



Ocean of Nectar

(E-Magazine for every Ekadasi)
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1) The Wonderful Opportunity of This Human Form on This Planet Earth

↓ The Grandest Ratha Yatra

How is everybody? How did you'll like the 25th Durban Ratha Yatra festival. This morning I was in Pietermaritzburg and I told them that this is one of the grandest Ratha Yatra I have seen in ISKCON. Calcutta Ratha Yatra used to be the biggest and the best before. We generally get a few million to participate and we have 8 day long amazing festivities but that's Calcutta. But outside India this kind of festival at least to me is inconceivable and after the Ratha Yatra festival I wrote to Indrayumna Maharaja and only he could do it. Maharaja has been especially empowered by Srila Prabhupada, Krishna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu to organise festivals like this. Here we have been doing it for last 25 years almost. This year we organised a festival in Gujerat and the success was amazing. But this one was completely beyond anyone's imagination like the city authorities coming forward offering us the best location and funding our festival. The government funding our festival I can't think of anytime, only San Francisco the Ratha Yatra was recognised by the local authorities as a holiday, it was announced as a holiday. But coming forward and funding our Ratha Yatra the State Premier, the Zulu King and all the government people coming and participating and being so appreciative. I heard that the mayor has been so appreciative that he already told us that we have the location now granted. I also heard should I be telling? I'm giving out all the secrets. This year the city authorities gave 900 000 Rand and for next year the city authorities pledged 5 million Rand. What an amazing achievement Srila Prabhupada would be so grateful. The manager and conductor of the symphony mentioned that in 30 years of their existence they never played to such an audience so appreciative and so large. The conductor of the symphony mentioned that if he was rating he would give 9.5 out of 10. This year they played once but next year they want to play twice. And Govinda Maharaja has to gear up also. I did not realise Maharaja was still here, get an asana for Maharaja, come sit here on top. I must admit that Govinda Maharaja is especially empowered to chant the Hare Krishna maha mantra only he could play with this 70 hand symphony! Next year the number will also increase because they want to have Indian classical

instruments as well. The symphony will organise that to have sitar and other instruments. From all different angels this has been such an amazing achievement and I feel so happy to have come here and been a part of this and witnessed this festival. How did you all feel? HHAAARRRRRIIIIIIBOOOOOOOLLLLLL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Hare Krishna thank you very much and Govinda Maharaja thank you very much. How did you like Madhava prabhu's kirtan? Madhava prabhu is also such a wonderful singer and he is actually taking ISKCON kirtan to another dimension, wherever he goes and sings devotees get completely enchanted by his singing and ecstatically join him, thank you so much. Hare Krishna. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

oà ajīāna-timirāndhasya jīānāijana çalākayā cakñur unmēlitaā yena tasmai çré gurave namaū çré-caitanya-mano-'bhēñōaā sthāpitaā yena bhū-tale svayaā rūpaū kadā mahyaā dadāti sva-padāntikam

vande 'haā çré-guroū çré-yuta-pada-kamalaā çré-gurūn vaiñēavāāç ca çré-rūpaā sāgrajātaā saha-gaēa-raghunāthānvitaā taā sa-jēvam sādvaītaā sāvadhūtaā parijana-sahitaā kāñēa-caitanya-devaā çré-rādhā-kāñēa-pādān saha-gaēa-lalitā-çré-viçākhānvitāāç ca

he kāñēa karuēā-sindho dēna-bandho jagat-pate gopeça gopikā-kānta rādhā-kānta namo 'stu te

tapta-kāicāna-gaurāigi rādhe vāndāvanēçvari vāñabhānu-sute devi praēamāmi hari-priye

vāichā-kalpatarubhyaç ca kāpā-sindhubhya eva ca patitānāā pāvanebhyo vaiñēavebhyo namo namaū

çré-kāñēa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda çré-advaita gadādhara çrévāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vānda

hare kāñēa hare kāñēa kāñēa kāñēa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

So today I wanted to share a very wonderful verse from the 11th canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. This chapter includes Uddhava Gita. Bhagavad Gita Krishna spoke to Arjuna and just before departing from this planet Krishna spoke to Uddhava giving him some very very wonderful instructions and that is known as Uddhava Gita. As a matter of fact Bhagavad Gita is the preliminary essence of Srimad Bhagavatam and in a way Uddhava Gita can be considered as the advanced conclusion of Srimad Bhagavatam. It has been pointed out that the spiritual perfection can be achieved only through 3 processes, karma yoga, jnana yoga and bhakti yoga. Bhagavad Gita predominantly deals with karma yoga although we know that out of 16 chapters, first 6 chapters deals with karma yoga, last 6 chapters deals with jnana yoga and in the middle there is bhakti yoga. From 7-12 that is dealing with bhakti. As you all

know the ninth chapter is known as the King of Knowledge Raja Vidya. Tenth chapter Krishna is revealing his spiritual opposites *vibuti*. Then eleventh chapter Krishna revealed His identity as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He shows Arjuna His *visvarupa*. Twelfth chapter actually concludes all the 6 chapters regarding bhakti. Twelfth chapter is also very important. But still Krishna in Bhagavad Gita delved into this topic of devotional service although He time and again He pointed out that devotional service is to Him, His lotus feet is THE ultimate goal of life but did not establish that point emphatically but in Uddhava Gita He has actually done that. He just pointed out that although karma yoga and jnana yoga are important but the ultimate culmination of these two processes is bhakti. He makes one point that all the other processes of spiritual advancement, eventually one has to give that up because those processes are not permanent. Like karma yoga and jnana yoga are austerity and penance and whatever one does they are not the ultimate culmination. Like when one performs karma yoga at some point he gives up karma yoga and he takes to jnana yoga. Then when he achieves the perfection of jnana then he gives up jnana and comes to bhakti so he is pointing out that the processes of karma and jnana are temporary because at some point they give them up but that is not the case with bhakti.

↓ Bhakti is the eternal occupation of a devotee

Bhakti is the eternal occupation of a devotee. Krishna is pointing out how bhakti is the ultimate goal of life. So in this way very beautifully Krishna explains that devotional service to His lotus feet is the ultimate goal of life. I have selected one verse from that chapter. The theme of this chapter is the Supremacy of devotional service.

SB 11.20.12

svargiëo 'py etam icchanti

lokaà nirayiëas tathä

sädhakaà jïäna-bhaktibhyäm

ubhayaà tad-asädhakam

Translation

The residents of both heaven and hell desire human birth on the earth planet because human life facilitates the achievement of transcendental knowledge and love of Godhead, whereas neither heavenly nor hellish bodies efficiently provide such opportunities.

↓ The importance of the human form of life.

So you got the point, do you see the importance of the human form of life. Like the of the hellish planets they

can understand, they are suffering from lower condition of existence one wants to be elevated to the higher platform, better state of existence. In the heavenly planets there is so much enjoyment, like in the Vedic scriptures there are so many instances where individuals perform thousands of years of austerity to be elevated to the heavenly planets. But here we are finding out that the residents of heavenly planets also desire to get a human form on this earth planet. Why? Because when one gets this human form of life one can achieve Krishna Consciousness. One can develop his loving relationship with Krishna, therefore this life is so special. Although heavenly planet may have better sense enjoyment or rather inconceivable opportunities for sense enjoyment but what they cannot get there is the ability to expand their consciousness to such an extent that they can understand Krishna and develop their loving relationship that opportunity is available only to the human beings. So that's why the human form of life is considered to be so special. Srimad Bhagavatam in another place is also pointing out that now that you have got the human form of life after many many possibilities and this human form of life is not only rare but this human form of life is very very uncertain because death can come at any moment and this opportunity may be lost. At any moment we cannot really predict. We cannot confidently say that we are going to live for so many years.

↓ "Although everyone is seeing so many people have died and so many people will die he thinks that he will never die."

