



ŚRĪ MAHĀNET



Since the beginning of the Millennium

JANUARY 2008



Srila A.C.
Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada

When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Kṛṣṇa fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one's behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vṛndāvana. These are all called anubhava, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify.

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ PRAPANNA-JĪVANĀMṚTAM

"Positive and Progressive Immortality"

by Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣhaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

Chapter Ten: *Avasesamṛtam* – Divine Remnants of Nectar



10.8

sṛnvataḥ sraddhaya nityam, grnatas ca sva-cestitam

natidirghena kalena, bhagavan visate hr̥di

Srimad Bhagavatam 2.8.4



"Swiftly does the Lord enter into the hearts of those who with faith constantly hear and chant the glories of His personality."

WORDS OF OUR GUARDIANS

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣhaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja
from *Loving Search for the Lost Servant*

The King Of The Cows

"May that lord of the cows be satisfied by us. Who is Indra when compared to Krishna? Krishna is the master of Indra. And yet He has appeared as the master of cows; the Supreme Absolute Truth has accepted a simple position as the keeper of cows. Superficially, He is a mere cowherd boy. But let that cowherd boy, who holds within Him the power of controlling the whole universe, be satisfied with us. We want to worship that Lord who has taken the humble position of the king of the cows."

*deve varsati yajna-viplavarusa vajrasma-
varsanilaih sidat-pala-pasu-striyatma-
saranam drstvanukampy-utsmayam
utpatyaika-karena sailamavalo*

*lilocchilindhram yatha bibrad
gosthamapan mahendram adabhit
priyan na indro gavam
Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.26.25*

The very gist of the Govardhana lila, the very substance of the pastime, is represented in this verse. The milkmen in Vrndavana used to observe a sacrifice to satisfy the king of heaven, Indra, at whose command the rain, clouds, and other subtle elementary powers move. The main wealth of the cowherd men is the cow, and the cow's main food is grass. Only rain can produce grass, and so the cowherd men used to perform sacrifice to satisfy the subtle power who is supposed to be in command of natural substances like rain.



Srila Sridhar Maharaja :

"Once I was asked by a professor of biology about alternatives to Darwinian evolution. I advised him that evolution from consciousness to matter may be understood on the basis of Berkeley's theory. Whatever we think of is really part of our consciousness."

By satisfying Indra, favorable rains would come and there would be sufficient grass. The cows could then graze easily on the grass and generate milk profusely. The gopas, the cowherd men and their families, used to make different preparations from the milk, sell them in the marketplace, and in that way earn their livelihood.

As the grazing ground in one place was finished, they would move from one forest to another. Only for the purpose of obtaining grass for the cows, Krsna's father Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men would wander from one place to the next. In this way, they lived sometimes in Vrndavana, sometimes in Nandagrama, and sometimes in Gokula. Once, Krsna wanted to assert Himself and modify the worship of Indra. He wanted to establish His own domain, Vrndavana, in its pristine glory.

Although He was only a boy, He was a boy of extraordinary capacity. He was only seven years old. But in the Padma Purana it is said that the development or

growth of special personalities is one and a half times that of ordinary persons. Although Krsna was only seven years old by ordinary calculation, He was eleven according to general calculation.

Krsna said, "Why should we perform this sacrifice to Indra? We have a direct concern with Govardhana Hill and not Indra." He announced this idea to the gopas, and somehow, willingly or reluctantly, the gopas submitted to the advice of Krsna. Nanda Maharaja was influenced by affection for his son, and, because he was the king, he told them, "This time we shall worship Govardhana Hill and not Indra."

Indra Insulted

And so the gopas, the milkmen of Vrndavana, followed Krsna's advice – some reluctantly and some willingly – and they began the sacrifice for Govardhana Hill. This news reached Indra, who thought to himself: "A boy of special capacity lives there. Now He has taken the leadership of Vrndavana and stopped this ancient sacrifice to me. For

a long time it was the tradition of the gopas to perform sacrifice to satisfy me, and now one boy is the cause of stopping my sacrifice!" He was very much enraged. Indra ordered the clouds and the wind and the lightning to attack the residents of Vrndavana.

