

Converting Crows into Swans

Lecture by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Srimad Bhagavatam 1.8.33

(Los Angeles, April 25, 1973)

*apare vasudevasya
devakyām yācito 'bhyagāt
ajas tvam asya kṣemāya
vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām*

"Others say that since both Vasudeva and Devakī prayed for You, You have taken Your birth as their son. Undoubtedly You are unborn, yet You take Your birth for their welfare and to kill those who are envious of the demigods."

Prabhupāda: So there are two purposes of incarnation. That is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

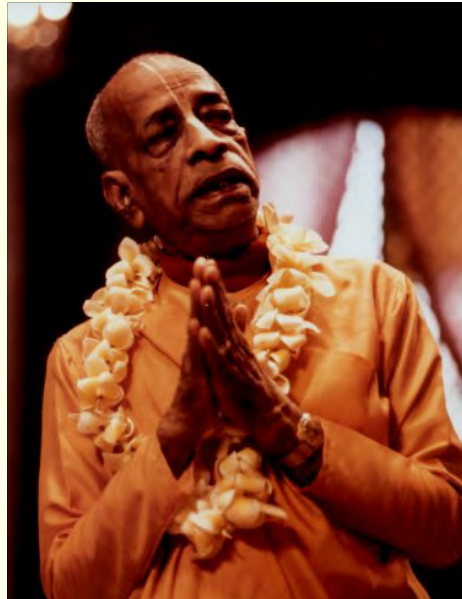
*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham*

[Bg. 4.7]

The Lord says that whenever there is irregularities, *dharmasya*, of religion, irregularities... *Glāniḥ*. *Glāniḥ* means irregularities. Just like you are executing some service. There may be irregularities. Then it becomes polluted. So *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati...* *Dharmasya glānir bhavati* means development of irreligiosity. That means if your wealth is diminished, then your poverty is increased, balanced. If you increase this side, the other side will go

up and if you increase that side, the other side... But you have to keep balance. That is required.

So in the human society, they are meant for keeping balance. What is that balance? They do not know that... It is just like balance. One side spirit, another side matter. We are now, actually, we are spirit soul. Somehow or



other we have been encaged within this body, material body. For that purpose, so long we have got this body, we have got necessities of the body, eating, sleeping, mating, defending. These are the necessities of the body. Soul does not require all these things. Soul has nothing to eat. That we do not know. Whatever we are eating, that is, that is for keeping of this body. So the bodily necessities are there, but if you simply look after the bodily necessities and do not care to look after the necessity of

the soul, that is foolish civilization. No balance. They do not know.

Just like a rascal. He's simply washing the coat, but does not take care of the body. Or a bird is in the cage and if you take care of the cage and don't take care of the bird within the cage... The bird is crying: "Ka Ka. Give me food, give me food." But you are taking care of the cage. This is foolishness. So why we are unhappy? Why, in your country especially... You are supposed to be the richest country in the world. You have no scarcity. No scarcity of food, no scarcity of motor car, no scarcity of bank balance, no scarcity of sex. Everything is there, complete, in full abundance. And still why a section of people are frustrated and confused like the hippies? They are not satisfied. Why? That is the defect. Because there is no balance. You are taking care of the bodily necessities of life, but you have no information of the soul. And there is necessity of the soul also. Because soul is the real subject matter. Body is the covering only.

So it is said that... No I'm explaining that verse. *Dharmasya glānir bhavati*. This is *dharmasya glāniḥ*, pollution of duty. *Dharma* means duty. *Dharma* is not a kind of faith. In English dictionary it is said: "religion means a faith." No, no. It is not. *Dharma* means the actual constitutional duty. That is *dharma*. So if you have no information of the soul, if you do not know what is the

need of the soul, simply you are busy on the bodily necessities of life, bodily comfort... So bodily comfort will not save you.

