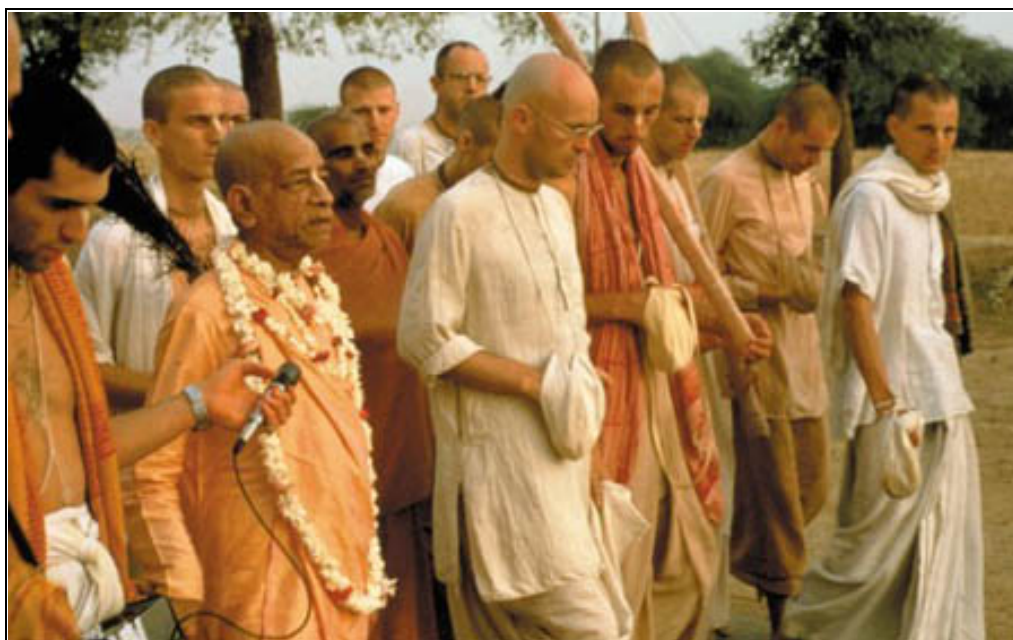


ALL GLORY TO SRI GURU AND GAURANGA

THE ASTROLOGICAL NEWSLETTER

Mithuna Twiins Astrological Services
“Home of the Bhrigu Project”



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya: International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Above: Srila Prabhupada instructs the world as devotees gather like bees to honey: That's ever-devoted Shrutakirti on the mike, our elder Rupanuga on Prabhupada's left, talented Yadubara just behind and steadfast Dhananjaya bringing up the rear. Exalted servants of the Paramhansa one and all.

Chant this mantra:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

...and your life will be sublime

In this issue:

Astrology of the Kumbha Mela

Also: The Birth of King Parikshit

The Astrological Newsletter (Please e-share it with your friends)

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed.

Abhaya Mudra Dasi

Jyotish Shastris, &tc.

Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

14 Feb. 2013 (#33) 526 Gaurabda Era. The 5th day of the waxing Moon of the Vaishnava month of Magha (Madhava *shukla panchami*). Vasanta Panchami, Saraswati Puja, Appearance of Srimati Vishnupriya Devi, Appearance of Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami, Disappearance of Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur, Appearance of Sri Pundarika Vidyanidhi, Appearance of Sri Raghunandana Thakur.

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Dear Prabhus,

Dandavats to the Vaishnavas and welcome to the issue. This issue covers a lot of ground. From the planets that start each of the four Kumbha Melas, to the life of plants; from Prabhupada's instructions for a sound *grihasta ashram* to the coming "comet of the century" there is something for all devotees.



As we go to press I recall a story that is well-known in India about Sri Shankaracharya. As we all know, he is the incarnation of Lord Shiva who appeared in Kerala over a thousand years back at the command of the Supreme Lord Narayana. Even as a child he felt the urge to take *sannyasa*, but naturally his mother would not allow that. So one day while swimming in the River Purna, a crocodile caught hold of the eight-year-old's leg. The lad yelled to his mother on the shore, "Now I am doomed. Let me die as a *sannyasi*." Tearfully, the mother agreed. At that moment the crocodile opened his jaws and the boy stepped out and came ashore, now with the mentality and poise of a renunciate. No crocodile has been seen in the Purna since.

This issue carries an essay on the “Stars of King Parikshit.” Therein we discuss the meaning of *graha*, a word which is translated alternatively as “crocodile, planet, seizing,” etc. As *samsari jivas* we are unaware of how much the *nava-grahas* or nine planets—or rather the personal demigods who control them—have over our lives. Here in the world of birth and death we conditioned living entities are as trapped as a man doomed in the mouth of a crocodile. It is only by the grace of the pure devotee who gives the medicine of the holy name that the jaws of the crocodile of material Nature can open up to allow us release from the grip of the *grahas* and passage to the Spritual Sky. By the grace of the Holy Names of the Lord we can transcend this influence of so-called good and bad *karma* as ordained by the *grahas* and go back to home, back to Godhead to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. That is the mercy of Sri Guru and Gauranga.

Thanks for reading, and enjoy the issue.

Always wishing you the very best in Krishna consciousness,

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed.

Kumbha Mela, the world’s largest gathering—religious or otherwise—is now in progress at Tirtharaja Prayaga where is it observed every twelve years. However, there are other Kumbha Melas that are organized at three other major tirtha-bhumis. The Puranas describe when and where these are held according planetary movements as Abhaya Mudra Dasi explains in detail ...

Planets of the Kumbha Mela

Stars of the Ocean of Nectar

Abhaya Mudra Dasi



Devotees of ISKCON join the throng of pilgrims to perform puja to the Triveni during Kumbha Mela

As described in the 8th canto of *Srimad Bhagavatam*, long, long ago at the beginning of creation the demigods and demons cajoled the king of snakes Vasuki to act as their rope in order to churn the Ocean of Milk. With the object in mind of extracting the nectar of immortality from the ocean, they set about churning. As all devotees know, once the nectar manifested Lord Vishnu appeared and personally supervised the task of distribution to insure that the nectar would go to the demigods. Nonetheless once the demigods had control of the nectar, the *guru* of the demons Shukracharya expressed his dissatisfaction with the turn of events. He urged his demon followers to chase after the demigods and seize the nectar from them.

Noting the determination of Shukracharya, the *guru* of the demigods, Brihaspati passed the nectar-filled pot or *kumbha* to Jayanta, the son of Indra. Brihaspati ordered the other demigods to protect Jayanta while he battled with Shukracharya. Wishing to lay their hands upon the pot of nectar, the demons chased after the demigods for twelve days. In the meantime the demigods were drinking the nectar although they were forced to move from here to there being pursued by the followers of Shukracharya.

