very interesting because this Vedantic explanation of liberation once you understand it, it will make many, many things clear to you in the Vedic scriptures - Bhagavad-gita, Srimad Bhagavatam and other Vedic scriptures. So we shall be looking at some certain verses from Srimad Bhagavatam that will help us understand this path, the path of spiritual progress which takes the soul beyond the heavenly planets, beyond the

Bramhaloka, beyond the bramhajyoti, beyond the sense of oneness and into the personal association of Krsna.

Are there any questions? Yes.

(Devotee: What happens in the stage of deep sleep?)

Yes, in the stage of deep sleep the soul in the heart merges into the tamasic energy of the Paramatma, Supersoul. Just like when we merge, as we explained the other day, at the time of devastation of the whole universe the living entities with the dissolved material elements merge into the body of Maha Visnu and they repose there within the pradhana, the potential material energy, which is within Lord Maha Visnu's body. So similarly when we go to sleep at night, for about half an hour every night we experience a very... say microcosmic devastation in which our consciousness merges into Paramatma, into His tamasic feature. And we experience this as a dreamless sleep. Yes?

(Devotee: Is this the goal of the Buddhists?)

Yes, that's what they attain, the pradhana. They merge into the unmanifest material elements.

(Devotee: Our consciousness is it polluted or just seems...)

Yes, so, what is polluted is our understanding. Avrtam jnanam etena / jnaninas nitya vairinam. The soul is the knower; he is full of knowledge. But his knowledge, his understanding has become covered. So that example of air and dust. The air never mix, or the dust never mixes with the air, the sky never becomes cloudy, but due to wrong perception, wrong understanding we see like that, we think like that. The fact remains as it is always. So similarly with consciousness, the fact remains that our consciousness is pure, but due to the influence, due to association with maya then we are perceiving things wrongly, that's all. It's like... it's like this when you go to... don't do this but people go to cinema house, they go inside and sit down in the seat. Then the lights go down and the film is projected on the screen and all that is happening is that some light and color are being shot onto the screen and from some speaker some sound is coming. And there is a bunch of people sitting in the dark room looking at that. That's all, that's the reality. And that IS, that IS the reality. But due to the understanding becoming covered, avrtam, one looks at this film and thinks it's real. He allows his consciousness to become absorbed in it and he is identifying... This is like in every film there is hero and heroine. The male leading figure and the female leading figure. So in the audience the men identify with the man and the ladies identify with the heroine. And so they actually start to experience, when there is some adventure in the film they get excited, and when there is some romance then their hearts get very soft, and when there is danger they become fearful. So these emotions are created in the audience, they are experiencing them, but all that is really going on is nothing but light and sound and some colors moving and some sound coming from the speakers. And if in the middle of the film the lights suddenly come on, then the whole dream is broken. And you will see when that happens, the audience becomes very disturbed: "Hey, turn out the lights!". They want this illusion: "We want to be in maya". So material world is like that. Yes?

(Devotee: The Vaisnavas, do they accept the material happiness as real?)

No, the material happiness and the material distress are dualities of the mind - sukhaha dukkaha dah /agamapayino 'nityas / tams titiksasva bhārata. Krsna says that these are like passing of summer and winter seasons. So in the wintertime, when it's very cold, I think about the summer. I think: "Oh, look at all this horrible snow. I can't wait for the summer time to come, all the snow will be gone, everything will be green and it will be so nice". And when the summer time comes I think: "Oh, it is hot. I'm burning up, I wish I could go skiing down the snowy slog. So we yearn for winter. So these are just dualities. And Prabhupada gave the example of carrying a load, you know, you carry a load on this shoulder for some time and that shoulder becomes very painful. And then you switch the load on this shoulder. That shoulder feels relieve - 'Oh, very nice!' - but gradually this shoulder becomes painful.

(Devotee: But this is temporary...)

No, it's not real, it's not real because the spirit soul has nothing to do with this. (Devotee: But the soul...) Yeah, but that's the dream being referred to. That's life in the mode of passion. Man in the mode of goodness he is detached from all that. That's what Krsna is saying: 'tams titiksasva bhārata'. You just have to tolerate these things. You're maybe perceiving heat, cold, happiness, distress, all that, but you should be apart from that. You should not let it bewilder you, you should not let it carry you away. So one who is actually in that state is sthita-dhir muni, he sees happiness and distress as the same, Krsna says. It is just some tingling of the nerve endings, just some (.....?), sensory interaction with material nature, he puts no value on it. Just as Krsna says gold, pebbles and stones he sees as the same - just lumps of matter.

(Devotee:.... the material nature is real?)

Yes, but remember my example of the cinema house. There is a projector, there is a screen, there is something being projected on the screen, there are speakers giving sound, there are people sitting in dark room - that's what is real. But they are looking at the film, becoming absorbed in the movie and thinking: "I am Arnold Schweizeneger" or "I am Madonna", whoever is up there. That's maya, that's a dream, that's not real. And when Arnold gets hit in the face we go 'Ooh'... you see, that identification.

(Devotee: ...real material world?)

You see, the material world works to bewilder us, it's the illusory energy. So as soon as we begin to identify then it is like this film, you know, there is something happening out there which is Krsna's energy working, but when we start to identify with it, then that what we perceive that's not real anymore. That's how maya works on our consciousness: tejo-vari- mrdam yatha vimimayo yatra tri-sargo mrsa, in the first verse of Srimad Bhagavatam there is this example of fire on water and water on land. So fire and water and land are real but maya bewilders us... This example is given just as if you see fire on water as when the sun is going down, the sun is going down on the ocean, on the ocean side over the horizon. So it makes it look like there is fire in the sea. So there is the sun which is fiery and there is the ocean which is watery, but there is no fire on the water. And similarly if we see a mirage of water on land. There is water and there is land but there is no water on land out there or land on water in converse. So as soon as we begin to identify, that means as soon as we want to control and exploit matter then she works this illusion, this maya, on us and we become bewildered. But, yes, there is a real material nature out there, that is Krsna's energy. One in the mode of goodness, at least he begins to see that reality. Because he is not caught up in that passionate illusion of I'm the controller, I'm the enjoyer. And one who is Krsna's devotee he sees the reality in full because he sees that this is Krsna's energy and it is meant to be used in Krsna's service. One in the mode of goodness sees that the illusion of this material world that is pursued after by materialists, is not real, but he doesn't understand how to engage the material nature in Krsna's service. So therefore he is always subject... like I said, like a man still in bed, who is awake, but if he stays in bed, he is going to fall back to sleep at any time. So it is the devotee alone who knows that this is Krsna's energy and I must use it in Krsna's service. Krsna sambandha vijnana - in that prayer to Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati. It is a science, a great science, Krsna sambandha... Vijnana means science, to see how everything is connected to Krsna. This is the science of devotional service. This is what we have to learn from our spiritual master. There are foodstuffs. So how do we connect them with Krsna, in Krsna's service? You prepare these foodstuffs in certain way according to authorized Vedic recipes and you offer the foodstuffs in this way, you chant these mantras, you offer them to the Deity, this particular Deity, not Kali, Durga, Kala-bhairava, but Radha and Krsna, Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai, Lord Jagannatha, Baladeva, Subhadra devi. And in this way - krsna sambandha vijnana - then this substance, this food will become connected to Krsna as prasadam. And then you can take and then that is not maya, that is spiritual life. Yes, mataji?

(Devotee...) Yes, they may say that (laughs) but by saying that, then they cut themselves off from happiness, from spiritual happiness. Because Krsna is the ananda-maya-purusa. He is the purusa, purusa means soul, but also means person, ananda-maya, who is full of bliss and He comes, He descends into this world to reveal His blissful pastimes, to reveal His blissful Holy name, form, qualities, activities so that the living entities who are simply pursuing this maya-sukha, this illusory happiness will know what is real happiness and can take it up through devotional service. So by the mayavadis saying 'Oh, that...' Because they have this cow philosophy actually. Prabhupada once said it's cow philosophy, giving the example of a cow, that was caught in a barn that was on fire. So this

cow saw the blazing orange and yellow sheets of flame and became very frightened. And at the last moment the cow was saved. But whenever the cow in the future would see sheets of yellow and orange, it would become frightened and run away making a loud sound 'Moo'. So when the farmer's wife would hang out the yellow and orange curtains or bed sheets in the wash, on the line and if the cow is eating grass there, then the cow would see these sheets - yellow and..... /break/

...They try to renounce that renunciation is called suska-vairagya, it is dry, dry renunciation. Prabhupada said the mayavadis when they study Vedanta, they also study Vedanta according to Sankaracarya, so they take this as a duty, they have to turn the pages of Vedanta-sutra, this is their activity - so many hours a day they have to turn the pages of Vedanta-sutra, reading and trying to understand how everything is illusion, everything is really Brahman. That's their so-called spiritual life - very dry. If a scorpion comes and stings them on the hand they have to keep turning the pages. Suska-vairagya. Yes?