Suppose a man is very comfortably situated. Does it mean that he will not die? He'll die. So simply by bodily comforts you cannot exist. Survival of the fittest. Struggle for existence. So when we simply take care of the body, that is called *dharmasya glāniḥ*, polluted. One must know what is the necessity of the body and what is the necessity of the soul. The real necessity of life is to supply the comforts of the soul. And the soul can be comforted not by material adjustment. Because soul is a different identity, the soul must be given spiritual food. That spiritual food is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you give the soul the spiritual food...

Food, there are, when one is diseased, you have to give him diet and medicine. Two things required. If you simply give medicine, no diet, that will be not very successful. Both. So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for giving food, means diet and medicine, to the soul. The medicine is the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. *Bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt pumān virajyeta vinā paśuḡhnāt* [SB 10.1.4]. The Parikṣit Mahārāja said to Śukadeva Gosvāmī that: "This *Bhāgavata* discussion which you are prepared to give me, it is not ordinary thing." *Nivṛtta-tarṣair up-agīyamānāt*. This *Bhāgavata* discussion is relishable by persons who are *nivṛtta-tṛṣṇā*. *Tṛṣṇā*, *tṛṣṇā* means hankering. Everyone in this material world is hankering, hankering. So one who is freed from this hankering, he can taste the *Bhāgavata*, how palatable it is. It is such

a thing. *Nivṛtta-tarṣaiḥ*... Similarly *bhāgavata* means also, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is also *bhāgavata*. *Bhāgavata* means anything in relationship with the Supreme Lord. That is called *bhāgavata*. The Supreme Lord is called Bhagavān. *Bhāgavata-śabda*, and in relationship with Him, anything, that *bhāgavata-śabda* turns into *bhāgavata-śabda*.

So Parikṣit Mahārāja said that the taste of *Bhāgavata* can be relished by a person who has finished his hankering of



material desires. *Nivṛtta-tarṣair up-agīyamānāt*. And what is, why such thing should be tasted? *Bhavauśadhi*. *Bhavauśadhi*, medicine for our disease of birth and death. *Bhava* means "become". Our... At the present moment, we are in diseased condition. They do not know what is the diseased condition, what is the healthy condition, these rascals. they do not know anything. Still they are passing on as great scientists, philosophers... They do not inquire that: "I do not want to die. Why death is enforced upon me?" There is no such inquiry. Neither is there any solution. And still they are scientists. What kind of scientists? If you can...

Science means that you advance in knowledge so that your miserable condition of life can be reduced, minimized. That is science. Otherwise, what is this science? They are simply promising; "In future." "But what you are delivering just now, sir?" "Now just now you suffer as you are suffering, go on suffering. In future we shall find out some chemicals." No. Actually *ātyantika-duḥkha-nivṛtti*. *Ātyantika*, ultimate. *Ātyantika* means ultimate. *Duḥkha* means sufferings. That should be the aim of human life. So they do not know what is *ātyantika-duḥkha*. *Duḥkha* means suffering. So *ātyantika-duḥkha* is pointed out in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. "Here is the *ātyantika-duḥkha*, sir." What is this? *Janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi* [Bg. 13.9]. Birth, death, old age and disease.

So what you have done for vanishing or making, or nullifying this *duḥkha*, these sufferings? So there is no such thing in the material world. *Ātyantika-duḥkha-nivṛtti*. Ultimate relinquishment from all kinds of suffering is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. What is that?

*mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhālayam aśāsvatam
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ
saṁsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ*
[Bg. 8.15]

So you should read all this. You have got: *Bhāgavata*, everything explanation. This is *ātyantika-duḥkha-nivṛtti*, ultimate relinquishment from all sufferings. What is that? *Mām upetya*. "One who approaches Me or one who comes to Me, back to home, back to Godhead." So they have no knowledge what is God and whether one can go back to home, back to Godhead. It is a practical thing or not. No knowledge. Simply like ani-

mals. That's all. No knowledge. They pray: "O, God, give us our daily bread." Now ask him: "What is God?" Can he explain? No. Then whom we are asking? In the air? If I ask, if I submit some petition, there must be some person. So I do not know what is that person, where to submit this petition. Simply... They say that He's in the sky. The sky, there are so many birds also, but that is not God. You see. No knowledge, no knowledge. Imperfect knowledge, all. And they're passing on scientists, philosophers, great thinkers, writers, and... All rubbish, all rubbish. The only book is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*. All rubbish. In the *Bhāgavata* it is said:

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmīn prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'nkitāni yat
śṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaḥ*
[SB 1.5.11]

And on the other side: *na yad vacaś
citra-padaṁ harer yaśo jagat-pavitraṁ
pragṛṇīta karhicit tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham...*
[SB 1.5.10]. *Tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham*. Any literature which has no connection with the knowledge of God, *tad, tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham*, that is just like the place where the crows take enjoyment. Where the crows take enjoyment? In the filthy place. And the swans, the white swans, they take pleasure in a nice, clear water where there is garden. where is birds.

So there are, even in the animals, there are divisions. Swan class and crow class. Natural division. The crow will not go to the swan. The swan will not go to the crow. Similarly in the human society, there are crow class men and swan class men. The swan class men will come here because here everything is clear, nice, good philosophy, good food, good education, good dress, good mind, eve-

rything good. And crow class men will go to such and such club, such and such party, naked dance, so many things. You see.

So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for the swan class of men. Not for the crow class of men. No. But we can convert the crows into swans. That is our philosophy. One who was crow is now swimming like swan. That we can do. That is the benefit of Kṛṣṇa con-



sciousness. So when the swans become crows, that is material world. That is Kṛṣṇa says: *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati* [Bg. 4.7]. The living entity is engaged in this material body and he's trying to gratify the senses, one body after another, one body after another, one body, after another. This is the position. And *dharma* means to gradually turn the crows into swans. That is *dharma*.

Just like one man may be, may remain, may be very illiterate, uncultured, but he can be converted into educated, cultured man. By education, by training. So that possibility is there in the human form of life. I cannot train a dog to become a devotee. That is difficult. It can be done also. But I may not be so powerful. Just like Caitanya Mahāpra-

bhu did. When He was passing through the jungle, Jharikhaṇḍa, the tigers, the snakes, the deers, all the animals, they became devotee. They became devotee. So what was possible for me, uh, Caitanya Mahāprabhu... Because He's God Himself. He can do anything. We cannot do that. But we can work in the human society. It doesn't matter, however fallen a man is. If he follows our instruction then he can be turned.

That is called *dharma*. *Dharma* means to bring one to his original position. That is *dharma*. So there may be degrees. But the original position is that we are part and parcel of God, and, when we understand that we are part and parcel of God, that is our real position of life. That is called *brahma-bhūta* [SB 4.30.20] stage, understanding his Brahman realization, identification. So Kṛṣṇa comes... This explanation...

Just like Kuntī says that: *apare vasudevasya devakyāṁ yācito 'bhyagāt* [SB 1.8.33]. Vasudeva and Devakī prayed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead that: "We want a son like You. That is our desires." Although they were married, they were, they did not beget any child. They engaged themselves in *tapasya*, severe *tapasya*. So Kṛṣṇa came before them: "What do you want?" "Now we want a child like You." Therefore here it is said: *vasudevasya devakyāṁ yācitaḥ*. *Yācitaḥ*. "Sir, we want a son like You." Now what, where there is possibility of another God? Kṛṣṇa is God. God cannot be two. God is one. So how there can be another God to become the son of Vasudeva and Devakī? Therefore God agreed that: "It is not possible to find out another God. Then I shall become your son."