According to Vedic understanding, all the elements are personified. In ancient days, the Aryans and Rajarsis, elevated human beings and great sages, used to see everything as persons. They saw everything in a personal way. They thought of the creepers, the trees, and everything else in the environment as persons. They understood that they were all persons who, according to karma, are wandering through the different species of life.

Once I was asked by a professor of biology about alternatives to Darwinian evolution. I advised him that evolution from consciousness to matter may be understood on the basis of Berkeley's theory. Whatever we think of is really part of our consciousness. And

consciousness means person. Everything that we may be conscious of is a person. We may think of the wind as an inanimate object, but it was thought of in the Vedic line as a person. Lightning, wind, clouds, and rain are all persons. Whatever we consider to be elementary matter, gross and subtle, were all considered by the ancient seers of the truth to be persons.

Indra commanded the wind, the clouds, and the rain to go and devastate the whole area of Gokula Vrndavana. "The residents of Vrndavana have insulted me!" He said. "They have rejected me, have stopped worshiping me, and are instead worshiping that mountain, that hill of Govardhana. I can't tolerate this insult! Go and devastate them." By the order and wrath of Indra, the master of all the higher subtle elements, heavy rain began to fall. And so thunder, hail, and rain simultaneously attacked the whole of Vraja Mandala.

Consequently, all the residents of Vrndavana were thrown into a great

disaster. Misery, pain, and sorrow afflicted the animals and the protectors of the animals, the gopas. So the helpless – the women, children, and animals of Vrndavana – had no alternative but to take refuge of Krsna. They all came to Krsna for relief. They cried, "O Krsna! Now what are we to do? You influenced us to stop the sacrifice meant for Indra, and now Indra, being vindictive, has begun to afflict us in this very heavy way. How can we live? Please save us!" They all came to Krsna for protection. Seeing this, Krsna had much pity for them. Being merciful upon them, He smiled a little, thinking, "They have all come to Me for relief."

DIVINE GUIDANCE

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

(from *Benedictine Tree of Divine Aspiration* – lecture at Mauritius college)

Krishna wanted to give some knowledge of the Vedas to Arjuna. He explained that there is a certain plane, and if we can live there, no reaction will come to us. Krishna said:
*niyatam kuru karma tvam
 karma jyayo hy akarmanah
 sarira-yatrapī ca te
 na prasiddhyed akarmanah*
 "If you do not do anything, you will not get anything. You will not even be able to survive! You must do something, so try to do something good."

[Bhagavad Gita 3:8]
*yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra
 loko 'yam karma-
 bandhanah
 tad-artham karma
 kaunteya
 mukta-sangah samacara*
 "O Arjuna, this whole world of living beings comes into bondage by their actions, except action performed as selfless duty offered to Lord Vishnu. Therefore, being free from attachment, fully engage in the performance of action for the purpose of such

sacrifice." [Bhagavad Gita 3:9]
 Actually, we need to do something good even from childhood. This is the knowledge of Srimad Bhagavatam and Krishna consciousness. Whenever we gain any knowledge, we should try to use that for a good purpose –not just for a good purpose, but we should use it in a way that will be good for everybody. If we proceed in this way, we shall be supremely benefitted in our lives as a result.



Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda
 Deva Goswami Maharaja

Failure Is The Pillar Of Success

When students study for promotion to a higher class, they endeavor with heart and soul, but not everyone is able to get the desired result because they may have many types of deficiencies. Some may fail in their class, but if they remember that "failure is the pillar of success," they can get the strength to try and try again. Even in the mundane world we must apply this process.