(Devotee: You mentioned that ... Brahman knows the pradhana and in the second day you said Sankhya follower only gets pradhana. So what is (with) the mayavadis, they also go in that state?)

Well, the mayavadis... There are two kinds of impersonalists who seek out the Atman. There are mayavadis and the brahmavadis. So the mayavadis are offenders - mayavadi krsna hi aparadhi, Lord Caitanya has said. They offend Krsna because they have this dogma, this doctrine that the Personality of Godhead is a product of illusion, product of maya. So they are offensive. So because of that they may attain Brahman, but it is a kind of punishment. They are flung into the rays of brahmajyoti. Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, for instance, if the mayavadi chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra... because the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is Krsna Himself, nondifferent, therefore... but he is chanting without any real love of Krsna, he is chanting in this offensive idea that God has no form, therefore the result of his chanting is that he is thrown into the impersonal brahmajyoti. And Srila Prabhodananda Saraswati has said kaivalyam narakayate, that this state of being one with the impersonal Brahman is like going to hell for the living entity because there is no engagement there. So he becomes dissatisfied in that state and later on he will be attracted to maya again because he has to do something, he has desires which cannot be fulfilled there. So he will fall back down into the material world. The brahmavadis, on the other hand, they do not have this doctrine that Krsna's name, form, qualities are maya. It is just that they have ascended by way of a slow process, which we will actually describe tomorrow in our discussion of the path of liberation, it's called the brahma-pantha - the path to Brahman. That is the path followed by yogis and so they attain the brahmajyoti and by association of devotees they may progress further. Like Bhagavatam says in the atmarama verse: atmaramas ca munayo / nirgrantha apy urukrame... that verse says that one may be atmarama, situated in the self, in the atman. Atmarama - enjoying the liberated state of the self, the neutral state or the brahman state. But if he hears about Krsna he will be attracted and thus his devotional life will begin. The mayavadis they can't hear about Krsna because they have that dogma, as soon as they hear about Krsna they reject, 'this is more maya' and they avoid it. So therefore mayavadi means, as Srila Prabhupada said, one who remains in maya, one who sticks to maya, Prabhupada said. They actually never get free of maya, they condemn themselves to fall down again. Yes?

(Devotee: In Sri Caitanya caritamrta it is mentioned the explanations between Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Ramananda Raya that the jnana-yogi they go no further than the Viraja river and so stay in the material world. That seems that there is no something like merging in brahmajyoti. The pradhana is similar to Brahman so everything that is said to merge in brahmajyoti it means it merges in pradhana. Is that right?)

Well, you see, the brahmajyoti is a marginal position so one cannot remain fixed. One has to go one way or the other way. So one can make spiritual progress after having attained the brahman conception: brahma-bhuta prasannatma / na socati na kanksati. That verse confirms that from the brahma-bhuta platform - mad-bhaktim labhate param - there pure devotional service begins when one has transcended the body. Or if one doesn't do that, if one doesn't accept Krsna consciousness, then from that marginal position one will gradually, imperceptibly become covered over by the material nature again. So you see, that jyoti is shining from Maha Visnu, it's becoming immediately conditioned or let's say it is enshrined, that is the word used in Brahma-samhita. That jyoti which consists of the jivas, they are immediately enshrined by the Sambhu-tattva which is Lord Siva. He becomes the

container of all these jivas. As soon as they leave Maha Visnu he encapsulates them and then he directs them into the material energy or impregnates them into the material energy, the pradhana, which is... He is the husband of Durga. So that position in Brahman is, as I said, it's just a borderline - you either take shelter of Visnu or you become encapsulated in Sambhu-tattva and end up again in the material nature. That's not a fixed position. And Srila Prabhupada said, they are always coming and going, that's what is the meaning of brahmajyoti - coming and going. Jivas are coming and going. Either going back to Godhead or coming here. Yes?

(Devotee: My question is in connection with the difference between matter and spirit. Once one devotee asked Srila Prabhupada and Prabhupada gave example with a rose - if you take the rose for our own enjoyment it is matter and if you offer it to Krsna then it is spirit. So when we offer food it seems that some transformation is going on, but it seems also in our consciousness there is some transformation?)

Yes, brahmarpanam brahma havir / brahmagnau brahmana hutam / brahmaiva tena gantavyam / brahma-karma-samadhina. This is all explain in Bhagavad-gita Fourth Chapter that in yajna, offering to the Lord, the thing that is offered, the person who is offering and the of act offering itself and also the consummation, the reception of the offering by the Supreme Lord, all of that is Brahman, all of that is happening on the transcendental platform. So, yes, indeed that flower, that rose which is offered to Krsna becomes a spiritual flower. Or Prabhupada would say 'becomes krsna-ized, spiritualized'. The example again of being iron in fire. The specific form of that rose will wilt away but it is still not material. Why it is not material? Because the effect is spiritual. If you smell that rose, that act of smelling this rose is liberating. You just purified your nose, you just purified your mind, you just purified your heart, you just purified your consciousness by smelling that rose. If you smell an ordinary, unoffered rose you become more attached to the material world.

(Devotee...)

Yes, exactly, this is a good understanding. Yes?

(Devotee...)

Yeah, but there is a reference there. The reference is to Krsna's consciousness. In these atheistic philosophies, they have no ultimate reference. The reference is just you. The world is whatever you make out of it.

(Devotee...)

Yes, exactly. Therefore I mentioned that verse from Bhagavatam, Fourth Canto, in which it is said : Krsna consciousness means to see this universe exactly as the Supreme Lord sees it. So how does the Supreme Lord see this universe - as His energy and He has His own plan for this energy. He reveals this plan when He comes. When Lord Krsna descends then He actually shows the real use of everything in His lila that He is the enjoyer.

(Devotee: But the maya acts on our consciousness.)

Yes, but you must understand, maya acts on our consciousness, but all these things that we see around us are also living beings with their consciousness, so maya is acting on them too. It is not just us.

(Devotee: right, right).

So simultaneously... See, this is the intersection... adhidaiva, adhibhuta, adhiatma. So, intersecting according to the plan of Krsna.

(Devotee: ...the material nature is active principle regardless of my consciousness).

Yes, exactly. Yes?

(Devotee: The day before yesterday you mentioned about this buddhist idea of buddhist(?) tattva in answer of some question. Why they preach if their doctrine is everything is illusion anyway?).

Well, there is no answer of this question. That is the self-contradiction of the Buddhism. Yes?

(Devotee: What happens with the mayavadis and the Buddhists. I must consciously observe an object, what is the truth of the object?).

Well, according to their philosophy then it doesn't exist. It is not there.

(Devotee...)

That is the sunyavada philosophy, exactly that actually everything is void and this that I am seeing is just some dream, whatever it is. I shouldn't ascribe any value to it because behind it there is just void. It is just like some annoyance, you know. Really everything is void but there is this annoying display of form and color in front of us, so I just shouldn't get into it, I should ignore it, just keep meditating on the nothingness that's beyond it. Yes?

(Devotee...)

Yeah, but fortunately for you there is Krsna's mercy, Krsna's very mercy. So we may not be on the platform of spiritual understanding, as you have said, but we enter the association of devotees and we partake in devotional activities and that in itself is purifying. Now, this brings up a very nice point about internal spiritual life and external spiritual life. This is something that I think bothers most devotees, maybe always or at least at some point in their progress in Krsna consciousness they reach some problem with this. So sometimes they think of themselves as great hypocrite or whatever, they have a problem that externally I'm engaged in Krsna consciousness but internally there are so many impurities, I have so many bad desires and memories, tendencies... So what is my position? Am I really a devotee or I am just a demon acting like a devotee? So this question came up in a conversation between Srila Prabhupada and a catholic priest, named Father Tenar in London, 1973. So Father Tenar, on the basis of his own experience as a catholic priest... you know, in the catholic priesthood they have to follow celibacy but so many priests they fall down, they get involved in some scandalous behaviour, they leave their priesthood all together, get married or they have other problems - they become alcoholics. So this was a very important theme to Father Tenar, so he kept bringing this up again and again to Srila Prabhupada, that a man may externally be doing the rituals and look pure but how do you know he is pure inside? And, so, Srila Prabhupada, his answer again and again ... because the priest was always bringing this up, so Srila Prabhupada again and again, in so many ways he was preaching to the priest that the process of Krsna consciousness is transcendental. Of course the process that catholic priests follow is not transcendental. But this process of Krsna consciousness - chanting Hare Krsna, serving the Deity, that is completely spiritual. So if we place ourselves in the spiritual activities, because spiritual life is absolute, therefore we become externally pure and internally pure, as long as we are situated in the bona-fide spiritual activities - following the four regulative principles, chanting sixteen rounds, serving the Deity, using all our time in Krsna's service. And Srila Prabhupada again gave this example of the iron in the fire. The iron represents our materialistic self, materialistic consciousness, this body and the senses and the mind and so on. We place the iron in the fire, the fire are the spiritual activities. So now where does the heat first act upon the iron - on the outside of course. That's the part of the iron that starts to become hot first. But as long as the iron stays in the fire then gradually the heat, I mean, very quickly the heat penetrates to the very core. And the whole thing becomes red hot. So Srila Prabhupada said, he insisted to this priest, as long as these boys and girls are engaged in their duties, their Krsna conscious duties, then we must accept them as being both internally as well externally pure. The criterion is simply whether or not they are properly engaged in their duties. There is no other criterion. The priest was saying 'But later on couldn't they fall down?'. He gave the example of... say there is a man who is marooned on a desert island somewhere. So because he is alone on this desert island there is no opportunity for him to drink liquor, there is no opportunity for him to have illicit sex, so then OK, for the time he is on this island he is pure, but as soon as he gets off, goes back into the human society, immediately we see these activities again. So the priest was saying 'Couldn't have just be by

the circumstances that these boys and girls in ISKCON they seem to be pure, but actually they will fall down. And Srila Prabhupada said: "This is no consideration." He said 'If their activities are pure now, we accept them as pure now'. Of course there is always that chance of falling down because we have free will. The free will is always there. But as long as one sticks to the process, one is pure.