Fatigued, Jayanta needed to pause at four places in order to rest. Meanwhile, Chandra, the demi-god of the Moon and controller of the ocean tides, made sure that the son of Indra did not spill any of the liquid of immortality. The all-seeing demigod of the Sun guarded the vessel that it should not be broken. The grave and serious Shani or Saturn, who controls the results of *karma*, guarded Jayanta that he should not be tempted to drink any of the nectar by himself. Despite being watched by the powerful demigods, Jayanta spilled a few drops of nectar at the each of the four places where he rested. Those four places became the Kumbha Mela-stans. They are Prayag, Haridwar, Ujjain, and Nasik.

Ever since time immemorial, those who desire the benefit of the nectar of immortality attend these Kumbha Melas. The demigods were chased for twelve days which equals twelve Earthly years. Twelve years also equals one tour of Jupiter through the twelve signs of the zodiac and indicates that the demigods traveled throughout the entire universe while being chased by the demons. Attending the Kumbha Mela—whether at Prayag, Nasik, Ujjain or Haridwar—is therefore equal to a trip around the entire universe.

There are special astrological configurations which determine when a Kumbha Mela is held at each of the four *punya bhimis*. The Sun, Jupiter and Moon all played an important role in keeping the nectar from the hands of the demons. Therefore the time of the Kumbha Mela becomes fixed as per the astrological positions of these three planets.

—Kumbha Mela is held at Haridwar in Uttarakhand—where the holy Ganga leaps from the mighty Himalayas and enters the plains—when Jupiter is in Aquarius and Sun enters Aries (Guru Kumbha, Surya Mesha).

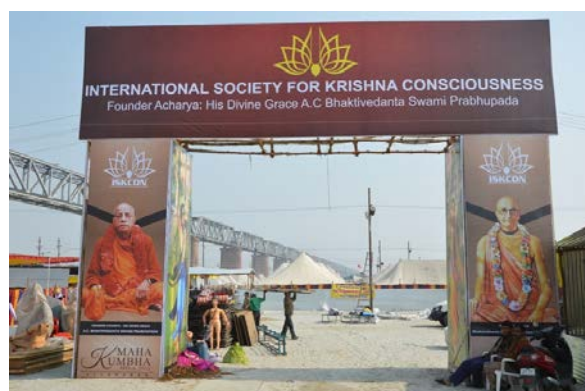
—Kumbha Mela is held at Prayag—modern day Allahabad at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and mystical Saraswati—when Jupiter is in Aries and the Sun and Moon enter Capricorn (Guru Mesha, Surya-Chandra Makara). Or when Jupiter is in Taurus and Sun enters Capricorn around the new moon day in the month of Magha (Guru Vrishabha, Makara Sankranti, Magha Amavashya). A similar configuration marked the start of the Kumbha Mela at Prayag this year.

—Kumbha Mela is held on the banks of Kshipra River at Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh when Jupiter is in Scorpio and Sun enters Aries (Guru Vrischika, Surya Mesha—Scorpio and Aries are the two signs owned by Mars, and Ujjain is the birth place of Mars or Mangal, just beside the Sandipani Muni Ashram). Or when Jupiter enters Libra and Sun and Moon remain together in the month of Damodar (Guru Tula, Kartik Amavashya). This latter Kumbha Mela is called Moksha Dayak Kumbha and attendance carries the promise of freedom from all material bondage.

—Kumbha Mela is held on the banks of the Godavari River at Nasik in Maharashtra when Jupiter and Sun are in Leo (Guru, Surya Simha). Or when Jupiter, Sun and Moon enter Cancer on the day of the dark Moon (Guru, Surya, Chandra Karkataka).

This year the Kumbha Mela began on Makara Sankranti when the Sun entered Capricorn which occurred on 14 January. As explained in the *Bhagavata's* Fifth Canto, this moment marks Surya Narayana's change from his southern path (*dakshinayana* or the region of the *pitris*) into his northern route (*uttarayana*) and into the region of the *devatas*. When the *mela* begins on Makara Sankranti it becomes especially auspicious and is called Kumbha Snana-yoga. On the day of Makara Sankranti the passage from our Earth into the higher planets opens up and thus allows the soul easy attainment of the celestial regions. For such reasons, the Kumbha Mela is popular among many classes of elevationists in India and throughout the world.

Devotees of Sri Krishna are usually not so much interested in attending the Kumbha Mela for any sort of material reward since they have no interest in promotion to the higher material planes. However even Srila Prabhupada attended the festival during 1971 (the *ardha-kumbha* or “6-year half *mela*”) and in 1977 (the *purna-kumbha*). By



his example Srila Prabhupada showed that it is always beneficial for devotees to preach the ultimate message of Krishna consciousness to aspiring transcendentalists on such occasions. As far as personal rewards are concerned, the devotee's view of such *melas* is explained by Srila Prabhupada in his discussion of Prayag's yearly Magha Mela in *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita, Madhya-lila* 18.145, Purport):

“If one goes to Prayaga and bathes at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna in the month of Magha, he attains the result of giving hundreds and thousands of cows in charity. Simply by bathing for three days there, he attains the results of such a pious activity.’

Because of this, the Sanodiya *brahmana* was very eager to go to Prayaga and bathe. Generally *karmis* (fruitive laborers) take advantage of bathing there during the month of Magha, thinking that they will be rewarded in the future. Those who are situated in devotional service do not very strictly follow this *karma-kandiya* process.” ♪

Srila Prabhupada on Astrology: A great personality is known by his deeds which in turn are foreseen by the horoscope at the exact moment of birth. The planets mirror a future that has already been determined by past life piety. Those planets work together to shape his destiny as we can see in the case of King Parikshit.

Birth of Maharaja Parikshit

Hero of Srimad Bhagavatam

Patita Pavana das Adhikary



Through the astrological arrangement of the planets—that is, according to the rising sign, planetary house positions, *rashi* or signs of planets, etc.—the past and future fate of anyone who takes birth can be ascertained by an expert *jyotish shastri*. Srila Vyasadeva explains the foundational elements of astrology here

and there in the *Bhagavata* and other *Puranas* while the specific details have been filled in by his father Sri Parashara Muni, and by those who follow Parashari *jyotish*. Any study of astrology without a foundation in the *Puranas*, as is commonly seen today among fad astrologers, is patently useless. Such non-Vaishnava would-be soothsayers learn a few rules by rote though they are utterly lacking in a personalist understanding of stellar philosophy based upon Krishna consciousness. And that is why Srila Prabhupada famously advised us to avoid *karmi* (non-devotee) astrologers.