At first nobody can walk. When a very young child first tries to walk, he falls down, but again he tries to walk. He walks, falls down, walks, falls down, gradually gaining in strength and capacity until he is finally able to walk properly. In this way karmis, jnanis, and yogis have some prospect. But the super prospect is with those who are fully surrendered to Krishna. By their own free will they march in the line of Krishna consciousness, and they gain the benefit accordingly. In the Srimad Bhagavatam we find this advice of Prahlad Maharaj to his student classmates:

*kaumara acaret prajno
dharman bhagavatan iha
durlabham manusam janma
tad apy adhruvam arthadam*

It is necessary that in this life we try to know what is the super benefit of our human life, and the super benefit of the soul. The soul is actually transcendental, but our body is mortal. The transcendental body is living in the mortal body, whether it be a human body or any other variety of species.

Actually we are not this body – we are living inside this body. We can understand this when we see a person who is dying. At that time we cannot give them any more days. We can understand that inside the body is the spirit of that person. With the spirit is thinking, feeling, and willing, and that is called the jiva, or the soul. When a man dies, that soul leaves his temporary material body. This is not only Indian philosophy, but in the Western countries also we find famous philosophers such as Hegel who have had similar realizations.

We must try to do something good for our self, for our soul. Good is possible through the processes of humility, tolerance, and giving honor to others. We should try to avoid the opposing environment, and in that way we can happily study what is the soul, what is God, and what is the super benefit of this life. Also, we should study where we have come from, where we will go, etc. Birth and death is natural in this world, and we are always getting happiness and sadness and many

Prahlad was a devotee of Lord Nrsimhadev. His classmate friends were only between five and twelve years of age, yet when he met with them in their teacher's house he would urge them to inquire about and practice spiritual life even from childhood.

We have fortunately gained this human body. We are jivas, or souls, and we may be given any type of body according to our past activities. By some good previous activity we have been given this human body. In the human body there is a much greater capacity and possibility to learn and realize many things. Other species such as dogs, cows, etc., have only a very limited power of understanding – just enough to try to achieve some basic happiness. Real happiness, however, is not possible in this mundane world, but some realization is possible.

We use knowledge in many ways to try to gain happiness and a good result. The best thing for the jiva is to try to know what is the transcendental world's environment, and his place there. Who am I? Why am I here? What is my destination in life? After death where will I go? In this human body we can realize the answers to many such questions; and that is called *bhagavat-jnana*, *bhagavat-dharma*. If we try to read and understand such topics, we will be benefitted.

other temporary feelings. We must try to understand all these things. Prahlada Maharaj said:

*kaumara acaret prajno
dharman bhagavatan iha
durlabham manusam janma
tad apy adhruvam arthadam*

We must try to understand what is Bhagavat Dharma, and when that steady knowledge comes within us, we should try to use it to understand what is what. If not, we will be losers. [Srimad Bhagavatam 7:6:1] It is only in this human body that we can properly understand what is good and what is bad, and if we try sincerely we will get that type of knowledge.

What is necessary is sincerity, tolerance, humility and giving honor to others. These four qualities are necessary for everyone. I am very happy to observe that the people here in Mauritius are very enthusiastic and enlightened with these qualities. Furthermore, their tendency is to be real searchers, and they are practicing to do good according to their capacity, while avoiding bad things. I am very happy to see this within this small country.

I am pleased to have met you all. I do not know how much good I can do for you, but I am with you, and it is my expectation that our attempt will be fruitful in the future.

VAISNAVA CALENDAR

for Sri Dham Navadvip, India

JANUARY 2008

4. (Fri) Krishna-ekadasi. Saphala Ekadasi. Fast. Disappearance of Srila Devananda Pandit and Srimad Bhakti Prakash Aranya Maharaj.

5. (Sat) Krishna-dvadasi. Paran by 9:55 a.m. Disappearance of Sripad Bhakti Bhudeva Srauti Maharaj.

6. (Sun) Krishna-trayodasi. Disappearance of Srila Mahesh Pandit and Srila Uddharan das Thakur.

9. (Wed) Gaura-pratipada. Appearance of Srila Lochan das Thakur.

11. (Fri) Gaura-tritiya. Disappearance of Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhu and Srila Jagadish Pandit.

14. (Mon) Sriman Mahaprabhu leaves Nabadwip in the night to go to Katwa to take sannyas.

16. (Wed) Festival in remembrance of Sriman Mahaprabhu's sannyas-lila.

18. (Fri) Gaura-ekadasi. No Fast.

19. (Sat) Gaura-dvadasi. Fasting of Putrada Ekadasi. Appearance of Srila Jagadish Pandit.

20. (Sun) Gaura-trayodasi. Paran by 9:59 a.m.

22. (Tue) Purnima. Pusyabhisheka Yatra of Sri Krishna.

25. (Fri) Krishna-tritiya. Appearance of Srila Gopal Bhatta Goswami Prabhu. Disappearance of Srila Ramachandra Kaviraj.

26. (Sat) Krishna-chaturthi. Disappearance of Sripad Jadavendu Bhakti Chandan.

28. (Mon) Krishna-sasthi. Disappearance of Srila Jayadeva Goswami Prabhu.

30. (Wed) Krishna-astami. Disappearance of Srila Lochan das Thakur.

LINKS TO ONLINE NECTAR

Home page of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, Navadwip Dham

<http://www.scsmath.com>

Pictorial updates of projects, news, programs

<http://scsmath.com/new.htm>

Audio Index of talks by Srila Govinda Maharaja

<http://www.scsmath.org/audio/>

List of SCSSMath International Centers

<http://www.scsmath.com/centers.html>

Credit card contributions to the Math

<http://scsmath.com/events/creditcardontations.html>

California Math Web page in honor of Srila Govinda Maharaja

<http://california.scsmath.org>

Veranda Views - Topical photos from the Math

<http://verandaviews.com>

from Srimati Jamuna Priya devi dasi

Sri Guru Vandana

<http://www.vaisnava.com/>

SCSSMath Bookstore/purchase with credit card

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from Sripad Premavatar Prabhu

Sri Chaitanya Shridhara Govinda Mission

<http://krsna.cc>

Audio Discourses by Srila Govinda Maharaja

from Spd. Madhusudana Prabhu, Hawaii

Sri Vaishnava Tosani

<http://www.toshani.com>

from Spd. Srutasrava Prabhu

Weblog of an Itinerant Monk

<http://www.imonk.net>

from H.H. Bhakti Lalita Akinchan Maharaja

Sacred Cybertemple of The Beautiful Goldenlord

<http://www.mahaprabhu.net>

from H.H. Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja

New Subscribers to Sri Mahanet

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mahanet/join>

It all depends on our Angle of Vision



This is actually the flat
chalk drawing seen below.

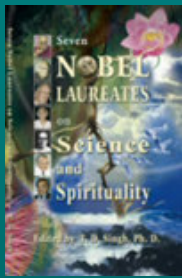


*"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.
Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.
For what are men better than sheep
or goats
That nourish a blind life within the
brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands
of prayer
Both for themselves and those who
call them friends?
For so the whole round earth is
every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet
of God."*

*Alfred Lord Tennyson
(1809-1892)*

FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

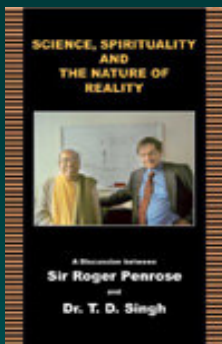
Synthesis of Science and Spirit



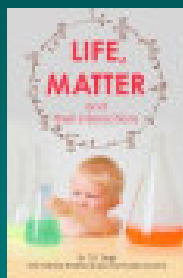
Seven Nobel Laureates on Science and Spirituality



Essays on Science and Religion



Science, Spirituality and the Nature of Reality



Life, Matter and Their Interactions

Knowledge Falsely So-called: The Theological Case Against Scientific Realism

by Justin S. Holcomb

(continued from previous issue)