Prabhupada said: "This is like if someone places a nice plate of prasadam in front of you, you don't think that: 'Oh, in three hours, in five hours this will be spoiled. So I better not eat it'. No, now it's good, now you take it. Don't speculate that 'It may be bad in the future so I better don't take it'. So this is the answer - whatever is going on, whatever we find going on in our mind, in our heart now, as long as you stay engaged in devotional service, as directed by a bona-fide spiritual master, then you are pure, you are purely situated. And these dirty things in the heart they will be very quickly washed away. The longer we stay in the process, the more purified we become, so these botherations from lingering impurities we simply have to tolerate, but don't worry about that. Don't let them drag you down, don't become morbidly obsessed thinking 'Oh, if I have such a thought as this, I must be a demon. So what is the use of me being in this movement, I'm so fallen. I should just leave'. Because if you leave, you will definitely fall down. Yes?

(Devotee...)

Well, Krsna... abhinnatvam nama namino - the Holy name and the named, the one who is named, are abhinna, they are not different. Of course we are speaking of the name given by the pure devotee, the name that comes in this sampradaya. So one who is chanting that name... If one chants the name given by some mayavadi, some nonsense, some sahajya, that will not even be Krsna's name at all, it doesn't matter what he does. He is not chanting Krsna's name, he is just chanting some mundane vibration that happened to coincide... the syllables Krs-na are there but it has not been received from a pure devotee. But if one receives this sound from a pure devotee that is Krsna's Holy name. So we are dealing with Krsna by chanting His name. Whether we are chanting offenselessly or on the clearing stage, namabhasa, the in-between stage or even the offensive stage, in each three cases if we receive the Holy name from the pure devotee then we are dealing with Krsna, we are reciprocating with Krsna. But if we chant offensively, then the effect can be very dangerous for us. Like the demons are offensive, so Krsna kills the demons.

(Devotee: But Srila Prabhupada said that even if one chants the name Krsna...)

That's namabhasa. That means you will be liberated from your sins. That's arranged by Krsna Himself, that He appears in these ways. (Devotee: Mayavadi...) Because a mayavadi has a wrong intention. His intention is to mislead, to delude. Therefore it has poisonous effect. You see, just like there is one Haridas Pandit in South India. He does kirtan. He says Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Radha and Krsna mixed together in one person. So you think 'What's wrong with that? Sounds nice'. But in the example he gives he says 'Krsna is black like coffee, Radharani is white like cream. When you mix the two you have Gaura, which is like very nice coffee to drink'. So all of his followers they are drinking coffee and chanting Hare Krsna. They think 'Very nice example'. So on the one side he is encouraging sinful activity, on the other side he is incorporating the chanting of Hare Krsna into the sense gratification. So this is very bad. Therefore the effect... Prabhupada gave this example of... when he was a little boy, he was playing with matches and striking them and throwing them. Striking, having fun in this way. One match fell on his dhoti and set it on fire. So his dhoti was burning, but fortunately a man passing by rolled him in the grass and putted the fire out. So Srila Prabhupada said just like one should not play with matches, so one should not play with Krsna's Holy name. The Holy name is like fire so just like fire has very good purpose - fire heats us in the winter, we use fire to cook food, fire consumes unwanted things, rubbish and so on. So there are very positive, worth... actually our life in this world depends on fire, but if you misuse fire to play with it you can burn your house down, you can kill yourself. (Devotee...) Yes, what you say is right but, remember, your consciousness is never separate from Krsna, you see. Why are you conscious of whatever you are conscious? Because the Supersoul is in the heart. Supersoul is the saksi, the witness, He knows you. So what you receive, because of your consciousness, is given by Krsna. It's not just something happening automatically. (Devotee...) It's based on desire but there is Krsna's desire and there is your desire. So if your desire coincides with Krsna's desire, Krsna will give you Himself in the form of His Holy name. So this is how He rewards His devotees. Because Krsna's desire is that we take Him. Take Him and Him alone. That's why He comes - to give Himself to His devotees. But if we desire something else, Krsna says 'All right, what can I do? OK, Maya, give him that '. Because anything we desire that is non-Krsna, that's provided for by Maya. So then He energises material nature to give us that. So everything is

always reciprocal. Therefore Prabhupada said: "You have your plan, I have my plan, Krsna has His plan". (Devotee...) Yes, He does that through the association of His pure devotee. This is how we develop the right desire - by associating with Krsna's pure devotee. Yes?

(Devotee: A friend of mine fell down. I couldn't accept it because he was doing such a nice service. If you internally and externally are engaged in Krsna's service, how can you stop this?)

It is by association. The point of engaging in Krsna's service externally is to remember Krsna internally. Just like when one takes initiation we chant this mantra: om apavitrah pavitra va / sarvavastham gato 'pi va / yah smaret pundarikaksam / sa bahyabhyantarah sucih. So the mantra says whether you are pure or impure, you become purified in either case, whether suci or not suci. Suci means also like brahmana - you may be a brahmana by your birth and upbringing or you maybe just a really low class person, but in either case by remembering Visnu, then one is purified, one is actually brought to the platform of real purity. So the point of what we are doing in devotional service is that we remember Krsna. Therefore it is also said that of all rules and regulations, take them all together, are only two - to remember Krsna always, on the positive side, and never forget Him, on the negative side. These are the only two rules and regulations. But if we associate, we take asat sanga, bad association, then by that association we forget Krsna and fall down. We cannot remain steady in our activities of devotional service and we fall down. So therefore asat-sanga tyaga - ei vaisnava acara, the first principle of vaisnava behavior is to renounce asat-sanga, impure association. So ...
/break/

Sixth lecture "The Vedic path of liberation"

Today we are going to look at the Bhagavatam description of the path of elevation and liberation, which is the Vedic path. The Vedic path is a path of elevation for all human beings and that path is one. It is called, as you see here, arciradi-vartmana in the Upanisads, in Vedanta sutra and also in Srimad Bhagavatam. The Srimad Bhagavatam verse I can refer you to with explanation of this term arciradi-vartmana is from 8th Canto, 5. 36:

*yac-caksur asit taranir deva-yanam
trayimayo brahmana esa dhisnyam
dvaram ca mukter amrtam ca mrtyuh
prasidatam nah sa maha-vibhutih*

...which means: "The sun god marks the path of liberation which is called arciradi-vartma. He is the chief source of understanding of the Vedas. He is the abode where the Absolute Truth can be worshipped. He is the gateway to liberation and he is the source of eternal life as well as the cause of death. The sun god is the eye of the Lord. May that Supreme Lord, Who is supremely opulent be pleased with us".