King Parikshit chastises the wicked lord of sin, Kali who pleads for his life ©BBT

Sage Narada says that if you want to find a perfect *muhurta*, then you must wait millions of years. And sometimes when such a precious *muhurta* arrives, the Lord, His expansions or His representatives take advantage of the auspicious planetary alignments and appear for the upliftment of the world. This article will give evidence from a verse and Bhaktivedanta Purport of *Srimad Bhagavatam* that describes such an auspicious moment: the glorious birth of King Parikshit.

There is a significant word in that verse (given below): *grahodaye*. *Graha* means in a broad sense “planet,” but the Western misconception of a massive ball of material energy—a planet—that magically circles in space does little justice to the term *graha*. In fact, the Western concept of dead planets actually negates the very personal foundation of astrology because they have no understanding of the great controllers, the powerful demi-gods, who are the personalities behind the *grahas*. On the other hand, the Vedic astrological concept is not one of mere planets, but of *grahas*, or power points. *Graha* in astrology implies a personal force or energy for a certain purpose. The concept of *graha* must be realized to grasp astrology in its original sense as Lord

Krishna, the creator of this great science of light, intended. And that is why only a Vaishnava, a personalist, can be an astrologer. All others, whether Mayavadis or *karmis*, are excluded by virtue of their inability to understand the different personalities of the demigods as representatives of the Supreme Lord, and the personal forces these powerful representatives of Krishna control.

The *Online Sanskrit Dicitonary's* definition of the word *graha* (<http://spokensanskrit.de/index.php?script=HK&beginning=0+&input=graha&trans=Translate&direction=AU>) imparts the principle of astrology in a nutshell. *Graha* means “to seize, take, catch, grasp, conceive or lay hold of.” In this way the results of one’s past *karma*, as directed by the great controllers of the planets, seize the individual and make him a victim of his previous works whether for suffering or so-called enjoyment. *Graha* means also “tenacity, alligator, large sea creature or prisoner” in the sense that one is seized by his *karma* as an alligator or aquatic predator turns his prey into his prisoner and adamantly refuses to let go. In this sense, eclipses are also referred to as *grahans* because Rahu seizes the Sun in his shadowy grip.

The *graha* term also means a “ladle” which holds a specified amount because that is what we receive as per our charts, a specific amount of *karma-phal* measured accurately against our good and bad deeds of *purva-punya*. We are ladled out proportions of this much enjoyment and that much suffering. The devotee who has renounced both suffering and enjoyment in favor of the eternal enjoyment of loving exchanges with Krishna in a mood of devotional service understands his debt to the spiritual master for freeing him from the ladle of *karma*. In other words, by virtue of the Holy Names of the Lord as given by the bona fide spiritual master at initiation, one transcends the influences of the planets that have bound him since time immemorial. Hence by the divine grace of Sri Guru we are released from the power of the *grahas* as Rahu must give up his grasp on the Sun or Moon when the time for the end of the eclipse arrives.

In the verse under discussion the exact word that is used is *grahodaya*. This means *graha-udaya*, which is the rising or coming into position of a proper planetary alignment. Such unique astrological permutations are measured to exactly foretell the future events in the unfolding life of anyone who takes birth.

Each of the demi-gods who control material nature in this mustard seed Universe are entrusted with portfolios to rule over different types of energy that affect every *jataki*, or “one who is born.” The specific energies each of the planets as representatives of the Supreme Lord are described in the fifth canto of the *Bhagavatam*. Jupiter is the planet of devotion, religion or big business. Saturn is the planet of hard luck or, in his higher octave, of austerity and penance. Mars is the planet of strife or boldness, depending upon his position in the chart. The feminine Moon is the planet of the mind and of nourishment while the masculine Sun is the planet of ego on one hand and self-realization on the other. Thus the personal understanding of a planet as *graha* can be

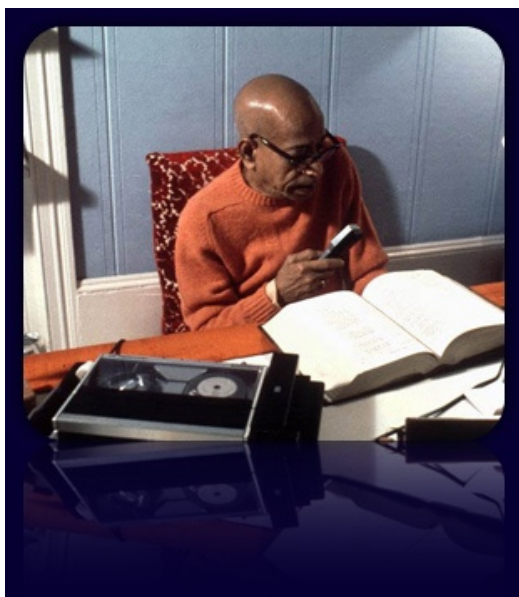
ascertained from the following verse. These are understandings that only the Vaishnava can properly comprehend.

In the verse and Bhaktivedanta Purport regarding the appearance of King Parikshit (SB 1.12.12), *grahodaya* refers to the planets placed in auspicious positions that herald the future heir to the throne of King Pandu.

*tataḥ sarva-gunodarke tataḥ sanukula-grahodaye
jajne vamsa-dhara pandor bhuyah pandur ivaujasa*

“Thereupon, when all the good signs of the zodiac gradually evolved, the heir apparent of Pandu, who would be exactly like him in prowess, took birth.” (SB 1.12.12)

BHAKTIVEDANTA PURPORT: Astronomical calculations of stellar



influences upon a living being are not suppositions, but are factual, as confirmed in *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Every living being is controlled by the laws of nature at every minute, just as a citizen is controlled by the influence of the state. The state laws are grossly observed, but the laws of material nature, being subtle to our gross understanding, cannot be experienced grossly. As stated in the *Bhagavad Gita* (3.9), every action of life produces another reaction, which is binding upon us, and only those who are acting on behalf of Yajna (Vishnu) are not bound

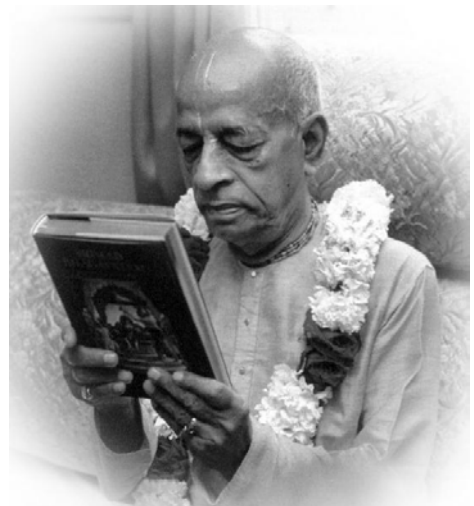
by reactions. Our actions are judged by the higher authorities, the agents of the Lord, and thus we are awarded bodies according to our activities. The law of nature is so subtle that every part of our body is influenced by the respective stars, and a living being obtains his working body to fulfill his terms of imprisonment by the manipulation of such astronomical influence. A man's destiny is therefore ascertained by the birth time constellation of stars, and a factual horoscope is made by a learned astrologer. It is a great science, and misuse of a science does not make it useless.