Christianity and the Necessary Preconditions for Science

The Christian can be confident in a discussion on the nature and use of science, precisely because the Christian theistic worldview can provide the necessary preconditions for the intelligibility of scientific inquiry. Although the suggestion that science requires a significant number of philosophical assumptions just to conduct empirical investigation may not be new, it has special import for the present evaluation. If one views science as a truth-obtaining enterprise, its "true" theories can not refute, either explicitly or by implication, the propositional foundations upon which science itself rests. Otherwise, these theories would undermine and invalidate science as a whole and themselves by inference. Unfortunately for the realist, his/her account of science falters under the weight of numerous internal contradictions. It should be remembered that non-theists do science (and usually do so very well), but they can not give an account for the very science they are doing

without relying on the "borrowed capital" from the Christian worldview. The non-theistic scientist is able to avoid utter nihilism and skepticism in science only by being inconsistent with their own worldview and borrowing some elements of God's revelation. In order to demonstrate the veracity and implications of this claim, it is first necessary to describe and discuss briefly some of the most important presuppositions without which scientific investigation should prove impossible. A brief list of such presuppositions includes : [10]

1. The uniformity of nature: the laws, properties, or characteristics of objects and phenomena of a particular class do not vary over distance or time. Nature should be regarded as uniform.
2. Induction: since nature is considered uniform, one may, from a limited number of objects/phenomena of a class, properly induce generalizations about all objects/phenomena of that same class.
3. Ontological/epistemological realism: nature has an objective existence as an interdependent system, and is both intelligible and accessible to the human intellect.
4. Mathematical realism: nature can be described accurately by the use of mathematics.
5. Methodological, epistemic, and ethical values: examples of these would be the common claims that some methods constitute good science, others bad or pseudo-science; good theories have certain characteristics; and scientists ought to report accurately and honestly.

6. The reliability of the human mind and sensory faculties: the human mind and senses "fit" the natural world, and the use of the laws of logic aids discovery of truth and tends to falsify error.

7. Ontological/conceptual categories: observed phenomena and entities are defined a priori by known classes such as objects, facts, events, etc. and are construed in a scientific tradition as planets, waves, species, etc.

8. The usefulness/adequacy of human language to describe nature: nature corresponds to the mind in such a way that human language closely "fits" nature.

9. The existence of singularities, ultimate boundary conditions, and brute givens: certain features/constants of the cosmos are simply taken for granted (eg. the mass of a proton, some values for forces, free acts of moral agents, etc.).

The claim being made is that the Christian theistic description of the world offers these presuppositions. The philosophical preconditions for science are in the pages of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. According to Scripture, God is the transcendent and almighty Creator of heaven and earth, and everything owes its very existence and character to God's creative powers and definition (Genesis 1; Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:16-17). God makes particulars in creation the way they are and determines that they will function as they do. According to Psalm 147: 5, "God's understanding is infinite." Ephesians 1:11 declares that God sovereignly governs every event that transpires, determining what, where, when, and how anything takes place. This includes the motion of the planets to the molecular world to the death of a sparrow. Isaiah 40:12. 22- 28 celebrates the power, creation, providence, delineating, and directing of Yahweh. God has the freedom and control over the created order as the potter has over the clay (Romans 9:21). Moreover, knowledge is possible because of a corresponding capacity created in us by God.

The anti-theist worldview can not account for the uniformity of nature on which to base the scientific process. David Hume has taught us that to say the future will be like the past is to beg the question. [11] Since the uniformity of nature is an unjustified assumption in the atheistic worldview, there is no basis

upon which to engage in scientific activities. Bertrand Russell succinctly states the problem of assuming the uniformity of nature in *The Problems of Philosophy*:

The problem we have to discuss is whether there is any reason for believing in what is called 'the uniformity of nature'. The belief in the uniformity of nature is the belief that everything that has happened or will happen is an instance of some general law to which there are no exceptions...But science habitually assumes, at least as a working hypothesis, that general rules which have exceptions can be replaced by general rules which have no exceptions...Have we any reason, assuming that they (scientific laws) have always held in the past, to suppose that they (scientific laws) will hold in the future. [12]