So this path of liberation which is marked out by arcis, arcis means the rays of the sun, is referred to by Krsna in the Eighth Chapter of Bhagavad-gita. He speaks there of actually two paths. One is called sukla and the other is called krsna, or the path of light and the path of darkness. Specifically now - the difference between these two is that in the sukla-vartma, the path of light, the sun is in the bright fortnight and in the krsna, darkness, the sun is travelling in the dark fortnight. So now we will explain, as we go on, what this all means. But first of all I want to ask from you remembering Lord Krsna's presentation of these two paths. I think most of you can remember from the Eight Chapter the Lord speaks of two paths of elevation. So he makes a distinction between the two. He says those who follow the path of light attain one thing and those who follow the path of dark - something else happens to them. So can someone tell me what is the difference? (Devotee : One has to come back.) Yes, one has to come back. Who? (Devotee: Who is following the dark) Those who follow the path of dark, the krsna path. Now of course this krsna does not mean Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is another sense of the term krsna, which means dark or black. So those who leave their body in the dark fortnight, Krsna says, they ascend to certain level and then they return. Those

who leave the body in the bright fortnight, they do not return to this mortal world. But both are following this path which is chalked out by the rays of the sun. So what is being referred to is a mystic process. Now the two paths, which are called in Bhagavad-gita sukla and krsna, are referred to in Srimad Bhagavatam as devayana and pitryana. So the reference I can give you for devayana and pitryana paths - you can look in 7th Canto, 15th Chapter, 54,55 - this will tell you about the devayana path. 7.15.50,51 will inform you of the pitryana path. So in short, the devayana path is a gradual step-by-step process which takes one up to the Brahmaloaka and then finally through the layers of the universe, into the spiritual realm. This is a gradual mystical process. And the means of ascend of the soul is actually by way of the rays of the sun. You may remember from Nectar of Devotion, in which Srila Prabhupada speaks of the laghima-siddhi, the mystic perfection by which a yogi becomes so light that he can move on the rays of the sun. These rays become for him just like a stairway. So this is the method of elevation - in devayana as well as in pitryana. But the pitryana path does not go so far. So now the distinction between the two paths is very important. We will be talking about that in a moment. One thing I want to say is that there are those, you may have heard, some persons who are coming out from the so-called new age movement, these modern spiritual groups. They accept reincarnation of the soul. But very often their believe is that the soul is always making progress. Automatically the soul must go up. Practically they say no matter what a person does. It is the arrangement of this universe that the soul will go upward into higher and higher regions. Sometimes they say, the worst that might happened is that the soul will get stuck in one place for time. But the soul will never go back. There is a group called the theosophists, which was started by one madam Blavatski. So this is one of the... again using this word archetype, archetypical new age group. Actually it is not so new - it was started about a hundred years ago or more. But anyway they propagate this idea that the soul is always being promoted and since that time many, many other groups are coming out, mystical groups and philosophical groups and so on who dabble in the Vedas and psychic phenomena and things like that. They have this idea that the soul is always moving upwards. Now this idea is actually very, very old, because this idea is mentioned in the Vedanta sutra as what is known as purva-paksa. Purva-paksa means a false argument. So because this false argument appears in Vedanta sutra we can understand that in the Vedic spiritual culture there has always been a class who have misunderstood in this way.

So the source of this misunderstanding is from the Upanisads, a wrong purport or wrong explanation of an Upanisad called the Kausitaki Upanisad, verse 2 of the first chapter. This verse says that all who depart the human body go to the moon. So the moon is a heavenly planet. So from this statement has come a wrong explanation which says 'Yes, all souls leaving the human body will go upward on this arciradi-vartmana'. But this is wrong. What this actually means is all souls who are following the Vedic culture they will be promoted either by the devayana or pitryana path. What is the difference between the two? We touched on that. That the pitryana, those who follow that path don't go so far. They go as far as the moon or the Pitrloka. This is the path that is followed by the karma-kandiyas, who worship the forefathers and they worship the demigods with the purpose of entering the moon or the Pitrloka. Sometimes you will find that these two are said to be the same. Or that the Pitrloka is a department in the moon. But anyway the moon planet and the Pitrloka planet are heavenly places where the karma-kandiyas go and there they receive, if they enter the moon, a body which is called a soma-rajya or a body of nectar, a body that is meant for tasting heavenly nectar. There is an interesting purport in Second Canto in which Srila Prabhupada explains that in this human body the genital organs are endowed with this ability to experience the same nectar. That's the only place on the human body. So therefore human beings are very inclined to enjoy sex life. But if one goes to the moon then one's whole body is endowed with the facility for tasting that nectar. So anyway, you can just imagine. To attain such birth on moon or Pitrloka is very interesting for those who are lusty, inclined to sense gratification. So this is the goal of materialistic persons. But materialistic persons, who are pious enough, intelligent enough to follow the Vedic injunctions here on earth. So they don't want liberation, they want elevation to a high status of sense gratification. So they follow this krsna-paksa or this pitryana path. So what this entails is that they are... I will read the verse and purport, 7.15.50,51: /transl/ "My dear King Yudhisthira, an oblations of ghee and food grains like barley and sesame are offered in sacrifice, they turn into celestial smoke, which carries one to successively higher planetary systems like the kingdoms of Dhuma, Ratri, Krsnapaksa, Daksinam and ultimately the moon. Then, however, the performers of sacrifice, descend again to earth, to become herbs, creepers, vegetables and food grains. These are eaten by different living entities and turn into semen, which is injected into female bodies. Thus one takes birth again and again."

So from the Purport: "This is explained in Bhagavad-gita (9.21):

*te tam bhuktva svarga-lokam visalam
ksinye punye martya-lokam visanti
evam trayi-dharmam anuprapanna
gata gatam kama-kama labhante*

"When those who follow the pravrtti-marga have enjoyed heavenly sense pleasure, they return to this mortal planet again. Thus, through the Vedic principles, they achieve only flickering happiness".

Following the pravrtti-marga, the living entity who desires to be promoted to the higher planetary systems performs sacrifices regularly, and how he goes up and comes down again is described here in Srimad Bhagavatam as well as in Bhagavad-gita. It is also said, trai-gunya-visaya vedah: "The Vedas deal mainly with the three modes of material nature". The Vedas, especially three Vedas, namely Sama, Yajur and Rk, vividly describe this process of ascending to the higher planets and returning. But Krsna advises Arjuna, trai-gunya-visaya veda / nistrai-gunyo bhavarjuna: one has to transcend these three modes of material nature, and then one will be released from the cycle of birth and death. Otherwise, although one may be promoted to a higher planetary system, such as Candraloka, one must again come down (ksinye punye martya-lokam visanti). After one's enjoyment due to pious activities is finished, one must return to this planet in rainfall and first take birth as a plant or creeper, which is eaten by various animals, including human beings, and turned to seed. This seed is injected into the female body, and thus the living entity takes birth. Those who return to earth in this way take birth especially in higher families like those of brahmanas."

So this karma-kandiya path is also called pravrtti-marga. Who knows the meaning of this pravrtti-marga as opposed to nivrtti-marga? (Devotee...sense gratification...) Yes, pravrtti-marga means a path of sense gratification. So one can become elevated by pravrtti-marga, or karma-kandiya, as far as Candraloka, but then one has to come back. Nivrtti-marga means the path of renunciation. So one following nivrtti-marga or the path of renunciation, liberation, he goes upward also and he also reaches the moon but he goes beyond. So let us hear from Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.54,55 (SSS mentions aside: It's the day before Gaura Purnima so... Also another thing I discovered is a nest of snakes under the seat. So maybe that's also the problem. Anyway...) This is the path... again, the devayana path or the path of liberation:

"On his path of ascent the progressive living entity enters the different worlds of fire, the sun, the day, the end of the day, the bright fortnight, the full moon, and the passing of the sun in the north, along with their presiding demigods. When he enters Brahmaloaka, he enjoys life for many millions of years, and finally his material designation comes to an end. He then comes to a subtle designation, from which he attains the casual designation, witnessing all previous states. Upon the annihilation of this causal state, he attains his pure state, in which he identifies with the Supersoul. In this way the living entity becomes transcendental".

And the next verse, 55, reads: "This gradual process of elevation for self-realization is meant for those who are truly aware of the Absolute Truth. After repeated birth on this path, which is known as devayana, one attains these consecutive stages. One who is completely free from all material desires, being situated in the self, need not traverse the path of repeated birth and death."

So this path described here - the devayana or the nivrtti-marga is the path of jnana yoga. So in this path of jnana yoga there is also worship of demigods, but the goal is different, the goal is not to enjoy. The goal is to go higher and higher. These stages, which are also mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita - the fire, the sun, the day, the end of the day, the bright fortnight, the full moon - this is actually referring to various Deities, which mark the path of arcirada-vartma, the path of elevation. So in the jnana yoga process as well as the other, the karma yoga, one worships these demigods, but in jnana yoga the goal is liberation, to enter Brahman. And when one is successful in devayana, then he never comes back to this world of birth and death.

So going back to this question of the Kausitaki Upanisad, that all who leave this human body enter the moon, what this Upanisad is referring to, are all souls who follow the Vedic culture whether they be karma yogis or jnana yogis or as we shall see momentarily also the bhakti yogis, because the devotees also follow the same path. We will explain this in a moment. So this is important to understand because I think in preaching it is very likely... I think many of you devotees come from Eastern Europe, but in Eastern Europe I have also heard the same question that why do you say the

human being may take birth in a lower species when we have heard from madam Blavatski that the soul is always going higher and higher and higher? That is very interesting to note that this misconception is coming out of Vedanta controversy, a philosophical argument over the Upanisads. It's very, very ancient. But Vedanta sutra... Srila Vyasadeva, as we said on the first day, it is his code for understanding the Upanisads, he refutes this argument. He says this is a purva-paksa or a wrong argument. And in his commentary, in Srimad Bhagavatam, he is explaining this two paths and also, he is explaining, there is another path, a third path for those who do not follow any Vedic injunction. Who are neither karma yogis, jnana yogis or bhakti yogis either, in other words - for those who are sinful. So what happens to them? Do they go to the moon? No, they go to hell! So here we see explained in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.30.33-34 the explanation of how one goes to hell:

Translation: "Therefore person who is very eager to maintain his family and kinsmen simply by black methods..." In other words sinful methods - adharmena - the word is used, by irreligious activities. "...he certainly goes to the darkest region of hell, which is known as Andha-tamisra."