Can we ever forecast when we are going to die or when death may come? Although everyone wants to live forever and as Yudishtir Maharaja told Yamaraja when he was asked, "what is the most amazing thing?" And do you know what Yudishtir Maharaja's answer to that was? "Although everyone is seeing so many people have died and so many people will die he thinks that he will never die." That is the natural tendency of the living entity, he doesn't want to die. He never thinks that he is going to die and its understandable why he thinks that way because he IS immortal. The spirit soul is immortal so he knows that he is immortal unfortunately when he identifies himself with his body then the body becomes subject to change. And because he identifies himself with the body he thinks now I am dying. But as a human being he gets an opportunity to transcend the bodily platform. So why the human form of life is so special? Because in the human form of life we get the opportunity to cultivate our loving relationship with Krishna. And when we achieve perfection in that practise then we can become free from this material bondage and go back to the spiritual sky that's why human form of life is so special. In the Vedas very systematically this point has also been established, why human form of life is so special. The human beings have the ability to transcend the material propensity.

What are the material tendencies or the natural tendencies of the body? The body wants to enjoy through sense gratification. What is sense gratification? Sense gratification is eating, sleeping, mating and defending. Our sense gratification is limited only to these 4 activities. The Vedas are pointing out that these are the animal propensities. When one is involved in these activities then his life is no better than an animal's. The Vedas are pointing out now you transcend these propensities. Now that you have got this wonderful opportunity transcend these animal propensities. How to do that?

↓ *Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*

Tamaso mā jyotir gamaya from this world of darkness enter into the region of light. What kind of light? Light of knowledge. The real light is the light of knowledge, real darkness is ignorance. So now enter into the region of light giving up the region of ignorance. From the world of death enter into the world of immortality. So that is the goal of this human form of light. *atatho brahmajijnasa* now you start your spiritual enquiry because only with the human form of life you can do that. In other forms this opportunity will not be there. Here what are you finding? That even the residents of heavenly planet aspire for this opportunity to get the human form of life in the earth planet. What is the hellish conditions of life? The suffering conditions and heavenly planets are the places for enjoyment. Srila Jiva Goswami gave a purport to this which has been presented in the eleventh canto. Our presentation which has been translated by Srila Prabhupada's very qualified disciples. They are saying Jiva Goswami points out that in material heaven one gets absorbed in extraordinary sense gratification and in hell one is absorbed in suffering. In both cases there is little impetus to acquire transcendental knowledge or pure love of Godhead. Excessive suffering or excessive enjoyments are both impediments and detrimental to spiritual life.

↓ Srila Prabhupada brought this knowledge out of India and distributed it all over the world

This transcendental knowledge or this knowledge of Vedas were actually confined only to the Indian subcontinent but Srila Prabhupada brought this knowledge out of India and distributed it all over the world and that is why we are getting an opportunity to perfect our human form of life. We got the human form of life it's a wonderful opportunity. How many of you think that now that you got this human form of life you have achieved an amazing opportunity? Please raise your hands. So practically all of you, thank you very much. Now the question is that we got this opportunity how to take advantage of this opportunity? So this has also been pointed out in

SB.11.20.17

nā-deham ādyaà su-labhaà su-durlabhaà

plavaà su-kalpaà guru-karēadhāram

mayānukūlena nabhasvateritā

pumān bhavābdhiā na taret sa ātma-hā

Translation

The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul.

↓ So we have a perfect boat, perfect captain and perfect condition to move forward

So we got this wonderful opportunity of this human form of life in this earth planet and this verse it has been pointed out why it is such a wonderful opportunity. It is like a very well constructed boat to cross an ocean and that boat is being captained by the bona fide spiritual master and for a boat or ship to move in the ocean it needs favourable wind and what is that favourable wind that will make the boat move forward? The instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So we have a perfect boat, perfect captain and perfect condition to move forward. Now if one does not take advantage of this wonderful opportunity then it is considered that he is a *ātma-hā* killer of the soul. So in this way Krishna instructed to Uddhava about the goal of life or the wonderful opportunity we have achieved by receiving this human form. So how many of you think that you have got a wonderful opportunity? Please raise your hands. How many of you want to take full advantage of this wonderful opportunity? How many of you think that you have the perfect opportunity? You got the human form of life in this beautiful country of South Africa, you have got the instructions of Srila Prabhupada and by the followers who are guiding you in your spiritual life, you have the perfect captain. Like there is a painting also in Lilamrita canto depicting this point. It has been pointed out that there is an ocean infested with all kinds of terrible aquatics sharks, piranhas, and there is a boat and on the flag of the boat it says ISKCON and the sail the wind of Hare Krishna and who is steering the boat? Srila Prabhupada. So that is the best way to perfect this wonderful opportunity that we got. So stay in this boat of ISKCON. Srila Prabhupada is steering this boat perfectly like when you get into an aeroplane to go to some place. What do you do? All you have to do is buy

the ticket and get into the plane with your passport and necessary visas and then what do you do? You just sit tight in the plane. Why are you so confident? Because you know that the pilot is an expert person who can fly the aircraft and the aircraft is also very safe. So that's the kind of confidence we have to have just stay in ISKCON. How many of you have joined ISKCON? Please raise your hands. How many of you think that you belong to ISKCON? Please raise your hands. How many of you who did not join ISKCON would like to join ISKCON? Please raise your hands. So take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

↓ What does it take to join ISKCON?

What does it take to join ISKCON? First of all you have to be a human being that is the first criteria. Then you have to come across the devotees or Prabhupada's books and then you get to see the facilities that you may get for your spiritual advancement in this institution. Then as you become acquainted with this institution what do you find? This is an international society with so many devotees and what is the basic prerequisite for becoming a member of ISKCON? You have to become a vegetarian not only a vegetarian but a prasadatarian. Then you have to give up all kinds of intoxicants including tea and coffee. You have to give up all kinds of immoral relationships, illicit sex and you have to give up gambling. So to join ISKCON these are the 4 regulative principles that one needs to follow and then chant the holy name of the Lord.

↓ So to be a gentleman you have to follow the 4 regulative principles

When I was young I was told that a gentleman doesn't do 3 things because I come from Bengal where vegetarianism is not very prevalent. At least I have been taught one shouldn't drink, one shouldn't have any improper and immoral relationships and one should not gamble. One who does that is bad. So to be a gentleman you have to follow the 4 regulative principles. Why? Because dharma stands on these 4 pillars. The 4 pillars of dharma are austerity, mercy, cleanliness and truthfulness. These are the 4 pillars of dharma on which dharma is standing and when these pillars break the legs of adharma grows. Pillar of austerity breaks meat eating begins, as the pillar of mercy breaks intoxication begins, as the pillar of cleanliness breaks illicit sex begins and as the pillar of truthfulness breaks gambling or cheating begins. So in order to pursue spiritual life one has to follow these 4 regulative principles.

↓ *harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam/ kalau nasly eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Why is chanting Hare Krishna so important? Because this is the way for making spiritual advancement. *harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam/ kalau nasly eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*. So this is how wonderful Srila Prabhupada organised this institution of ISKCON and provided this wonderful facilities for all of us to get that opportunity to perfect our human form. Srila Prabhupada spread this movement all over the world. And where is the centre of this Krishna Consciousness Movement? Sridham Mayapur. Why Mayapur why not Vrindavan? Because Mayapur is the place where Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared. In this age of Kali Krishna came as GAURANGA! Very good. In the age of Kali Krishna came as Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In Dvapara-yuga Krishna came as Krishna and His dhama is Vrindavan but in the Kali-yuga He came as Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Mayapur is His place, His eternal residence. Caitanya Mahaprabhu came from the spiritual sky. In spiritual sky also the topmost region is Goloka and Goloka has 2 chambers Vrindavan and Mayapur. When Krishna comes He brings His dhama and when Caitanya Mahaprabhu comes He brings Mayapur. Its an extension of the spiritual sky. HH Giriraj Swami told Prabhupada about the 2 most important things that the devotees of ISKCON have: 1. Distributing Srila Prabhupada's books all over the world; and 2. To build a wonderful temple in Sridhama Mayapur.

↓ Srila Prabhupada wanted an amazing temple to be built there so that the whole world will be awestruck.

Srila Prabhupada wanted an amazing temple to be built there so that the whole world will be awestruck. This endeavour had been going on for quite some time practically from since Prabhupada's Samadhi was built. How many of you have gone to Mayapur? Very good and you have seen Srila Prabhupada's Samadhi and what do you think of it? Isn't it amazing? Such a wonderful temple that Srila Prabhupada's devotees has offered to him. Since the Samadhi was built the devotees have been planning or wanting to build a temple in Mayapur but for various reasons it did not happen. Recently Ambarish prabhu the great grandson of Henry Ford who is a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, one of our God-brothers took it upon himself to build the temple which will cost about 60 million dollars or even more with the escalation of the price due to increased cost in materials, steel, cement, marble, everything with the passing of time becomes more and more expensive. So what we planned 4 year ago already the cost has escalated to quite an extent. Ambarish prabhu himself gave 25 million dollars The temple is going to be 350 feet high like this temple is 100 feet high so three times, in simple words that building will be a 35 story buildings with 3 domes. The central dome is massive in order to make the dome you have to have the support which is being made with stainless steel.

Generally when they cast they cast it with wood, the scaffolding. The concrete part has been completed and now we are working on the dome. It will be huge, to give you an idea Prabhupada's Samadhi looks really small compared to that. Recently one of our devotees who is quite involved in the construction an Indian devotee who lives in America, very nice devotee who also joined in Mayapur, Radhajivan das, a disciple of HH Tamal Krishna Maharaja. In one of the meetings he came up with an idea that why don't we give everyone an opportunity to take part in the construction of the temple and we thought that was a very very wonderful idea so that everyone can identify well I have done something for this project. It doesn't matter how big or how small. Previously we were going to different people asking them to come forward and to help with construction. From South Africa there is also a considerable amount of support. Only very few can donate 1 million Rand but why shouldn't we allow everyone to take part. How? We came up with an idea that everyone can donate at least one square foot area. The temple has 350 000 square feet and the construction cost of 1 foot is only 150 dollars about 1350 Rand and this has been so well received all over the world. Some devotees went to China people are not so rich and devotees are making a presentation then when they asked who can donate 1 square foot then one little girl about 6 or 7 years old she raised her hand so he asked where will you get the money and she said I don't have the money but next month is my birthday and I will tell my father to give the money and the devotee was telling me he was in tears he became very emotional to see such enthusiasm to help in Srila Prabhupada's construction of this wonderful temple. Since I had the opportunity to be here with you I thought I'll also ask you if you want please try to help according to your ability and you can tell your children and grandchildren how you made your contribution to this temple. We are trying to give everybody an opportunity to assist. Ambarish prabhu has been a wonderful support and he is the great grandson of Henry Ford and his original name is Alfred and due to the financial meltdown Ford Motor Company was in bad shape in 2007/2008 and ever since he got involved in the construction of the temple the Ford Company shares started to go up. He was telling me that it was a clear indication of Krishna's mercy. Because he wants to help Krishna is making the arrangements. How many of you want to be a part of this wonderful construction of this temple? Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

3. Srila Prabhupada appreciation

This transcendental knowledge or this knowledge of Vedas were actually confined only to the Indian subcontinent but Srila Prabhupada brought this knowledge out of India and distributed it all over the

world and that is why we are getting an opportunity to perfect our human form of life. Who is steering the boat? Srila Prabhupada. So that is the best way to perfect this wonderful opportunity that we got. So stay in this boat of ISKCON. Srila Prabhupada is steering this boat perfectly. So this is how wonderful Srila Prabhupada organised this institution of ISKCON and provided this wonderful facilities for all of us to get that opportunity to perfect our human form. Srila Prabhupada spread this movement all over the world. Srila Prabhupada wanted an amazing temple to be built there so that the whole world will be awestruck.

4. Guru Maharaja's Instructions:

- ↓ Bhakti is the eternal occupation of a devotee;
- ↓ Because when one gets this human form of life one can achieve Krishna Consciousness. One can develop his loving relationship with Krishna, therefore this life is so special;
- ↓ So that's the kind of confidence we have to have just stay in ISKCON and
- ↓ You have to become a vegetarian not only a vegetarian but a prasadaterian. Then you have to give up all kinds of intoxicants including tea and coffee. You have to give up all kinds of immoral relationships, illicit sex and you have to give up gambling.

(The content of this E-magazine was based on a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami at ISKCON Chatsworth on 7 April 2013)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)