Maharaja Parikshit or even the Personality of Godhead appear in certain constellations of good stars, and thus the influence is exerted upon the body thus born at an auspicious moment. The most auspicious constellation of stars takes place during the appearance of the Lord in this material world, and it is specifically called *jayanti*, a word not to be abused for any other purposes. Maharaja Parikshit was not only a great *kshatriya* emperor, but

also a great devotee of the Lord. Thus he cannot take his birth at any inauspicious moment. As a proper place and time is selected to receive a respectable personage, so also to receive such a personality as Maharaja Parikshit, who was especially cared for by the Supreme Lord, a suitable moment is chosen when all good stars assembled together to exert their influence upon the King. Thus he took his birth just to be known as the great hero of *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

This suitable arrangement of astral influences is never a creation of man's will, but is the arrangement of the superior management of the agency of the Supreme Lord. Of course, the arrangement is made according to the good or bad deeds of the living being. Herein lies the importance of pious acts performed by the living being. Only by pious acts can one be allowed to get good wealth, good education and beautiful features. The *samskaras* of the school of *sanatan-dharma* (man's eternal engagement) are highly suitable for creating an atmosphere for taking advantage of good stellar influences, and therefore *garbhadhan-samskara*, or the first seedling purificatory process prescribed for the higher castes, is the beginning of all pious acts to receive a good pious and intelligent class of men in human society. There will be peace and prosperity in the world due to good and sane population only; there is hell and disturbance only because of the unwanted, insane populace addicted to sex indulgence.

Always practical, Srila Prabhupada has ended on an instructive and cautionary note. The implication is that through unrestricted sex indulgence, unworthy *jivas* whose birth charts reflect the sins of their past lives, take birth and drag society down through undermining any remaining moral standard. Whether one is born for poverty and sin or for rising to the post of world savior, all that is seen in his *graha-udaya* of birth chart. And that is why the equiposed devotee looks upon all sorts of *karma-phal*, whether leading to enjoyment or to misery, as one and the same.



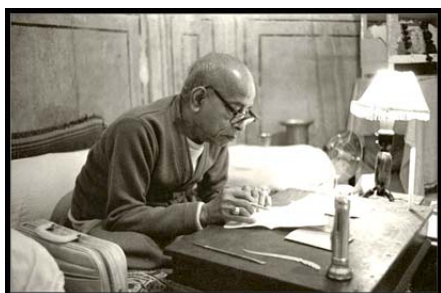
As far as the subject of sexual indulgence mentioned by Srila Prabhupada, we note that even farmers plant only at the right time as to insure a good crop. When plants are afforded that benefit, should not Vaishnavas procreate when the stars and the time of night are properly aligned? But that subject must remain aside for a separate article. ♪

Srila Prabhupada wrote tens of thousands of letters, and each one was as good as shastra. Receiving a letter from Prabhupada was akin to being handed divine instruction from the Supreme Lord Himself. The following letter stresses the importance of grihasta ashram, the foundation of Vedic society.

Letter from Srila Prabhupada:

Krishna Conscious Marriage

Patita Pavana das Adhikary



Through his *Srimad Bhagavatam* translations and purports, Srila Prabhupada recommended that astrology be utilized to establish harmonious marriages. Matching birth charts is indisputably an important element in establishing a solid *grihasta ashram*, which is the pillar of the other three *ashrams*. First let the husband and wife be devotees. Then second, let their charts reflect agreeable compatibility in the form of good procreative abilities, a harmonious life together, minimal obstacles and shared happiness as they progress in *bhakti*.

For more on Srila Prabhupada's instructions on using of astrology for Krishna conscious marriage, see this: <http://www.dandavats.com/?p=8169>. There you will see how Srila Prabhupada recommends mutual *nakshatra* compatibility between the spouses. *Nakshatra* compatibility—whether one is *deva gana*, *manushya gana* or *rakshasa gana* and how a couple's *nakshatras* reflect harmoniously—is the first step to the many layers of the fine science of matching horoscopes. As far as the more important aspect of marriage, that being the couple's shared loving devotion to the Supreme Lord or Krishna consciousness, read the following letter from Srila Prabhupada. 🌀

04 Jan. 1973

Bombay

My dear Madhukara,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated December 22, 1972, and I have noted the contents with care. For these questions arising between married husband and wife, you are requesting me to leave your wife and take the vanaprastha order of life, for these questions you must consult with and take permission from presidents and GBC. Yes, I know your wife Lilasakti, and I know that she is a very serious and advanced disciple. But now you are married to her, there is some obligation according to our Krishna consciousness or Vedic system. These things cannot be taken

so lightly, otherwise the whole thing will become a farce. Simply get married without considering what is the serious nature of married life, then if there is little disturbance, or if I do not like my wife or my husband, let me go away, everyone else is doing like that. So in this way the whole thing is becoming a farce.

You say that your "association together was hindering your advancement." But Krishna consciousness marriage system should not be taken in that way, that if there is any botheration that means something is hindering my spiritual progress, no. Once it is adopted, the grihastha life, even it may be troublesome at times, it must be fulfilled as my occupational duty. Of course, it is better to remain unmarried, celibate.

But so many women are coming, we cannot reject them. If someone comes to Krishna it is our duty to give them protection. Krishna has informed us in Bhagavad-gita that even women and sudras and others inferior class of men can take refuge in Him. So the problem is there, the women must have a husband to give protection. Of course, if the women can remain unmarried, and if there is suitable arrangement for the temple to protect them, just like in the Christian Church there is nunnery for systematic program of engaging the ladies and protecting them, that is also nice.



Marriage ceremony performed by Srila Prabhupada 1969 at ISKCON Boston. l to r: Saradiya and Vaikunthanath, Rukmini and Baradwaja and Jahnava and Nanda Kishore. Photo: Uddhava das, ISKCON Press.