The problem is that without a basis for the uniformity of nature there is no basis for induction. Russell continues that the business of science is to find uniformities, such as the law of gravitation and the laws of motion. Is it possible to formulate general laws of science in a world with no basis for the uniformity of nature? Russell answers this in the negative by writing the following:

Experience might conceivably confirm the inductive principle as regards the cases that have been already examined; but as regards unexamined cases, it is the inductive principle alone that can justify any inference from what has been examined to what has not been examined. All arguments which, on the basis of experience, argue as to the future or the unexperienced parts of the past or present, assume the inductive principle; hence we can never use experience to prove the inductive principle without begging the question. Then we must either accept the inductive principle on the ground of its intrinsic evidence, or forgo all justification of our expectation about the future. [13]

The Christian is not left with such a problem, precisely because the uniformity of nature and induction are compatible with the Christian "picture" of the world. God, who is providentially in control of all events,

has revealed to humans that we can count on regularities in the natural world. Because of this regularity, the endeavors of science will be fruitful. Science would be impossible without the truth of the Christian view.

Conclusion

Realism entails at least the idea that many of its scientific models name theoretical entities that have actual counterparts in the objective world; that is, some models genuinely refer. The theories regarded as "most successful" (and thus most likely to refer) are those that can account for much empirical data, and, more importantly for the matter at hand, those that prove capable of making accurate predictions. I have already noted some difficulties of using empirical data as the test for veracity, but what of predictive accuracy? As impressive as a model's ability to make accurate predictions may seem at first glance, however, the question of whether this ability establishes the positive truth-value of the model remains. In 1611, one of Galileo's more famous opponents, Robert Bellarmine, pointed out that any evidence accrued to support the Copernican model would necessarily adopt the following form of argument: If A is true, then we shall find B. We have found B, therefore A must be true. The fallacious nature of this kind of argument is called the fallacy of affirming the consequent. No scientific model can stake the truth-status of its antecedent claims upon its predictive accuracy without affirming the consequent. Bellarmine's sound argument has not been taken seriously by realists. Dr. Lauden writes:

It is little short of remarkable that realists would imagine that their critics would find the argument for realism compelling. Ever since antiquity critics of epistemic realism have based their scepticism on deep-rooted conviction that the fallacy of affirming the consequent is indeed fallacious. When Bellarmine or Hume doubted that certain theories which saved the phenomena were warrantable as true, their doubts were based on a belief that the exhibition that a theory had some true consequences left entirely open the truth-status of the theory. Indeed, many non-realists have been non-realists precisely because they believed that false theories, as well as true ones, could have true consequences. [14]

Although I should wish to concede that it is possible, or even likely, that, given the fact that realism commends so numerous and talented disciples, they may in time surmount some of the obstacles to realism mentioned herein; but the prospect that they might overcome all of them, given the apparently insuperable nature of several of them, seems but dimly remote. And until the critic of Christianity who wishes to levy against it some scientific claim or other can produce some respectable answers of their own to ground their presuppositions, they remain a proverbial paper tiger, a skeptic full of sound and fury, signifying nothing- save their own inability to justify the knowledge claims they need to discredit religious belief.

Endnotes

[1] This will be a Christian theistic response, since that is the view of the author. But I believe this argument is relevant for Judaism and Islam.

[2] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 55-65.

[3] J. P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), pp. 153-154.

[4] Malcolm Acock, "The Age of the Universe," *Philosophy of Science* 50 (2) 1983, pp. 130-145.

[5] Larry Lauden, *Science and Values* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 110-113.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 114-127.

[7] Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p. 102.

[8] Moreland, *Christianity and Nature of Science*, pp.160-165.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

[10] *Ibid.*, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, pp. 108-133.

[11] See section IV in David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.

[12] Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* (Oxford University Press), pp. 63-64.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[14] Larry Lauden, "A Confutation of Convergent Realism," *Philosophy of Science* 48:1 (March 1984), p. 45