So people say that because Vasudeva and Devakī wanted Kṛṣṇa as their son,

He appeared. *Kecit*. Somebody says. *Vasudevasya devakyām yācitaḥ*. Being requested, being prayed for, *abhyagāt*, He appeared. *Ajas tvam asya kṣemāya vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām*. Others says the same thing, as I was explaining. *Pari-trāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām* [Bg. 4.8]. Actually Kṛṣṇa comes to pacify His devotee. Just like He appeared to pacify, to satisfy His devotee, Vasudeva and Devakī. But when He comes, He does the other business. What is that? *Vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām*. *Vadhāya* means killing. *Sura-dviṣām*.

There is a class of men, they are called *asuras*. They are *sura-dviṣām*. They are always envious of the devotees. They are called demons. Just like Prahlāda Mahārāja and his father Hiraṇyakaśipu. Hiraṇyakaśipu is the father of Prahlāda Mahārāja, but because Prahlāda Mahārāja was a devotee, he became envious. That is the nature of the demons. So much so envious, that he was prepared to kill his own son. The only fault is that little boy, he was chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. That is his fault. The father could not. Therefore they are called *sura-dviṣām*, always envious of the devotees. Demon means always envious of the devotees. This material world is so nuisance place that...

Just you have got a very nice example. Just like Jesus Christ, Lord Christ. So what was his fault? But the *sura-dviṣām*, the envious persons killed him. And if we find, if we analyze, what is the fault of Jesus Christ, there is no fault. The only fault he was preaching about God. And still he'd find so many enemies. He was cruelly crucified. So you'll always find this, *sura-dviṣām*. So Kṛṣṇa comes to kill these *sura-dviṣām*. Therefore *vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām*. These envious persons are killed.

But this killing business can be done without the presence of Kṛṣṇa. Because there are so many natural forces, war, pestilence, famine. Anything. Just set on working. Millions of people can be killed. So Kṛṣṇa does not require to come here to kill these rascals. They can be killed simply by Kṛṣṇa's direction, nature's law. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ* [Bg. 3.27]. *Sṛṣṭi-sṭhiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā* [Bs. 5.44]. The nature has got so much



power that it can create, it can maintain, it can annihilate, dissolve, everything. Nature is so powerful.

Sṛṣṭi-sṭhiti-pralaya. *Sṛṣṭi* means creation and *sṭhiti* means maintenance and *pralaya* means destruction. These three things nature can do. Just like this creation, material creation is natural, nature, cosmic manifestation. It is being maintained. By nature's mercy, we are getting sunlight, we are getting air, we are getting rains and thereby we are growing our food, eating nicely, growing nicely. This maintenance also being done by nature, But at any time everything can be finished simply by one strong wind. Nature is so powerful. So for killing these demons, nature is already there. Of course, nature is working under the direction of Kṛṣṇa.

Mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carā-caram [Bg. 9.10]. So if Kṛṣṇa says that these demons may be killed, then nature's one blast, one strong wind will, can kill millions of them.

So for that purpose Kṛṣṇa does not require to come. But Kṛṣṇa comes as it is stated here, that: *yācita*. Kṛṣṇa comes when He is requested by devotee like Vasudeva and Devakī. That is His coming. That is the cause of His coming. And simultaneously when He comes He also shows that, that "Anyone who is envious of My devotees, I kill them. I kill them." Of course, His killing and maintaining, the same thing. He's absolute. Those who are killed by Kṛṣṇa, they immediately get salvation, which requires millions of years to get. So people say like that, that Kṛṣṇa came for this purpose or that purpose, but actually Kṛṣṇa comes for the benefit of the devotees, *kṣemāya*. What is the meaning of *kṣemāya*? For maintenance?

Devotee: "For the good."

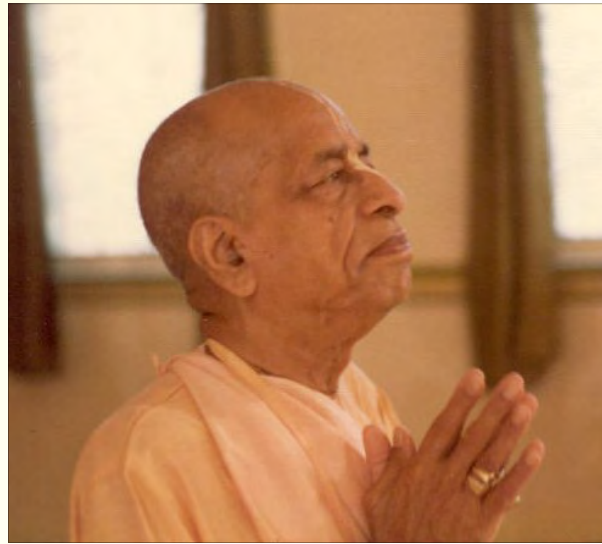
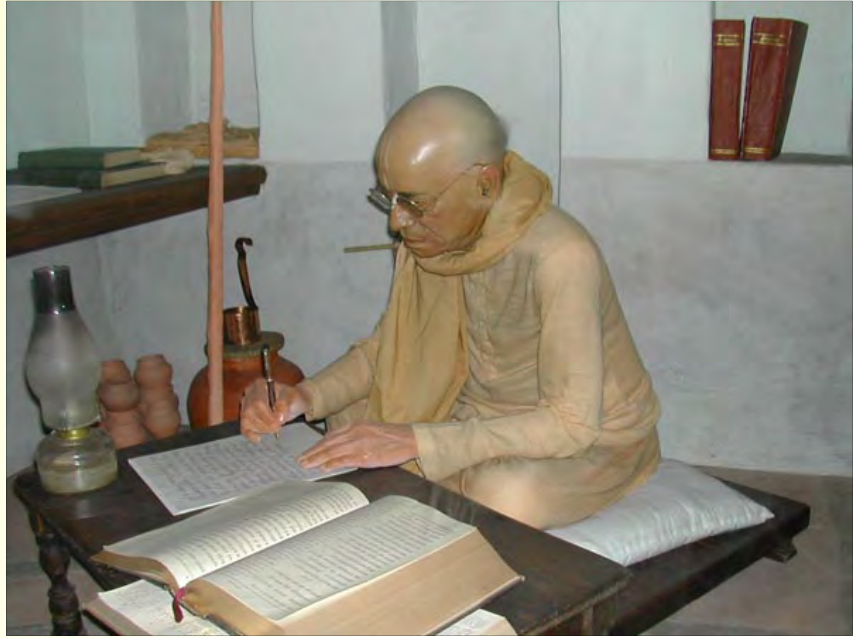
Prabhupāda: For the good. For the good of the devotees. He's always after seeing good of the devotees. Therefore from this instruction of Kuntī, our business should be always how to become devotee. Then all good qualities will come upon us. *Yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty aikānā sarvair guṇais tatra samāstate surāḥ* [SB 5.18.12]. If you simply develop your devotion, dormant devotion, natural devotion... We have got natural devotion.

Just like father and son, there is natural affection. And the son has got natural devotion to the father, for father, for mother. Similarly, we have got our natural devotion. When we are actually in danger, even the scientists, they also pray to God. But when they are not in

danger, they defy God. So therefore danger is required in order to teach these rascals that there is God. So that is natural. *Jīvera svarūpa haya nitya-kṛṣṇa-dāsa* [Cc. *Madhya* 20.108-109]. That is our natural... Artificially we are trying to banish God. "God is dead, there is no God, I am God, this God, that God." This rascaldom we shall give up. Then we shall be given all protection by Kṛṣṇa.

Thank you very much. (end)

ॐ



Hare Krishna Centre for Vedic Studies
Indraprastha Ashram
28 Evington Road
Leicester LE2 1HG
United Kingdom

e-mail: gauranga@gauranga.org
website: www.gauranga.org
tel: +44 (0) 116 254 6292
mobile: +44 (0) 7887 560 260