But if there is sex desire, then how to control it? Women are normally very lusty, lustier than men, and they are the weaker sex, it is difficult for them to make spiritual advancement without the help of a husband. For so many reasons, our women must have a husband. That's all right, but if once they have got a husband and he goes away so quickly, that will not be very much happy for them.

Now I do not know the situation in your particular case, I am simply giving you the general policy or background understanding. We should never think of our so-called advancement as being conditioned by or dependent upon some set of material circumstances such as marriage, vanaprastha, or this or that. Mature understanding of Krishna consciousness means that whatever condition of life I am in at present, that is Krishna's special mercy upon me, therefore let me take advantage in the best way possible to spread this Krishna consciousness movement and conduct my spiritual master's mission. If I consider my own personal progress or happiness or any other thing personal, that is a material consideration.

If there was an unhappy adjustment for becoming married, why you got married at all? Whatever is done, is done, that is a fact, but I am only pointing out that once before you did something without a proper study of your real responsibility, now you are contemplating again some drastic action in a similar manner. Therefore consider it carefully in this light.

There is one verse from *Bhagavad-gita*:

*yasman nodvijate loko lokan nodvijate ca yah /
harsamarsa-bhayodvegair mukto yah sa ca me priyah*

"He for whom no one is put into difficulty and who is not disturbed by anxiety, who is steady in happiness and distress, is very dear to Me." (12.15)

One mistake of judgment often made by the neophyte devotees is that any time there is some disturbance or some difficulty they are considering that the conditions or the external circumstances under which the difficulty took place are the cause of the difficulty itself. That is not the fact. In this material world there is always some difficulty, no matter in this situation or that situation. Therefore simply by changing my status of occupation or my status of life, that will not help anything. Because the real fact is that if there is any difficulty with others; then that is my lack of Krishna consciousness, not theirs. Is this clear?

Krishna says that His dearest devotee is one who does not put others into difficulty, in fact, who puts no one other into difficulty. So try to judge the matter on these points, whether or not you are putting either your wife or yourself into some difficulty.

The right understanding of *Bhagavad-gita* is Arjuna's understanding. In other words, Arjuna came to the

conclusion that he must perform his occupational duty, not as a material obligation, for reasons of wife, family, friends, reputation, professional integrity, like that—no.

Rather he must conduct the functions of his station of life only as a devotional service performed for Krishna. That means that devotional service is what is important, not my occupational duty. But it does not mean that because occupation duty is not the real consideration, that I should give it up and do something else, thinking that devotional service may be carried on under whatever circumstances which I may whimsically decide. Krishna recommended that Arjuna remain as he was, not to disrupt the order of society and go against his own nature just for the sake of convenience.

Our occupational duty is not arbitrary, that means once we have taken up some field of action, if we are advanced in our understanding, then we shall not change it for another. Rather our devotion is the important factor, so what does it matter what I am doing so long my work and energy are completely devoted to Krishna?

Just like Krishna, He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He has no work, neither He has anything to do, still He comes here to teach us this lesson. He accepts not only His occupational duty as cowherd boy, royal prince, but also He accepts married life, He enters politics, He is philosopher, He is even chariot driver during a great battle, He does not give example of Himself avoiding His occupational duty. So if Krishna Himself is exhibiting by His own conduct what is the perfection of existence, then we should heed such example if we are intelligent.

Even supposing there is a wife at home, with children, that does not matter, that is no hindrance to our spiritual life. And once we have accepted these things, occupational duties, we should not lightly give them up. That is the point. Of course, our occupational duty is as preachers of Krishna consciousness. So we must stick to that business under all circumstances; that is the main thing. Therefore married, unmarried, divorced, whatever condition of life, my preaching mission does not depend on these things.

The varnasrama-dharma system is scientifically arranged by Krishna to provide facility for delivering the fallen souls back to home, back to Godhead. And if we make a mockery of this system by whimsically disrupting the order, that we must consider. That will not be a very good example if so many young boys and girls so casually become married and then go away from each other, and the wife is little unhappy, the husband is neglecting her in so many ways,

like that. If we set this example, then how the thing will go on properly?

Householder life means wife, children, home, these things are understood by everyone, why our devotees have taken it as something different? They simply have some sex desire, get themselves married, and when the matter does not fulfill their expectations, immediately there is separation--these things are just like material activities, prostitution. The wife is left without her husband, and sometimes there is a child to be raised, in so many ways the proposition that you, and some others also, are making becomes distasteful.

We cannot expect that our temples will become places of shelter for so many widows and rejected wives, that will be a great burden and we shall become the laughingstock in the society. There will be unwanted progeny also. And there will be illicit sex life; that we are seeing already. And being the weaker sex, women require a husband who is strong in Krishna consciousness so that they may take advantage and make progress by sticking tightly to his feet. If their husband goes away from them, what will they do? So many instances are already there in our Society, so many frustrated girls and boys.

So I have introduced this marriage system in your Western countries because there is custom of freely intermingling male and female. Therefore marriage required just to engage the boys and girls in devotional service, never mind distinction of living status ... But our marriage system is a little different than in your country, we do not sanction the policy of quick divorce. We are supposed to take husband or wife as eternal companion or assistant in Krishna consciousness service, and there is promise never to separate. Of course if there is any instance of very advanced disciples, married couple, and they have agreed that the husband shall now take sannyasa or renounced order of life, being mutually very happy by that arrangement, then there is ground for such separation.

But even in those cases there is no question of separation, the husband, even he is sannyasa, he must be certain his wife will be taken care of nicely and protected in his absence. Now so many cases are there of unhappiness by the wife who has been abandoned by her husband against her wishes. So how can I sanction such thing?

I want to avoid setting any bad example for future generations, therefore I am so much cautiously considering your request. But if it becomes so easy for me to get married and then leave my wife, under excuse of married life being an impediment to my own spiritual progress, that

will not be very good at all. That is misunderstanding of what is advancement in spiritual life.

Occupational duty must be there, either this one or that one, but once I am engaged in something occupational duty, then I should not change that or give it up, that is the worst mistake. Devotional service is not bound up by such designations. Therefore once I have chosen, it is better to stick in that way and develop my devotional attitude into full-blown love of Godhead. That is Arjuna's understanding.

Hoping this meets you in good health,

Your ever well-wisher,

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami 

The shape of the world upon which we live is a perennial debate amongst that pits shastra against modern science...

“Round and Round We Go!”