Now there is also an argument mentioned, another purva-paksa argument or wrong argument, which says: 'All right, so he goes to hell but then after he is punished in hell, then he goes to heaven, then he goes up higher and higher'. No, from 3.30.34 we learn, this is what happens:

"Having gone through all the miserable, hellish conditions and having passed in a regular order through the lowest forms of animal life prior to human birth, and having thus been purged of his sins, one is reborn again as a human being on this earth."

So you see, after having spent time in hell, then one comes up through the lower species, by these repeated births in lower species one's sins are relieved and finally one comes to the human form again and there one has the choice whether he will follow karma yoga, jnana yoga, bhakti yoga or follow adharm again, sinful activities. And on that choice depends what happens with him next, whether he is elevated on this arciradi-vartma or whether he again goes to hell.

So now let's speak more on this arciradi-vartma. The Upanisads and the Vedanta sutra speak of the heart as the sitting place of the soul and when the time for death comes upon the soul then according to the soul's karma a particular nadi... nadi means a channel, a subtle channel in the subtle body, the astral body, this channel is illuminated by the Supersoul. So, again, if that soul is sinful, Supersoul will illuminate a path downwards to go to hell via that path. But... or actually we hear that the Jamadutas come and pull him out of the body. But that path to hell, that is illuminated by the Supersoul for him. The Jamadutas are carrying him by that path down to hell. But if one goes upwards, then there is a particular nadi, which is called Susumna, which is illuminated. The Susumna-nadi. And this is mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.24:

"O King, when such a mystic passes over the Milky Way by the illuminating Susumna to reach the highest planet, Brahmaloaka, he goes first to Vaisvanara, the planet of the deity of the fire, wherein he becomes completely cleansed of all contaminations, and thereafter he goes still higher, to the circle of Sisumara, to relate with Lord Hari, the Personality of Godhead."

So this Susumna is mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam. So through this Susumna nadi, this illuminated channel, he then passes into the region, called arcis, which is this region of the sun's rays. And that does not actually refer to just the sky above where we see the sunshine. But it is actually referring to a subtle manifestation of solar energy such as that which is seen in the subtle body. Around everyone there is an aura, you may know this from your reading of mystical books, that everyone has an aura around. So that aura is constructed of these arcis, these subtle sun rays or mystical rays of the sun. So the soul passes into this region of the aura and then, travelling on this aura, he can go higher. Actually when he reaches that region, he meets a guide, called the Arcisdeva, a luminous being, which conducts him higher and then he meets successive devas, successive Deities who take him higher and higher and higher and finally on the devayana path he comes to the Brahmaloaka. So again, in your reading, perhaps before you became devotees you read some mystical book and you read some things like this about guarding angels, about guides, luminous beings that take one higher. So this is all there in the Vedic literature is explained.

Now for the followers of the pitryana, those who worship the forefathers, the guides are the forefathers or their representatives. Therefore you see even in modern times some people when they have what is called NDE, near-death experience, they clinically died in hospital, on operation and then after 5-10 minutes they came back to life. Sometimes they have memories, actually very startling memories of first being in a dark place, then seeing a channel or tunnel that is lit by a very wonderful light and they floated up to that channel and they came into another world and then there they saw their forefathers, maybe they saw their father or grandfather. So this is an experience of those who are on the pitryana path that their forefathers conduct them into heaven and there they enjoy. So the jnana yogis, those on the devayana path they are conducted by other beings until they reach Brahmaloaka. So who conducts the devotee? Because the devotees also traverse the same path, path of elevation, till they reach... /break/

...and they told Dhruva Maharaja in Canto 4.12.24-25 that : "We are representatives of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the whole universe, Who carries in His hand the bow named Sarnga. We have been specifically deputed to take you to the spiritual world".

Verse 25: "To achieve Visnuloka is very difficult, but by your austerity you have conquered. Even the great rsis and demigods cannot achieve this position".

Now here the Visnudutas are referring, when they say 'the rsis', they are referring to those who follow the devayana path, who go as far as Brahmaloaka or who may attain impersonal Brahman. And when they speak of the demigods, they are referring to those who enter the heavenly planets to enjoy. So here the Visnudutas, they are saying that 'we are going to take you beyond that, beyond what is reached by the demigods and also the sages'.

/verse 25 continuing/ "Simply to see the supreme abode (the Visnu planet) the sun and moon and all the other planets, stars, lunar mansions and solar systems are circumambulating it. Now please, come: you are welcome to go there".

So from the Purport Srila Prabhupada writes: "Even in this material world the so called scientists, philosophers and mental speculators strive to merge into the spiritual sky, but they can never go there. But a devotee, by executing devotional service, not only realizes what the spiritual world actually is, but factually goes there to live an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. The Krsna consciousness movement is so potent that by adopting these principles of life and developing love of God one can very easily go back home, back to Godhead. Here the practical example is the case of Dhruva Maharaja. While the scientist and philosopher go to the moon but are disappointed in their attempts to stay there and live, the devotee makes an easy journey to other planets and ultimately goes back to Godhead. Devotees have no interest in seeing other planets, but while going back to Godhead, they see all of them as passing phases just as one who is going on a distant place passes through many small stations."

So here you see the devotee is also traversing that same path, pitryana, devayana, he is seeing all these places flash by, but he is not interested in them. Now, if he is interested in them, you see, if he still has some interest for sense gratification, somewhere in his heart, then he is going to see a place that will captivate him and he will tell the Visnudutas: "Ah, hmm, I think I would like to stop here. Looks very nice". So then he remains within the material world. That's why Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita that those who are not perfect in devotional service they go to the planets of demigods and then they come back to earth, but there they get another chance to take up devotional service. They should have gone back to Godhead but because in the heart there were some hidden desires for sense gratification then seeing all these places go by, they saw that place: "Oh, I didn't the material world could be like this. Well, hmm...looks very nice". So that's why Srila Prabhupada always warned us that even you have a slight tinge of desire for sense gratification you cannot leave this material world, you cannot enter the spiritual world, because Maya will show you just that place which suits your particular, very subtle material desire. And you will become captivated. So therefore we should really try in this human form of life now that we have it and we have this opportunity to perform devotional service, we should really try to rid ourselves by strict practice of sadhana-bhakti, bhakti yoga, we should really try to rid ourselves certainly of all gross, but as well as all subtle fine desires for sense gratification and mental speculation. Mental speculation means the Muni-lokas like the Jnana-loka, Tapaloka and finally Brahmaloaka. I think I mentioned before, Srila Prabhupada said there is no sense gratification in these

regions, but there is mental speculation, that is the material happiness. There are great sages, they like to think about Vedic knowledge, discuss among themselves, speculate. In this way they remain in the material world.

So the devotee is conducted to the Brahmaloaka and then beyond. So here, Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.28-30 we hear: "After reaching Satyaloka...", the planet of Brahma, in other words, "...the devotee is specifically able to be incorporated fearlessly by the subtle body in an identity similar to that of the gross body, and one after another he gradually attains stages of existence from earthly to watery, fiery, glowing and airy until he reaches the ethereal stage."

So what is being referred to here, as mentioned in this Purport, Purport to this verse, as Srila Prabhupada writes: "One who attains the place...", means the Brahmaloaka, "...by dint of devotional service is specifically mentioned here in relation to how he can penetrate into the different coverings of the universe and thus ultimately disclose his spiritual identity in the absolute atmosphere of supreme existence."

Verse 29: "The devotee thus surpasses the subtle objects of the different senses like aroma by smelling, the palate by tasting, vision by seeing forms, touch by contacting, the vibrations of the ear by ethereal identification, and the sense organs by material activities."

Verse 30: "The devotee thus surpassing the gross and the subtle forms of coverings, enters the plane of egoism. And in that status he merges the material modes of nature (ignorance and passion) in this point of neutralization and thus reaches egoism in goodness. After this all egoism is merged in the mahat-tattva, and he comes to the point of pure self-realization."

So he passes through the acit-sakti - all of these layers of the universe and egoism in ignorance, passion and goodness is called in Srimad Bhagavatam acit-sakti. This is mentioned in Canto 7.3.34 - acit-sakti is the material energy of Krsna. So the devotee passes through that and he attains his own spiritual identity.