The December issue of **The Astrological Newsletter** (http://ebooks.iskcondesiretree.info/pdf/Astrological_Newsletter/THE_ASTROLOGICAL_NEWSLETTER_-_Issue-33_-_2012_December_23.pdf) carried evidence from the *Puranas* and *Mahabharata* that the earth is not a globe spinning in space with water magically sticking to its sides in defiance of the laws of Nature. Despite much modern scientific evidence apparently to the contrary, the *shastras* which we follow do not conform to the opinion of modern scientists. Hereunder is a letter we received from a nice devotee who might appear to side with some modern scientific views.

HARE KRSNA!!! DANDAVATS!!! AGTGM!!! AGTSP!!!

Hope this find you in good health. I just wanted to comment on the points that you raised only in regards to the Earth not being round, but flat. Please have a look at this video which is evidence of the earth being round http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_W280R_Jt8.

I would like to share something from my end. Even the *Bhagvatam* mentions earth to be a spherical object and talks about sunrise and sunsets. In terms of the flat view in Canto 5 specifically, it is given in order to give the observer a perspective of the universe. Whenever we take perspective, we use a reference point as ground 0. In this case India on planet Earth and the universe is described from that point. So this geocentric view is to give an observer something to baseline on. We can explain the universe by baselining it on various reference points.

We use modern technology of flying, mobile, GPS using the computational logic based on the fact that the Earth is round. I think the fighting point

with science is the fact that they believe life came from matter and we know for a fact that life comes from life. Apart from this, the logic of electron movements, earth being round, *et al* are based facts on the way KRSNA has made the nature work so we don't need to put that down as being heresy.

I just thought of sharing this with you. Please let me know your comments.

Your servant,
Vrajanath Krsna das

We respond:

My dear Vrajanath Krishna das Prabhuji,

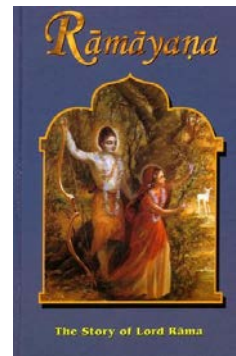
Blessings upon you. Thanks very much for your letter and for your interest in **The Astrological Newsletter**. I have seen the video you recommended which is based around modern scientific theory. In their own way they have proven their thesis to their satisfaction, that the earth is round. Well, I can also respond with another video that in my opinion offers harder evidence that is just as scientific and proves that the earth is not like that. Have a look and listen to the scientific logic of Mr. George Vanderkuur: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zb-cxF26ev0&feature=endscreen>. The fact is that the scientific theory of a round earth dangling mysteriously in some presumed void of space does not satisfy the laws of nature. It has too many flaws as we discussed in the previous issue. Scientists always offer the explanation in the word gravity, but no scientist has ever produced an ounce of gravity so how do they know what gravity is?

We cannot be a *Bhagavata* or *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata* apologist. And by that I mean that we accept the statements of Srila Vyasadeva and Adikavi Valmiki literally, as they are, which is Srila Prabhupada's specific instruction to each of us. Therefore I do not accept your statement that "the flat view in Canto 5 specifically is given in order to give the observer a perspective of the universe." No. To me this is akin to some modern indologists who actually claim the description of the Dasa Avatars was a primitive Hindu-ized understanding of Darwin's theory of evolution. If God wishes to appear among different species of life as a boar or fish or turtle, then who are we to change that to suit our limited conceptions of the Absolute Truth? The key words Prabhupada emphasized are *as it is*. Neither are we merely interested in only presenting convenient parts of the philosophy to the rascal modern scientists and then sitting quietly like dumb stones as they reply with their predictable barrage of speculative nonsense. No, they are mostly all atheistic fools and puffed-up *mudhas* and their demonic mentality must be exposed from every side and not just what

we feel is convenient. And here is how that is achieved, from the lotus lips of Sri Sadaputa das as per the instructions he received from Srila Prabhupada: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=n9Yle4SD_r0.


Please do click on that link and have a listen to the words of ISKCON's leading sadhu-scientist to clarify your understanding of preaching without compromise before the face of modern misguided science, social mores, materialistic religion, etc. As Prabhupada says, we do not drink watery milk. No. We boil the milk down to make it sweeter and richer. We have no need for compromise and we are not impressed by modern time-wasting "education."

Lately I have been reading the *Ramayana* translation by His Holiness Bhakti Vikas Maharaja. The same idea of an earth that is not a hanging ball is more or less given therein in the narration of the sons of Sagara digging the earth in search of the sacrificial horse. In their search, these 60,000 sons encountered the four elephants who support the earth and they even obtained directions from them. When these elephants shake, earthquakes are produced. Now let me ask you, do you accept this or not?



That is *Ramayana As It Is*, not some "mythological tale of ancient gods and heros," which is a watered-down statement the likes of which less bold indological writers hide behind in describing *Ramayana*. We accept such statements as factual, while theoretical scientific appropriations of the laws of Nature filled with speculative laboratory bluffs we consider as blatant concoctions and outright lies. And for the record, we extend those sentiments to mundane religionists who do not accept that the Supreme Lord is a person also. Krishna consciousness is a line drawn in the sand, and we must decide which side of that line we are on. Whether we choose the light or the shadow is up to us. The Sun makes both just as Krishna creates both the enlightenment of bhakti or Maya. Time is limited, and surrender can take a moment or a billion universe cycles. Which path do we choose?

I pray that this meets you happily engaged in surrendered devotional service of Sri Guru and Gauranga.

Always wishing you the very best,
Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed. 

Notes from the Antariksha:

Outer Space Diary

Comet ISON, which some astronomers say could be the comet of the century, is barrelling towards Earth. As confirmed in SB 3.17.4 <http://prabhupadabooks.com/?g=22775> comets are extremely inauspicious. If Comet ISON will become as bright as a full Moon as some speculate, it is an omen for rough days ahead. For a recent survey of comets and guesswork about ISON, see this: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_1HdOCOI_Q. To hear Srila Prabhupada speak on comets, *dhumaketu*, link here: <http://prabhupadabooks.com/?g=161517>.

Resignation of the Catholic Pope: The world was stunned when the Holy See announced his resignation on 11 Feb for health reasons, the first time a Pope has vacated his post since . Just hours later a huge bolt of lightning struck the Vatican as seen here: <http://www.daily.mail.co.uk/news/article-2276884/Pope-Benedict-XVI-resigns-First-Pontiff-600-years-stand-longer-strength-carry-on.htm#axzz2Kd94cYID> But here is something just as astounding. Take a look at the last eclipses and the next ones to come. There was a total solar eclipse on 13 Nov 2012 and a penubral lunar eclipse on 28 November. Here are the dates of the next eclipse cluster: 25 April (partial lunar eclipse), 10 May (annular solar eclipse) and 25 May (penumbral lunar eclipse).

Taking the mid-point between the the last two eclipses of 2012 and counting to the mid-point of the first two coming eclipses, we find that the date of the Pope's resignation practically bisects two events. That is, the date of resignation is halfway between the halfway point of the last cluster and the halfway point of the first two eclipses of the next cluster, give or take a few days. What this means is that eclipses work in a geometrical fashion and their dark influences do not end when the *grahan* is over. Sensitive dates remain. ♪

Do you know anyone who talks with the plants in their house or yard as they care for them? I talk to mine, and as it turns out we who speak with Krishna's plants are not as crazy as the rest of the world thinks!

The Language and Music of Plants

Patita Pavana das Adhikary



In the video that follows we learn—and hear—that plants have a musical language all their own. The music of plants establishes that within each individual plant is housed an eternal spirit soul who is part and parcel of Lord Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Please take out a moment to watch this amazing film: “The Singing Plants of Damahur”. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZaoINmQ4eY&feature=em-share_video_user.

As all Vaishnavas know (but Mayavadis fail to understand), astrology is Krishna’s science of individuality. This eternal uniqueness of the *jiva* soul includes all embodied, conditioned living entities—both those who move and those who are stationary. The individuality of the eternal soul is reflected not only in the spiritually liberated state, but in the material dilemma through the individual karmic bondage of the samsaric entity. Astrology teaches that due to the overlordship of the great demi-gods, who themselves are all under the superior control of Lord Krishna, we *nitya-badha* entities are given the opportunity to take birth indefinitely and only at certain moments. This is all ordained by the great planetary leaders under whose control we have succumbed due to our desire to lord it over material Nature. Each unique moment of birth for each entity necessarily includes plants as they revolve up the cycle of 8,400,000 species of life. And all this goes to prove that Sri Krishna alone can be the Omniscient Astrologer, while all others who dabble in the science of the stars are eternal students. In other words, according to the astrological permutations, plants take birth at one time, animals at another moment, and humans at still another. Therefore since astrology is a divine science created by Krishna and measured in mille-seconds it is actually inconceivable except for the Inconceivable Lord Who owns each and every part and parcel including us.

As far as the eternal *jiva* encaged by his own *karma* in the body of a plant, we have the example from SB 10.10.20-22 about the sons of Kuvera becoming cursed to stand as trees due to their offence before the great sage Sri Narada Muni:

(Sri Narada said) “These two young men, Nalakuvara and Manigriva, are by fortune the sons of the great demigod Kuvera. However, due to false prestige and their madness from drinking liquor, they have become so fallen that they do not realize that they are standing naked. Therefore, because they are no better than trees, these two young men should receive the bodies of trees. This will be their proper punishment. Nonetheless, after they become trees and until they are released—by my mercy—they will remember their past sinful activities. Moreover, by my special favor, after the expiry of one hundred years by the measurement of the demigods, they will be able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, face to face, and thus revive their real position as devotees.”

And in SB 2.3.18 we find this verse and commentary by our revered Guru Maharaja:

*taravah kim na jivanti bhastrah kim na svasanty uta
na khadanti na mehanti kim game pashavo 'pare*

**“Do the trees not live? Does the bellows of the blacksmith not breathe?
All around us, do the beasts not eat and discharge semen?”**

BHAKTIVEDANTA PURPORT: The materialistic man of the modern age will argue that life, or part of it, is never meant for discussion of theosophical or theological arguments. Life is meant for the maximum duration of existence for eating, drinking, sexual intercourse, making merry and enjoying life. The modern man wants to live forever by the advancement of material science, and there are many foolish theories for prolonging life to the maximum duration. But the *Srimad Bhagavatam* affirms that life is not meant for so-called economic development or advancement of materialistic science for the hedonistic philosophy of eating, mating, drinking and merrymaking. Life is solely meant for *tapasya*, for purifying existence so that one may enter into eternal life just after the end of the human form of life.

The materialists want to prolong life as much as possible because they have no information of the next life. They want to get the maximum comforts in this present life because they think conclusively that there is no life after death. This ignorance about the eternity of the living being and the change of covering in the material world has played havoc in the structure of modern human society. Consequently there are many problems, multiplied by various plans of modernized man. The plans for solving the problems of society have only aggravated the troubles. Even if it is possible to prolong life more than one hundred years, advancement of human civilization does not necessarily follow. The *Bhagavatam* says that certain trees live for hundreds and thousands of years. In Vrindavana there is a tamarind tree (the place is known as Imlitala) which is said to have existed since the time of Lord Krishna. In the Calcutta Botanical Garden there is a banyan tree said to be older than five hundred years, and there are many such trees all over the world. Swami Shankaracharya lived only thirty-two years, and Lord Chaitanya lived forty-eight years. Does it mean that the prolonged lives of the abovementioned trees are more important than Shankara or Chaitanya? Prolonged life without spiritual value is not very important.



Imlitala (Vrindavana). Film: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDe8HcYOInw>

One may doubt that trees have life because they do not breathe. But modern scientists like Bose have already proved that there is life in plants, so breathing is no sign of actual life. The *Bhagavatam* says that the bellows of the blacksmith breathes very soundly, but that does not mean that the bellows has life. The materialist will argue that life in the tree and life in the man cannot be compared because the tree cannot enjoy life by eating palatable dishes or by enjoying sexual intercourse. In reply to this, the *Bhagavatam* asks whether other animals like the dogs and hogs, living in the same village with human beings, do not eat and enjoy sexual life. The specific utterance of *Srimad Bhagavatam* in regard to “other animals” means that persons who are simply engaged in planning a better type of animal life consisting of eating, breathing and mating are also animals in the shape of human beings. A society of such polished animals cannot benefit suffering humanity, for an animal can easily harm another animal but rarely do good.” (End of Purport)

As far as the scientific method Sri Jagadish Chandra Bose employed to determine the life of plants, I am told that his experiment began soon after the invention of slow motion photography. Using a gramophone he played gentle music while filming his collection of plants. The slow motion photography would reveal the plants to be moving and flourishing in harmony with the music. On the other hand, when he played cacaphonic sounds, the plants were seen to visibly Srink in panic. In modern times, this was the first scientific test to affirm on plants the verdict of *Bhagavad Gita* (2.20):

“For the soul there is never birth or death. Nor, having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.” B

Loonies in Space: The Superstitious Astronaut



Houston we have a problem!