Now comes the next question from the mayavadis' side. The mayavadis they refer to the Upanisads, like for instance Gopala-tapani Upanisad says that when one attains the spiritual destination, when one becomes fully illumined by spiritual knowledge, then he should think "so 'ham", he should think "I am He" or "I am the Lord". So the mayavadis take that to mean that you merge in the existence of the Lord, but actually this sense of "so 'ham" is referring... thinking "I am He" is not referring to merging, becoming one with God but it is actually referring to transcendental ecstasy, ecstasy of devotional love of Krsna, such as that, which is seen in the gopis of Vrndavan. And here is the reference, as I have been saying all along, Srimad Bhagavatam is commentary on Vedanta-sutra so all of these questions that are raised in the Vedanta and the Upanisads and so on, are answered in Srimad Bhagavatam. So from Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 10.30.3 we learn:

"Because the beloved gopis were absorbed in thoughts of their beloved Krsna their bodies imitated His way of moving and smiling, His way of beholding them, His speech and His other distinctive features. Deeply immersed in thinking of Him and maddened by remembering His pastimes they declared to one another: 'I am Krsna!'".

So, you know, when Krsna left for Mathura the gopis of Vraja were alone without His association, then the ecstasy of vipralambha or separation, which Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught is the highest ecstasy of love of Godhead, they begun to enact Krsna's pastimes. This was their Krsna consciousness. They were remembering Krsna's pastimes to such a degree that they were acting them out for one another and thus they were declaring 'I am Krsna' by imitating His pastimes. So this is the Bhagavata explanation of those Upanisadic references, which say the goal is "so 'ham", to think of oneself... yes, you can think of oneself as being Krsna but in the mood of the gopis, in the mood of ecstatic loving separation. That is proper. Not in the mood of the impersonalists. So Bhagavatam explains... that... I have several verses. Bhagavatam explains that when one attains the spiritual world, one attains liberation, then he attains his eternal relationship, loving relationship with Krsna. That is a relationship of devotional service. So the references are, for instance Canto 6.16.25; Canto 9.4.63,64; Canto 9.4.68:

/SB 6.16.25/ "Oh, transcendental Lord, who are situated in the topmost planet of the spiritual world, Your two lotus feet are always massaged by a multitude of the best devotees with lotus-bud hands. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, complete in six opulences. You are the supreme person mentioned in the Purusa-sukta prayers. You are the most perfect, self-realized master of all mystic power. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You."

So here it is very clearly described that the Supreme Lord lives on the topmost planet Goloka Vrndavana and the devotees who attain them here do not merge in Him but they are engaged in rendering service, for instance they are massaging His lotus feet with their lotus-bud-like hands, or spiritual hands. This similarity between the Lord's lotus feet and the devotees' lotus-bud-like hands are indicating the similarity of their forms. Lord Krsna has His spiritual form and so also do Krsna's devotees. This is very interesting. The Chandogya Upanisad... The Upanisads are very much loved by the mayavadis because the Upanisads are written in language, which is easy to interpret sometimes in different ways. So the Upanisads, Chandogya Upanisad speaks of how the soul rises up... having left the last material body the soul rises up into light, into the jyoti, to the spiritual light and attains its svarupa. So such descriptions are very appealing to the mayavadis, but then that same Chandogya Upanisad goes on to say that in that spiritual realm the soul meets other liberated souls and together with them he enjoys. And different activities are mentioned like laughing and singing and so on. So then this becomes very confusing for the mayavadis. Why do the Upanisads say such things as this? So why - it is clearly said here in Srimad Bhagavatam, clearly explained so that there is no doubt that these liberated souls they are attaining their svarupa in the spiritual world of Krsna, they are receiving a spiritual form and in Krsna's association they are enjoying together. In fact the Lord says, He told the yogi Durvasa, when Durvasa came to the Svetadvipa planet to beg lord Visnu to call off His Sudarsana cakra, so the Lord explained that "Sudarsana is pursuing you because you have offended my devotee and there is really nothing that I can do about that. Because I'm not independent from My devotee, so therefore neither is My Sudarsan cakra. You have offended My devotee so the Sudarsana automatically acts in this way". So the Lord told Durvasa Muni /9.4.63/ that:

"I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotees, even those who are devotees of My devotees are very dear to Me".

Sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo / bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyah. So this last line - bhaktair bhakta-jana- priyah - is indicating for all of our benefit, how anyone of us can become successful in attaining the supreme goal of life - one should just become dear to the devotees of the Lord. Because the Lord says: "My devotees are so dear to Me, I cannot be separated from them. I sit in the cores of their heart and indeed whoever is dear to My devotees they are also dear to Me". So He accepts the bhakta-jana, the followers of devotees, as His own devotees also. So Srila Prabhupada said it is a very rare thing to become a Vaisnava. So therefore we should try to be servants of the Vaisnavas and then for us this exalted path of liberation, of going back home back to Godhead is opened. Then the Lord goes on to say /9.4.64/:

"O best of the brahmanas, without saintly persons for whom I am the only destination, I do not desire to enjoy My transcendental bliss and My supreme opulences".

So the Lord does not... He does not find even the spiritual world attractive if there would be no devotees there. That is actually why there is a spiritual world - so that the Lord can receive the service of His devotees there. Otherwise without devotees Krsna has no interest in opulence, His spiritual opulence. And this is also very interesting because, as we have been telling, we have been explaining from Srimad Bhagavatam what is the material world, what is the material energy - it is simply the Lord's spiritual energy but devoid of devotion. The material world is a place where the non-devotees go. So therefore Krsna is not very much interested here. So actually the difference between the spiritual world and material world is simply the difference between where Krsna is enjoying and where He is not enjoying. So the spiritual world is also here, wherever the devotees are serving Krsna and adding to His transcendental pleasure by their service. Then Krsna is present... just like this holy dhama of Mayapur, this is the spiritual world. Why? Because here the devotees of the Lord serve Him, give pleasure to His senses. That is why this is the spiritual world. No other reason.

So I think, now you can all understand why Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita and why it is also stated in Srimad Bhagavatam, that the devotees are not bewildered by these two paths, the paths that are followed by the pravrtti-margis and the nivrtti-margis. I think now that becomes clear. The devotee he is also traversing that same path but he is not interested in any of the stops on the way that attract the pravrtti-margis, or karma-kandis, and the nivrtti-margis, or the jnana-kandis. Therefore he is not bewildered by these two paths, that is the sense of this word. And this is also why devotees do not worship demigods. This is also why Krsna explains to Arjuna yanti deva-vrata devan - those who worship the demigods they go to the demigods, but those who worship Me... He says those who worship the pitrs they go to the pitrs, those who worship the ghosts go to the ghosts, those who worship Me come to Me. The devotees don't worship the demigods because the devotees don't want to end up on some Devaloka, somewhere. They worship only Krsna Himself or Krsna's representatives, the Yamadutas... I'm sorry (aside: These snakes again...)... the Visnudhutas they come to personally conduct the devotee back home back to Godhead. So are there any questions? Yes?

(Devotee: Could you clarify what happens at the time of death to persons who live in the holy dhama but are not good devotees and are engaged in smoking bidi and this and that? What happens to those who are not devotees?)

The thing is that everyone who lives in the holy dhama is a devotee of some kind or other. They may not be such good devotees but they couldn't be here if they were not devotees. So they are devotees. All those who live here, even the Muslims, they know who is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So that means they are very, very exalted souls. They know who is Caitanya Mahaprabhu, they know what is Hare Krsna Maha-mantra, they know what is sankirtana. They may not practice but they know. They have known from their very birth. So how much more exalted they are than people from countries outside India who don't know anything. Or even areas in India outside of this holy dhama. They don't know who is Lord Caitanya. But still they are engaged in materialistic activities therefore they have to take birth in the dhama again as animals. And then after that birth as animals they are liberated they go back home back to Godhead. Yes?

(Devotee: In Bhagavad-gita it is described that by karma yoga and jnana yoga it is possible to achieve the Supersoul. So how to achieve the Brahman realization is easy to understand but what exactly is the step from Brahman realization to Paramatma realization?)

Yes, so, for those who follow karma kanda they are worshiping Visnu but as the universal form. Therefore they are interested in ascending up through planetary systems. They are interested in the sense gratification that is available in the Visvarupa. So their conception of Vsnu is Visnu as Visvarupa, universal form. And on the jnana yoga path... well, actually to attain impersonal Brahman, since the Brahman is the effulgence of the Supersoul, in that way they also attain the Supersoul. But more advanced than brahmajnanis or the brahmavadis are the paramatma-vadis, who actually meditate upon the form of the Lord in the heart. This is the higher stage of jnana yoga - the mystic yoga system. So they are interested in mystic powers or they are interested in isvara-sayuja, it is called, to actually merge into the form of Supersoul. This is also not devotional service. It's a mystical process.

(Devotee: Is it right to say that to meditate about the inner spiritual atmosphere, the self, is also worship of the Supersoul because the service (.....?). Therefore they have achieved the Supersoul. Is this that like step between because the jnana yogis (.....?) Brahman realization then he goes further to Supersoul?)

Well, the via media are the rays of Brahman because these rays emanate from the Supersoul so they first of all meditate upon that - the light - and also you will see in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Lord Caitanya is explaining in His explanations of the atmarama verse that in santa-rasa there is some thirteen stages, He explains. The lowest platform are those who just merge in the light of brahmajyoti and the highest platform are those who have penetrated the light and have realized the form of the Lord. All of this is santa-rasa. And the santa-rasa is the highest stage attainable by the jnanis. So there are these different levels. So the santa-rasa, that neutral relationship with the Lord, is also seen in those who just entered the brahmajyoti. That also turns a kind of santa-rasa - lowest stage. So the jnanis, you know, they may be on different stages of advancement in the santa-rasa.

(Devotee: When one begins to worship the Supersoul he begins to enter in dasya-rasa...)

Yes, but this will only be possible by the association of pure devotees. He learns that from the devotees. Otherwise by this mystic process he may approach the Supersoul but his motivation again is for mystic powers or for liberation. And that the Lord will give him... It is said - the Lord gives this very easily. Of course He gives that very easily after they have performed so many hard austerities. Once they have attained His darsan then they very easily they can get all mystic powers or they can merge into Him. But what is so special about merging in Visnu when we all do that at the end of the cosmic manifestation anyway, so that's not a very great thing. Yes?

(Devotee: You told about (.....?)arguments used by Blavatska. From where they took these arguments?)

I think you are talking about their belief in the continual elevation of the soul, that's what I was referring to. They believe that after the human being dies, his soul must be promoted upwards automatically. (Devotee: From where is this idea?) Yes, as I said, this is based on a verse from a Upanisad, Kausitaki Upanisad which says all those who depart the human body they attain the moon, they will reach the moon. But I explained what this meant. "All those" means all those who are following the Vedic path, either karma, jnana or even bhakti paths, they will attain the moon. Of course the jnanis and the bhaktas will go beyond. The karmis will stay there. So that's the reference. All those who are practicing Vedic dharma but those who are not - they will go downward, they will fall down. This is the mistake they make. Nowadays people are engaged in sinful activities but these 'new age', you know, mystic psychics, whatever they are, misleaders, they say: "Oh, doesn't matter what you do because automatically after you die your soul will be promoted". There is talk of the next stage, the next platform, the next dimension or whatever.

(Devotee: There is misunderstanding of this verse?) But this is very ancient misunderstanding. Yes?

(Devotee: It is said a devotee can get the mercy of Lord Caitanya in the time of death. He takes...)

Well, you see, to enter Krsna's pastimes one must be trained. So one actually passes through all that but one attains Krsna, association of Krsna, in the universe where He is displaying His lila. One takes birth there... /break/give up their bodies in anxiety of separation. What that means is that they are held back from joining Krsna by certain very subtle attachments. What are these attachments? These are actually attachments to piety. Because they are women, they are at home with their husbands so they have what is called stri-dharma, a dharma of pious womanhood, which they are attached to, which holds them back. Krsna says sarva dharman parityaja - you have to give up all dharmas to be with Me. So even piety you have to give up, material piety. So in this way that attachment is burnt up because although the body is held back, out of anxiety to be with Krsna, they leave that body and then they join Krsna in a spiritual body. So in this way they are trained up in that, we can say, final birth, in giving up even the most subtle, subtle, subtle, fine attachments and thus they associate with Krsna without any reservation. And then they go to Goloka with Krsna from there. (Devotee...) Yeah, because they have to leave this universe to go to the universe... in whichever universe Krsna is. So they are passing the same path. Yes?

(Devotee: The spiritual masters have their different many disciples. If these disciples have different rasas, what is their relationship with the spiritual master? Or perhaps the answer is that all these disciples have the same rasa as their spiritual master?)

So the answer is that the spiritual master is Krsna's representative and Krsna empowers him to teach his disciple how to serve Krsna no matter what his rasa is. So therefore we find in Bhaktivinoda Thakura's book Jaiva-dharma that a spiritual master had two disciples of two different rasas and the same spiritual master appeared to these disciples when they were liberated in the form of their rasa - in the form of cowherd boy and in the form of gopi. The same spiritual master to the one disciple who had rasa of cowherd boy the spiritual master appeared as cowherd boy and to the disciple who had rasa as gopi that same spiritual master appeared to him as gopi. So it doesn't matter. The spiritual master is empowered by Krsna to instruct his disciples, he is given full power. So regardless of what the spiritual master's own rasa may be, he can instruct his disciples in any rasa and get them situated. Because he is Krsna's representative. Yes?

(Devotee...) No, there is no contradiction - the Supersoul illuminates the path to hell, that's all you need to understand. That path to hell is illuminated and he is dragged along that path by the Yamadutas. Just like for the devotees the path to Brahmaloaka and beyond is illuminated and he is conducted along the path by the Visnudutas. Yes?

(Devotee: It is said that the relationship between the spiritual master and the disciple is eternal. What does it mean because eternal also means without beginning?)

Yes, the answer to that question is very easy. In Bhagavad-gita Purport Srila Prabhupada says that Krsna is the real spiritual master. So your relationship with Krsna is eternal, without beginning and the spiritual master who comes to save you he is sent by Krsna, he is Krsna's representative. So it is stated *jive saksad nahi tata guru caitya rupa* - the guru is actually within the heart but the jiva in maya cannot understand him therefore *siksa guru haite habe mahanta-svarupa*, therefore the *siksa guru* comes in the form of mahanta, devotee. So in that sense your relationship with the mahant, devotee, has its beginning. *Brahmanda brahmite kona bhagyavan jiva / guru-krsna-prasade paya bhakti-lata-bija* - there is a time when you are bhagyavan, fortunate to have the association of a pure devotee. And that has its beginning in time. But who is that devotee - he is just a representative of Krsna and your relationship with Krsna, the caitya-guru, the Lord in the heart, is eternal. Therefore... and also another point is since Krsna and Krsna's devotee cannot be separate therefore your relationship with Krsna's devotee is also eternal. But there is one time when Krsna's devotee comes to you and says: "All right, stop this nonsense, let's go back home, back to Godhead, Krsna is waiting for you now". Yes?

(Devotee...)

Well, the thing was that in the case of Ajamila, because he chanted the holy name of the Lord... you see, that he has been taken off by the Yamadutas, that is the automatic reaction of his sinful activities, that is the result of his sinful activities, in other words, that is the working of Maya. But because he chanted the holy name of Narayana therefore this machinery of the material nature was suddenly stopped by the appearance of the Visnudutas. And they told Ajamila that 'Because you have chanted the holy name therefore it is not your time to leave your body'. This was the result, not that any path was illuminated. The Yamadutas thought 'Oh, we should take him'. But the Visnudutas said: "No, he has chanted the holy name of Lord". And they told Ajamila: "Now you stay in your body some time longer. Now you should become a proper devotee so that when you leave your body at the proper time in the future then you can go back home back to Godhead". So after that time Ajamila became very serious and he practiced Krsna consciousness nicely, became pure devotee and then went back home, back to Godhead. Yes?

(Devotee...)

No, the sinful reactions or desires are there in the heart, but what has been purified, what has been relieved of, are the very heavy, gross reactions to them. But the seeds of material desires are there. It's like this, like from a seed a plant grows, then winter comes and the plant withers, all the leaves fall off. It seems the plant has died, some flowers they completely wither away, but then when the spring comes, from the same seed the flower grows new. So like that, from a sinful desire a sinful reaction grows up and then it can be cut gradually, withered away or cut away by suffering reactions as one must do when one passes through the species of life. So then the reaction seems to have gone. But the seed is still there and it can grow up again in that human form.

(Devotee...)

Yes, what happens is all the matter of association, if you associate only with sinful people, then by that association the sinful desire-seeds are watered and they grow. But if you associate with the pure devotee then the *bhakti-lata-bija*, the seed of devotional service is planted in the heart and by association and practice that is watered and the devotional creeper grows.

(Devotee: When one descends from the celestial, the higher planets does one immediately attain a human form of life or one can enter animal species?)

Well, we have heard that the soul actually enters first of all the bodies of plants. And then these plants are eaten by different living entities and then the soul in this way passes from the male into the womb of the female and receives a body. So plants are also eaten by lower creatures too. So there is some possibility that one may fall down from heaven and then end up in the womb of a mother cow or horse or something else. The chance is there. It's all adjusted by, again, his residual pious or impious activities. Even when he goes to heaven and comes back, there is some residual, subtle pious / impious reactions. So depending on what is there he may take birth as human or also as animal. Yes?

(Devotee: In the material world devotees have positions of high and low, like spiritual master, temple president and so on. So when we go in the spiritual world will we find the same kind of high and low positions?)

Srila Prabhupada said that we will have our ISKCON in the spiritual world so everything will be the same. What we have to see, what we have to learn here is that actually there is no high or low. Everything in Krsna consciousness is absolute, everyone is connected with Krsna through devotional service. Therefore this sense of high and low is actually only a mundane idea. There are different positions in the spiritual world, the devotees have different relationships with Krsna but all are Krsna conscious, all are serving and loving Krsna and Krsna is reciprocating with all of them according to their love. So therefore Srila Prabhupada he was very displeased when he saw that some of his disciples in Los Angeles were studying Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, the prayers of the gopis to Krsna, the descriptions of the gopis' lila, madhurya-lila, with Krsna, they were only reading this and they were trying to cultivate some gopi-bhava, they called it, some ecstasy of the gopis. And Prabhupada was very displeased with this. He said: "Oh, they think that by becoming gopis then they will be better than mother Yasoda". This is a material conception. Just like in the material world one wants to be promoted, he gets job in some company and he is thinking: "Let me work, work, work and get promoted to higher salary, higher position, higher, higher, higher!". So it is not like that. Whether one becomes gopi or Krsna's mother or friend of Krsna, it is simply according to love, the flavour of love, it has nothing to do with higher or lower. And that flavour of love you will find, whatever it may be, absolutely satisfying to you because Krsna will relate with you, you will relate with Krsna in just the way that you feel most natural. Of course in Vrndavan, in Goloka Vrndavan, the devotees they even change their rasa according to the need but this is very esoteric, but Prabhupada referred to this. There is also a story in account in the literature of the Goswamis how one cowherd boy... because Krsna wanted to take bath in the Yamuna river, but Yamuna river was far away so this cowherd boy took the form of a river so that Krsna could bathe in him. And then when Krsna came out of that river, Krsna needed to dry Himself, so the cowherd boy took the form of a towel so that Krsna could dry Himself. So these things are going on. The relationship with Krsna in Goloka Vrndavana is spontaneous. The devotees there are looking for the opportunities to serve Krsna so in this way the rasas change but every devotee has one principle rasa that he likes best. So the fact is whatever that rasa is that is what you... you like that best because you can associate and serve Krsna in the way that you like best. So there is no question of someone who is in a cowherd boy-rasa thinking: "Oh, this is boring, I'm tired of taking lunch with Krsna. I want to dance with Krsna in rasa-lila. So I want to be a gopi.". The devotees never think like that, they don't think this way. They only think 'What does Krsna want from me? So Krsna wants me to be cowherd boy, yes, I feel that's best, because I find by serving Krsna this way that is my natural position'. Or Krsna wants me to be gopi, or Krsna wants me to be something else. And even then sometimes the opportunity is there to be something else: "Oh, now Krsna wants this. All right there is none else with that rasa right now, all right, so I'll do it". Just like in ISKCON, you mentioned temple president or guru, but sometimes they also are cleaning the floor because it's Krsna's service. You see, when Krsna's temple has to be cleaned we don't call for the (bangies?), you know, this class of sweepers who are considered very low class. We don't have some (bangie?) class standing by, untouchable class: "Hey, you, now clean the temple.". The devotees clean the temple. We don't think this is low. This is Krsna's service, everything is absolute. Yes?

(Devotee...)

It's the same - a fivefold sacrifice which is mentioned in the Upanisads. Sacrifice which conducts one... This is the pitryana process, fivefold sacrifice, fivefold offerings, by which one leaves this human body, attains the heavenly world, enjoys there, comes back down and attains a human birth in Varnasrama culture. (Devotee...) Well, they come down by the way of the rain and the rain is of course generated by sacrifice, by the sacrifice of the persons on earth. All right, a few more questions.

(Devotee...)

I have never been in a library in Jagannatha Puri. There is Vrndavana Research Institute in Vrndavana where they are keeping all the books of the Goswamis but the major books, the major writings of the Goswamis are available, of course in Sanskrit and Bengali, but they are preserved in this Gaudiya Vaisnava sampradaya and some are being translated by the BBT. BBT has a... now a plan for translating some important philosophical works of the Goswamis. Other devotees have also translated but I cannot recommend their accuracy although they are there, there is the Krsna Institute from Los Angeles, there are many volumes of books, Goswamis' literature, but as I said, the accuracy may not be that good. Yes?

(Devotee...)

But as we've heard, we read a verse from Srimad Bhagavatam, they come up to lower species until they achieve human birth and then in the human form of life they have choice if they follow Vedic injunctions, either karma-khanda, jnana-khanda or bhakti yoga, they will be promoted. If they neglect Vedic injunctions and again are sinful they will again fall down to hell. Yeah?

(Devotee...)

Yes. So the subtle body contains the subtle elements and these subtle elements are actually referring to the... they are also seen in the covering of the universe, these are subtle elements. So for the subtle body, or for the soul rather, to pass through the layers of the universe then he has to relinquish bit by bit these aspects of his subtle body. They are merged into each layer, all the elements are seen in these layers. (Devotee: It's simultaneously by going through?) Yes, by going through, otherwise he cannot go through. So within every layer there is a Deity also. This is described in Bhad Bhagavatamrta. The presiding Deity of the watery layer is Matsya and there is a presiding Deity of the fiery and so on, mind, all of the presiding Deities are form of Visnu. So passing beyond for a devotee simply means to worship these forms and get Their blessings. So they bless the devotee by removing attachment for that element so that he can go beyond. Yes, mataji?

(Devotee...)

I haven't understood the complete question because I didn't hear everything you said.

Yes...

(Devotee...)

...yes...

(Devotee...)

...yes, one who is liberated within the body is called jivan-mukta. So jivan-mukta, as explained by Baladeva Vidyabhusana, that is a liberated Vaisnava. A pure devotee of the Lord lives within this body to serve Krsna only. So he is not in any way...his consciousness is not in any way confined by this body, he is not attached to it. Actually within his heart he is in the spiritual world, he is with Krsna. And he is seeing Krsna's eternal pastimes within his heart. So he is not actually in the material world. But he has a body by which he preaches. So he is called jivan-mukta. And the other kind of moksa or mukti which is attained by one who is becoming liberated from the body, that's called videha-mukti. That means giving up the body, the conditioned body, giving it up. So this jivan-mukta is only available to Vaisnavas. The mayavadis or the impersonalists, the jnana yogis, they strive for liberation but it's only this videha-mukti. Because to them to have a material body means...you know, if you have a body that means you are conditioned. Because they have no idea about the transcendental purpose of this body. That this body can be engaged here in Krsna's service. Understand? Yes?

(Devotee...)

He wants to know if there is any correlation between the presiding Deities in the layers of the universe and the incarnations or Deities described in the tenth Cantos of Srimad Bhagavatam. Well, there is... you cannot make a correlation from Canto to layer like that: First Canto - first layer, Second Canto - second... That's speculation. But of course the Deity forms of the Lord are described in the various Cantos of Bhagavatam and how to serve them is described. So a devotee he knows when he sees the Lord how to worship the Lord and receive the Lord's blessing. So that's what you learn from Srimad Bhagavatam. (Devotee...) But he is doing that automatically, he sees the form of the Lord or the Lord's pure devotee because some... in some layers like in pradhan there is mula-prakrti, Durga devi, Durga devi as the acit-sakti, we mentioned, the Lord's own potency of acit, ignorance. But she is a devotee, so he respects, the devotee respects Durga devi as Vaisnavi and then she is satisfied: "OK, you can go". And then after he meets Lord Siva, Lord Siva in the realm of Brahman and when Lord Siva sees that this person who is now coming is not a mayavadi, is not a yogi but is a devotee he is very happy and he begins to chant and dance: "OK, you go, go on to Vaikuntha. Don't stay here". He will actually tell the devotee, as Sanatana Goswami describes in Brhad Bhagavatamrta, he'll tell the devotee: "This place is not for you. Go on." Yes? (Devotee...) Yes, but Matsya... Matsya has, as it is explained by Srila Prabhupada in a letter to Ekayani dd in 1970, he said these forms as Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, they assume these forms as fish, tortoise, boar in the material world as their lila but in the spiritual world.../break/

So in the spiritual world we are speaking of the Personality of Godhead, Visnu, one Personality of Godhead in different manifestations. Here in the material world these forms of the Lord expand in His particular pastime forms as a fish, as a boar and so on, for some particular lila but these are expansions of the Lila-purusottama, Prabhupada says, Krsna in His different pastime-forms. That's what Prabhupada said in this letter.

It's getting late... Four minutes left... Whose question is most important? (laughs) He says his question is more important than your. So all right, we will listen to your question.

(Devotee: It's stated that if a devotee attains success in his devotional service then fourteen generations of his...)

Descendants.

(Devotee: Yeah...and ...)

Ancestors.

(Devotee:...they also attain liberation. Does it regard...)

What a question! You call this important?

(Devotee: I'm asking in regard of my Grandfather...)

Obviously it means on the both sides.

(Devotee...)

Anyway (laughs). Yes, in another place Srila Prabhupada says ten generations back, ten generations forth, instead of fourteen. You can ask so many questions like this but the main thing is that those who are... Krsna consciousness is so powerful that those who are linked by karma to that devotee and so 'linked by karma' means on mother's side as well as father's side. There is karmic chain. So those who are linked then the both chains of karma are purified. Whether ten generations or fourteen, or this, or that... That's the point you must understand.

All right, I'm not convinced that there are anymore important questions. And it's one minute to twelve, so we will stop. And the snakes are starting to move (laugh). So we will stop now.

Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!
Srimad Bhagavatam ki jaya!
Gaura-premanande Hari-haribol !