From a Russian Reader: Lunar Humor:

Haribol Prabhus!

Here is a joke you would appreciate as an astrologist. The author is Russian-American stand-up Jakob Smirnoff:

"Brezhnev calls all of his scientists and generals and says, "I just got the news that the Americans have landed on the Moon. We must land on the Sun!" The scientists say that it is impossible, that the cosmonauts would burn to death. Brezhnev replies, "I already thought of that. We will land on the Sun during the night."

Cheers, S

Letters to the Editor

(Edited for brevity)

“Amazing Research”



Hare Krishna dear Patita Pavana Prabhu
Hare Krishna dear Abhaya Mudra mataji,

Please accept my most humble obeisances to You. All glories to Srila Prabhupada. Once again, the December issue of *The Astrological Newsletter* is a wonderful work and expression of Vedic science. It is amazing how much research work you offer to the world and how you enlighten people, especially the Vaishnavas. Through this edition once again one receives astonishing insights.

I do hope that readers send voluntarily contributions to this work because out in the materialistic world people would ask a lot of money for doing this kind of service which You offer for free. I pray to the Lord that things are improving around You and that You can establish a safe Goloka Dhama-like place there in Bulgaria. All the best.

Your servant
DG (Germany)

Yes, by the grace of the Supreme Lord and His consort we do receive donations from time to time to invest into the propagation of Krishna consciousness as we have understood this transcendental science from Srila Prabhupada. And by the way, thanks for the kind offering you sent with this letter. We have just managed to move into the new place by the grace of the Vaishnavas and are fixing up the old place as a temple. And at this time Lord Giri Govardhana has manifested Himself here. Please see the next message also. –Ed.

“Donation are Appreciated”

Prabhu

Hi! It's me, still in the US. I thought that I would send you a donation ... do you receive them? It is not much, but something. I just received some money and I try to give away 10% to temples and to some devotees here and there. Please let me know at your earliest convenience. And thanks for the interesting newsletters.

KK (USA)

Thank you, Prabhu, you are most kind and generous and we pray that Krishna will continue to bless you. Such donations are essential for our New Gauda Mandala Bhumi preaching mission here in Bulgaria.–Ed.

“Input Helped a Lot”

Dear Abhaya dd,

Thank you for the reading that you did for us. I was suspecting myself that we are going through a bad period, but your input also helped a lot, so thank you so much again! May Lord Krishna bless you!!!

Your servant,

AA (USA)

“Very Interesting”

Namaste

The December 2012 newsletter is very interesting I must say, and while reading had the feeling of going to these other worlds if we may call it that, but as Mother Abhaya Mudra Dasi has written:

*We do not need to travel far to reach a distant star,
But close is far for the kind who leave their souls behind.*

RR (South Africa)

“Karanodakashayi not Garbhodakashayi”

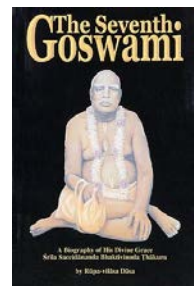
Hare Krishna Patita Pavana Prabhu,

In your latest newsletter you have written: “The *gola* of the universe emerged as a floating bubble from the all-transcendental body of Lord Garbhodakashayi Vishnu, the worshipful Personality of Godhead.”

It is my understanding that the universes emanated from the pores of Lord Karanodakashayi Vishnu. All these universes are collectively produced by the Karanodakashayi Vishnu called also the Maha-Vishnu, who simply throws His glance to impregnate the material sky as follows:

This Maha-Vishnu is the plenary portion of the Lord Sri Krishna, who is mentioned in the *Brahma Samhita* (5.58) as follows:

‘Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the original Personality of Godhead, Govinda, whose plenary portion is the Maha-Vishnu All the Brahmas, the heads of the



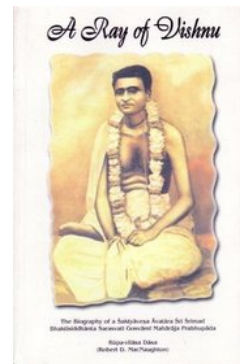
universes, live only for the period of His exhaling, after the universes are generated from the pores of His transcendental body.”

From SB 2.5.33 Purport): The Lord then, by His plenary portion as Maha-Vishnu, lies down within the water of the *mahat-tattva*, and the water is called the Causal Ocean (Karana-jala). While Maha-Vishnu sleeps within the Causal Ocean, innumerable universes are generated along with His breathing. These universes are floating, and they are scattered all over the Causal Ocean. They stay only during the breathing period of Maha-Vishnu. In each and every universal globe, the same Maha-Vishnu enters again as Garbhodakashayi Vishnu and lies there on the serpentlike Shesha incarnation. From His navel sprouts a lotus stem, and on the lotus, Brahma, the lord of the universe, is born. Brahma creates all forms of living beings of different shapes in terms of different desires within the universe. He also creates the sun, moon and other demigods.”

Bhagavad Gita lecture 13 August 1973, Paris) And we see from the *shastra* how this material world has a beginning. There was first of all Maha-Vishnu. From Maha-Vishnu, these universes came out. As stated in *Brahma Samhita* (5.48)

*yasyaika-nisvasita-kalam athavalambya jivanti loma-vilaja jagad-anda-nathah
visnur mahan sa iha yasya kala-viseso govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami”*

(Letter to Mohanananda 6 December 1971) “Regarding your question on the creation, Mahavisnu is lying in the Causal Ocean and while He is breathing the universes are coming out like small seeds. And when they come into contact with the Causal Ocean they develop. Then the same Maha-Visnu enters into each universe and again he lies down in the Garbha Ocean within each universe. From this Garbha ocean lying down, a lotus stem grows from His navel and Lord Brahma is born. Brahma creates all other things. Lord Siva is born from Brahma and He is reserved for dissolving everything. These things are all described in the 2nd Canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.”



Your servant, Rupa-vilasa das

Here's one more, from the Bhaktivedanta Purport to SB 1.3.2: "Therefore, the conclusion is that the purusha-avatara is manifested in three features - first the Karanodakashayi who creates aggregate material ingredients in the mahat-tattva, second the Garbhodakashayi who enters in each and every universe, and third the Kshirodakashayi Vishnu who is the Paramatma of every material object, organic or inorganic." What can I say except that shastra means astra and I surrender! Of course I meant to write Karanodakashayi Vishnu, but thanks for pointing out my obvious error. I salute your scholarship now as I do whenever I read your fascinating Vaishnava biographies like Ray of Vishnu. Bowing to your feet I pray for our continued success in Krishna consciousness. Your servant, -Ed

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare**