

***THE
VEDIC PROPHECIES***

**A New Look Into
the Future**



**The Eastern Answers
to the Mysteries of Life**

Stephen Knapp

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*The
Vedic Prophecies:
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to the Mysteries of Life*

By
Stephen Knapp

Dedicated to all of you
who are entering the spirit of the new millennium:
You are not afraid to investigate the possibilities
of what may be in the future,
yet remain steadfast in the courage to help bring in
light, love, and spiritual improvement for one and all.
You are the people forming the new species of humanity.

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Cover photo: An image of Lord Shiva as Nataraja or Rudra doing the cosmic Tandiva Nitrya dance of destruction that brings the huge universal, multicolored clouds that play a part in causing the annihilation of the universe. Photo taken by Stephen Knapp.

Other books by the author:

1. The Secret Teachings of the Vedas: The Eastern Answers to the Mysteries of Life
2. The Universal Path to Enlightenment
3. The Vedic Prophecies: A New Look into the Future
4. How the Universe was Created and Our Purpose In It
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Contents

TITLE PAGE

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FOREWORD, By Bhakti Tirtha Swami

INTRODUCTION

What is Considered Vedic

CHAPTER ONE

THE STORY OF VYASADEVAS VISIONS

More Prophecies From the Great Sage Markandeya

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROPHECIES THAT HAVE ALREADY HAPPENED

The Prophecy of Lord Buddha's Appearance * Prediction of Shiva appearing in Kali-yuga as Shankaracharya * The Prophecies about Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

CHAPTER THREE

THE BEGINNING OF THE AGE OF KALI-YUGA

Why Puranas Repeat the Same Series of Events * The Story of Kali-yuga's Appearance * The Dangers of Kali in Standardized Gold * The Basic Pattern of Events for the Future in Kali-yuga

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMING CHANGES DURING KALI-YUGA

Effects of Demonic Forces in Kali-yuga * General Conditions and Characteristics of People in Kali-yuga * The Effects of Low-Class Rulers * The Immoral Qualities of People * The Cheating in Business, Money, and Social Positions * The Disappearance of Religiosity * Disappearance of the Holy Rivers * The Degradation in Family Life and Relations Between People * Droughts and Rampant Famine * The Worst Conditions at the End of Kali-yuga

CHAPTER FIVE

THE GOLDEN AGE IN KALI-YUGA: A TIME FOR UPLIFTMENT

The Advantages of Kali-yuga * Prophecies on the Importance of Mayapur, India * How the New Spiritual Awareness Will Spread Around the World * How to Get Free of the Influence of Kali-yuga * A New Species Of Humanity * Conclusion

CHAPTER SIX

THE NEXT AVATARA OF GOD: LORD KALKI AND THE END OF KALI-YUGA

The Appearance of Lord Kalki * The Activities of Lord Kalki * Lord Kalki Predicted in the Book of Revelations * The Return of the Golden Age —Satya-yuga

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD

The Next Annihilation of the World * The Final Annihilation of the Universe

WHEN THE WINDS OF KALI RAGE

APPENDIX ONE

TIMING THE AGES

APPENDIX TWO

DESCRIPTION OF KALI-YUGA FROM THE RAMAYANA

APPENDIX THREE

THE BHAVISHYA PURANA

The Bhavishya Purana * The Prophecy of Jayadeva Goswami * The Prediction of Nimbarkacharya * The Prediction of Madhvacharya * The Prediction of Sridhara * The Prophecy of Jesus Christ * Jesus in Kashmir * Was Jesus Really Predicted in the Bhavishya Purana? * Is Prophet Mohammed Really Prophesied in the Bhavishya Purana?

APPENDIX FOUR

MORE ABOUT THE RETREATING GLACIERS OF THE HIMALAYAS

APPENDIX FIVE

IF THERE IS A GOD, WHY IS THE WORLD LIKE THIS?

[REFERENCES](#)

[GLOSSARY](#)

[ABOUT THE AUTHOR](#)

Foreword

Several years ago I got a very desperate call from one of the directors of the NBC Television Network program on “Prophecies.” They requested information on our Vedic tradition for their program. They were particularly interested in millennium prophecies. I explained to the director the difference between assorted types of psychics and clairvoyance in contrast to one who is connected with a transcendental heritage that is endowed with various *siddhis* (mystic powers), which includes prophecy. I explained further that all prophecies are somewhat secondary to the Vedic prophecies. The *Vedas* are the oldest scriptures in the world dealing with such subject matter. They are reliable and authentic because several of the prophecies in the *Vedas* are given to humanity by God or by his specially empowered, fully realized ambassadors. Not only do these ambassadors perceive past, present, and future, but they are distinctly enlivened in making or arranging for the future. Uniquely, I explained, the *Vedas* are not limited to this universe or planet. Given that many future events are happening or have happened already on other planets and will later manifest on this planet, it is very easy for such events to be accurately explained or described by the *Vedas* and by bona fide followers of the Vedic tradition. I sent them a volume of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam (Bhagavata Purana)* on predictions, written by the great teacher His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada. Although authentic, it did not address sufficiently the millennium concerns in the way they desired. Furthermore, I could understand they needed more preparation to appreciate properly this gem I had sent them.

As I look back at this encounter, my regret is that I did not have this wonderful little book by my colleague, Stephen Knapp, to give them. Stephen has done a great service by painstakingly putting together such important prophecies from the Vedic tradition so that those who are familiar, as well as the novice, will reflect on world prophecy from the most sacred and authentic scriptures known to humankind. The *Vedas* give predictions that extend throughout all planets and all traditions.

According to Indian philosophy, there are 10 *pramanas* (different ways of knowing truth). They are:

1. *Arsa*—a statement of an authoritative sage or Demigod.
2. *Upamana*—comparison (something like something else).
3. *Arthapatti*—presumption due to some other known fact.
4. *Abhava*—absence (perceiving the object's absence).
5. *Sambhava*—inclusion (a larger quantity includes a smaller).
6. *Arthya*—tradition.
7. *Cesta*—gesture or symbols (someone making a “V” sign or *mudra* gesture).
8. *Pratyaksa*—direct perception.
9. *Anumana*—inference (based on generalized experience derived by reason or deduction).
10. *Shabda*—sound (revealed knowledge).

The last three are the only ones accepted by transcendental scholars and holy men like Jiva Goswami and Madhavacharya. Number ten, *shabda pramana*, revealed knowledge of the *Vedas* from superhuman sources, is the supreme superior method. In one of my books, *Spiritual Warrior: Uncovering Spiritual Truths in Psychic Phenomena*, I sometimes rely on *anumana*, which is inferior to *shabda*. In *The Vedic Prophecies: A New Look into the Future*, the author relies almost exclusively on *shabda pramana* for elucidating prophecy. What a wonderful offering! By this approach, Stephen gives the reader information about the prophecies that have already happened, the beginning of Kali-yuga (the last age—the age of quarrel), the changes during this age, the special age of enlightenment (the Golden Age) in Kali-yuga, the next incarnation of God, and the destruction of the world. Even the author's explanation of the Federal Reserve System helps the reader to get a clearer understanding of how some of the evil effects of Kali-yuga are already fully operational.

Let us investigate a few millennium concerns in this Kaliyuga. Nostradamus proclaimed a number of things that would happen around the turn of the century. Edgar Cayce proclaimed that Japan would slide into the Pacific Ocean, earthquakes would destroy California, coastal areas would flood, and New Lands would appear. It is predicted by psychics affiliated with Buddhism that Buddhism will last for only 2,500 years. Buddhism has

been in existence for 2,500 years. Also, it has been predicted that Tibetan Buddhism will end some time after the thirteenth Dalai Lama has been dethroned. He has been dethroned. Psychic pyramidologists report that the turns and measurement of the Great Pyramid at Gizeh predicts the end of present civilization. The decline is said to have started in 1965. The Aztecs and Hopis predict the coming of a New Age within the next decade. Islam proclaims it will last until man sets foot on the moon. (Have we or have we not gone to the moon?) Gordon-Michael Scallion predicts serious earth changes and a new era for humankind in the next several years. At Fatima, the predictions proclaim holocaust, earth changes, and the dawning of a new era in the near future. From the Bible in Revelations, many things are described about the destruction of civilization.

Also, information is given from the *Brahma-vaivarta Purana* where Krishna tells Ganga Devi that there will be a Golden Age within the Kali-yuga that will start 5,000 years after the beginning of the age of Kali-yuga. It will last for 10,000 years, i.e., 15,000 years into the age of Kali-yuga the full force of Kali will manifest. We are considered to be in the first phase of this Golden Age, for Lord Krishna departed 5,000 years ago. Therefore, millennium predictions coincide with Krishna's message.

Stephen does not leave us with the dismal effects of this age, but he explains how to get free of the influences of Kali-yuga, how spiritual awareness will spread around the world, and, most important, how a new species of humanity will evolve.

I quote the author in Chapter Five:

“There will be a higher and progressive energy shift, as predicted by the Vedic scriptures, and it is already in progress. In this cycle, the planetary changes, whether they appear to be good or severe, will be a cleansing process to help bring in the needed progress and new species of humanity, at least while the Golden Age within Kali-yuga continues.

“What this means is that we are at a decisive period. There will be a transformed world. It will be attained by force, through an apocalypse, or through cooperation by a planetary awakening.”

If you are particularly interested in doing your part to bring about this Golden Age, then I am sure you will value this book as much as I do.

Bhakti Tirtha Swami
Vedic Psychotherapist
Global Consultant

Author of such books as:

Leadership For an Age of Higher Consciousness

*Spiritual Warrior: Uncovering Spiritual Truths in Psychic
Phenomena*

Spiritual Warrior II: Transforming Lust into Love

The Beggar: Meditations and Prayers on the Supreme Lord

Introduction

Although many books have been written about various predictions of the future, this is the first book that focuses on the ancient prophecies recorded in the Vedic literature, which are known for being the oldest and most spiritual writings in the world. Now for the first time you will be able to understand from where and how these prophecies came to be, and what they may mean for you and the future of life on this planet.

Everyone wants to know the future of the world. Some of the general futuristic views circulating in popular books paint a very rosy and progressive picture of what it will be like hundreds or thousands of years into the future. Many people seem to think that with the advancement of technology life will be long, healthy, and all sorts of unimaginable conveniences will be available for everyone. And some of these things will happen. Nevertheless, some descriptions in the Vedic literature are quite to the contrary, even shocking and not at all what you may expect.

These descriptions are not only of things we can see presently happening around us, but they also provide a look at how things will be many thousands of years from now, even up to the end of time and the destruction of the universe. In fact, many of the Vedic prophecies give a long term view of the future and focus on the changing times over the course of many hundreds and thousands of years through the age of Kali-yuga. Naturally, there will be some prophecies that overlap from one text to another and are similar to those of other cultures, such as what you find with the Mayans, or from Nostradamus, or in the Bible. But most of the Vedic prophecies are completely unique and unlike any others that you will encounter. Thus, they give a very different or new look into the future.

This book takes information that is widely scattered throughout many volumes of Vedic literature and condenses it into the present work for a concise explanation of the Vedic prophecies and its descriptions of the future. The Vedic texts, being ancient but important spiritual literature, also gives explicit information about our spiritual identity, the Supreme Being, His *avatars* or incarnations, the material creation, and about the important spiritual processes that people can use for getting free from material

existence. Some of this is directly related to the future in this age of Kali-yuga. Therefore, to leave out this spiritual information, I feel, certainly would make this book incomplete as far as it being a full presentation of the Vedic prophecies and what they predict will happen in the future, and what they prescribe as solutions for the problems of this age. Thus, I present as much information as is relevant to understand both materially and spiritually what the Vedic literature says regarding what will happen in the future. I have also tried to use specific references from the Vedic texts whenever possible to let them speak for themselves. That way we can understand clearly what they say.

Within these Vedic references you will find that different *Puranas* may repeat the same prophecy. And this book shows the variety of these texts which express many similar views, thus corroborating one book with another. When one *Purana* supports what is said in another, it often helps to clarify and elaborate on those predictions, and also adds to the credibility as well as emphasis on the prophecies.

I have also tried not to overburden the book with explanations or commentaries on the connection between the Vedic Prophecies and current events. In some cases I have done this, especially regarding the standardization of gold or when there may be some noteworthy information to add. Otherwise, anyone can see the connection by looking at any newspaper or news broadcast and see what is happening and compare it to what the Vedic texts say.

One important point about the Vedic prophecies is that they are not time oriented. What I mean by that is that they do not say that certain events will happen at particular points in time, or certain years, and so on. The Vedic prophecies are like a time table in the sense that what happens is determined by the level of consciousness amongst the masses that populate the planet. Thus, as the general consciousness reaches certain levels of purity, truthfulness and spirituality, or deceptiveness, materialism and selfishness, then you will see the signs of it in the actions of the people and the consequences in nature. As you recognize these particular signs, as indicated by the Vedic prophecies, you will then know how far into the age of Kali-yuga we have entered, and how much of its influence we are experiencing. Then you will know what more to expect in regard to what has been predicted. We should also understand that we can hold off particular effects of Kali-yuga and its reactions if we live in harmony with

nature and cooperation with each other by employing a spiritual lifestyle. Thus, by our actions and intentions, humanity does have some control over its destiny. After all, why should there be so many adverse reactions in nature if we are living in harmony with it? On the other hand the less spiritual we become, and the more selfish, insensitive and materialistic we are, then we will see a reflection of that amongst ourselves in society, in nature, and how easy or difficult life becomes in this world as it merely reflects the consciousness of those who live here. So, the choice is ours, which will become more clear as you proceed through this book.

For some readers, the information in this book may seem so different that it may border the fantastic and be quite controversial. For others, it may make a lot of sense and provide an understanding of life for which they have long been looking. For others, it may kindle a reawakening of what, deep in their hearts, they already know but could not quite remember. Further information on the knowledge of the East and Vedic spirituality is supplied in my other books, such as *The Secret Teachings of the Vedas*, and *The Heart of Hinduism*, and others that are listed in the back of this book to answer more questions. If you would also like to have the addresses of temples and organizations in the West that are based on the philosophy of the East, please check my website for a free listing at: www.stephenknapp.com or also <http://stephenknapp.wordpress.com>.

WHAT IS CONSIDERED VEDIC

Some people may question why I call this book Vedic Prophecies when, actually, the original Vedic *samhitas* themselves, such as the *Rig*, *Atharva*, *Sama*, and *Yajur Vedas*, do not contain prophecies. The prophecies mostly come from the *Puranas* or the *Smriti* portion of the Vedic literature. So to begin explaining what is Vedic or not, we can understand that the word *Veda* has its root in the Sanskrit *vid*, which means “to know,” or simply “knowledge.” The word *Veda* also has three root meanings, representing its connection with the power of God, namely 1) that Vedic knowledge is eternal; 2) *Veda* is the essential knowledge itself, which means that it provides knowledge of God, or that we can know the Supreme through the *Veda*; and 3) *Veda* gives the most desirable thing to the souls, which is the Divine Bliss that comes from our connection with God. Therefore, any part of the literature which does this and supports the Vedic conclusion is a part

of the Vedic literature. This is confirmed in the *Bhavishya Purana* (Brahma Parva 4.96): “The *Vedas*, Vedic mantras, and Vedic literature are three parts of the same body.”

According to Vedic tradition, when the Supreme Lord created this material world, His transcendental energy pervaded every corner of it. This spiritual energy was the pure vibration, *shabda-brahma*, in which the Supreme Himself can be found. It is explained that first there was the subtle vibration of spiritual sound, the eternal and spiritual vibration called the *shabda-brahman*. It is explained that through the worship of this subtle form of the *Vedas*, mystics can cleanse their hearts of all faults and impurities caused by the association of various material substances and actions. Thus they can attain liberation from further cycles of birth and death. From this spiritual sound vibration, Srila Vyasadeva compiled the Vedic literature. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12.6.37-38)

As most scholars on Vedic philosophy know, when you say *Vedas* you refer to the original four *Vedas*: the *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama*, and *Atharva Vedas*. From the four main *Vedas* are branches or appendices called *Brahmanas*, which relate to rituals and ceremonies. From these are derived the *Aranyakas*. The *Upanishads* are the appendices (the secret and esoteric knowledge) of the *Aranyakas*. When you say *Veda* (without the *s*) you not only refer to the four *Vedas*, but also to the *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas*, and *Upanishads*, or all the texts that are considered *Shruti*. *Shruti* is considered the original revealed knowledge which was unveiled to self-realized sages. *Shruti* also means that which is heard. It was first heard from God and then was heard and passed along in an oral tradition in the association of other sages. In this way, it was protected from being misunderstood or misused. It is this sound vibration that will awaken mankind’s higher awareness and inclination to attain the spiritual dimension, thus providing the means for mankind’s liberation from material existence.

The remaining parts of Vedic literature, besides the *Tantras* and *Agamas*, consist of such texts as the *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavad-gita*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Puranas*. These are the *Itihasas* or histories and supplemental portions of the Vedic literature, which is called *Smriti*, or that which is remembered. The *Puranas* are especially an elaboration of the original Vedic concepts and philosophy of the four *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. So, when we say “Vedic literature,” it refers to both *Shruti* and *Smriti* in a general way. However, some scholars think that the *Shruti* is more

important than the *Smriti*. Therefore, some may object to the way I alternately use the words “*Vedas*” and “Vedic literature” to refer to the same thing, which includes all of the Vedic texts, both *Shruti* and *Smriti*.

The reason I do this is that I present Vedic evidence from any portion of the Vedic literature, and I often use quotes from the *Puranas*. To leave out the supplemental portions of the Vedic literature would deprive the reader of an enormous amount of Vedic knowledge and elaborated explanations. And for this book, it would leave out many of the best portions of Vedic prophecies. Furthermore, some of the greatest of spiritual authorities, like Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, and others, have presented *Smriti* as valid evidence of spiritual truths and wrote commentaries on *Bhagavad-gita*. In fact, Madhvacharya, in his commentary on the *Vedanta-sutras* (2.1.6), quotes the *Bhavishya Purana*, stating, “The *Rig-veda*, *Yajur-veda*, *Sama-veda*, *Atharva-veda*, *Mahabharata*, *Pancharatra*, and the original *Ramayana* are all considered Vedic literature. The Vaishnava supplements, the *Puranas*, are also Vedic literature.” Even the *Chandogya Upanishad* (7.1.4) mentions the *Puranas* as the fifth *Veda*. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.4.20) also clearly agrees with this: “The four divisions of the original sources of knowledge (the *Vedas*) were made separately. But the historical facts and authentic stories mentioned in the *Puranas* are called the fifth *Veda*.”

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (4.5.11) also relates: “The *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama*, and *Atharva Vedas*, the *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, *Upanishads*, verses and mantras, *sutras*, and the spiritual knowledge and explanations within, all emanate from the Supreme Being.” It not only says it once, but the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* says it again (2.4.10), “As from a fire kindled with wet fuel, clouds of smoke issue forth, so, my dear, verily, from this glorious great God has been breathed forth the *Rig-veda*, the *Yajur-veda*, the *Sama-veda*, *Atharvanagirasa*, *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, science of knowledge, mystic doctrines or *Upanishads*, pithy verses, aphorisms, elucidations, and commentaries. From Him, indeed, are all these breathed forth.” Thus, they all have importance in presenting Vedic information, and one should not be biased toward one set of *shastra* or scripture to exclude the other.

This point is confirmed again in the *Bhavishya Purana* (Brahma Parva 7.55): “*Shruti* refers to the four *Vedas* and *Smriti* refers to the revealed scriptures that were compiled in pursuance of the Vedic version. One should

consult both kinds of scriptures as a guide to all one's activities because religion that does not refer to them is simply a disturbance to society."

The *Mahabharata* (*Adi Parva* 1.267) explains the necessity of understanding Vedic knowledge with the help of the *Puranas*: "One should expand and accept the meaning of the *Vedas* with the help of the *Itihasas* and *Puranas*. The *Vedas* are afraid of being mistreated by one who is ignorant of the *Itihasas* and *Puranas*." This is quite similar to what is related in the *Prabhasa-khanda* section (2.93) of the *Skanda Purana*, where it is said, "I consider the *Puranas* equal to the *Vedas*... The *Vedas* feared that their purport would be distorted by inattentive listening, but their purport was established long ago by the *Itihasas* and *Puranas*. What is not found in the *Vedas* is found in the *Smritis*. And what is not found in either is described in the *Puranas*. A person who knows the four *Vedas* along with the *Upanishads* but who does not know the *Puranas* is not very learned." In this way, we should understand that one's education in Vedic culture and science is not complete if one excludes the understanding and knowledge given in the *Puranas*.

To further verify this point, in the *Naradiya Purana* Lord Shiva is quoted as saying to his wife Parvati that, "I consider the message of the *Puranas* to be more important than that of the *Vedas*. All that is in the *Vedas* is in the *Puranas* without a doubt." So I relate this simply for those who feel that there should be some further distinction between *Shruti* and *Smriti* and may object to the way I use the terms "*Vedas*" and "Vedic literature" to mean the same thing, although many parts of the Vedic literature point to the need for using the *Puranas* and other portions of the *Smritis* to more fully understand the depths of Vedic knowledge. This is why I call this book "The Vedic Prophecies."

CHAPTER ONE

The Story of Vyasadeva's Visions

Five thousand years ago was a time when many wise and powerful sages traversed the area of India and the Himalayan Mountains. They would engage in potent spiritual practices that could give them mystic powers and abilities. One such great and powerful sage was Vyasadeva. So great was he that by the mental power of his concentrated meditations he could enter the spiritual state of consciousness known as *labdhopashanti*. In this state of being there are no effects from devastating time, which control even the superior celestial beings and demigods who live in the higher levels of existence. Nor is there any effect from false ego, the material nature, nor the material modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance, which create the appearance of past, present, and future. Vyasadeva was completely beyond all material inclinations and influences.

In this state of consciousness, Vyasadeva could perceive the workings of every portion of the material cosmic creation, and all events in time, both past or future. He could see how the universe had been created and how it expanded, and the process by which the innumerable living beings were placed into various species of life that became scattered throughout the universe. He could see the past ages of refined and advanced human civilization, but also the future changes of society which would bring the degradation of civilization, and the coming changes in the physical stature and mental ability of human beings. He could also see the planetary cataclysms; even the universal annihilation when this whole material creation would be no more. He could see all of this, and he was greatly disturbed.

One morning as the sun rose over the mountains in Shamyaprasa, in the Badarikashrama area of the Himalayas, Vyasadeva sat alone on the western bank of the Sarasvati River. He could see that as the present age of Kali-yuga progressed, people would become more and more interested in temporary material pleasures and pursuits, and more forgetful of their spiritual identity. He could see that the duration of life would be reduced

and such materialistic people would be impatient, greedy, lustful, unfortunate, and always disturbed.

Also, Vyasadeva could see that in the future the earth would no longer produce sufficient food grains, cows would not give as much milk, and fruits and vegetables would be fewer and less nourishing. This would cause lower standards of health, intelligence, memory, duration of life, and moral principles. People would resort to lower and lower methods to survive, squeezing whatever pleasure they could out of their lives. Diseases previously unknown would appear, creating incurable epidemics. Vyasadeva also saw that the deep spiritual practices meant for the true advancement of human society would be given up and forgotten. Gradually, spiritual knowledge and the mode of goodness would be lost. This would cause people to become more corrupt, dishonest, and hypocritical. The distant condition of Kali-yuga would be a growing state of chaos and madness.

To help prevent this rapid decay in civilization, Vyasadeva compiled the first spiritual texts, known as the *Vedas*. These had originally been an oral tradition, but he could see that people would not be able to remember them and that it was time to put them into writing. He then also expanded them into the *Upanishads*, *Vedanta Sutras*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Puranas*. Then, with the help of his disciples, he handed them down to the rest of society. (This is explained in detail in my book *The Heart of Hinduism*.) In this way, he compiled various levels of spiritual understanding so even the less intelligent people in this age could study and assimilate this highly developed spiritual knowledge. However, even after compiling so many texts, Vyasadeva was still not satisfied in his heart, and he questioned his dissatisfaction.

As Vyasadeva was contemplating this problem one morning, Narada Muni, the sage among the gods, appeared before him. Narada, acting as Vyasadeva's spiritual master, instructed him to write one more book that would elaborate the most important and confidential knowledge of our spiritual identity and the qualities, characteristics, and pastimes of the Supreme Being, Sri Krishna, explaining how to reach the highest levels of spiritual realizations.

After being instructed by Narada Muni, Vyasadeva sat and fixed his mind in bhakti-yoga and saw the Absolute Truth and, thus, wrote the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*Bhagavata Purana*) for the good of all people. In this

way, Vyasadeva wrote his own commentary on all of his previous writings. Furthermore, because of his focus on the Absolute Truth without any material motivations, and because Vyasadeva also is accepted as an empowered incarnation of God, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is considered the literary incarnation of God that can deliver from ignorance all who approach it. Vyasadeva also recited the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to his son, Shukadeva, who later spoke it to the great Emperor Pariksit at a huge gathering of sages.

Within the ancient text of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and many other *Puranas* are numerous prophecies regarding the future of this world. Just as Vyasadeva and Shukadeva presented it for the good of all, similarly we are now using it, along with many other portions of Vedic literature, to explain the many ways our world will change as time unfolds into the future.

MORE PROPHECIES FROM THE GREAT SAGE **MARKANDEYA**

There are also a number of prophecies that are related to the great sage Markandeya. As recorded in the *Mahabharata*, King Yudhisthira asks the sage to explain the future of Kali-yuga. So Markandeya goes on to explain the conditions of the age. Markandeya also appears in a few of the *Puranas*, in which his prophecies are provided there as well. But many of the ones I use are taken from the *Mahabharata*, which appear throughout this book in the descriptions of Kali-yuga.

The story of how King Yudhisthira asked Markandeya about Kali-yuga appears in the Vana Parva section of the *Mahabharata*, Chapter 190, verses 1 through 10. Therein it is described: Vaishampayana said, “The son of Kunti, Yudhisthira again asked the great Rishi Markandeya about the future government of the earth.”

Yudhisthira asked: “O rishi, O descendant of Bhrigu, O foremost of speakers, the account of the destruction and recreation of things at the end of the yuga which we have heard from you is highly wonderful. I am very curious to know what will happen in Kali-yuga, and what would remain when virtue will be destroyed. What will be the power of men then and what will be their food and what their amusements; what will be the length of their life, what will be their dress and what also will be the limit of time

[the end of Kali-yuga], after attaining which the Krita (age) will again begin. O Rishi, tell me all this. All that you narrate is varied and delightful.”

Vaishampayana said: “Having been thus addressed, that great Rishi again began to narrate, delighting that foremost of the Vrishni (Krishna) race and the Pandavas.”

So Markandeya said: “O king, hear all that has been and heard by me and all that has been known to me by intuition through the grace of the God of gods. O best of the Bharata race, hear as I narrate the account of the world when the sinful time would come. O best of the Bharata race, in the Krita age (also called Satya-yuga), everything was free from deceit and guile, avarice and covetousness. Virtue, like a bull, was among men with four legs complete. In the Treta, sin took away one of its legs; and virtue had then (only) three legs. In the Dvapara-yuga, sin and virtue are mixed half and half.”

In this way, in Kali-yuga virtue stands on only one leg, which itself diminishes throughout the age, while sin and wickedness increases as the age progresses.

So, as we proceed through this book, we will see what has been described by the sages of ancient times as they look into the future of this world, and how these descriptions are outlined in the Vedic texts that relate what is to be expected over the long term.

CHAPTER TWO

The Prophecies that Have Already Happened

Nothing gives a religious or spiritual text more credit, recognition, or trust than when its prophecies become reality. There are many prophecies in the Vedic literature, many of which have already happened, and many more are presently unfolding before our eyes. We just need the knowledge to recognize them as they happen around us. The Vedic literature not only describes histories of events on this planet, but also describes a variety of histories and future events of other planets. Therefore, the Vedic texts are universal in nature, dealing with important spiritual events that may happen in any part of the universe. Thus, they are also non-sectarian. They belong to no single culture, although on this planet they are based primarily in the area of India.

The Vedic literature also provides descriptions of the various incarnations or avatars of God that have appeared on earth and in other areas of the universe, along with their purpose and pastimes. It also describes *avatars* or incarnations that will appear in the future. It is said that we can verify an *avatar* of God according to the descriptions provided in the Vedic literature. There will be times, especially in this age of Kali, when many people may be bold or foolish enough to declare that they are an incarnation of the Supreme. Unfortunately, there will also be those ignorant enough to accept such impostors. If they had knowledge of the Vedic descriptions, however, they could tell which incarnations are scheduled to appear according to the timetable given in the Vedic texts with their names and characteristics.

THE PROPHECY OF LORD BUDDHA'S APPEARANCE

One of the earliest prophecies that we can easily recognize is the one about Lord Buddha. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.3.24), which was spoken

5,000 years ago, predicted the appearance of Lord Buddha who appeared 2500 years later, according to most historians, in 560 BCE. [However, other evidence has shown that the Buddha was born in 1887 BCE, renounced the world in 1858 BCE, and died in 1807 BCE. But that is another story.] The *Bhagavatam* says: “In the beginning of the age of Kali-yuga, the Supreme Being will appear in the province of Gaya as Lord Buddha, the son of Anjana, just for the purpose of deluding those who are always envious of the faithful theists.” Similar verses are found in many other *Puranas*.

This is in reference to a time when unqualified people used perverted forms of Vedic rituals to unnecessarily slaughter animals. Buddha rejected the Vedic rites and preached nonviolence. This verse shows that Lord Buddha was an incarnation of the Supreme Being who would appear in Gaya, a town in central India. Nevertheless, some historians may point out that Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, was actually born in Lumbini, Nepal, and that his mother was Queen Mahamaya. If you go to Lumbini you will see the shrines dedicated to Buddha and the pond that Anjana had used to bathe in just before she gave birth to Buddha. Therefore, they might feel that this verse is inaccurate. But Siddhartha became the Buddha after he attained spiritual enlightenment during his meditation under the Bo tree in Gaya. This means that his spiritual realization was his second and most important birth. Furthermore, Siddhartha’s mother, Queen Mahamaya, died several days after Siddhartha’s birth, leaving him to be raised by his grandmother, Anjana. So the prediction in the *Bhagavatam* fits this scenario.

PREDICTION OF SHIVA APPEARING IN KALI-YUGA AS SHANKARACHARYA

Another interesting prediction is that Lord Shiva, one of the great Vedic divinities, would appear in Kali-yuga as Shankaracharya. In the *Padma Purana* (6.236.5-12) Shiva explains to his wife, Parvati, that he will appear in the age of Kali to proclaim that the Buddhist doctrine is a false religion and illusory. And through this means, he did defeat the Buddhist arguments and caused a great decrease in the influence and growth of Buddhism in India at the time. He also said that he would propound the *mayavada* or impersonalist philosophy, emphasizing the indefinable nature of the Brahman, the great, impersonal spiritual force.

He explained, “The philosophy of Maya (*mayavada*) is a wicked doctrine and is pseudo-Buddhist. In the form of a Brahmana, I proclaim this doctrine in Kali-yuga. It makes the words of the holy Vedic texts meaningless and is condemned in the world. In this doctrine it recommends giving up one’s duties of life [in order to be free of karma], which is said to be religiousness for those who have fallen from their duties. I will propound the identity of the Supreme Soul and the individual soul to be the [one and the same] Brahman in nature, without qualities. O goddess, I have conceived this *mayavada* (impersonalist) doctrine, which resembles a purport of the *Vedas*, for deluding people in this age of Kali [to mislead them toward atheism by denying the personal form of God].”

The quote from the *Padma Purana* that follows describes how Lord Shiva tells his wife, Parvati, that he would appear in Kali-yuga. Yet, there was a purpose for it.

*mayavadam asac-chastram
pracchannam bauddham ucyate
mayaiva kalpitam devi
kalau brahmana rupini

brahmanas caparam rupam
nirgunam vaksyate maya
sarvasvam jagato’py asya
mohanartham kalau yuge

vedante tu maha-shastre
mayavadam avaidikam
mayaiva vaksyate devi
jagatam nasha-karanat*

Lord Shiva explains herein, “The Mayavada philosophy is impious. It is covered Buddhism. My dear Parvati, in the form of a Brahmana in Kali-yuga I teach this imagined Mayavada philosophy. In order to cheat the atheists I mislead them by describing the Supreme Lord to be without any personal form or qualities.”

To do this, Shankara gave up the direct method of Vedic knowledge and presented an indirect meaning which actually covered the real goal of Vedanta. This is confirmed in the *Padma Purana* where Lord Shiva addresses his wife, Parvati:

*shrinu devi pravaksyami
tamasani yathakramam
yesham shravana-matrena
patityam jnaninam api*

*apartham shruti-vakyanam
darshayal loka-garhitam
karma-svarupa-tyajyatvam
atra ca pratipadyate*

*sarva-karma-paribhramsan
naiskarmyam tatra cocyate
paratma-jivayor aikyam
mayatra pratipadyate*

“My dear wife, hear my explanations of how I have spread ignorance through Mayavada philosophy. Simply by hearing it even an advanced scholar will fall down. In this philosophy which is certainly very inauspicious for people in general, I have misrepresented the real meaning of the *Vedas* and recommended that one give up all activities in order to achieve freedom from karma. In this Mayavada philosophy, I have described the *jivatma* and Paramatma to be one and the same.”

Herein, Lord Shiva himself points out that to believe God has no form is not accurate and is equal to atheism. Even though this Mayavada philosophy was not good for pious people to hear because it would sway them toward an impersonalistic viewpoint, we should note that Shankara’s philosophy was just right for the time and circumstance. The Buddhists, who had spread throughout India and neglected the *Vedas*, believed in neither a soul nor a God and that, ultimately, the essence of everything is the nothingness or void wherein lies *nirvana*, freedom from all suffering. So, considering how the Buddhists had followed a philosophy of what would generally be considered atheism for hundreds of years and would never have accepted a viewpoint which advocated a supreme personal God, Shankara’s was the only philosophy they would have considered. It was like a compromise between atheism and theism, but Shankara used portions of Vedic knowledge as the basis of his arguments. In this way, as Shankara traveled throughout India his arguments prevailed. Thus, Buddhism bowed and Vedic culture was brought back to prominence. Therefore, his purpose

was accomplished, so much so that his *Sariraka-bhasya* is considered the definitive rendition of Vedanta even to the present day.

The *Shiva Purana* also quotes the Supreme Lord ordering Lord Shiva: “In Kali-yuga mislead the people in general by propounding imaginary meanings from the *Vedas* to bewilder them.” How the Supreme Lord ordered Lord Shiva to appear in Kali-yuga to delude atheists and produce a philosophy and texts to hide the Supreme Being, and to make Shiva seem superior, is explained in the *Padma Purana* (6.71.89-116).

The *Kurma Purana* (1.30.33-34) also confirms how Shiva will incarnate as Shankara: “In Kali-yuga, Shankara, Nilalohita, will incarnate for the purpose of establishing rites of the Shrauta [Vedic] and Smarta [based on *Smriti* scriptures], with the desire for the welfare of his devotees. He will teach his disciples the knowledge of Brahman.” Thus, we find in these verses confirmation that it was Lord Shiva who appeared in the Age of Kali as Shankaracharya at the request of the Supreme.

Shankaracharya (CE 788-820), also known as Shankara, was a follower of Shiva, born of a South Indian Brahmana family in the town of Kaladi on the banks of the Periyar river. When Shankara appeared, Buddhism had spread throughout India. It had been patronized by Emperor Ashoka in the third century BCE, and the followers of Buddhism had given up the *Vedas*. The Buddhist philosophy, basically, is that the material creation is the only manifestation of the Absolute Truth, which itself is temporary and brought on by egoistic desires. It asserts that these desires must be eliminated for one to enter back into the void. It propounds that the void itself is all that is real and eternal, and the source from which everything manifests. The Buddhists believe in neither a soul nor a God and, ultimately, that the essence of everything is the nothingness or void wherein lies *nirvana*, freedom from all suffering.

Shankara’s purpose, therefore, was to reform and purify religious life by reestablishing the authority of the Vedic scriptures. His interpretation of the *Vedas* is known as *advaita* or nondualistic because he taught that the individual *jiva* or soul is identical with God; that, ultimately, there is no variety, individuality, or personality in spiritual existence. According to him, the individuality of the Supreme Being and the *jiva* is false.

This Mayavadi philosophy also teaches that the material world is false. The impersonal Brahman, or great white light, is truth. One merges back into the Brahman, where there are no activities or spiritual characteristics,

after giving up the ego or bodily consciousness. Therefore, we find that impersonalists generally do not study the *Vedas* beyond the *Vedanta-sutras*. The reason is that as we progress through the Vedic literature up to the *Puranas*, it becomes more specific about the personal characteristics of the Absolute Truth, contradicting the impersonal viewpoint and establishing that the Supreme Being is a person.

In order for Shankara to teach the way he did, he had to ignore the many statements in the *Vedas* which assert that the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Person and the *jivas* are His subordinate parts. Therefore, by word jugglery, he developed a twofold theory that Brahman consists of the pure impersonal Brahman, and that any incarnation of God within this universe is simply a manifestation of that Brahman. This was a complete rejection of most of the Vedic literature, such as *Bhagavad-gita*, and in this way he differed with all orthodox Vedic schools. Like Buddha, he also refused to answer questions about the origin of the cosmos and said that *maya*, the illusory energy, was inexplicable.

It is accepted in the *Puranas*, however, that Lord Shiva is the greatest devotee of Lord Vishnu, Krishna. Pictures of Shiva always show him in meditation, concentrating on the Absolute Truth, or Sri Krishna. And several times in Shankara's life he revealed his true beliefs, that he was actually a devotee of Lord Krishna. In his birthplace of Kaladi, for example, there is a temple near the *samadhi* tomb of his mother that has a deity of Lord Krishna installed by Shankara himself. Anyone can go there and see it. Furthermore, in his *Gita-bhasya*, the first verse explains that Narayana (another expansion of Lord Krishna), or Bhagavan, is transcendental to the material creation. In *The Bhagavad-gita with the Commentary of Sri Sankaracarya*, Dinkar Vishnu Gokhale establishes that Lord Shiva writes in his *Meditations on the Bhagavad-gita*: "Salutations to thee, O Vyasa [Vyasadeva, the incarnation of Krishna who compiled the *Vedas*]. Thou art of mighty intellect, and thine eyes are as large as a full-blown lotus. It was thou who brightened this lamp of wisdom, filling it with the oil of the *Mahabharata*." Shankara also points out that it is Bhagavan Krishna, "whose glories are sung by the verses of the *Vedas*, of whom the singers of the *Sama* sing, and of whose glories the *Upanishads* proclaim in full choir." This indicates that Shankara was encouraging everyone to read *Bhagavad-gita* and *Mahabharata* as written by Srila Vyasadeva to understand the conclusion of spiritual knowledge. This also gives evidence that Shankara's

personal beliefs were different from the philosophy he taught. There is no evidence that makes this clearer than texts eight and nine of his *Meditations on the Bhagavad-gita* as follows:

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, the transcendental, blissful husband of the Goddess of Fortune, whose mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains. Let all obeisances be unto the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra, the Maruts, and all divine beings praise with the divine hymns of the *Vedas* and their supplementary parts, such as the *Upanishads*, whom the followers of the *Sama-veda* glorify with song, whom great mystics see with their minds absorbed in perfect meditation and of whom all the hosts of demigods and demons know not the limitations. To Him, the Supreme Lord, let there be all obeisances.

Near the end of his life, Shankara wrote his *Bhaja Govindam* prayers. Verses 1 and 34, which are the conclusive verses in these prayers, are often overlooked by his followers. Yet they were written especially for those who might miss the actual purport of the *Vedas*. He wrote in verse one, “Worship Govinda [another name of Krishna], worship Govinda, worship Govinda, you intellectual fools. At the end of your life all your grammatical arguments will not help you.” And again in verse 34 he writes: “Worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda, Oh fool. Other than chanting the Lord’s names, there is no other way to cross the material ocean [of birth and death].”

In the final book that Shankaracharya wrote, the *Prabodh Sudhakar*, he established his true philosophy. He pointed out that God has two eternal forms, which are both personal and impersonal, the latter of which is difficult to realize. The supreme form, however, is the beautiful and divine Lord Krishna who appeared on this earth in the Yadu dynasty. Without devotion to Lord Krishna, one’s heart cannot be fully purified. Thus, as Shankaracharya says, it is one’s own ill fortune if one is not attracted to the form and pastimes of Lord Krishna.

In this way, even Shankaracharya emphasized that it is Krishna who is the Supreme form of God, and that the supreme form of God-realization is through the process of worshiping Him and chanting Krishna’s holy names, which is the sure way of liberation from material existence.

THE PROPHECIES ABOUT SRI CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

The prophecy of the most recent *avatar* of the Supreme to appear in this world is that of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His appearance was predicted in numerous Vedic texts that were written many hundreds and even thousands of years before Sri Chaitanya appeared in February of 1486 in the place of Sridhama Mayapura in Bengal, India, north of Kolkata.

One of the oldest prophecies concerning Sri Chaitanya's appearance in this world is found in the *Atharva-veda* verse, starting as: *ito 'ham krita-sannyaso 'vatarisyami*. In this verse the Supreme states: "I will descend as a *sannyasi*, a tall, fair, and saintly Brahmana devotee, after four to five thousand years of Kali-yuga have passed. I will appear on earth near the Ganges shore and with all the signs of an exalted person, free from material desires. I will always chant the holy names of the Lord, and, thus, taste the sweetness of My own devotional service. Only other advanced devotees will understand Me." So this verse states clearly that Sri Chaitanya would descend as an *avatar* of the Lord but would be recognized as such by only a few advanced devotees. He would engage in his own devotional service and His primary activities would be chanting the holy names of the Lord.

Also, in a verse from the *Sama-veda*, starting as: *tathaham krita-sannyaso bhu-girbanah avatarisye*, the Supreme Being says that He will descend to earth as a Brahmana *sannyasi* at a place on the shore of the Ganges. Again and again He will chant the names of the Lord in the company of His associates to rescue the people who are devoured by sins in the age of Kali.

The *Mundaka Upanishad* (3.3) also relates the prophecy of Sri Chaitanya in a different way. It states, "When one realizes the golden form of Lord Gauranga [called Gauranga because of His golden complexion], who is the ultimate actor and the source of the Supreme Brahman, he attains the highest knowledge. He transcends both pious and impious activities, becomes free from worldly bondage, and enters the divine abode of the Lord."

The prophecy of the appearance of Sri Chaitanya as found in the *Bhavishya Purana* is related especially in two verses. They state:

*ajayadhvamaja yadhvam na sansayah kalau sankirtana rambhe
bhavisyami saci sutah*

“The Supreme Lord said: ‘In Kali-yuga, I will appear as the son of Saci, and inaugurate the *sankirtana* movement. There is no doubt about this.’”

*anandasru-kala-roma-harsa-purnam tapo-dhana sarve mam eva
draksyanti kalau sannyasa-rupinam*

“O sage whose wealth is austerity, in the Kali-yuga everyone will see My form as a *sannyasi*, a form filled with tears of bliss and bodily hairs standing erect in ecstasy.”

In the *Vayu Purana* we also find where the Supreme Being states: “In the age of Kali I shall descend as the son of Mother Sachidevi to inaugurate the *sankirtan* movement [movement of congregational chanting of Krishna’s holy names].”

Therein we find that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the same as Lord Krishna Himself, and what His activities will be. This is also confirmed in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.5.32) where it states: “In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Krishna. Although His complexion is not blackish [like that of Lord Krishna], He is Krishna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons, and confidential companions.”

The great classic *Mahabharata* (in the *Vishnu-sahasra-nama-stotra*, 127.92.75) confirms that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is not different from Lord Sri Krishna: “The Supreme Lord has a golden complexion [when He appears as Lord Chaitanya]. Indeed, His entire body, which is very nicely constituted, is like molten gold. Sandalwood pulp is smeared all over His body. He will take the fourth order of life [*sannyasa*] and will be very self-controlled. He will be distinguished from Mayavadi *sannyasis* in that He will be fixed in devotional service and will propagate the *sankirtana* movement.”

In an earlier text, the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* (3.12) relates that: “Mahaprabhu [the great master], the Supreme Being, is brilliantly effulgent and imperishable like molten gold, and [through *sankirtana*] bestows spiritual intelligence on the living beings. In the guise of a *sannyasi*, He is the source of spiritual purity and liberation.”

How He is the “great master” or will “bestow spiritual intelligence” is described in another *Upanishad*. This is one of the lesser *Upanishads* known as the *Chaitanyopanishad*, which comes from the ancient *Atharva Veda*. In this description there is not only the prediction of His appearance but a description of His life and purpose, and the reasons why His process of spiritual enlightenment is so powerful and effective in this age of Kali. The *Chaitanyopanishad* is a short text with only nineteen verses. All of them are very significant.

The *Chaitanyopanishad* explains that one day Pippalada, the son of Lord Brahma, approached his father and asked about how the sinful living entities in the age of Kali-yuga may be delivered. Lord Brahma told him to listen carefully and he would give him a confidential description of what would happen in Kali-yuga. He explained that in Kali-yuga, the Supreme Being, whose form is completely transcendental and who is the all-pervading Supersoul in the hearts of all living entities, will appear again in the Kali age. He will appear in the guise of the greatest devotee, with a golden complexion in His abode on the banks of the Ganges at Navadvipa. He will disseminate pure devotional service to the Supreme. He will be known as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Appearing in this golden form, the all-powerful Supreme Being—who is understood only by the most fortunate and who is the oldest, the original person, the original cause of the universe—will spread spiritual bliss by the chanting of His own holy names. The Supreme Lord will chant a mantra consisting of the names of Hari, Krishna, and Rama [the Hare Krishna *Maha* mantra]. This mantra is the best of all mantras, and, though difficult to understand, it can be understood by engaging in devotional service to the Supreme. This is the most confidential of secrets, and those who seriously desire to make progress in spiritual life, and to cross the ocean of birth and death, continually chant these names of the Supreme.

Another interesting story about the prediction of the appearance of Lord Chaitanya in Kali-yuga is related in a lengthy conversation between Murari Gupta and Damodara Pandita, two contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya. It is found in the *Sri Caitanya Mangala*, a biography of Sri Chaitanya by Srila Locana Dasa Thakura. Among the many things they discuss are the symptoms and difficulties found in the age of Kali; how Lord Krishna appears on earth in this age, His confidential reasons for doing so, and how He revealed to Narada Muni His form as Lord Gauranga that He would

accept while appearing on earth in this age. In this form He would distribute love of God to everyone He met by chanting the holy names. This conversation is very enlightening.

Within this conversation they further relate an incident recorded as the *Vishnu-Katyayani Samvada* of the *Padma Purana*. This is a conversation between Lord Vishnu and Katyayani (Parvati), Lord Shiva's wife. The story is that one time the great sage Narada Muni acquired the *maha-prasada*, personal food remnants, of Lord Narayana, Vishnu, and gave a morsel to his friend Lord Shiva. Shiva tasted it and he began to dance in ecstasy, to the point of disturbing the earth. When he was approached by Parvati about why he was dancing so, he explained what happened. However, she was unhappy and angry that he did not share any with her. Being devoted to Lord Vishnu and concerned for the spiritual well-being of all conditioned souls, she then vowed that if she should get the blessings of Lord Vishnu, she would see to it that the Lord's *maha-prasada* [sanctified food that has been offered to Him] was distributed to everyone. Just then Lord Vishnu Himself appeared and conversed with her. He assured her that He would appear in the world as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the age of Kali and would keep her promise and spread His mercy in the form of *maha-prasada*, and the chanting of His holy names to everyone, distributing His mercy everywhere.

Another book is the *Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa* by Sanatana Gosvami. Sanatana lived about 500 years ago in Vrindavana, India and was a great scholar of the Vedic scripture. A portion of the book contains an anthology of an amazing assortment of verses from the Vedic texts which predict the appearance of Lord Chaitanya. Besides some of the quotes we have already cited, he includes verses from such texts as the *Chandogya Upanishad*, *Krishna Upanishad*, *Narada Purana*, *Kurma Purana*, *Garuda Purana*, *Devi Purana*, *Nrisimha Purana*, *Padma Purana*, *Brahma Purana*, *Agni Purana*, *Saura Purana*, *Matsya Purana*, *Vayu Purana*, *Markandeya Purana*, *Varaha Purana*, *Vamana Purana*, *Vishnu Purana*, *Skanda Purana*, *Upapuranas*, *Narayana-Samhita*, *Krishna-yamala*, *Brahma-yamala*, *Vishnu-yamala*, *Yoga-vasistha*, and the *Tantras*, such as *Urdhvamnaya-tantra*, *Kapila Tantra*, *Visvasara Tantra*, *Kularnava Tantra*, and others.

The verses from the above-mentioned texts are of various lengths; some are more specific than others but all are similar in content. Rather than including them all, we can point out what they establish by summarizing

them. They clearly establish that the Supreme Being, Lord Krishna, will descend to earth near the beginning of Kali-yuga and will take birth in the home of a Brahmana near the shore of the Ganges River. He will appear in the month of Phalgunā [Feb-Mar] when the star Phalgunī is conjoined with the full moon, and become the son of Jagannātha Misra and Mother Sachidevī in Navadvīpa-Mayapura. He will come to deliver the materially conditioned souls in the age of Kali. He will appear in the disguise of His own devotee and taste the bliss of His own devotional service [bhakti-yoga]. He will be surrounded by His saintly associates. After He takes *sannyasa* [the renounced order], He will live in Jagannātha Puri and accept the name of Sri Krishna Chaitanya, Lord Gaurāṅga, and spread the chanting of the Lord's holy names. Thus, He will show mercy to the people and start the *sankīrtana* movement. However, those who are too bewildered by His illusory potency [*maya*] will not understand the great secret of His appearance in this world in his form as Lord Chaitanya. Only the saintly will understand Him.

Thus, many centuries after these numerous predictions, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu did, indeed, take birth in the land of Mayapura. He became known as a great scholar and defeated anyone who came near Him in philosophical debate regarding the Absolute Truth and the purpose of life. So great was He that, while still a young boy, He became feared even by the most intellectual and recognized scholars who did not agree with His point of view. Only after He took initiation from Isvara Puri in the town of Gaya did Sri Chaitanya give up His scholarly program of debate. Thereafter, He simply engaged in blissfully singing and chanting the holy names of Krishna, a universal, non-sectarian spiritual process for the age of Kali. Thus, rather than showing His influence and reasoning through discussion, He freely gave the spiritual ecstasy of chanting the holy names through *sankīrtana*, the congregational singing of the holy names of Krishna, and of devotional service to the Supreme. In this way, He was no longer feared but became the center of large gatherings of people who all engaged in such singing processions wherever Sri Chaitanya went. Furthermore, after He took *sannyasa*, He did become known as Sri Krishna Chaitanya and also spent His remaining years living in the town of Jagannātha Puri.

In a biography of Sri Chaitanya by Krishnadasa Kavirāja, known as the *Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta*, it is recorded in the Madhyalīla, 20.340: “Accompanied by His personal devotees, Lord Krishna, assuming a golden

color, introduces the *hari-nama sankirtana*, the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, in the age of Kali. By this process, He delivers love for Krishna to the general populace.” Elsewhere in the *Sri Caitanya-caritamrita* (Antya-lila 20.8) it states: “In great jubilation, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, ‘My dear Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya, know from Me that chanting of the holy name is the most feasible means of salvation in this age of Kali.’”

In this way, the numerous predictions in the Vedic literature about the appearance and activities of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu became manifest.

Many additional prophecies that have already manifested are also described in the Vedic literature, or are presently happening around us, which we can recognize as we proceed through this book. Other prophecies that have taken place are described in the *Bhavishya Purana*, which is given special attention in a separate appendix in the back of the book.

CHAPTER THREE

The Beginning of the Age of Kali-yuga

As old as this world is, according to the Vedic prophecies, the rapid deterioration in society and in the earth's environment does not take place until the age of Kali-yuga. But Kali-yuga is not an age of the future. Kali-yuga began 5,000 years ago in 3102 BCE. Thus, the decline is already in progress.

There are four ages or yugas. Descriptions of the length of these ages are found in such texts as the *Bhagavad-gita* (8.17), the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3.11.19), the *Vana Parva* section of the *Mahabharata*, and other places. It is described that Kali-yuga lasts 432,000 years, of which we have already passed through 5,000. Prior to Kali-yuga was the age of Dvapara-yuga, lasting 800,000 years. Before that was Treta-yuga, lasting 1,200,000 years. Before that age was the age of Satya-yuga, which lasted 1,728,000 years. (See *Appendix One* for an explanation about how the duration of each age is calculated.)

Descriptions of the characteristics of each yuga or age are found in many *Puranas*, such as the *Bhavishya Purana* (Brahma Parva, 2.113-119). For example, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (starting at 12.3.18) states that in Satya-yuga there is virtue, wisdom, and religion, with no ignorance or vice. People are full of truthfulness, mercy, austerity, and charity. These are the four legs of religion and the universal aspects of pious life as found in any true spiritual process. The people of Satya-yuga are also self-satisfied, friendly, peaceful, sober, and tolerant. Their pleasure is found within themselves, not through gratifying their senses in external activities. They know their spiritual identity and live in harmony with God, nature, and each other. They see things equally and continually work to attain spiritual perfection. People in Satya-yuga, living in this mode of goodness, could live to be up to 100,000 years old.

The *Narada Purana* (Canto 1, Chapter 41, Verses 7-11) elaborates on the conditions of Satya or Krita-yuga. In Krita-yuga there were no separate [species of demigods and demonic beings on earth, such as] Devas,

Danavas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, or serpents. All were as good as Devas or demigods. All were always full of delight and righteousness. There was neither buying or selling. There were no different classifications of the *Vedas*. All classes of people were interested in their respective duties and conduct of life. There was only one deity, Lord Narayana, and the people were always engrossed in penance and meditation and devotion to Narayana. They were free from lust and other defects and were endowed with qualities such as self-control. Their minds were engaged in seeking the means of Dharma [spiritual merit], and they were without envy, jealousy, arrogance, or hypocrisy. All were truthful and richly endowed with Vedic knowledge. They practiced the proper holy rites for their stage of life.

The *Kurma Purana* (1.29.14-17) goes on to say that in Satya-yuga the birth of people was through spiritually sanctioned methods, so everyone was born with a highly developed consciousness, which spread throughout society. All livelihoods were without greed. The citizens were always content and had all pleasures and enjoyments. They were without distinctions and, therefore, without inferiority or superiority. They had equal longevity and beauty, were free from grief, and practiced adherence to truth, meditation, and penance. They were always delighted in their minds.

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.2-5) also states that people in Satya-yuga were all devoted to the worship of one deity, Vishnu (Narayana), and were free from grief and disease. All were truthful, kind, and lived long. They were all rich in wealth and grains. They did no harm to other beings and were free from religious hypocrisy. No one practiced unrighteousness.

The *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 232.32) relates how in the Krita age (Satya-yuga) the performance of sacrifices or rituals were not required. Such performance becomes necessary only in the Treta age. In Dvapara-yuga, ritual worship begins to fall away, as it does even more so in the Kali age.

It also describes that men of that yuga never acquired knowledge or objects through unrighteousness or forbidden means. All persons were free of disease and achieved whatever they needed. However, in the Treta age, *Dharma*, as established by the *Vedas*, the length of life, and the fruits of Vedic rites all gradually decrease by a quarter. (*Mahabharata*, Shanti Parva, 231.23-25) In the conversation between Uddhava and Lord Krishna found in the Eleventh Canto of the *Bhagavata Purana* (11.17.10-11), Krishna explains:

“In the beginning, in Satya-yuga, there is only one social class, called *hamsa* [swan-like] to which all human beings belong. In that age all people are unalloyed devotees of the Lord from birth, and thus learned scholars call this first age Krita-yuga, or the age in which all religious duties are perfectly fulfilled. In Satya-yuga, the undivided *Veda* is expressed by the syllable Om, and I am the only object of mental activities [thought and meditation]. I become manifest as the four-legged bull of religion, and thus the inhabitants of Satya-yuga, fixed in austerity and free from all sins, worship Me as Lord Hamsa.”

In Satya-yuga, because everyone understood the essence of the Vedic and Dharmic instruction for spiritual advancement, there was no need for further explanations by dividing the Vedic knowledge into additional branches. Nor was there any need for rituals or austerities to train the mind and senses for engaging in spiritual life. That is the significance of the bull of religion, which stands on all four legs of truth, austerity, mercy, and cleanliness. With each yuga that passes, he loses one leg indicating the loss of one of those good qualities.

Continuing with the descriptions in the *Bhagavatam* (from 12.3.20), it states that in the next age of Treta-yuga there is a 25 percent reduction in religion, and that is when vice appears. The influence of irreligion is felt through the introduction of lying, violence, dissatisfaction, and quarrel. This increases as people begin to lose touch with their spiritual identity. In Treta-yuga people are devoted to the performance of rituals and severe austerities for both spiritual and economic gain. They attain prosperity by following the instructions of the three *Vedas*. People are not so violent or lusty for sensual pleasure. However, this is the age when they perceive the divisions of social classes, namely as Brahmanas (spiritual scholars and priests), Kshatriyas (administrators and warriors), Vaishyas (merchants, bankers, and farmers), and Shudras (laborers, artists, performers, etc.). People of Treta-yuga could live up to 10,000 years.

In the continuation of the conversation between Uddhava and Lord Krishna, Lord Krishna explains: “O greatly fortunate one, at the beginning of Treta-yuga Vedic knowledge appeared from My heart, which is the abode of the air of life, in three divisions—as *Rig*, *Sama*, and *Yajur Vedas*. Then from that knowledge I appeared as threefold sacrifice.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11.14.12)

This is when the *Vedas* first became divided into branches, and when the Vedic rituals were first recommended for the purification of people's minds, bodies, senses, and consciousness. The threefold sacrifice is recognized in its form as when the Hota priest offers oblations in the ritual fire and chants the *Rig Veda*; the Udgata priest chants the *Sama Veda*; and the Adhvaryu priest arranges the sacred ground and altar where the ritual is held and chants the *Yajur Veda*. This was the recommended process for spiritual advancement at that time.

“In the Treta-yuga the four social orders were manifested from the universal form of the Supreme Lord. The Brahmanas appeared from the Lord's face, the Kshatriyas from His arms; the Vaishyas from the Lord's thighs, and the Shudras from the legs of that mighty form. Each social division was recognized by its particular duties and behavior.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11.17.13) This meant that everyone was a part of the Lord's universal form, and that they were Divine in their internal and essential nature. It also meant that according to their natural talents, interests and proclivities, everyone had a part to play through which was the function of a harmonious social body.

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.6-9) also says that in Treta-yuga unhappiness appeared and affected some people. Most people were kind and engaged in the worship of Vishnu. They were happy and had a composed mind. They all followed the religious stages of human life. The Brahmanas mastered the *Vedas*, were noble and true to their words. They always engaged in penances and vows, had control over their senses, and were averse to accepting charity or gifts.

In this regard, the *Vayu Purana* (57.81-84) also explains: “Sacrifice, charity, penance, and truthfulness are the holy rites in Treta-yuga. During this age, Dharma functions in accordance with the social divisions of life. Danda-niti (administration of Justice) aims at the establishment of the bounds of decency. All the subjects are jolly, well built, free from ailments. Their minds are fully contented. Only a single unified *Veda* with four subdivisions prevails in Treta-yuga. People live up to 3000 years. Surrounded by sons and grandsons, people die in due order [of old age]. This is the characteristic feature of the Treta Age.”

After Treta-yuga we arrive at Dvapara-yuga. In describing the characteristics of Dvapara-yuga, the *Bhagavatam* states that there is another 25 percent reduction in religion, virtue, and spiritual values, with a further

increase in vice. People are interested in fame, glory, and nobility. They are opulent, have large families, enjoy life, and engage in the study of the *Vedas*. People at that time could live for 1000 years.

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.10-13) says that when Dvaparayuga arrived, some men were pious while others were engrossed in sins. Some were happy and others were extremely unhappy. That is also when Kings began to harass their subjects [through taxation] due to greed for wealth.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.24-25) also explains that in Dvaparayuga difference of opinion begins among men and life becomes arduous, involving bodily strain. Covetousness, wars, diseases, slaughter, breakdowns in social rules and systems, and passion and hatred grow.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.3-5) continues: “The following vices begin to appear in the people at the time of Dvapara: covetousness, lack of fortitude, a trading mentality, war-mindedness, indecision about principles, indecision about duties, destruction of sacrificial plants and animals, pride, arrogance, impatience, and weakness. These vices provoked by *raja* and *tama-gunas* [the mindset of passion and ignorance] prevail in Dvapara-yuga. In Krita-yuga, Dharma [righteous duty and spiritual pursuits] is natural, in Treta it is sought and attained, in Dvapara-yuga it becomes agitated and intensely affected, and in Kali-yuga it is scarce and then completely perishes.”

“In Dvapara-yuga, rival (theologies and texts) crop up against the scriptures which were honored formerly in the first Svayambhuva Manvantara. There are variations and alterations in the science of Ayurveda, Jyotisha, and the ancillaries of the *Vedas*. There are doubts and variations in regard to the texts on political economy and logic. There are diversities and variations in the *Smriti* texts. Separate systems and schools (of theology and philosophy) are established. Therefore, in Dvapara-yuga, difference of opinion starts among men.” (*Vayu Purana* 58.22-23)

Described above is the reason why there are different forms of spiritual paths or religions, which then begin to fight with one another for rank and superiority. This is utterly ridiculous because spirituality is to help all people gain insight into who and what they really are, beyond the body and mind, and over and above mental speculation or mere religion. It is to connect one to the soul directly. Yet, if people are so much focused merely on differences of opinion, then no one advances very far at all. And this diversity, as it is explained above, is also what keeps those who follow Vedic Dharma from being unified in their culture and amongst each other,

but instead form different schools of thought based on their own perceptions of variations between the Smriti and Shruti texts. The point is, they are all meant to help everyone advance in understanding the various levels of perceiving the Absolute Truth. Yet, when we do not see this unity and instead perceive various differences, then the diversity of opinion becomes the focal point, which is a reason for a lack of cooperation and united efforts, or even quarrels and fights amongst those who would otherwise appear to be following the same path. This becomes but another distraction on the path to Truth, and another reason for the discord in society and between those who seek the Absolute Truth. Thus, it perpetuates increased disruption and a lack of harmony in society and between religious groups.

It is further explained (*Vayu Purana* 58.25-27) that, “The life of all living beings in Dvapara-yuga becomes arduous involving bodily strain. Livelihood is possible only by mental, verbal and physical strain [unlike the ease found in previous yugas]. Covetousness, lack of fortitude, mercantile activities, wars, indecision in regard to philosophical principles, [the unnecessary] handling and editing of the Vedic knowledge, inter-mixture of holy rites, diseases, sickness, greed, slaughter, breakdown in the system and rules of the *varnas* [social divisions] and *ashramas* of life, and susceptibility to passion and hatred—all these become rampant in Dvapara-yuga.”

Finally, we come to the age of Kali-yuga in which, as explained in the *Bhagavatam*, there is a continued decrease in virtue until at the end it will practically disappear. In fact, the everincreasing presence of impiety reduces all religious principles to nil. This also paves the way for an increase of strife, vice, ignorance, and all sorts of irreligious activities. Life becomes more and more difficult and is especially dangerous for those interested in spiritual realization because there are so many false paths that provide no real or deep truth, but merely blind faith in dogmatic beliefs. Gradually, in the age of Kali, spirituality becomes nothing more than a vague form of Buddhism. Because of all the strife, problems, and wickedness, people in Kali-yuga are lucky if they can live up to 100 years of age. At the end of Kali-yuga, Satya-yuga will begin again after the appearance of Lord Kalki who destroys all of the miscreant kings, thus paving the way for a new age of enlightenment.

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.15-17) elaborates that in Kali-yuga, which is the abode of sins, everyone is involved in sinful activities. Misguided people censure the *Vedas* or spiritual truths, and engage in gambling and stealing. Brahmanas [spiritual and intellectual priests] will act fraudulently for a livelihood. Everyone will be addicted to women, sex, and intoxicating liquors. They will be stealing others' wealth. Heretics and atheists will become prominent. Also (*Padma Purana* 3.7.13-14) men born in Kali-yuga will possess little luster and will be wrathful, greedy, untruthful, and be filled with jealousy, pride, anger, deceit, and malice.

The *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 232.36) also relates that as the age of Kali continues, gradually all the Vedic literature will become so scarce that there will be a time when they are no longer seen by men. The world being afflicted by iniquity, they become extinct along with the rituals and spiritual practices established by them.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.6-9) elaborates on this: "In Kali-yuga, doubts (in the Vedic tradition due to variance) in *Shrutis* and *Smritis* begin to rise. Owing to the difference between the *Shrutis* and *Smritis*, great indecision occurs for spiritual progress. Due to indecision, principles of Dharma cannot be declared. When the principles diverge, there is difference of opinion among men. Owing to mutual differences in their views and delusion, no definite decision as to what is Dharma and what is not can be arrived at. [This contributes to the lack of unity amongst followers of Dharma, or Hindus in general, which lets the forces of *adharma* or opponents to the Vedic spiritual traditions to enter and use these weaknesses to gain control or advance their contrary agendas.] In view of the defects in the causes and the indecisions therein, differences of opinion arise leading to differences of outlook [and philosophical points of view, which adds to the confusion found in this age].

"A single unified *Veda* was divided into four in Treta-yuga. Due to the shorter span of life in the Dvapara-yuga, the *Veda* is compiled into written form and classified into four by Vedavyasa (at the end of Dvapara-yuga). The *Vedas* are further sub-divided into mantras and *Brahmana* texts by the descendants of sages by alterations on accents, syllables, etc., in accordance with their different outlooks. Consequently the [texts known as the] *Brahmanas*, *Kalpa Sutras*, and *Mantra-Pravachanas* come into existence. Some were abandoned by authoritative teachers while others were retained." (*Vayu Purana* 58.10-14)

The *Vayu Purana* and other texts go on with the descriptions of Kali-yuga, but we will focus on all of these as we proceed through the book, dividing them into the topics which they described.

This overall pattern of the yugas is also confirmed and summarized by the *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 231.23-28): “In the Krita age all the duties exist in full, along with Truth. Men of that age never acquired knowledge or possessions through unrighteous or forbidden means. In the other cycles, duty, as laid down in the *Vedas*, is seen to gradually decline by a quarter in each yuga. Sinfulness multiplies by theft, untruth, and deception. In the Krita age, all persons are free from disease and achieve their objects, and all live for four hundred years. In the Treta, the period of life decreases by a quarter. We have heard that, in the succeeding yugas, the words of the *Vedas*, the periods of life, the blessings and the fruits of Vedic rites, all decrease gradually. The duties set down for the Krita-yuga are of one kind. Those for the Treta are otherwise. This is in accordance with the decline which marks every succeeding cycle. In the Krita age, penance is the foremost. In the Treta, knowledge is foremost. In Dvapara, sacrifice [Vedic rituals] has been said to be the foremost. In the Kali-yuga, only one gift is sanctioned [the chanting of the holy names of God].”

The time period of the four yugas together is called a cycle, which lasts 4,160,000 years of earth time. At the end of Kali-yuga, Lord Kalki appears to start a new age of Satya-yuga. Then the pattern of the four ages—Satya-yuga, Treta-yuga, Dvapara-yuga, and Kali-yuga—begins again. When these four yugas [a *chaturyuga*] repeat a thousand cycles, it is called a kalpa, or a day of Brahma. The same length of time comprises Brahma’s night when there is a partial annihilation of the universe. After the end of Brahma’s night, the creation of the cosmos begins again and the repetitions of the four yugas go on for another 1000 cycles, or another kalpa. Lord Brahma lives for 100 celestial years, and each year consists of 365 of such days and nights. Thus, such a lifetime goes on for 311 trillion and 40 million years by earth standards. And Lord Krishna appears in this world once in every 24 hours of Lord Brahma, or approximately every 8,320,000,000 years.

It is agreed by many Vedic scholars that the present age of Kali-yuga began just before the disappearance of Lord Krishna 5,000 years ago. But due to the Lord’s presence, the influence of Kali-yuga was held off. However, when Lord Krishna left this world, the effects of Kali-yuga could no longer be stifled. This is confirmed in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.29-33)

and in the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) which also explains that Kali-yuga comprises 1200 years of the demigods, or 432,000 earth years. Thus, it is generally accepted that the age of Kali-yuga began on February 20, 3102 BCE.

WHY PURANAS REPEAT THE SAME SERIES OF EVENTS

As we can see, especially as we go further through this book, many of the *Puranas* and other portions of the Vedic literature repeat the same pattern of events as the yugas are described. This is because the yugas themselves are repetitive, although there can be some basic differences. These differences are often because each *Purana* may describe the events in different *kalpas*, or days of Brahma. There are differences in this because the arrangements or order of events are different by the way Brahma brings about the creation in each of his days. In other words, the pattern of creation from Brahma may change from one day or kalpa to the next depending on his various states of mind, or his meditation process which brings about the various levels of the creation and species of life. Other than such differences, the basic process is always the same, and the way the yugas unfold are also most similar. This is further explained directly from the *Vayu Purana* (58.116-118, 125):

“In a single set of four yugas, everything happens in the manner you have heard now. In other sets of four yugas, the same thing happens in the same order. The differences that occur [in the pattern of events] in the various creations [kalpas] are confined to twenty-five, neither more or less. So also the kalpas and the yugas are similar in their characteristics... The Lord arranges for the creation... in accordance with the nature of each of those yugas for the purposes of fulfilling the functions [of the living beings] in the respective yugas.” Thus, it is explained herein that whatever basic differences there may be in the descriptions of the unfoldment of the kalpas or in the yugas are up to and limited to twenty-five variations.

THE STORY OF KALI-YUGA’S APPEARANCE

It is explained that due to Sri Krishna’s spiritual power the effects of the deteriorating age of Kali were held back until after Krishna left this planet.

But even before Lord Krishna left this world, as related in the *Brahma Purana* (101.29-35), they saw evil omens in the sky and on earth that indicated that Krishna was about to leave this world. Krishna predicted that when the Yadava dynasty was finished and they abandoned His island city of Dwaraka, the sea would engulf it and He would leave this world for His own abode. Thus, He arranged that He and the Yadava family go to Prabhasa on the coast of present-day Gujarat where they became involved in a fierce fight with each other until all of the Yadavas were killed. After that, Krishna rested under a tree contemplating His departure from this material realm.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (starting at 11.30.28) relates that when Lord Krishna began to wrap up His pastimes in this universe, it was arranged by His energy that as He sat under a pippala tree, resting His left foot with its lotus red sole on His right thigh, a hunter would see His foot and mistake it for the face of a deer. The hunter, Jara, aimed and shot his arrow at Krishna's foot. When Jara went to have a closer inspection, he realized his mistake. Jara saw Sri Krishna in His four-armed form, exhibiting His brilliant effulgence that dissipated the darkness in all directions. A beautiful smile graced His lotus face that displayed His attractive lotus eyes. He wore bracelets, arm ornaments, necklaces, the Kaustubha jewel [on His chest], flower garlands, and other royal emblems. The Supreme, whose body is composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss, was accompanied by His weapons who stood next to Him in their personal, embodied forms. Thus, even His weapons took on their spiritual identities, ready to return with the Lord to the spiritual world. These associates consisted of Krishna's lotus flower, conch shell, club, and disc.

When Jara saw the four-armed form of the Supreme, he was immediately terrified of his offense. He placed his head upon the feet of Krishna and asked for forgiveness. Krishna replied that he should not fear. What has been done was by His own desire, and Jara could go to the spiritual world. Krishna then sent His charioteer to tell the residents of Dwaraka, His island capital, to leave since it would sink under the ocean after His departure from this planet.

Soon many demigods and higher beings appeared on the scene to witness the departure of the Supreme from this world. As they glorified Him, the sky became crowded with their many airplanes. Then Sri Krishna closed His eyes, fixed His mind within Himself, and entered His own

spiritual abode. Many demigods could not see Krishna entering His abode, just as ordinary men cannot understand the path of a lightning bolt. Nevertheless, some did manage to catch a glimpse of His movements and were extremely amazed. In this way, the Supreme enters the universe after creating it. He plays with it for some time like an actor in a play, and then leaves the cosmic manifestation for His own abode.

Upon Krishna's departure, the qualities of truth, religion, faithfulness, glory, and beauty immediately followed Him. For this reason, the influence of Kali could enter this planet and become stronger. In summary, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* explains that when the Supreme Lord, Krishna, who is brilliant as the sun, returned to the spiritual strata, Kali entered this world and the general populace began to enjoy various sinful activities. As long as Lord Krishna was on this planet, Kali could not manifest his influence. However, when the constellation of the seven sages, the constellation of Ursa Major to Western astronomers, is passing through the lunar mansion of Magha, that is the time when the age of Kali begins. Kali-yuga lasts twelve centuries of the demigods, or 432,000 earth years. When the great sages of the Saptarshi constellation pass from Magha to Purvashadha, the age of Kali will have full strength, beginning from the time of King Nanda. Those in knowledge declare that when Lord Krishna departed from this world to His spiritual abode, the age of Kali began. It is further predicted that after one thousand years (or twelve centuries) of the celestial region, the age of Satya-yuga will begin again with the advent of Lord Kalki. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12.2.29-34)

The symptoms that designate the beginning of the age of Kaliyuga are described in the *Puranas*. The *Bhagavatam* or *Bhagavata Purana* (starting at 1.4.16) states that at the beginning of Kali-yuga the great sage Vyasadeva sat in meditation near his cottage. He could see the past, present, and future due to his being a liberated soul. Vyasadeva could see the deterioration of everything material. People would be reduced in their duration of life and would be impatient, angry, and always disturbed. Because of ignorance, people will not understand the purpose of life. They become overly attracted to the temporary glitter of materialism, reducing their ability to attain spiritual understanding. This keeps them preoccupied with that which wastes their life, and it makes them reluctant to find and hear about genuine spiritual knowledge. Therefore, Vyasadeva wanted to arrange for the progressive life of the people of this age. Thus, he divided the four *Vedas*

into many branches to allow people to understand this spiritual knowledge more easily. (This is described in detail in my other books, namely *The Secret Teachings of the Vedas* and *The Heart of Hinduism*, so we will not elaborate on it here.)

It was also at this time, 5,000 years ago as described in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (starting at 1.14.1), when the battle of Kuruksetra had ended and Maharaja Yudhisthira had been installed as the king of the land. Arjuna, Krishna's close friend, had gone to Dwaraka to see Lord Krishna. Maharaja Yudhisthira was waiting for Arjuna to return to hear the latest news. Arjuna, however, did not return and Yudhisthira began to see inauspicious and fearful omens in his kingdom. He began to feel anxious about Arjuna and the wellbeing of Dwaraka. He suspected that Lord Krishna had left this world.

Yudhisthira began to see disruptions in the seasonal tendencies, such as winter appearing in summer and vice versa. Becoming overly greedy, angry, and deceitful, people began to adopt foul livelihoods. Ordinary dealings, even between friends, became affected by cheating. In family affairs were always misunderstandings, strain, and quarrel, even between husband and wife. People became accustomed to greed, anger, pride, and hypocrisy, all of which became rampant throughout society. Yudhisthira was astonished to see all these symptoms of Kali-yuga. [This means, of course, that none of these symptoms were previously present in the kingdom of Maharaja Yudhisthira. So we can only imagine how pleasant a kingdom it was before the qualities of Kali began to infiltrate into the lives of the people at that time.]

As Yudhisthira looked around, he could see the she-jackal crying at the rising sun, dogs barked at him fearlessly, and the owls and crows shrieked. Smoke circled in the air and there were cloudless thunder bolts from the sky. The earth and mountains were quaking as never before. Violent winds blasted dust everywhere creating darkness. Clouds appeared and it rained as the sun grew dark. The stars seemed to be fighting among themselves in the sky. Confused living entities were weeping, and all rivers, ponds, and tributaries were perturbed. The cows no longer gave milk nor did the calves suck the teats. They were all crying with tears in their eyes, and bulls were not going to the pasturing grounds.

The deities in the temples seemed to cry, lament, and perspire. All cities, towns, and gardens were dark, without beauty and happiness.

Yudhisthira asked himself, “What is happening in this extraordinary time? What sorts of calamities await us?”

Just then Arjuna returned from Dwaraka and informed Maharaja Yudhisthira that Lord Krishna had indeed left this world. As stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.15.36), when Lord Krishna disappeared from this universe, from that day Kali became fully manifest to create inauspicious conditions for those endowed with a poor fund of knowledge.

Maharaja Yudhisthira, recognized the effects of Kali-yuga in the form of increasing avarice, falsehood, cheating, and violence throughout his kingdom—all of which is so common today. Thus, he prepared to leave home and enthroned his grandson, Maharaja Pariksit, as the new king. Then he purified his consciousness and, shortly after that, left this world and attained the spiritual strata.

In the First Canto, Chapter Seventeen of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* it is further explained that as Maharaja Pariksit ruled the world, he once met the personality of Kali-yuga. Although lower than a Shudra [meaning an outcaste, a low and uncultured man who did not participate in a spiritually progressive life], Kali was disguised as a king but was beating the legs of a cow and bull. Maharaja Pariksit grabbed the culprit to kill him. Pariksit told the man that though he was dressed as a king, he was beating those who are helpless in Pariksit Maharaja’s kingdom. Therefore, Kali, or quarrel personified, was considered a culprit and deserved to be killed.

As Maharaja Pariksit took up his sword to kill the personality of Kali, who is the cause of all irreligion and misfortune, Kali immediately gave up the disguise of a king and surrendered to Pariksit with bowed head. Being kind, Maharaja Pariksit did not kill Kali, but told him that he had to leave the kingdom since Kali was a friend of irreligion. With Kali’s presence, irreligious principles like greed, falsehood, robbery, incivility, treachery, misfortune, cheating, quarrel, and vanity will abound.

In fear, Kali responded by requesting the king to fix some place where he could live permanently under the protection of Maharaja Pariksit’s government. Maharaja Pariksit gave Kali permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution, and animal slaughter were performed.

These are the basic principles of irreligion. Wherever they are found lies the basis of activities that further the development of Kaliyuga and the deterioration of human civilization.

So here we find, as related in the *Bhagavata Purana*, that at the start of Kali-yuga, King Pariksit declared that the seeds of evil will manifest in four things: intoxication, gambling, illicit sex, and the killing of innocent creatures.

Engaging in the above-mentioned activities propel us into numerous additional bad habits, all of which force us to give in to such negative emotions as greed, anger, jealousy, fault-finding, treachery, hatred, and so on. All of these pave the way for untold pain, suffering, misery, and further wicked activities and intrigue.

We can plainly see the damage these activities are doing. For example, liquor and drugs and other forms of intoxication no doubt ruin the lives of innumerable people. It causes poor health, depression, the waste of needed money, and even suicides and death, either by accidental overdoses or from other things such as territorial gang wars and so on. Drinking or intoxication literally poisons the brain and body. It takes away the ability to achieve a higher consciousness and destroys the principle of austerity, and being responsible and focused on the proper goals of life. This leads to irresponsibility and a philosophy of “whatever feels good, do it.” Such intoxication paves the way for further calamities in one’s actions and difficulties in life.

Gambling or engaging in questionable or fraudulent business practices takes away the principle of truthfulness and honesty. Gambling houses also tempt people into their clutches with fancy lights and alluring women with the hope of gaining easy fortune, yet mostly take much of the money away from those who patronize such places, sometimes leaving them in ruins.

Animal slaughter, which is the basis of meat eating, takes away one’s sense of mercy and compassion for others. It promotes selfishness and cruelty and furthers society’s ignorance of its spiritual identity. You could not so easily slaughter and eat other creatures if you clearly recognized that the consciousness of a living being is the symptom of the soul within the animal. Of course, today we are treating other species like inert object, as if they are devoid of any feelings. We are showing unprecedented cruelty and lack of feelings and callousness more than ever towards the creatures of God with whom we share this planet. Cruelty has been industrialized, such as industrialized slaughterhouses, and this kind of barbarism has been institutionalized and taken as the norm. Today the mistreatment of animals has been streamlined into an efficient process that increases the number of

animals killed. The treatment meted out to animals before they become someone's dinner is a staggering amount of killing that creates violence in the atmosphere and turns into the reactions that come back to befall us, such as the increasing loss of sensitivity not only to animals but to each other, as well as the karmic reactions we will be forced to endure.

Prostitution or frivolous sexual activity takes away one's sense of bodily and mental cleanliness. It increases addiction to trivial bodily pleasures, which accelerates degradation and disease in society. It also plants the seeds of a predator mentality in that a person begins to see others as objects to be exploited for one's own pleasure, or to be used to fulfill one's desire for sex.

The desire for sex in this age of Kali-yuga is one of the most captivating of all preoccupations of the human race. It distracts most of society from the real spiritual purpose of life. People want to satisfy themselves in this way and then use up so much energy, physical and otherwise, in their attempts to seek out and fulfill their sensual desires. It saps them of their time in life when they could be using this existence in much more important ways.

For quick profits debauched men and even women capture and force many young girls, and boys as well, into a life of prostitution, which often leaves them hurt, wounded, diseased, or ruined for life. Such exploitative culprits, especially those who engage in human trafficking and force others into such an existence of engaging in the sex trade, will multiply like a virus in this age of Kali-yuga. And like any virus, if they are not destroyed completely, they will only reappear later in a different place.

On a personal level, for any man, semen or the vital force is the most precious substance in the human body, and is not meant to be wasted through mere sensual enjoyment. It is the last product made by the body through the process of digesting the food we eat. This vital force is especially effective in nourishing the nervous system and brain. All who are on the spiritual path to perceive the spiritual dimension are recommended to retain this vital force for assistance and greater strength, concentration, intelligence, good memory, health, determination, and clarity. When it is preserved it is turned into the Ojas Shakti, and is utilized in the brain for higher abilities and noble purposes. If it is wasted and released through frequent or unnecessary sex, one's brain and nervous system are disadvantaged. This manifests as lack of certitude, direction, clarity, along with mental weakness, indifference, and lethargy. Then noble thoughts give

way to the increased focus on base and sensual desires. Intellectual energy is then diverted from spiritual inquiry to concocting further plans for more sensual pleasure. Then this becomes the major aim in such a person's life, especially in Kaliyuga, which depletes them of their time, energy, higher consciousness, and paves the way to death's door with little else being accomplished. In this way, one's life becomes wasted.

Anyone, such as rulers, social leaders, or religionists, who desires progressive well-being for themselves and society should avoid these four irreligious activities. All of these eliminate the finer characteristics of human nature, which leaves behind the lower animalistic qualities and the further degradation of human society and the world, which becomes the main emphasis in the age of Kali-yuga.

THE DANGERS OF KALI IN STANDARDIZED GOLD

In the story of Kali requesting Maharaja Pariksit for places in which he could stay, as related in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.17.39), Kali begged for one more place to reside, besides the four that have been previously described. So Maharaja Pariksit gave permission for Kali to live where there is gold, because wherever there is the hoarding of gold [meaning in large amounts beyond mere preparations for personal emergencies] there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy, and enmity. Therefore, the personification of Kali became gold standardized. This has led to innumerable problems in this age, and it is simply getting worse as the age of Kali progresses.

Now one thing to remember here is that we have been warned about the dangers of standardized gold in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, which was written around 5,000 years ago. But how does this danger manifest? How would a 5,000 year old statement or prophecy about gold apply to us today? Let us explain further.

Throughout history governments have coined and printed their own money, based on actual supply of whatever commodity was backing the money, such as gold or silver or other items that can give it value. This is what standardization is all about. A five-dollar bill, for example, would be worth five dollars of gold. Of course, the problem is that they removed that standard years ago and now they can print all kinds of dollar bills that have no standard value. Falsity sets in when actual gold, as in gold coins, is no longer used as a currency and paper money replaces it. The paper money

does not fairly represent the value of the actual reserved gold. The result of this is artificial inflation and manipulation because the currency is not real. This inflation can set off multitudes of reactions in the value of goods, such as changes in the value of your savings and the money you earn, how much you have to spend for the normal commodities that you need, etc.

Then add to this the widespread ignorance and confusion regarding national tax laws, and you have a system designed to keep people under control or bewilderment. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1787, John Adams wrote, "All perplexities, confusion, and distress in America arise not from defects in the Constitution, nor from want of honor and virtue so much as from downright ignorance of the nature of coin, credit and circulation." In other words, a dishonest money system is the basis of many of the economic and even social problems in America. Money can either build or destroy a nation. If a money system is honest, all people can prosper. A dishonest system, however, enriches a few at the cost of many.

To give a very simple example, which was told to me by an economist, centuries ago in some townships people stored their gold in the goldsmith's vault for a fee, in which case, they would get a receipt for their gold. Afterwards, people would exchange these receipts among themselves as a money substitute for commodities or services. They could redeem the receipts for the gold. However, only a small amount of the gold was ever reclaimed, allowing the goldsmith to issue receipts for more gold than he had. So some receipts did not represent anything. In fact, he could use some receipts himself to make purchases or to lend at interest and yet take title to property as collateral. In this way, the increase in fraudulent receipts decreased the value of legitimate receipts. By manipulating the number of receipts in circulation, the wealth and prosperity of the community were quietly manipulated by the goldsmith without anyone knowing.

By changing the number of receipts and money in circulation, the goldsmith could cause a little depression in which he could increase his wealth at the expense of others. However, by increasing the number of receipts he could stimulate the economy and bring prosperity into the community. In this way, we can see that any money substitute like paper currency is honest only when it accurately represents real money. But when people use paper instead of real money, the seeds of corruption can enter the system.

America's economic problems are based on this practice of issuing notes that are not accurately backed by gold. This is standard practice in the banking industry that is based on the modern day goldsmith known as The Federal Reserve and their Federal Reserve Notes. Remember, a Note is an I.O.U. or debt. Paying a debt with another debt is not possible. A debt must be paid with something of value, like gold or silver. Thus, the name "Federal Reserve Note" is, in fact, a fraudulent name since it is not what it claims to be—an accurate representation of a certain amount of gold.

There are only two actual economic systems: One is barter and the other is credit. Barter is simply the exchange of items that have equal value. The use of gold or silver coins is a barter system. Other items that have been used for exchange have included cows, salt, tea, tobacco, opium, wheat, etc. But money by itself does not exist: It must be something of value or an honest representation of something of value. However, credit is not tangible; it cannot be measured. Wealth is produced through labor in exchange for value or in making useable products that have exchange value in the marketplace. You do not find this with credit, except for the amount of money that becomes owed. That is what people in general accept as credit, how much they owe on something.

Bookkeeping tactics can then manipulate and adjust the value of such credit to suit whatever the plans are of those who control it. On page twelve of *Keeping Our Money Healthy*, published by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, it states, "The Federal Reserve system works only with credit." But credit is not wealth.

This state of affairs started 200 years ago when Amschel Rothschild (1743-1812) established a principle that the economic and political systems of nations would not be controlled by the citizens but by the bankers, for the bankers. This came about by a carefully planned series of political and economic maneuvers that gradually established a "Central Bank" in every country. This, in effect, allows those involved in this Central Bank system to gain control over the economy of the world. Many people think that the strategy of these power elite bankers is to establish a single world government over which they have complete control. If such would become the case, then politicians, leaders, and people in general, would all be controlled by the policy decisions of these bankers, not by governments. Even nowadays governments are often influenced by the economic decisions made by these bankers.

These central banks have the authority to print money for whatever country in which they are established. It is these banks from which governments borrow money to pay for debts to continue their operation. Thus, printed money, as we find in this system, is debt money. It has no intrinsic value since they do not base it on gold. It is printed to further the borrowing by the government. This propels a false economy in which everything, even the government, operates on credit, which is debt. And the larger the debt, the shakier everything becomes. So, yes, presently the Federal Government of the U. S. is practically bankrupt, so it keeps borrowing money from the Central Bank, known as the Federal Reserve Bank. And now the national debt is over 8 and one-half trillion dollars (at the time of this writing, as of January 1, 2007), which the government owes to the Federal Reserve Bank and other member institutions. This also means that in a country of over 300,500,000 people, every U. S. citizen owes over \$28,000 as their contribution to help pay off this debt. [This has gone up tremendously over the few years that have followed, so much so that by 2011 it was calculated that the national debt was over 14 trillion dollars and each individual American owed over \$45,000 toward this debt of the American government. This is simply not sustainable.] Most of this debt is interest that multiplies on a daily basis that the government, or rather the American taxpayers, are supposed to pay back to the Federal Reserve Bank. To pay back such a debt is most difficult if not impossible. And if it is not possible, then a collapse of the system at some point cannot be avoided. Thus, policy decisions by the Federal Reserve regarding the national debt can send waves of changes throughout the country at any given time. So we can see how this government must consider the dictates of the Federal Reserve Bank, which operates more like a privately owned and operated organization of international bankers than an agency of the government, since that is exactly what it is.

Presently, the policies of the Federal Reserve control inflation and deflation. They have the duty to establish and adjust the “prime lending rate” that “helps” stimulate the economy or control growth. They can expand or contract the money supply by buying or selling U. S. securities and by raising or lowering reserve requirements, which is the money that member banks must have in reserve. The Federal Reserve has many other duties that exert a powerful influence on this nation’s economic life, and, thus, affect every other country in the world.

It was on November 22, 1910 when the nation's leading bankers left by train at night from Hoboken, New Jersey on a secret mission to Jekyll Island, Georgia to create what would be the Federal Reserve System. Through their plans they were able to bypass the U. S. Constitution that established how they should regulate money. For example, Article One, Section Eight of the United States Constitution directly states that only Congress has the "power to coin money and regulate the value thereof." Furthermore, Article One, Section Ten of the United States Constitution says, "No state shall make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts." Also, Title Twelve of the United States Code, Section 152, states: "The term lawful money, or lawful money of the United States, shall be construed to mean gold or silver coin of the United States." Even as far back as the "Coinage Act of 1792," Congress fixed the dollar as a specific weight of silver in the form of a coin, and fixed the value of a gold coin in relation to it.

Nonetheless, it was in 1913 that Congress surrendered the original constitutional power to create and regulate money to the Federal Reserve in the Federal Reserve Act, thus giving this control to foreign interests. Then the Federal Reserve began printing paper money. Between 1914 and 1963 the Federal Reserve Note never claimed to be money or dollars. It simply stated that, as on a note for five dollars, "The United States of America will pay to the bearer on demand Five Dollars." Above the bank seal it said, "This note is legal tender for all debts public and private and is redeemable in lawful money at the United States Treasury or at any Federal Reserve Bank."

Then in 1963 the Fed began to issue its new series of notes without this promise and began taking the previous notes out of circulation. By removing this promise to pay the bearer, the federal government, in cooperation with the Federal Reserve, eliminated the money system as established by the Constitution and replaced it with something totally different.

The implications of this may not seem as drastic as they really are, and, obviously, most people did not think so at the time. Nevertheless, a few people have certainly understood what this could mean.

For example, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), the third president of the United States, made the prediction: "If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation and

then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all property until their children shall wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.” In other words, they would lose their homes because people could no longer afford to buy them, which, in this system means they could no longer afford the interest on their mortgage, which is the method by which banks earn their money. Then the banks would take control of the property. And in a poor economy, this can become rampant, like an unwanted disease, leaving the people without much facility to live any kind of decent life, and little means to object to what is being done to them.

Although Jefferson was no prophet, he perceived a clear picture of what we could expect. Even in the early days of this country the bankers had tried to establish a central bank. In light of this, Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), the seventh president of the United States, stated: “The bold efforts that the present bank has made to control the government, the distress it has wantonly caused, are but premonitions of the fate which awaits the American people should they be deluded into a perpetuation of this institution or the establishment of another like it. If people only understood the rank injustice of our money and banking system, there could be a revolution before morning!”

The reasons for the early American wars were many, including the principles these bankers were trying to implement. England, for example, had attempted to take away the right of the colonies to print their own money. It had been noted by Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) in 1763 while visiting England, that the reason why the colonies were prospering while England was suffering a tremendous national debt and high unemployment was because the colonies issued their money in proper proportions to the demands of its trade and industry.

Thereafter, the Central Banks of England pushed the British Parliament to pass a Bill prohibiting the colonies from issuing their own money. Thus, the bankers could gain control of the wealth of the colonies. Benjamin Franklin later noted that within one year of the enactment of that Bill, the streets of the colonies were filled with the unemployed, and there was great dissatisfaction.

Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) tried hardest to establish the Bank of the United States, which would be an agency of the international bankers. But Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and other leaders greatly

opposed this. However, after Franklin's death, Hamilton had bribed enough congressmen to grant a charter for the First Bank of the United States in 1791. Having lost this battle, Jefferson said that he believed banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies. They have set up a money aristocracy that has set the government at defiance. They should take the power of issuing money from the banks and restore it to Congress and the people to whom it belongs.

The charter for the First Bank of the United States was for 20 years and expired in 1811. Then the Bank of England attempted to seize control over the ex-colonies as they had tried before the Revolution. This was one reason for the War of 1812.

For the next 100 years the international bankers tried gaining control in the U. S., but there were various opponents, including Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), the 16th president of the United States. He said the money power preys upon a nation in times of peace and conspires against it in times of adversity. It is more despotic than monarchy, more insolent than autocracy, and more selfish than bureaucracy. It denounces as public enemies all who question its methods or throw light upon its crimes.

It is interesting that in 1913, the same year the Federal Reserve Act was incorporated for the Federal Reserve Bank, the government also adopted the 16th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution that began the Income Tax. Income tax "contributions" are collected by the Internal Revenue Service, which operates like a private collection agency for the Federal Reserve. In this way, they have positioned themselves as tax collectors who take the wealth of all individuals, besides printing the currency and directing governments by making economic policy. Furthermore, member bankers, and their institutions such as various Foundations, have used their wealth to purchase much of the media, controlling our education, news, publications, radio and television networks. They also can manipulate universities by providing (or withholding) large grants of funds for particular programs, and they also often own companies that produce the college and school textbooks. In these ways, they can feed us whatever information is needed so that we form the necessary opinions they want us to have about many things around us. Thus, much of our philosophies and outlooks on life, the politicians we vote for, even the way we do things, are affected through this means. Plus, these days we can see how many people get seduced by the promise of easy money through various bank loans, adjustable mortgages

which may be attractive at first until the rates go up, and the lure of credit cards, which catch people who become forever indebted by such instruments, or “products” as they are called in the banking industry. Though there may be many of us who use banks for various reasons, these are some of the ways by which numerous people become unknowing slaves to a banking system wherein a small group of elitist individuals live a wealthy life at the expense of the many.

Needless to say, there are hundreds of groups out there that have plenty of information and speculation about what is likely to happen in the future regarding the plans of these power elite bankers and their allies. Some people say that they will replace all money with a single international currency. They will later change this to international debit cards that each person must carry that will have a computer chip in it that will hold information on your whole life. In this scenario, one central computer will observe and track all of your dealings. Later they will do away with these cards and they will surgically embed the chips under the skin of your hand. Then you will not be able to make any transactions without having the microchip. No more cash or private transactions or gifts to friends or family without bankers knowing. There will be no transactions without it going through the banks and through your microchip. Some people also expect that they will take out taxes from your account automatically, or they might take possession of everything you own without you being able to do anything about it. You will have no privacy and few freedoms. You will be either a good citizen of the one world government, or I should say the one world bank, the New World Order, or you will be a renegade living underground or in the mountains. Thousands of people going off to live in the mountains and away from government control is a scenario that is also predicted in the Vedic literature, as we will see as we proceed through this book. From here the speculations of what may happen in the future can go on and on.

The reason why I write about all of this is not to promote the speculations or conspiracy theories of some people, but to show the bigger ramifications of the short warning that has been given in the Vedic literature about what will happen in the Age of Kali and the cause of it when the dangers in the hoarding of gold and manipulation of currency is mentioned. Also, to help recognize the full implications and how that description will expand as the Age of Kali progresses. In this case, it is only one verse in the

Srimad-Bhagavatam that states the personality of Kali could reside in the form of hoarding and the standardization of gold, and that wherever this goes on there will be falsity, intoxication, lust, envy, and enmity. This also indicates the desire or lust for ever-increasing power and control, and an expanding gap between the haves and the have-nots. Certainly, we can see all of this in the short review above of the last few hundred years regarding this issue and the control of currency. Thus, the results or outcome of whatever small warning the Vedic literature gives regarding various topics may have very wide and deep implications that will greatly affect our lives and the state of society and politics, and even the well-being of the planet and our environment and natural resources as we go further into the future. Naturally, the more profit oriented any organization is, the less they will be concerned for the well-being of the people, planet and natural resources.

So, we need to contemplate these warnings and develop the ability to perceive the long term dangers to which these Vedic prophecies are referring. We have to understand that the process of increasing corruption in the economy, government, and society in general of which the Vedic prophecies speak is still an ongoing process. What we may accept as normal during this day and age, even the economic principles that we think are standard, will all mean something far different in another 50 or 100 years. The rate of change and corruption is increasing as the age of Kali-yuga moves forward.

So, as we go through the warnings and prophecies in the Vedic literature, I will not describe in such detail how the various predictions have manifested or are growing before our eyes. In many cases, it will be quite evident whenever we see the news. But be mindful of the seriousness of what they describe. Then, as we become familiar with them, we will be more aware of the general pattern of events that are likely to continue into the far distant future of the Age of Kali, and how to prepare for such social tendencies and what our role is in an ever-changing and increasingly materialistic world. Nonetheless, there is still hope for expanding the spiritual forces in society, as I describe in the segment of this book called, "A New Species of Humanity." But the time to act is now while we still have the freedom to make a difference.

THE BASIC PATTERN OF EVENTS FOR THE FUTURE IN KALI-YUGA

An important point to consider is that the Vedic prophecies do not outline a year-by-year schedule of events, nor do they indicate particular times to watch for worst case scenarios or disasters. They are not really time oriented. Nor do they predict some fearful apocalypse that will happen any time soon that will put an end to the world as we know it. The Vedic prophecies describe a more general flow of the deterioration in society's general mass consciousness and the tell-tale signs of it that anyone can see. They describe the consequences, reactions and tendencies as the aggregate consciousness of society in this age of Kali-yuga reaches particular levels of uplifting thought or degradation. Such changes in consciousness are not necessarily predicted to happen at certain times, though there may be a general downward trend. Actually, the times for the symptoms or inclinations that can be seen in the habits of people, according to the changes in consciousness, may take place sooner or later. These may also be directed by society at large according to their interests and mental makeup. This depends on how spiritual or materialistic people become, which means that how Kaliyuga unfolds is basically up to us, at least to varying degrees. Psychics may predict events in the course of time, which may or may not always be accurate, whereas the timing of the Vedic prophecies may fluctuate with the flow of social development, either positive or negative. These prophecies apply not only for the next few decades, but over the course of the next hundreds of thousands of years, until the very end of Kali-yuga, which is predicted to continue for another 427,000 years. In other words, if you think things are bad now, you have not seen anything yet. After that, things will be better again.

Nonetheless, the *Kalki Purana* does contain predictions of what will happen over a basic time frame within the age of Kali-yuga, much of which you can see already happening. It breaks the yuga into four periods of time. In describing the characteristics of people in the first part of Kali-yuga, the first chapter of the *Kalki Purana* describes the lack of spiritual interest in the people in general. It says, "The people in Kali-yuga will be accustomed to quarreling and fighting amongst themselves. They will go to great lengths to groom their hair, wear the best clothes, and decorate themselves with costly ornaments.

"In Kali-yuga, a person with a lot of money will naturally be respected as a great soul. If a twice-born person [spiritually initiated or even those

who are not] earns his livelihood by lending money on interest, he will be considered a pillar of society. Those [impure] Sannyasis of Kali-yuga will be attached to home and property, and householders will become devoid of all power of discrimination. In Kali-yuga, people will blaspheme a spiritual master or other elderly person without hesitation. Indeed, people in general will simply become hypocrites, liars and cheaters.” (*Kalki Purana* 1.28-29)

In regard to crime, it says, “In Kali-yuga, Shudras will accept charity from others, or else plunder [and rob] others’ wealth without discrimination.”

Then in relation to marriage between two people, it relates that “Mutual agreement will become the sole criteria for solemnizing the marriage of a boy and a girl... Many married women will behave little better than prostitutes because they have practically no attachment for their husbands. In this way, they will become promiscuous, so that they will be easily abandoned by their husbands [and, thus, go from man to man].”

A special problem will be the lack of spiritual depth in anyone. They will be more concerned with appearance and reputation, which becomes all that a person is judged by, as it says, “People will show sympathy and magnanimity, but it will simply be a form of duplicity [and self-promotion]. Forgiveness will be granted only when a person is unable to harm the offending party. In a society of ‘might makes right,’ people will easily become annoyed with those in a weaker position. Even fools will be very talkative in an attempt to prove that they are learned. People will engage in religious ceremonies, but simply to acquire reputation. If one has got wealth, he will be considered to be a saint. Simply by putting on a sacred thread, one will be recognized as a Brahmana [a twice-born or religious priest]. Simply by carrying a staff, one will be recognized as a Sannyasi [renounced monk].”

About problems with the environment, the *Kalki Purana* relates that, “The earth will restrict the production of food grains. The currents of rivers will flow very rapidly. Clouds will shower rain very irregularly, and the land will not yield sufficient crops.”

In regard to the characteristics of rulers as Kali-yuga moves forward, it says, “Kings will whimsically torture and kill their subjects, and burden them with excessive taxes. Such unfortunate subjects will finally take their family and belongings to the shelter of mountains and dense forests [in attempts to escape such oppressive conditions]. The people of Kali-yuga

will sustain their lives by eating flesh, honey, fruits, and roots without discrimination. Almost everyone will take pleasure in blaspheming the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna. These are some of the symptoms that will manifest at the beginning of Kali-yuga.” (*Kalki Purana* 1.30-37)

Then it goes on to explain a few symptoms of the following parts of Kali-yuga. “In the second quarter of Kali-yuga, people will no longer chant the holy names of Lord Krishna [by then the names will be forgotten]. In the third quarter of Kali-yuga, there will be an upsurge of unwanted population [the planet hardly able to support all of its people and their misguided aims of life], and in the final quarter of Kali-yuga, there will be only one class of human being, because God consciousness will have been long forgotten [meaning that no one will have any spiritual knowledge].” (*Kalki Purana* 1.38)

“When the study of the *Vedas*, performance of sacrifice [religious rituals], chanting of mantras, and other religious practices thus disappear from this world during Kali-yuga, the demigods, being afflicted due to not receiving their share of sacrificial [ritualistic] offerings, will take shelter of Lord Brahma, the grandfather of the universe, who was born from the universal lotus flower.” (*Kalki Purana* 1.39) In other words, the Devas or demigods, our higher spiritual guides and well-wishers, will turn away from this world due to neglect from the general populace.

This last verse is in reference to when things get especially difficult and the demigods led by Brahma therefore approach Lord Vishnu in His spiritual abode to pray for a solution to the problems. Thereafter, Lord Vishnu explains that He will appear as Lord Kalki in the village of Shambhala to rectify the situation by annihilating all evil kings and cheaters from the face of the world, and bring in the age of Satya-yuga. Thus, the start of the next cycle of the four yugas is initiated. These points that are mentioned in the *Kalki Purana* and many others are more thoroughly explained in the next chapter.

However, in considering some of the statements given above, anyone can look around and see this basic pattern and trend of events unfolding as the age of Kali-yuga progresses by looking at any newspaper. The patterns become quite evident simply by understanding the above descriptions of the economic arrangements and the increasing presence of the principles of quarrel and confusion and irreligion brought by the age of Kali. Kali-yuga is the advancement of the modes of passion (*raja-guna*) and ignorance

(*tama-guna*), which causes people to become further disconnected from their real identity as spiritual beings. The more that happens, the more the general moral standards are given up or even deliberately discarded. Then basic selfishness increases and society gives up its values of consideration for others, not to mention the lack of regard it has for the environment and anything else. As that escalates, governments become increasingly intolerant of uncooperative people and will demand more control and tougher laws, which also provokes groups to revolt and create uprisings against it. There will not be wars merely between countries, but within the nations themselves. As time goes on and the modes of passion and ignorance increase, there will be no peace anywhere. Even the history of when the world new a little peace will seem like it was a luxury in itself. People will want to leave the cities to live in the hillsides and mountains, and not merely to find peace, but for the meager chance of basic survival. Gradually, as the age moves on it, will become one of increasing chaos and madness on all levels.

Kali-yuga is also a time when there is widespread struggle for economic development. As Kali-yuga moves forward, people of all classes will be struggling to maintain themselves by any means, good or bad. People will become extremely greedy due to the ignorant notions that this earthly life is all there is, and that satisfying the mind and body is the primary goal of life. In this way, advancement in society will be centered around economic development, which is the standard of the mode of passion (*raja-guna*). The accumulation of goods, great production, great endeavor and enterprises, engagements for profit, fame and adoration, etc., are all considered developments in the mode of passion.

Before the age of Kali, advancement was focused on the mode of goodness (*sattva-guna*)—stability, balance, endurance, maintenance, preservation, and harmony with God and nature. In goodness, not a lot seems to happen or change, except within oneself in terms of the development of spiritual progress and wisdom. This type of advancement is real evolutionary development, not simply technological improvement which may bring about many comforts and facilities, but at the cost of using up all of our natural resources, and destroying the earth and society with its pollutants.

The development of huge cities is another sign of advancement of civilization in the mode of passion. Constructing as many highways,

vehicles, planes, and buildings as possible is the American dream; the dream to make lots of money through such development. This is the standard of the mode of passion. But with this is also an accumulation of the mode of ignorance, which is a problem. This manifests when our endeavors in the mode of passion cause unwanted results in the mode of ignorance. A prime example of this is the business of oil production, which is enormously profitable (in the mode of passion), but results in exhaust fumes and oil spills that do so much environmental damage (in the mode of darkness or ignorance).

Remember, when Kali-yuga begins, matter or material things lose their potency. For example, food is no longer as full of nutrients as it used to be. There is a decreasing amount of nutrient rich soil, which is incapable of producing food rich in nutrients. And the soil no longer produces the same amount of plants and eatables. Plus, countries that become wealthy often switch to a diet which requires more beef, poultry like chicken, and also pork and fish, which requires more grain for animal feed that could have provided humans more food. Thus, not only is there a decrease in nutritious food, but fewer people get fed, and food prices go up.

People then become so greedy for money that they use anything to get more food production from the soil. This endeavor in the mode of passion leads to the use of chemical fertilizers which may help to produce more food in the short-term, but ultimately destroys the soil and causes diseases. This produces food that is even less helpful for our physical and mental development. Thus, the process of losing the ability to produce good food is perpetuated, causing problems to only worsen. Then you have the side effect or result in the mode of ignorance, that everyone becomes affected because of the pollution in the soil, air, and water, and the food lacks the proper nutrients to develop the brain and body to its fullest capacity. In essence, people and animals become brain damaged, even deformed, depending on whether they can get proper nutrients in their food or not, and the degree to which they are exposed to the pollutants that gradually seem to spread everywhere. Thus, people's level of intelligence goes down as Kali-yuga progresses. And as more pollutants enter the soil and atmosphere, or as mad scientists try to change the food we grow by genetic modifications, additional problems, diseases and deformities affect more animals and people and the environment. More specific examples of what happens in the future of Kali-yuga will be given in the next chapter.

Because of the upsurge of the modes of passion and ignorance, and how people become affected by them, the ability to understand higher philosophical knowledge is reduced, even eliminated in an increasing number of people. What happens is that places of knowledge, such as schools and colleges, become more profit oriented places of business and advancement of economic development, which is again the influence of the mode of passion. Thus, places like universities and the domain of intellectuals becomes degraded. Where such passionate endeavors exist means that educational institutions also become places of intoxication and parties for sexual encounters, and other activities that cater to the demands of the mind and senses. After all, that is the purpose of increasing one's profits. These places then become more preoccupied with presenting the goal and then the prize for increasing one's ability to compete in the pursuit of adoration, distinction and influence for personal profit and fame. The better they become at presenting their facilities for pursuing and achieving this goal, the more students they get. The more students they get and the higher the tuition they pay, the more profits that are made. And this becomes the bottom line for such educational institutions. Finally, rather than being concerned with providing real education to all who may deserve it, they prefer their students from higher income families, those who have more money to spend at the university. Thus, they begin to exclude even worthy but financially impacted students, and the higher reasoning abilities and the philosophical understanding that used to be provided or developed by such institutions become a thing of the past. In this way, the dollar becomes the real goal of the university and the development and well-being of society in general decreases all the more.

In any case, no matter how good an education a person may have, if he or she still does not know who or what he is by the attainment of spiritual knowledge, he will not truly know what to do with himself or where he or she fits into the scheme of things. Such a person often feels like there is something still missing in life, but he does not know what it is. Therefore, he may not have the peace of mind or contentment in life that he wishes to find, and this becomes the standard problem throughout society, which often leads to confusion, depression and despondency. Yet, advertisements and propaganda indoctrinate people into thinking they can solve their problems by filling their lives with an increasing number of objects and ways for attaining sensual pleasure, mental stimulation, and entertainment.

All you have to do is keep working or find the means to acquire the necessary funds to afford it. Thus, without realizing it, you become a voluntary slave to your mind and senses, and to the institutions that seemingly help you attain your dreams, such as the government, banks, etc.

In Vedic times, it used to be the intellectuals who understood spiritual knowledge and the Absolute Truth, and had direct experience of it. Such people had the practical knowledge to give direction and bring stability to society; to give society a brain. A brainless society is without real direction. In such a society, everyone works in any way possible for economic development, acquiring whatever superficial prizes and heights that mean the most, while being ignorant of the true goal of life. This becomes the norm in Kali-yuga.

Kali-yuga is also the age when pollution becomes rampant. However, the planet only reflects the consciousness of those who inhabit it. Outer environmental pollution is merely a reflection of humanity's internal polluted consciousness. This inner pollution is society's perverted mental habits, desires, and thought patterns. As we become polluted internally and act to satisfy those polluted desires externally, based on gaining money, power, distinction, adoration, and sensual gratification, we act in selfish ways to accomplish such things as attaining high positions for rapid and easy profits and pleasures. This is the materialistic form of consciousness. This easily leads to activities that may pollute the earth and its atmosphere, not only environmentally but also morally, economically, politically, and in so many other ways. It does not matter how small or big we are, or whether we are running a large corporation or just a household. Our consciousness will determine our decisions, which affects all of those around us. Thus, in some way, the whole world becomes affected by everything we do.

Thousands of years ago Lord Krishna gave the warning to Arjuna about the dangers of materialistic consciousness and the implications such mental pollution can have in the world. He said in *Bhagavad-gita* (16.8) that materialists, "say that this world is unreal, with no foundation, and no God in control." Because of this attitude, they feel justified in doing whatever they like in order to lead a pampered life, or to attain instant sensual pleasure and quick profits. However, Krishna goes on to explain (*Bg.*16.11): "They believe that to gratify the senses is the prime necessity of human civilization." So this is their motivation in life, but because of this, "until the end of life their anxiety is immeasurable." Why? Because they are,

“bound by a network of hundreds of thousands of desires.” (Bg.16.12) It is because of these numerous material desires that such people become relentless in trying to achieve what they want, and thus they will “engage in unbeneficial, horrible acts, meant to destroy the world.” (Bg.16.19) Therefore, the more materialistic people get, the more polluted society becomes. As the pollution of materialistic consciousness increases, the stronger will be the socially deteriorating effects of Kali-yuga.

Pollution also is the art of propaganda, the art of creating desires in the minds of people through exaggeration and lying in commercials and politics. They design such propaganda to cheat those against whom it is used. They take your money or your vote and give you less than what you are promised. The basis of this sort of pollution lies in being expert in the art of lying and persuasion. We especially see this in politics. In Kali-yuga there are few if any real leaders, and no one really likes politicians. Actually, many people vote not for the persons they want in office but for the ones that are most likely to do the least damage. And that is judged according to who gives the most convincing propaganda.

The bottom line is that now, at the beginning of this 21st century, things are getting so bad that such problems are beyond the hope of material solutions. By studying this chapter anyone will be able to see the basic pattern of events that the future of Kali-yuga holds as the influence of the modes of passion and ignorance increase. Anyone with a little understanding can see that at this point only divine intervention or spiritually based resolutions will help change things and solve our problems. This is especially possible in the period of time known as “The Golden Age within Kali-yuga.” This was predicted to begin in the first part of the 432,000 years of Kaliyuga, which we are in right now. This will continue for another 10,000 years. During this period spiritual knowledge can become widespread and produce many benefits for the people of this age. (This is explained more thoroughly in Chapter Five.) However, this will help only to the degree in which we use it. Otherwise, the forces of darkness or spiritual ignorance will increase.

Ignorance is the cause of all the anomalies in human society that Maharaja Yudhisthira could perceive at the onset of Kali-yuga, as previously described. Thus, the most important thing we can do is to counteract the effects of such ignorance by spreading real knowledge and solutions based on true spiritual understanding. The higher energies and

understanding of life, along with spiritual awareness, must be brought in. That can at least delay the effects of Kali-yuga and the many earth changes predicted to happen. As people become more focused on true spiritual understanding and how to perceive their spiritual identity, the more we can change things in a positive way, and the more people will want to change in the right direction. A world of darkness can become a world of light.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Coming Changes During Kali-yuga

Throughout many of the ancient Vedic texts there are descriptions of numerous future changes that will take place in society, some of which we can already see and many others that will happen in the next few hundred or thousands of years from now. Some of what is described is that as Kali-yuga progresses things will begin to deteriorate, social values and moral standards will regress, and food becomes scarce and more expensive. Due to pollution and lack of proper food and good nutrition, mankind will gradually lose brain power. People will get smaller and have a shorter life expectancy. As society begins to have less brain power or thinking ability, there is the tendency to become less civilized and more barbaric, unable to maintain the skills needed to maintain technological advancement. This is predicted to continue over the course of many thousands of years to the point where people will go back to using the simplest of stone tools for lack of better facilities and ingenuity. Thus, technology gradually fades and disappears, or even destroys itself through the polluting of the natural resources that we need to survive. Then, with the display of such social and mental retardation, humankind takes on the physical characteristics of those beings who are less capable intellectually. Thus, the relics we find today of ancient man may simply be the remnants of a previous age of Kali millions of years ago. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.39-40) specifically states:

In the age of Kali, people's minds will always be agitated. They will become emaciated by famine and taxation, and will always be disturbed by fear and drought. They will lack adequate clothing, food and drink, will be unable to rest properly, have sex or bathe themselves, and will have no ornaments to decorate their bodies. In fact, the people of Kali-yuga will gradually come to appear like ghostly haunted creatures.

This indicates that the way people will treat themselves, engaging in all kinds of detrimental acts in their attempt to squeeze whatever pleasure they can out of their bodies, along with their bad habits, eating the wrong foods, enduring the natural disasters of the day and the high taxation of government, much of their energy for life will be exhausted. Combine that with being forced to work hard for little return, along with wars, industrial pollution, drought, and famine, they will have little strength or energy left to live—or even to have sex. Thus, they will look ghostly.

It may be hard for some people to visualize a time when the world has little food and water, even for growing crops or for bathing. Nevertheless, we can see that it is already happening in various parts of the world, and the Vedic literature predicts a time in the future when this condition will gradually spread everywhere. Looking at the environmental changes that are happening now makes it seem like such conditions may not be so far away. Finding a place to rest also will be difficult because society will be so disturbed day and night, crime will be rampant, poverty will be pervasive, and business and work so demanding that few people will have good or peaceful homes or dependable shelters. Everyone will be worried about losing what they have. Thus, getting proper rest may also seem like a luxury. And there will be no facility or money for acquiring ornaments for the body, not to mention the casual pleasures that people take for granted, such as having music to listen to, drinking water from the faucet, or nice shoes and clothes. In the distant future, all this will become difficult or impossible to acquire, which is already the case for some people in the world today.

The above verse also means that Kali-yuga is an age when a growing number of people are subjected to the influence of entities that exist in the lower subtle realm, such as disembodied spirits or ghostly creatures. Such beings were not prevalent in the Satya or Treta-yugas. The *Garuda Purana* (11.20.17 and *Garuda Purana, Dharma (Preta) Kanda* 20.7) points out that Kali-yuga is an age in which ghostly creatures become more commonplace. It says that he who does not observe rites for spiritual purification, who has no faith in the sanctity of the *Vedas*, hates righteous acts, and indulges in falsehood, may be tormented by ghosts. Thus, through wicked deeds, or if one is influenced too much by ghostly entities, he becomes a candidate for becoming a *preta*, ghostly being, in the Kali Age.

Such ghostly beings who are earthbound and without physical bodies look for ways to satisfy their material desires. This usually involves an attempt to enter or control someone else's material body, thus giving the victim much trouble that he or she may not understand. Such subtle beings usually bother those people who are nonspiritual, unclean, and weak-minded. They are the easiest to control. Such victims may, indeed, hear voices or do things they normally would not do. Even people in high positions—kings, presidents, even false religious leaders—may be influenced by such subtle beings. The influence of such beings may cause serious mood swings in the victim or even pave the way for disastrous calamities, wars, and injustice within that person's sphere of activity, especially if the victim is in a position of power.

The *Padma Purana* (1.76.123) relates that some ghostly beings may also take birth in physical bodies. It states that in the Kaliyuga, there are gods, demons, and the rest are human beings. The evil spirits will be born and will [be recognized by their habit of] eating corpses and dead animals. The *Vayu Purana* also confirms this in the verse *rakshasah kalim ashritya jayante brahma-yonishu*, which explains that demons like *rakshasas* take advantage of the age of Kali to appear even in the families of Brahmanas [not to mention the families of others].

EFFECTS OF DEMONIC FORCES IN KALI-YUGA

In the verse quoted above from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, it is described how some people will become like replicas of ghostly creatures in this age. This does not only mean that they will take on the physical appearance of these kinds of beings, but it is also the mentality that may take on the characteristics of ghosts or demons. Some people may look quite lovely on the outside, but their consciousness may be completely disturbed, unbalanced and monstrous. The reason is that due to the vibrational frequency that pervades much of human civilization in Kali-yuga, the demonic mentality can easily enter society and influence and affect the consciousness of people. This angry and diabolic mentality can even be witnessed in some of the modern music created by popular musicians, as well as in movies, the news media, etc. With their words, descriptions, mood, and activities, they create an atmosphere and present images of disharmony, turmoil, discontent, rebelliousness, anger, rage, violence,

horror, crime, and the selfish desires for attaining sensual and sexual satisfaction by any means.

These low and evil forces can actually be partly caused by subtle or ghostly beings of the underworld whose intention is to create a disruptive atmosphere wherein people become susceptible to confusion, accidents, crimes, violence, and suicidal thoughts. These subtle beings get energy and feed off the confusion, fear and anger that people generate when involved in such scenes or activities. So, they deliberately create situations wherein people are influenced by their evil suggestions and forces, and who are then lured into acting out such disruptive emotions. This contributes to the misdirected aim of society and the confusion therein. This only releases more low and dark mental and emotional energy that the evil forces and beings feed on, thus making them even stronger.

These same subtle beings can goad people who have a tendency toward lusty desires or rebelliousness or anger and incite them to act in such ways. These subtle entities make such humans their inconspicuous slaves so they can feed off the low energy that is projected by the persons when they are engaged in sex, or fits of anger, or even depression, moroseness, etc., and gain energy with the release of these kinds of negative emotions. These repugnant entities will surround the people who are absorbed in lusty actions to sap them of all the vigor they can get.

Therefore, people who have a strong interest in sex are often influenced by such beings and can be surrounded by a number of them who continue to mentally suggest the idea for more sex, or, in other cases, more crime, more violence, etc. Thus, they feed upon the vital force of people who are weak-minded and give in under the influence of suggestions and desires. People who are especially addicted to intoxication or sex may be followed by these kinds of low subtle beings who still have a taste for such things but have no physical body to satisfy their thirst for these activities. So, they attach themselves to those who are weak and prone to these kinds of habits and then live through such people, like a monkey on one's back. This is why some people explain that the inclination for such desires has come from outside themselves, like an outside force or voice that they felt or heard.

In this way, some of these subtle and wicked beings have a quota to create a certain number of inauspicious scenarios every day. Those people who are prone to such desires or who lose their vital force and mental determination are perfect tools for providing this kind of low emotional

frequency to the subtle beings who feed off of it and then get more energy, like a psychic vampire. Such people are also easily influenced into anger, fear, depression, and other negative emotions, or even compelled to engage in plans for wicked goals. Therefore, they may be mentally attacked from outside and thus influenced and compelled into performing despicable or terrible actions. It is like a pattern that keeps people focused on base desires without understanding how to get free from them and lift their consciousness toward higher goals.

The point that the Vedic literature is indicating is that the line between those who live on the physical plane and those who live in the subtle realm gets thinner during the age of Kali-yuga. Thus, you might say the two dimensions begin to overlap, and the subtle beings can more easily enter the physical plane of existence or influence those who live therein, even to the point where such entities in the subtle realm are seen more often by those in the physical dimension. Adversely, when people go to bars or gambling houses, or listen to lusty music, or watch similar kinds of movies and violent shows on television of sex and crime, it provides a vehicle through which the demoniac forces can appear or strengthen their influence and, thus, incite people in wicked ways.

This is why the Vedic scriptures recommend the chanting of particular mantras and the singing of devotional *bhajans* or songs, along with practicing meditation and other spiritual activities. These refine and also raise the vibration of our immediate environment and our consciousness, which chases away the dark forces and invokes the higher beings and Devas to come near. In this way, we become increasingly protected or free from the low and evil influences, both individually and socially, so that we can rise to a higher awareness and operate in a spiritually progressive frame of mind. This is the objective of the Vedic spiritual path anyway, but it becomes all the more important as the age of Kali-yuga progresses, because, as anyone can see, the materialistic mindset becomes all the more pervasive as time moves forward in this age, moral standards decrease, and spirituality itself becomes increasingly distant from the thoughts and goals of people in general. Therefore, those who are spiritually inclined need to take care in this way.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE IN KALI-YUGA

There are many other basic symptoms of the age of Kali described in the *Puranas* that we can presently observe. For example, the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, Chap.190, Text 76-77) relates a general condition that increases as time goes on in this age: “When that age of Kali would come, every one will be in want. All the directions will be in a blaze; the stars and the constellations will have no brilliancy and the planets and planetary conjunctions [astrologically] will be inauspicious. The course of the wind will be confused and innumerable meteors will flash through the sky, foreboding great fear.”

Meteors were always an ominous sign in the past, and the fading light from the stars may be because of the increase in pollution in the atmosphere. That is certainly the case near the cities. And we have seen that the course of the jet stream across North America and other places have resulted in most confusing and even severe weather patterns.

The *Brahmanda Purana* (1.2.31.31-35) further describes that the characteristic features of Kali-yuga are based on violence, jealousy, falsehood, and *maya* (deception and cheating). The decline of religious and moral standards, the ridicule and murder of ascetics, sages, and devotees, along with fatal diseases, hunger, and fear, also increase during Kali-yuga. The subjects will die at various ages, some as infants, youth, in old age, or even while in the womb. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.1.10) also explains: “O learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed.”

The *Vayu Purana* (58.31-68 & 59.5-9) states similar characteristics with further elaborations on how things will decline in the future. These include that livelihoods will be difficult to achieve despite hard endeavor, and people will not accept the authority of the Vedic texts and will produce misleading religious scriptures unmindful of rules of conduct. People will be quick to get angry and violent, and be deficient in power. People will continuously lie, and kings and rulers will be low-class and propagate heretical ideas. People will not hesitate to kill a child in the womb. Thus, longevity, intellect, strength, beauty, and family prestige will all decline. Men will use harsh words, steal the gems and wealth of others, and rape other men’s wives. Their passion will be released through a wicked heart and will revel in violent, sinful activities. Sickness, delusion, dejection, unhappiness, and all activities in the mode of ignorance prevail in the Kali

Age. Because of such dark conditions, saintly men will withdraw from society and stay aloof, unknown to the rest of the world. Due to the spread of this misery, people will have short lives, and societies and whole countries will be exterminated. In the age of Kali, beasts of prey become more numerous and powerful, while useful animals like cows will dwindle and die. As Kali-yuga progresses, gradually the height of human beings will be reduced by seven times from that of what it was.

In regard to the lack of hesitancy to kill a child in the womb, in the year 2008 alone, nearly 42 million babies were killed in the womb all over the world. Put simply per day, 115,000 babies were killed on a daily basis in 2008. This translates into 80 babies every minute.

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.29) sums it up to say that Kali-yuga is extremely terrible, a mixture of all sins. This means that not only are all kinds of sins performed, but society is forced to experience all of the reactions of such activities.

The above symptoms of the age of Kali may not seem rampant around the world as of yet, but many of them can easily be recognized in various countries today, even in the most developed countries, and are herein predicted to get worse.

THE EFFECTS OF LOW-CLASS RULERS

According to the Vedic information, the deterioration of the system of proper government began with the disappearance of Lord Krishna in 3102 BCE. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.1.1-8) we find a description of some of the dynasties that will rule in the age of Kali and what will happen to them. Therein we see the first assassination of a king, Puranjaya, by his minister, Sunaka, so that the minister can install his own son, Pradyota, as the king. Thereafter, the kings that follow will consist of eleven generations of descendants of Pradyota, ending with King Nanda, who is estimated to have existed about 1150 years after the age of Kali began, or after the reign of King Pariksit. It was predicted that King Nanda, born of a low-class woman, would rule over the world and wreak havoc among the other kings. He would be the master of millions of soldiers, and obtain fabulous wealth. From him onward all kings and rulers would be irreligious and low-class Shudras, or worse. The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) and the

Srimad-Bhagavatam (12.2.32) also state that it is from the time of this King Nanda that the influence of Kali-yuga will increase.

It is then predicted that the greatly learned Brahmana Chanakya Pandit will deceive Nanda in order to destroy his dynasty and enthrone Chandragupta, thus paving the way for the Maurya dynasty to rule. These events are now found in recorded history.

Regarding the assassination of Puranjaya by his minister, this type of act is also said to become common, as it is stated, “during Kali-yuga, a prince will kill his father to become king.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, Chapter 90.46)

Continuing with the descriptions of the *Bhagavatam*, we find it explained that more rulers will follow with fewer and fewer good qualities. In fact, we find it predicted that more and more impious and uncultured men will make their way into government with little to show but greater levels of impiety and confusion, which expands throughout society. Giving up the path of Vedic or a spiritually oriented civilization, society will lose all spiritual strength. The rulers who will appear during Kali-yuga will be uncivilized, uncharitable, have fierce tempers, and be devoted to the ways of irreligion and falsity. The world will see many such rulers simultaneously on this planet. They will become the equivalent of barbarians, exploiting or killing innocent women, children, Brahmanas (the priestly class), and cows. They will lust and covet after the wives and property of other men. In this way, it is described that the lawmakers and politicians themselves will devise the means to plunder and devour the citizens. They will have little strength of character and have erratic moods. Because of their activities, they are short-lived. The citizens ruled by such leaders will imitate their behavior and, thus, harassed by their own rulers and each other, will feel no relief and suffer ruination.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.31-35, 37) also describes that, “Possessing little energy and strength and no knowledge, and being addicted to avarice, ignorance, and sinful practices, men will accept with joy contemptuous words [conversations with arguments, insults and controversy]. O son of Kunti, the kings with their hearts wedded to sin, having no knowledge and always being proud of their wisdom, will fight with one another with the intention of taking one another’s lives. The Kshatriyas [rulers in government] will, at the end of the yuga, be the thorns of the earth. Full of avarice, swelling with pride and vanity, unable and

unwilling to protect (their subjects) they will take pleasure in punishing (the people under them). Again and again, attacking the good and the honest, and feeling no pity for them even when they will cry in grief, the [fake] Kshatriyas [or rulers] will, O descendant of Bharata, rob them of their wives and wealth... The [false and unqualified] Kings with their minds darkened by ignorance and discontented with what they have will at such a time rob their subjects by every means in their power.” This also means that taxes will become many and beyond reason, thus putting the people in constant torment in the struggle to exist.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.67) further elaborates that low-class kings will perform no spiritually meritorious activities. Thus, their subjects will slaughter cows and murder women, or allow such things to happen. People will fight and kill one another, and in this way try to accomplish their goals.

The *Linga Purana* (40.9 & 11) goes on to say that in Kaliyuga thieves will function as kings and kings will be as good as thieves. Kings will confiscate and misappropriate public property, and will cease to be protectors. The *Padma Purana* (7.26.35) confirms that low-class *mlecchas*, addicted to sins, will be kings.

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.37, 71, 81) goes on to say that in the age of Kali the rulers are greedily absorbed in wealth, are tyrannous, and will inflict pain on their subjects by imposing heavy taxes. After the advent of the Kali Age, uncultured men and outcastes will become kings. Being panic-stricken with the fear of robbers, etc., people will adopt wooden contrivances as a security measure. [This may mean simple wood weapons during a time when high technology has already disappeared or when guns or sophisticated weapons amongst the public are no longer allowed.] People will be extremely harassed by droughts and heavy taxation.

It is even explained that the forest dwellers [those who have nothing] will also have to suffer from payment of taxes [to irresponsible rulers]. (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, Chapter 7.33)

The *Vidyeshvarasamhita* (1.17-21) of the *Shiva Purana* says how the rulers, warriors, and politicians will discard their duties, indulge in selfish acts, associate with evil men, and aim toward debauchery. They will flee the battlefield and refuse to engage in virtuous warfare for the good of others. They follow the ways of thieves and are mentally enslaved by their base passions, always engaging in brutish sexual dalliances with their women. They do not really care to protect the people or those who seek refuge. They

give up the virtue of protecting the citizens and rejoice in what they gain by harassing others [through high taxes, political intrigue, exploitation, etc.]. Thus, they are wicked annihilators of their own people.

We should understand herein that when criminals and miscreants flourish in society it is only due to cowardly and impotent leaders. Rogues and thieves will flourish when there are no proper leaders to curb their activities, as stated in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.13.20). Without a proper government, a degraded civilization results. Even if anyone is homeless or starving it is because of government mismanagement, as verified in the *Bhagavatam* (4.17.10-11).

As further related (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.18.43-45), without strict and proper leaders the world becomes filled with rogues who take advantage of the unprotected citizens like wolves who go after defenseless lambs. When miscreants plunder the wealth of the people, social disruptions occur; people are killed, women and property are stolen. What is even worse is when the leaders and politicians act as thieves to plunder and usurp the property and money of the citizens. Then the people will fall from the path of progressive civilization and will be attracted to getting money in any way possible for nothing but gratifying their senses, which will be their way of trying to escape from the constant flow of problems. This is what leads the way to unwanted population that are practically on the level of animals.

The problem is that weak rulers have no strength to extinguish the rogues and thieves, especially if they are of the same caliber. So, corrupt activity spreads throughout society and begins to multiply. This manifests in the form of leaders who are more and more crooked with each successive generation. Even now, political corruption has become so widespread that certain practices are no longer considered as illegal or unethical. Political donations at election times with expectations of favors in the future is one of the most common practices in all democratic systems in the world. Thus, morals go down while corruption escalates, and that becomes normal politics, or should I say business. That is why democracy is sometimes called demon crazy. Under the ploy of freedom, without genuinely honest and upstanding leaders, the ways of the corrupt are let loose and out of control.

However, such leaders also become implicated by the results of the nefarious activities of the citizens. As stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.20.14 & 4.21.24) and in *Manu-samhita* (8.304-309), a good king who

protects the people receives one-sixth of the rewards of all pious activities performed by his citizens. But a king who collects his share of taxes, duties, and fines from the citizens and does not give them proper protection will accept one-sixth of the results or total karma of his subjects' bad activities and will sink into hell. Therefore, it will be difficult for a ruler in the age of Kali to have anything but a dark future in his next life. The conclusion is that, as *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.14.17) relates, a government that cannot protect its citizens should not collect taxes.

The *Bhagavatam* (12.2.7-11) goes on to say that among the crowded and corrupt population that will cover the earth in Kali-yuga, whoever shows himself to be the strongest can gain political power. We can see today that many politicians gain office by a show of financial power through advertising and propaganda. The Vedic predictions continue to explain that due to losing their wives and properties to rulers who show no mercy on their citizens, people in general will be forced to flee to the mountains and forests. While there, famine will harass and force them to eat leaves, roots, flesh, fruits, flowers, seeds, and honey. However, their situation is so fragile that they are completely ruined when hit by drought. They will also have to contend with wind, rain, heat, cold, and snow. Further troubles will be in dealing with hunger, thirst, disease, quarrels, and intense distress. In this situation people will live a maximum of fifty years.

This is further elaborated in the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) where it states that as the age of Kali continues in the distant future, the monarchs and rulers will have violent tempers and be addicted to falsehood and wickedness. They will cause the death of women and children. They will seize the property of their subjects, and their rule will quickly rise and fall. They will have little piety and insatiable desires. The citizens will imitate their actions and the barbaric tribes will gain power by patronizing these rulers, and the purer tribes will be ignored. [We can see this already happening in parts of Africa.] In the distant years ahead, the people, unable to bear the burdens of the avaricious leaders, will take refuge in the mountains and will be glad to eat the herbs, fruits, roots, honey, and leaves or vegetables. They will wear only clothes made from the bark of trees. During this time, exposed to cold, wind, sun, and rain, the oldest any man will become is twenty-three years of age. In Kaliyuga, decay will continuously spread until humankind approaches its annihilation. [This means that pollution, wars, and the false aims of life will create situations in

which the human population will greatly decrease, along with its length of life.] The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) further relates that rulers will plunder citizens rather than protecting them, robbing businessmen and shopkeepers of their merchandise under the pretext of collecting taxes.

Notice that there are a few differences in this description in the *Vishnu Purana* compared with the *Bhagavatam*, especially regarding the maximum age to which the people will live. As Kaliyuga advances, things get rougher. It becomes more difficult to survive. People die at increasingly younger ages. It is further explained that if the quality of our leaders does not change, demoniac and low-class men, dressed like sophisticated government officials, will take control of the government. They will be motivated to develop large military forces and fight with one another using the lives of innocent men they send off to battle. Proper kings or rulers should lead the charge in battle, but kings and rulers today never visit the battlefield, but instead hide behind desks, officiating over the battle as if they are too important to risk injury, while freely sending the sons of others to die. It is further explained that as numerous wars spring up, such wars will decrease the earth's burden of so many demoniac leaders. Eventually, however, the kings, rulers, and governments will not be able to collect all of its needed taxes from the poor citizens to meet its huge military and operational expenses. Then the government and military will collapse, and chaos and terror will reign all over the country. However, if enough greedy and warmongering leaders kill themselves off, the possibility of peace is aroused, at least for a time.

Further information is provided on this matter: "Although the demons who take possession of the government are dressed like men of government [as if they have good character], they do not know the duty of government. Consequently, by the arrangement of God, such demons, who possess great military strength, enthusiastically fight with one another, and thus the great burden and population of demons on the surface of the earth is reduced. In this way, the demons increase their military power by the will of the Supreme so that their numbers will be diminished, and the world can become peaceful and devotees can advance spiritually." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 9.24.59)

In this way, it is the demoniac rulers that keep the world at war, even when the general population would simply like peace to exist for the betterment of everyone. But they do not know how to establish real peace.

As the *Bhagavatam* (4.14.1) states, without a proper leader to look after the interests of the citizens, people become degraded and unruly like animals. No one is happy. Furthermore (*Bhag.4.14.3*), as society becomes more and more godless, people give up whatever moral standards they had and become destined to ruin.

“Bereft of a good king, the world will suffer in misrule. By the fault of Kali-yuga, the people will become diseased and povertystricken beggars dressed in rags.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, Chapter 90.53)

As it is further related in the *Manu-samhita* (7.142-144), a king who does not protect his citizens is a dead king. When leaders are strong and punish criminals in an exemplary way, then such miscreants cannot flourish and society can live peacefully. It is the duty of the king or ruler to give protection to the citizens. The *Bhagavatam* (4.14.18) also explains that the duty of the state is that everyone’s situation should be so nicely arranged that everyone can make spiritual progress in their own situation.

Unfortunately, as we find it said in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.49): “Uncivilized *mlecchas* and *yavanas* will become kings. They will demean the true religion and gleefully uproot the good reputations of the saintly devotees.” Actually, we are seeing this on an increasing basis, that those swamis and true saints who promote an honest understanding of genuine spiritual knowledge and the Vedic tradition are, by intrigue and deception as arranged by government or other officials, made to look like criminals in a way to tarnish their reputation and credibility as much as possible, thus also discrediting the whole tradition and those who follow it.

The *Manu-samhita* (8.21-22) more clearly puts things into perspective, saying that a kingdom controlled by low-class men, infested with atheists and the uncultured, soon perishes, afflicted by famine and disease.

In this way, we can understand that when men are not ruled by God or God’s laws through pious and qualified leaders, the citizens will be ruled by godless tyrants and their lives will become increasingly miserable and hellish. Thus, while we can, we must make sure our rulers are fit for their position and have a genuine interest for protecting the culture and the well-being of the people.

THE IMMORAL QUALITIES OF PEOPLE

When the rulers become so bad, then the people themselves cannot help but slide into degradation and deepening forms of corruption. Therefore, regarding the qualities of the people of Kaliyuga, the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, Chap.190, Texts 11-14, 25, 38, 39, 40, 45, 52, 53, 56, 68-70) explains, “O best of the Bharata race, in the dark age (of Kali) virtue being mixed with three parts of sin lives by the side of men. Accordingly, virtue is said to wait upon men with only one-fourth part remaining. O Yudhisthira, know that the period of life, the energy, the intellect and the physical strength of men (gradually) decrease in every yuga. O Yudhisthira, the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and Shudras will practice morality and virtue with deceit, and men in general will deceive their fellow men by spreading the (false) net of virtue [in appearance only]. Men with false pride of learning by their acts will make truth concealed [will propose non-truths when it is for their own benefit]... At such time things forbidden by the *Shastras* will be enjoyed by men... There is no doubt the world will by then be a field of *mleccha* activity [of the lowest class]. Men with false pride of learning will diminish the truth. The old will display the folly of the young, and the young will show in them the dotage of the old. The cowards will have the reputation of bravery and the brave will be as melancholy (foolish) as the cowards. In this age men will not trust one another... O king, men and women will become perfectly free [to do any immoral thing] in their conduct. When this age will come, they will not tolerate one another’s acts... The country will be afflicted with dearth and famine. The roads will be filled with lustful men and unchaste women. Women will also hate their husbands. When this age will come, men will certainly adopt the *mleccha* conduct; they will eat all things [without discrimination]; they will be free [unrestricted] in all their acts... When this age would come, led by their nature, men will act with cruelty and will speak ill of one another... All this will take place in the (Kali) yuga. Know that these are the signs of the (Kali) yuga. When men become always fierce, sinful, carnivorous, addicted to intoxicating drinks, then does the (Kali) yuga come. In this yuga the clouds pour rain unseasonably.” This means that sometimes it may rain too much and at other times not enough. This shows the imbalance of nature which is but the reflection of humanity’s own imbalance in consciousness. It is this consciousness of the general mass of people which

sends out a vibration that affects the planet and the way nature responds to humanity.

People will also have little respect for nature and the way they treat animals in this age. The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190. 27, 57, 60) explains this: “Men will till low-lands and employ cows and calves that are but one year old in drawing the plough and carrying the burdens... People will pitilessly destroy trees and gardens. Men will be filled with anxiety for their livelihood... When men will kill others, when they will be wicked, cruel, and destroyers of all animals, then will that (be recognized as the age of Kali) yuga.”

The qualities of the people who live in Kali-yuga are further described in many other *Puranas* as well. The *Vidyeshvarasamhita* (1.12-37) of the *Shiva Purana* relates that at the beginning of the terrible age of Kali-yuga men will start becoming devoid of good qualities. They will engage in evil ways and fall away from the truthful vocations. They will covet other men’s wealth and wives and injure others for gain. They will be atheists and take the body to be the self. Thus, [thinking their body to be their real identity and providing pleasure for it the goal of life] they are slaves to lust. All classes of people will discard their duties and take to evil ways. Merchants will take to crooked means to earn money and will be notorious for cheating people. Women become inclined toward misbehavior, slight their husbands, and fearlessly pursue frivolous activities. Men and women will engage in flirtations and will be carried away by their desires and pursue illicit connections with paramours.

So, Kali-yuga began 5,000 years ago and, of course, not everyone is exhibiting all of these symptoms. However, are any of these descriptions unfamiliar to us? I don’t think so. Anyone can recognize these characteristics, symptoms of Kali-yuga, in many areas of life today. Look around. We can see more people catering to their sensual desires than ever. Crime is on the rise and becoming more depraved and insensitive, and moral standards in the media and entertainment are becoming lower all the time. We also have to be more careful than ever of merchants, repairmen, and scam artists, who have developed newer ways of cheating people. We also see more people than ever who give up the responsibility of married life and raising the children they’ve brought in the world to go off and do something else. So, the symptoms of Kali-yuga are very prominent and

increasing. And we can recognize more of these symptoms and learn what is yet to happen in the descriptions that follow.

Additional aspects of the character of people in Kali-yuga are described in the *Vayu Purana* (58.68-69), “Due to the spread of misery, people will be short-lived. Kingdoms will be exterminated. Sickness, delusion, dejection, unhappiness, and all kinds of ignorant and foolish activities will prevail in Kali-yuga. With the advent of Kali-yuga [which is at present], people will kill and destroy children in wombs. Longevity, strength and beauty decline. The highest life expectation of men afflicted by such misery will be a hundred years.

The *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.37-38) goes on to say that even from the beginning of Kali-yuga you will find degraded people that are [falsely] considered to be ascetics [spiritual adepts]. Such cheats will [fraudulently] take the persona of ascetics but continue to denounce everyone and find fault with them [to uplift their own status]. However, the people who believe in Lord Vishnu shall be [rightly] called devotees of Lord Vishnu. Yet, even at this time, thieves will become the killers of people.

So, herein we can understand that we have to be so careful of not being cheated by those who pose as spiritual authorities, only to give themselves an easy lifestyle, yet can provide little or no spiritual benefits to those who look for genuine spiritual knowledge. But it is the devotees of Lord Vishnu who have the deepest levels of spiritual understanding to offer, yet few may be interested.

The *Linga Purana* (40.1-18) also contains many examples of what we will find in the character and qualities of the people who live in Kali-yuga. It relates that as the age of Kali unfolds, men will be motivated by the mode of ignorance and adopt deception as a common trait. They will not hesitate to kill ascetics or devotees [those on the spiritual path who, hundreds of years from now, will be forced to flee the cities]. There will be constant carelessness, illness, hunger, fear, terrible droughts, quarrel, and opposition among different parts of the world. People will be sinful, irritable, narrow-minded, and will no longer consider the Vedic literature an authority. People will be greedy, wicked, and always lie. They will chase after evil desires. Killing of the fetus in the womb and murders of heroes and good men become prevalent. Also, during the Kali age, the earth yields substantial

fruits in one area and famine in another. There will be no balance in anything.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.53-54) concurs and explains that people will be begging too much of one another. They will habitually eat meat [which will cause the slaughter of so many innocent living beings]. They will always use harsh words and will not be straightforward or free from jealousy. No one will return the help that they receive. People will get emaciated and weak. They will indulge unhesitatingly in activities that cause their own downfall. And (*Vayu Purana* 58.58) the men will have an unlikable consciousness and will keep their hair long and disheveled.

Even the *Kurma Purana* (1.30.3, 7, 15) sheds some light on what to expect in the type of people that will become prominent in Kali-yuga. It states that bad subjects born in Kali-yuga are impious, liars, greedy, highly furious, and deficient in brilliance. The killing of the fetus and of meritorious men will become common practice among kings and rulers [in order to keep themselves in power]. There will be a prevalence of misery, shortness of life-span, exhaustion of physical bodies, the spread of disease and evil habits arising from the attachment to ways of irreligion.

The *Brahmanda Purana* (1.2.31.69-70) also explains that in Kali-yuga people become short-lived due to illness and constantly engage in narrations [complaints] of their bodily troubles. Their bodies become short. Strength and beauty are reduced. The practice of killing children in the womb comes into vogue due to enmity [viewing the child as a botheration].

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.22-88) also contains many predictions of what we will find in this age, many of which are similar to those described above. A few of the differences in the predictions, however, are as follows: Due to the short life-span of people, they will not have time to learn much. As different lores and cultural knowledge diminish, unbalanced and wicked ways will increase. Not possessing much wealth, people will be vainglorious and will exhibit a false show of piety. They will be fond of boasting about themselves and decrying others. No one will be a true disciple, preceptor or teacher, son, father, wife, or husband. As Kali-yuga advances, even rich persons will become beggars.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.25) continues that in Kali-yuga people are predominantly greedy, ill-behaved, and without mercy. They are prone to engage in useless quarrels. They are unfortunate and obsessed with many material desires. Almost all people in this age will become like barbarians.

It is also predicted that as the age of Kali progresses, and this is hundreds and thousands of years from now, people will be motivated for nothing more than sense enjoyment, evolving around eating, sleeping, and having sex. In this way, they will come to act, more or less, like a royal edition of animals. In this regard, the *Bhagavatam* (12.3.30-31) explains that in the age of Kali there is a predominance of cheating, lying, sloth, sleepiness, intoxication, violence, depression, lamentation, delusion, and fear in the qualities of the population. Furthermore, because of these bad qualities, people will be shortsighted, unfortunate, gluttonous, full of lust, and overcome with poverty. The women will become unchaste, wandering from one man to another. The *Vayu Purana* (58.43) also confirms that in the age of Kali women will become unchaste and uninterested in religious affairs. They become fond of wine and meat. When Kali-yuga sets in, they resort to deceptive means. And the *Bhagavatam* (12.2.6) elaborates, beauty will be dependent on how people arrange their hair. [This would make it seem that there is not much else to work with in beautifying oneself, like make-up, beauty creams, and jewelry, during the time in which this prediction refers.]

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (1.37-50) describes that men will be averse to religiosity, mad with pride, and unrestrained toward sinful acts. They will be lustful, cruel, harsh, deceitful, short-lived, and always sick and in poverty. In their attempt to fulfill their desires, they will engage in many perverted acts and habits that are detrimental to their body, health, and existence. Thus, harassed by disease and sorrow, they will be ugly, feeble, low, and mean. They will also be malicious, quarrelsome, depraved, cowardly, and shameless in seducing the wives of others. And (*Mahanirvana Tantra* 4.54) brothers and companions will strike one another over trifles.

We can clearly see how the above-mentioned activities are going on right now and are on the rise. In any big city one of the most common causes of murder are quarrels between family members and friends over ridiculously simple problems. Other crimes are also caused by the lack of restraint people have toward sex, or attempts to seduce the wives and girlfriends of acquaintances, or stealing drugs and merchandise from others. The outcome of such activities often leads to quarrels, fights, domestic violence, and murders. This is all because, as it is stated, some people are becoming mad with pride and averse to basic moral principles.

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) goes on to say that people will substitute presumption for learning, and they will feel great pride over the most insignificant possessions. Also (Chapter 38), everyone will be born a Shudra or lower, and they will perform no Vedic ceremonies or worship.

One reason why everyone is born in such a condition or consciousness is that in the age of Kali, children are generally born by chance, without the performance of any purificatory process. The Vedic purificatory processes are known as *samskaras*, which begin from the time of the mother's pregnancy, or seed giving ceremony. These help give a clear consciousness to the parents and to the conception process so a highly evolved child may enter the womb. The Vedic process understands that the child that is conceived will reflect the consciousness of the parents at the time of conception. But now in Kali-yuga, people engage in sex whenever they have the urge, or even when they are intoxicated on drugs or alcohol, or angry, fearful, agitated, depressed, psychologically unbalanced, or worse. This means that children are conceived while influenced by the consciousness of the parents which generally paves the way for confused, angry or hostile children to take birth, and then inflict others with their uncivilized manners and habits. Even healthy babies become deformed or mentally retarded due to the unhealthy or abominable habits of the mother. I have even seen a baby born with a broken leg because of the physical fights the parents had while the mother was pregnant. This only multiplies the problems of society because when such children grow up, they generally produce more of the same kind of low-minded children, perpetuating these same problems. Thus, the population of the earth becomes increasingly problematic, and intellectually retarded, and spiritually and morally bereft.

Now we see where the *Kalki Purana* (1.22-24) explains why this happens, and that such people are but the agents of the personality of Kali in this age: "All these relatives [agents] of [the personification of the age of] Kali are the destroyers of sacrifice [religious ritual], study of the *Vedas*, and charity because they transgressed all the Vedic principles of religion. They are the reservoirs of mental distress, disease, old age, destruction of religious principles, sorrow, lamentation, and fear.

"These descendants of Kali are found wandering everywhere throughout the kingdom of Kali, destroying the people of the world. They are misguided by the influence of time, very restless by nature, full of lusty desires, extremely sinful, very proud, and violent even to their own father

and mother. [Even] those who are known as twiceborn [spiritually initiated] among them are devoid of all good behavior, without any observance of proper etiquette, and always engaged in the service of the low class and uncultured.” Thus, it is clearly stated here that because of people becoming increasingly godless, there is practically no other direction for society to go in except deeper into confusion and degradation.

In the *Bhagavata-Mahatmya* of the *Padma Purana* (1.28-36), the great sage Narada Muni gives another explanation of what to expect in the kind of people that will inhabit the earth in the age of Kali. He states that while visiting the holy places on this planet, he found no joy or peace of mind while the earth is assailed by the age of Kali. There is no truthfulness, purity of mind and body, compassion, or liberality toward the poor. The people are wretched and engaged only in filling their bellies. They continually lie among themselves. Out of greed, people sell their own daughters. There are frequent quarrels between husbands and wives. Hermitages and places of pilgrimage are controlled by foreigners [the non-Aryan and non-Dharmic neighbors and invaders of India] and many temples have been and will be destroyed by these wicked people. There will be no yogis, no one who has attained spiritual perfection, no enlightened souls or anyone doing righteous deeds. All spiritual paths will stand consumed by the wild fire of Kali-yuga. Brahmanas sell knowledge of the *Vedas* [for their livelihood] and women make their living by prostitution.

Herein we can see yet another prophecy having been fulfilled in regard to the non-Aryan invaders of India who have already destroyed many of its Vedic temples. India is a land of numerous temples and hermitages. Many holy places can be found that are connected with the pastimes of the Lord and His many *avataras* or incarnations that have appeared in India. Yet, there have been those invaders who have had no regard for this culture and have ruined or torn down many of these beautiful or meaningful temples. There are also political movements present in India today, such as Communism, as well as outside forms of religion who have no regard for the spiritual culture and the holy places and temples of India, and who give no respect or funds for the maintenance of such important sites. They may even try to spread propaganda to convince people that the Vedic culture should be avoided or is no longer beneficial. This is merely another quarrel based on the mode of darkness to hide the deepest levels of spiritual knowledge so one religion can establish superiority over another. This is

another reminder that if the people do not take it upon themselves to maintain their spiritual understanding, awareness, and traditions, then such an opportunity to do so will increasingly vanish as the age of Kali continues.

Narada Muni goes on to say that in the age of Kali, righteous conduct, the path of spiritual progress, and all asceticism disappear. Roguery and evil deeds are so common that people are replicas of demons, such as Aghasura [as described in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*]. In this age honest men are ignored and dejected. The unrighteous are overjoyed and dominant. Year after year this planet gradually becomes a burden for the Lord. No sign of good luck is to be seen. Such things as devotion to God, spiritual enlightenment, and detachment to sensual pleasures are neglected by men who are blinded by love for sense enjoyment. (*Padma Purana*, 1.57-62)

Furthermore, “When this age would come, men will abandon their friends and relatives, servants and followers. Leaving the countries, directions, towns, and cities that they occupy, men will one after the other seek for new ones.” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.85-87) Here we see that even when people of that time try to find a decent place of peace in which to live, they are forced to wander the world in their search and struggle to survive.

Further insight into this is provided by the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, Chapter 7.31-32, 35-36, 39, 41), which relates that people will speak malicious things [and be mean to each other], following the wrong path [of human existence]. Some of the cities and villages will be without population and shall look terrible. In some of them the people will dwell in small huts. Therefore, the outlook of the villages will be similar to the [poor and chaotic] cities. The low-grades of people will be honored in society, while the rich and valorous people will become arrogant [disinterested in helping the poor]... The reason for this is that the high caste people will engage themselves in degraded works and resort to falsehoods in cheating and wickedness. In spite of that, they will be considered as truthful [merely by appearances]. [In this way] the sinful people will be considered virtuous. The uncivilized people would be considered civilized. The cheats would be thought of as self-disciplined, and the wicked women would be considered as chaste... Those with little knowledge will be considered as intellectuals, and the cheaters will invite adoration [to themselves]. All men and women will become dwarfish in

stature [because of the consciousness of the masses in Kali-yuga and what it does to them]... Later in Kali-yuga, women shall attain youthfulness at the age of eight and will start menstruation at the same age, and shall also conceive. They will produce a child at the end of each year, and shall grow old by the age of sixteen.

The *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, Chapter 90. 41-42, 47, 52, 58, 62) goes on to relate that the people will also be troubled by rogues and thieves. Everyone will always speak lies.... Everyone will do as they please. Devoted only to the belly and genitals, they will be greedy, degraded, tormented by diseases, and dressed in rags... It is the nature of this yuga that people will become thieves, greedily stealing the wealth of others [hating the idea of working for what they want]. Bereft of temples, the world will become a frightening place... Everyone will be greedy. Women will not be beautiful or desirable. They will love to quarrel. Men will not be handsome... All human beings will be merciless, harshly-speaking atheists.

For some people, these descriptions may sound too negative, too dark. Some may think that it could never get this bad. But, nonetheless, this shows the general pattern of events that will unfold in Kali-yuga. Many times have we already heard about villagers in India, Nepal, Thailand, and other places who sell their daughters, either willingly or by being tricked into it, in hopes that they will have a better life somewhere else, only to find they have been sold into forced prostitution. This is the prophecy in the *Padma Purana* as stated above. As people become more inclined toward material concerns and bodily pleasures, they will become more insensitive and lose sight of their spiritual nature, as well as their discrimination between what is right and wrong. Locked into this course of destiny, they will continue to increase their disregard for all spiritual authority and lose moral standards and piety, what to speak of social etiquette. Thus, life becomes more difficult, troublesome and hellish.

THE CHEATING IN BUSINESS, MONEY, AND SOCIAL POSITIONS

The predictions in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.25) also state that as Kali-yuga advances wealth alone will be all that indicates a man's good birth, behavior and qualities. If one wants justice in any legal proceeding, it

will depend on his financial power. Success in business will depend on deceit. One's social position will be based on his earning power, which, of course, will depend on his ability to deceive others. Hypocrisy will be considered a virtue.

These predictions mean that all virtuous qualities will be disregarded and considered an obstacle to getting ahead in life. With time, as Kali-yuga unfolds, and as virtuous qualities are discarded, all business will be as cutthroat as possible, displays of unrestrained attacks on the competition will become acceptable, as is already seen in politics today. "Anything goes" will be a common business tactic. The only way you will get any legal justice is if you have the money to pay for a better lawyer than your opponent, or bribe the judge, who also will be corrupt and enticed by underhanded means in Kali-yuga. Thus, if you are in the right, or have a good business idea or operation, you may be viciously attacked with no opportunity for justice if you do not have enough money. The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) confirms this and states that success in business will be based on dishonesty, and lying and cheating will be the means of success in courts.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.75) also describes that, "Preceptors, impoverished for the want of wealth, will be disregarded by men. Friends and relations and kinsmen will perform friendly offices [duties] only for the sake of wealth."

As Kali-yuga goes on, there will be a decrease in morals in the business arena. There will also be no human rights to protect the innocent or powerless. There will be no protection for laborers or employees. There will be no unions. Laws will be useless and ignored. If there are unions, they will be as corrupt as the politicians. Slave labor and politically forced labor will be common. Rulers and police will not stop it because they will have been bribed to keep silent and do nothing.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.30, 54) further explains, "Men will rob the possessions of helpless persons, of those that are friendless and of those that are widows... best of the Bharata race, led by avarice, men will deceive one another when they will buy and sell."

The *Vayu Purana* (58.51) states that in Kali-yuga, people have a trading propensity, but due to false measures, buyers will be cheated of their due share of products. Furthermore, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.35-36) also explains that businessmen will earn their money by cheating other

merchants in petty commerce. People will engage in any hellish or degraded occupation, even when it is not a time of difficulty. Anything will be acceptable despite how much cheating or lying is involved. Also, workers or servants will abandon any master or boss if he loses his wealth, despite how nice or qualified the master or business owner has been. On the other hand, masters will forget any servant if he is unable to provide service, regardless of how dedicated the servant has been.

Similarly, it is said that they will also kill or ignore cows when they no longer give milk, as is also verified in the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38). [This indicates the despicable nature of exploiting animals that produce food for the benefit of humanity, only to slaughter them when they are no longer productive.]

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.22-24, 31) states that all men will give gifts [or favors] to those who have obliged them. Bribery and dishonesty will be a way of life. This also means that all men who seek power or wealth must be slaves to those who give it. Furthermore, it states that in Kali-yuga, through affection for friends, people will lie or bare false witness toward others. They will be extremely two-faced. They will lie and talk of wicked deeds of those they do not like. They will criticize the character of others in their absence, but will talk sweetly in their presence... And people will be affectionate in words only until their mission does not succeed.

“All people will take to cheating and stealing as a means of living. All people will indulge themselves in violence and kill other human beings [as a means to live]. The children of the higher castes will also resort to sinful ways [indicating there is no meaning to their status].” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.50-51)

“In the age of Kali, some of the ladies will be barren and the people of all castes will sell away their daughters; the mother, the women and the daughter-in-law shall all remain busy in earning a livelihood by unfair means. The men also will earn their living through the friends of their daughters and sisters. In the age of Kali, the people will sell out in the name of the Lord, and to merely enhance their glory [or social status] shall contribute their belongings to charity... But after a second thought [and by underhanded arrangements] they shall get all of it back.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, Chapter 7.42-45)

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) also states that he who has much money will be the ruler of men. Men will be wholly occupied in

attaining wealth, even by dishonest means, which will be spent foolishly on gratifying the senses, and no man will be willing to part with the smallest coin. A powerful and rich man may espouse maidens of any race or tribe. And while everyone who has cars or elephants will be a *raja* or great man, everyone who is weak will be a slave.

This last statement seems to indicate a widening division between the rich and poor as the middle class disappears. The upper class, as indicated by their financial power, will have more and more control over the lower and weak classes of people and will take advantage of them by force. History has shown that this eventually leads to revolution. So, we can also understand that chaos will increase throughout society in Kali-yuga.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF RELIGIOSITY

We can get a hint of the trouble that the age of Kali-yuga will present when Lord Krishna Himself advises His friend Uddhava, in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.7.4-5), that before Kali-yuga begins, he should simply prepare to leave this place. Krishna explains that He will soon depart from this world and the earth will then be bereft of all piety as it becomes overwhelmed by the characteristics of the age of Kali. People will be addicted to all kinds of sinful activities. So before Kali-yuga begins, Krishna tells Uddhava not to remain on this planet, but to purify himself and prepare to exit this world for the spiritual domain. In this way, if He advised Uddhava in this way 5,000 years ago, what is there to say for us who are presently living in the midst of this age?

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.24-25) goes on to describe that by the time the age of Kali begins, there will remain only 25 percent of all religious principles that had once been common in Satya-yuga. As Kali-yuga unfolds, religious principles will decrease continuously until they all are finally destroyed. Herein, we can understand that Kali-yuga is the age when atheists as well as the demoniac become prominent in society. Thus, it is the age when we can experience the bitter results of irreligiosity. That is the purpose of this age.

The *Bramha-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.69) also explains this: “In Treta-yuga, Dharma will stand on only three legs, [Dvapara-yuga on only two], in [the beginning of] Kali-yuga only on one leg, and thereafter it ultimately disappears completely.”

It is further explained in the *Bhagavatam* (12.3.43-44) that in Kali-yuga atheism will divert people's intelligence and they will almost never offer any kind of worship to the Supreme Being. Although great and divine personalities that live far beyond the realm of human existence bow to the Supreme, in this age the miserable human beings will not do so. Even if a person is about to die and is terrified, collapsed on his bed, if he can simply utter the name of the Supreme, Sri Krishna, he could be freed from karma and able to achieve the spiritual world. But in this age of Kali people are too proud to do this.

One problem in Kali-yuga is the high number of bogus gurus and inept spiritual teachers. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.38) we find the explanation that uncultured men will pose as being affiliated with God and will accept charity and earn their livelihood by making a show of being a spiritual authority. Such impostors will sit on a high seat and speak on religious topics, although they know nothing about true spirituality and cannot offer any real guidance. Often such religious impostors offer only enough advice and hope for salvation to their audience or followers to keep the money coming in from those who are willing to give to such cheaters.

It is further explained that "Brahmanas will not wear *tilaka* [sacred markings] or a sacred thread, nor will they chant the Gayatri mantra or study the *Vedas* and other scriptures. The people will eat what should not be eaten. Everyone in the four *varnas* [Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras] will be a debauchee." (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, Chapter 90.36-37)

Furthermore (from *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, Chapter 90.43-44, 48, 50-51.), "The Brahmanas will not perform any purifying rites, nor will they chant Gayatri or study the scriptures. They will become servants of the lowest classes and they will burn their corpses [as a menial religious service]. Brahmana men will enjoy with low-class women, and men will enjoy with Brahmana women... Gurus will reject the genuine mantras and teach false mantras. They will not come from good families. They will not be advanced in age. They will like to insult others... No one will worship the *pitras* [forefathers], demigods, Brahmanas, guests, or parents. Instead they will worship their wives. O father, men will give all honor to their wives and their wives' relatives. Brahmanas born in good families will become thieves, stealing even from the Deities in the temples."

“The Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras will all discard their [religious or spiritual] duties and will act like *mlecchas* [lower non-Vedic and non-spiritual people] and disown their scriptures and take up the scriptures of the *mlecchas*. In Kali-yuga the higher classes will serve the lower classes [who may be corrupt politicians, celebrities, or those who have influence]. There will be only one virtuous person amongst thousands of people, and the thinking of men, women and children will be polluted and deformed.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, Chapter 7.24-25, 30)

“The *yajnas* (Vedic spiritual rituals), *vratas* (religious vows), and performance of *tapas* (austerities for spiritual advancement) would disappear, and the [Vedic] Dharma would disappear totally from the earth.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.14)

These verses describe quite clearly how and why the deep spiritual knowledge, for which the Vedic tradition is especially known, will gradually disappear completely from this world. People will give it little concern and begin to adopt the ways of the materialists and the wicked. Because of the lack of respect for this spiritual understanding, the tradition itself becomes lost, along with most other religious knowledge and moralistic principles. As it is further elaborated in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.22-23): “In the age of Kali, the adoration of the guests, Vishnu, manes [the ancestors and what they gave us] and the gods would disappear. The people would always be envious of Lord Vishnu and the Vaishnavas, all the people of the four *varnas* would get attracted towards *Vamachara* [materialistic pursuits].”

“The people would [be affected by and then] remain under the influence of *mlecchas* and would never touch the *Shalagrama-shila* [the sacred Vishnu stone], [the holy] Tulasi tree, *kusha* grass, or the water of the Ganga. The Brahmanas, also influenced by illusion, will disown the cause of all causes [the Supreme Lord], the seed of all, and bestower of pleasure and *moksha* [the process of attaining liberation from *samsara*, birth and death in material existence through worshiping of the Lord]. All of the riches would be used for the promotion of the *vama-mantra* [sounds, songs and knowledge that promotes materialism], which is the killer of the *Vedas*.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.24-26)

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.58-59, 61-64) describes, in the instructions of Bishma to King Yudhisthira, how society will persecute and

even kill genuine saintly men and Brahmanas, forcing them to leave society or wander the world while concealing their identity, or end up becoming forced servants of the lower classes of people just to survive in a wicked society. “O king, led away by covetousness, men will kill the Brahmanas and appropriate and enjoy their wealth. The Brahmanas, being persecuted by the Shudras and afflicted with fear and exclaiming ‘Oh, Alas’, will rove over the world with none to protect them... O perpetuator of the Kuru race, O king, the foremost of Brahmanas, being persecuted by the robbers, will like crows fly in fear and in great speed to rivers, mountains, and to inaccessible regions. Being afflicted with tasks imposed on them by cruel kings, O ruler of earth, they will lose all patience in this fearful age. They will do all improper works and become the servants of the Shudras [if they stay in society]. The Shudras will explain religion, Brahmanas will listen to them and settle their duties by accepting such interpretations (as made by them).”

This means that such Brahmanas and priests who stay amidst the materialistic society of Kali-yuga will be forced to cater to those who have the most ability to provide money and facility to them. In other words, they will be interested primarily in their own survival rather than in the upholding of spiritual truth. This is further explained in the *Vayu Purana* (58.44-45, 50) that genuine saintly men will be forced to withdraw and keep aloof from the rest of society. Dharma, or deep spirituality and religious duties, will become difficult to find and will deteriorate since the conduct of life of those who enjoy [nefarious activities] will be loose and uncontrollable. In the age of Kali there will be wicked persons in the guise of sages. And (*Vayu Purana* 58.52, 55, 64-66) the whole society will abound in heretics of foul conduct and activity with their false appearances. Thus, the earth will become devoid of good men. There will be many heretics, and the *Vedas* will not be studied.

Not only will the Vedic literature become scarce in the future of Kali-yuga, but it will hardly be found by anyone, as confirmed in the *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 232.36): “In the Kali age, all the *Vedas* become so scarce that they are not seen by men. Afflicted by iniquity [in society], they become extinct along with the rites and sacrifices laid down in them.”

Furthermore, the *Linga Purana* (40.5) elaborates that those who are expected to be qualified, such as teachers, priests, and Brahmanas, will be

defective. They will not engage in the prescribed rites or duties, nor study the *Vedas*. In fact, the *Narada Purana* (1.41.52) also relates that as Kali-yuga continues, the priests will crave for and indulge in sexual intercourse with low-class women and widows, and enjoy cooked food prepared by such women. This is mentioned because it is understood that the consciousness or vibrations of the cook goes into the food that he or she is cooking. Thus, if Brahmanas, or anyone on a strict spiritual path, eat the cooked food of low-minded people, then their consciousness will be affected in a similar way.

Along these same lines, the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190. 24, 26) explains: “Those men who are devoted to the rites in honor of the deceased and of the celestials will be covetous and will also appropriate and enjoy what belongs to others... The Brahmanas will speak ill of the *Vedas* and they will not observe any vows. Their understanding being clouded by the science of controversy [the everchanging theories about life], they will neither perform sacrifices nor Homas [fire rituals]. Deluded by the sciences of controversy [hiding behind questionable and unclear directions], their heart will be led away to things mean and low.”

The *Bhagavatam* (12.2.4-5) further elaborates that people will view the spiritual position of someone merely by the external dress and symbols he wears, and by that standard people will change from one spiritual discipline or rank to the next. Regardless of a person’s level of spiritual realizations and experience, if he is a good talker, efficient at juggling words, he will be considered a great scholar. This is one of the problems with people in Kali-yuga, they may have little knowledge or any genuine spiritual potency, but still want to teach as if they are an authority.

The *Kurma Purana* (1.30.31) also verifies this and states that in Kali-yuga persons whose behavior is wicked yet practices vows that are useless or not sanctioned by the *Vedas* will delude others to follow false doctrines. The *Narada Purana* (1.41.54-55 & 59-60) concludes that the lower classes will not serve the twice-born priests or qualified Brahmanas but will consider themselves knowledgeable and practice holy rites. Such people will clothe themselves in ochre robes, have matted hair, and will smear ashes on their bodies. Deceptively appearing like saintly men, they will converse on their faulty version of Dharma [religious duties]. Many heretics, such as nude ascetics, red robed mendicants, etc., will roam about, many of whom will decry the *Vedas* and teach unauthorized, or false,

unfruitful doctrines. In this way, people who give respect to such people, not knowing how to recognize truly saintly men, will be led by such fools and their misguided instructions.

Another point that is mentioned in these verses is that in Kaliyuga, men who generally destroy Dharma often will be good at singing, acting, or playing musical instruments. This means that not just deluded and deceptive teachers will spread false spiritual paths and various forms of materialism, but people who may be talented in other ways and respected for their abilities, such as popular musicians, singers, actors, politicians, and those of influence, will also destroy Dharma by either what they say or by the misconduct or low behavior they exhibit in their lifestyle. Thus, they provide bad examples that other people follow.

Furthermore, the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, (Prakriti Khanda, 7.45) clarifies that, “the [genuine] Brahmanas who act as teachers for the spiritual upliftment of people would be snatched away [kidnaped or killed] in the age of Kali.” If they are not killed, then they are captured by some manipulated intrigue and discredited for an assumed mistake and trumped up but unproven charges that are then published in the media. This is becoming a method used at an increasing pace by those who hate genuine spirituality and the Vedic Dharma in places like India, which then removes the authentic saint and his or her influence and also creates doubts in people who had been following the tradition. This is often followed with the attempt to replace the saint and the Vedic teachings with something far more shallow and inept, as if it is the new answer to all that went wrong. It is surprising that the Vedic texts could see this happening so many years ago.

It is also related in the *Bhagavatam* (12.3.32) that the true knowledge of the *Vedas* will be contaminated by the interpretations of speculators and atheists. The new so-called priests will be devotees of their bellies and genitals. Thus, the final goal and real purpose of Vedic and spiritual knowledge will become obscured and hidden.

In this regard, we can read the history of how the British tried to monopolize and change the Sanskrit Vedic literature through their translations when they occupied India, as if India did not have their own Sanskrit scholars who were more than capable of doing the job, and were in fact already doing it. This was all in the attempt to discredit these ancient texts, hide the deep spiritual truths that were within them, and also turn the

average Indian to being British by taste, and to convince them to adopt their religion as well by the influence of the British missionaries, who also took pleasure in destroying many of the Vedic temples.

The prevalence of these spiritual impostors is the unfortunate situation in Kali-yuga, especially for those who are seriously searching for genuine and deep spiritual truth. As stated in the *Bhagavatam* (10.20.8): “In the evening twilight during the rainy season, the darkness allowed the glow worms but not the stars to shine forth, just as in the age of Kali the predominance of sinful activities allows atheistic doctrines to overshadow the true spiritual knowledge of the *Vedas*.”

In any case, as society grows less and less spiritual, due to disrespect towards genuine spiritual scripture and saintly men, or because of it being hidden away or concealed by the wicked, a chain reaction is set up that only increases the degraded state of humanity in general. In this way, we can see that the loss of Dharma, or genuine spirituality, is also the loss of happiness. This is more clearly described in the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190. 15-18, 29, 42, 46): “In consequence of the loss of Truth, the lives of men will be short and in consequence of the shortness of life they will not be able to acquire much knowledge. In consequence of the littleness of knowledge, they will have no wisdom. And for this, covetousness and avarice will overwhelm them all. Men being wedded to avarice, anger, ignorance, and desire, will display enmity towards one another and will desire to take one another’s life. Thus virtue diminished and their asceticism and truth gone, Vaishyas, Brahmanas and Kshatriyas will all be equal to Shudras. The lowest (orders of men) will rise to the middle (classes of men) and the middle will certainly descend to the lowest... The whole world will be filled with *mleccha* conduct and *mleccha* notions. All (religious) rites and sacrifices will cease; there will be joy no where and general festivities will disappear... O ruler of men, the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, and the Vaishyas will disappear, leaving no trace of their orders. At this time all men will be of one order... O Yudhishthira, the whole world will then be a field of *mlecchas*; and men will no more gratify the celestials [forefathers and demigods by] performing the Shraddha ceremony.”

This shows quite clearly that regardless of one’s social status or so-called high birth, everyone will be of the same category, born in ignorance of the true spiritual wisdom, and hardly able to understand it, what to speak of following it. Thus, everyone will be of the same low caliber and in need

of being trained in proper spiritual understanding, which will become increasingly difficult to find. That is because, especially as we go deeper into Kali-yuga as it unfolds, few will actually hold the real wisdom that can grant a person genuine spiritual enlightenment. A further hint of what to expect in the future in this regard is explained in the *Kalki Purana* (1.25-27):

“These fallen souls are very fond of dry arguments, and they use religion as a means of livelihood, teach Vedic knowledge as a profession, are fallen from the execution of their vows, and sell wine and other abominable things, including meat. They are cruel by nature, and very fond of gratifying their bellies and genitals. For this reason, they lust after the wives of others and are always seen to be intoxicated. They were not born from a father and mother who were properly married, and they are short in stature and always engaged in sinful acts, such as cheating others. They generally reside in a sacred place, live for only sixteen years, associate with wretched people, and only consider a brother-in-law to be a friend and relative.”

Within these predictions of the bogus gurus and false spiritual teachers are also the warning signs of who is unqualified. We can use these to discriminate between who is a real spiritual authority and who is not. If such people make a show of religiosity, or have a big ego and an attitude of self-importance, or offer only what seems like high philosophy but no real truth, then that person is bogus or lacks genuine spiritual experience and maturity. If they pose as being religious but enjoy wicked habits, do not study the genuine spiritual texts, or do not perform religious duties, etc., then they are simply pretenders or worse. The above descriptions are of those we need to avoid.

Herein we can understand how important it is to be careful regarding from whom we take knowledge and guidance. In considering from whom we take spiritual instruction, we must understand their lives, their habits, and the traditions they follow. Do they spread love and devotion? Or do they spread the hope and desire for power and control? Have they manufactured their own religion, or do they accurately represent the teachings of the previous masters and authentic spiritual texts? According to the Vedic system of checks and balances, any tradition that spiritual teachers follow must be in line with three items: 1) the authoritative Vedic spiritual texts or word of God, 2) the previous *acharyas* or spiritual masters,

and 3) the present day spiritual authorities, sages or devotees. When these three references or guideposts all agree on any particular issue, then you can be sure that you are accepting a dependable authority and can follow appropriately. If spiritual teachers or *acharyas* are not backed by this system of three checks and balances, then we must be careful or we may be cheated and find ourselves on a negative or materialistic path rather than being a part of a true spiritual system. Any spiritual teacher who is not authorized by these three points in his behavior or his teachings is either bogus or incomplete in his understanding, experience, and level of spiritual realizations. Thus, he should be avoided.

A fourth factor in this regard is to understand which *sampradaya* or disciplic succession a teacher represents. Who is his or her spiritual master? The Vedic principle is that everyone, even an incarnation of God, must accept a spiritual master at least to teach by example. Which disciplic succession and spiritual master is accepted will also determine what school of thought he will teach and what authority he has. Therefore, he must belong to an established and authorized line of disciplic succession or lineage that leads to a proper source of knowledge for a fruitful result for all who follow it. By making sure that a teacher is connected with a proper line of spiritual masters, with his teachings in accord with the above-mentioned three references, one can progress with assurance. By using these guideposts carefully, one can discern who is a proper teacher and which is the proper path to follow. Unfortunately, as Kali-yuga continues, all of this will be forgotten.

Also explained in the *Narada Purana* (1.41.44) is that far deeper into the age of Kali, the [so-called] Brahmanas or churchmen will be greedy for money, and will take away the wealth of good men and pious widows, and will perform no holy observances. One of the reasons for this is explained in another verse (*Narada Purana* 1.41.49) which relates that when Krishna descends in a dark color [at the end of Dvapara-yuga just before Kali-yuga] the wicked servants of the king will begin to beat the Brahmanas and saintly people who perform the authorized sacred rites for extorting money from them. Of course, we know that this is what King Kamsa did, as described in the *Puranas* and which was stopped by Lord Krishna at the time, but that tactic is something that later continues into the Age of Kali.

This is also confirmed in the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190, 72) where it says: "Soon is the earth filled with the *mlecchas*, while the [genuine]

Brahmanas, for fear of heavy taxes, fly in all directions.”

This indicates that another reason for the continuing degenerating process in Kali-yuga is the pressure of the wicked government on qualified priests, nuns, or religious practitioners, most of whom have lived with little income or expenses. This means that the money-hungry government politicians will force ministers, priests, monks, and devotees, and even the temples themselves, to make a business out of their religious practices. Such spiritually oriented people will be forced to charge more and more money for the services or knowledge they provide, or devise other means of getting more money in order to pay higher taxes, bribes, dues, and penalties to agents of the government that demand more money from them. They also will need additional funds just to live and maintain their own practice of religious activities, their process of propagating spiritual knowledge, and any buildings or property they may need. This, of course, causes further distractions and degradations in the ability of such people to function on a purely spiritual basis, and to keep the knowledge and traditions pure. In this way, the priests, monks, and sages will no longer be able to focus exclusively on their spiritual development or in delivering such knowledge to others. They will be forced to devise ways of acquiring money due to government harassment.

It is further related (*Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 12.2.6) that as Kaliyuga advances, a person will be considered unholy if he has no money or has accepted a state of poverty, as many nuns, monks, swamis, and *sadhus* presently do to remain focused on their spiritual path without distractions. And the observance of religious principles will be only for show for the sake of one's reputation. The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.51) elaborates that, “When this age would come, the possessions of men will be small and they will falsely bear the marks of religion. The world will be filled with avarice and jealousy. No one will be a giver [of genuine spiritual knowledge] to the other.” Thus, we can see how twisted social customs will become in this area as the future unfolds. Of course, we can see much of what has been described going on to varying degrees right now.

In this way, the attraction among the general populace will turn toward sensual activities, and anyone offering advice on how to advance in this way will become very popular. Thus, materialists, atheists, miscreants, cheaters, and manufacturers of false or new religions become quite prominent in the age of Kali, while those who follow genuine spiritual

practices are ignored. This is explicitly pointed out in the *Narada Purana* (1.41.70) wherein it states that sinners will criticize and dishonor the person who points to the genuine spiritual path. Those who are self-complacent and vain show no respect for those engaged in spiritual practices. The *Padma Purana* (7.26.31-32) agrees with this and relates that people will laugh at those who are pious or devoted to God. People will prosper through wicked deeds and will, therefore, be addicted to sins.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.47, 65-67, 71, 74) goes on to say: “O ruler of men, no one will listen to the words of others and none will be considered as another’s preceptor. The whole world will be enveloped by fearful (intellectual) darkness... The low will become the high and all source of things will appear in contrary shape. Abandoning the celestials [the forefathers and demigods], men will worship the bones [meaning honoring the bodies of the dead]. At this age [point in time in Kali-yuga], the lower classes of people will cease to serve the Brahmanas. In the hermitages of the Brahmanas, in their schools and colleges, in places sacred to the gods and in sacrificial grounds and in sacred [water] tanks, the earth will be disfigured with tombs and walls containing bones and they will have no temples dedicated to the celestials [the Devas or gods]... Ceremonial rites of men will not follow one another in due order and the lower classes will quarrel with the Brahmanas [spiritual authorities]... When the world will be so afflicted, there will be no rectitude of conduct. Disciples will not heed their preceptor’s instructions, nay they will even try to injure them.”

This shows the lack of respect that the priestly class will receive from those who lack spiritual knowledge, and how the non-Dharmic forces will gain in popularity and spread, as indicated by the worship of graves of the dead instead of God. People would rather honor the graves of those who are praiseworthy, in their materialistic estimation, rather than give credit to the Supreme. Even disciples, when they are not satisfied, will try to injure their teachers or preceptors. Such injury may not only mean physical, but also indicates damage to the reputation of the teacher by making false accusations, and spreading degrading rumors, or even starting lawsuits against him. In this way, the flow of spiritual knowledge and wisdom can and will be interrupted either by lack of respect or quarrels with spiritual authorities, or by harassment. With no proper disciplic chain or succession to continue the traditional and appropriate teachings, all spiritual traditions and knowledge gradually become lost.

In this way, slowly, by the time we reach the latter years of Kali-yuga, all genuine spiritual truths will disappear from the face of the earth. Once all religiosity disappears, the times will give way to the philosophy of “anything goes,” and the meaning of the traditions will fade away. The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.55) confirms, “When this age would come, men will perform the ceremonies and rites without knowing the ordinances [the rules, the meanings or purpose]; and they will behave [in any way] as they would like.”

Herein we can see that with time, all morals and decency will be lost and any manner of degeneracy will abound. Without knowledge of the Supreme Being there will be no reason for people to think that they are at all accountable for their actions. Thus, people will think they can do anything they want if they can get away with it. In some areas, this is already the case. And if the priests and holy men are devotees of nothing but their belly and genitals, we can only imagine what practices they will incorporate into their religion to satisfy their desires and senses, either their own, or of the masses.

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (1.37-50) has more information to offer in this regard. It states that as Dharma or religion and responsible duty are destroyed, Kali-yuga will be an age of evil ways, customs, and deceit. The *Vedas* will be forgotten and the *Puranas* will be destroyed. The Brahmanas, priests, and religious leaders will be without faith or devotion, averse to all austerities, deceitful, ignorant, and will neglect their own prayers or fail to chant their mantras. Of course, this means that they would no longer be real Brahmanas, priests, or religious leaders. Also, it is described (*Mahanirvana Tantra* 4.46) that when people openly drink liquor and eat flesh without condemnation or punishment [habits which are the death of real spiritual life], that is the influence of the age of Kali.

Just as spiritual knowledge will eventually fade away, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.6) confirms that the sacred holy places will also disappear. It states that later in the age of Kali-yuga a sacred place will be considered as no more than a lake or river located some distance away. Then people will forget that the purpose of a place of pilgrimage is to hear and take instruction from the holy men who live there, and not merely go for a swim. But even the ability to discern who is holy and who is not will also disappear.

Another interesting point regarding the disappearance of holy places is found in the legend of the Narasimha deity in the town of Joshimath, just south of Badrinath. The temple is not far from the road, so anyone can hop out of the car and see the deity. The deity is sitting in a lotus position and has very detailed features. It self-manifested from a sacred *shalagram-shila* stone. Shankaracharya originally installed this deity nearly 1200 years ago. If you look closely at the wrist of the deity, it is very thin and getting thinner. It is said that the wrist will one day break and His hand will fall when the dark influence of Kali-yuga becomes overwhelming. Then, the nearby mountains called Jaya and Vijaya, appropriately named after the two guards who protect the entrance into the spiritual world, will crumble and block the road leading to the holy place of Badrinath. Then this holy town will become inaccessible to all but the most serious pilgrims. Thus, it will become another holy place that will gradually be forgotten.

More information in this connection was reported in the *Times of India*. The article, *Krishna's Dwarka May Not be a Myth*, by Gautam Mehta, released April 7, 1997, describes how evidence of the remains of Dwaraka have been found near the island of Bet Dwaraka. Dwaraka was the capital city of Lord Krishna, which was submerged under the sea after Krishna left the planet. S. R. Rao, who heads the underwater excavation project, is a marine archeologist and a consultant to the Marine Archeology Center of the National Institute of Oceanography in Goa. He relates that three temples and evidence of a township have been found on the seashore near the present Dwaraka temple. Another major township was found almost 30 kilometers away at a depth of 30 feet near the island of Bet Dwaraka with significant evidence uncovered, such as pottery, vessels and equipment. Mr. Rao explains that Bet Dwaraka corresponds with the town of Kusasthali where the first town named Dwaraka was built under Krishna's direction, as described in the *Mahabharata*. The present town of Dwaraka, on the mainland at the mouth of the Gomati River, stands where the second Dwaraka or Dwaravati was located.

The disturbing thing about this report is that, as Mr. Rao describes, the submergences of the townships near Dwaraka provide a clear indication that the sea level along the Gujarat coast has risen as much as 30 feet in the last 3,600 years and it is continuing to rise. Archeologists and scientists of the National Institute of Oceanography estimate that, at the present pace of the rise of sea level, the ports and temples on the state sea coast may be

completely submerged in another 1,000 years. Other scientists from around the world agree that the ocean is rising. In this case, not only will Dwaraka and Gujarat be effected, but there will be many other coastal holy places and temple towns that will disappear into the sea. Places such as Mumbai (Bombay) and the temples in the west, or Guruvayoor and Kanya Kumari in South India, or Kolkata, Mayapura and Jagannatha Puri on the east side of India may also be effected. Thus, many other important coastal temples and holy places may disappear with time.

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) supports this view and relates that as the full force of Kali-yuga is felt, there will be no special holy places anymore, and that water or any lake a distance away will constitute a holy place. Brahmanas or spiritual intellectuals will be known only by their outward dress, such as the priest's collar or the Brahmana's thread that anyone can purchase. Lowborn men will wear the outer marks of a religious person in order to live by begging and accepting donations. They will join any easy religious order and follow heretical and impious teachings. Property alone will establish rank. The only devotion will be toward getting wealth. Dignity will be based on clothes and appearance. Finally, the whole world will become totally depraved as piety decreases day by day. The *Padma Purana* (7.26.39-40) simply concludes in this regard that as there is a decrease in pious people in the age of Kali, and there will be an equal increase of the wicked in the world.

Such a scenario in the future of Kali-yuga is further described in the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38), in which it states that society, corrupted by the prominence of atheists, will decline from praising God, Lord Vishnu, the creator of all, and will challenge, "What authority do the *Vedas* hold? What are gods or Brahmanas?" At that time, the clouds will offer little rain, the corn will give ears of few kernels, the grains will be poor and of little substance, millet will be the common grain, clothes will be made from coarse fibers, all people will be lowborn, and whatever milk is available mostly will come from goats. People will take whatever text they like, the doctrine of anyone, and choose it as scripture, accepting any god as one to worship. Righteousness will constitute any kind of fasting, austerity, or liberality as is preferred by the so-called pious. There will be no effective spiritual line of disciplic succession who will carefully preserve and hand down spiritual knowledge to students, and no effective initiating process between spiritual master and disciple. Whatever initiation that does take

place will have no meaning. Both the spiritual master and the disciple will be unqualified. This is how the disappearance of all spiritual culture will take place.

This is further verified in the *Narada Purana* (1.41.84) which states that mendicants will take disciples using the acquisition of food and money as a consideration. Thus, teachers will not be qualified, nor will the students. In this way, instead of the teacher's concern for helping students advance to the stage of spiritual enlightenment, the disciple's value will be considered according to his ability to give food or money. Of course, this can also be used as a means to distinguish those spiritual teachers who should be avoided.

In the *Bhagavata-Mahatmya* (1.73-77) of the *Padma Purana*, Narada Muni explains his own observations of how religiosity disappears in the age of Kali. He describes that even those whose mind is agitated with passion, anger, excessive greed, and thirst for pleasure have, nonetheless, superficially taken to an ascetic life; hence, the value of asceticism is gone. Due to greed, hypocrisy, and want of control over the mind, and due to people embracing heretical doctrines and abstaining from the study of sacred books, the fruit of *dyana-yoga* [meditation yoga] has disappeared. The learned pundits will indulge in sexual commerce with their wives like buffaloes. They are expert in procreating children but are not able to achieve liberation from this world [or in helping others do the same]. Devotion to the Supreme, Lord Vishnu, or to following a genuine spiritual path is no where to be seen. Such, however, is the spirit of the times. That is why the Supreme Being seems so far away though abiding so close in our very hearts while tolerating all of this.

The *Padma Purana* (6.71.56-60) also agrees with this and states that as Kali-yuga unfolds, Brahmanas [spiritual teachers and ministers] become heretics and engrossed in impious acts. They will not say their prayers or chant mantras, and will give up their vows. The low-class people who are spiritually uneducated will not be able to distinguish what is righteous or unrighteous, or beneficial or not. Everyone will be wicked and dirty, except for the devotees of God, Lord Vishnu.

The above reference indicates that only those who are sincerely and devotedly attracted to the Supreme, and whose motivation is real spiritual love and compassion for one and all, will be able to avoid the pitfalls and wicked ways that become so prevalent in the age of Kali. Others will not

have the necessary knowledge, perception, or potency to overcome the deteriorating effects of this age.

This is further substantiated in the *Narada Purana* (1.41.24, 30, 48, 51, & 88) which explains the conditions in the distant future. It is related therein that all other classes of people in Kali-yuga will become averse to righteous behavior. The priests will turn away from the *Vedas* and genuine spiritual knowledge. Holy rites, perfect knowledge, and good conduct will perish. Thus, calamities will befall the world due to the prevalence of impious activities. The minds of none will be devoted to God. Even in the first quarter of Kali-yuga men will begin to censure knowledge of Hari, the Supreme, and near the end of the age, no one will have any knowledge of the Supreme spiritual reality, nor will they even speak of the name of Hari, Krishna. Finally, when all Dharma or spiritual knowledge disappears, the whole world becomes hellish, and infant mortality becomes prominent. There will be a steady growth of irreligious materialism. Thus, irreligious activities will simply breed more and more wicked behavior with all of its characteristics as greed, dishonesty, and competition. This will increase to [include constant] fighting, enslavement, and killing. Then the cycle of degeneration will be completely irreversible. In such a state, the world will become a hellish planet in which people are born only to suffer. Society will then exhibit a continuous state of chaos and madness.

* * *

To help avoid the above scenario, we need to remember that religion is the process of understanding God, our relationship with God, and our spiritual identity. The purpose of a religious organization or institution is to help spread this knowledge and guidance for the benefit of humanity, and to create a place where likeminded people can associate and enthuse one another in the process. Once a religion begins to establish forced control over others, or to make its teachings a dogma that must be followed or punishment results, then that religion loses sight of true spiritual understanding. That is when it brings in the seeds of corruption. It replaces the need to promote true spiritual understanding with the desire to establish its superiority over others, which can lead to the ways of totalitarianism. Then politics, disunity, intrigue, and even war become prevalent within that religion, or because of it, which then spreads out through society in general.

All true religions accept that God is the ultimate unifying principle, an omnipotent, supremely spiritual Being who has infinite intelligence and capabilities, and from whom comes pure and unlimited love for one and all. He reciprocates with us to the degree to which we surrender or desire to understand Him. A religion which cannot offer such an understanding, or whose followers have perverted the philosophy, or who cannot apply it in their daily lives, is not a truly progressive or elevating religion. In such a case, it becomes necessary to get away from that institution to get closer to God. After all, the church should not make itself more important than the true spiritual knowledge it should be promoting. In other words, when the process of worship outweighs the object of worship, or God, then you have already lost Him. Such a religion will not be spiritually successful and should be either corrected or avoided.

What this means, as we head into the future, is that it will be most important for people to be spiritually knowledgeable and to think for themselves and recognize that forced dogma is not what true religion is about. We have already spent many centuries witnessing religions suppressing and persecuting others and we should have learned our lesson by now. As spiritual beings, we all have an eternal relationship with the Supreme Spirit. All it has to do is be reawakened with the use of the proper methods and teachings. No church or institution or its representatives can interfere with that. We do not have to participate in any religion that forces us to be subservient to a faulty creed or misleading or corrupt leaders. We must only search out those individuals, pure devotees, who can assist us and give us the spiritual knowledge by which we can understand and reach the Supreme Being ourselves, with or without any institution or organized religion.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE HOLY RIVERS

Furthermore, when Kali-yuga becomes strong, it is predicted that the Ganga [Ganges River] will be broken in some places and at others it will be diverted from its course. This means that it could stop flowing or be damned up in some places, or later become a series of small lakes before it begins to dry up or disappear in the same way as did the Sarasvati River. The way the glaciers are melting, the very source of water for the rivers may also disappear, thus ending the flow of the Ganga altogether. This is

but another aspect of the loss of all Vedic culture with time. However, there are ways to delay these effects, as will be described in the Chapter Five.

In the meantime, the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, 129.46-49) confirms the possibility of the disappearance of the sacred rivers of India. In fact, it is a part of the Vedic prophecies. Therein we find a conversation between Sri Krishna and Ganga Devi, the personification of the Ganges River. Lord Krishna tells Ganga Devi that there will be a golden age within Kali-yuga that will start about 5,000 years after the age of Kali begins. This will last for 10,000 years in which there can be a rekindling of spiritual knowledge and awareness in society. However, after that the full force of Kali-yuga will be felt. Then the Ganga, Yamuna, and other sacred rivers should hide under the earth in the same way as the Sarasvati and wait to appear only at the beginning of the next Satya-yuga, or with the appearance of Lord Kalki.

It is described that when Lord Krishna was getting ready to leave this planet earth for His eternal abode, “all the rivers like the Ganga, Sarasvati, Padma, Yamuna, Godavari, Svarnarekha, Kaveri, Narmada, Bahuda, and the auspicious Kritamala arrived there and started offering their salutations to the Lord. Getting upset with the fever of separation, her eyes filled with tears, the Ganga spoke to Lord Krishna while crying. Bhagirathi said: ‘O lovable Lord, you are now proceeding to Goloka. What shall be our position during the age of Kali?’”

As the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, 129.50-52, 59) continues, Sri Krishna said: “O Ganga, you remain on earth for five thousand years during Kali-yuga. All the sins that are washed in your water would disappear with the reciting of the mantras by the devotees and by the people who earn merit by having a look at you. You would also listen to the reciting of the name of Hari and the reciting of the *Puranas*... During the Kali-yuga, My devotees would remain on earth for 10,000 years.”

It is further explained: “Sri Krishna said: Lord Hari will stay on this earth for the first ten-thousand years of Kali-yuga [including in such forms as His deities, His holy names, and the knowledge of Him as given by His pure devotees]. For that time the deities of the demigods will be worshiped and the *Puranas* and [Vedic] scriptures will also be present. For half that period [the next 5,000 years], the Ganga and other holy places will be present. For half that period the village temples and the *Vedas* studied by

learned Brahmanas will be present.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.32-

33)

“After the completion of five thousand years in Kali-yuga, all of the Goddesses [Sarasvati, Ganga and Lakshmi] in river forms [as Sarasvati, Ganga and Padmavati respectively] would revert back to the abode of Lord Vishnu [Vaikuntha, thus leaving this material world]. The sacred places of Kashi, Vrindavana, and all others would also return to the spiritual realm with them. After the completion of ten thousand years the deities of Shalagrama and Jagannatha would also revert back to Vishnuloka (and thus also disappear from this world).

“The attendants of Vishnu, the *Puranas*, the conch, the *shraddha* rituals, *tarpana* or offerings, and all the rites prescribed in the *Vedas* would also disappear. The adoration of the Lord, His names, the recitation of His names, the sixth parts of the *Vedas* and the *Shastras* will also disappear. The saints, truth, Dharma, *Vedas*, village deities, resolution, penance, and fasting (for religious purposes) will also disappear with them.

“Thereafter, the followers of the left path and those who attack the *Shastras*, along with falsehood and cheating, shall remain on the earth. Thereafter, Lord Vishnu will be adored [in thought only] without [the sacred] Tulasi leaves. All the people will remain without observing the Ekadashi-vows, and [becoming] devoid of Dharma shall always move against Lord Narayana [Vishnu].” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.10-17)

So, herein we can understand that the Ganga River would continue to flow for another 5,000 years in which people can become purified with her assistance, such as by bathing in her waters. But after that, her presence may no longer be here. In other words, she will disappear, after which the world and its residents could become purified by the association of those devotees who worship Lord Krishna by chanting His mantra consisting of His holy names. This is further confirmed by a few additional verses as follows:

“In the age of Kali-yuga, I [Lord Krishna] would continue to be adored on earth for ten thousand years, and the Ganga would flow on earth for five thousand years. As long as the Ganga flows on earth, the Tulasi plant, devotion to Vishnu, and recitation of the *Puranas* will continue. O lord of Vraja, no one would recite My name in Kaliyuga (once the age advances to

when the Ganga ceases to flow). [Thereafter] the land would be deprived of truthfulness, the trees would no longer provide fruits, and the rivers would be without water... The Brahmanas would become deprived of the Vedic knowledge, and the rulers would become weak. There would be a classless society, and the rulers would be the same as *mlecchas*.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.28-30, 32-33)

From this description we can understand that with the loss of the Ganga River many of the most holy places in India will become lost or forgotten. So, considering the importance and sacredness of the Ganga River, the disappearance of it would portend to be the complete loss of any spiritual civilization or culture in India, as well as the rest of the world. Not only will the sacred rivers disappear, but it is also confirmed, as described above, that the *Puranas* and the Vedic scriptures in general, would also vanish from the face of the earth.

In this way, we can begin to see how the influence of the age of Kali will create an atmosphere that would cause the sacred rivers to all fade away within another 5,000 years, possibly less, depending on how the mass consciousness of society affects things in this world. Plus, the devotees of Lord Vishnu, the deities, and, thus, most temples, or certainly the reason for them, will also be gone within the next 10,000 years. Then there will be nothing preventing the full force of the the age of Kali to bulldoze its way across the face of the planet.

THE DEGRADATION IN FAMILY LIFE AND RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE

In the age of Kali, it will be extremely difficult to maintain and keep a family together. In fact, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.6) states that anyone who is able to maintain a family will be considered an expert or hero. However, we can easily recognize that many families suffer turmoil and are affected by divorce. The husband or wife must often work a long way from home or must travel for days or weeks for the sake of the job. This adds to the instability of the family. In other instances, the father may be undependable and simply leave the household, forcing the wife to take the responsibility of working and raising the family. These problems are common factors in family life in Kali-yuga.

Kali-yuga is an age of reversals: What was once strong becomes weak and vice-versa. So often in Kali-yuga men become weak in mind and body and can no longer be expected to fulfill the responsibilities that were once provided years ago. On the other hand, in Kali-yuga it is seen that women become stronger, bolder, and more independent. In some cases, women are forced to become strong and independent due to being mistreated or left unprotected by men of little character. The *Bhagavatam* (1.16.21) explains that women and children are left unhappy and forlorn by unscrupulous men who often search for young girls with whom they might have illicit sex. Yet if there is pregnancy, the man sometimes leaves the woman to fend for herself. If the child is born, both child and mother are left in difficulty.

The *Bhagavatam* (12.2.5) also explains that in Kali-yuga marriage will be nothing more than a verbal agreement. So it will not be taken seriously and it will be easy for husband and wife to part ways whenever they like, for whatever reason. Because of this, the purpose of marriage will degenerate to a matter of convenience for sexual affairs, not for responsibly raising a family in a legal and purposeful relationship. Therefore, as the *Bhagavatam* (12.2.3) relates, men and women will live together simply because of bodily attraction, and how good they are as man or woman will evolve around their level of sexual prowess.

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) also confirms this, stating that marriage will be based on mutual consent. Union between the sexes will be based on passion alone, and women will be mere objects of gratification. And (Book Four, Chapter 38) the laws of marriage and the regulations of conduct for husband and wife will be disregarded.

Then we also find in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.35), “Marriage purified by sacred mantras will no longer exist. There will be no truthfulness and no forgiveness. Men will associate with women only for sex.”

Furthermore (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.18-19, 20), “All the people thereafter will become wicked, heartless, crafty, arrogant, thieves, and violent. There would remain no difference between men and women. The institution of marriage will disappear, miscarriage of justice will become prevalent as will the usurping trend [thievery] in the title of objects or possessions... All the men will be under the influence of women and the houses will be ruled by wicked women who will denounce their husbands from time to time.”

Unfortunately, as Kali-yuga progresses, both men and women will lose their good qualities and become more selfish and angry toward each other over trivial things. The *Bhagavatam* (12.3.42-43) explains that in Kali-yuga men will hate each other over nothing more than a few coins. They will give up friendly relations and be ready to kill their own family or give up their own lives for such trivial concerns. Thus, people will care for nothing more than filling their own bellies and satisfying their genitals. They will give up all concern and protection for their own parents, children, and wives.

In the age of Kali, as the *Bhagavatam* (12.3.37) continues, men will become so demeaning in their attempt to satisfy their genitals that they will be controlled by women. They will reject all of their relatives and friends to associate with the sisters and brothers of their wives. This means that there will be a time when they will base friendships exclusively on sexual ties. The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) also relates that a man's friends will be his brother-in-law or those who have a lusty wife.

Further descriptions in this regard are also supplied in this quote: "The people will enjoy the company [for sex] of their own daughter; some would enjoy the company of one's own father-in-law or daughters-in-law, while some people will enjoy the company of all. Some of them will have illicit relations with their own sisters, some with the step-mothers, and some with the brother's wives. In every house-hold the people will have illicit relations with prohibited women. Leaving their mothers, they will also enjoy the company of all women. [People will be so confused that] in Kali-yuga no one will be able to decide the relationship between a husband and wife [meaning anything goes]." (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.45-49)

These explanations mean that at the time this prediction goes into effect, adultery will be common place and many men will have an effeminate nature and be willing to engage in sex with either women or men. The gender will not matter. Friends will be those only with whom they have some sexual connection. As a result of this, children will be born primarily by accident in an unloved atmosphere. These children will be forced to adopt any kind of means to survive because they will be, basically, without parents. Thus, they will belong to gangs to feel a sense of family or belonging and adopt the social ways of the times. They will become unrestrained in every way. Needless to say, such children will be so

uncontrollable that there will be no possibility of educating them in an organized institution. As a local saying goes, you train them to fail, train them for jail. Already we see a great increase in the way children carry guns and other weapons to school and a big rise in the way they disrespect teachers. This is a sign of the strong influence of Kali-yuga today.

Also, respect for any authority will disappear, as it is described herein, “The son would torture the father, and similarly the pupil would treat the teacher like a servant. In the house, the wife would pounce upon the husband like a greedy cock.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.34)

“A son will insult his father. A disciple will insult his guru. The citizens will attack their king. The king will torture his citizens.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.40)

In this way, love and gratitude for those who are protecting or training the younger ones will subside and be replaced by a demeaning view and insulting attitude. Yet, hundreds or thousands of years from now this will be much worse. As each generation comes forth, children will reflect the lack of love they have received. They will be malnourished and lack education and the ability to feel any common emotion. They will get progressively more merciless, unloving, selfish, mean, and violent in their attempt to survive and get what they want from life and from others. In the distant future, such children may look innocent, but their mentality will be that of monsters. They will hold no value for life.

As the age of Kali proceeds, it is not only the men who will have despicable characters, the women will also change. The *Bhagavatam* (12.3.34) explains that women will become much shorter. They will lose all shyness, speak harshly, and engage in thievery, deceit, and bold audacity. They will eat too much and have more children than they can properly care for. It is also said (*Bhag.*8.9.10) that independent women are never dependable in their relationships and always seek newer sexual relations. The *Narada Purana* (1.41.79-80) also relates that in Kali-yuga women will be self-supporting. Even women of noble families will be unfaithful to their husbands. However, let us point out that in Kali-yuga women often have no choice but to support themselves, since many men simply will be too irresponsible.

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) also confirms that as Kali-yuga continues, women will increasingly become ever fond of pleasure and

follow whatever inclinations they have. Women will become fickle-minded, short, and gluttonous. They will have too many children and little means to support them. They will pay little heed to the advice of their husbands or parents, and will be selfish and untidy in appearance and habits. They will lie and speak in harsh language. Their conduct will be immoral and lack decency, becoming attached to similarly immoral men. Women will be attracted only to those who have wealth, and if their husbands lose their property, their wives will desert them. Arrangements of one's hair will be all that women [or men] have to prompt their pride of beauty because, as Kali-yuga advances, there will be no more gold, jewels, diamonds, or fancy clothes with which to decorate themselves.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.36, 50, 80-82) elaborates on some of the characteristics of family life as the age of Kali progresses, much of which we are already seeing around us today: "When this yuga will come, no one will ask for a girl (for marriage)[from the parents, as once was the standard, especially in India] and no one also will give away a girl. The girls will themselves choose their own husbands... O king, O foremost of monarchs, when this age would come the wife will not remain content with her husband and the husband also will not remain content with his wife... The women will always be very harsh in speech; they will become pitiless and fond of weeping. They will never obey the orders of their husbands. When this age will come, sons will kill fathers and mothers. Women living uncontrolled [lifestyles] will kill their husbands and sons."

Furthermore, relations between parents will also be out of balance, as one will be envious of the other, and the laws will be ineffective from causing restraint in their actions, all of which affects the conditions of the world, as explained in *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.28, 43): "Sons having killed their fathers and fathers having killed their sons will incur no disgrace by doing it; and they ever will take glory in them... Fathers will not forgive their sons and the sons will not forgive their fathers; nor at this time will wives serve their husbands."

"The country will be afflicted with dearth and famine [as merely a reflection of the consciousness of the masses which pervades the planet]. The roads will be filled with lustful men and unchaste women. Women will also hate their husbands." (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.52)

"No woman will be chaste. In home after home the wife will be unchaste, always running after men. The wife will treat her husband like her

servant. She will always rebuke him and make him tremble. O father, she will give her paramour delicious foods, betelnuts, sandal paste, and costly garments, but she will not even feed her unhappy husband.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.38-39).

“A wife will kill her husband and worship her paramour... Women will be very lusty and stay always with their paramours.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.46, 60)

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (4.51) goes on to say that women will have no self-control and will be heartless and quarrelsome and cause trouble for their husbands. And men will be slaves to lust. This is also confirmed in the *Padma Purana* (7.26.25-27, 34) which further relates that unchaste and adulterous women, who will also be fickle-minded, will speak pretentiously like chaste ladies to their husbands. But in Kali-yuga people will be wicked, even selling their daughters... And through indiscriminate sexual indulgence people will have many children and, therefore, will be unhappy.

The *Bhagavad-gita* (1.40-42) gives warning of how the family will produce unwanted progeny when irreligion is prominent and the women become corrupt and degraded. In such a case, which becomes common in Kali-yuga, there is an increase of unwanted population, creating a hellish situation for the family and society at large. Due to evil deeds that the community or government leaders have either allowed or perpetuated, they devastate the welfare of the family and community. Thus, all moral and religious principles are lost and good population in human society disappears, along with all hopes for peace, prosperity, happiness, and spiritual progress.

In this way, as unwanted population increases around the world, there will be greater risks of community unrest—crime, rape, war, disease, and pestilence, and all the more reason for abortions. Gradually, the world will be filled with chaos.

By the time this takes place in the distant future of Kali-yuga, child pornography, rape, human trafficking, and other sexual crimes will be out of control. Politicians and law officers will be bribed into impotence, some even participating in and profiting from these perverse activities. Children will be fearlessly seized from the streets and hardly missed by their irresponsible parents. The depravity these young children will be forced to endure will make death a welcome end. And those that survive will be so mentally damaged that they will wreak havoc on the rest of society. Adult

and child slavery will be rampant and predominantly based on sex. It will be found mostly where people have the money to support it, which will be in the homes of the so-called wealthy and upper classes. There will be no human rights or justice, and the world will be on the edge of disaster and ruin. In these circumstances, and when this type of men, women, and children are roaming the cities, you have a picture of hell on earth.

DROUGHTS AND RAMPANT FAMINE

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.6) explains that as Kali-yuga progresses the goal of life will be simply to fill the belly, which refers to the basic struggle to survive. Unfortunately, this will not be so easy. As I have pointed out earlier, many people will be forced to move to the mountains and hills to try to live there, out of the easy reach of criminals, wicked rulers, and oppressive government. Others will remain to struggle in the cities. It is stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.32) that the cities will be dominated by crooks and rogue politicians who will ruin the conditions of the communities and control the citizens. No one will be able to live peacefully. There will be one social disaster after another. In fact, it is also related (*Bhag.3.17.5*) that natural disturbances, whether it is too much heat, snow, earthquakes, volcanoes, cyclones, tornadoes, or other storms, portend that the demoniac population in the world is increasing. Therefore, when this happens it is merely the acts of nature that reflect the consciousness and collective karma of those who inhabit this planet.

To give some additional insight into this, in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.18.6-7) there is the story of when Mother Earth, Bhumi, explains to King Prithu why she does not reciprocate like she used to: “My dear King, the seeds, roots, herbs, and grains, which were created by Lord Brahma in the past, are now being used by nondevotees, who are devoid of all spiritual understanding. My dear King, not only are grains and herbs being used by non-devotees, but as far as I am concerned, I am not being properly maintained. I am being neglected by kings who are not punishing these rascals who have turned into thieves by using grains for sense gratification. Consequently I have hidden all these seeds, which were meant for the performance of ritual.” Thus, as food grains diminish because of environmental changes and problems, people will resort to whatever means they can to find food, even up to and including killing and eating each other.

It is also said that as the nefarious and sinful activities of the rulers and citizens escalate, rain will also become increasingly scarce. Drought will be rampant around the world, which will allow for insufficient production of food, and reduce the forests and vegetation around the world. This is explained herein: “The earth will be deprived of her greenery. The trees will be without fruits, the ladies will bear no children, the cows will yield no milk, and the milk will yield no ghee [clarified butter]. The rivers, rivulets, step-wells, and the springs will remain without water... Water irrigation will continue only by means of the tanks and river water. There will be no good yield of crops and the good harvest will not be profitable.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.27-30, 33-34)

This is all reiterated as follows: “The earth will give no crops. Cows will give no milk. Because there is almost no milk, there will be no butter or ghee... Rivers, oceans, caves, ponds, and lakes will have neither water nor lotus flowers. Clouds will not carry water... All the banyan trees will be cut down. The earth will be treeless. Trees will not have fruits, branches, or trunks. Grains, fruits, and water will not taste good.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.41-42, 59, 60-61)

Even good people will be forced to leave their homes because of being harassed by high taxes, drought, and famine. They will try to find whatever facility they can in the mountains. In this way, we can see that one of the prime ways of surviving the future will be to get accustomed to an agrarian lifestyle. As the world continues to change, it will be important for communities or individuals who are seeking to be self-sufficient to learn to farm and produce their own food, and make sure they have a source of water. Farming and self-sufficiency will be a basic need for the continuation of society through the coming changes.

Unfortunately, the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) relates that in Kali-yuga farmers will give up agriculture and commerce to seek livelihoods in doing mechanics or engaging in servitude to others [which we can presently see happening as the farmers sell their land and move to the cities to take up other kinds of occupation]. “People will increasingly live in dread of drought, famine, and scarcity, and will always be looking to the skies watching the weather. There will never be abundance in the age of Kali. Men will always be lacking in pleasure and happiness.”

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.76-77) also states that in Kali-yuga men will become extremely fearful of hunger and drought, and will always watch the

sky for rain. Because of the absence of rain, men will be in extreme anxiety trying to live off whatever roots, leaves, and fruits they can find. And (1.41.42) the earth will lose its fertility and the seeds and flowers will perish. However, though many places will suffer drought, other places will also be devastated by incessant rains. This is also confirmed in the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.79) where it says: “The exalted deity of one thousand eyes [referring to Indra, the king of heaven and controller of rainfall] will unceasingly shower rains.”

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.23, 44, 80, 83-84) continues to explain the conditions that society will be forced to endure due to droughts: “They will dig even the banks of streams with their spades and sow grains there. But even these places will prove barren to them at this period of time... When this age [of Kali] will come men will seek those countries where men’s staple food is wheat and barley [which may be a luxury at this time]... When this age will come, crops will not grow in (great) abundance... When this age will come, fire [like forest fires] will blaze up in all directions. Travelers, being unable to obtain food, drink and shelter even when they ask for them, will lie down on the wayside [due to hunger and weakness]. Crows, snakes, vultures, kites, and other animals and birds [seeing the sick, starving and dying] will utter discordant cries [waiting for their deaths].”

Many other *Puranas* also support this view of the distant future. The *Kurma Purana* (1.30.2) states that there will be continuous fear of hunger, starvation, droughts, epidemics of fatal disease, and whole countries being destroyed in the age of Kali. Similarly, the *Brahmanda Purana* (1.2.31.34) also says that there will be calamities in all the countries and there will be terrific fear of drought.

Presently, the times may not be as bad as the Vedic prophecies foretell, but we must remember that though we can work to right many wrongs in the way we are taking care of the planet, the ecosystem is very carefully balanced. If we tilt that balance too far one way or the other, it will become impossible to bring it back. As we see the way big companies tear away at the earth, the forests, and the farmland, it becomes obvious that in due course the delicate balance of nature will be so damaged that it will never be the same. At that time, the Vedic prophecies will begin to manifest faster than ever.

Even at present, the heavy losses of territory to advancing deserts in places like China and Nigeria, the most populous countries in Asia and Africa respectively, illustrate the trends for scores of other countries. China is not only losing productive land to deserts, but it is doing so at an accelerating rate. From 1950 to 1975 China lost an average of 1560 square kilometers of land to desert each year. By 2000, nearly 3625 square kilometers were going to desert annually. This is definitely having an impact on the resources it needs to feed all of its people.

Furthermore, the lowering level of ground water is also a concern. In some places like India ground water has lowered by as much as 1000 feet in different areas, making it increasingly difficult to reach and supply water to the local population. If this problem continues or gets worse, which will obviously happen with society's growing demand for water, water will become a resource that will become evermore difficult to secure. And without water, life itself becomes more and more troublesome.

Men may engage in mechanics and the production of machines, but when there is a scarcity of water and natural resources, such as oil and its by-products (as is predicted to happen if we keep our present rate of consumption), machines will do us little good. We cannot eat nuts and bolts. When we lose our farmland or the ability to farm, then all of the technological advancements we have made will seem useless if we do not have enough to eat. And that is what the Vedic prophecies say will happen.

It is also mentioned (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.4.17-18)) that as Kali-yuga progresses, everything material will deteriorate and lose its potency. In this case, the land will not provide the necessary food as it did before. Due to weather conditions, drought, and the soil being depleted of nutrients, good food will become more and more scarce. People will be forced to struggle so hard to find enough to eat, especially in the cities. They will become like scavengers, eating whatever they can find no matter whether it is good or abominable. The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (4.53) further relates that the earth will have little fertility and will yield poor harvests. Clouds will give little rain, and trees will provide meager fruit. The *Vayu Purana* (58.46, 55-56) also explains that as the end of Kali-yuga approaches, the earth will yield little food. The rains will fall in a mysteriously haphazard way and the earth will be less fertile and have a shortage of water.

As it is explained elsewhere, not only will there be a water shortage, but the population of animals also will decrease: "In this *yuga* the clouds pour

rain unseasonably [and unreliably].” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.70)

“Men will till low-lands and employ cows and calves that are but one year old in drawing the plough and carrying the burdens.” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.27)

“Full of avarice and ignorance, all the world will have but one sort of food, sin will increase and virtue will fade away.” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.41)

“People will pitilessly destroy trees and gardens. Men will be filled with anxiety for their livelihood... When men will kill others, when they will be wicked, cruel and destroyers of all animals, then is the age of Kali-yuga.” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 190.57-60)

The *Padma Purana* (7.26.27-28) agrees and further states that the earth will have few crops. Clouds will have increasingly less water, or will pour too much water at wrong times. In Kali-yuga, cows will give little milk, of poor quality, and will be forced to eat feces.

The last statement here is significant in light of the disaster regarding what had been the feeding of dead animals and feces to cows in England. This resulted in the “Mad Cow Disease” scare, in which they calculated that hundreds of thousands of cows were sick or possibly contaminated with this disease caused by eating innards from other diseased animals. This can spread to humans through eating of contaminated animals. This was a practice that went on in other countries as well, including the United States, though smaller in scale. It was a practice, and hopefully it is gone for good, in which these Kali-yuga businesspeople and farmers try to recycle waste because they want to make extra profits by cheating nature, more or less. By not giving the proper feed to the cows, they caused thousands of cows and animals to become diseased. This had brought further controversy because the farmers slaughtered thousands of the contaminated cows, and even those that were suspected to be contaminated. This only shows the foolishness to which men will resort in their attempt to make more money, all the while risking the health of the animals and people. This is typical of the Kali-yuga form of intelligence that paves the way for further problems with food shortage and in the way men abuse animals and nature. In the end, it only backfires in their faces.

As should be plenty obvious by now, as people become more engrossed in chasing after their desires, there will be less and less peace in the world. Society will become more violent, angry, and selfish. Large scale wars are

declared wherein even women and children are maimed and killed. This violence is reflected and perpetuated by the many slaughterhouses that are opened to kill hundreds of millions of innocent creatures each year for the sake of satisfying the desires of humans, specifically for the lump of flesh known as the tongue. For that, so many living beings are put to death, slaughtered, or boiled alive. This puts an incredible amount of violence into the atmosphere, and where do you think it goes? A basic law of physics is that for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. On a universal level, they call this same law the law of karma. What we do comes right back to us. And karma refers to those reactions accumulated by an individual, community, or even a whole nation. So, is there any wonder why there is increasingly less peace in this world when humankind resorts to this level of selfish violence?

Another reason for the food shortages, droughts, and less fertile farmlands, as described in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.18.6-7) is due to the misuse of the land and natural resources by people who have no spiritual understanding. People who have no knowledge of the real purpose of life will not maintain the earth properly. The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) confirms that the earth planet will receive respect only for the minerals and resources men can get from it. That means the only care they have for the earth is for whatever profits they can make from it, for which they will do anything and go to any length, forgetting that it provides the very resources we need for our survival if we take care of it properly.

The Vedic literature describes planet earth as a living being, Mother Bhumi, a personality who gives in return for being properly treated. When she is neglected or misused, she is not able or willing to produce all of the necessary resources, as we have described earlier. In other words, there is a way to farm and do things in a natural way to protect the earth from being damaged by our actions and still produce enough to feed all of its inhabitants. But this means there must be proper management by people who have firm spiritual understanding and knowledge of the true goal of life for spiritual advancement. In Vedic times, such persons were the Brahmanas, the spiritual guides for society. When there are no real spiritual authorities, society becomes headless, without a brain. A headless society does not know what the real goal of life is or the best things to do. If nonspiritually oriented beings misuse the earth and its resources, all real progress is stopped. Nature becomes out of balance. Then by natural

reactions the rains cease to pour and the earth no longer provides all that we need. Thus, it is predicted that there will be a time when there will be no grains, fruits, flowers, metals, or gold, not to mention enough water and grains to support cattle and animals for those who wish to eat meat.

It is predicted that in the distant future, as food becomes more scarce, the thieves and rogues will be forced to hunt and eat each other. Then not only will you have to guard yourself from crooks, rapists, kidnappers, rogue politicians who will take your property and your wives, plus high taxes, cheating businessmen, and a legal and economic system that works only for the wealthy, but you will also have to struggle against starvation, and watch out for those who may want to eat you for food. People will be so overcome by hunger and will be so mentally slow or deranged that “the need to feed” will make them turn on each other even to the point of eating their own family members if necessary.

In many ways, in the distant future of Kali-yuga, the inhabitants of the planet will be like a society of rats, scurrying everywhere, scavenging for food. They will be malnourished and mentally deficient to the point that they will not recognize their own family members.

People who read this may find it shocking to hear the way the Vedic literature describes the distant future, and that there will be a time when it will be common for people to be this way, or even eat each other. But this is no different than the way the sages of many years ago were shocked to learn from the Vedic prophecies that people of Kali-yuga would raise and cultivate cows simply for slaughter and meat consumption. At the time, this was unthinkable. Even now, humans eating humans is unthinkable, but it is just another level of the deteriorating standard in society as Kali-yuga progresses. What is unacceptable now later becomes the norm.

THE WORST CONDITIONS AT THE END OF KALI-YUGA

The Vedic literature, such as *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (2.7.38) describes a world at the very end of Kali-yuga in which there is a complete absence of spiritual knowledge. People will not discuss topics of God, and nothing will remain of any true spiritual process. Also, the power of government will be in the hands of those who are lowborn, uncultured, and godless.

The above description is further corroborated in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.12-16), which relates that at the end of Kali-yuga all true religious principles will have been destroyed or will have disappeared before the end of Kali-yuga. The Vedic literature will have been forgotten and will no longer exist. Religion will be atheistic. The physical size of all creatures will be much smaller, even the plants and herbs will be tiny. The trees will be dwarfed, thus providing no fruit or shade. What few cows are left will be like goats. Kings will be no different than thieves. Lying, stealing, and senseless violence will be the occupation of men. There will no longer be holy places. Spiritual hermitages will be the same as mundane households without piety. Family ties will go no further than the bonds of marriage, for however long such arrangements last. Lightning will constantly appear in the clouds. There will be continuous darkness, bad weather, earthquakes, and disasters. All human beings will be no better than asses.

The *Vayu Purana* (97.116-124) also explains that people will become unreasonable, angry, and deluded; causing destruction for everyone. They will engage in war and kill one another. They will be extremely distressed and have no confidence in anyone. They will have no belongings, will leave their cities and villages, and live in forests or near rivers and mountains [in their attempts to survive]. All Dharma [religious and meritorious activities] will be lost. People will be short, like dwarves, and short-lived. Leaves, roots and fruits will be their diet. They will wear leaves, barks of trees, or hides. They will have no means of sustenance and will be overwhelmed by adversities. They will undergo all kinds of suffering. Only when the Kali Age lapses and the Satya or Krita-yuga starts again will all things regain their original forms and conditions in a natural sequence. [This sounds more like we are heading back toward the stone age.]

At the end of a long description of the ruling families and kings of the future, the *Vayu Purana* elaborates further on the conditions of the world near the end of Kali-yuga. Much of what it says is similar to descriptions found in other *Puranas*, so I will include only those that are not repetitive.

It explains that during the end of Kali-yuga, *mleccha* [lowborn and wicked] kings will enjoy the earth. They will not be duly crowned but will take their position by force and will commit evil actions. They will not hesitate to kill women and children, or destroy each other. The reign of such kings will flourish and perish in rapid succession. They will be without

piety, true love, or real wealth. The common people will follow similar habits. All accepted traditions will be lost. The kings will destroy their subjects, and will be greedy and devoted to malicious behavior. During this time women will outnumber men. People will become increasingly deficient in learning, strength, and duration of life. Finally, the ruling kings will be ruined by time, and then there will be no more kings. Only after the appearance of Lord Kalki will all the *mlecchas*, heretics, and unrighteous be destroyed. (*Vayu Purana*, 98.382-390)

The *Vayu Purana* (98.391-407) goes on to describe that at the end of Kali-yuga [remember, this is another 400,000 years or so from now], only a very few people will survive. They will be helpless and destitute without possessions. They will have no one to help them, and will be afflicted by disease and sorrows. They will be ruined by drought and will slaughter each other [out of anger and hunger]. All feelings of affection will be lost, even between the closest of friends. People will live on mountains and riverbanks as scavengers roaming the earth. At the end of Kali-yuga the subjects will be annihilated.

The *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.57) continues in this line of thought of what the conditions will be at this time: “[Near the end of Kali-yuga] all people will be lowborn *mlecchas* [non-spiritual and unregulated, dishonest materialists]. At that point in time the trees will be the height of one hand and humans will be the size of a thumb.”

“Kings will have only a few pots and seashells in their treasuries. They will be kings of pots. Men will be the size of thumbs. Trees will be the size of [present day] vegetables. The fruits of tala, panasa, and coconut trees will be the size of mustard seeds. In time they will become smaller still. Homes will have no water, cups, plates, grains, cloth, or decorations. Homes will be dark, lampless, and filled with bad smells. Everyone will be a sinner afraid of violent beings.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.54-56) When people are so wicked, the smaller they are, the less harm they can do to the earth or the environment.

The *Brahmanda Purana* (2.3.74.200-225) describes how people will try to find edible things from under the ground, digging with wooden spikes. With great effort they try to keep goats, sheep, donkeys, and camels. People will think highly of themselves, yet produce no or little progeny. They will not maintain cleanliness or good habits, and engage only in sinful activities.

The people will be forced to obey mean and base leaders of evil conduct and depressed conditions. No one will live past 23 years of age.”

“Thus, the people of Kali-yuga will have a short span of life. They become old quickly while being young, and at the age of sixteen their hair will grow grey. And at the age of twenty, the old-age will overpower them [with death].” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.40)

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190. 48-49) gives a similar view, but as we get closer to the end of Kali-yuga the length of life continues to decrease. “Then the length of mens’ life will be sixteen years. When this age would come, men will die at this age. Girls of five or six will give birth to children, and boys of seven or eight years of age will be fathers.”

An additional reason for this short life span is explained in the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.41): “Full of avarice and ignorance, all the world will have but one sort of food, sin will increase and virtue will fade away.” The reduced choice in food may indeed be from environmental problems and contamination from an abundance of pollutants. But as ignorance and a short duration of life continue, the means and ways to manage the planet will give way to only the most short term vision for surviving in any way possible, which would be founded on the most base desires. And that usually has disastrous results.

The *Brahmanda Purana* (1.2.31.55-58) further describes the end of Kali-yuga as a time when no one will return help to another. No one will be straightforward and honest. Everyone will speak harshly and think nothing of injuring others. There will be no wealth, and everyone will live in poverty and fear. Rulers will be useless and take away the possessions of others and molest wives of other men. People will be evil-minded, unsympathetic, and addicted to wicked and criminal acts.

The general attitude between men in the later years during Kali-yuga is also related in the *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190. 22): “At the end of (Kali) yuga men will be opposed to one another and seek one another’s life. They will be atheists and thieves.”

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 38) gives clear elaborations on the conditions and the causes of them near the end of the age of Kali. It is due to the disappearance of any true spiritual knowledge, especially that of the *Vedas*, that men will sink into heresy and iniquity, and the duration of life will decrease. Because of all of their bad habits, poor and little food, and a totally polluted environment, men will possess little intelligence,

virtue, and energy, and, therefore, will die after a very brief life. Girls will bear children when they are only five, six, or seven years old, and boys will become fathers when they are eight, nine, or ten. A man will get gray hair when he is twelve years old, and no one will live past twenty years of life. Boys, having little sense, will daily commit a life of sin and will be subjected to all the infirmities of mind, body, and speech. All that which is known to do harm or cause injury—be impure, vicious, and wretched—will manifest itself in the age of Kali. Therefore, wise men take note that as more of these symptoms appear, that is how far the age of Kali has elapsed.

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.64-65) also agrees that at the end of Kali-yuga five year old girls will give birth, but the maximum age of life will be only sixteen years. They will call boys up to seven or eight years “youths,” and “old age” will be anything beyond that. The *Padma Purana* (7.26.32-34) also states that it is because of their wicked deeds that people will completely perish within ten to twelve years. People will lose all their strength in the age of Kali. This indicates that as the age of Kali reaches its end and becomes increasingly troublesome and difficult, and because of people’s wicked activities, the size of people and the maximum age of life continue to decrease.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.42, 52, 54, 55, 61-62) goes on to explain that near the end of the age of Kali, government administrators will be merely thieves and robbers. Society will be full of foul conduct. Men will be a minority and there will be many women. People will be sickly, have little strength, and will not hesitate to engage in activities that cause their ruin. The earth will be desolate, have few good men, with only scattered groups of people in the cities. Abundance and good health will be rare. Spiritual knowledge and holy rites will have disappeared. Worms, mice, and serpents will gain strength and size and attack men. Abundance, welfare, good health, and ability will also become rare.

Can you imagine a return to the stone age when men are fleeing for their lives from the overgrown and mutated serpents and lizards, which could resemble the dinosaurs by now in this time-frame? This is what is being described. Some of the remnants of what we are finding now in archeological digs could be merely remnants from the previous age of Kali-yuga some 4 million years ago. The *Kurma Purana* (1.30.26) also agrees that when spiritual knowledge is lost [or when men are no better than animals], insects, mice, and serpents will harass humans.

When the above verses describe how animals will be reduced in size, this suggests that horses and other useful animals will also have shrunk considerably. Does this mean that the small horse skeletons that have been found in prehistoric archeological digs are simply remnants from the previous age of Kali nearly 4,000,000 years ago? And as the size of humans also shrink, other creatures such as rodents and serpents, in the survival of the fittest, may increase in size. This would corroborate the quotes from the Vedic passages that say such creatures would harass humanity.

The *Linga Purana* (40.26-73) also points out that beasts of prey will become violent, and germs, mice, and serpents will torment men. At the close of Kali-yuga, rain will be sparse, and the earth will have a short supply of useful water and few fruits. The earth will have no kings, riches, or food grains. Countries and cities will have groups of conspirators robbing others of their belongings, stealing food, and violating others' wives. Everyone will be lustful, base, wicked, and foolhardy. It will be difficult to attain any prosperity, health, longevity, or strength. The spiritual or Vedic texts will no longer exist. People will be afflicted with fear as anarchy spreads. They will always be suspicious of each other, not hesitating to attack and kill one another. People will be shameless and unloving, without good conduct. Due to a lack of rain, nothing will grow and they will give up agriculture. They will be forced to live near rivers and oceans. In their misery they will live on whatever meat, roots, and fruits they can find. They will be stunted in growth and will be forced to wear tree barks, leaves, and skins. Thus, the few remaining subjects who live during the concluding years of Kali-yuga will be involved in many calamities and live in miserable circumstances.

The *Linga Purana* (40.19-25) also describes how the number of men decreases while the population of women increases. The number of cows will decline and good men will disappear from all areas of society. [This may mean that such good or even saintly men will live outside society, underground, or in mountain caves, or will be living in a higher consciousness and on a higher vibratory level by which they simply disappear from the view of ordinary people.]

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.20-21) continues with this same kind of description and says that towards the later days of Kali-yuga, cows will be far less than merely low in numbers: "At the end of (Kali) yuga men will live on fish and milk of goats and sheep, for cows will then be extinct."

You never know the value of something until it's gone, but once the damage is done, it can be irreversible. In this case, the conditions on earth no longer support various species of life, which includes cows.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.78, 73, 85-88) describes the great heat at the end of Kali-yuga and says that the heat will become so difficult that it will appear like more than one sun, and people will try to find anywhere that is survivable: "The sun will appear with six other suns. There will be great noise on every side and everywhere there will be (great) conflagrations... [Due to their desperation] all distinctions between men disappear. With honorary tasks and offices, men [give these up to] go to the forests and live on fruits and roots.... When this age would come, men will abandon their friends and relatives, servants and followers. Leaving the countries, directions, towns and cities that they occupy, men will one after the other seek for new ones. 'O father, O son', uttering such frightful words, men in great affliction will rove over the (various) countries [looking for relief and wondering] when this terrible age would be over."

"In the last phase of Kali-yuga, all sinners would be destroyed. Some of them would see their destruction from the scorching heat of the sun, while others would be destroyed with the flooding from rivers and lakes." (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.35)

All of these descriptions conclude that when the above conditions are present at the very end of Kali-yuga, that is the time when the Supreme Being, as Lord Kalki, will come to earth again and rescue the planet from all of these difficulties and reestablish the Golden Age—Satya-yuga. This will be the next coming of the Supreme. However, when this condition occurs at the end of a kalpa, or the end of a day of Brahma as described in Chapter Three, Lord Kalki will not appear again, and the earth will simply slide into total annihilation, which is described more fully in Chapter Seven. Such are the changes predicted in the Vedic literature that we can expect in the future of this age of Kali. However, there are a few things we can do to hold them off or help prevent them from being so overwhelming, which we will discuss in the next chapter. Before the full effects of Kali-yuga manifest we are in what is called the Golden Age within Kali-yuga, which lasts for 10,000 years. So let us see how we can use it to our best advantage while it lasts, as we discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Golden Age in Kali-yuga: A Time for Upliftment

In spite of all that has been said about the dark future of Kaliyuga, all is not yet lost. As mentioned at the end of Chapter Three, there are plenty of good possibilities and benefits ahead. So do not give up hope. Although we can certainly see in any newspaper how various portions of the Vedic prophecies are starting to appear, there is, nonetheless, a 10,000 year period in the 432,000 years of Kaliyuga when everything can change for the better. This is a very important period of time we must note because, according to the Vedic descriptions, it has many advantages and will show a rise in people's consciousness, spiritual awareness, enlightenment, knowledge, unity, and harmony in many areas of life. However, this will happen only if we make a concerted effort to make the right positive changes, otherwise we could lose the opportunity. The time in which this takes place is called the "Golden Age in Kali-yuga," which we are in right now.

In this Golden Age within Kali there will be a struggle, or polarization, between the forces of light and forces of darkness. The forces of darkness are formidable now and getting stronger, but the forces of light and those who are working to bring more spiritual light into this world are also quite strong and progressing. If we keep working to bring in those forces of light and to spread genuine spiritual knowledge, this world can be made into a place that provides a higher, spiritually progressive level of existence. But this depends on whether the downward or deteriorating tendency of the age of Kali can be curbed. That is possible only by working to increase the level of spiritual awareness throughout the world. Despite all of the wars or changes on the planet that are predicted to happen in the next several years, these are not absolute. These can be lessened or even eliminated by changing and uplifting the vibratory level in the atmosphere by transforming the social consciousness. The more we change ourselves, the more we also change our future.

In the recent decades we have seen so many changes in favor of the dismantling of what are no doubt manifestations of the forces of darkness, such as the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, changes in the Soviet Union, and other governmental and social alterations worldwide. There are also increasing changes occurring in our understanding of things that are no longer healthy, such as the consumption of red meat, the smoking of cigarettes, stress in our jobs, violence on television and in movies, and so on. We are also learning more about the ancient ways of making our lives, homes, and work spaces more nurturing and healthy for inner as well as outer growth and development. There is increased interest in the ancient alternative methods of medicine, and interest in finding alternatives to fossil fuels. There is also a greater interest and clearer understanding that there is more to life than this mere physical level of existence, as we can plainly see by all of the published accounts of those who have had the “near death experience” or have journeyed into the light.

Also, more people are recognizing that life is meant to be more than a mere struggle to exist while trying to raise a family or simply get through life. Our existence does not have to be based solely around acquiring the almighty dollar, the accumulation of which becomes the basis of our happiness as well as the cause of much of our unhappiness when we do not get dollars. More people are seeing that life is for understanding the lessons we are meant to learn in this human experience that force us to take another look at who and what we really are. Rather than wondering why certain things happen to us, people are beginning to realize that incidents, whether good or bad, lead us to accomplish progressive evolutionary transformations in our consciousness, and changes in our view of what we are meant to do in this life. Thus, life does not need to be a struggle at all. However, if we were more tuned into what life is offering us, we may be less subject to learning life’s lessons the hard way through difficult situations. It is often said that a person will learn more about himself or herself through difficulties, challenges, or tests in life, rather than through times that are easy. Normally this may be the case. But if we are more aware of the purpose of life, we may learn as much about ourselves through happy and fun times, too.

For example, in this lifetime you may be here to learn about yourself because of some karmic adjustment that needs to happen due to some past life debt. Or you may need to develop some latent talent from which you, as

well as other people, may benefit. Or you may be here to help bring in evolutionary changes in society. The possibilities of your purpose and where you fit are endless. Everyone has a purpose and a reason for being. By understanding this, we can see that the world and our perception of ourselves is changing and growing.

This is not so surprising for those of us who know what is meant to take place in this Golden Age in Kali-yuga. This trend of development will continue because it is predicted that much of the ancient knowledge that was lost for hundreds and thousands of years, especially during the dark ages, will again be revealed. We can see that this is presently happening. Therefore, many of the recent discoveries and achievements and information that we are using today to enhance our lives is knowledge that has been around from long ago that we are now only rediscovering. This is very evident when we study the ancient sciences of the *Vedas*, which I have related in my other books, such as *The Secret Teachings of the Vedas* and *The Heart of Hinduism*.

This tendency to rediscover and use the ancient wisdom and to bring in the forces of light and spiritual development is predicted to last another 10,000 years. In the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Sri Krishna foretold that after 5,000 years of Kali-yuga have passed, His *mantra upasaka* (the devotee who worships His holy names) will appear in this world and spread the chanting of Krishna's names all over the planet. This is said to be what will cause a change of consciousness wherever it goes, and in whomever it contacts. The extent to which this is established will determine the degree to which the negative influences of the age of Kali will be stifled. This period of global spiritual awareness will continue until approximately 12,000 CE. Lord Krishna goes on to say that when this period ends, the full force of Kali will take hold and all of the downward or negative changes of Kali-yuga, as mentioned in the previous chapter, will begin to manifest without hindrance. Therefore, we should take advantage of this time while we have the opportunity.

In some ways, this Golden Age in Kali-yuga is like the last gas station on the edge of the desert. It is our last chance to prepare ourselves and fill our car with gasoline before we enter the danger zone. Similarly, this Golden Age in Kali-yuga is our last chance to improve ourselves, individually and collectively, before facing the full onslaught of Kali-yuga.

The following is a story that helps put all this into focus. It is from the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Sri Krishna-janma Kanda, 129.49-60) and was spoken by Lord Krishna to Mother Ganga (the personality of the Ganges River) just before the beginning of Kaliyuga. Herein He answers Ganga's question regarding her own future and purpose. Lord Krishna's response includes the potency of His devotees who will wander the earth and purify it. Yet after they are gone, at the end of the Golden Age within Kali-yuga, which is in another 10,000 years, then the full onslaught of the dark influence of Kali-yuga will be felt. Since Kali-yuga began approximately five thousand years ago, and it has a duration of 432,000 years, this leaves us with about 427,000 more years till the end of the present age of Kali. The Golden Age in the beginning of Kali-yuga is being described below by Lord Sri Krishna.

Text 49

*bhagarathy uvaca
he natha ramanashreshtha
yasi golokamuttamam
asmakam ka gatishcatra
bhavishyati kalau yuge*

Translation

Bhagirathi [Ganga devi] said: "O lovable Lord, you are now proceeding to Goloka [Krishna's spiritual domain]. What shall be our position during the age of Kali?"

Text 50

*sri-bhagavan uvaca
kaleh pancasahasrani
varshani tishtha bhutale
papani papino yani
tubhyam dasyanti snanatah*

Translation

Lord Bhagavan (Krishna) said: "On the earth 5,000 years of Kali will be sinful and sinners will deposit their sins in you by bathing [in your waters]."

Text 51

man-mantropasakasparshad

*bhasmibhutani tatkshanat
bhavishyanti darsanacca
snanadeva hi jahnavi*

Translation

“Thereafter, by the sight and touch of those devotees who worship me by my mantra, and by the people who earn merit by having a look at you, all those sins [in your water] will be burnt away and disappear [by the potency of their devotion to Krishna].

Text 52

*harernamani yatraiva
puranani bhavanti hi
tatra gatva savadhanam
abhih sarddham ca shroshyasi*

Translation

“There will be chanting of the name of Hari and reading of the [*Bhagavata*] *Purana*. Reaching such a place, attentively hear.

Text 53

*purana shravanaccaiva
harernamanukirtanat
bhasmibhutani papani
brahma-hatyadikani ca*

Translation

“Sinful reactions, including the killing of a Brahmana, can be nullified by hearing the *Purana* and chanting of the names of Hari in the manner of devotees.

Text 54

*bhasmibhutani tanyeva
vaishnavalinganena ca
trinani shushkakashthani
dahanti pavako yatha*

Translation

“Just as dry grass is burnt by fire, by the embrace of My devotees, the Vaishnavas, all sins are burnt away.

Text 55

*tathapi vaishnava loka
papani papinamapi
prithivyaṃ yaṇi tirthaṇi
punyaṇyapi ca jaṇṇavi*

Translation

“O Ganga, the whole planet, even though it had been sinful, will become a pilgrimage sight by the presence of My devotees [the bodies of which enshrine all the holy places on earth].

Text 56

*madbhaktanam sharireshu
santi puteshu samtataṃ
madbhaktapadarajasa
sadyah putā vasundhara*

Translation

“In the body of my devotees remains eternally [the purifier]. Mother earth becomes pure by the dust of the feet of My devotees.

Text 57

*sadyah putani tirthaṇi
sadyah putam jagattatha
manmantropasaka vipra
ye maducchishtabhojinaḥ*

Translation

“Pilgrimage sights and the whole world become purified by the dust from the feet of those intelligent worshipers of My mantra [devotees who chant the Hare Krishna mantra] and who partake of My remnants [eating food first offered to Krishna].

Text 58

*mameva nityam dhyayante
te mat pranadhikah priyah
tadupasparshamatrena
puto vayushca pavakah*

Translation

“Such Brahmanas [devotees] who are devoted to Me are more dear to Me than My life, who everyday meditate only on Me. Even by their indirect touch the air and fire become pure.

Text 59

*kaler dasha-sahasrani
madbhaktah santi bhu-tale
ekavarna bhavishyanti
madbhakteshu gateshu ca*

Translation

“For 10,000 years of Kali-yuga such devotees of Mine will remain on earth [filling the planet]. After the departure of My devotees there will only be one *varna* [social class, the outcastes].

Text 60

*madbhaktashunya prithivi
kaligrasta bhavishyati
etasminnantare tatra
krishnadehadvinirgatah*

Translation

“Devoid of My devotees, the earth will be shackled by [the dark influence of] Kali.” Saying this Sri Krishna departed.

So, herein we can understand that the Ganga would continue to flow for another 5,000 years in which people can become purified with her assistance, such as by bathing in her waters. But after that, she will disappear, after which the world and its residents could become purified by the association of those devotees who worship Lord Krishna by chanting His mantra consisting of His holy names. However, as stated above, Vaishnavas or devotees of Sri Krishna, along with the process of chanting His holy names, would only remain on earth for another 10,000 years and then also disappear. This is further confirmed as follows:

“In the age of Kali-yuga, I [Lord Krishna] would continue to be adored on earth for ten thousand years, and the Ganga would flow on earth for five thousand years. As long as the Ganga flows on earth, the Tulasi plant, devotion to Vishnu, and recitation of the *Puranas* will continue. O lord of Vraja, no one would recite My name in Kaliyuga (once the age advances to

when the Ganga ceases to flow). [Thereafter] the land would be deprived of truthfulness, the trees would no longer provide fruits, and the rivers would be without water... The Brahmanas would become deprived of the Vedic knowledge, and the rulers would become weak. There would be a classless society, and the rulers would be the same as *mlecchas*.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 128.28-30, 32-33)

So, while we are in this Golden Age, what are the best things we can do and what is so special about it?

THE ADVANTAGES OF KALI-YUGA

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.5.38-40) relates that while this Golden Age in Kali-yuga is in progress even those who live in Satya-yuga and the other ages want to take birth in this age since there will be many devotees of the Supreme, Lord Narayana, on this planet. Thus, intelligent persons of the other ages hanker for the association of these spiritually advanced souls because, with the help of these sages, within one short lifetime in Kali-yuga one can reach spiritual perfection. You cannot find this advantage at any other time.

The *Vayu Purana* (58.47) also confirms this by explaining that: “Piety practiced for one day (in Kali-yuga) is equal to that practiced for a month in Dvapara-yuga, or a year in Treta-yuga.”

“At that time men [who perform genuine spiritual activities] will attain perfection within a short time. Such blessed people, and leading excellent Brahmana priests, will perform holy rites at the end of the yuga. For those who perform the holy rites enjoined by the *Shrutis* and *Smritis*, without the least tinge of jealousy, the performance of such activities for a year in Treta-yuga is equal to a month in Dvapara-yuga. An intelligent man performing these in Kaliyuga, according to his capacity, shall attain the same results in a day.” (*Vayu Purana* 58.71-72)

Furthermore, it is also stated that “O father, though Kali-yuga is filled with all the evils, but still there are great virtues in the same. In Kali-yuga a person gets merit for mental virtues or spiritual thoughts, but not the sins for lusty or sinful thoughts.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Krishna-Janma Khanda, 90.29-30) This is very positive because if we were held accountable for every bad thought we had, which is commonplace in Kali-

yuga, there would be no end to the karmic consequences that we would have to endure. These are a few of the advantages to this age.

The Vedic tradition is not the only culture that mentions that many souls want to be born on earth at this time. The Tibetan Lamas, the Native American Indians, the East Indian mystics, the Mayan priests, and others, also say that many souls are waiting to incarnate here to take advantage of the coming changes.

The most important advantage in the Golden Age in Kaliyuga, in spite of whatever chaos and wars currently plague the planet, is the opportunity for making great strides in spiritual understanding. After all, it was only 500 years ago when Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1534) appeared to establish the process of spiritual-realization that is the easiest and most appropriate for this era. This process would bring in the Golden Age in Kali-yuga that we are presently beginning to experience. This is the process of *harinama sankirtana*, a type of mantra-yoga that incorporates the congregational glorification and singing of the names of the Supreme, which actually is very common in the hymns and chants of most religions and spiritual paths. But here it is specifically in the form of the Hare Krishna mantra. *Harinama* means name of Hari, Krishna. This *maha-mantra*, or great mantra for deliverance (Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare / Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) and the process of singing or chanting it has been advocated in many Vedic texts for thousands of years. Chanting mantras like a song in a group or congregation is called *sankirtana*. Chanting it quietly for oneself or on beads is called *japa* meditation. Sri Chaitanya said that spreading the chanting of this mantra is the single most important factor in changing the consciousness of humankind and spreading spiritual awareness, especially in this age of Kali. This, indeed, would produce a new species of humanity.

The *Kali-santarana Upanishad* specifically states, “After searching through all of the Vedic literature, one cannot find a method of religion more sublime for this age of Kali-yuga than the chanting of Hare Krishna.”

This is further verified in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.5.32) which predicts that the intelligent persons in the age of Kali will engage in congregational chanting of the names of Krishna to worship the incarnation of the Supreme [Lord Sri Chaitanya] who constantly sings the names of Krishna, and who is Krishna Himself, although His complexion is not blackish. He is

accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons, and confidential companions.

The *Sri Caitanya-caritamrita* (Adi-lila, 17.22) also says, “In this age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, in the form of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, is the incarnation of Lord Krishna. Simply by chanting the holy name, one associates with the Supreme directly. Anyone who does this is certainly delivered [from further material existence].”

This is also elaborated in the *Kalki Purana* (24.7) which states, “Those who always chant Your holy names, which destroy the contamination of Kali, and removes the fear of material existence, and enables one to develop transcendental qualities, even though undergoing material miseries at present, will never again have to accept a material body.” In other words, it is this mantra that provides the doorway which leads directly to the spiritual realm. The vibration of the holy name is the high frequency through which we can enter into the spiritual dimension. Furthermore, the use of it means that we change the vibrational level of our own consciousness and the surrounding environment in which we exist. This can cause the manifestation of that spiritual atmosphere in this material world.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.51-52) goes on to say that this process of reawakening one’s spiritual awareness is the most important advantage of Kali-yuga. It also states (11.5.36-37) that enlightened persons who are advanced in knowledge can appreciate the real value of this fallen age of Kali-yuga because in this age all perfection can be attained easily by the process of *sankirtana*. For materially embodied souls wandering in this material world, there is no higher gain than coming in contact with the Supreme Being’s *sankirtana* movement by which one attains ultimate peace and freedom from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

In the *Padma Purana* (5.80.2-8) we find a conversation between Shiva and his wife, Parvati, in which Shiva specifically says that Kali-yuga does not harass those who utter the name of Hari or chant Hare Rama, Hare Krishna. One can be freed from worldly existence just by remembering Vishnu’s names, no matter whether one is pure or impure.

The point is that because the age of Kali is so difficult, polluted and disturbing—taxing our consciousness with so many distractions—all other forms of religion and processes of spiritual realization either lose their effectiveness or offer only incomplete knowledge; thus, they simply fail to produce the needed results. They may produce some peace and forgiveness,

some moral standards and understanding, but they do not deliver the higher principles and experience of spiritual realization. Shukadeva Gosvami says in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.3.45-49) that although all objects, places, and persons in Kali-yuga are polluted, the Supreme Being can remove such contamination from one who hears or chants about, meditates upon, glorifies, or simply offers respect to the Supreme. Therefore, by remaining ever aware and focused on the Lord in the heart, the contamination from many thousands of lifetimes can be removed. Such awareness is many times more potent than any other process; such as austerities, breath control, strict vows, or bathing in holy places. Anyone who maintains this concentration at the time of death will certainly attain the supreme destination in the spiritual world.

In this regard it is further related in the *Mahanirvana Tantra* (2.14-20) that all Vedic rites and processes of spiritual purification that were effective in other ages are useless in this age of Kali-yuga. So, it says the primary process that must be followed in this age is the use of mantras from the tantric texts that give immediate results when used for chanting, meditation, or rituals and ceremonies.

This is also verified in a verse from the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* which explains that in the age of Kali, austerities, yoga meditation, elaborate Deity worship, and rituals, cannot be carried out properly even by experts. This means that our faculties, whether they are mental, intellectual, physical, or otherwise, are simply not available in this age to the degree necessary to enable us to reach the proper results by any of these methods.

Therefore, the *Brihan-naradiya Purana* (39.97), along with the *Vishnu Purana* (6.2.17), the *Padma Purana* (Uttara-khanda 72.25), and the *Bhagavata Purana* (12.3.52) all say that what was achieved in Satya-yuga by meditation, and in Treta-yuga by the performance of rituals, and in Dvapara-yuga by refined deity worship, can now be attained in Kali-yuga simply by *sankirtana*, glorifying or singing the names of God, Lord Keshava, Krishna. In other words, because Kali-yuga is the most difficult age, we have been given the easiest spiritual process. This is stated in the *Kurma Purana* (1.30.37) that although the age of Kali is full of defects, the good point is that people can acquire great spiritual merit without great strain. The *Vayu Purana* (58.47), as well as the *Linga Purana* (40.47), goes on to explain that pious acts performed in one day in Kali-yuga are equal to those practiced for a month in Dvapara-yuga, or a year in Tretayuga.

Further elaboration is given in the *Padma Purana* (1.41.91-92, and 7.26.40-44) which explains that what merit is attained through ten years of spiritual practice in Satya or Krita-yuga, a year in Tretayuga, or a month in Dvapara-yuga, is attained in one day and night in Kali-yuga. What is achieved by meditation in Krita-yuga, or by ceremonies in Treta-yuga, or by elaborate worship in Dvapara-yuga, one can obtain in Kali-yuga simply by glorifying and repeating the name of Keshava (Krishna). The *Padma Purana* (6.71.23-29) also concludes that with all their sins destroyed by this means in Kaliyuga, people can attain the highest position [meaning the ultimate goal of life of entering back into the spiritual dimension].

In fact, this is why King Pariksit did not kill the personality of Kali when he first saw him, as related in Chapter Three of this volume. After all, why didn't he simply kill Kali and do away with all of this trouble that was bound to happen? The *Srimad Bhagavat-Mahatmya* (1.67-69) of the *Padma Purana* explains that when King Pariksit first met Kali, he thought to himself that Kali did not deserve to die at the King's hand. In the age of Kali a person, through the mere chanting of the names and glory of Sri Krishna, can secure the fruit [liberation from material existence] which cannot be attained through concentrating the mind or deep meditation in yoga. Therefore, perceiving the Kali age to be valuable in this one respect, though devoid of all other benefits, King Pariksit, with a view to secure the spiritual happiness of those born in Kali-yuga, allowed the spirit of it to stay.

The *Narada Purana* (1.41.89-118) also gives explicit directions on rising into a higher dimension of existence, both individually and collectively. It is stated therein that nowhere does the dark age of Kali affect those whose consciousness is absorbed in devotion to Hari, Krishna, or who practice the recitation of His names. In fact, it states that those who are devoted to the repetition of the names of Hari are equal to Shiva [or can attain Shiva's higher dimensional level of existence by the required change of consciousness]. Therefore, it is advised that one should always be absorbed in the spiritual vibrations of reciting the holy names of God, such as Hari, Keshava, Govinda, Vasudeva, Jagannatha, or Krishna. Those persons need not be afraid of the age of Kali. They are very fortunate and noble, even if they do not have the association of saintly persons. How fortunate are those who recite these names, for sins do not bind them and they are worthy of being worshiped by the Devas. Narada emphatically

declares that individual liberation from the material world is not possible by any other means in Kali-yuga except through the name of Hari. This is the greatest merit and penance.

The conclusion of all this is that the greatest virtue of Kaliyuga is the opportunity to learn and hear about the Supreme Being and, thus, clear your consciousness to perceive who and what you really are. This is clearly stated in the *Bhagavatam* (12.3.51): “Although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults there is still one good quality about this age, and that is by chanting the holy names of Krishna one can become free from material existence and reach the spiritual kingdom.” This is the ultimate goal of life, which can easily be achieved in this age of Kali.

Actually, according to the *Brihan-naradiya Purana* (38.126), this is an absolute necessity in this age. It states: “Chant the holy name, chant the holy name, chant the holy name of Lord Hari, to make spiritual progress in this age of Kali there is no other way, no other way, no other way.”

It is also said that all Vedic rites and the results of all other spiritual practices are found within the holy names of the Hare Krishna mantra. Thus, it is the easiest and most effective process for spiritual enlightenment and liberation. The Vedic literature leaves no doubt, as stated in the *Skanda Purana* (*Caturmasya-mahatmya* section), that the most perfect process of spiritual elevation that can be executed is the chanting of the holy names of Lord Sri Hari. Such performance of *sankirtana* is what can please the Supreme Being, especially in the age of Kali.

It is also for this reason that Brahma said to Lord Krishna in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.6.24) that in the age of Kali pious and saintly persons will easily cross over the darkness of this age if they hear about and praise Your transcendental qualities and activities.

Furthermore, it is predicted that this form of spiritual development, *bhakti-yoga*, devotion to the Supreme, will spread around the world. This is related in the *Srimad-Bhagavata-Mahatmya* (2.1-12) section of the *Padma Purana*. Therein is a conversation between the great sage Narada Muni and the feminine personality of *Bhakti*. Narada explains that in the other ages, Satya-yuga, Tretayuga, and Dvapara-yuga, meditation and rituals were the means to spiritual enlightenment. But in Kali-yuga, *bhakti* alone, devotion to the Supreme, brings unity with the Supreme Being. *Bhakti's* real form looks after the devotees in Vaikuntha, the spiritual world, and assuming a shadow-form she takes care of the devotees on earth.

Narada specifically explains further that there is no age like Kali. In this age *bhakti* will travel all over the world and be established in every house and in every individual. Narada says that if he fails to propagate *bhakti* throughout the world, making all other religions fade in the background and making prominent the grand celebrations connected with devotion, then he is no longer a servant of Sri Hari, Krishna. Those that become endowed with *bhakti*, though they are sinners in this age of Kali, will attain the abode of Sri Krishna in the spiritual world after death. Those who are full of *bhakti* never see Yama, the lord of death, nor are they touched by a ghost, a spirit of the departed, nor a fiend, an ogre, nor a demon. The Supreme can be won only through devotion (*bhakti*), not meditation, good deeds, sacred vows, pilgrimages, disciplines, rituals, discourses, or enlightenment. In Kali-yuga, *bhakti* alone is the supreme path, through which Lord Sri Krishna reveals Himself. This easy path is the great advantage of Kali-yuga. (*Padma Purana, Srimad-Bhagavata-Mahatmya, 2.13-21*)

PROPHECIES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MAYAPUR, INDIA

One of the major centers from which this new spiritual awareness is predicted to arise and spread throughout the world is the city of Mayapur, India, located north of Kolkata. This is the birthplace of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and is considered a holy *dhama*, or place where the spiritual energy manifests in this material world.

One prediction about the importance and future significance of Mayapur appeared 500 years ago in Prabodhananda Sarasvati Thakura's book, *Navadvipa Shataka*. He wrote that Lord Chaitanya's city is where the living beings eternally shine in their blissful forms, which cannot be understood by those who are blinded by *maya*, illusion. The eternal, blissful, spiritual nature is manifest in Lord Chaitanya's city, so everyone should take shelter there. You should reside there if you are set on crossing the ocean of repeated birth and death, or if you relish the sweet nectar of Krishna *sankirtana* and love of the Supreme. Simply abandon all misconceptions and take shelter in Lord Gauranga's [Chaitanya's] city.

It was in the nineteenth century when Bhaktivinoda Thakura (1838-1914), a great spiritual master in the disciplic line of the Brahma-Madhava-Gaudiya *sampradaya*, had a vision of a wonderful golden city while he was

sitting in his house in Godrumdvipa, across the Jalangi River from Sri Mayapur. He saw a brilliant effulgence in Sri Mayapur that spread out in all directions. He knew that this was the spiritual city, centered around the birth site of Sri Chaitanya, that would one day be where the knowledge of *Krishna-prema*, love of God, and the teachings of devotional service, *bhakti-yoga*, would spread throughout the world.

In his *Caitanya Sikshamrita*, Bhaktivinoda Thakura also predicted that the day would arrive when foreigners would come to Sri Mayapur and dance in ecstasy with their Indian brothers in this holy land. They would chant, “Jaya Sacinandana! Jaya Sacinandana!” This means victory and glories to Sacinandana, who is Sri Chaitanya as the son of Mother Saci.

In another book, *Nabadwipa-Dhama Mahatmya*, Chapter Five, Bhaktivinoda Thakura also explains how Nityananda Prabhu, who was Sri Chaitanya’s brother and spiritual confidante, revealed the holy place of Navadvipa to Jiva Gosvami nearly 500 years ago. When they were visiting the area of Antardwipa, Nityananda Prabhu related that the River Ganga would flood the holy place of Mayapur and inundate the town after the Lord (Sri Chaitanya) leaves this earthly plane. After remaining underwater for over 100 years, the Ganga would recede and gradually people again would live in Mayapur and build temples, out of which, “One exceedingly wonderful temple will appear from which eternal service to Sri Chaitanya will be preached everywhere.”

Another point is that various portions of the Vedic texts, such as in the *Padma Purana* and others, explain the significance of numerous holy places throughout India. These sites are sacred for various reasons, such being where the *avatars* of the Supreme have displayed pastimes, where important miracles or events have taken place, where great devotees and saints have lived, and so on. But these Vedic scriptures also say that as the age of Kali-yuga continues, many of the holy sites will lose their potency, and in time many will simply be forgotten. The power of any sacred place is judged by how they can relieve the sinful reactions or bad karma of the pilgrims who visit it. But gradually the sins of those who visit such places begin to accumulate and bring down the spiritual vibration of the holy sites, and fewer pure devotees and saintly persons come through to help purify them. However, it is just the opposite with Mayapur or Navadvipa, whose glories and power increase as the age of Kali-yuga progresses. Thus, in

Kali-yuga, the holy land of Mayapur becomes the most sacred and potent of all holy places.

This is explained by Bhaktivinoda Thakura in reference to the *Muktisankalini Tantra* quoted in his book *Navadvipa-dhama Mahatmya* (Pramana Khanda 4.2.7) that, “In Satya-yuga, Kurukshetra is the most important holy place; in Treta-yuga Lake Pushkar is the most important holy place; in Dvapara-yuga Naimisharanya is the most important holy place; and in Kali-yuga, Navadvipa [which includes Mayapur] is the most important holy place.”

Therefore, the spiritual light and knowledge that comes from the holy land of Mayapur will grow ever stronger, and the purification will affect an ever wider area around the world. Other spiritual authorities also have described the future significance of Mayapur. Vrindavan das Thakur, in the Pramana Khanda of the *Navadvipadhama Mahatmya*, described a wondrous and beautiful temple that would be in Mayapur. Narahari Chakravarti also described the great and beautiful temple of Mayapur and the spiritual nature of this sacred place as seen by Srinivasa Acharya in the *Bhakti-ratnakara*. This, therefore, reveals the importance that the city of Mayapur will have. But which temple would this be? Who would develop it? And how will this spiritual knowledge spread throughout the planet?

HOW THE NEW SPIRITUAL AWARENESS WILL SPREAD AROUND THE WORLD

In regard to how this new spiritual awareness will spread, let us remember the purpose of the higher spiritual knowledge which is preserved and presented in the Vedic literature. It is explained in the *Kalki Purana* (25.5-6) that “Just to fulfill the desires of materialistic people, the *Vedas* propagate the path of fruitive action. At the same time, the *Vedas* establish the genuine principles of religion and present the path of pure devotional service to the Lord. Under the guidance of the *Vedas*, great sages like Vatsyayana propagate the worship of Lord Hari [Vishnu], the master of the universe, within human society.”

This explains the real purpose of the Vedic literature. However, Lord Kalki further explains: “The twice-born devotees [those initiated by proper spiritual gurus or teachers] who preach the [real] purport of the *Vedas*, and who are themselves personifications of the *Vedas*, please Me to such an

extent that none of the demigods or anyone else can. The Vedic knowledge has spread only by the work of those who are twice-born. All of the living entities in this world, who are My parts and parcels, are being protected by the *Vedas*. Therefore, it is to be concluded that those who are twice-born are the principal instruments for maintaining My body. That is why I offer My obeisances to the Brahmanas from My position in the mode of pure goodness. Those who are twice-born are the shelter of everyone and they serve Me, considering Me to be the basis of the entire universe.” (*Kalki Purana* 4.10-12)

In this way, those who are properly connected to the Lord and who actually understand the genuine and conclusive teachings of the Vedic spiritual knowledge can really help protect and spread this lofty nonmaterial awareness. The Vedic knowledge and its *shabda-brahma* spiritual vibration is considered part of the body of the Supreme, and thus helping preserve this Vedic tradition is also regarded to be a service and a form of maintaining the body of the Supreme, especially in this difficult age of Kali-yuga. Thus, no ordinary person, but only one who is empowered by the Lord can help protect and give this genuine spiritual knowledge to the people of the world.

As previously stated, in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, in a conversation with Ganga Devi, Lord Krishna describes that after 5,000 years of Kali-yuga have passed, His *mantra upasaka*, the great sage and worshiper of Krishna’s holy names, will appear and spread the chanting of Krishna’s names (in the form of the Hare Krishna mantra) not only in India but throughout the world. Lord Krishna explains that by the chanting of His holy names the world will become spiritualized and everyone will be *Hari-bhaktas* [devotees of Lord Hari, Krishna], engaged in the process of devotional yoga to the Supreme. The purified devotees will visit the holy places and holy rivers of India and will purify them. They will also purify those with whom they come in contact. In this way, Sri Krishna predicted the appearance of a powerful devotee who would spread the chanting of His names worldwide.

Furthermore, in the Fourth Chapter of the *Antya-lila* (4.126) of the *Caitanya Bhagavata*, which is a biography of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu written by Sri Vrindavan dasa Thakura who is said to be an incarnation of Srila Vyasadeva, Sri Chaitanya explains: “I have appeared on earth to propagate the congregational chanting of the holy names of God. In this

way, I will deliver the sinful material world. Those demons who never before accepted My authority and lordship will weep in joy by chanting My names. I will vigorously distribute devotional service, *bhakti*, which is sought after even by demigods, sages, and perfected beings, so that even the most abominable sinners will receive it. But those who, intoxicated with education, wealth, family background, and knowledge, criticize and offend My devotees, will be deprived of everything and will never know My true identity.” Then Sri Chaitanya specifically states: “I declare that My name will be preached in every town and village on this earth.”

Even in the *Sri Caitanya Mangala*, another biography of Sri Chaitanya written in 1537 by Srila Locana Dasa Thakura (who was born in 1520 CE), Lord Chaitanya foretold the coming of an empowered devotee who would take the *sankirtana* process everywhere: “I want to flood the whole world with the chanting of the holy names. I will personally preach and flood India with *harinama sankirtana*, chanting of the holy names. And My *senapati bhakta* (great devotee commander) will come, preach in different countries and flood the world with the chanting of Hare Krishna.” This means that, though Sri Chaitanya came to establish and spread the process of congregational chanting of Krishna’s names in India, there would be one great devotee who would appear and spread it throughout the world.

Later, in the 1800s, Bhaktivinoda Thakura predicted in his magazine, *Sajjana-toshani*, in an article called *Nityananda Suryodoy*, “Soon there will be a time when chanting of Krishna’s name will be heard in England, France, Russia, Germany, and America.”

In this regard, Bhaktivinoda also wrote in his *Sajjana-toshani* in 1895 that, “Sriman Mahaprabhu did not descend with His associates to deliver a certain number of human beings in the land of India, but rather His purpose was to deliver and uplift all living beings in all countries of the world by practicing the eternal religion of all souls.” In the same article, Bhaktivinoda questioned, when will that day come when all greatly fortunate souls take up banners, drums, and hand cymbals and cause the ecstatic waves of *harinamakirtans* [songs of the holy names of the Supreme] and the singing of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s holy name to rise in the streets of their towns and cities?

In 1896, Bhaktivinoda predicted in his book, *Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts*, on page 62, “The principle of *kirtana*, as the future church of the world, invites all classes of men without

distinction of caste, creed, or clan to the highest cultivation of the spirit. This church will extend all over the world and take the place of all sectarian churches which exclude outsiders from the precincts of their mosque, church or temple.”

What all this means is that with his spiritual vision, Bhaktivinoda Thakura could see how the *sankirtana* process would be taken in the near future to the western countries and, indeed, all over the planet. In fact, in 1875 Bhaktivinoda Thakura had also predicted: “A personality will soon appear to preach the teachings of Lord Chaitanya and move unrestrictedly over the whole world with His message.” But who could this be? Who would do it?

As an answer to these prayers and predictions, on Nandotsava, the annual festival day celebrating Krishna’s birth, in the year of 1896, there appeared His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. It was Srila Prabhupada who grew up as a pure devotee of Krishna. In 1933, he was initiated by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami, the son of Bhaktivinoda Thakura, who also instructed him to spread the message of devotional service to Krishna in the Englishspeaking countries. Srila Prabhupada came to America in 1965 with little money and without knowing anyone. With difficulty he continued to work, carrying out the instructions of his spiritual master until he established the first Krishna temple in the United States. Thereafter, he continued to distribute this spiritual knowledge and the process of singing and chanting Hare Krishna all over the world. He traveled around the world 12 times and visited every major country to take *bhakti* and *harinama sankirtana* to the western world. He also gave thousands of lectures, wrote thousands of letters, and met with many important scholars and dignitaries. He also laid the cornerstone and made plans for the development of the Sri Chaitanya Chandrodaya Mandir in Mayapur, India, which will be the largest temple and devotional community complex in Bengal. Therefore, it was Srila Prabhupada who had been predicted by the previous *acharyas*, and by Sri Chaitanya, and even by Lord Krishna in the ancient *Puranas*, as the person who would spread this new spiritual awareness on a grand scale.

Even though Srila Prabhupada left this world in 1977, he wrote 51 volumes of books with translations in 28 languages, especially *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, so anyone can take advantage of this knowledge. He established 108 temples in most major cities around the

world, and touched so many people who can also teach this philosophy that this genuine spiritual knowledge will continue to spread and be available for the next 10,000 years, throughout the length of this Golden Age in Kali-yuga.

In light of this, along with the previously explained information on how those dedicated to the holy names of Lord Krishna would be the source of genuine spiritual knowledge even after the Ganga would cease to flow, we find in the Pratisarga of the *Bhavishya Purana* (20.71-73), the following prediction: “Lord Jagannatha, the Supreme Lord Sri Hari Himself, spoke these attractive words for the welfare of all: The *mlecchas* who are born from mixed countries ruled by descendants of Kashyapa (demons) and the Shudras will become Brahmanas by initiation [following the principles of *vaidhi-bhakti* or regulative principles]. They will wear *shikhas* [tufts of hair on shaved heads] and Brahmana threads [to chant the Gayatri mantra], and will become well-versed in the uncontaminated fruit of the *Vedas* (*Srimad-Bhagavatam*). They will worship Me by the *yajna* [Vedic ritual of chanting the holy names] prescribed by the Lord of lords, the protector of [Mother] Sachi [meaning Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu].”

This makes it clear how the continuation of the new spiritual awareness will spread around the world. Furthermore, forty-six years before the beginning of Kali-yuga, Vishnuchittha, one of the twelve great Vaishnava saints of the Sri *sampradaya*, predicted: “There will come a race [of people] which will tread the Earth with raised hands and vertical *tilaka* [markings] on their foreheads, who will chant the names of Hari; this will destroy the influence of Kali-yuga.” (*Divyaprabhanda* 1:10)

Sri Ramanuja also predicted: “The pure devotion to Sri Hari, devoid of karma [selfish or materialistically motivated activities] and *jnana* [speculative knowledge] will grow and grow like a banyan tree covering the whole world, teaching everyone who takes shelter of it.” (*Prapannamrita Tarpana*, last chapter)

Sri Madhvacharya also predicted in this regard: “The real knowledge of the difference between the *jiva* soul and Lord Sri Hari and the service to Sri Hari [Lord Krishna] will spread all over the world very shortly.” (*Anu Madhva Vijaya*, last chapter)

In this way, the relief from the influence of Kali-yuga, and the means to spread the spiritual awareness throughout the world, at least while the golden age within Kali-yuga lasts, has been described herein. So, what else

is there to do but work to promote this knowledge to as many people across the world as possible. We simply need to be a part of it and help in the process.

Some may ask, however, why is there such emphasis on Lord Krishna? What is His actual position? However, this was a question that has been asked many times before, as we find in the *Mahabharata*. So, to relieve any doubts for those who may wonder, let us review that story.

The *Mahabharata* explains how Krishna is the One Supreme Being. In it when Grandfather Bishma was giving the last of his advice to King Yudhisthira while on the battlefield of Kurukshetra before leaving this world, King Yudhisthira asked, “Who is the One God in the world? The One Object which is our sole refuge, by worshipping whom does one obtain all that one desires? Which is the One Religion which is the foremost of all religions? What is the mantra, reciting which, man becomes freed from bondage to birth?”

In answer to this the great Bishma responds, “Krishna is the Lord of the Universe. He is the God of Gods. He is the foremost of all beings. By Him is pervaded this universe. Meditating on Him and on His many names man can transcend all sorrow. The foremost of all religions is Krishna. He is the highest energy. He is the highest penance. He is the highest refuge. He is the holiest of holies. He is the beginning of all creation and the end of all creation. Krishna is the eternal Brahman. Surrender yourself to Him and you will be one with Him: with Krishna the Lord of the past, the present and the future: the Supreme Soul.” (From the *Mahabharata* translated by Kamala Subramaniam, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1982, pages 721-2)

There are many other quotes that could be provided in this regard, but to provide a little more clarity on who is Sri Krishna, we can look to the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.87-89) which explains what we should look for:

“Lord Krishna happens to be the cause of all the creations, eternal, everlasting, moving according to His own wish, the extreme Brahman, unattached, invisible, beyond material nature. In order to bestow His grace on His devotees, He takes to human form. He is extremely beautiful and the complexion of his body resembles the newly formed [darkish] clouds. He has two arms, holds a flute in his hands, and appears in the form of a tender-

aged cowherd boy. He knows everything and is served by all. He is the Supreme Soul and the Lord of all.”

In this way, Lord Krishna is described to show His superior nature over all that be. He is the Brahman, Paramatma or Supersoul, and Bhagavan the Supreme Person. He is the epitome of all aspects of God. No matter whether we are attracted to the Brahman, to the other *jiva* souls, or to the material energy, all meditation and devotion should be aimed at Him because He is the ultimate source of all else, and the final goal of all spiritual and philosophical understanding.

HOW TO GET FREE OF THE INFLUENCE OF KALI-YUGA

From the material perspective, we should recognize that as the age of Kali-yuga moves forward, many people are wondering how bad social conditions will get before they start to show some serious improvement, and what can we do about it now. Yet, the Vedic texts contain a specific prescription for staying free from the heavy influence that this age of Kali-yuga brings.

In spite of all the changes predicted to happen in society and on the planet, there are still many ways, both material and spiritual, to stifle or even get free of Kali-yuga’s influence. If we are going to change anything for the better, now is the time to work at it—while the Golden Age within Kali-yuga lasts.

One of the first things we must understand is that a perfect civilization is based on working with valor while depending on the Supreme. The more godless we become, then the more deteriorated and degraded society and this world will be due to allowing the influence of Kali-yuga to come in without any interference. Therefore, we all need to work for our existence, but we need to recognize that we also are dependent on nature, or the gifts of God. For example, a farmer may have planned and worked so hard to acquire full facility to grow food, such as getting land, seeds, and equipment. But he is not in control of the rain. Without proper rainfall all of his endeavors are fruitless. Therefore, he is dependent on the higher powers who can provide such necessities. So, although wanting to be independent of everything is natural for numerous people, this is not possible while living in this material world. We are all dependent on so many other beings

and things to survive, including the laws of material nature. And, ultimately, it is the Supreme Being who is in charge of those laws. Therefore, the perfection of society is to work to contribute to family and society while depending on and working in harmony with the Supreme Will.

The proper and peaceful view of human existence is described in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.8.40) where it states: “All these cities and villages are flourishing in all respects because the herbs and grains are in abundance, the trees are full of fruits, the rivers are flowing, the hills are full of minerals and the oceans full of wealth. And this is all due to the glance of the Supreme Being.”

It is natural for humankind and all life on this planet to flourish and be happy by taking advantage of the gifts of nature, such as fruits, grains, vegetables, unpolluted rivers and lakes, fresh air, minerals, jewels, etc. All are supplied by the arrangement of the Supreme. However, if the world is sufficient in these items, then what is the need to hanker after large industrial projects that often exploit men and resources at the cost of slowly destroying the planet and increasing unrest and dissatisfaction in society for the sake of acquiring money? Money may be necessary, but without spiritual knowledge and guidance, we will not know how to use it or how to direct our actions in a proper occupation. And without that, peace is not possible.

Often we can see that where there are many industrial businesses, such as mines, factories, workshops, and slaughterhouses, the area becomes dark, filthy, and dungeon-like, with low-class residential quarters and slums. The attitude of people in these areas often become low and miserable, with an increase in health problems and a consciousness geared toward immediate gratification of the mind and senses. As moral standards and consideration of each other goes down, crimes goes up. As dependency on financial gain increases while the economy and jobs deteriorate, people become more miserable and desperate.

Whereas when residential and working areas are made to nurture our well-being, and include flower gardens, parks, reservoirs of water, and flowering trees, everything is brighter and more enjoyable. When society depends more on the natural resources without the need for manipulating it for increased profits, which are often at the expense of our well-being, then people can live a more balanced and simpler life. Thus, advancement of society should not be estimated solely by the growth of industry and

technology. Such measures must at least include the development of the spiritual and finer characteristics of human beings. Otherwise, spending one's life in factories, slaughterhouses, and mills, simply dulls and deteriorates the finer sentiments of people and poisons the environment in so many ways.

The more dependent we become on artificial necessities, the more vulnerable we are to needless and artificial crises. Our dependence on things like oil, gasoline, electricity, and other conveniences have also made us vulnerable to the problems when such things are no longer available or are in shortage. For example, when there is an electrical black out, then the computers at the banks no longer work. So business stops, among other things. Or when there is an oil shortage, gasoline prices go up, which also raises the costs on everything that depends on transportation, like groceries at the market, or just getting to our jobs, etc. True independence means being free from being dependent on such artificial needs. Such detachment and independence may be more important than we think if we are to survive those changes that are predicted to happen on the planet and in society. Things we take for granted now may one day be difficult to get.

Just as there is now the holistic view of health, there needs to be what I call "holistic economics." The basis of holistic economics is considering economic development with the whole planet in mind. This is actually the Vedic principle. The principle of proper economic development, in the Vedic view, must be centered on land and cows, along with other real necessities, such as food grains, fruits, milk, minerals, wood, jewels, clothing, and housing. We all require these things to live. Therefore, all enterprises based on these items can prosper in a natural way if they are used for the benefit of society and the planet without exploitative intentions. In this way, we can understand that the secret of a successful society is to take refuge under the protection of the Supreme, and to use the gifts of nature in the way they are meant to be used—for the benefit of society and the planet.

The point is that there must be cooperation between humankind, nature, and God. This, however, depends on the consciousness of people and how spiritually evolved they are. It is this full cooperation between humans, nature, and God that will bring happiness, peace, and prosperity in the world. The attitude of vicious competition, envy, and the exploitation of one another and the planet for all that can be gotten from it, will only cause

discontent and misery. Real prosperity and happiness flourish on the gifts of nature, not merely on industrial enterprises. For example, even the powerful automotive industry depends on natural resources for its continuation, such as metals, oil, chemicals, etc. Without these, there is no auto industry. And without the auto industry, many will lose their jobs. And without cars or vehicles for mass transit, our speed of transportation will certainly be reduced. So, we are all directly or indirectly dependent on the gifts of nature.

Artificial forms of economic development based on factories producing artificial requirements for quick profits, and the bank's and government's methods of manipulating the economy, have led to a world of greed, envy, hunger for power and resources, and, ultimately, chaos and wars. Many history books relate the process of how wars have developed, but they often fail to point out the correct reasons for it, which are endeavors based on false economic advancement, the exploitation of the weak, and the lack of spiritual consciousness in the world. Spiritual consciousness includes the recognition that all of our rivers, oceans, forests, hills and mountains, and all of its resources are not creations of humankind that are to be used any way people want. These are the creations of the Supreme. There are means and systems of using these resources in a harmonious way for all involved. This is holistic economics. It is real economic development based on genuine needs of society and the well-being of the planet. It is the method by which we guarantee ourselves and the planet a bright future. Understanding and using the principle of holistic economics, and working in harmony with nature, is one way society can be free from the deteriorating effects of the age of Kali.

Now from the spiritual point of view, the Vedic literature naturally puts great emphasis on which spiritual knowledge is necessary to free ourselves from the effects of Kali-yuga. It also explains the method needed to reach a higher level of consciousness and enter a new dimension and higher vibratory level of existence.

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* (4.57-69) explains that Kali-yuga cannot harm those who are purified by truth, who have conquered their passions and senses, are compassionate, devoted to the service of their guru, take care of their mothers and wives, are adherents to the true Dharma, and faithful to the performance of its duties. The age of Kali cannot harm those who are free of malice, envy, arrogance, and hatred, and who keep the company of

those who are spiritually knowledgeable. The Kali age cannot harm those who perform their penances, pilgrimages, devotions, and purificatory rituals. The age of Kali is but a slave to those who are free of crookedness and falsehood, devoted to the good of others, and who follow the ways of Dharma [spiritual merit].

This may all sound quite lofty, so to help us in knowing the ways of true Dharma and how to bring a change in the atmosphere and social environment, the *Srimad Bhagavata-Mahatmya* (1.9-12) of the *Padma Purana* states that the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*Bhagavata Purana*) was expounded in Kali-yuga to guide us and purify the minds of those who listen and learn from it. The *Bhagavata-Mahatmya* says: “Suta replied: Saunaka, I shall disclose that which is the essence of all established conclusions. I shall tell you that which is capable of dispelling the fear of reincarnation, is prone to swell the tide of devotion, and is conducive to satisfying Lord Krishna. Hear it attentively. The holy scripture known by the name of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* was expounded in this age of Kali by the sage Shuka with the object of completely destroying the fear of being caught in the jaws of the serpent of time. There is no means other than this conducive to the purification of the mind. One gets to hear *Srimad-Bhagavatam* only when there is virtue earned in one’s past lives.”

In this way, we begin to understand the potency of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and why it is so effective for changing the atmosphere and spreading genuine spiritual knowledge in this age. In fact, the *Bhagavata-Mahatmya* (2.62-63) further states: “All these evils of Kali-yuga will surely disappear at the very chanting [or recitation] of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, even as wolves take to flight at the very roar of a lion. Then *Bhakti* (devotion) and *Jnana* (knowledge) and *Vairagya* (detachment) will dance in every heart and in every home.”

The *Bhagavatam* is considered so powerful that, “They [the seers and demigods] came to regard the holy book of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* as an embodiment of the Lord Himself in the Kali age and capable of conferring the reward of speedy access to Vaikuntha (the divine spiritual realm) by merely being read or heard.” (*Padma Purana, Srimad-Bhagavata-Mahatmya*, 1.20)

Suta Gosvami states in the *Bhagavatam* (1.3.40) itself that, “This *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is the literary incarnation of God, and is compiled by

Srila Vyasadeva, the incarnation of God. It is meant for the ultimate good of all people, and it is all-successful, all-blissful and all-perfect.”

The *Bhagavata-Mahatmya* (1.17) relates many powerful characteristics of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. For example, it states that an opportunity to hear *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is so uncommon in this world that even the demigods [residents on the higher planetary systems] consider it a rarity to hear it. The four Kumaras also state that the *Bhagavatam* is the essence of the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. (2.67) And a house where it is read every day is a sacred place, (3.29) and if you seek the highest destiny, read even a quarter verse of it every day. (3.33)

An assortment of other verses in the *Padma Purana*, *Srimad-Bhagavata-Mahatmya*, are found that signify that reading *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is superior to everything else (3.32-39), is important for reaching a high destiny and the spiritual world, (3.40-41) and for gaining spiritual merit, (3.30-31) and for making sure one’s life is not wasted. (3.42) Other verses explain the importance of taking advantage of the rare opportunity of hearing the *Bhagavatam*, (3.44-50) and how focusing on reading or hearing it is superior to everything, including fasting, rituals, going on pilgrimage, or practicing yoga and meditation. (3.50-51)

In conclusion, Srila Vyasadeva himself says that the *Bhagavatam* is the mature fruit of all Vedic wisdom: “This *Bhagavata Purana* is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Krishna to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of Kali shall get light from this *Purana*.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.3.43)

The point of all this is that as you comprehend this spiritual science, you will automatically understand the other aspects of this material creation and you will have your own spiritual realizations about who and what you are and how you fit into the scheme of things. The more you become spiritually purified, the more clear things will be. Just as when you have a million dollars, all of your ten dollar problems are solved, similarly, once you begin to understand the highest levels of spiritual science you also understand the lower levels of existence, and perceive the solutions to problems on that facet of existence. Thus, in order to spread as much light and spiritual knowledge in this age as possible, and to counteract the pollution and confusion that pervades this planet and the general consciousness of society, and to relieve humanity of the influence of Kali-yuga, the use of and

familiarity with this *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and the knowledge and philosophy it contains is of the utmost importance. Then you will want to help spread this universal spiritual knowledge to everyone. That is the change in the world that will free us from the future negative influences in this age of Kali-yuga.

A NEW SPECIES OF HUMANITY

If we are going to succeed in becoming free from the influence of Kali-yuga and use the Golden Age within the first 10,000 years of Kali-yuga in the best way possible, then we must cooperate in allowing for a new species of humanity to enter this world. This new species will not be based on physical changes but on the development of spiritual consciousness, and the goal of working toward the perfection of human life—materially and spiritually. This new species of humanity and spiritual warriors are those who are not afraid to investigate higher dimensions of reality, new areas of spiritual experiences that are beyond the limitations of conventional and fear-based religions [those that urge the obedience to their principles based on the wrath of God]. After such investigations, they will help make such higher spiritual knowledge and experience available for the welfare of others. This is happening now and growing all the time. However, this has always been the Vedic process for thousands of years.

So in some ways, the new species mentioned herein is but a reawakening of the spiritual consciousness that was prominent in the early ages such as Satya-yuga, or found in the enlightened sages of today. Yet, this consciousness, when compared with the general materialistic views and motivations found in most people today, is like a new species of humanity. It is the rare type of person who is genuinely concerned about the physical, emotional and spiritual well being of all living entities, and who also has the higher consciousness to perceive how to do that. Everyone who is concerned about themselves and the welfare of the planet should be eager to be a part of this new species of humanity, this higher consciousness, and help in this process of spiritual change and improvement. For any real solutions to our problems or social issues must be based on a spiritual foundation.

Any plan-making endeavors for solutions without a spiritual foundation will simply go through the six basic changes that all material elements go

through, which is birth, growth, maintenance, producing some by-products or reactions, dwindling, and then vanishing, only to be replaced by something else. Humanity needs more than this sort of guesswork or speculative resolutions that come and go. It needs a change of consciousness based on spiritual understanding and perception. This means that the light workers and spiritual warriors on this planet must work to bring in and spread as much light and spiritual knowledge as possible.

Another thing that this new species of humanity will want is genuine knowledge of the spiritual strata. Therefore, true spiritual knowledge must be made available without misinterpretations or the contamination of those who have ulterior motives. Ignorance is the cause of all the anomalies of human society that King Yudhisthira could perceive at the onset of the age of Kali, as described earlier in Chapter Three as found in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The way to overcome such ignorance and the problems that accompany it is to inject pure spiritual sound vibrations into the atmosphere. This will counter all forms of pollution in this world, beginning with the pollution in our consciousness, thoughts, and desires, *for this is indeed the starting point of all pollution*. This pure sound vibration, as previously described, is in the form of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* and the recitation of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Therefore, anyone who wants to become a part of the new species of humanity or the new breed of spiritual warriors to help bring about a new revolution in society and in spiritual consciousness should participate in this process.

One fact that we need to recognize is that the world has enough of everything. There is no scarcity of food or material resources. It is wrong to think that there is scarcity due to overpopulation on this planet. Mundane economists put forward this theory. There is, however, a great burden in the lack of cooperation in the proper management of the planet's resources caused by a lack of spiritual awareness among the world's leaders. Even if there may be a shortage of food in one area of the world, there is plenty of food in other areas. Nevertheless, because of a lack of cooperation, one country or another suffers starvation because of the artificial system of economics, as previously described, that sets the stage for competition, envy, and a lack of efficiency and unity between countries and communities. The only real solution is to bring in this new human species, the new breed of spiritual warriors, who can pave the way for a revolution in spiritual consciousness and awakening. People must recognize the

spiritual nature of each other and of all beings in this world if there is to be a true change in the way we relate or cooperate with each other.

With the right consciousness we can, indeed, make proper use of things to live comfortably without enmity between each other and nature. And if a new species of such like-minded people act together in this way, it will have extremely powerful effects on this planet. If, however, humankind insists on seeing each other on the basis of bodily and cultural differences, then their vision is no better than that of the cats and dogs who are always howling, barking, chasing, and fighting with one another. Society will be no better than that of polished, two-legged animals, like that described in the previous chapter. There is no excuse for humankind to remain on such a base level when they have the higher mental and intellectual facilities that they do. They must rise above the animalistic platform by their spiritual progress. Only through this means will humankind reach a level of evolutionary development in which they can begin to see beyond bodily and cultural distinctions and work together in spiritual harmony with themselves, nature, and the Supreme Will. In this way, this age of Kali will lose its dark influence. It can become like the Golden Age of Satya-yuga. There is no better nor a more needed time for this to happen than right now. Let us not forget that the influence of Kali-yuga can be inflicted only upon those who are not developed enough in spiritual awareness.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious to many that the forces of darkness are getting stronger as the years go by, as the Age of Kali advances. Moral standards decrease while crime increases. Similarly, the forces of light are also getting stronger, and new levels of spiritual knowledge are coming into this earthly plane, the likes of which we have not understood for thousands of years. The characteristics between the forces of light and darkness are also becoming more distinct. Therefore, the people of this earth will participate in this polarization and will be required to decide with which force they will participate: The spiritual and progressive level, or the descending and materialistic one.

As this polarization increases, the future of the world becomes twofold: One aspect will be the obvious physical and geographic changes, as described in the last chapter. The other will be the more spiritual changes.

The physical, social, and geographic changes will not be viewed or experienced as so drastic by those who flow into the higher dimension, while planet earth will display a hard and difficult life for those who remain absorbed in the lower materialistic and fearful level of consciousness. The earth will accommodate both levels of dimension, but the views of existence on earth will be very different from each level.

There will, indeed, be a higher and progressive energy shift, as predicted by the Vedic scripture, and it is already in progress. In this cycle, the planetary changes, whether they seem good or severe, will be a cleansing process to help bring in the needed progress and new species of humanity, at least while the Golden Age within Kali-yuga continues, which is predicted to last another 10,000 years.

What this means is that we are at a decisive point. There will be a transformed world. It will be attained by force through an apocalypse or earth changes of some kind, or through cooperation by a planetary awakening. Whether the whole population spiritually awakens is not necessary. Only a certain percentage need be enlightened in this way because the power of light will far exceed and overpower the force of darkness or materialism, at least enough to keep the positive changes available for those who wish to participate in them. Naturally, not everyone will be interested.

This polarization during this age of Kali means that people will vibrate on different levels. As the consciousness of those who are spiritually inclined develops, they will become increasingly open to extraordinary experiences. They will become more in tuned with levels of higher realms, and beings who exist in those realms. Communications between us and those of higher dimensions will also increase. After all, higher consciousness means you vibrate and perceive that which is on higher levels of existence. The more spiritual you become, the more you can perceive that which is spiritual.

As genuine religionists, devotees, and sages become successful in the process of spiritual development and begin to disappear from the face of the earth, or disengage themselves from materialistic society, or rise above the earthly plane before the Golden Age in Kali-yuga comes to an end, they will reach higher dimensions that will be imperceptible to those on the lower levels. The vibratory levels of their thinking and consciousness will bring them to higher dimensions of existence. Thus, they can separate

themselves from the rest of society, and the severe changes in Kali-yuga, described in Chapter Four, may not be so applicable to them. They will have risen above it, even if remaining physically in this earthly existence.

An example of this is Srila Vyasadeva. The Vedic texts state that Srila Vyasadeva, the compiler of the Vedic literature, still lives at Badarikashrama in the Himalayas, although no one can see him. And there are descriptions of other sages and masters who have been living in the region of the Himalaya mountains who are hundreds of years old. Yet how can Vyasadeva live there without being seen for so many thousands of years? This is possible because he lives in a higher dimension of energy which makes him imperceptible to our eyes. We may be standing right next to him and not see him. And if you visit his cave in Mana, near Badrinatha, you can definitely feel the energy of a strong presence there, at least I did. Also, because he is living on a subtler platform, he does not have the same physical needs nor will he age as we do.

This is why the *Puranas* describe various *siddhas*, perfected living beings, who will be waiting for the end of Kali-yuga to reveal themselves and help begin the new age of Satya-yuga. This is described in Chapter Six. During the Golden Age within Kali-yuga, the whole world can enter a higher vibratory level and rise into a higher level of consciousness. Remember, consciousness is not merely a state of mind but also a vibrational frequency. The higher the consciousness, the higher the vibratory level of energy in which that person perceives, understands, lives, and sends out to others. This is the opportunity that this Golden Age within Kali-yuga provides for us, to whatever degree we develop it.

Adjusting the level of our consciousness is also the way we can change the course of our future. In spite of the predictions that are provided of what to expect in the distant future, or the prophecies we find in other various texts, we can reduce the severity of them. We can decide for ourselves what level of consciousness we want to develop and in which we want to exist. The higher the mass social consciousness is, the less severe the changes will be in society and throughout the planet, and the more harmonious things will be globally. In other words, there would be less need of the severe earth changes for the cleansing of the planet. Remember, the world or nature only reflects the consciousness of the inhabitants. When the inhabitants work in harmony with nature, and with each other, especially on a spiritual level, then what is the need for nature to cause repercussions to our actions?

When nature and people are balanced, the world will give what we need. Thus, we can create a very bright and positive future for ourselves and this planet simply by elevating our consciousness.

It may be difficult for some to understand, but pure souls or devotees with cleansed or pure consciousness can directly perceive themselves as spiritual beings in a human body while also perceiving the spiritual identity of others. They can recognize how the spiritual world or its energy pervades this material strata, though it is imperceptible to most. When they are in this consciousness, they can see the planet as an island, a space ship you might say, and our bodies as suitable vehicles for existing on this particular planet. Such persons can also lift their consciousness to detach from the body or bodily state of mind and enter various levels of the spiritual dimension, though their body is still acting and perceived on the material plane. In other words, the body may still be here, but the consciousness and vision of the pure soul has entered another dimension and is perceiving things from that spiritual level, yet he or she is still interacting within this material realm. One minute they may be participating in the drama of life on this planet. The next minute they can see themselves as merely wearing the material body like a temporary costume, aloof from their activities on this plane of existence and absorbed in knowing that they are spiritual beings, part of the spiritual dimension.

In this consciousness, they know that wherever they go they are already home because the spiritual dimension pervades everything. The spiritual dimension is eternal and unlimited while the material dimension is temporary and finite. So they go through life in this world like a tourist traveling in a foreign country: They observe, even participate in activities, help out and try to make things better, but they remain detached and aloof at the same time. The point is that during the Golden Age within Kali-yuga, such pure souls and devotees will live among the general populace of this earth. Though they may not be recognized, known or appreciated by many, those who can search them out can take advantage of such persons by learning from them. They can learn the process of changing their own consciousness for the most positive developments and, thus, be directed to the goal of life and return to the spiritual dimension. However, we need to remember that after this Golden Age within Kali-yuga is finished, all such spiritual persons, even knowledge of such people, along with all information of the Supreme and the genuine, fruitful spiritual process, will

fade away and disappear from the face of the earth. Then the darkest portion of Kali-yuga will proceed. Therefore, let us take advantage of the opportunities that we presently have to raise our consciousness and become a part of the spiritual changes, a new species of humanity, that can manifest in this age while we still have the time to do so. And let us plan the arrangements to share this potential with all others. This can indeed decelerate and curb the progress of the oncoming dark influences of this age of Kali-yuga.

CHAPTER SIX

The Next Avatara of God: Lord Kalki And the End of Kali-yuga

As the 10,000 year period of the Golden Age within Kali-yuga comes to a close, the lower modes of material nature will become so strong that people will lose interest in spiritual topics. Everyone will become godless. The devotees, *bhaktas*, and sages that are left on the planet by this time will be so unique in character and peculiar compared with the rest of society, that they will be ridiculed and hunted down in the cities for sport like animals. Thus, they will flee the cities to live underground in caves or high up in the mountains, or simply disengage from the earthly plane of existence. They will even leave the once pious land of India, as explained in the *Kalki Purana* (2.45), wherein Vishnuyasha said: “At present, the pious Brahmanas have left this country (India), having been chastised by the powerful Kali, who is envious of saintly persons, and who destroys the practice of religious principles.”

In this way, genuine saintly or spiritually advanced persons will disappear from the face of the earth. That is the time when the dark influence of the age of Kali will become so dominant, unleashing all of its influence, that all of the prophecies, as described in Chapter Four, will begin to manifest without hindrance.

Things will become so bad as the years go by that this world will be like one of the hellish planets in which people are born to suffer. There will be corruption in government and police, and they will be no better, worse in fact, than common criminals. Common citizens will have no protection. They will be subjected to the worst of crimes with no solution. Everyone will be fighting with each other. The world will slide into a state of constant war and chaos. Finally, after 432,000 years from the beginning of the age of Kali, Lord Kalki will appear as the twenty-second *avatara* of God.

THE APPEARANCE OF LORD KALKI

There are many *avataras* or incarnations of the Supreme Being, as stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.3.26): “O Brahmanas, the incarnations of the Lord are innumerable, like rivulets flowing from inexhaustible sources of water.” However, out of all the various incarnations of the Supreme, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (1.3.28) specifically states “*krishnas tu bhagavan svayam*,” which means that Lord Sri Krishna is the original Supreme Personality of God. All others are His plenary portions, or parts of His plenary portions, who descend into this material world to carry out certain responsibilities and to do specific things. This is especially the case when the planets are overly disturbed by miscreants and atheists. In Kali-yuga, many years go by in which constant disturbances and social upheavals are allowed to happen, but the Vedic literature predicts that at the end of the yuga Lord Kalki will make His appearance to change everything, as described in the following verses from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*:

“Thereafter, at the conjunction of two yugas, the Lord of the creation will take His birth as the Kalki incarnation and become the son of Vishnuyasha. At this time the rulers of the earth will have degenerated into plunderers.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.3.25)

“Lord Kalki will appear in the home of the most eminent Brahmana of Shambhala village, the great soul Vishnuyasha.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12.2.18)

“At the end of Kali-yuga, when there exist no topics on the subject of God, even at the residences of so-called saints and respectable gentlemen of the three higher *varnas* [castes], and when the power of government is transferred to the hands of ministers elected from the lowborn Shudra class or those less than them, and when nothing is known of the techniques of sacrifice, even by word, at that time the Lord will appear as the supreme chastiser.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.7.38)

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) also explains that, “When the practices taught in the *Vedas* and institutes of law have nearly ceased, and the close of the Kali age shall be nigh, a portion of that divine being who exists of His own spiritual nature, and who is the beginning and end, and who comprehends all things, shall descend upon earth. He will be born in the family of Vishnuyasha, an eminent Brahmana of Shambhala village, as Kalki, endowed with eight superhuman faculties.”

The *Mahabharatra* (Vana Parva, 190.93-97) adds to the description of Lord Kalki's appearance: "Impelled by time, a Brahmana named Kalki Vishnuyasha will be born. He will possess great energy, intelligence and prowess. He will be born at a village called Shambhala in a blessed Brahmana family. As soon as thought of, vehicles, weapons, warriors, and arms and armors will all be at his command. He will be the imperial sovereign, ever victorious by the strength of his virtue. He will restore order and peace in this world, overcrowded with creatures and contradictory in its laws. That effulgent and greatly intelligent Brahmana will destroy all things. He will be the destroyer of all and He will be the maker of a new Yuga [Satya-Yuga]. That twice-born one surrounded by the Brahmanas, will exterminate all the low and despicable *mlecchas* wherever they will be found."

The *Agni Purana* (16.7-9) also explains that when the non-Aryans who pose as kings begin devouring men who appear righteous and feed on human beings, Kalki, as the son of Vishnuyasha, and Yajnavalkya as His priest and teacher, will destroy these non-Aryans with His weapons. He will establish moral law in the form of the fourfold *varnas*, or the suitable organization of society in four classes. After that people will return to the path of righteousness.

The *Padma Purana* (6.71.279-282) relates that Lord Kalki will end the age of Kali and will kill all the wicked *mlecchas* [low class and evil beings] and, thus, destroy the bad condition of the world. He will gather all of the distinguished Brahmanas and will propound the highest truth. He will know all the ways of life that have perished and will remove the prolonged hunger of the genuine Brahmanas and the pious. He will be the only ruler of the world that cannot be controlled, and will be the banner of victory and adorable to the world.

To clarify this prophecy, it is also mentioned in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.60, 58-59) what the conditions will be near the end of Kali-yuga and what Kalki's actions and purpose will be:

"At that point of time there will be chaos on earth. Everywhere the undesirable activities of the thieves and plunderers would be on the increase... At that point in time, in the house of a Brahmana named Vishnuyasha, Narayana shall appear in one of his rays in the form of the great Kalki as the son of that Brahmana. He will be mounted on a very big horse and holding a sword in his hand, he shall destroy all the *mlecchas*

[wicked, selfish and low-minded people] on earth. Thus, the earth would be rid of the *mlecchas*, after which he will disappear.”

Here in these verses we find that Lord Kalki will come as a chastiser or warrior. By this time the planet will be filled with people who will be unable to understand logical conversations. They will be too slow-minded and dull-witted, not capable of being taught much, especially in the way of high spiritual philosophy regarding the purpose of life. They will not know what they need to do or how to live. And they certainly will be unable to change their ways. Therefore, Lord Kalki does not come to teach, but simply to chastise, punish, and cleanse the planet. For this reason the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (10.40.22) refers to Lord Kalki as the killer of the *mleccha* [most wicked and low-born] outcaste meat-eaters who pose as kings.

It is important to note that in these descriptions we also find the name of the place where Lord Kalki will appear and the name of the family in which He will be born. The family will be qualified Brahmanas. This means that a disciplic and family line of spiritually qualified Brahmanas will remain on the planet throughout the age of Kali, no matter how bad things get. Though they may be hidden, living in a small village somewhere, it will be this line of *bhaktas*, spiritual devotees of the Vedic tradition, from which Lord Kalki will appear in the distant future.

In this connection, we find in the *Padma Purana* (6.242.8-12) the prediction that Lord Kalki will be born in the town of Shambala near the end of Kali-yuga from a Brahmana who is actually an incarnation of Svayambhuva Manu. It is further described that Svayambhuva performed austerities at Naimisa on the bank of the Gomati River for acquiring the privilege of having Lord Vishnu as his son in three different lifetimes. Lord Vishnu, being pleased with Svayambhuva, granted the blessing that He would appear as Svayambhuva’s son as Lord Rama, Krishna, and Kalki. Thus, Svayambhuva would appear as Dasaratha, Vasudeva, and then Vishnuyasha. Also, in the *Padma Purana* (1.40.46) we find Lord Vishnu admits that He will be born in Kali-yuga. Thus, He will appear as Lord Kalki.

This aspect is more fully explained in the *Kalki Purana* (2.4-8) when the demigods, headed by Brahma, went to Lord Vishnu asking for respite from the conditions on earth. He assured them that He would be taking birth on earth as Kalki, but He also mentions the name of His mother, and His

wife-to-be, as well as Her family. These are additional factors, along with those already mentioned, that indicate how He will be recognized. Thus, it is important to consider these to understand that not just anyone can claim to be Kalki, which many ordinary or even unscrupulous men may try to do.

So, this is what Lord Vishnu says about appearing as Kalki: “After hearing everything that the demigods had to say regarding the situation on earth, the lotus-eyed Lord Hari [Vishnu] said: O Brahma, rest assured that I will soon descend to the earth and appear in the village known as Shambhala. I will take birth in the house of a Brahmana named Vishnuyasha, from the womb of his wife, Sumati. My mission will be to eliminate the wicked Kali [and his influence] with the help of My four brothers. O demigods, your expansions should also take birth on the earth to assist Me in My mission. My consort, the beloved lotus-eyed Kamala-devi, will also appear on the earth, having the name Padma. She will be born from the womb of Kaumudi, the wife of Brihadratha, the king of Simhala.

“O demigods, you should not delay. By your plenary portions, take birth on the earth. Later on, I will entrust the responsibility for ruling the earth to two powerful kings named Maru and Devapi. I will then again establish Satya-yuga, and thus reinstate the principles of religion as they were before. Rest assured that I will return to Vaikuntha only after destroying the poisonous snake, Kali.”

THE ACTIVITIES OF LORD KALKI

In the *Kalki Purana* (3.9-10) Lord Parasurama, as Kalki’s teacher, explains to Lord Kalki after His training what His mission will be: “You have learned the art of discharging arrows from Me. You will imbibe transcendental knowledge from Shukadeva Gosvami, and You will be awarded a powerful weapon by Lord Shiva. Thereafter, You will marry a woman named Padma from the island of Simhala [Sri Lanka]. Your mission is to re-establish *Sanatana-dharma*. Thereafter, You will set out to conquer the entire world and in the course of that conquest, You will defeat many sinful kings who are representatives of Kali. You will also annihilate many followers of Buddhism and finally, You will entrust the responsibility of ruling the world to Devapi and Maru.”

When it says here that Lord Kalki will annihilate many followers of Buddhism, we must remember that by this time Buddhism as we know it

today will have faded out long before this. By this time, as it is explained elsewhere, that any form of a religion will only be a collection of vague impersonalistic ideas that include no knowledge of a personal God, or of the nature of the soul. All such knowledge will have ceased to exist from most of the planet. Therefore, whatever is left of any religion by the time Lord Kalki appears will only be a form of atheism. All such kinds of atheism along with the sinful rulers who follow such philosophy of irresponsibility will have to be removed if there is going to be the reappearance of the golden age of Satya-yuga. This will be the mission of Lord Kalki.

The *Kalki Purana* (20.33-35) goes on to explain that in His search for the nefarious person known as Kali, Lord Kalki would go to the favorite places of that personality, which were the playgrounds of inauspicious creatures, such as ghosts, foxes and jackals. “These places are permeated with the foul odor of decaying beef, and infested with crows and owls. Kali’s domain can be found wherever there is gambling and intoxication, as well as where women constantly quarrel. Kali’s favorite places of residence are always causes of fear and danger. The men in these places are controlled by women,” meaning they are completely under the demanding sway of gratifying their senses with no moral foundation.

Why Lord Kalki would pursue the agents of the personality of Kali is further explained in the *Kalki Purana* (1.22-24).

“All these relatives [agents] of [the personification of the age of] Kali are the destroyers of sacrifice [religious ritual], study of the *Vedas*, and charity because they transgressed all the Vedic principles of religion. They are the reservoirs of mental distress, disease, old age, destruction of religious principles, sorrow, lamentation, and fear. These descendants of Kali are found wandering everywhere throughout the kingdom of Kali, destroying the people of the world. Such people are misguided by the influence of time, very restless by nature, full of lusty desires, extremely sinful, very proud, and violent even to their own father and mother. [Even] those who are known as twice-born [spiritually initiated] are devoid of all good behavior, without any observance of proper etiquette, and always engaged in the service of the lowest classes.” This means that those who should be spiritually advanced only serve those who have money in order to maintain their material facilities.

The description of such so-called Brahmanas of that future time are further related: “These fallen souls are very fond of dry arguments, and they

use religion as a means of livelihood, teach Vedic knowledge as a profession, are fallen from the execution of their vows, and sell wine and other abominable things, including meat. They are cruel by nature, and very fond of gratifying their bellies and genitals. For this reason, they lust after the wives of others and are always seen to be intoxicated. They were not born from a father and mother who were properly married, and they are short in stature and always engaged in sinful acts, such as cheating others. They generally reside in a sacred place, live for only sixteen years, associate with wretched people, and only consider a brother-in-law to be a friend and relative.” (*Kalki Purana* 1.25-27)

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.19-20) also describes Lord Kalki’s activities as follows: “Lord Kalki, the Lord of the universe, will mount His swift white horse Devadatta and, sword in hand, travel over the earth exhibiting His eight mystic opulences and eight special qualities of Godhead. Displaying His unequalled effulgence and riding with great speed, He will kill by the millions those thieves who have dared dress as kings.”

We should make note here that, as the Vedic literature explains, when the Supreme kills anyone, that person is immediately spiritually purified by His touch and because the person is focused on the Supreme Being while leaving his body. Thus, that person attains the same destination as those *yogis* who spend years steadying the mind in order to meditate and leave their bodies while focused on the Supreme. So being killed by the Supreme is a great advantage for those of a demoniac mentality who would otherwise enter lower realms of existence or even the hellish planets in their next lives.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 191.1-6) describes some of Lord Kalki’s activities in this way: Markandeya said, “Then exterminating all robbers, He (Kalki) will duly give away this earth at a great horse-ritual to the Brahmanas. Having established the blessed rectitude ordained by the Self-created (Brahma), that doer of virtuous and renowned deeds will then enter a charming forest. The people of the earth will imitate His conduct. When thieves and robbers will be exterminated by the Brahmanas, there will be prosperity again (on earth). When the countries will all be subjugated by that foremost of Brahmanas, He will cast away the deer skins, lances and tridents and other weapons. Showing His reverence for the excellent twice-born ones [Brahmanas], He engages in killing the thieves. Kalki will rove over the earth being adored by the foremost of Brahmanas.

The heart-rending cries of ‘O father,’ ‘O mother,’ ‘O son,’ will rise when He will exterminate the thieves and robbers.”

The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) continues to explain Lord Kalki’s activities: “By His irresistible might he will destroy all the *mlecchas* and thieves, and all whose minds are devoted to iniquity. He will reestablish righteousness upon earth, and the minds of those who live at the end of the Kali age shall be awakened, and shall be as clear as crystal. The men who are thus changed by virtue of that peculiar time shall be as the seeds of human beings, and shall give birth to a race who will follow the laws of the Krita age [Satya-yuga], the age of purity. As it is said, ‘When the sun and moon, and the lunar asterism Tishya, and the planet Jupiter, are in one mansion, the Krita age shall return.’” The *Agni Purana* (16.10) also relates that Hari, after giving up the form of Kalki, will go to heaven. Then the Krita or Satya-yuga will return as before.

Additional information that can help us understand the activities of the next coming of God is found in the *Linga Purana*, the *Brahmanda Purana*, and the *Vayu Purana*. In these texts we find descriptions of Lord Kalki as He will appear in the future and also as how He appeared in previous incarnations as Pramiti in the time period known as the Svayambhuva Manvantara. These texts tell us that as Kali-yuga comes to a close, and after the death of Bhrigu (or in order to slay the Bhrigus), Kalki (Pramiti) takes birth in the Lunar dynasty of Manu. He will wander over the planet without being seen by any living being. Then he will start His campaign in His thirtysecond year and roam the earth for twenty years. He will take with Him a big army of horses, chariots, and elephants, surrounded by hundreds and thousands of spiritually purified Brahmanas armed with weapons. [Being Brahmanas, these weapons may be *brahminical* weapons that are activated by mantras, such as the powerful *brahmastra* rather than base weapons of combat such as knives, swords, and spears, or even guns and ordinary explosives.] Though they may try to do battle with Him, He will kill all of the heretics [and false prophets] and wicked, *mleccha* kings.

In a previous incarnation He killed the Udicyas (Northerners), Madhya Deshyas (residents of the middle lands), Purvatiyas (mountain dwellers), Pracyas (Easterners), Praticyas (Westerners), Dakshinatyas (of Southern India), the Simhalas (Sri Lankans), Pahlavas (the fair-skinned nomadic tribes of the Caucasus mountains), Yadavas (in the area of Greece), Tusharas (people of the area of Mandhata, India, or present day

Tukharistan), Cinas (Chinese), Shulikas, Khashas, and different tribes of the Kiratas (aboriginal tribes living in north-eastern India and Nepal) and Vrishalas.

No one could stop Him as He wielded His discus and killed all the barbarians. When He was finished, He rested in the middle land between the Ganges and Yamuna with His ministers and followers. He allowed only a few people to remain, scattered over the planet. These would be as seeds for the next generations that would follow in the next Satya-yuga. Thereafter, when Lord Kalki has made way for the next age of Satya-yuga, and delivered the earth and whatever is left of civilization from the effects of Kali-yuga, He goes back to His eternal abode along with His army. (*Linga Purana* 40.50- 92, the *Brahmanda Purana* 1.2.31.76-106 & 2.3.73.104-126, and the *Vayu Purana* 58.75-110)

LORD KALKI PREDICTED IN THE BOOK OF REVELATIONS

At this point I want to present some verses from the book of *Revelations* in the Bible that are very similar to the above descriptions in the *Puranas* about Lord Kalki. These verses are so similar that they cannot be ignored. We must ask if this is but another prediction of what is really Lord Kalki? In *Revelations* it states:

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, but no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was

taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse.” (*Revelations* 19.11-16, & 19-21)

This sounds so much like the incarnation of Lord Kalki that it could hardly be anyone else. Thus, we could say that *Revelations* predicts the appearance of Lord Kalki, or used a story based on this prophecy. Surely, by the time Lord Kalki appears, no one will have the slightest expectation of Him or His appearance. No one will know His name. And His army of Brahmanas will be as pure as if they had descended from heaven. At the time of Lord Kalki’s appearance, He will kill the remaining miscreants and deliver the few saintly people from the present conditions of the earth, changing it back to the Golden Age of Satya-yuga. In this regard, *Revelations* also describes:

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb [a typical symbol for the Divine or an incarnation of the Divine] stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.” (*Revelations* 14.1-3)

One significant description in the above verses is that those who are redeemed from the earth will have God’s name written on their foreheads. This is a widespread custom of the Vaishnava Brahmanas and devotees in India to write the name of God, such as Vishnu or Krishna, on their foreheads. This is called *tilok*, which is usually put on with clay made from the banks of a holy river. It is applied in the middle of the forehead in the shape of a “U” from the bridge of the nose which represents the name of God and that the body is a temple of God. The mark is made while reciting “*Om keshavaya namaha*,” which means “Salutations to Lord Keshava,” another name of Krishna. So, this would indicate that when the last of

society is delivered from the earth during the end times, they will be those who wear the name of God on their foreheads. Also, as in accord with the other Vedic prophecies presented in this volume, we can understand that there will be very few people left in the world who will have any piety at all. So, it would fit in with the Vedic prophecies that by the time Lord Kalki appears, there may, indeed, be only 144,000 who will be left in the world worthy of being delivered from the godless and chaotic conditions of the earth.

THE RETURN OF THE GOLDEN AGE—SATYA-YUGA

Now let us continue with the above description of Lord Kalki as described in the *Kalki Purana* (24.8). Shushanta, the queen of king Shashidhvaja, expressed the benefits of the arrival of Lord Kalki on earth that she had witnessed. “Because of Your appearance within this world, the prestige of the devotees has been reinstated, the Brahmanas once again engage in their ritualistic performances, the demigods feel secure, Satya-yuga will soon commence, religious principles are being obeyed, and the influence of Kali has slackened. May I also receive the benefit of Your incarnation.”

After Lord Kalki had removed all of the nefarious and wicked kings, rulers, and people, and the atheist religions had also been abolished for the real spiritual process of *Sanatana-dharma*, Lord Kalki returned from His wanderings over the planet to remain in the village of Shambhala. The *Kalki Purana* (32.2-5) explains, “Lord Kalki continued to reside in the village of Shambhala, along with His brothers, sons, other relatives and associates, for one thousand years. The entire village of Shambhala, which was as good as the heavenly planets, appeared very beautiful with its assembly houses, gates, raised platforms, and flags flapping in the breeze that has been placed here and there. Anyone who gave up his material body in Shambhala was freed from all sinful reactions and awarded shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Kalki. Thus, the village of Shambhala, which was profusely decorated with blooming flowers, pious trees, forests and gardens, became a holy place that granted liberation from material existence.”

The *Kalki Purana* (28.28-30) also describes how Lord Kalki made arrangements for the management of the territory for peaceful existence. “Thereafter, the unlimitedly powerful Lord Kalki continued to reside at

Shambhala, and He gave [the lands of] Kankanadesha and Kalapadesha to King Vishakhayupa to rule. Later on, Lord Kalki ordered His son, Kritavarma, to rule numerous other kingdoms, such as Chola, Varvara, and Karva, which were under the jurisdiction of Dvaraka. Lord Kalki respectfully offered heaps of jewels and other kinds of wealth to His father, and, indeed, He satisfied all the citizens of Shambhala. He then continued to happily reside there as a householder, along with His wives, Ramaa and Padmavati. It was at this time that Satya-yuga recommenced.”

The *Kalki Purana* (30.2-5) further relates the auspicious conditions that were found while Lord Kalki ruled the planet. “With Lord Kalki sitting upon the royal throne, the *Vedas*, the religious principles, Satya-yuga personified, the demigods, and indeed all other moving and non-moving living entities became greatly satisfied. In the previous yuga, the Brahmanas had worshiped the demigods, and to bewilder the masses of people, they had displayed some minuscule mystic powers. During the reign of Lord Kalki, all such cheating practices were stopped so that no atheists or hypocrites could be seen within His kingdom. Lord Kalki thus happily resided in the city of Shambhala.”

As time went on, the day finally arrived for Lord Kalki to return to His spiritual residence. The *Kalki Purana* (33.13-28) describes what happened.

“[One day] After hearing the prayers of the demigods, Lord Kalki ecstatically expressed His own desire to return to Vaikuntha [His spiritual abode], taking with Him His eternal associates. Thereafter, Lord Kalki summoned His four very powerful sons, all of whom were very dear to the citizens because they were very pious and influential, and handed over the rule of the kingdom to them. The Lord then addressed His subjects, revealing His intention. Lord Kalki said: ‘At the request of the demigods, I will return to Vaikuntha.’

“When the inhabitants of Shambhala heard this, they were shocked and began shedding tears of grief. Just as sons address their fathers, the people began speaking of the Lord after offering their obeisances. The citizens said: My dear Lord, You are the original propounder of genuine religious principles. It is not proper for You to leave us, for You always displayed affection for those who had sincerely surrendered unto You. Wherever You go, please allow us to accompany You. Although everyone considers his wife, children, wealth, and house to be very dear, Your servants know that You are the supreme enjoyer who, by awarding detachment, vanquishes all

suffering in this life and the next. Because of knowing You in truth, our lives are dedicated to You.

“After hearing the prayers of His subjects, Lord Kalki pacified them as far as possible and then departed for the forest, taking with Him His two consorts. Thereafter, Lord Kalki, surrounded by many sages, traveled to the Himalaya Mountains, which are adorned by the Ganges River, which is worshiped even by the demigods and which gives pleasure to the heart. The Lord sat by the side of the Ganges and then assumed His four-armed form while entering deep into meditation upon Himself. The Lord appeared as brilliant as thousands of suns, and thus looked very attractive. He was the witness of everything, as well as the eternal Lord and Supersoul of all living entities. His form was the form of all ornaments. He held a conch shell, disc, club, lotus flower, and bow string in His hands. On His chest was the Kaustubha gem. The demigods showered fragrant flowers as the sounds of beating drums could be heard in the four directions.

“In this way, Lord Kalki enacted His pastime of disappearance from this world. All moving and non-moving living beings that witnessed the disappearance of the Lord glorified Him in a mood of great astonishment. [The wives of Lord Kalki] Padmavati and Ramaa saw Lord Kalki’s transcendental form [take on the characteristics] as if devoid of life. Realizing this to be an illusory display of the external energy, although greatly astonished, they entered fire so as to rejoin their husband in His eternal abode.

“Meanwhile, Dharma and Satya-yuga personified wandered throughout the world without any fear of enemies, by the order of Lord Kalki. They happily resided within the world now that [the age of] Satya-yuga had commenced. By the order of Lord Kalki, the two kings, Maru and Devapi, executed their duties of protecting the people of the world.”

The *Linga*, *Brahmanda*, and *Vayu Puranas* further explain that after Lord Kalki returns to His eternal abode, when those subjects surviving at the end of Kali-yuga are enlightened, the yuga changes overnight. Then the minds of all people will become enlightened and as clear as crystal, and with inevitable force Krita or Satya-yuga sets in. People then realize the soul, acquire piety, devotion, tranquility, and clear consciousness. Then those *Siddhas* [the enlightened and perfected living beings who had remained invisible on a higher dimension through to the end of the age of Kali] return to the earthly dimension and again are clearly visible. They

establish themselves with the return of the Saptarishis, the seven sages, who instruct everyone about spiritual life, Vedic knowledge, and the progressive organization of society for a peaceful and fulfilling existence. Then again people flourish and perform the sacred rites, and the sages will remain in authority to continue the advancement of the new Satya-yuga.

We can understand from this that Lord Kalki will simply chastise by killing all of the evil kings and rogues and thereby bring in a new era of enlightened beings, a race whose minds will be as clear as crystal and who will produce offspring that will follow the tendencies of real human beings as found in the age of Satya-yuga.

Srimad-Bhagavatam (12.2.21-24) further describes that after all of the devious and fake kings have been killed, the remaining residents of the towns and cities will smell the breezes that carry the sacred aroma of the Lord's sandalwood paste and decorations, and their minds will then become spiritually purified. When the Supreme Being appears in their hearts in His form of pure goodness, the remaining citizens will abundantly repopulate the earth. With this appearance of Lord Kalki, Satya-yuga will begin again and the remaining humans will produce children in goodness [*sattva-guna*]. Thus, when the moon, the sun, and Jupiter are in the constellation of Kartaka, Cancer, and together enter the lunar mansion of Pusya, that is when the age of Satya-yuga will begin.

Therefore, as further related in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.34), after one thousand celestial years of Kali-yuga, Satya-yuga will again manifest. At that time the minds of men will be selfeffulgent.

The *Mahabharata* (Vana Parva, 190.89-92) continues to describe the conditions of the earth when the Satya-yuga returns. "Creatures would come into existence again, beginning with the Brahmanas. When that age will pass away, creation will again increase. Providence will again be propitious at will. When the sun, the moon, and Brihaspati enter the constellation of Pushya, the clouds will incessantly shower rains, and [positions of the] stars and planets will be auspicious. The planets, duly revolving in their orbits, will be greatly propitious. Abundance, prosperity, wealth, and peace will be everywhere."

Herein we see that once balance or Dharma is restored, as reestablished by Lord Kalki, the planet begins to heal and rejuvenate itself. Those creatures that were once extinct due to the pollution and imbalance caused by humanity will appear again. The sacred rivers of the Ganga and Yamuna

and others also reappear. The planet creates what it needs again, and after years of drought and famine the clouds will supply rain again. Everywhere there will be peace and bountifulness.

The following description shows how, at the beginning of the next Satya-yuga, everyone will again live in harmony and with a common cause and goal, based on spiritual upliftment for one and all. “Reaching at this stage, there will be an end to Kali-yuga, in which the truth and the *tapas* [austerity for spiritual insight] would reemerge completely, together with Dharma. At that point in time the Brahmanas will perform their *tapas*. They will be extremely religious and well-versed in the Vedic knowledge. In every household, there will again be chaste ladies devoted to religion [the Vedic spiritual path]. There will be regional kings who will be devoted to their own Dharma [duties as an honest and principled ruler], devoted to [genuine and highly advanced] Brahmanas [the intellectuals and priests who understand Vedic spiritual knowledge], as well as glorious, devoted to Dharma, and will always be performing good deeds and activities. The Vaishyas [Vedically principled and honest merchants] will engage themselves in commerce and will be devoted to the Brahmanas and religion. The Shudras [or worker class, artists, performers, etc.] also will be quite meritorious, devoted to Dharma and adore the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas, Kshatriys, and Vaishyas will perform the *yajnas* [Vedic rituals] of Vishnu. There will be Vaishnavas [worshippers of Vishnu] always reciting the name of Lord Vishnu and devoted to Me [Lord Narayana, Vishnu]. They will be well-versed in the *Smritis*, *Shrutis* and *Puranas*, as well as Vedic Dharma and will enjoy the company of their wives only at the appropriate times. Therefore, Krita-yuga will be influenced only by Dharma and there will be no particle of *adharmas* [non-Vedic or nonspiritual or immoral actions or thoughts]. (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.63-68)

The *Mahabharata* also states some of the same things but with further elaborations on how conditions will be when Satya-yuga or Krita-yuga begins again: “O descendant of Bharata, when at the appearance of the Krita Yuga, sin will thus be completely destroyed and virtue will flourish, men will again be engaged in religious rites. Well-planted gardens, sacrificial grounds, large tanks, Vedic schools and colleges, ponds and temples, will (all) reappear everywhere; various sacrifices will also begin to be performed at the appearance of the Krita age. Brahmanas will be honest

and good. Being devoted to asceticism, they will be *rishis* [wise sages]. The hermitages [that had been] occupied by the wicked wretches will once more be the homes of men devoted to Truth. Men in general will begin to honor and practice Truth. All seeds sown on earth will grow. O king of kings, every kind of crop will grow in every season. Men will devotedly practice charity, vows, and religious rites. The Brahmanas, devoted to meditation and sacrifices [Vedic rituals], will be of virtuous soul and cheerful disposition. The kings will virtuously govern the earth. In the Krita-yuga, the Vaishyas will devote themselves to trade, the Brahmanas will be devoted to their six duties and the Kshatriyas will be devoted to the display of prowess [for the protection of the citizens]. The Shudras will be devoted to the service of the other three orders. Such will be the Dharma in Krita, Treta, and Dvapara-yugas.

“O son of Pandu, I have now narrated to you everything. I have told you the periods embraced by the several yugas, that which is known to all. Thus, have I now told you everything appertaining to both the past and the future as narrated by Vayu in his own *Purana* adored by the Rishi. Immortal as I am, I have many times seen and ascertained the course of the world. I have now told you all that I have seen and felt.” (*Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 191.7-17) The *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter One) also relates that the *Vedas* and the principles of *Sanatana-dharma*, or the eternal nature of the soul, fade and disappear from the planet at the end of every four ages. The *Bhagavatam* (8.14.4-5) also confirms that there are saintly persons who help reestablish these principles in Satya-yuga along with the basis of *varnashrama* [the divisions of four *varnas*, such as Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras that are established not by one’s birth, but by one’s natural talents and tendencies; and the four *ashramas*, namely Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa], which is the proper organization of society for humanity.

The *Vishnu Purana* continues to explain that it is in the jurisdiction of the seven universal sages or *rishis* (the Saptarishis) to make sure the Vedic knowledge is given currency again, even if these *rishis* must descend from the higher planets to do so. So, in every Satya-yuga the Manu [the demigod son of Brahma who is the lawgiver of humanity] of that age is the author of the body of law, while the sons of Manu and their descendants are sovereigns of the earth. This means that although the genuine spiritual knowledge or Vedic information may disappear from the face of this planet,

it is still dwelling elsewhere in the universe, or even out of the jurisdiction of society in this world, and it is the duty of higher authorities to reestablish it in its proper time.

To help in this regard, it is predicted in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.37-38) and the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Four, Chapter 24) that there are two persons who are waiting for the end of Kali-yuga: Devapi of the race of Puru and brother of King Shantanu, and Maru, a descendant of King Ikshvaku. They will be great kings and will help in the process of reestablishing the proper principles in society. These two are alive even now by their great mystic strength obtained through the power of devotion [*bhakti*]. They have lived through all four of the yugas and reside in the village of Kalapa. They are waiting for the end of Kali-yuga. Then, at the beginning of Satya-yuga, under the instructions of the Supreme, they will return to society and be members of the family of the Manu and reestablish the eternal religion of humanity, *Sanatana-dharma* [based on the soul's eternal nature to serve the Supreme], and the institution of *varnashrama*, which is the proper organization of society for its continued harmony in life, and its material and spiritual progress. They will become great kings and form a proper government.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (9.12.6) also relates the means by which Maru has been able to continue living and what his mission will be: "Having achieved perfection in the power of mystic yoga [pranayama or breath control], Maru still lives in a place known as Kalapa-grama. At the end of Kali-yuga, he will revive the lost Surya dynasty by begetting a son." Thus, by the arrangement of the Supreme Being, there are those who will always be the guardians of that spiritual knowledge that contains the genuine principles for attaining the real goal of human existence, and who will provide the means so that it is passed along to others.

After all of this is accomplished, as related in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.2.39), the cycle of the four ages of Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali-yugas [a Chaturyuga] will continue to repeat itself along with the same general pattern of events.

Those who repeatedly hear the transcendental glories of the Kalki incarnation of Lord Maha-Vishnu with devotion will find that all inauspiciousness within their hearts will be reduced to nil. (*Kalki Purana* 34.16)

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Destruction of the World

Most all cultural or religious literature seems to foretell a time when the world comes to an end. The Vedic literature is no exception. However, in the Vedic version, this is but part of a cycle of creation and then destruction before another recreation.

In the process of the universal annihilation, the Vedic prophecies foretell a time when Lord Kalki will not appear at the end of Kali-yuga to bring back the age of enlightenment, Satya-yuga. That is the time when this world will simply slide into complete destruction. The *Kurma Purana* (2.45.5-13) describes four different types of dissolution. These are *Nitya*, *Naimittika*, *Prakrita*, and *Atyantika*. The *Nitya* dissolution is the death of the physical body that everyone undergoes. A *Naimittika* dissolution is that which takes place during Brahma's night at the end of a kalpa. A *Prakrita* dissolution is when the entire universe is annihilated, like at the end of a life of Brahma. And the *Atyantika* dissolution is when one becomes perfect in spiritual consciousness and attains the spiritual abode, thus attaining freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3.10.14) also explains three similar types of worldly destruction. One is due to the scheduled time of universal annihilation, another is due to the universal fire that emanates from the mouth of the Lord's incarnation as Ananta Sesha or Sankarshana, and the other is due to our quality of activities and reactions, or individual and social karma.

Karmic destruction in this case refers to the destruction that goes on in this world due to the actions of society at large which create social karma, or the reactions to the activities that are performed that society must then experience. Some of these calamities and disasters are predicted and some are not. Some of these karmic destructions will be in the form of war, government breakdown, economic collapse, social upheaval, industrial disaster, and outbreaks of incurable diseases. These forms of reactions will go on throughout the age of Kali and cause many levels of worldly

upheavals and destruction of such things as our natural resources, land, cities, and people. Various psychics or astrologers may predict such things, but the Vedic prophecies allude to these only in a general way because they are a part of the natural course of events that take place based on the consequences of mankind's consciousness and activities, as described in Chapter Four. As the age of Kali continues, various forms of these disasters and worldly changes will become so numerous that it will be pointless to expect anyone to predict all but the most important. There would be a need for volumes of books to mention all of them if they could be accurately predicted. Some of these karmic reactions will be on a more personal level, while others will affect society at large, such as the destruction of social foundations like marriage and the family; or the loss of economic stability, jobs, and health; or even one's duration of life. All of these are caused by things like our lifestyles, attitudes, and those things that we do to ourselves or to others.

Two of the other forms of destruction mentioned above are scheduled and take place within a designated window of time in the plan for the universe, such as the end of what is called Brahma's day, and the final annihilation at the end of the Brahma's life. The next scheduled annihilation of the world, according to the Vedic prophecies, will be at what is called the end of Brahma's day, which, at this point in time, is still a long way off.

THE NEXT ANNIHILATION OF THE WORLD

It is explained in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.10.30) that in all of the planetary systems throughout the universe there exists the fear of time, or death, even among the great demigods. Even the greatest demigod, Lord Brahma, lives 311,040,000,000,000 earthly years, and is also afraid of the Supreme in the form of death. Even though Lord Brahma lives for so long, this is considered only 100 years on his level of existence.

Furthermore, each of those years is divided into 365 days. Each day is stated to consist of one thousand cycles of the four yugas, which is known as a kalpa, or 4,320,000,000 solar years. And onehalf of each day consists of Brahma's night, which is of the same duration. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12.4.2-4)

The three universal planetary systems are subject to annihilation during his night. This is called the *Naimittika*, or occasional annihilation. This is

not when the whole cosmic creation is destroyed, but when things within the universe are absorbed by Brahma while he ceases certain parts of his activities while he is said to sleep. The final annihilation is when everything, even Lord Brahma who helped create the conditions and living beings within the universe, is withdrawn into the body of Maha-Vishnu.

The *Vayu Purana* (38.133-139) describes that at the end of the kalpa during Brahma's night there is a complete withdrawal of all living entities by Brahma. When Brahma feels the need to sleep, he begins to dissolve all beings along with everything else into him. Then a drought sets in and lasts for 100 years [earth time] which makes all beings on the surface of the earth lose strength and merge into the earth, after which the sun evaporates all moisture from the earth.

The *Vayu Purana* (38.143-161) and the *Kurma Purana* (2.45.18-34) relate that the sun, using the moisture as food, becomes more intense and forms seven suns. Those intense rays dry up the earth planet, reaching the nether and upper regions of the universe and scorching all other worlds. The whole sky is filled with fiercely blazing *samvartaka* fires [the universal fires of destruction]. All living beings become dissolved, and all mountains, oceans, and continents are reduced to ashes. The fire consumes the different planetary systems, including those of the Gandharvas, Pishacas, Yakshas, the serpents, and Rakshasas. The fire burns up the four worlds, Bhurloka, Bhuvarka, Svarloka, and Maharloka. The entire universe shines like a hot iron ball.

In the following description, Suta Goswami explains the events that take place at the end of a kalpa, one of Brahma's days, to the many sages that had assembled in the forests of Naimisaranya.

“O Brahmanas! Thereafter, the abodes presided over by the deities become vacant and fall down along with constellations, stars and planets getting hurled and destroyed. When the lords of the three worlds, including the eight Indras pass away, the fourteen groups of Devas [the higher beings and demigods], beginning with Ajita and others, and ending with Chakshusas—the Devas who were mighty and full of splendor in all the *manvantaras*—who go to [the higher planetary system of] Maharloka where they will become identical with those Devas who stay there till the end of the kalpa.

“It is reported that when the time of *Samhara* (the heaping and collision) comes, those fourteen groups of Devas will forsake the

Maharloka planetary system and go to the [higher] Janaloka planet with their physical bodies, and accompanied by their followers. Thus, when the Devas have gone from Maharloka to Janaloka, when *bhutadi* [the cosmic ego–*ahankara*] and other (prime causes of the universe) remain and (even) immobile living beings have come to an end, when the abodes of the worlds beginning with the Bhuh planetary system and ending with Mahah have become void, when the Devas have gone upward and become united with the Kalpavasins (those who stay till the end of the kalpa), after withdrawing (annihilating) those Devas, Sages, Pitris [forefathers], and Danavas, Brahma with his powerful vision sees that it is the end of the yuga [the last time period of the kalpa or day of Brahma] and then he puts an end to his creation. The knowers of day and night of Brahma understand that the day of Brahma consists of a thousand cycles of the four yugas, and similarly the night too consists of [the time equal to] a thousand cycles of four yugas.” (*Vayu Purana* 38.123-131) The *Bhagavatam* (3.11.28-32) goes on to explain that during the night of Brahma, the universe and the innumerable living entities merge into the darkness of night. Everything is silent, merged into dissolution. The three planetary systems disappear. The sun and moon lose their glare. This devastation is caused by the fire that emanates from the mouth of Sankarshana, another name for Ananta Sesha, who lies on the Garbhodaka Ocean in the lower part of the universe. This fire is said to go on for 36,000 solar years. Great mystical sages like Bhrigu and others leave the Maharloka planet and travel to the higher planetary system of Janaloka due to the fire that rages through the three planetary systems below. Then all of the seas overflow and the universal winds blow violently. Thus, the three major planetary systems of the universe are flooded with water and torrential rains for another 36,000 solar years. The higher planetary systems of Maharloka, Tapoloka, Satyaloka, and Brahmaloaka are not dissolved in the devastating waters. During the deluge, the Supreme Being, Vishnu, known in this form as His universal expansion of Garbhodakashayi Vishnu, lies down on His bed of Ananta Sesha on the universal waters of devastation of the rising Garbhodaka Ocean, and enters a mystic sleep, known as *yoga-nidra*, which is a state of spiritual meditation.

This process of destruction is explained in more detail in the *Vishnu Purana* (Book Six, Chapters Three & Four). It states that at the end of 1,000 cycles of the four yugas, called a chaturyuga, the earth is almost exhausted. A great scarcity of food ensues, which lasts 100 years. Because of the lack

of food, all beings become weak and slow, and finally perish entirely. Lord Vishnu then assumes the character of Rudra (a form of Lord Shiva), the destroyer, and descends to reunite all of His creatures within Himself. He enters into the seven rays of the sun, causing all moisture in the oceans, rivers, soil, and living bodies to evaporate. The whole earth is dried up. Thus fed with abundant moisture from the evaporation, the seven rays dilate into seven suns, whose radiance glows everywhere and sets the three planetary systems and the lower system of Patala on fire. The three planetary systems become rugged and deformed throughout their mountains, rivers, and seas as they are consumed by these suns. The earth alone remains, destitute of moisture, resembling the back of a turtle.

Then Lord Hari (Vishnu), in the form of Rudra, who is the fire of time, destroyer of all things, becomes the scorching breath of Ananta Sesha, Sankarshana, and reduces the lower planetary system of Patala to ashes. The great roaring fire makes its way up through the universe to earth and destroys it. A vast whirlpool of flame then spreads to the higher region of the demigods and puts them all to ruin. The three planetary systems appear like a frying pan surrounded by flames that consume all things. The inhabitants of the upper planetary systems then move higher to Maharloka, and when that becomes too hot, those who desire final liberation depart for the higher regions of Janaloka.

The *Vayu Purana* (38.188-195 & 39.51-55) further relates that it is those saintly mortals who are distinguished by piety and diligent worship of Lord Vishnu who are in Maharloka with elevated ancestors, the Manus (lawgivers), the seven universal *rishis*, and other celestial spirits. They leave Maharloka when the flames of destruction reach it and go to Janaloka. They leave in their subtle forms and determine to become re-embodied when the world is renewed or recreated at the beginning of the next kalpa, or day of Brahma. This process of destruction and regeneration goes on until, at the end of Brahma's life, everything is destroyed and wrapped up into the body of Maha-Vishnu. But those who have attained Brahmaloaka by understanding themselves as spiritual beings in relation to the Supreme Lord are finally given freedom from any further cycles of birth and death.

Lord Brahma's personal planet is the highest of all orbs in the universe, from which many residents leave the material manifestation to enter directly into the spiritual worlds. The *Vishnu Purana* goes on to explain that Rudra, after consuming the universe with fire, breathes forth heavy clouds

that spread over the universal sky and roar with thunder and lightning. Some are black and others are white, yellow, deep blue, bright red, etc. They fill all space and shower torrents of rain that quench the dreadful fire that engulfs the three levels of planetary systems. It rains continuously, pouring down drops as large as dice upon earth and heaven. The universe, now filled with darkness, and all life having perished, is full of clouds that pour rain for more than another 100 years of the demigods.

From the *Vayu Purana* (38.162-170) we get this description of part of the dissolution at the end of a kalpa, or a day of Brahma in preparation for his night.

“Thereafter, the terrible Samvartaka clouds begin to rise in the sky. They assume the shapes of the herds of huge elephants and are embellished with lightning streaks. Some are dark-colored like the blue lotus. Some are like white lilies, some resemble lapis lazuli, and other are like emerald and sapphire. Others are white like the conch shell and the kunda flowers. Some are (black) like the natural collyrium. Some clouds are smoke-colored and some clouds are yellow. Some clouds have the (grey) color, some resemble the red lacquer, others have the luster of the red arsenic, and there are dove-colored clouds. Some glow-worm colored clouds rise up in the sky; some are as vast as the expansive cities and the Earth, and some are as huge as herds of elephants. Some clouds are like mountains and some are like rocky regions. Some resemble large basins and some huge shoals of fish.

“Terrific in appearance and multi-formed, all those clouds, thundering terribly, fill the entire firmament at that time [of dissolution]. Then the terrific and fresh clouds, identifying themselves with the suns, organize themselves in seven groups and extinguish the fire. The clouds then shower energetically and quell the entire inauspicious and horrible fire.”

The *Vayu Purana* (38.171-181, 184) goes on to describe that over the course of one hundred years, the fires become quelled and the universe becomes filled with water. “The universe is then filled with waters from the heavy downpour [from the clouds]. The brilliance of the burning fire is overcome by the waters, and the fire enters [merges] into the water. When in the course of a hundred years, the whole fire is quelled, the clouds that arise from the fire inundate the entire universe with huge quantities of showers. Urged by the selfborn deity (Brahma), they fill the universe with their showers. Others assail the sea-shore with large quantities of water. The entire earth with its continents and mountains is covered with water. O

Brahmanas, the entire quantity of water showered by the clouds [upon the earth] enters the ocean. There it is again sucked up by the rays of the sun. The water sucked up by the rays of the sun clings to the clouds. It falls again on the earth whereby the oceans are filled up. Then the oceans overflow their shores all round. Mountains crumble down and the earth sinks into the water. Whirling up suddenly, a violent wind of terrible nature envelops all those clouds in the sky. In that *ekarnava* (a single vast sheet of water) all the mobile and immobile beings get dissolved.

“Learned men call this sheet of water whereby the entire world is enveloped *ekarnava*. All separate entities are lost sight of. Neither the surface of the earth, nor the atmosphere, neither the wind nor the firmament is visible distinctly. When only water is seen flowing hither and thither, it is called *salila*. When it stands covering the whole earth, that (mass of) water is called *arnava* (an ocean). At the end of that period of a thousand sets of four yugas, one day of Brahma passes. At the end of the whole of that period, the entire universe becomes submerged in the *ekarnava*. All the activities of Prajapati, Brahma, cease [as he prepares for his night, which is of equal length to his day].”

The *Brahmanda Purana* (3.4.1.169-173) continues to describe that from the fire that is destroyed by the showers, the clouds, arising from those fires, fill the entire universe with torrents of water currents. All land and spaces are swallowed up by the water. When everything becomes dissolved in that fearsome expanse of water, then it is understood that the kalpa has come to an end.

The *Vishnu Purana* then elaborates that when the waters reach the region of the seven *rishis*, and the whole universe is filled, the mighty clouds stop raining. The universal breath of Lord Vishnu then becomes a strong wind that blows throughout the universe for more than 100 years until all of the clouds are dispersed. Then the wind is reabsorbed into Lord Vishnu and then He, from whom all things are made, reposes on Ananta Sesha and enters that mystic slumber called *yoganidra*.

Now we find in the *Kurma Purana* (2.45.54-56) where Lord Kurma (Vishnu) says He adopts *maya* and enters the yogic slumber as the whole universe submerges into the water. During the period of His sleep, the great sages that stay in Janaloka see Him with their mystic vision. Then the *Agni Purana* (368.12-15) confirms that when the water rises up to the region of the seven sages (the Great Bear constellation), from the breath of Lord

Vishnu issues a hundred storms that disperse the clouds. Then after drinking the wind, Lord Hari lies down on the great ocean and rests in yogic sleep, *yoganidra*, for another kalpa period, contemplating His own form as Vasudeva. Then the universe lies in an unmanifest state in the *Prakriti* [material nature in its primordial state].

The *Brahma Purana* (125.2-10) similarly relates that the winds that blow for 100 years from Vishnu's exhalation destroy all of the clouds. Then Lord Hari (Vishnu) drinks up all the wind and lies on the bed of Sheshanaga in that vast expanse of water. He is praised and eulogized by the Siddhas, mystically perfected beings, that are residing on the Janaloka planetary system, and is meditated on by those seeking liberation who live on Brahmaloaka. He then enters the *yoganidra* (yogic mystic slumber) and meditates on His own form. When this Soul of souls is awake, the universe is active. When He lies on the bed to sleep, the visible universe ceases to function and vanishes. When Vishnu, assuming the form of Brahma, awakes at the close of the night, the work of creation begins again.

The *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 233.1-13, 18-19) offers a similar version of this but in a summary. Therein Vyasadeva describes that he shall now tell you how Brahma's night comes when his day is gone. At that time he withdraws all things to himself, making this gross universe exceedingly subtle, and merges everything into himself. When the time for universal dissolution comes, twelve Suns, and Agni, the god of fire, with his seven flames [or rays], begin to burn. Wrapped by those flames, the entire universe begins to blaze forth in a huge fire. All things mobile and immobile that are on the earth first disappear and merge into the substance of which this planet is formed. After all mobile and immobile objects have thus disappeared, the earth, shorn of trees and herbs, looks nude like a tortoise shell. Then water takes up the attribute of the element of earth, with its characteristic of having scent or aroma. When earth becomes shorn of this principal attribute, that [is when that] element is about to be destroyed. Water then prevails, surging into big billows and roaring dreadfully. Only water fills this space and moves about or stands still. Then the attribute of water is overcome by heat, and losing its own attribute, water emerges in that element [of fire]. Dazzling flames of fire, ablaze all around, hide the sun that is in the center of ether. Indeed, then, ether itself, full of those flames, burns in a vast fire. Then wind comes and takes the attribute or form of heat and light, which, possessed of great power, becomes awfully

agitated. Obtaining its own attribute of carrying sound, the wind begins to move upwards and downwards and transversely along all the ten points [ten directions]. Then space [ether] takes [absorbs] the attribute of sound, [carried by] the wind, upon which the latter is extinguished and enters into a state of existence resembling that of unheard or unuttered sound [absolute silence]. Then space [ether] is all that remains, and that element whose attribute is sound, exists in all the other elements, shorn of the attributes of form, taste, touch, smell, and without shape of any kind, like sound in its unmanifest form of existence. Then sound, which is the attribute of space, is swallowed up by Mind which is the essence of all manifest things. Thus, Mind withdraws all that is manifested by Mind. This withdrawal of manifest Mind into unmanifest Mind, is called the destruction of the external universe... Truly has this, which should be conceived (with the aid of the scriptures) and which is a topic of science, been thus described by yogis empowered with Supreme Souls, after actual experience. In this way does Brahma repeatedly practice the processes of creation and destruction [and then recreation], and even thus are Brahma's day and night, each consisting of a thousand yugas."

Let us remember that this is a partial and scheduled annihilation of much but not all of the interior of the universe. After the length of time known as Brahma's night comes to an end, it is arranged that the universe begin again and be recreated. The *Brahmanda Purana* (3.4.1.189-203) continues to explain that Lord Brahma, while lying down, stays in the waters in the darkness of night. When the night ends, Brahma wakes up with a desire to create. He then concentrates on the activity of creation. When his night becomes dawn [so to speak], all living beings are again born of Brahma, including the sages, Manus, and Siddhas. Thus, the night of Brahma comes to an end.

The *Vayu Purana* (38.195-207) further elaborates that when the night ends and Brahma awakes, he has the desire to create. The rebirth of all living beings, after the dissolution, is called *samsara*. All living beings are born again from Brahma at the beginning of every kalpa in the same succession as before. All living beings start as new, having been absolved of all sins, karma, and all reactions during the dissolution.

In this way, the *Vishnu Purana* concludes, for the same length of time as Brahma's day is his night, during which the world is submerged in the vast, universal Garbhodaka Ocean. When the universal spirit awakes, the world

revives. Awakening at the end of his night, the unborn Lord Vishnu, in the form of Brahma [when no other living being is qualified to be Brahma], creates the universe anew. This is also stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3.11.23): “After the end of Brahma’s night, the creation of the three worlds begins again in the daytime of Brahma, and they continue to exist through the life durations of 14 consecutive Manus, or fathers of mankind [equaling another 1000 cycles of the four yugas as before].”

Thus, as stated in the *Linga Purana* (40.86-92), as a thousand cycles of the four yugas make one day of Brahma, or one kalpa, his night consists of the same. What happens in the basic pattern of four yugas is repeated in the next four yugas, and the pattern of one kalpa is the same as the next. However, the difference or variations in the basic order or pattern of events within the kalpas is limited to 25. Thus, the world goes through the continuous cycle of creation and annihilation for the duration of time known as the life of Brahma.

Though there are many more references in the Vedic literature we could include in these descriptions of the universal destruction at the end of Brahma’s day, what has been provided is more than an essential story of how this takes place.

Furthermore, one thing to remember is that some differences in the descriptions of the events of the creation, as seen occasionally between the *Puranas*, is admitted to be there, but is limited to 25. This is because the different *Puranas* are known to describe the events that take place in different kalpas, and one kalpa may have a slight variance from another. Thus, it is not merely a mechanical system, but depends on the changing moods that Brahma enters in his meditations while he creates the various species of life and planetary systems that gradually again fill the universe.

THE FINAL ANNIHILATION OF THE UNIVERSE

At the end of time, called the end of Brahma’s life of 100 years, each of which has 365 of his days, there is the final annihilation of the universe. In the *Kalki Purana*, Lord Kalki, as an expansion of Lord Vishnu, summarizes the meaning of the final annihilation of the universe. Lord Kalki said: “When the final dissolution of the universe will take place, everyone, even Lord Brahma, will be annihilated. At that time, the entire universe will

become merged within Me. In the beginning, only I existed, and therefore, all living entities and elements emanated from Me.

“After the [previous] final dissolution, the entire universe remained unmanifest and there was no one except the Supersoul. Then, at the end of that long and dark night, I manifested My universal form in order to enact the pastime of material creation.

“That universal form of Mine has thousands of heads, thousands of eyes, and thousands of legs. From that mouth of the universal form came the supremely powerful Brahma, who spoke the four *Vedas*.

“In accordance with My order, which is as good as the *Vedas*, the omniscient Brahma began his work of creating the living entities, who are My separated parts and parcels, as well as the time factor, and the planetary systems. In the beginning, Brahma created the progenitors, Manus, demigods, and human beings.

“Although all of them are My parts and parcels, they engage in different kinds of activities by the arrangement of *maya* [the illusory force], under the dictation of the three modes of material nature. As a result, all moving and non-moving living entities are materially designated.

“All moving and nonmoving living entities are My separated parts and parcels, although they appear to be products of *maya*. At the end, everyone will merge into Me. The Brahmanas and other members of the social order are just like parts of My body.” (*Kalki Purana* 4.2-8)

The final annihilation of the universe begins at the end of the last day of Brahma’s life. The *Bhagavatam* (11.3.9-15) explains that when it is time for the annihilation of all material elements, the Supreme Being withdraws the cosmic manifestation in His form of time, causing the whole universe to vanish into its unmanifest state. Of course, this is at the end of Kali-yuga when Brahma finishes his life span of 100 celestial or divine years. Again, the start of this process begins as it did before at the end of a kalpa with a terrible drought that takes place on earth for 100 years, and everywhere is tormented by the heat of the sun. From the mouth of Sankarshana emanates a fire that scorches everything as it is carried by great winds. Then hoards of universal clouds pour torrents of rain for 100 years, flooding the entire universe in water with raindrops as long as the trunk of elephants. Thereafter, Vairaja Brahma gives up his own body and enters the subtle unmanifest nature, the *pradhana*. Then the elements merge or withdraw into one another, starting from the earth into water, then into fire, into air, into

space, into time, and into the element of false ego in the mode of ignorance. False ego is the subtle element that causes the living entities to forget their spiritual nature and to think they are their material bodies. Then the material senses and the subtle element of intelligence merge into false ego in the mode of passion, and the mind and demigods merge into false ego in the mode of goodness. Then the final element of false ego merges into the *maha-tattva*, which is the total amount of ingredients of the material energy in its unmanifest state.

The above paragraph is a simplistic explanation of the final annihilation. More details are found elsewhere in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (starting at 12.4.5-7). To begin elaborating the details, therein we first find that when Brahma's life is complete, the seven basic elements of creation are annihilated. Once these are destroyed, then the whole universe begins to break down in the process of annihilation. This begins with the earth receiving no rain for 100 years. This causes the drought which leads to famine. Thus, all inhabitants of the earth are gradually destroyed.

As the living beings give up their bodies during the time of dissolution, they merge into the Supreme Being in His form as Garbhodakshayi Vishnu, who exists in each universe. As stated in the *Bhagavatam*, it was the Supreme Being alone who existed before the manifested creation, and in Him only do all living beings merge during the dissolution, as if sleeping at night, their energy suspended until the time of the next cosmic creation. This means that each separate spirit soul remains as an individual but are brought together and merged in the spiritual existence within this Supreme Being. However, their desires for material pleasures remain. Thus, they continue in a dormant state and during the next creation they again are manifested in the material energy and accept the appropriate physical bodies that enable them to chase after the same desires they had before. In this way, they appear in different species of life according to their inclinations and, thus, populate the worlds. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.10.21-22)

The *Bhagavatam* (12.4.8-10) continues describing that the sun will evaporate all of the water from the ocean, all living bodies, and the soil. Then the great fire of annihilation will emanate from Lord Sankarshana's mouth and burn the entire universe as it is carried by the fierce universal winds. The universe will become a huge but lifeless cosmic shell. Burned

from below by the fire of Lord Sankarshana and from above by the scorching sun, the universal shell will look like a burning ball.

The *Brahma Purana* (124.24-28) elaborates that by means of the flames from Sheshanaga (Sankarshana), the Supreme burns the nether worlds from below. This fire of universal destruction reaches the earth and burns the entire surface. The fires also burn the Bhuvah and Svarga worlds, and when the higher planets are burned up, the residents leave in their subtle bodies for Maharloka. However, the *Brahmanda Purana* (3.4.1.157) goes on to relate that the fires of devastation now move throughout the universe and this time, in the final annihilation of the cosmos, also burn the Bhuvaloka, Bhuvanloka, and Svarloka worlds, as well as the Maharloka planetary system.

Elsewhere in the *Bhagavatam* (5.25.3), it states that Lord Shiva plays a significant role in the final annihilation of the universe. “At the time of devastation, when Lord Anantadeva [Ananta Sesha, Sankarshana] desires to destroy the entire creation, He becomes slightly angry. Then from between His two eyebrows appears threeeyed Rudra, carrying a trident. This Rudra, who is known as Sankarshana, is the embodiment of the eleven Rudras, or incarnations of Lord Shiva. He appears in order to devastate the entire creation.”

The *Brahma Purana* (124.16) goes on to explain that it is the imperishable Lord Krishna who assumes the form of Rudra to bring all the elements and living beings back into Himself in this process of annihilation.

After Shiva appears in this way, he begins to do his dance of dissolution, dancing wildly to the beat of his drum. “At the time of dissolution, Lord Shiva’s hair is scattered, and he pierces the rulers of the different directions with his trident. He laughs and dances proudly, scattering their hands like flags, as thunder scattered the clouds all over the world.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* (4.5.10) Lord Shiva’s dancing causes such a commotion that it brings in the clouds that cause the universe to become inundated with water, which is what happens next.

The *Bhagavatam* (12.4.11-12) continues to describe that a terrible wind will blow for more than 100 years causing great destruction and making the sky turn gray with dust. Then many multicolored clouds filled with terrible thunder will gather and pour floods of rain for another 100 years until the universal shell fills with a great cosmic flood. Then the *Brahma Purana* (125.40) also says that with the whole universe filled with darkness and all

entities destroyed, these powerful clouds rain for more than a hundred years.

The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.4.13-19) as well as the *Brahma Purana* (125.12-34) goes on to relate that at this point all of the individual elements throughout the cosmic creation will lose their distinguishing qualities and merge into one another in a process that proceeds from the most gross and physical of the elements to the most subtle. The element of earth will lose its distinguishing quality of fragrance and be swallowed up by the water and be absorbed into it. Water then loses the quality of taste and is consumed by, and merges into, the element of fire. Air overpowers the quality of form in fire causing fire to merge into the element of air. Ether then overpowers air which loses the quality of touch, which causes air to merge into ether. The subtle element of false ego in the mode of ignorance consumes sound, which is the quality of ether, thus forcing ether to merge into false ego. Similarly, false ego in the mode of passion absorbs the senses, and false ego in goodness absorbs the demigods. Then the total ingredients of material creation in its unmanifest state, the *mahat-tattva*, absorbs false ego and its functions. That *mahat* is absorbed into the modes of nature, which are goodness, passion and ignorance. The modes of nature are then reduced to a state of equilibrium and, impelled by the time factor, are absorbed into the original *mahat*, the unmanifested form of nature. This unmanifested nature is not subject to the changes that are due to time because it has no beginning nor end. It is the unmanifest, eternal seeds of creation.

The *Bhagavatam* (12.4.20-22) further states that once the contents of the universe reach this stage of unmanifest nature, known as *pradhana*, then no longer are there such things as planets, demigods, senses, and vital air. Nor are there the material elements of earth, air, fire, and water. Nor are there subtle elements, such as mind, intelligence, speech, nor the modes of nature, nor even time. Neither are there any states of consciousness. Everything is void and indescribable. This *pradhana* is the root or foundation of the material creation.

This is the *Prakritika* annihilation when all of the material energies of the Supreme Being, impelled at first by time, begins the transformations by which they lose their potencies and are then dissolved together into primordial matter. Then the innumerable universes and nonmanifest material ingredients merge into the huge body of Maha-Vishnu with the

inhalation of His breath. He is situated in what is called the Karana Ocean, or Causal Ocean, in which all the universes rest while they are manifested.

Furthermore, it is explained in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (10.87.12-13) that after the universal annihilation when Lord Maha-Vishnu withdraws into Himself all of the universes He had created, He will lay for sometime as if asleep, and His energies will rest dormant within Him. When the time comes for the next creation, then the forms of the personified *Vedas* will appear from the Lord's breathing and will awaken Him by chanting descriptions of His characteristics just as poets or singers awaken a king. This confirms that the *Vedas* are not simply books, but they are spiritual sound vibrations that exist eternally within the spiritual strata, and they are brought into this material world for the benefit of the materially bound living beings.

The above verses are in reference to when Lord Maha-Vishnu again creates the cosmic universes which appear in His breathing. It is explained that the material universes manifest with the exhalation of Lord Maha-Vishnu and they merge back into Him with His inhalation. This is similar to the way so many germs are found in the exhalation of an ordinary human, which can again be ingested with each inhalation. However, when Maha-Vishnu no longer intends to exhibit His material energies or manifest the material creation, Maha-Vishnu no longer exhales. What happens then is explained in the *Bhagavatam* (11.24.22-27): After the process of annihilation has reached the level in which the universe is void, all material energies then merge into the Supreme in His form of the omniscient Mahapurusha, the originator of all living beings in the material creation. That origin of all life, Maha-Vishnu, then merges into the Supreme in His original form as Lord Krishna, who exists in the highest levels of the spiritual world. In this way, all material energies ultimately remain absorbed in the body of Lord Krishna until He decides to manifest the material creation again. At that time He again expands into His form as Maha-Vishnu, who thus manifests the energies for the cosmic creation. Thus, ultimately, the Vedic texts establish that it is from the Supreme Being in His original form of Lord Krishna that all creation and annihilation are manifested.

This is further confirmed and explained in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* (Prakriti Khanda, 7.76-79): "That is called the natural dissolution of the universe. At that point of time, the earth becomes invisible and the entire

universe is submerged in water. All gods like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, the ascetics, and all the creatures which are moveable and immovable merge into the body of Lord Krishna. The material nature also is merged in Him. That is why it is known as the natural dissolution. After the fall of Brahma and his merging [into the unmanifest] at the time of dissolution, the entire period is like the winking of the eye for Lord Krishna. Thus, the entire world is destroyed, but the [spiritual world of] Goloka and Vaikuntha remain intact together [beyond the material manifestation] with Lord Krishna and His devotees [engaged in pastimes together].

“There, Lord Krishna divides Himself into two main expansions; one is His two-armed form in Goloka [the highest and most central of all the spiritual planets] while the other has four arms [in His expansions as Vishnu] in the Vaikuntha [spiritual planets].” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.85)

“In the winking of the eye of Lord Krishna, the same material universe re-emerges. Thus, the number of times the universe was created and is met with dissolution, along with the number of kalpas [days of Brahma] that may have passed is difficult to describe, and no one knows for sure.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.80-81) In other words, this cycle of creation, destruction and recreation is endless and has been going on indefinitely.

The process of both the material creation and its annihilation can be summarized in this way: In the very beginning of creation, a portion of Sri Krishna, the Supreme Being, assumes the form of Maha-Vishnu and lies on the causal ocean, the Karanadakashayi Ocean, which appears like a vast cloud in a corner of the spiritual sky. Within that Maha-Vishnu all of the unmanifest material ingredients exist, merged in His spiritual body until He is ready to create the cosmic manifestation. Then innumerable universes emanate from the exhalations of Maha-Vishnu and from the pores of His skin. Then these universes float in the waters of creation, called the Karanadakashayi Ocean. Within each universe, a portion of that Maha-Vishnu appears in His expansions known as Garbhodakashayi Vishnu, who, thus, oversees the process of creation in each universe. It is into this Garbhodakashayi Vishnu, reclining on the Garbhodaka Ocean, that all of the universal elements merge during the dissolution of Brahma’s night. But when the universe undergoes a complete annihilation, all of the universes, even the Garbhodakashayi Vishnus, merge back into the huge and

immeasurable body of Maha-Vishnu as He inhales. The duration of each cosmic creation is, thus, no more than a breath of Maha-Vishnu as He rests in the Karana Ocean during His mystic slumber, called *yoga-nidra*. The material world is said to be nothing more than a temporary dream, but it is the *yoga-nidra* dream of Lord Maha-Vishnu which manifests as this cosmic creation. After the final annihilation of all the universes, when the Supreme Being no longer cares to exhibit His material energies in the cosmos, the cloud of the material creation, the Karana Ocean, disappears into Lord Maha-Vishnu. Then He merges back into the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, who exists in the highest levels of the spiritual world.

As it is pointed out in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.4.36-38), this is the process of the constant generation, transformation, and annihilation of all living beings and their varied experiences while they exist within the material elements.

From these descriptions we can understand, as further explained in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.4.23-28), that it is the Supreme Absolute Truth, or God, alone who is the ultimate basis from which everything manifests. Everything within this material creation has no separate existence from that Supreme Reality. Everything, therefore, is connected with and has its foundation on the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Person, who is the cause of all causes. On that basis everything we see is nothing more than a display of His energies. Therefore, nothing really exists outside this connection with the Supreme Being. Forgetting this, or neglecting it, or acting outside of this awareness is but *maya*, the illusion. That is why the whole basis of true spiritual development is to rise above the illusion and get back to the reality.

When the Winds of Kali Rage

When people in general become accustomed to greed
and deceitfully endeavor to attain more than they need,
When dealings between friends become so demanding
and in family relations there's misunderstandings
When between husband and wife there is always strain
that is the age when the winds of Kali rage.

When men become quarrelsome and have but short lives
and are disturbed, lazy, and think spiritual truths are all lies,
When those who are spiritually advanced are no longer respected
and women, children and old men no longer protected,
When innocent beings are caught and mercilessly caged
that is the age when the winds of Kali rage.

When smoke and dust linger and darken the skies
and rains cease to pour and rivers start to dry
When natural disasters leave destruction after they've hit
when the earth reflects the minds of people who inhabit it
and when they think it's peaceful another holocaust will blaze
even scientists will not know why the winds of Kali rage.

When the leaders of this world become so corrupt and cruel
employing torture and high taxes over the people they rule
Out of ignorance only people will say, "This is a beautiful life,"
while ignoring those who are dying and living in strife
They take such troubles in stride saying, "There'll be better days,"
but such words are meaningless when the winds of Kali rage.

When property alone confers rank, wealth the only devotion,
lust the only bond of the sexes, falsehood the only promotion,

When women are slaves to man's passion, rich men reputed as pure,
presumption substituted for learning, dishonesty subsisting the
universe,

When morals and piety decrease until the world is wholly depraved,
that is the age when the winds of Kali will rage.

When people develop cruel habits without ever questioning why
thinking that making the mind and body happy is all there is to life,
Like a cult of robots they try to keep up with the times
One person does what the others do, ignoring the warning signs,
Controlled by unquenchable desires, they'll run in a craze,
that is the age when the winds of Kali hopelessly rage.

Of course, this age has not gotten so bad that we can't find a bit of
peace
but it's said that in the future all such pleasures will cease
So before the trouble gets worse and we no longer have the time
let's try to make some advancement and elevate our minds,
Because if we wait too late we may find there's nothing we can
change,
for we'll already be caught in the age when the winds of Kali rage.

APPENDIX ONE

Timing The Ages

When describing the length of the yugas or ages, and which yuga we are in and how far along we are in it, there is sometimes confusion about how to calculate them. A number of theories have cropped over the years regarding how the yugas transpire. The problem is when they are figured only according to years of earth's time, they will never be accurate. They are described in the Vedic literature according to the celestial years, or years of the Devas. Nonetheless, there are specific references in the Vedic texts which make it clear how to calculate them. For starters, the *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 231.12-20) explains it in detail:

“The *rishis*, measuring time, have given particular names to particular portions [of time]. Five and ten winks of the eye make what is called a *Kastha*. Thirty *Kasthas* make what is called a *Kala*. Thirty *Kalas*, with the tenth part of a *Kala*, make a *Muhurta*. Thirty *Muhurtas* make one day and night. Thirty days and nights form a month, and twelve months form a year. Persons well-read in mathematical science say that a year is made up of two solar motions, meaning the northern and southern. The sun makes the day and night for men. The night is for the sleep of all living creatures, and the day is for work. A month of human beings is equal to a day and night of the departed manes [ancestors who have gone on to the subtle worlds]. That division consists in this: the light half of the month is their day which is for work; and the dark fortnight is their night for sleep. A year (of men) is equal to a day and night to the gods [Devas or celestials]. This division consists in this: the half year for which the sun travels from the vernal to the autumnal equinox is the day of the gods, and the half year for which the sun moves from the latter to the former is their night. [Thus, an earth year is but a day for the Devas.] Calculating by the days and nights of human beings about which I have told you, I shall speak of the day and night of Brahma and his years also. I shall, in their order, tell you the number of years, that are for different purposes calculated differently, in the *Krita*, the *Treta*, the *Dvapara*, and the *Kali* yugas. Four thousand celestial years is the duration

of the first or Krita age. The morning of that cycle consists of four hundred years and its evening is of four hundred years. [Note: This says celestial years, or years of the demigods on the higher planets. Such years are much longer than those of planet earth. So 4000 celestial years, with the morning or Sandhya of 400 celestial years and the evening or Sandhyansa, or intermediate period, of another 400 years equals 4800 celestial years or 1,728,000 human years.]

“Regarding the other cycles [or yugas], the duration of each gradually decreases by a quarter in respect of both the principal period with the minor portion and the conjoining portion itself. These periods always keep up the never-ending and eternal worlds. They who know Brahma, O child, regard this as Immutable Brahma.” (*Mahabharata*, Shanti Parva, 231.21-22)

This means that as each age or yuga appears, from the Krita, Treta, Dvapara, to Kali, each yuga decreases by a quarter of the previous yuga, in addition to the conjoining Sandhya and Sandhyansa periods with each yuga. In this way, it is roughly calculated that a whole cycle of the four yugas, namely Krita, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali-yuga together, total about 12,000 celestial years in length.

The *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 231.29-32) continues: “The learned say that these 12,000 celestial years form what is called a cycle. A thousand such cycles form a single day of Brahma. The same is the duration of Brahma’s night. With the beginning of Brahma’s day the universal entities come into being. During the period of universal dissolution the Creator [Brahma] sleeps in Yogameditation. When the period of sleep expires, He awakes. What is Brahma’s day covers a thousand such cycles. His night also covers a thousand similar cycles. They who know this are said to know the day and the night. On the expiry of His night, Brahma, waking up, modifies the indestructible intelligence by causing it to be overlaid with ignorance. He then causes Consciousness to spring up, whence it originates Mind which is at one with the Manifest.” [This creative process is described in detail in my book *How the Universe was Created and Our Purpose In It*.]

In calculating the duration of the different yugas, there are a few differences between the *Puranas*, otherwise their descriptions are all the same. The *Brahmanda Purana* (1.2.29.31-34) specifically states that Krita or Satya-yuga is 1,440,000 human years in length, Treta-yuga is 1,080,000 years, Dvapara-yuga is 720,000 years, and Kali-yuga is 360,000 years in length. The *Linga Purana* (4.24-35) also agrees with this except for Treta-

yuga, which it says is 1,800,000 years in length. These figures are correct when we leave out the conjoining Sandhya [at the beginning of each yuga] and the Sandhyansa [ending of each yuga] periods.

When explaining the various measurements of time, the *Vishnu Purana* (Book One, Chapter Three) and the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3.11.19), along with the *Bhagavad-gita* (8.17), the *Vayu Purana* (Chapter 57), and *Bhavishya Purana* (Brahma Parva, 2.86-107), and others, such as the *Mahabharata* as quoted above, also all agree on the measurements of the durations of the yugas. This shows that these time measurements are corroborated throughout the Vedic texts, and if anyone has a different theory about the Vedic time frame, then they are going outside the Vedic descriptions. We will describe this in more simplified terms as follows:

In the explanations of the measurements of time found therein, one cycle of the four yugas together is 12,000 years of the demigods, called divine years. Each of these years is composed of 360 days, and each of their days is equal to one human year. So Kritayuga is 4000 divine years in length, Treta-yuga is 3000 divine years in length, Dvapara-yuga is 2000 divine years in length, and Kali-yuga is 1000 divine years long, each one a quarter less than Krita or Satya-yuga, with the addition of the conjoining portions of the Sandhya and Sandhyansa.

So, each yuga is preceded by a period called a Sandhya, which is as many hundred years in length as there are thousands of years in that particular yuga. Each yuga is also followed by a period of time known as a Sandhyansa, which is also as many hundreds of years in length as there are thousands of years in the yuga. In between these periods of time is the actual yuga. Therefore, we have:

Krita-yuga = 4000 divine years, Sandhya = 400 divine years, Sandhyansa = 400 divine years. Total = 4800 divine years x 360 days = 1,728,000 human years.

Treta-yuga = 3000 divine years, Sandhya = 300 divine years, Sandhyansa = 300 divine years. Total = 3600 divine years x 360 days = 1,296,000 human years.

Dvapara-yuga = 2000 divine years, Sandhya = 200 divine years, Sandhyansa = 200 divine years. Total = 2400 divine years x 360 days = 864,000 human years.

Kali-yuga = 1000 divine years, Sandhya = 100 divine years, Sandhyansa = 100 divine years. Total = 1200 divine years x 360 days = 432,000 human years.

This equals 4,320,000 human years, or 12,000 divine years, in one cycle of the four yugas together, and 1000 cycles of these yugas equals a Chaturyuga at 12,000,000 divine years and 4,320,000,000 human years in one day of Brahma. It is also explained that Kali-yuga began with the disappearance of Lord Krishna from the planet. This has been calculated to be 3102 BCE. Since Kali-yuga is described as being 432,000 earth years in length, with 5,000 years and more already passed, then the age of Kali-yuga has approximately 326,000 more years to go.

To be more clear about this, these calculations are further confirmed in the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purana* which relates the same figures in the following way:

“Now I will tell you about the counting of time. As the days rise and end, similarly all the four yugas also come and end. A single divine day and night of Manu compares with the completed year of the humans. Those well-versed in the signs of time, ordain that after the passing of the three hundred and sixty yugas of the humans, a divine yuga of the gods is made. Seventy-one divine years [of the gods] comprise a *manvantara*. An age of Indra is equivalent to one *manvantara*. Thus, after the existence of twenty-eight Indras, there is one day and night of Brahma. Thus, after the lapse of one hundred and eight years, the life of Brahma comes to an end.” (*Brahma-Vaivarta Purana*, Prakriti Khanda, 7.72-75)

The same time frame is calculated with a different description in the *Kalki Purana* (19.12-14) as follows:

“Twelve thousand years of the demigods is the duration of the four yugas on earth. The duration of Satya-yuga is four thousand celestial years, Treta-yuga is three thousand celestial years, Dvaparayuga is two thousand celestial years, and Kali-yuga is one thousand celestial years. The transitional periods of the four yugas are four hundred, three hundred, two hundred, and one hundred celestial years respectively. In this way, the total comes to twelve thousand celestial years. The duration of the reign of each Manu is seventy-one cycles of the four yugas. Fourteen Manus reign during one day of Brahma. This is also the duration of Brahma’s night [which is as long as his day].”

To understand this in greater detail and to also show the consistency of these calculations throughout the Vedic literature, we can use the additional example. Here Suta Gosvami explains to the sages during the huge gathering at the forest of Naimisaranya 5000 years ago, all of the divisions of time and how the lengths of the yugas are formulated, as related in the *Vayu Purana*.

“In the context of the description of the earth, etc., I have already said about the four yugas. Now I shall recount them in detail. (Listen and) understand them. Calculating everything and mentioning in detail, I shall narrate in full the six aspects of yugas, namely *yugabheda* (difference in yugas), *yugadharma* (the particular characteristics of each yuga), *yugasandhi* (the junction of yugas), *yugamsha* (the parts of yugas), and *yugasandhana* (the joints of the yugas). The human year can be understood (calculated) by means of valid working knowledge. Calculating on the basis of that year [in the human time frame], I shall explain the four yugas. The time taken to utter a short syllable is equal to a Nimesha. Nimesha, Kashtha, Kala, and Muhurta are the units of time. Fifteen Nimeshas constitute a Kashtha, thirty Kashthas make one Kala, and thirty Kalas make one Muhurta. Thirty Muhurtas make one full day and night. The sun demarcates the human as well as the divine days and nights. The day is intended for activity and the night is meant for sleep. A (human) month constitutes the day and night of the Pitris [the departed ancestors, now included as part of the celestials]. Its division is thus: The dark half is the day for them and the bright half is their night for sleep [as calculated by the waning and waxing of the moon].” (*Vayu Purana* 57.2-9)

“Therefore, thirty human months make one month of the Pitris [the celestial ancestors]. On the basis of the human calculation, three hundred and sixty months constitute a year of the Pitris. A hundred human years constitute three years and four months of the Pitris. A human year in accordance with the human calculation is one day and one night of the Devas [the higher demigods]. This is the conclusion in this scripture.” (*Vayu Purana* 57.10-12)

“So, the divine day and night together [of the Devas] make a human year. A further classification is that the Uttarayana period (northern transit of the sun) is the day and the Dakshinayana period (southern transit of the sun) is the night (of the Devas). Thirty of the days and nights of the gods, or thirty human years make one divine month (of the gods). One hundred

human years make three divine months and three divine days. Thus is the divine reckoning for divisions of time.” (*Vayu Purana* 57.13-15)

“Three hundred and sixty years according to human calculation constitute one divine year. Three thousand and thirty years according to human calculation constitute one year of the Seven Sages (Saptarishis) or the (astrological constellation of) the Great Bear. Nine thousand and ninety human years make one Kraunchan year. Thirty-six thousand human years should be known as one hundred divine years. Thus is the calculation of the divine unit of time. Persons well versed in calculation say that three hundred and sixty thousand (360,000) years reckoned on the basis of human time units constitute a thousand divine years [of the Devas]. It is thus that the sages sang about the divine calculation. They have formulated the reckoning of the yugas and their duration on the basis of this divine calculation.” (*Vayu Purana* 57.16-21)

Now with all of this calculating we reach the point where it is used to establish the durations of the four yugas as followed:

“Wise people know that there are four yugas in Bharata Varsha [the area of India and sometimes considered planet earth in general]. The first one is Krita, followed by Treta, Dvapara, and Kaliyuga. One should reckon these yugas in this order. They say that the Krita-yuga consists of four thousand years. The Sandhya (transition period) consists of as many hundreds of years (400 divine years). The Sandhyamsha (part of the junction with the next yuga) is equal to the Sandhya period. In the Sandhyas and Sandhyamshas of the other yugas there is a gradual reduction of a thousand [years of the yuga] and hundred years [in the Sandhya and Sandhyamsha transitions]. [This means that] Treta-yuga contains three thousand years, and its Sandhya and Sandhyamsha [junctions with the preceding and following yugas] consist of three hundred years each. The wise say that Dvapara-yuga contains two thousand [celestial] years, and the Sandhya consists of two hundred years and the Sandhyamsha is equal to the Sandhya [two hundred years]. The learned say that Kali-yuga consists of a thousand years, and its Sandhya is of a hundred years and the Sandhyamsha is the same. This period of twelve thousand (divine) years is known as a Maha-yuga. The four yugas together are Krita, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali.” (*Vayu Purana* 57.22-28)

“In this world the calculation of years is based on the human level. Now I shall mention the duration of Krita-yuga in accordance with that type of

[human] calculation. The duration [of Krita-yuga] is one million, four hundred and forty thousand [human] years. As for Kali-yuga, it is one fourth of that. Thus the specific duration of time of the four yugas excluding the Sandhyas and Sandhyamshas is declared. Including the Sandhyas and Sandhyamshas the duration of the four yugas put together is four million three hundred and twenty thousand [4,320,000] human years.” (*Vayu Purana* 57.29-32)

Thus, we have provided the different ways of explaining the units of time to calculate the length of the yugas according to the references in the Vedic texts. I hope this has provided enough information and evidence to clarify and conclude what is sometimes a confusing issue, and that the same figures and conclusions are arrived at in various texts.

THE MANU AVATARAS

To more clearly understand the division of time known as a *manvantara*, or the life span of one Manu, the full explanation is provided herein. First of all, the Manus appear for certain durations within a day of Brahma. Brahma’s day is calculated as 4,300,000 years (the time of one cycle of the four yugas) times 1,000, or about 4,320,000,000 human years. Within one day of Brahma there are 14 Manus. The list of the 14 Manus in this universe is as follows: Yajna is Svayambhuva Manu, Vibhu is Svarocisha Manu, Satyasena is Uttama Manu, Hari is Tamasa Manu, Vaikuntha is Raivata Manu, Ajita is Ckakashusha Manu, Vamana is Vaivasvata Manu (the Manu of the present age), Sarvabhauma is Savarni Manu, Rishabha is Daksha-savarni Manu, Vishvaksena is Brahma-savarni Manu, Dharmasetu is Dharma-savarni Manu, Sudhama is Rudra-savarni Manu, Yogesvara is Deva-savarni Manu, and Brihadbhanu is Indrasavarni Manu. These fourteen Manus cover the 4,320,000,000 solar years of one day of Brahma. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.3.5 purport & *Chaitanya-caritamrita*, *Madhya-lila* 20, 319-328)

To understand more completely how long these Manus reign we can consider the following information. For example, there are four ages, namely Satya-yuga, Treta-yuga, Dvapara-yuga, and Kaliyuga, which together comprise a divya-yuga, which is one set of the four yugas, also called a chatur-yuga. Let us remember that Satya-yuga lasts 1,728,000 years, Treta-yuga 1,296,000 years, Dvapara-yuga 864,000 years, and Kali-

yuga 432,000 years. That is a total of 4,320,000 years. A day of Brahma, called a kalpa, lasts for 1,000 of these cycles, and is thus 4,320,000,000 solar years. There are 14 Manus in each day of Brahma. Each Manu is said to exist for one *manvantara*, which is a period of time lasting 71 divya-yugas. Therefore, each Manu exists for roughly 306,720,000 years. Additionally, Brahma lives for 100 years, composed of 365 of such days in a year. (*Bhagavad-gita* 8.17 & *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.3.11.20 & *Vishnu Purana*, Book One, Chapter Three, p.35)

From further analysis we can also discover the age of the earth from these Vedic calculations. The present Manu is the seventh in line, called Vaivasvata Manu, the son of Vivasvan. Twenty-seven divya-yugas, or cycles of the four yugas, of his age have now passed. So 27 divya-yugas means 116,640,000 years. It is scheduled that at the end of the Dvapara-yuga of the twenty-eighth divya-yuga of the seventh Manu, Lord Krishna appears on earth with the full paraphernalia of His eternal spiritual abode, named Vrajadhama or Goloka Vrindavana. Brahma's day consists of 4,320,000,000 years. In this way, six of these Manus appear and disappear before Lord Krishna takes birth. This means that 1,975,320,000 years of the day of Brahma have gone by before the appearance of Lord Krishna. (*Chaitanya-caritamrita*, *Adi-lila* 3, 7-10 & *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.30.49 purport)

Therefore, this is also the age of the earth in this particular day of Brahma by these Vedic calculations. Science is sometimes surprised that such lengths of time were part of the ancient Vedic conception of the universe.

APPENDIX TWO

Description of Kali-yuga From the Ramayana

The *Ramayana* by Tulasi Das (*Sri Ramacharitamanasa*, Uttar-kanda, verses 96-103) is another Vedic text which contains particular predictions on the conditions that will be found in the age of Kali-yuga. We have not included these beforehand, but they are quite similar to those we have already quoted, so here is a summary of some of what it says.

Kakbhushundi said: In the Kali-yuga, the hot-bed of sin, men and women are all steeped in unrighteousness and act contrary to the *Vedas*. In the age of Kali, every virtue becomes engulfed by the sins of Kali-yuga; all good books disappear; impostors promulgate a number of creeds which they invent out of their own wit. The people become fallen prey to delusion and all pious acts are overtaken by greed. Now listen, while I describe a few peculiarities of Kali-yuga.

In that age, as it unfolds into the future, no one follows the duties of one's own social status or position, and the four *ashramas* or stages of life also disappear. Every man and woman takes delight in revolting against the *Vedas*, and the principals they establish. The Brahmanas sell the *Vedas* and their knowledge; the kings bleed their subjects through taxes; no one respects the injunctions of the *Vedas*. The right course for every individual is that which one takes a fancy to; for example, a man of erudition is he who plays the braggart. Whoever launches spurious undertakings and is given over to hypocrisy is regarded as equal to a saint. He alone is clever who robs another of his wealth; he who puts up false appearances is an ardent follower of established usage. He who is given to lying and is clever at joking is spoken of as a man of respect in the Kali age. He alone who is a reprobate and has abandoned the path of the *Vedas* [viewed as purely secular, though in reality spiritually weak] is viewed as a man of wisdom and dispassion in the Kali age. He alone who has grown big nails and long

locks of matted hair is a renowned ascetic in the Kali age. [Quality no longer carries any value, but all credibility lies with appearances.]

They alone who put on an unsightly garb and ornaments and eat anything and everything, no matter whether it is worth eating or not, are considered ascetics; they alone are perfect men and they are worth adoring in the Kali age. They who are of maleficent conduct are held in great esteem and they alone are worthy of honor. Even so they alone who are babblers in thought, word and deed are orators in the Kali age.

Dominated by women, all men dance to their tune like a monkey controlled by its trainer. Shudras instruct the twice-born (Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) in spiritual wisdom and wearing the sacred thread, accept the worst type of gifts. All men are given over to sensuality and greed and they are irascible and hostile to the gods, to the Brahmanas, to the *Vedas* as well as to the saints. Unfortunate wives desert their accomplished and handsome husbands and bestow their hearts on a [irresponsible] paramour. Wives having their husbands alive wear no ornaments on their person, while widows adorn themselves in the latest style [showing that husbands may be worth more dead than alive, or once free they are on the prowl for a new one]. The disciple and the preceptor severally resemble a deaf man and a blind man: the one would not listen, while the other cannot see. A spiritual guide who robs his disciple of money but fails to rid him of his sorrow [through spiritual upliftment] is cast into a terrible hell. Parents call their children and teach them such religion as may only fill their belly.

Men and women may talk of nothing else than the knowledge of God (Brahma-Gyana); while in their greed they would kill a Brahmana, or for that matter, kill even their own spiritual guide for the sake of a single shell. Shudras argue with the twice-born [those who are spiritually developed] and ask: “Are we in any way inferior to you? A good Brahmana is he who knows the truth of God!” and defiantly glowers at them.

They alone who are covetous of another’s wife and are clever at wiles and steeped in delusion, malice and worldly attachment are enlightened men swearing by the identity of the individual soul with God. Such is the practice I have seen in every Kali age. Doomed themselves, such people bring ruin even to those rare souls who tread the path of virtue. They who find fault with the *Vedas* by dint of logic are condemned to each hell for a whole kalpa (day of Brahma). People of the lowest grade in society get their heads shaved and enter the order of Sannyasa (renunciation) [though they

be completely unqualified] when their wives are no more in this world and they have lost their household properties. [Thus, they misuse it as an easy retirement program when they have nothing else they can do.] They allow themselves to be worshiped by the Brahmanas and bring ruin to themselves here as well as hereafter.

As for the [ordinary] Brahmanas, they are often unlettered, grasping, lascivious, immoral and stupid, and marry low-caste women of lewd character. Shudras on the other hand practice *japa* (the muttering of prayers) and austere penance, undertake sacred vows of various kinds and expound the *Puranas* from an exalted seat. All men follow a course of conduct of their own imagination; the endless variety of wrong-doing cannot be described in words.

In the Kali age there ensues a confusion of *varnas* [social classes and qualities] (due to promiscuous intermarriages) and every one infringes the sacred laws. Men perpetrate sins and reap suffering, terror, disease, sorrow, and desolation. Overcome by delusion they walk not in the path of devotion to Sri Hari, conjoined with dispassion and wisdom - a path which has the approval of the *Vedas* - and invent diverse creeds of their own.

The so-called recluses [those expected to be renunciants] build themselves houses and furnish them at considerable expense [thus often displaying more wealth than the average householders and laymen]. Dispassion is no more to be seen in them, the same having been wiped out by their eagerness for sensual pleasure. The so-called ascetics grow wealthy and householders go penniless; the freaks of the Kali age are beyond all telling. Men drive out a well-born and virtuous wife and bring home some servant-girl, casting to the winds all good usage. Sons respect their fathers and mothers, only so long as they have not seen the face of their wives. From the time they take a fancy to their wives' kinsfolk, they begin to look upon their own people as their enemies.

Kings get addicted to sin and cease to have anything to do with piety. They ever persecute their subjects by inflicting unmerited punishment on them. The meanest churl, if he is rich, is considered an accounted noble. A Brahmana is known only by his sacred thread, and an ascetic by his naked body. He who refuses to recognize the *Vedas* and *Puranas* is counted as a true saint and a servant of Sri Hari in the Kali age. In the Kali age, those who find fault with others' virtues can be had in any number, but no one [can be found] possessing real virtues.

In the Kali age famines are of frequent occurrence and for want of food grains people perish en masse. In the age of Kali duplicity, perversity, hypocrisy, malice, heresy, pride, infatuation, concupiscence, and arrogance, etc., pervade the whole universe. Men practice *japa*, austere penance and charity, perform sacrifices and undertake sacred vows with some unholy motive [hope for materialistic gain]. The gods rain not upon the earth and food grains sown in the soil do not germinate.

In the age of Kali there is no contentment, nor discernment, nor composure. People of all classes, whether high or low, have taken to begging. Envy, harsh words and covetousness are rampant; while evenness of mind is absent. The duties and rules of conduct prescribed for the four orders of society and stages in life are neglected. Self-control, charity, compassion, and wisdom disappear while stupidity and fraud multiply to a large extent. Men and women all pamper their body; while slanderers are diffused all over the world.

However, though the age of Kali is a store house of impurities and vices, nonetheless it has many virtues, too. Final emancipation is possible in the Kali age without any exertion. Moreover, the same goal which is reached through worship of God, or performance of sacrifices or the practice of Yoga in the Satya-yuga, and in the Treta and Dwapara-yuga, men are able to attain through chanting of the holy name of Sri Hari [Lord Krishna or His other incarnations such as Lord Ram] in the Kali age. No other age can compare with the Kali age provided a man has faith (in its virtue); for in this age one can easily cross the ocean of transmigration simply by singing Sri Ram's holy praises.

So, once again we see here in the *Ramayana* that the prescription for changing the course of Kali-yuga, and for holding back its dark influence, is that we all learn about and engage in the devotional service of the Lord, which begins with the chanting of the holy names of Lord Hari, Krishna. We can easily chant *japa*, which can be done quietly for our own meditation such as on beads, or in the congregational and group singing of the holy names in the temple or our homes. As we can begin to see the unwanted changes take place around us that are predicted to increase as the age of Kali moves forward, the more we will need to take up this principal of chanting the holy names and discussing this spiritual knowledge of the Supreme. Without that, in time all such knowledge will, with each

successive generation, gradually disappear from the face of the earth. Let us hold that possibility away from us as much as possible.

APPENDIX THREE

The Bhavishya Purana

When it comes to prophecies in the Vedic literature, anyone who is aware of the contents will also look for the information and predictions found in the *Bhavishya Purana*. The *Bhavishya Purana* is especially known for its descriptions of the future, but it has been determined that it is not always a dependable source. The *Bhavishya Purana* is considered to be one of the major 18 *Puranas* of the Vedic canon. As the name suggests, it includes a section on future events (*bhavisyati*). The *Bhavishya Purana* is also mentioned in the ancient text of the *Apastambha-dharma-sutras*, so it is to be taken as an original Puranic literature dating from the time of Srila Vyasadeva, who is said to be its original author. In the text of the *Bhavishya Purana*, it is spoken by Sumantu, the disciple of Srila Vyasadeva, to King Shatanika. This was at the suggestion of Srila Vyasadeva [VedaVyasa] who was sitting nearby in the assembly of sages, all of whom were listening to the discussion. (*Bhavishya Purana*, Bhrama Parva, 1.28-35) Thus, it is considered an authentic Vedic text coming from Srila Vyasadeva.

However, there are presently four known editions of the *Bhavishya Purana*, each having different predictions from the other. So, its dependability also hinges on which edition you are able to obtain. One edition contains five chapters, one contains four, another contains three and yet another contains only two. Even the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (12.13.4-9) lists the number of verses in the *Puranas*, of which the *Bhavishya Purana* is said to have 14,500 verses. Yet, in other places we find that it is indicated the *Bhavishya Purana* has 26,000 verses. Additionally, the contents in all four editions differ in various degrees—some having extra verses and some having less. Due to these circumstances, it is difficult to ascertain which of the four is the original text of the *Bhavishya Purana*, if indeed an original text still exists,

We know that some parts of it, many chapters in fact, have been lost, while other portions are likely to have been tampered or changed with possible unauthorized additions. Most of what we find in it may be truthful

and dependable, and holds to the regular Vedic principles and information, but some parts or verses may be interpolations added later to suit the situation or agenda of those doing the tampering. So, how do we determine what is reliable? That is not so easy. Most prophecies in the *Puranas* can be corroborated by other *Puranas*. That is somewhat true of the *Bhavishya Purana* as well, yet it also holds some that are completely unique. This does not mean that they are all false, but some of them may be questionable. So, I have separated it from the rest of the Vedic prophecies and provided what we find of it in this appendix for further scrutiny.

The word *bhavishyati* means “what will be.” The *Bhavishya Purana* is comparatively short among the other *Puranas*, with about 14,000 couplets or *shlokas*. It contains many topics, stories, and various levels of knowledge, all of which are in agreement to the basic Vedic standards. However, it is most noted for its sections filled with astrological predictions and long lists of the dynasties and kings of the age of Kali-yuga. Most of the information in it is the general sort that many *Puranas* contain. Yet, most of the predictions deal with the time following the war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas at Kuruksetra, generally accepted as having occurred around 3140 to 3137 BCE. Thereafter, the age of Kali began in the year 3102 BCE with the disappearance of Lord Krishna. It is generally considered that the *Bhavishya Purana* was written by Srila Vyasadeva while Senajit was king, 267 years after the war of Kuruksetra, although it could have been earlier.

One of the latter sections of the *Bhavishya Purana* clearly describes Kali-yuga as an evil time. It explains the Yavanas (Greeks) would invade India with the ambition and hope of plundering others. It explains that such Yavanas will follow corrupt ways: The rulers will not be properly appointed by qualifications. Various races of humans will become prominent and rule the earth. Many races will decline as soon as they rise. Unrighteous and poor rulers and kings will kill each other for little reason. The sophisticated Aryan class of people, and the lower class *mleccha* races who do not believe in Vedic customs, will mingle freely. Such low class rulers will create conditions in which women, children, and old men will receive no respect, and even be massacred. As the Yavanas, Aryans, and *mlecchas* in turn prevail over each other, civilization will become corrupt in moralistic principles. The populations will perish.

Yavana was the name of one of the sons of Maharaja Yayati. He was given the area of Turkey to rule, so Turkey is the area of Maharaja Yavana's descendants. At one time the Yavanas were Kshatriyas, warriors connected with the Vedic culture. However, they later gave up Vedic culture to follow their own proclivities. In the battle of Kuruksetra, they were defeated by the Pandavas after they had taken the side of Duryodhana and the Kauravas under the influence of Karna. Thus, they left the region of India in disgrace. These Yavanas are described in the *Mahabharata* (Adi Parva, 85.34). It was predicted that these Yavanas would return to India and conquer it. This has become true with the Muslim invasions.

The *Bhavishya Purana* also states that during the third century CE, destitute outcastes and Shudras will become kings in areas along the rivers Indus, Chenab, and the Kounti, and in the area of Kashmir. None of these kings will have good qualities such as righteousness, truthfulness, or grace.

Similar to these prophecies are those found in other *Puranas*, such as the *Matsya*, *Vayu*, *Brahmanda*, *Vishnu*, *Garuda*, and the *Bhagavata Purana*, along with the *Mahabharata* and even the *Ramayana*. These descriptions have their similarities as well as differences.

THE PROPHECY OF JAYADEVA GOSWAMI

One of the unique prophecies from the *Bhavishya Purana* by Srila Vyasadeva is of the appearance of the great devotee Jayadeva Goswami. The story is that the sage Brihaspati had described to Lord Indra, the king of heaven, how in the city of Pampapura there was a Brahmana by the name of Heli. He was a great worshiper of the sun planet but did not want to accept *dakshina* (donations) so he used 5000 coins to develop a shop in which he used his artistic talents to produce beautiful clothes, paintings, metal deities, etc. All the profits he earned he used in his worship to the sun-god, especially in the month of Magha (January-February).

Gradually, the sun-god Vishvakarma (the architect of the gods) was pleased with him and appeared in a brilliant form on the top of a large pillar at the lake called Pampasarovara. Heli made food offerings to the sun-god at noontime, pleasing the sun-god. Thus, when Heli left his body he entered into the sun. Brihaspati explained that in this way, the sun-god could also help Lord Indra.

As further explained by Suta Gosvami, Lord Indra thus began to worship the Sun-god in a similar fashion. Being pleased by such worship, the sun-god Tvastha (Visvakarma) explained: “I will take birth in a village named Bilvagram in Bengal. I will become the poet known as Jayadeva and will compile the Nirukta (Vedic vocabulary).” Thereafter, he left for Bengal and appeared as the son of the Brahmana known as Kanduke. Jayadeva served his parents for 12 years from the age of five. When his parents left their bodies, he performed the funeral ceremonies (Shraddha) in Gaya, after which they went to heaven. Afterwards, Jayadeva lived in the jungle as a renounced Brahmana.

When Jayadeva was twenty-three, a Brahmana offered his daughter to Lord Jagannatha. But Lord Annirudha in the form of the Darubrahma (wooden form of the Deity of the Lord, Jagannatha) spoke and said: “O Satyavrata, please take your daughter Padmavati and offer her to Jayadeva who is like My own body.” Satyavrata, the Brahmana, obediently took his daughter to Jayadeva and left her with him. The girl, Padmavati, served her husband for many years. It was during this time that Jayadeva wrote the Nirukta, which is one of the six Vedangas. There had been five kinds of Niruktas, but the evil nature of the people in Kali-yuga caused them to be destroyed and the illiterate language known as Prakrit-bhasha had been established. Thereafter, for the sake of the demigods and the upliftment of humanity, Panini, the author of the Ashtadhyayi grammar, established the eloquence and purity of the Sanskrit language.

Once two thieves robbed Jayadeva of all the money he had and also chopped off his hands and feet, leaving him to die in the ditch. His wife greatly grieved for him. When King Dharmapala was out hunting, he found Jayadeva in this way and asked who put him into this condition. Jayadeva replied no one, he was simply suffering the results of his past bad activities and karma. The king then placed Jayadeva and his wife on a palanquin and took them to his palace and established a dharamshala or religious institution after being instructed by Jayadeva.

Those same thieves came to see King Dharmapala while dressed as educated Vaishnavas. They explained to the king that they have been serving Lord Vishnu in the Shalagrama form, and He accepts their offerings. Asked if the King wanted proof, the thieves showed the King a four-handed form of Lord Vishnu in the act of eating. Impressed, the king thought himself extremely fortunate and told Jayadeva that by the grace of

these Vaishnavas he had seen the Lord Himself. Therefore, Jayadeva should also come quickly to see.

Then Jayadeva saw the thieves, who also recognized him. They promptly told the king a story, stating that Jayadeva had once been a cook in a king's palace, but being greedy for money he tried to kill the king with poisoned food. Thus that king, having discovered the plan, wanted Jayadeva to be crucified. But the thieves explained to King Dharmapala that they instructed Jayadeva in Vedic knowledge and then the king refused to crucify Jayadeva but cut off his hands and feet instead.

However, while speaking in this way, the earth opened up and swallowed the two thieves, sending them down to Patala-loka. Then Jayadeva began to cry for them and his hands and feet reappeared on his body. Then he explained to the king what had actually happened to him.

Jayadeva went on to write his *Gita Govinda*, which was read by the king who received liberation due to its affects. In this way, the story of Jayadeva was related, and the pastime of Lord Vishnu appearing as Sri Krishna Chaitanya was described next.

THE PREDICTION OF NIMBARKACHARYA

The *Bhavishya Purana*, Pratisarga Parva, 7th Chapter, explains that once after the Sun-god had been worshiped by the other demigods, he was pleased and announced that by the order of Lord Krishna, Sudarshan, the personification of the Lord's disc weapon, would take birth on earth in the age of Dvapara-yuga and would be known as Nambaditya (Nimbarka). He would reverse the decline in religious principles at the time.

Therein, Suta Gosvami goes on to explain that Lord Krishna had ordered him to appear on the bank of the Narmada River. This, as related in the story, is on the southern side of the Meru mountain in the state of Tailanga where the devarsis (god-like sages) congregate. Sri Krishna had ordered him to accept instruction from Narada Muni and reside in the holy places of Mathura, Naimisaranya and Dvaraka.

Sudarshana accepted these orders and appeared on earth in the family of a holy Brahmana, Aruna, and his wife, Jayanti. They were living as austere sages in the state of Tailanga. His brilliant luster appeared in the heart of Jayanti, who looked like the bright moon. Then during the month of Kartika (Oct-Nov), on the night of Gaura paksha purnima, when the five planets

were arranged in high places, in Masa-lagna, during the evening sunset, Sudarshana, who enthused the whole universe with Vedic knowledge, appeared from Jayanti.

How Nimbarka got his name is also related. It is said that once Lord Brahma went to visit Nimbarka at his ashrama just before sunset and asked, since he was hungry, if he could have something to eat while the sun is still in the sky. Nimbarka gave him some food and while he was eating, the sun went down. Yet, by his own power, Nimbarka kept a disc which shined like a sun on a Neem tree. Impressed, Lord Brahma paid his obeisances to Nimbarka by laying flat on his stomach. After getting up and being pleased by the Brahmana's austerity and power, Lord Brahma told him that he would be known as Nimbadiya (Nimbarka—one who made the sun appear from a Neem tree).

THE PREDICTION OF MADHVACHARYA

This is from the *Bhavishya Purana*, Pratisarga Parva, Chapter 7. It is described that Brihaspati explained to Lord Indra, the king of the heavenly region, how a Brahmana named Shakra in Ayodhya, worshiped the Asvini Kumaras, Rudras, Vasus, and Surya, the Sun-god, through the chanting of mantras from the *Yajur-veda*. Being pleased, these demigods awarded him all desirable things. Because of such blessings, he lived for 10,000 years without aging. After finally quitting his body, he went to the Sun planet to rule there for 100,000 years before going on to Brahmaloaka, the highest planet of Lord Brahma. After that he was still able to spend 8,000 celestial years of the demigods to tour the various higher planets before returning to the sun planet again. However, in hearing this we should not think that he lived there in a physical form conducive for living on planet earth. Each planet has its own environment, and any resident there has a body appropriate for the atmosphere of the planet. In this case, the Sun is referred to as one of the higher planets for pious beings who are qualified to live there.

Upon hearing about this, Lord Indra, the king of the heavenly region, also wanted to please the Sun-god and thus began worshiping the Sun-god, Surya, and the various demigods in the month of June-July. Then, on the purnima or full-moon day, the Sun-god descended to the earth planet and told the various demigods that he would take birth as a Brahmana in Kali-

yuga in the holy town of Vrindavana. This Brahmana would be born as Madhu, the son of Madhva, and execute pious acts for the demigods according to the Vedic customs.

Then the *Bhavishya Purana* describes how Suta Gosvami explained that the Sun-god sent a special ray of light from his body and sent it to Vrindavana. After taking birth, this Brahmana soon attracted all irreligious people and gave them the spiritual energy, Vaishnavi-shakti, for service to Lord Vishnu, the bestower of liberation. In this way, he became known as Madhvacharya.

THE PREDICTION OF SHRIDHARA

The *Bhavishya Purana* (Pratisarga Parva, Chapter 7) also goes on to relate how there would be a Brahmana in the age of Dvaparayuga named Megha Sharma. He was a farmer who was also learned as a follower of the Vedic path. He would engage ten percent of his profits in worshipping the demigods everyday. During the time when Maharaja Shantanu ruled the area, there was a drought that lasted for five years. Nonetheless, the farm of Megha Sharma was still plentiful because of being watered by rains. During the scarcity he became quite wealthy. So the king called him to request that he give spiritual advice to him so the people could avoid this scarcity.

Megha Sharma told them how to engage in great worship to the Sun-god in the month of Shravana (July-August). He instructed that the king should call twelve qualified Vedic Brahmanas to chant the mantra to the sun one-hundred thousand times. Then, through the Brahmanas, on the purnima (full moon) day, they should offer onetenth the number of oblations into the sacred fire. The king did this and fed all the Brahmanas nicely, after which the Sun-god was greatly pleased and poured heavy rains across the land. Thereafter, the king became greatly pious by regularly performing this Surya ritual.

Then Surya, the Sun-god, went to visit Varanasi and announced that in Kali-yuga he would appear in Vrindavana and preach the customs of the Devas according to the Vedic path when the *mlecchas* [low class people] would be ruling the land. At the appropriate time, Surya descended into Vrindavana as a son of Deva Sharma and was named Shridhara. He finely studied the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and compiled a great commentary which

became famous and is known as the *Sridhara-bhasya*, “Sridhara’s Commentary.”

THE PROPHECY OF JESUS CHRIST

Probably one of the most controversial prophecies in the *Bhavishya Purana* is that concerning Jesus. Dr. Vedavyas, a research scholar with a doctorate in Sanskrit, discusses some important prophecies from the *Bhavishya Purana*, which he says dates back to near 3000 BCE. He states that one prophecy describes the future appearance of *Isha putra*, the son (*putra*) of God (*Isha*)(Jesus Christ), born of an unmarried woman named Kumari (Mary) Garbha Sambhava. He would visit India at the age of thirteen and go to the Himalayan Mountains and do *tapas* or penance to acquire spiritual maturity under the guidance of *rishis* and *siddha-yogis* before going back to Palestine to preach to his people. So, if Jesus was trained by the sages of India, this would explain why he was able to perform various miracles (*siddhas*) that various yogis know how to do. It also explains why there are so many philosophical similarities between early Christianity and Vedic culture. However, there are some people who feel that the Isha that is mentioned herein is not the same as Jesus Christ.

Dr. Vedavyas goes on to say that the *Bhavishya Purana* describes how Jesus would visit Varanasi and other Hindu and Buddhist holy places. This is also corroborated by the manuscript on the life of Isha (or Issa), discovered by Mr. Notovich in 1886 at the Hemis monastery in Ladakh, India, as well as by the Hebrew inscriptions found in Srinagar, Kashmir at the Roza bal, the tomb of Yuz Asaf [Isha or Issa]. The *Bhavishya Purana* also predicted how Isha would meet Emperor Shalivahana who established the Shalivahana or “Saka” era. Dr. Vedavyas describes this in his Telegu book, *Veerabrahmendra Yogipai Parishodhana*.

The description that is taken to be of Jesus is found in verses 17-32 in the 19th chapter of the Chaturyuga Khanda Dvitiyadhyayah of the *Bhavishya Purana*. To get a clearer understanding, here is what the verses say:

Texts 17 - 21

*vikramaditya-pautrasca
pitr-rajyam grhitavan*

*jitva sakanduradharsams
cina-taittiridesajan*

*bahlikankamarupasca
romajankhurajanchhatan
tesam kosan-grhitva ca
danda-yogyanakarayata*

*sthapita tena maryada
mleccharyanam prthak-prthak
sindhusthanam iti jneyam
rastramaryasya cottamam*

*mlecchasthanam param sindhoh
krtam tena mahatmana
ekada tu sakadiso
himatungam samayayau*

Ruling over the Aryans was a king called Shalivahana, the grandson of Vikramaditya, who occupied the throne of his father. He defeated the Shakas who were very difficult to subdue, the Cinas [Chinese], and the people from Tittiri and Bahikaus who could assume any form at will. He also defeated the people from Rome and the descendants of Khuru, who were deceitful and wicked. He punished them severely and took their wealth. Shalivahana thus established the boundaries dividing the separate countries of the *mlecchas* [low classes] and the Vedic Aryans. In this way, Sindusthan came to be known as the greatest country. That personality appointed the abode of the *mlecchas* to be beyond the Sindhu River and to the west.

Text 22

*ekadaa tu shakadhishe
himatungari samaayayau
hunadeshasya madhye vai
giristhan purusam shubhano
dadarsha balaram raajaa*

Once upon a time the subduer of the Shakas went towards Himatunga and in the middle of the Huna country (Hunadesh - the area near Manasa Sarovara or Kailash mountain in Western Tibet), the powerful king saw an

auspicious man who was living on a mountain. The man's complexion was golden and his clothes were white.

Text 23

*ko bharam iti tam praaha
su hovacha mudanvitah
iishaa purtagm maam viddhi
kumaarigarbha sambhavam*

The king asked, "Who are you sir?" "You should know that I am Isha Putra, the Son of God," he replied blissfully, and "am born of a virgin."

Text 24

*mleccha dharmasya vaktaram
satyavata paraayanam
iti srutva nrpa praaha
dharmah ko bhavato matah*

"I am the expounder of the religion of the *mlecchas* and I strictly adhere to the Absolute Truth." Hearing this the king enquired, "What are the religious principles according to your opinion?"

Texts 25 - 26

*shruto vaaca mahaaraaja
praapte satyasya samkshaye
nirmaaryaade mlechadeshe
masiiho 'ham samagatah

iishaamasii ca dasyuunaa
praadurbhuutaa bhayankarii
taamaham mlecchataah praapya
masiihatva mupaagatah*

Hearing this question of Shalivahana, Isha Putra said, "O king, when the destruction of the truth occurred, I, Masiha the prophet, came to this country of degraded people where there are no rules and regulations. Finding that fearful irreligious condition of the barbarians spreading from Mleccha-Desha [the country of the *mlecchas*], I have taken to prophethood."

Texts 27 - 29

*mlecchasa sthaapito dharmo
mayaa tacchrnu bhuupate
maanasam nirmalam krtva
malam dehe subhaasbham*

*naiganam apamasthaya
japeta nirmalam param
nyayena satyavacasaa
manasyai kena manavah*

*dhyayena pujayedisham
suurya-mandala-samsthitam
acaloyam prabhuh sakshatathaa
suuryacalah sada*

“Please hear, Oh king, which religious principles I have established among the *mlecchas*. The living entity is subject to good and bad contaminations. The mind should be purified by taking recourse of proper conduct and performance of *japa* [meditation on the chanting of the holy names of God]. By chanting the holy names one attains the highest purity. Just as the immovable sun attracts from all directions the elements of all living beings, the Lord of the Surya Mandala [sun planet], who is fixed and all-attractive, attracts the hearts of all living creatures. Thus, by following rules, speaking truthful words, by mental harmony and by meditation, Oh descendant of Manu, one should worship that immovable Lord.”

Text 30

*isha muurtirt-dradi praptaa
nityashuddha sivamkari
ishamasihah iti ca
mama nama pratishthitam*

“Having placed the eternally pure and auspicious form of the Supreme Lord in my heart, O protector of the earth planet, I preached these principles through the *mlecchas*’ own faith and thus my name became ‘isha-masiha’ (Jesus the Messiah).”

Text 31

*iti shrutra sa bhuupale
natraa tam mlecchapujaam*

*sthaapayaamaasa tam tutra
mlecchasthaane hi daarune*

After hearing these words and paying obeisances to that person who is worshiped by the wicked, the king humbly requested him to stay there in the dreadful land of *mlecchas*.

Text 32

*svaraajyam praaptavaan raajaa
hayamedhan ciikirat
raajyam krittvaa sa shashthyabdam
svarga lokamu paayayau*

King Shalivahana, after leaving his kingdom performed an *asvamedha yajna* ritual and after ruling for sixty years, went to heaven. Now please hear what happened when the king went to (the heavenly region of) svargaloka.

Thus ends the second chapter entitled, “The Age of Shalivahana” of the story of Kali-yuga of the Chaturyuga Khanda also called Pratisarga-parva of the wonderful *Bhavishya Maha Purana*.

As we can read here, this relates that the grandson of Bikrama Jit, Shalivahana, was the ruler of the Kushans. Some estimate that he ruled from 39 to 50 CE. It is also said that he vanquished the attackers from China, Parthia, Scythia, and the Bactrians. After establishing a border between the Aryans and the *mlecchas*, he ordered all the *mlecchas* to leave India. Once when Shalivahana went to the Himalayas he reached the land of the Hun, or Ladakh, and saw a man who was fair and dressed in white, looking very saintly. The powerful king asked who he was. The man replied that he was called a son of God, born of a virgin, a teacher of the nonbelievers, and was earnestly searching for the truth. The king asked his religion. The man replied that he came from a foreign country where there was no truth, only unlimited evil.

The man explained to the king that his religion was to purify the consciousness and impure body, after which, seeking guidance in the Naigama [a scripture], man could pray to the Supreme. By acting in truth and justice and engaging in meditation on God’s holy names and spiritual unity, man will return to Isha, the Supreme Being. God will one day unite with all wandering spiritual beings, and Ihamasi [the evil of illusion] will be

destroyed. Then man will be absorbed in the ecstatic image of Isha who exists in the heart and is the source of happiness. The man then told the king, "I am called Isha-Masih [Jesus the Messiah]." After the king heard the man speak, the king sent the teacher of the faithless back to his land of nonbelievers.

Among various scholars, some say Jesus did not die on the cross but was crucified, suffered and was later revived. Others also say his ascent into heaven was actually his journey up to the heavenly land of Kashmir, where he eventually died and was buried in Srinagar at the Roza bal, the presently known grave of Yuz Asaf, a name said to be that of Jesus. However, there are those who feel that Yuz Asaf and Jesus are not the same person.

One point we must clearly understand is that if we do accept that Jesus was predicted in the *Bhavishya Purana* in which it is described that he traveled through India, and if Jesus did study under the Vedic Brahmanas and priests before returning to his homeland to preach, as some say he did, then I'm sure it would come as a shock to most Christians that Jesus was an initiate of the wisdom of India. Thus, he naturally based much of his own teachings on Vedic knowledge, as anyone who is familiar with Eastern philosophy and the teachings of Jesus can see. This would also explain why there are so many similarities between early Christianity and the Dharmic wisdom, much of which seems to have been lost from the Christian fold through the ages.

It is obvious that Christianity is but a modified form of Sanatanadharma. The deeper levels of spiritual truths within Christianity are the same as those found in the Vedic philosophy, if a person can reach that depth. Yet, since Jesus spoke in parables on many occasions, the connection with Vedic knowledge and the deeper meaning of his teachings are not always made clear. In fact, there have been numerous diversions and misunderstandings made because of this, as shown by the hundreds of sects that have developed within the Christian community. So, essentially, this would also mean that you cannot comprehend the deepest aspects of Jesus' teachings without understanding Vedic scripture or the philosophy of Sanatanadharma, since those are really the roots or foundation of Christianity and the basis of the teachings of Jesus. Therefore, it makes sense that we all look into, study and learn this Vedic knowledge and follow its principles for a higher degree and more complete form of spirituality that we can add to our lives. For this is the foundation of most of the spiritual

knowledge that has spread throughout the world into its many forms that we find today.

However, if Jesus did in fact later return to Kashmir, which was called heaven or the promised land by some, and died there, then obviously he did not ascend into heaven the way many people would like to think. This would show that he was but a preacher, an empowered one nonetheless, who gave his message for the upliftment of his people.

Dr. Vedavyas goes on to say that the coming of Lord Kalki, as described in the *Bhavishya* as well as many other *Puranas*, is the *avatara* equivalent to the second coming of Christ as described in the Bible. Lord Kalki, according to the Vedic prophecies, is predicted to be the next great world leader many years from now and will establish a world government and bring back the Vedic culture in a new Satya-yuga, a new kingdom of God.

The *Bhavishya Purana* also relates the likelihood of a great war of wars which could change the entire map of the world, at least politically, and possibly even geographically if nuclear weapons are used. This has been further corroborated by other psychics and astrologers. But how all this may happen remains to be seen.

[JESUS IN KASHMIR](#)

If Jesus is really predicted in the *Bhavishya Purana*, did he also really go to Kashmir or Ladakh in India? This is a controversial issue and there are people who argue both sides, some saying he indeed went there, and others saying he did not. Let us take a look at this.

I had visited the place that is called the grave of Jesus in Srinagar, Kashmir in June of 2007. And, actually, unless you know the history and controversy about this little building, there is not much that will give any indications of this being the grave of Jesus. But it is good that I went when I did, because now it is locked and off-limits to foreigners, especially westerners.

This place is also called the Roza bal, or Rauza bol, which means “tomb of the prophet.” This is the burial place of Yuz Asaph (or Asaf), in the center of Srinagar’s old part of town. The name Yuz Asaph is said to relate to Jesus. Some people believe it is the grave of Jesus, and others think it is all based on faulty premises, meaning it is merely a rumor or urban legend. However, there is a complete line of logic behind this, so I will only give

you the evidence and what people say and you can decide for yourself. That way, if you are ever in Srinagar, you can have some understanding of the significance of this place and check it out yourself.

To visit the grave of Jesus, you will find it in Anzimar next to a small Muslim cemetery in the Khanjar (Khanyar) quarter of Srinagar's old town. You find Rauza bal Khanyar down a short narrow alley in an old, wooden mausoleum. The grave itself is inside the building. The sign in front says that it is the tomb of Ziarati Hazrati Youza Asouph and Syed Nasir-u-Din. Therefore, this is a grave of two people, with Nasir-u-Din being a Muslim saint. Some say that Youza Asouph (or Yuz Asaph) means the gatherer, which could be in relation to the idea that Jesus was a gatherer of the lost tribes of Israel, some of whom were known to have come to Kashmir. Others say the name means the leader of the healed, since Jesus was a healer. While still others say the name Youza Asouph means Joseph's son.

You enter the rectangular building through a small doorway on the side of the structure. This leads into a small hall that allows to you to look through a few windows at the small central room inside with the sarcophagus. If the inner doorway is unlocked, you can go in for a closer view. On your way in you will see an inscription on a board that explains that Yuz Asaph (or Asaf) came to Kashmir many centuries ago and dedicated himself to the search for truth. The single inner chamber has a cheap looking, raised wooden frame in the shape of a sarcophagus for two graves, each covered with heavy, embroidered cloth. The first and smaller grave is for an Islamic saint Syed Nasir-ud-Din, buried here in 1451, a descendent of Imam Moosa Ali Raza, said to be a great devotee of Jesus. The larger grave behind it is for Yuz Asaph. A document signed by five Muslim judges (Muftis) of that time certifies that the tomb contains the remains of the prophet Yuz Asaph. Near this, along the side of the inner chamber, is a stone with the imprint of two feet showing what seem to be nail wounds (a round wound on the left foot and an arcshaped wound on the right foot), the scars Jesus would have suffered from his crucifixion. Some people feel this is the sign for the identity of who is buried here. It is the custom for pilgrims to place candles around the gravestones, and when years of wax was removed by Professor Hassnain, not only did he discover the footprints, but he also found a cross and rosary. As typical with Muslim mausoleums, these graves are replicas and the actual graves are in a crypt under the floor in the basement. However, some also say that due to age, the

ground gave way years ago and the original grave simply sank into the ground, with the present sarcophagus built over it. A look down into the real burial chamber is provided by a small opening. But that window is now covered by a cloth to block the view. The grave which contains the remains of Yuz Asaph also points east to west, according to Jewish tradition.

Previously, several decades ago, the central shrine in the house was surrounded by beautifully carved wooden panels. But these have now been removed and replaced with glass windows. These windows, of course, let you see the fake sarcophagus inside, which is covered with the embroidered cloth, as well as the two feet carved into the stone block at one end. You can also see this from outside through the windows of the house, but the stone with the feet can be seen only as long as the outer doorway is unlocked and you can get in. The house is also now painted green, the color for Islam. Whatever else was once inside, including various relics, scrolls, and information regarding the place, have now been removed.

Suzanne Olsson, while appearing in the video “Jesus in India” by Paul David (2008), mentions that in her research she was told by local authorities that below the main floor, the real graves do not contain any bodies. But behind the wall was a ledge where the body of Yuz Asaph was actually placed, and then the ledge was sealed. That is the actual grave behind the false wall. She at one time had the permission to take DNA samples from the body through a small opening in that wall. This way she could verify the age and possible identity of the person buried there. But Islamic militancy arose before she could accomplish that and kept her from doing it. Thus, possible verification of this may now never be possible.

However, when talking with the local Muslims who live nearby, they will tell you adamantly that it is not the grave of Jesus, but is the tomb of a Muslim prophet, Youza. If you ask too much, or insist on an alternative view, they will tell you that you are committing an offense to Islam and the Koran. Nonetheless, the tomb is built in an east-west direction, the same as the Jewish tradition, in line as a follower of Moses, and is not in the direction facing Mecca. But this is inconsequential to the locals. Therefore, without background information, you would never know the significance of this place.

The locals will also tell you that the grave is that of a messenger of God who liked the Muslim people and settled there. They admit that the grave is ancient, but they forget that the person buried there arrived hundreds of

years before Islam was ever an established religion. But they do not think it was Jesus. So even among the local people different versions of the story about the grave circulate. Also, some Muslims feel that in the end, after the crucifixion, Jesus was lifted up to heaven because if he had actually died on the cross, it would be a sign that he had failed in his mission.

The grave has been maintained by attendants since its construction, which is established by ancient records to be as far back as 112 CE. The premise is that Jesus' Hebrew name was Yuza, similar to Yuz. In Arabic and in the Koran his name was Hazrat Isa, or just Isa, and Issa in Tibetan, both of which are similar to the name Isha in Sanskrit. This tradition has been carried down through the *Farhang-Asafia*, Volume One, which explains how Jesus healed some leper who then became *asaf*, meaning purified or healed. The word *yuz* means leader. Thus, Yuz Asaph became a common reference to Jesus as "leader of the healed."

There are other accounts of how Yuz Asaph preached throughout Persia, present-day Iran, converting many people. Some of these details can be found in Agha Mustafai's *Ahivali Ahaliau-i-Paras* which confirms that Jesus and Yuz Asaph are the same person. Even the well-known Emperor Akbar had a court poet who referred to Jesus as *Ai Ki Nam-i to: Yuz o Kristo*, which means, "Thou whose name is Yuz or Christ." Also, at Akbar's city, Fatehpur Sikri, near Agra, as you enter the main gate toward the mosque, there is an inscription which states: "Jesus (Peace be with him) has said: 'The world is a bridge. Pass over it, but do not settle down on it!'"

Other records and place names that relate to Jesus point to his presence in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Acts of Thomas describe the journey of Jesus and Thomas in Pakistan (then Taxila) at the court of King Gundafor in the 26th year of his rule, which would be about 47 CE.

Also, when Jesus came to Kashmir he came with a group of followers which included his mother, Mary, who must have been over 70 years old, and was no doubt weakened by the journey. Seventy kilometers east of Taxila, and 170 kilometers west of Srinagar on the border of Kashmir, is a small town called Mari, or Murree in English, near Rawalpindi. In that town is a very old grave called *Mai Mari da Asthan*, meaning "the final resting place of Mother Mary." This is a tomb in Jewish style, aligned on the east-west line, while the Muslim tombs are always aligned on the north-south axis. Here is where she must have died before Jesus reached Kashmir, which was considered paradise, or heaven on earth. Even to this day this

grave is maintained by Muslims as the resting place of Jesus' mother because he (Isa) is considered one of the main prophets of Islam. However, the British knocked down the original hill shrine to Mother Mary to build a fort at that place because of the view over the surrounding area, and because they did not believe in Mary being buried there. Out of respect, the local people gathered the rocks of the grave and put them back near the original site. So, it is not in the same place as where the body was located.

Also near the villages of Naugam and Nilmag, about 40 kilometers south of Srinagar is a large plain called the Yuz Marg, the meadow of Jesus. It is said that from Murree, Jesus proceeded to Srinagar entering Kashmir from the pass now called Yuz Marg, and he rested at Aish Muqam, about 50 miles south of Srinagar, where a sanctuary was erected containing the horns of "God's ram" and a walking stick that is considered Moses' stick, later used by Jesus. It is also here that some of the tribes of Israel are supposed to have settled after 722 BCE to live as shepherds, which is still a major occupation in the area today.

More evidence of Jesus in Kashmir is found in an inscription that was carved on the sides of the steps at the threshold on the Throne of Solomon in Srinagar. Behind the Boulevard near Dal Lake is Shankaracharya Hill which rises 1100 feet above the city. At the summit is a Hindu temple for Shiva, but an earlier temple was built here around 200 BCE by Ashoka's son. One temple that had been built was by King Laladitya in the 6th century CE known as Gopadri. The road at the base of the hill where the State Government officials are located is still known as Gupkar road in connection with that temple. This is the oldest known site in Srinagar, believed to date back to 2500 BCE when the original sandstone structure had been built by King Sandiman. It is also said that the philosopher Shankaracharya visited Kashmir many centuries ago and had stayed on the hilltop to meditate. The top of the hill also provides a great view over the lake. But due to security reasons cameras are not allowed through the final checkpoint when going to the hilltop Shiva temple. The temple as we find it today is built on a high octagonal plinth, reached by a flight of 270 steps, the side walls of which used to have inscriptions on them. The main interior shrine is a small circular room with a *lingam* about three feet tall. A new ceiling has inscriptions in Persian which connects its origin to the reign of Shah Jahan.

The hill used to be called Takht-i-Sulaiman, the Throne of Solomon, which definitely represents some of the history of this region, and why some people think that King Solomon had been here. Other factors to consider is that there was an inscription on the remnants of the old building which states that the new temple was restored in 78 CE by King Gopadatta (or Gopananda), who ruled Kashmir from 49-109 CE. According to tradition, Solomon had visited the land of Kashmir. In fact, the local Muslims know Kashmir as “Bagh Suleiman,” the Garden of Solomon. This would go in accord with the theory that some scholars believe that Kashmir was the “Promised Land,” or the “Land of the Fathers” that the “ten lost tribes of Israel” wandered to in northern India where they found peace and tranquility. This was after they had moved eastwards when they had been driven out of Israel by the Assyrians, never to be heard from again. Therefore, it may have indeed been Solomon, as tradition declares, who divided the Barehmooleh Mountain and created an outlet for the water that later formed Dal Lake. He also may have constructed the original building of the Takht-i-Suleiman on top of what is now Shankaracharya Hill.

The meaning of the inscriptions on the Throne of Solomon is described in detail by Mullah Nadiri, a historian during the rule of Sultan Zainul Aabidin, in 1413 in his book on the history of Kashmir, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*. He relates that Gopananda, or Gopadatta, ruled Kashmir and had the Temple of Solomon refurbished by a Persian architect. During the renovation four sayings in ancient Persian were set in stone that said, in essence, that Bihishti Zagar is the constructor of these columns in the year of 54. Khwaja Rukun, son of Murjan, had these columns built. In the year 54, Jesus, as Yuz Asaf proclaimed his prophetic calling. He is Jesus, prophet of the sons of Israel.

Unfortunately, these inscriptions are another artifact that has been removed from the premises, so you can no longer find these carvings in the building if you try to look for them. Nonetheless, Mullah Nadiri goes on to relate that during the rule of Gopadatta, Yuz Asaf came from the Holy Land to the Kashmir valley and proclaimed to be a prophet and preached to the people. Gopadatta ruled sixty years and two months before he died. It is calculated that Jesus came to Kashmir nearly 16 years after the crucifixion and lived to be around 80 years old. Even the Koran (4.157) explains that Jesus did not die on the cross: “That they said (in boast), ‘We killed Christ Jesus, The son of Mary, The Messenger of Allah’ —But they killed him not,

Nor crucified him, But so it was made to appear to them, And those who differ therein are full of doubts, With no (certain) knowledge, But only conjecture to follow, For a surety they killed him not.” Other scholars feel that another verse in the *Koran* (23.50) relates that Jesus did not die on the cross but ascended to live on a peaceful hill-side watered by a fresh spring.

All this seems to indicate that not only did Jesus come to India to learn the spiritual knowledge of the Vedic Brahmanas and Buddhists as other records have described, but after returning to his land of Israel to preach and was later crucified, he did not die on the cross but suffered and recovered. After that he ascended to heaven, known as Kashmir, where, after some years, he died and was buried in Srinagar.

According to various records, during his missing years Jesus was supposed to have studied for four years at the temple of Jagannatha Puri. In this regard, the 145th Shankaracharya at Jagannatha Puri was asked if Jesus had come there, and he agreed that Jesus came to Puri. He explained that the truth of Jesus’ visit to India was hidden in order to propagate lies, rather than let it be known that he came to India to study amongst the Brahmanas to acquire his deeper spiritual knowledge. The Shankaracharya mentions that Jesus studied the Vedic code of conduct on being compassionate, merciful, forgiving, etc. But most Christians deny this.

However, the book “The Life of Saint Issa” from the Hemis Monastery in Ladakh explains that he later criticized the Brahmanas and the caste system and later was forced to leave. Then he traveled north to Kapilavastu (present-day Lumbini), the birthplace of Buddha in Nepal, and studied with the Buddhists. This is said to be where he got more of his wisdom. Then he went to Lhasa in Tibet for five years. After that he went homeward and then to Greece for sometime before going on to Egypt. Then at the age of 25 he went to Heliopolis and studied for five more years before returning to his homeland at the age of 30.

The Hemis Monastery in Ladakh, near Leh, is another place that I have been fortunate enough to visit. The Hemis Gompa, as it stands today, is over 400 years old. However, the previous monastery, the Go San Gompa, existed here for well over 1000 years. Many inner rooms are filled with ancient writings, much of it uncataloged. They have a big festival every year with masked dancers, and people from all over attend. It was here that one of the books that stirred great interest in the idea of Jesus going to India was discovered.

The Hemis Monastery is where, in 1886, Nicolas Notovitch is said to have discovered the ancient manuscript that describes the life and travels of Saint Issa, said to be Jesus. This was, as Notovitch explained, a compilation of scrolls from the library in Lhasa that were brought from India, Nepal, and Magadha about 200 years after the time of Christ. Written in Tibetan, the manuscript also describes how Issa traveled to India and to the north to Nepal and the Himalayan region.

“The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ” by Nicolas Notovitch describes his finding a document on Issa at the Hemis Buddhist Monastery, which took place in 1886. He describes how he was there for several weeks after breaking his leg from a fall from his horse. After becoming acquainted with the monks, one showed him the document on the life of Issa. He had the text translated, first into Russian, and then published his book in France in 1894. Though critics such as Max Muller and others attacked Notovitch to debunk his claims, Notovitch in turn said he talked in private to a Catholic priest at the Vatican who told him that the Vatican library had 63 documents of various oriental languages that referred to Jesus traveling in India. These had been brought to the Vatican by missionaries from India, China and Arabia.

Later, there were others who also claimed to have seen that same document or scroll at the Hemis Monastery on “The Life of Saint Issa.” This then helped confirm that Jesus studied amongst the Hindus and Buddhists and valued their teachings and learned from them, setting the example that his followers should also exhibit such respect and value for other religions.

This document at Hemis was later seen by Swami Abhedananda who was able to read and translate it, which he discussed in his book, “Journey into Kashmir and Tibet.” He visited Hemis in 1922 and relates in his book how a monk showed him the manuscript while he was there. The monk told him it was an exact translation of the original that could be found in the Marbour Monastery near Lhasa, which was in the Pali language, while the Hemis one was in Tibetan. Swami Abhedananda lived at an ashrama called the RamaKrishna Vedanta Society in Kolkata, which you can still visit today. His book is also still available today and provides for very interesting reading.

Nicolas Roerich, a Russian born Jew who converted to Christianity, claims to have visited Hemis in 1925 and also seen the Hemis Monastery

document. He published his own account of the manuscripts in his book, *The Heart of Asia*. Therein, the descriptions provide some interesting evidence that Isha or Issa, possibly Jesus, may very well have come to India to live, learn, and then return to his homeland of Jerusalem to preach, but then die in Kashmir after returning again from Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case, the document at the Hemis Monastery seems to have since disappeared with present day monks knowing nothing about such a document. Some feel that certain Christian missionaries or agents had gone there to deliberately confiscate it to prevent any such evidence from being available any longer.

The story of Jesus' crucifixion is also interesting because, generally, most people die on the cross by starvation or suffocation when the ribs press down on the lungs so that the person can no longer breathe. This often takes several days. According to tradition, Jesus was nailed on the cross in the early afternoon of a Friday and taken down as dusk was approaching, after being nailed on the cross for only four or five hours. So it is most unusual that a young and healthy person like Jesus died after only four hours on the cross. Thus, it is more likely that as a yogi he was able to enter an altered state and appear as if dead, only to be revived later. This is not uncommon with some yogis in India. Furthermore, there are modern commemorations of Jesus' crucifixion wherein people are crucified every year in the Philippines and Mexico and survive quite easily. A person does not die of crucifixion after only four hours. Thus, it is quite likely that he survived the crucifixion and died elsewhere.

Nonetheless, there were no witnesses to any resurrection, and it certainly cannot be investigated historically. So there is plenty of room for speculation about this from all sides, and that is mostly what we have. However, if he had survived the crucifixion, it would make sense that he would want to leave Jerusalem and the area to be free from any threat from the Roman soldiers. Thus, there is the idea he went to Kashmir where some of the lost tribes of Israel are said to have relocated. Thus, even today, one can recognize similarities with the Jewish culture in Kashmir, such as with some of the foods, clothes, butcher knives, heart-shaped boat paddles, etc.

Of course, when talking to most Christians, they are often convinced that Jesus never went to India. They feel that there would be no need for him to learn from any Hindus or Buddhists. Plus, the Bible gives no information about the 18 missing years of his life (between the ages of 12

and 30). It only says that he grew in wisdom. But that is the question, what happened during those 18 years?

Except within certain esoteric circles the shrine itself had not been discussed for some time after Notovitch, Swami Abhedananda, and Nicolas Roerich had brought attention to it. Then it again came into the limelight when a local journalist, Aziz Kashmiri, argued in his 1973 book, *Christ in Kashmir*, that Jesus survived the crucifixion some 2,000 years ago, migrated to Kashmir and was buried in Srinagar. The modest stone building with traditional multi-tiered roof again slipped into oblivion but came into focus again in 2002 when Suzanne Olsson arrived in Srinagar, claiming to be Christ's '59th descendant' and seeking DNA testing of the shrine's remains.

Olsson, though, doesn't seem to be alone in her conviction. There are some who support her view. Renowned Kashmiri academic Fida Hassnain's 1994 book, *A Search for the Historical Jesus*, was about this legend. Later, he co-authored a book on the subject with Olsson, *Roza Bal the Tomb of Jesus*. The stories of Jesus in India date back to the 19th century and now find mention in a plethora of texts by scholars of varied persuasions—Islamic, Buddhist and Christian.

WAS JESUS REALLY PREDICTED IN THE BHAVISHYA PURANA?

Though some people have become convinced that Jesus went to India, or is predicted in the *Bhavishya Purana*, there is also another view to this. With the help of the research done by B. V. Giri Swami, based near Mysore, India, he relates that a closer look at the prediction of Jesus found in the *Bhavishya Purana* strongly suggests foul play or interpolation on the part of Christian missionaries in India during the late 18th century.

There are presently four known editions of the *Bhavishya Purana*, each having different predictions from the other, but suspiciously having one consistent prediction—that of Isa or Jesus. All four editions do mention someone that could be Jesus.

The Venkateswar Steam Press edition of the *Bhavishya Purana* printed in Bombay in 1829 (and reprinted by Nag Publishers in 2003) is probably the most complete version available, containing all the main features of the four manuscripts. Since none of the four editions of the *Bhavishya Purana* predate British Rule in India, this further suggests a discrepancy. The fact is

that the British tried to monopolize the publishing of all Sanskrit literature during the British Raj. They bought or confiscated any Sanskrit literature they could locate. And that is why you practically cannot find any Sanskrit literature that is published before 200 years ago. It is further known that they liked to publish their own translations, as if India could not produce its own Sanskrit scholars to translate the Sanskrit themselves. Plus, they would also try to interpolate various verses here and there to have the reader draw a different conclusion of the personality or traits of the characters described in the texts. Most were quite noble, but by slipping in verses that said certain persons had less than admirable qualities, or that questionable practices were used, it would change the reader's disposition and attitude toward the Vedic culture, even if they were Indian-born followers of it.

Therefore, the consistent prophecy of Jesus in all four editions of the *Bhavishya Purana*, in spite of the differences in the editions found, seems to indicate, according to B. V. Giri Swami, an interpolation regarding the so-called meeting of Maharaja Shalivahana and Isha Putra. This is found in the 19th chapter of the Pratisarga-parva. However, as B. V. Giri Swami relates, in examining this section, certain flaws can be found which betray its dubious origins.

For example, at the very outset of this description of Isha meeting Shalivahana, this section is fraught with historical inaccuracies. Shalivahana was the king of Ujjain (in modern day Madhya Pradesh), and while it is not surprising that Shalivahana traveled to the Himalayas, the enemies that he supposedly vanquished in battle before he went should be looked into more thoroughly. Historical research tells us that the only invading force that Shalivahana actually subdued were the Shakas, who entered India from the north-west regions. But as for his defeating the Cinas (Chinese), Bahlikas (Bactrians), Kamarupas (Assamese), Romas (Romans) and the Khurus (Khorasans, or Persians), there is no historical evidence that validates Shalivahana doing this, nor is there any historical proof of the Romans and the Chinese ever invading India at that time. The Bactrians (Greeks) came earlier during the Gupta Period and the Persians (Moguls) came later. The people of Assam were simply a small hill-tribe during this period of Indian history [conquering of which would not have warranted a mention in Vedic verse].

Later, the king asks Isha or Jesus "Who are you?" and Isha answers that he was born of a virgin. However, the Christian idea that Jesus was born of

a virgin is based on the following verse found in the Christian version of the Old Testament in the Book of Isaiah: “Behold, a virgin has conceived and bears a son and she will call his name Immanuel.” But the original Hebrew text of the Book of Isaiah does not mention anything about a virgin. The original text being: *hinneh ha-almah harah ve-yeldeth ben ve-karath shem-o immanuel*, “Behold, the young woman has conceived - and bears a son and calls his name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7.14)

The Hebrew word for virgin is *betulah* yet it appears nowhere in this verse of Isaiah. The word used is *almah* which simply means “a young woman.” Isaiah only uses *almah* once. However, the word *betulah* is used five times throughout the Book of Isaiah, so Isaiah obviously made a distinction between these two words.

After Jesus has introduced himself to Shalivahana, he explains that he is teaching religion in the distant land of the *mlecchas* and tells the king what those teachings are, in which he says: “Please hear from me, O King, about the religion that I have established amongst the *mlecchas*. The mind should be purified by taking recourse of proper conduct, since we are subject to auspicious and inauspicious contaminations; by following the scriptures and concentrating on *japa* (meditation on the repetition of God’s names) one will attain the highest level of purity; by speaking true words and by mental harmony, and by meditation and worship, O descendant of Manu. Just as the immovable Sun attracts from all directions the elements of all living beings, the Lord of the Surya-mandala (Sun globe) is fixed and all-attractive, and attracts the hearts of all living creatures.” (19:27-29)

However, nowhere in the Christian Gospels do we find in the ministry of Jesus the above teachings to his followers, unless they had been removed from the Gospels and somehow preserved in the *Bhavishya Purana*. Furthermore, in this passage, Jesus is advocating the worship of the Sun-god (again, something that is absent in his instructions to the apostles). *Japa*, meditation, the negation of both good and bad karma, are all concepts that are familiar to Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, but not to the Abrahamic religions of the west, unless Jesus had already been trained by Vedic Brahmanas and Buddhist priests at that time. In such a case, the *Bhavishya Purana* may have preserved some of the concepts of the teachings of Jesus that were never included in the Gospels, or that were later deleted from them because of manipulating politics. This would mean

that in order to get the true and deeper teachings of Jesus a person would have to study the Vedic texts and its philosophy.

Considering the above anomalies and the fact that no edition of the *Bhavishya Purana* can be found prior to the British period in India, we can deduce that the *Bhavishya Purana* may have been tampered with by the Christian missionaries who added the chapter on Jesus. Their motive would be obvious—to make the personality of Jesus acceptable to the Hindus in order to convert them to Christianity.

In 1784, the famous Indologist Sir William Jones wrote the following letter to Sir Warren Hastings, Governor General of India, confirming our suspicions that this was indeed part of their program:

“As to the general extension [spreading] of our pure faith [Christianity] in Hindoostan [India] there are at present many sad obstacles to it... We may assure ourselves, that Hindoos will never be converted by any mission from the church of Rome, or from any other church; and the only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution, will be to translate into Sanscrit... such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah, as are indisputably evangelical, together with one of the gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidence of the very distant ages, in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the Divine Person (Jesus) is predicted, were severally made public and then quietly to disperse the work among the well-educated natives.” (Asiatic Researches Vol. 1. Published 1979, pages 234-235. First published 1788).

What better way to translate into Sanskrit whatever they could of predictions of the Christian prophets and then disperse them among the well-educated natives than to slip such translations into some of the Vedic texts themselves? Plus, we often see that Christians, especially in India, tell Hindus that since Jesus is supposed to be predicted in the Vedic texts, then they should accept Jesus as their ultimate savior. But the Vedic texts are much more open and inclusive than that and also describe so many more *avatars* and incarnations of Lord Vishnu. So why shouldn't the Christians also accept Lord Vishnu or Krishna as the Supreme Person, or at least aspects of the Supreme Being? After all, it was proclaimed that Jesus was the son of God. But who is the Father? So Vishnu or Krishna must have been the Supreme Father as the *Bhagavad-gita* and other Vedic texts clearly state. And if Jesus did go to India, then he was familiar with this concept, which he thus expressed in his own teachings in his homeland. This is not

going against the Biblical tenants. After all, the Bible does not exactly describe who is the Supreme Person, but only gives Him a name, such as Yahweh, etc. The Vedic texts, however, give God innumerable names and describes much more about Him, such as His appearance, character, personality, pastimes, and so on.

Swami B.V. Giri concludes that it may also be noted that throughout the Pratisarga-parva of the *Bhavishya Purana* we find the stories of Adam and Eve (Adhama and Havyavati), Noah (Nyuha), Moses (Musa), and other Biblical characters. These he also considers to be likely additions by zealous Christians. The *Bhavishya Purana* may well be a genuine Vedic scripture prophesying future events, but from the above analysis we may want to reconsider how likely it is that the Jesus episode of the *Bhavishya Purana* is an authentic Vedic revelation.

In spite of whatever issues there may be in what we presently find with today's editions of the *Bhavishya Purana*, there are numerous predictions of all kinds in the other *Puranas* and Vedic texts. Many of these also verify, repeat or overlap each other in a way that allows us to see how they forecast the events of the future with reliability. Furthermore, even though much of what they say deals with the distant future, we can already observe the beginning patterns of events that they describe unfolding right before us.

Aside from all of this, the *Bhavishya Purana* also contains quotes that some feel relate to various personalities, such as Adam, Noah, Allah, Shankaracharya, Nanak, Aurangzeb, Shivaji, and on up to the rule of Queen Victavati, meaning Queen Victoria. It even seems to describe how the British will build factories in Kolkata [Calcutta]. Most of these quotations are rather short with little elaboration, which gives little possibility to verify its meaning. An example of one such quote is that which describes the appearance of Mahamada, which some people claim to be Prophet Mohammed, which also may or may not be an accurate understanding.

IS PROPHET MOHAMMED REALLY PROPHESED IN THE BHAVISHYA PURANA?

The debate regarding whether Jesus was actually predicted in the *Bhavishya Purana* can also be applied to whether it predicts Prophet Mohammed. The *Bhavishya Purana* has a reference regarding someone named Mahamada, which some people are very eager to make the claim

that it means Prophet Mohammed, thus saying that the Prophet is predicted in the Vedic literature. But before we come to that conclusion, with additional research, let us take a closer look to see what the full reference to Mahamada really says.

It is explained in the *Bhavishya Purana* (Parva 3, Khand 3, Adhya 3, verses 5-6) that “An illiterate *mleccha* [foreigner] teacher will appear, Mahamada is his name, and he will give religion to his fifth-class companions.” This does not describe much in regard to his life, but it does mention someone by the name of Mahamada, and what he was expected to do, which was to give his own form of religion to the lower classes of people in his area. Some people suggest this person to be Prophet Mohammed, and are, thus, most willing to accept that Prophet Mohammed was predicted in the *Bhavishya Purana*. But if we look at the full translation of this story, they may not want to jump to such a conclusion.

So here is the Roman transliteration of the Sanskrit in the *Bhavishya Purana*, however accurate it may be (Prati Sarga: Part III, 3.3.5-27).

mahamadh ithi khayath, shishya-sakha-samniviyath 5
..... mahadev marusthal nivasinam. mahadevthe snanya-pya punch-gavua
sannivithya tripurarsur-nashav bahu-maya pravathiney 7
malech-dharma shav shudhaya sat-chit-anandaya swarupye, thva ma hei
kinkare vidhii sharanaghatham 8
suta uvacha: ithi shurthiya sthav deva shabadh-mah nupaya tam, gath-vaya
bhojraj-ney mahakhaleshwar-sthale 9
malech-shu dhushita bhumi-vahika nam-vishritha arya dharma hi nav-
vathra vahike desh-darunya 10
vamu-vatra maha-mayi yo-sav dagdho myaa pura tripuro bali-daithyane
proshith punaragath 11
ayoni sa varo math prasava daithyo-vrudhan mahamadh ithi khayath ,
paishacha-kruthi thathpar 12
nagathvaya thvya bhup paisachae desh-vartake math prasadhayane bhupal
tav shudhii prajayathe 13
thi shruthva nupshav svadesha-napu maragmath mahamadh toi sdhav
sindhu-thir mupaye-yav 14
uchav bhupati premane mahamadh-virshad tva deva maharaja das-tva
magath 15
mamo-chit sabhu jiya-dhatha tatpashya bho nup ithi shruthya ththa hata
para vismaya-magath 16

malechdhano mathi-shasi-tatsaya bhupasaya darutho 17
 tucha tva kalidas-sthu rucha praah mahamadham maya-thei nirmithi
 dhutharya nush-mohan-hethvei 18
 hanishyami-duravara vahik purusha-dhamum ityak va sa jidh shrimanava-
 raja-tathpar 19
 japthya dush-sah-trayach tah-sahansh juhav sa bhasm mutva sa mayavi
 malech-dev-tva-magath 20
 maybhithashtu tachya-shyaa desh vahii-kamayuuah guhitva svaguro-bhasm
 madaheen tva-magatham 21
 swapiit tav bhuh-ghyot-thro-shrumadh-tathpara madaheen puro jath thosha
 trith sayam smurthaum 22
 rathri sa dev-roop-shav bahu-maya-virshad paisacha deha-marathaya
 bhojraj hi so trivith 23
 arya-dharmo hei to raja-sarvoutham smurth ishapraya karinayami paishacha
 dharna darunbhu 24
 linga-chedri shikhaheen shamshu dhaari sa dhushak yukhalapi sarva
 bhakshi bhavishyat jano maum 25
 vina kaul cha pashav-thosha bhakshava matha maum muslanav sanskar
 kushariv bhavishyat 26
 tasman-musal-vanto hi jathiyo dharna dhushika ithi pishacha-dharna mya
 kruth 27

To set the scene, in this section of the *Bhavishya Purana*, Shri Suta Gosvami first explained that previously, in the dynasty of King Shalivahana, there were ten kings who went to the heavenly planets after ruling for over 500 years. [This gives these kings roughly 50 years of rule for each one.] Then gradually the morality declined on the planet. At that time, Bhojaraja was the tenth of the kings on the earth [who would have ruled about 450 years after King Shalivahana]. When he saw that the moral law of conduct was declining, he went to conquer all the directions of his country with ten-thousand soldiers commanded by Kalidasa. He crossed the river Sindhu [modern Indus River] going northward and conquered over the *gandharas* [the area of Afghanistan], *mlecchas* [present-day region of Turkey], *shakas*, Kashmiris [Kashmir and present-day Pakistan], *naravas*, and *sathas*. Crossing the Sindhu, he conquered the *mlecchas* in Gandhar and the *shaths* in Kashmir. King Bhoj grabbed their treasure and then punished them.

Then, as verses 7-8 relate, the Aryan King Bhojaraja, who had already left India for the lands across the Sindhu River and to the west, meets Mahamada [some say this is Mohammed], the preceptor of the *mlecchadharmā* [religion of the *mlecchas*], who had arrived with his followers. Thereafter, however, the King went to worship the image of Lord Mahadev, the great god Shiva, situated in the *marusthal*, desert. King Bhoj bathed the image of Shiva with Ganges water and worshiped him in his mind with *panchagavya* (the five purificatory elements from the cow, consisting of milk, ghee, yogurt, cow dung, and cow urine), along with sandalwood paste, etc., and offered him, the image of Shiva, sincere prayers and devotion. King Bhoj prayed to Lord Mahadev, “O Girijanath who stays in the *marusthal* (land of deserts), I offer my prayers to you. You have forced *maya* [the illusory energy] to destroy Tripurasur [the demon Tripura]; but the *mlecchas* are now worshiping you. You are pure and *sat-chit-anand swaroop* [eternal knowledge and bliss]. I am your *sevak* [servant]. I have come under your protection.”

Verses 10-27 relates next that Suta Goswami explained: After hearing the king’s prayers and being pleased with him, Lord Shiva said: “Let the King go to Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain) in the land of Vahika, which is now contaminated by *mlecchas*. O King, the land where you are standing, that is popular by the name of Bahik, has been polluted by the *mlecchas*. In that terrible country there no longer exists Dharma. There was a mystic demon named Tripura (Tripurasura), whom I have already burnt to ashes once before, he has come again by the order of Bali. He has no origin but he achieved a benediction from me. His name is Mahamada and his deeds are like that of a ghost. Therefore, O king, you should not go to this land of the evil ghost. By my mercy your intelligence will be purified.” [This would seem to indicate that this Mahamada was an incarnation of the demon Tripura.] So hearing this, the king came back to his country and Mahamada came with them, but only to the bank of the river Sindhu. He was expert in expanding illusion, so he said to the king very pleasingly, “O great king, your god has become my servant. Just see, as he eats my remnants, so I will show you.”

The king became surprised when he saw this happening before them. Then in anger Kalidasa, the king’s commander, rebuked Mahamada, “O rascal, you have created an illusion to bewilder the king, I will kill you, you are the lowest...” Then the king left that area.

Later, in the form of a ghostly presence, the expert illusionist Mahamada appeared at night in front of King Bhojaraja and said: “O King, your religion is of course known as the best religion among all. Still, by the order of the Lord, I am going to establish a terrible and demoniac religion and enforce a strong creed over the meat-eaters [*mlecchas*]. My followers will be known by their cut [circumcised] genitals, they will have no *shikha* [tuft of hair on their head, like Brahmanas], but will have a beard, make noise loudly, and eat all kinds of animals except swine without observing any rituals. They will perform purificatory acts with the musala, and thus be called musalman, and not purify their things with *kusha* grass [one of the Vedic customs]. Thus, I will be the originator of this *adharmic* [opposed to Vedic or Aryan Dharma] and demoniac religion of the meat-eating nations.” After having heard all this, the *Bhavishya Purana* goes on to relate that King Bhojaraja returned to his land and palace, and that ghost of the man also went back to his own place.

It is lastly described how the intelligent king, Bhojaraja, established the language of Sanskrit amongst the three *varnas*—the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas—and for the Shudras he established *prakrita-bhasha*, the ordinary language spoken by common men. After ruling his kingdom for another 50 years, he went to the heavenly planets. The moral laws established by him were honored even by the demigods. The *arya-varta*, the pious land is situated between Vindhyachala and Himachala, or the mountains known as Vindhya and Himalaya. The Aryans reside there, but the *varna-sankaras* reside on the lower part of Vindhya. The musalman people were kept on the other [northwestern] side of the river Sindhu.

* * *

Thus, from the interpretations of the present editions of the *Bhavishya Purana* that are available, it seems to say there was someone named Mahamada that King Bhojaraja met in the desert, who was supposedly a reappearance of the Tripura demon, who would start his own religion for those *mlecchas* who are unable to follow the spiritual codes of the deeper aspects of spiritual culture, or Vedic Dharma, and who would also spread *adharma*, or that religion that would be opposed to Vedic Dharma. Plus, according to the description, Mahamada knew and accepted the depth of the Vedic spiritual path and admitted to its superiority. But is Mahamada really Prophet Mohammed?

Let me assure everyone that this section is not a commentary on Prophet Mohammed, and is only an explanation of what is said in the *Bhavishya Purana*. But since some people accept this to be a prediction, we need to take a closer look at it.

So, the first few lines of this translation does seem to hold a **possibility** of referring to the Prophet. But after that, it could be questionable whether a person would really want to accept this story to be about Prophet Mohammed or not.

Historically, however, we know that Prophet Mohammed was born between 570-580 CE, became interested in religion at age 40, preached in Mecca for 10 years, and then went to Medina in 621 CE at age 51 when he finally established a following. He started engaging in armed conflict in 624 CE, gained possession of Mecca in 630, and died in 632 CE at age 62. So, he would have had to have met King Bhojaraja only after he had a following, between the years of 621 and 632. That is an extremely narrow eleven-year window of time. However, herein it also says that Mahamada went with King Bhojaraja to the Sindhu River, but there is never any historical record that Prophet Mohammed personally went to that area, which establishes another doubt of whether this could have been the Prophet.

Furthermore, even though it is described how King Bhojaraja conquered over the *gandharas* [the area of Afghanistan], *mlecchas* [present-day region of Turkey], *shakas*, Kashmiris [Kashmir and present-day Pakistan], *naravas*, and *sathas*, it never mentions that he went into the area of central Saudi Arabia where he would have had to go in order to meet the Prophet at the particular time when the Prophet had a following.

Plus, if King Bhojaraja was the tenth king after Shalivahana, who was supposed to have existed about the time of Jesus Christ, according to the evidence provided in the previous section, that would mean that this king lived about 450 to 500 CE. This is too early to allow for a possibility to have met the Prophet. However, there are a few King Bhojaraja's that are recorded in history. The one in the *Bhavishya Purana* is noted as intelligent, and who "established the language of Sanskrit amongst the three *varnas*—the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas—and for the Shudras he established *prakrita-bhasha*, the ordinary language spoken by common men." The King Bhojaraja who was known for being a Sanskrit scholar is credited with being the author of two books, the *Saraswatikanthabharana*, and the

Shringaraprakasha. Of these, the first is a compendious volume in five chapters, dealing with the merits and defects of poetry, figures of speech, language, etc. However, this scholar King Bhojaraja is said to have lived from 1018 to 1054 CE. This is way too late to have enabled him to personally have met the Prophet.

Therefore, at least with the present information that is available, we are left to conclude that, though King Bhojaraja may have indeed met a person named Mahamada, the meeting between the king and Prophet Mohammed as an accurate historical event is extremely unlikely. Thus, in this description from the *Bhavishya Purana*, Mahamada is not the Prophet. Beyond this point of view, is this a later interpolation? Who can say? And if so, by who and for what reason? Or is this is a prophecy in an allegorical form? That would have to be left to one's own opinions or sentiments.

APPENDIX FOUR

More About the Retreating Glaciers of the Himalayas

As reported in an article by Charles Arthur in the June 8, 1999 edition of *The Independent* in England, new information has been gathered by scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, India, regarding how the glaciers in the Himalayas are retreating. The glacier above Gangotri, from which the Ganges River starts, has retreated about one kilometer in the past 20 years or so. In fact, it has been determined that these glaciers are retreating faster than anywhere else on the planet. Professor Syed Hasnain, the main author of the report, relates that all of the glaciers in the middle Himalayas are retreating. He warns that many of the glaciers in this region could disappear, or greatly diminish, by 2035. New fears are that the meltwater could produce catastrophic floods as mountain lakes overflow.

As I explained earlier in this book, the Vedic texts reveal that such holy rivers as the Ganges will dry up and become only a series of small lakes, at best. In this way, it may practically disappear, as did the Sarasvati River. This latest report surely seems to show the possibility of this happening sooner than expected. This also shows the reason that the origination of the Ganges, at the ice cave called Gaumukh above Gangotri, is retreating farther away as the years go by. So those travelers who wish to journey to this mouth of the holy Ganga will have to travel farther up into the mountains to reach it. This also indicates why this mouth of the Ganges is always changing in its appearance.

Getting back to the way the glaciers are retreating, at the University of Colorado in Boulder, a research team has found that the mountain glaciers are diminishing in the West as well. The Alps have lost nearly 50% of their ice in the last 100 years. The Major glacier at Mt. Kenya has lost 8% of its size, and 14 of the 27 glaciers in Spain are gone.

The disappearing of the mountain glaciers is also reported in an article by Lily Whiteman in the January/February, 1999 issue of *National Parks*. It

stated that there were more than 150 glaciers in Glacier National Park in Montana back in 1850. Now there are only 50, and it is expected that these will also disappear within the next four decades. This is primarily blamed on the increase in global temperatures by only one degree since the 1800's. They say glaciers, because of being too solid and stable to show short-term variations in climate, are particularly good barometers of global warming.

In regard to the Vedic tradition, it explains that the Ganges fell from heaven to earth and was caught on the head of Lord Shiva. This was to prevent the intense damage that the force of it would cause to the earth if it fell directly on to the planet. This took place at Gangotri, where the water backed up into the mountains where much of it froze. The course of the Ganges is said to still flow through the universe and come down to the earth planet. However, much of the river water comes from underneath the glacier. If the glacier at Gaumukh does continue to recede or melt away, and if the Ganges would ever cease its flow or begin to dry up, it would certainly mean the end of an era and a drastic affect on the Vedic spiritual culture as we have known it in India. Indeed, it would never be the same.

2007 UPDATE

I visited Gangotri again in June of 2007, and it was easy to see that the Gaumukh glacier is melting faster than ever. The water that flowed downstream and over the falls at Gangotri was really fierce. This does not mean that there was merely more water in the river, but that the glacier was melting faster than previously. There are a few reasons for this.

One of the issues is that India is building dams on all of its rivers. Along the Ganga there is a dam at Tehri, which has created a green lake that backs up for miles along the river. As was explained to me, this lake now somehow attracts more rain to that area, leaving the clouds drained by the time they get up toward Gangotri. This also leaves the region of Gangotri and Gaumukh drier than before. This also prevents the Gaumukh glacier from being replenished with the rain or snow that it normally would receive. Thus, the rate of it receding away from Bhojbasa or Gangotri is increasing. This is not only from the general affects of global warming, but now also due to not being replenished by rains and snowfall that add water to the glacier. So some people are thinking that the Ganga may reduce its

flow, or even stop flowing if this effect increases, in as little as 10-15, or up to 35 years.

When I was in Gangotri ten years earlier, the Ganga had a steady but kind of meandering flow over the falls. But now there is lots of water that descends rapidly and powerfully. The village people in the area are simple and feel that it's just more water in the flow. They don't see how this may indeed affect the future of the glacier. However, some people do understand that this is a bad sign over the long term, and that it may only deplete the glacier that much sooner.

India is making electricity from its hydro-electric dams along its rivers, so much so that it is selling electricity to other countries, even China. Yet, it is odd that they cannot even supply steady electricity to places like Gangotri, which is in a blackout about half the time. Other cities in Uttar Pradesh have a similar fate with regular blackouts. But the building of dams is causing environmental changes, the future effects of which are unsure. Thus, as the glaciers recede and dry, the source of the river water will begin to disappear.

This was further explained in a *New York Times* article on July 17, 2007, by Somini Sengupta. D.P. Dobhal, 44, a glaciologist with the Wadia Institute for Himalayan Geology, has spent the last three years investigating the Chorabari glacier, the waters of which form the Mandakini River. He reports that the glacier itself has receded 90 feet in three years. On a map drawn in 1962, it was plotted 860 feet from where the glacier starts today.

The article goes on to say that a recent study by the Indian Space Research Organization, using satellite imaging to gauge the changes to 466 glaciers, has found more than a 20 percent reduction in size from 1962 to 2001, with bigger glaciers breaking into smaller pieces, each one retreating faster than its parent. A separate study found the Parbati glacier, one of the largest in the area, to be retreating by 170 feet a year during the 1990s. Another glacier that Mr. Dobhal has tracked, known as Dokriani, lost 20 percent of its size in three decades. Between 1991 and 1995, its beginning or snout inched back 55 feet each year.

Similar losses are being seen around the world. Lonnie G. Thompson, a glaciologist at Ohio State University, found a 22 percent loss of ice on the Qori Kalis glacier in Peru between 1963 and 2002. He called it "a repeating theme whether you are in tropical Andes, the Himalayas, or Kilimanjaro in Africa."

A vast and ancient sheet of ice, a glacier is in effect the planet's most sensitive organ, like an aging knee that feels the onset of winter. Its upper reaches accumulate snow and ice when it is cold; its lower reaches melt when it is warm. Its long-term survival depends on the balance between the buildup and the melting. Glaciers worldwide serve as a barometer for global warming, which has, according to a report in 2007 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, been spurred in recent decades by rising levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Even the Himalayas have grown measurably warmer. A recent study found that mean air temperature in the northwestern Himalayan range had risen by 2.2 degrees Celsius in the last two decades, a rate considerably higher than the rate of increase over the last 100 years.

India's public response so far has been to blame the industrialized world for rising emissions and resist any mandatory caps of its own. India's per capita share of emissions is one-twentieth that of industrialized countries, the government points out, going on to argue that any restrictions on emissions would stunt its economic growth. And yet, as critics say, India's rapid economic advance, combined with a population of more than a billion people and growing, will soon make it a far bigger contributor to greenhouse gases. More to the point, India stands to bear some of the most devastating consequences of human-induced climate change.

In an October, 2007 edition of the *Hindustan Times*, there was an article called, "Gangotri Glacier Melting Rapidly," which explained how much the Gangotri glacier melted since 2004. Of course, we know that glaciers all over the world are melting away, but the Gangotri glacier is the main source of the Ganga River, which directly affects all of Vedic culture in various ways. Plus, the Vedic *Puranas* have also predicted that the Ganga will one day cease to flow and dry up, similar to what happened to the Sarasvati, which is said to now flow underground.

A few points mentioned in the article included:

In what is being termed a result of the first ever authentic study of the famous Gangotri glacier in the Garhwal Himalaya, the glacial landscape receded by 12.10 metres [or around 40 feet or more] in just one year since 2004.

It was the first of its kind study of the Gangotri glacier carried out using the highly sophisticated Global Positioning System, revealed Dr. M. S. Miral, a scientist at the Glacier Study Centre of the G. B. Pant Institute of

Himalayan Environment and Development, Almora. “Before that, studies conducted on the Gangotri glacier were based on observations only.”

A six-member team of scientists from GBPIHED carried out the study. Dr. Kireet Kumar, head of GBPIHED’s Glacier Study Centre, led the team.

Dr. Miral attributed the Gangotri glacier retreating at an unusually fast pace to global warming. “Global warming has increased the atmospheric temperature by 0.6 degree centigrade worldwide,” he said, adding even the Himalayan arc “is not untouched by the rising temperature.”

The rising temperature in the Himalaya did not just manifest itself in the retreating glaciers but also sent [increased] the snowmelt run-off of the region by several times. “The snowmelt run-off of the Gangotri glacier, for instance, had been recorded at a huge 57.45 cubic metres annually within just five years since 1999,” said the expert.

Similarly, the rate at which the suspended sedimentation that the snowmelt run-off of the Gangotri glacier carries with it, comes to around 17.78 lakh tons a year, which is dangerous for reservoirs like the Tehri dam, as it leads to a very fast sedimentation in these artificial water bodies.

Dr. Miral said the Gangotri glacier “is receding so fast that even Gaumukh, the snout of the Bhagirathi river, which is a popular religious destination for the Hindus, has ceased to resemble the mouth of a cow, for which its revered.”

This, of course, could lead into a much deeper conversation on the matter. But the point is that we are already seeing the affects on the Gangotri glacier, which will have serious and irreversible reactions on the Ganga River itself and the religious nature of life in India.

It is further reported in the *India Tribune* (December 26, 2009) that in the village of Stackmo, Ladakh, 92 year old Phuntchok Namgyal remembers when they used to get water from the glaciers from April onwards, but now there is a water shortage even in early summer. The glaciers that did not melt during summer and would reach Stackmo are now receding further and further away.

Professor Syed Iqbal Hasnain of the Energy Research Institute, and who has been studying the glaciers for several years, says that the future prospects on the Hindukush-Himalayan-Tibetan glaciers seem to be getting worse. He says that scientists project an average of a 43 percent decrease in the glacial area by 2070 and a 75 percent decrease by the end of the 21st century at the current rate.

Tundup Angmo, climate change co-ordinator at Geres, an NGO active in the area, explains that glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than anywhere else in the world, at 70 meters per year. Pest attacks on crops are being reported in newer areas across Ladakh. Violent monsoons that cause damage to crops and the human habitat are also being reported in the Himalayas. Snowfall has also become less abundant, thus providing less water for the Indus River. This will also decrease the effectiveness of the hydro-electric power generators over the long term.

However, Angmo explains that what is undeniable is the steady rise of the recorded temperatures over the past three decades. So winters are slightly less severe while summers are getting longer and warmer. "Apple orchards are also coming up at higher areas," she explains, all of which are not the norm for this area.

So, though the Vedic prophecies explain that the Ganga and Yamuna Rivers will disappear in another 5,000 years, the changes seem to be taking place at an increasingly faster pace.

APPENDIX FIVE

If There is a God, Why is the World Like This?

How many times have I or you heard this question? Many people cannot seem to figure out why so many problems exist, as if God should take them all away, regardless of how humanity acts.

I hope this book has made at least one thing clear, that though God gives us the instructions by which to align our lives, thoughts and deeds, if we decide to do something else, or act directly contrary to the good instructions and spiritual knowledge that has been provided, then God will not interfere, but it is up to our own faults in the way this world reflects our own consciousness to allow evil, confusion, selfishness, or insensitivity to increase. In other words, as the pollution of materialistic consciousness increases, the stronger will be the socially deteriorating effects of it in this age. We have no one else to blame but ourselves.

Blaming God for the situation or the difficulties and confusion in life is like blaming the sun for the darkness that takes place at night. It is not the sun which is the cause of darkness, it is the absence of the sun which is the cause. In the same way, it is not the fault of God for the evil in the world, but it is the absence of God and lack of godliness which is the problem, and that is no one's fault but our own. Therefore, this is the age when we can experience the bitter results of irreligiosity and godlessness. That is the purpose of this age. Nonetheless, it can still be changed. We can hold off the bad aspects of this age by being more spiritual.

The fact is that suffering makes us begin to question our existence, such as why am I here? Why are things like this? What am I supposed to do? Why am I suffering? It helps you begin the quest of life, which is to discover who you are as a spiritual being, above and beyond merely being a physical shell in which you exist. If life was always lovely and easy, why would we question our existence? Yet, merely being in a material body means to suffer the aches and pains of the body, the problems we have with

other living being, or the difficulties we get from nature itself. You cannot get away from these problems. So what do we do about them? How do we get free? That is the beginning of the real purpose of human existence, which is to question why we are here and who am I, which can lead to the discovery of your spiritual identity. That is the real way of resolving to find the answers to life, which is the purpose of human existence.

So when something terrible happens, why should we ask how God can allow this, when we should be asking how can WE allow this. How can we tolerate whatever injustice we may see? We are the ones who can make a difference, and that difference starts by changing ourselves, changing our consciousness, uplifting our attitude and the way we see each other. That is up to you, and me, which leads to the obvious question: What are you waiting for? What is it that has to happen before you make a difference, before you make a stand to improve things in this world by first improving yourself?

You can change yourself, and to some degree change your sphere of influence, your circle of friends, your area of work or existence by what you do. Become spiritual enough to let God work through you, and be ready for miracles to happen. Be open to change and possibilities. And don't expect to merely sit back and have God do everything for you. You first have to show the initiative, the proper intention, the right direction in your thoughts and actions. Then the more people who adapt to that mindset, the more momentum will gather to make the uplifting changes possible, which can gradually grow around the world. Keep that in mind, always. If you want to change the world, then start with yourself. As it is said, to move but one grain of sand on the beach is to change the face of the world. The more we work together, the more it becomes possible, the more it becomes probable.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Bhagavad-gita is abbreviated in this book as *Bg*.
Caitanya-caritamrita is *Cc*.
Srimad-Bhagavatam or *Bhagavat Purana* is *Bhag*.

GLOSSARY

Acarya or *Acharya*—the spiritual master who sets the proper standard by his own example.

Advaita—nondual, meaning that the Absolute is one with the infinitesimal souls with no individuality between them. The philosophy of Sankaracharya.

Agni—fire, or Agni the demigod of fire.

Agnihotra—the Vedic sacrifice in which offerings were made to the fire, such as ghee, milk, sesame seeds, grains, etc. The demigod Agni would deliver the offerings to the demigods that were referred to in the ritual.

Ahankara—false ego, identification with matter.

Ahimsa—nonviolence.

Akarma—actions which cause no *karmic* reactions.

Ananda—spiritual bliss.

Ananta—unlimited.

Ananta-Sesha—the Lord's incarnation as the thousand-headed serpent whose coiled body serves as the bed of Vishnu. He also sustains the planets of the universe on His heads. He is also known as the "Endless or Infinite One." The many coils of His body symbolize endless time. From His mouth comes the fire of universal annihilation and from between His eyebrows comes Lord Rudra who does his dance of dissolution which creates the clouds which create the universal flood.

Apsaras—the dancing girls of heaven.

Aranyaka—sacred writings that are supposed to frame the essence of the *Upanishads*.

Arati—the ceremony of worship when incense and ghee lamps are offered to the Deities.

Arca-vigraha—the worshipable deity form of the Lord made of stone, wood, etc.

Atharva Veda—one of the four *Vedas*, the original revealed scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Aryan—a noble person, one who is on the path of spiritual advancement.

Asana—postures for meditation, or exercises for developing the body into a fit instrument for spiritual advancement.

Asat—that which is temporary.

Ashrama—one of the four orders of spiritual life, such as *brahmacari* (celibate student), *grihastha* (married householder), *vanaprastha* (retired stage), and *sannyasa* (renunciate); or the abode of a spiritual teacher or *sadhu*.

Astanga-yoga—the eightfold path of mystic yoga.

Asura—one who is ungodly or a demon.

Atma—the self or soul. Sometimes means the body, mind, and senses.

Atman—usually referred to as the Supreme Self.

Avatara—an incarnation of the Lord who descends from the spiritual world.

Avidya—ignorance or nescience.

Aum—*om* or *pranava*

Ayurveda—the original wholistic form of medicine as described in the Vedic literature.

Babaji—wandering mendicant holy man.

Badrinatha—one of the holy places of pilgrimage in the Himalayas, and home of the Deity Sri Badrinatha along with many sages and hermits.

Balarama or Baladeva—the first plenary expansion of Lord Krishna, and His brother who appeared as the son of Rohini.

Bhagavad-gita—the Song of God, the conversation between Lord Krishna and His devotee Arjuna, which was one of the chapters in the *Mahabharata*.

Bhagavan—one who possesses all opulences, God.

Bhajan—song of worship.

Bhajan kutir—a small dwelling used for one's worship and meditation.

Bhakta—a devotee of the Lord who is engaged in *bhakti-yoga*.

Bhakti—love and devotion for God.

Bhakti-yoga—the path of offering pure devotional service to the Supreme.

Bhang—pronounced bong, a sweet mixed with hashish.

Brahma—the demigod of creation who was born from Lord Vishnu, the first created living being and the engineer of the secondary stage of creation of the universe when all the living entities were manifested.

Brahmacari—a celibate student who is trained by the spiritual master. One of the four divisions or ashramas of spiritual life.

Brahmajyoti—the great white light or effulgence which emanates from the body of the Lord.

Brahmaloka—the highest planet or plane of existence in the universe; the planet where Lord Brahma lives.

Brahman—the spiritual energy; the all-pervading impersonal aspect of the Lord; or the Supreme Lord Himself.

Brahmana or brahmin—one of the four orders of society; the intellectual class of men who have been trained in the knowledge of the *Vedas* and initiated by a spiritual master.

Brahmana—the supplemental books of the four primary *Vedas*. They usually contained instructions for performing Vedic *agnihotras*, chanting the mantras, the purpose of the rituals, etc. The *Aitareya* and *Kaushitaki Brahmanas* belong to the *Rig-veda*, the *Satapatha Brahmana* belongs to the *White Yajur-veda*, and the *Taittiriya Brahmana* belongs to the *Black Yajur-veda*. The *Praudha* and *Shadvinsa Brahmanas* are two of the eight *Brahmanas* belonging to the *Atharva-veda*.

Brahmastra—a nuclear weapon that is produced and controlled by mantra.

Brahminical—to be clean and upstanding, both outwardly and inwardly, like a *brahmana* should be.

Buddha—Lord Buddha or a learned man.

Caitanya-caritamṛta—the scripture by Krishnadasa Kaviraja which explains the teachings and pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu—the most recent incarnation of the Lord who appeared in the 15th century in Bengal and who originally started the *sankirtana* movement, based on congregational chanting of the holy names.

Canakya Pandit—the prime minister of King Candragupta whose aphorisms are noted for their logic and which is still famous throughout India.

Chakra—a wheel, disk, or psychic energy center situated along the spinal column in the subtle body of the physical shell.

Causal Ocean or Karana Ocean—is the corner of the spiritual sky where Maha-Vishnu lies down to create the material manifestation.

Cit—eternal knowledge.

Chhandas—sacred hymns of the *Atharva-veda*.

Darshan—the devotional act of seeing and being seen by the Deity in the temple.

Deity—the *arca-vigraha*, or worshipful form of the Supreme in the temple, or deity as the worshipful image of the demigod.

Devas—demigods or heavenly beings from higher levels of material existence, or a godly person.

Devaloka—the higher planets or planes of existence of the devas.

Devaki—the devotee who acted as Lord Krishna’s mother.

Dham—a holy place.

Dharma—the essential, spiritual nature or duty of the living being.

Diksha—spiritual initiation.

Dualism—as related in this book refers to the Supreme as both an impersonal force as well as a person.

Durga—the form of Parvati, Shiva’s wife, as a warrior goddess known by many names according to her deeds, such as Simhavahini when riding her lion, Mahishasuramardini for killing the demon Mahishasura, Jagaddhatri as the mother of the universe, Kali when she killed the demon Raktavija, Tara when killing Shumba, etc.

Dvapara-yuga—the third age which lasts 864,000 years.

Dvaraka—the island kingdom of Lord Krishna that was off the coast of Gujarat 5,000 years ago.

Dwaita—dualism, the principle that the Absolute Truth consists of the infinite Supreme Being and the infinitesimal individual souls.

Gandharvas—the celestial angel-like beings who have beautiful forms and voices, and are expert in dance and music, capable of becoming invisible and can help souls on the earthly plane.

Ganesh—a son of Shiva, said to destroy obstacles (as Vinayaka) and offer good luck to those who petition him.

Ganga—another name for the Ganges River.

Ganga Devi—the personified form of the Ganges River.

Ganges—the sacred and spiritual river which, according to the *Vedas*, runs throughout the universe, a portion of which is seen in India. The reason the river is considered holy is that it is said to be a drop of the Karana Ocean that leaked in when Lord Vishnu, in His incarnation as Vamanadeva, kicked a small hole in the universal shell with His toe. Thus, the water is spiritual as well as being purified by the touch of Lord Vishnu.

Gangapuja—the arati ceremony for worshiping the Ganges.

Gangotri—the source of the Ganges River in the Himalayas.

Garbhodakasayi Vishnu—the expansion of Lord Vishnu who enters into each universe.

Gaudiya—a part of India sometimes called Aryavarta or land of the Aryans, located south of the Himalayas and north of the Vindhya Hills.

Gaudiya *sampradaya*—the school of Vaishnavism founded by Sri Caitanya.

Gayatri—the spiritual vibration or mantra from which the other *Vedas* were expanded and which is chanted by those who are initiated as *brahmanas* and given the spiritual understanding of Vedic philosophy.

Goloka Vrindavana—the name of Lord Krishna’s spiritual planet.

Gosvami—one who is master of the senses.

Govinda—a name of Krishna which means one who gives pleasure to the cows and senses.

Grihastha—the householder order of life. One of the four *ashramas* in spiritual life.

Gunas—the modes of material nature of which there is *sattva* (goodness), *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (ignorance).

Guru—a spiritual master.

Hare—the Lord’s pleasure potency, Radharani, who is approached for accessibility to the Lord.

Hare Krishna mantra—Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

Hari—a name of Krishna as the one who takes away one’s obstacles on the spiritual path.

Haribol—a word that means to chant the name of the Lord, Hari.

Hari-kirtana—the chanting of the names of Lord Krishna.

Harinam—refers to the name of the Lord, Hari.

Hiranyagarbha—another name of Brahma who was born of Vishnu in the primordial waters within the egg of the universe.

Hrishikesa—a name for Krishna which means the master of the senses.

Ikshvaku—the son of Manu who was king of the earth in ancient times and to whom Manu spoke *Bhagavad-gita*.

Impersonalism—the view that God has no personality or form, but is only an impersonal force.

Impersonalist—those who believe God has no personality or form.

Incarnation—the taking on of a body or form.

Indra—the King of heaven and controller of rain, who by his great power conquers the forces of darkness.

Jai or *Jaya*—a term meaning victory, all glories.

Japa—the chanting one performs, usually softly, for one's own meditation.

Japa-mala—the string of beads one uses for chanting.

Jiva—the individual soul or living being.

Jivanmukta—a liberated soul, though still in the material body and universe.

Jiva-shakti—the living force.

Jnana—knowledge which may be material or spiritual.

Jnana-kanda—the portion of the *Vedas* which stresses empirical speculation for understanding truth.

Jnana-yoga—the process of linking with the Supreme through empirical knowledge and mental speculation.

Jnani—one engaged in *jnana-yoga*, or the process of cultivating knowledge to understand the Absolute.

Kala—eternal time.

Kali—the demigoddess who is the fierce form of the wife of Lord Shiva.

The word *kali* comes from *kala*, the Sanskrit word for time: the power that dissolves or destroys everything.

Kali—also the male personality of Kali-yuga personified.

Kali-yuga—the fourth and present age, the age of quarrel and confusion, which lasts 432,000 years and began 5,000 years ago.

Kalki—the incarnation of the Supreme who annihilates all of the miscreants and establishes the next age of Satya-yuga.

Kalpa—a day in the life of Lord Brahma which lasts a thousand cycles of the four *yugas*.

Kama—lust or inordinate desire.

Kapila—an incarnation of Lord Krishna who propagated the Sankhya philosophy.

Karanodakasayi Vishnu (Maha-Vishnu)—the expansion of Lord Krishna who created all the material universes.

Karma—material actions performed in regard to developing one's position or for future results which produce *karmic* reactions. It is also the reactions one endures from such fruitive activities.

Karma-kanda—the portion of the *Vedas* which primarily deals with recommended fruitive activities for various results.

Karma-yoga—the system of yoga for dovetailing one’s activities for spiritual advancement.

Kirtana—chanting or singing the glories of the Lord.

Krishna—the name of the original Supreme Personality of Godhead which means the most attractive and greatest pleasure. He is the source of all other incarnations, such as Vishnu, Rama, Narasimha, Narayana, Buddha, Parashurama, Vamanadeva, Kalki at the end of Kali-yuga, etc.

Krishnaloka—the spiritual planet where Lord Krishna resides.

Kshatriya—the second class of *varna* of society, or occupation of administrative or protective service, such as warrior or military personnel.

Ksirodakasayi Vishnu—the Supersoul expansion of the Lord who enters into each atom and the heart of each individual.

Kumbha Mela—the holy festival in which millions of pilgrims and sages gather to bathe in the holy and purifying rivers for liberation at particular auspicious times that are calculated astrologically. The Kumbha Mela festivals take place every three years alternating between Allahabad, Nasik, Ujjain, and Hardwar.

Kuruksetra—the place of battle 5,000 years ago between the Pandavas and the Kauravas ninety miles north of New Delhi, where Krishna spoke the *Bhagavad-gita*.

Kurus—the family of Dhritarashtra who were the enemies of the Pandavas.

Lakshmi—the goddess of fortune and wife of Lord Vishnu.

Lila—pastimes.

Lilavataras—the many incarnations of God who appear to display various spiritual pastimes to attract the conditioned souls in the material world.

Linga—the phallic symbol of Lord Shiva. *Mahabhagavata*—a great devotee of the Lord.

Mahabharata—the great epic of the Pandavas, which includes the *Bhagavad-gita*, by Vyasadeva.

Maha-mantra—the best mantra for self-realization in this age, called the Hare Krishna mantra: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

Mahatma—a great soul or devotee.

Mahat-tattva—the total material energy.

Maha-Vishnu or Karanodakasayi Vishnu—the Vishnu expansion of Lord Krishna from whom all the material universes emanate, and who lies in the Karana Ocean, called the Causal Ocean.

Mandir—a temple.

Mantra—a sound vibration which prepares the mind for spiritual realization and delivers the mind from material inclinations. In some cases a mantra is chanted for specific material benefits.

Manu—a demigod son of Brahma who is the forefather and lawgiver of the human race. A succession of 14 Manus exist during each day of Brahma.

Martya-loka—the earth planet, the place of death.

Maya—illusion, or anything that appears to not be connected with the eternal Absolute Truth.

Mayavadi—the impersonalist or voidist who believes that the Supreme has no form.

Mitra—the deity controlling the sun, and who gives life to earth.

Mleccha—a derogatory name for a low-born, uncivilized person, a meat eater, or those outside of Vedic society.

Moksha—liberation from material existence.

Murti—a Deity of the Lord or spiritual master that is worshiped.

Narada Muni—the universal sage and devotee of the Lord who travels throughout the universe in his eternal body. He is the spiritual master of Vyasadeva and many other devotees.

Narasimha—the incarnation of the Lord who appears as half-man, half-lion to display His anger toward the demons and provide protection to His devotees.

Narayana—the four-handed form of the Supreme Lord.

Nirguna—without material qualities.

Nirvana—the state of no material miseries, usually the goal of the Buddhists or voidists.

Om or *Om-kara*—*pranava*, the transcendental *om* mantra, generally referring to the attributeless or impersonal aspects of the Absolute.

Paramahansa—the highest level of self-realized devotees of the Lord.

Paramatma—the Supersoul, or localized expansion of the Lord.

Parampara—the system of disciplic succession through which transcendental knowledge descends.

Parvati—Lord Shiva’s spouse, daughter of Parvata. Parvata is the personification of the Himalayas. She is also called Gauri for her golden complexion, Candi, Bhairavi (as the wife of Bhairava, Shiva), Durga, Ambika, and Shakti.

Patanjali—the authority on the *astanga-yoga* system.

Pradhana—the total material energy in its unmanifest state.

Prajapati—deity presiding over procreation.

Prakriti—matter in its primordial state, the material nature.

Prana—the life air or cosmic energy.

Pranayama—control of the breathing process as in *astanga* or *raja-yoga*.

Pranava—same as *omkara*.

Prasada—food or other articles that have been offered to the Deity in the temple and then distributed amongst people as the blessings or mercy of the Deity.

Prema—matured love for Krishna.

Puja—the worship offered to the Deity.

Pujari—the priest who performs worship, *puja*, to the Deity.

Purusha or *Purusham*—the supreme enjoyer.

Raja-yoga—the eightfold yoga system.

Rajo-guna—the material mode of passion.

Ramachandra—an incarnation of Krishna as He appeared as the greatest of kings.

Ramayana—the great epic of the incarnation of Lord Ramachandra.

Rasa—an enjoyable taste or feeling, a relationship with God.

Rig Veda—one of the four *Vedas*, original scriptures spoken by the lord.

Rishi—saintly person who knows the Vedic knowledge.

Sacrifice—in this book it in no way pertains to human sacrifice, as many people tend to think when this word is used. But it means to engage in an austerity of some kind for a higher, spiritual purpose.

Sama Veda—one of the four original *samhitas*, consisting of Vedic hymns that were set to music.

Shabda-brahma—the original spiritual vibration or energy of which the *Vedas* are composed.

Sac-cid-ananda-vigraha—the transcendental form of the Lord or of the living entity which is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss.

Sadhana—a specific practice or discipline for attaining God realization.

Sadhu—Indian holy man or devotee.

Saguna Brahman—the aspect of the Absolute with form and qualities.

Samadhi—trance, the perfection of being absorbed in the Absolute.

Samsara—rounds of life; cycles of birth and death; reincarnation.

Sanatana-dharma—the eternal nature of the living being, to love and render service to the supreme lovable object, the Lord.

Sangam—the confluence of two or more rivers.

Sankarshana—one of the four original expansions of Lord Krishna in the spiritual world, and another name of Balarama who is also Krishna's brother.

Sankhya—analytical understanding of material nature, the body, and the soul.

Sankirtana-yajna—the prescribed sacrifice for this age: congregational chanting of the holy names of God.

Sannyasa—the renounced order of life, the highest of the four *ashramas* on the spiritual path.

Sarasvati—the goddess of knowledge and intelligence.

Sattva-guna—the material mode of goodness.

Satya-yuga—the first of the four ages which lasts 1,728,000 years.

Shaivites—worshippers of Lord Shiva.

Shakti—energy, potency or power, the active principle in creation. Also the active power or wife of a deity, such as Shiva/Shakti.

Shastra—the authentic revealed scripture.

Shiva—the benevolent one, the demigod who is in charge of the material mode of ignorance and the destruction of the universe. Part of the triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva who continually create, maintain, and destroy the universe. He is known as Rudra when displaying his destructive aspect.

Shudra—the working class of society, the fourth of the *varnas*.

Sikha—a tuft of hair on the back of the head signifying that one is a Vaishnava.

Smaranam—remembering the Lord.

Smriti—the traditional Vedic knowledge "that is remembered" from what was directly heard by or revealed to the *rishis*.

Sravanam—hearing about the Lord.

Srimad-Bhagavatam—the most ripened fruit of the tree of Vedic knowledge compiled by Vyasadeva.

Sruti—scriptures that were received directly from God and transmitted orally by *brahmanas* or *rishis* down through succeeding generations. Traditionally, it is considered the four primary *Vedas*.

Svami—one who can control his mind and senses.

Tamo-guna—the material mode of ignorance.

Tapasya—voluntary austerity for spiritual advancement.

Tilok—the clay markings that signify a person's body as a temple, and the sect or school of thought of the person.

Tirtha—a holy place of pilgrimage.

Treta-yuga—the second of the four ages which lasts 1,296,000 years.

Tulasi—the small tree that grows where worship to Krishna is found. It is called the embodiment of devotion, and the incarnation of Vrinda-devi.

Upanishads—the portions of the *Vedas* which primarily explain philosophically the Absolute Truth. It is knowledge of Brahman which releases one from the world and allows one to attain self-realization when received from a qualified teacher. Except for the *Isa Upanishad*, which is the 40th chapter of the *Vajasaneyi Samhita* of the *Sukla (White) Yajur-veda*, the *Upanishads* are connected to the four primary *Vedas*, generally found in the *Brahmanas*.

Vaikunthas—the planets located in the spiritual sky.

Vaishnava—a worshiper of the Supreme Lord Vishnu or Krishna and His expansions or incarnations.

Vaishnava-*aparadha*—an offense against a Vaisnava or devotee, which can negate all of one's spiritual progress.

Vaisya—the third class of society engaged in business or farming.

Vanaprastha—the third of the four *ashramas* of spiritual life in which one retires from family life in preparation for the renounced order.

Varna—sometimes referred to as caste, a division of society, such as *brahmana* (a priestly intellectual), a *kshatriya* (ruler or manager), *vaisya* (a merchant, banker, or farmer), and *sudra* (common laborer).

Varnashrama—the system of four divisions of society, *varnas*, and four orders of spiritual life, *ashramas*. *Varnas* are the natural divisions of society, namely the Shudras or laborer class, the *vaisyas* or farmers and merchants, the Kshatriyas or warriors, military, and leaders, and

the *brahmanas* or intellectual and priestly class. This is not the modern day caste system that is determined by family birth, which was inflicted on the people by the British to help cause dissension among the people and make it easier for the British to maintain control over them. But this is the natural tendencies, proclivities, and abilities that each individual has. When each individual is engaged in his natural tendencies and contributes to society that way, everyone is happy and appreciated. The *ashramas* are simply the divisions of life, consisting of *brahmacari* or celibate student life, the *grihasthas* of married life, the *vanaprasthas* or retired life, and the *sannyasis* or life of renunciation when one prepares for death by becoming as spiritually focused as possible.

Vedanta-sutras—the philosophical conclusion of the four *Vedas*.

Vedas—generally means the four primary *samhitas*; the *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Sama*, and *Atharva*.

Vidya—knowledge.

Vikarma—sinful activities performed without scriptural authority and which produce sinful reactions.

Virajanadi or Viraja River—the space that separates the material creation from the spiritual sky.

Vishnu—the expansion of Lord Krishna who enters into the material energy to create and maintain the cosmic world.

Vishnu Purana—one of the eighteen major *Puranas*, Vedic historical scriptures.

Vrindavana—the place where Lord Krishna displayed His village pastimes 5,000 years ago, and is considered to be part of the spiritual abode..

Vyasadeva—the incarnation of God who appeared as the greatest philosopher who compiled all the *Vedas* into written form.

Yadu dynasty—the dynasty in which Lord Krishna appeared.

Yajna—a ritual or austerity that is done as a sacrifice for spiritual merit, or ritual worship of a demigod for good *karmic* reactions.

Yajur Veda—one of the four *Vedas*, original revealed scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Yamaraja—the demigod and lord of death who directs the living entities to various punishments according to their activities.

Yantra—a machine, instrument, or mystical diagram used in ritual worship.

Yoga—linking up with the Absolute.

Yoga-siddhi—mystic perfection.

Yogi—a transcendentalist striving for union with the Supreme.

Yuga-avatars—the incarnations of God who appear in each of the four *yugas* to explain the authorized system of self-realization in that age.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Knapp grew up in a Christian family, during which time he seriously studied the Bible to understand its teachings. In his late teenage years, however, he sought answers to questions not easily explained in Christian theology. So he began to search through other religions and philosophies from around the world and started to find the answers for which he was looking. He also studied a variety of occult sciences, ancient mythology, mysticism, yoga, and the spiritual teachings of the East. After his first reading of the *Bhagavad-gita*, he felt he had found the last piece of the puzzle he had been putting together through all of his research. Therefore, he continued to study all of the major Vedic texts of India to gain a better understanding of the Vedic science.

It is known amongst all Eastern mystics that anyone, regardless of qualifications, academic or otherwise, who does not engage in the spiritual practices described in the Vedic texts cannot actually enter into understanding the depths of the Vedic spiritual science, nor acquire the realizations that should accompany it. So, rather than pursuing his research in an academic atmosphere at a university, Stephen directly engaged in the spiritual disciplines that have been recommended for hundreds of years. He continued his study of Vedic knowledge and spiritual practice under the guidance of a spiritual master. Through this process, and with the sanction of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, he became initiated into the genuine and authorized spiritual line of the Brahma-Madhava-Gaudiya *sampradaya*, which is a disciplic succession that descends back through Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Sri Vyasadeva, the compiler of Vedic literature, and further back to Sri Krishna. Besides being *brahminically* initiated, Stephen has also been to India several times and traveled extensively throughout the country, visiting most of the major holy places and gaining a wide variety of spiritual experiences that only such places can give.

Stephen has put the culmination of over forty years of continuous research and travel experience into his books in an effort to share it with those who are also looking for spiritual understanding. More books are

forthcoming, so stay in touch through his website to find out further developments.

More information about Stephen, his projects, books, free ebooks, and numerous articles and videos can be found on his website at: www.stephenknapp.com or at <http://stephenknapp.wordpress.com>.

Stephen has continued to write books that include in *The Eastern Answers of the Mysteries of Life* series:

The Secret Teachings of the Vedas,
The Universal Path to Enlightenment,
The Vedic Prophecies: A New Look into the Future,
How the Universe was Created and Our Purpose In It.

He has also written:

Toward World Peace: Seeing the Unity Between Us All,
Facing Death: Welcoming the Afterlife,
The Key to Real Happiness,
Proof of Vedic Culture's Global Existence,
Vedic Culture: The Difference It Can Make In Your Life,
Reincarnation and Karma: How They Really Affect Us,
Power of the Dharma: An Introduction to Hinduism and Vedic Culture,
The Eleventh Commandment: The Next Step in Social Spiritual Development,
The Heart of Hinduism: The Eastern Path to Freedom, Empowerment and Illumination,
Seeing Spiritual India: A Guide to Temples, Holy Sites, Festivals and Traditions,
Crimes Against India: And the Need to Protect its Vedic Tradition,
Avatars, Gods and Goddesses of the Vedic Tradition,
The Soul: Understanding Our Real Identity, and Destined for Infinity, an exciting novel for those who prefer lighter reading, or learning spiritual knowledge in the context of an action oriented, spiritual adventure.

If you have enjoyed this book, or if you are serious about finding higher levels of real spiritual Truth, and learning more about the mysteries of India's Vedic culture, then you will also want to get other books written by Stephen Knapp, which include:

The Secret Teachings of the Vedas

The Eastern Answers to the Mysteries of Life

This book presents the essence of the ancient Eastern philosophy and summarizes some of the most elevated and important of all spiritual knowledge. This enlightening information is explained in a clear and concise way and is essential for all who want to increase their spiritual understanding, regardless of what their religious background may be. If you are looking for a book to give you an in-depth introduction to the Vedic spiritual knowledge, and to get you started in real spiritual understanding, this is the book!

The topics include: What is your real spiritual identity; the Vedic explanation of the soul; scientific evidence that consciousness is separate from but interacts with the body; the real unity between us all; how to attain the highest happiness and freedom from the cause of suffering; the law of karma and reincarnation; the karma of a nation; where you are really going in life; the real process of progressive evolution; life after death—heaven, hell, or beyond; a description of the spiritual realm; the nature of the Absolute Truth—personal God or impersonal force; recognizing the existence of the Supreme; the reason why we exist at all; and much more. This book provides the answers to questions not found in other religions or philosophies, and condenses information from a wide variety of sources that would take a person years to assemble. It also contains many quotations from the Vedic texts to let the texts speak for themselves, and to show the knowledge the Vedas have held for thousands of years. It also explains the history and origins of the Vedic literature. This book has been called one of the best reviews of Eastern philosophy available.

The Universal Path to Enlightenment

The Way to Spiritual Success for Everyone

Although all religions and spiritual processes are meant to lead you toward enlightenment, they are not all the same in regard to the methods they teach, nor in the level of philosophical understanding they offer. So an intelligent person will make comparisons between them to understand the aims and distinctions of each religion, and which is the most elevating.

This book presents a most interesting and revealing survey of the major spiritual paths of the world and describes their histories, philosophical basis, and goals. It will help you decide which path may be the best for you.

You Will Learn

- the essential similarities of all religions that all people of any culture or tradition can practice, which could bring about a united world religion, or “THE UNIVERSAL PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT.”
- how Christianity and Judaism were greatly influenced by the early pre-Christian or "pagan" religions and adopted many of their legends, holidays, and rituals that are still accepted and practiced today.
- about evidence that shows Jesus traveled to India to learn its spiritual knowledge, and then made bhakti-yoga the basis of his teachings.
- the philosophical basis and origin of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Sikhism, and many others.
- and, most importantly, what is the real purpose that you should strive for in a spiritual process, and how to practice the path that is especially recommended as the easiest and most effective for the people of this age.

This book is \$19.95, 6”x 9” trim size, 340 pages, ISBN: 1453644660.

How the Universe was Created And Our Purpose In It

This book provides answers and details about the process of creation that are not available in any other traditions, religions, or areas of science. It offers the oldest rendition of the creation and presents insights into the spiritual purpose of it and what we are really meant to do here.

Every culture in the world and most religions have their own descriptions of the creation, and ideas about from where we came and what we should do. Unfortunately, these are often short and generalized versions that lack details. Thus, they are often given no better regard than myths. However, there are descriptions that give more elaborate explanations of how the cosmic creation fully manifested which are found in the ancient Vedic *Puranas* of India, some of the oldest spiritual writings on the planet. These descriptions provide the details and answers that other versions leave out. Furthermore, these Vedic descriptions often agree, and sometimes disagree, with the modern scientific theories of creation, and offer some factors that science has yet to consider.

Now, with this book, we can get a clearer understanding of how this universe appears, what is its real purpose, from where we really came, how we fit into the plan for the universe, and if there is a way out of here. Some of the many topics included are:

- Comparisons between other creation legends.

- Detailed descriptions of the dawn of creation and how the material energy developed and caused the formation of the cosmos.

- What is the primary source of the material and spiritual elements.

- Insights into the primal questions of, “Who am I? Why am I here?

- Where have I come from? What is the purpose of this universe and my life?”

- An alternative description of the evolutionary development of the various forms of life.

- Seeing beyond the temporary nature of the material worlds, and more.

This book will provide some of the most profound insights into these questions and topics. It will also give any theist more information and understanding about how the universe is indeed a creation of God.

This book is \$19.95, 6" x 9" trim size, 308 pages, ISBN: 1456460455.

Proof of Vedic Culture's Global Existence

This book provides evidence which makes it clear that the ancient Vedic culture was once a global society. Even today we can see its influence in any part of the world. Thus, it becomes obvious that before the world became full of distinct and separate cultures, religions and countries, it was once united in a common brotherhood of Vedic culture, with common standards, principles, and representations of God.

No matter what we may consider our present religion, society or country, we are all descendants of this ancient global civilization. Thus, the Vedic culture is the parent of all humanity and the original ancestor of all religions. In this way, we all share a common heritage.

This book is an attempt to allow humanity to see more clearly its universal roots. This book provides a look into:

- How Vedic knowledge was given to humanity by the Supreme.
- The history and traditional source of the Vedas and Vedic Aryan society.
- Who were the original Vedic Aryans. How Vedic society was a global influence and what shattered this world-wide society. How Sanskrit faded from being a global language.
- Many scientific discoveries over the past several centuries are only rediscoveries of what the Vedic literature already knew.
- How the origins of world literature are found in India and Sanskrit.
- The links between the Vedic and other ancient cultures, such as the Sumerians, Persians, Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, and others.
- Links between the Vedic tradition and Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.
- How many of the western holy sites, churches, and mosques were once the sites of Vedic holy places and sacred shrines.
- The Vedic influence presently found in such countries as Britain, France, Russia, Greece, Israel, Arabia, China, Japan, and in areas of Scandinavia, the Middle East, Africa, the South Pacific, and the Americas.

- Uncovering the truth of India's history: Powerful evidence that shows how many mosques and Muslim buildings were once opulent Vedic temples, including the Taj Mahal, Delhi's Jama Masjid, Kutab Minar, as well as buildings in many other cities, such as Agra, Ahmedabad, Bijapur, etc.
- How there is presently a need to plan for the survival of Vedic culture.

This book is sure to provide some amazing facts and evidence about the truth of world history and the ancient, global Vedic Culture. This book has enough startling information and historical evidence to cause a major shift in the way we view religious history and the basis of world traditions.

This book is \$20.99, 6"x9" trim size, 431 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4392-4648-1.

Toward World Peace: Seeing the Unity Between Us All

This book points out the essential reasons why peace in the world and cooperation amongst people, communities, and nations have been so difficult to establish. It also advises the only way real peace and harmony amongst humanity can be achieved.

In order for peace and unity to exist we must first realize what barriers and divisions keep us apart. Only then can we break through those barriers to see the unity that naturally exists between us all. Then, rather than focus on our differences, it is easier to recognize our similarities and common goals. With a common goal established, all of humanity can work together to help each other reach that destiny.

This book is short and to the point. It is a thought provoking book and will provide inspiration for anyone. It is especially useful for those working in politics, religion, interfaith, race relations, the media, the United Nations, teaching, or who have a position of leadership in any capacity. It is also for those of us who simply want to spread the insights needed for bringing greater levels of peace, acceptance, unity, and equality between friends, neighbours, and communities. Such insights include:

- The factors that keep us apart.
- Breaking down cultural distinctions.
- Breaking down the religious differences.
- Seeing through bodily distinctions.
- We are all working to attain the same things.
- Our real identity: The basis for common ground.
- Seeing the Divinity within each of us.
- What we can do to bring unity between everyone we meet.

This book carries an important message and plan of action that we must incorporate into our lives and plans for the future if we intend to ever bring peace and unity between us.

This book is \$6.95, 90 pages, 6" x 9" trim size, ISBN: 1452813744.

Facing Death

Welcoming the Afterlife

Many people are afraid of death, or do not know how to prepare for it nor what to expect. So this book is provided to relieve anyone of the fear that often accompanies the thought of death, and to supply a means to more clearly understand the purpose of it and how we can use it to our advantage. It will also help the survivors of the departed souls to better understand what has happened and how to cope with it. Furthermore, it shows that death is not a tragedy, but a natural course of events meant to help us reach our destiny.

This book is easy to read, with soothing and comforting wisdom, along with stories of people who have been with departing souls and what they have experienced. It is written especially for those who have given death little thought beforehand, but now would like to have some preparedness for what may need to be done regarding the many levels of the experience and what might take place during this transition.

To assist you in preparing for your own death, or that of a loved one, you will find guidelines for making one's final days as peaceful and as smooth as possible, both physically and spiritually. Preparing for death can transform your whole outlook in a positive way, if understood properly. Some of the topics in the book include:

- The fear of death and learning to let go.
- The opportunity of death: The portal into the next life.
- This earth and this body are no one's real home, so death is natural.
- Being practical and dealing with the final responsibilities.
- Forgiving yourself and others before you go.
- Being the assistant of one leaving this life.
- Connecting with the person inside the disease.
- Surviving the death of a loved one.
- Stories of being with dying, and an amazing near-death-experience.
- Connecting to the spiritual side of death.
- What happens while leaving the body.

- What difference the consciousness makes during death, and how to attain the best level of awareness to carry you through it, or what death will be like and how to prepare for it, this book will help you.

Published by iUniverse.com, \$13.95, 135 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4401-1344-4

Destined for Infinity

Deep within the mystical and spiritual practices of India are doors that lead to various levels of both higher and lower planes of existence. Few people from the outside are ever able to enter into the depths of these practices to experience such levels of reality.

This is the story of the mystical adventure of a man, Roman West, who entered deep into the secrets of India where few other Westerners have been able to penetrate. While living with a master in the Himalayan foothills and traveling the mystical path that leads to the Infinite, he witnesses the amazing powers the mystics can achieve and undergoes some of the most unusual experiences of his life. Under the guidance of a master that he meets in the mountains, he gradually develops mystic abilities of his own and attains the sacred vision of the enlightened sages and enters the unfathomable realm of Infinity. However, his peaceful life in the hills comes to an abrupt end when he is unexpectedly forced to confront the powerful forces of darkness that have been unleashed by an evil Tantric priest to kill both Roman and his master. His only chance to defeat the intense forces of darkness depends on whatever spiritual strength he has been able to develop.

This story includes traditions and legends that have existed for hundreds and thousands of years. All of the philosophy, rituals, mystic powers, forms of meditation, and descriptions of the Absolute are authentic and taken from narrations found in many of the sacred books of the East, or gathered by the author from his own experiences in India and information from various sages themselves.

This book will will prepare you to perceive the multidimensional realities that exist all around us, outside our sense perception. This is a book that will give you many insights into the broad possibilities of our life and purpose in this world.

Published by iUniverse.com, \$16.95, 255 pages, 6" x 9" trim size, ISBN: 0-595-33959-X.

Reincarnation and Karma: How They Really Affect Us

Everyone may know a little about reincarnation, but few understand the complexities and how it actually works. Now you can find out how reincarnation and karma really affect us. Herein all of the details are provided on how a person is implicated for better or worse by their own actions. You will understand why particular situations in life happen, and how to make improvements for one's future. You will see why it appears that bad things happen to good people, or even why good things happen to bad people, and what can be done about it.

Other topics include:

- Reincarnation recognized throughout the world
- The most ancient teachings on reincarnation
- Reincarnation in Christianity
- How we transmigrate from one body to another
- Life between lives
- Going to heaven or hell
- The reason for reincarnation
- Free will and choice
- Karma of the nation
- How we determine our own destiny
- What our next life may be like
- Becoming free from all karma and how to prepare to make our next life the best possible.

Combine this with modern research into past life memories and experiences and you will have a complete view of how reincarnation and karma really operate.

Published by iUniverse.com, \$13.95, 135 pages, 6" x 9" trim size, ISBN: 0-595-34199-3.

Vedic Culture

The Difference It Can Make In Your Life

The Vedic culture of India is rooted in Sanatana-dharma, the eternal and universal truths that are beneficial to everyone. It includes many avenues of self-development that an increasing number of people from the West are starting to investigate and use, including:

- Yoga
- Meditation and spiritual practice
- Vedic astrology
- Ayurveda
- Vedic gemology
- Vastu or home arrangement
- Environmental awareness
- Vegetarianism
- Social cooperation and arrangement
- The means for global peace
- And much more

Vedic Culture: The Difference It Can Make In Your Life shows the advantages of the Vedic paths of improvement and self-discovery that you can use in your life to attain higher personal awareness, happiness, and fulfillment. It also provides a new view of what these avenues have to offer from some of the most prominent writers on Vedic culture in the West, who discovered how it has affected and benefited their own lives. They write about what it has done for them and then explain how their particular area of interest can assist others. The noted authors include, David Frawley, Subhash Kak, Chakrapani Ullal, Michael Cremo, Jeffrey Armstrong, Robert Talyor, Howard Beckman, Andy Fraenkel, George Vutetakis, Pratchi Mathur, Dhan Rouse, Arun Naik, and Stephen Knapp, all of whom have authored numerous books or articles of their own.

For the benefit of individuals and social progress, the Vedic system is as relevant today as it was in ancient times. Discover why there is a growing renaissance in what the Vedic tradition has to offer in *Vedic Culture*.

Published by iUniverse.com, 300 pages, 6" x 9" trim size, \$22.95,
ISBN: 0-595-37120-5.

The Heart of Hinduism:

The Eastern Path to Freedom, Empowerment and Illumination

This is a definitive and easy to understand guide to the essential as well as devotional heart of the Vedic/Hindu philosophy. You will see the depths of wisdom and insights that are contained within this profound spiritual knowledge. It is especially good for anyone who lacks the time to research the many topics that are contained within the numerous Vedic manuscripts and to see the advantages of knowing them. This also provides you with a complete process for progressing on the spiritual path, making way for individual empowerment, freedom, and spiritual illumination. All the information is now at your fingertips.

Some of the topics you will find include:

- A complete review of all the Vedic texts and the wide range of topics they contain. This also presents the traditional origins of the Vedic philosophy and how it was developed, and their philosophical conclusion.
- The uniqueness and freedom of the Vedic system.
- A description of the main yoga processes and their effectiveness.
- A review of the Vedic Gods, such as Krishna, Shiva, Durga, Ganesh, and others. You will learn the identity and purpose of each.
- You will have the essential teachings of Lord Krishna who has given some of the most direct and insightful of all spiritual messages known to humanity, and the key to direct spiritual perception.
- The real purpose of yoga and the religious systems.
- What is the most effective spiritual path for this modern age and what it can do for you, with practical instructions for deep realizations.
- The universal path of devotion, the one world religion.
- How Vedic culture is the last bastion of deep spiritual truth.
- Plus many more topics and information for your enlightenment.

So to dive deep into what is Hinduism and the Vedic path to freedom and spiritual perception, this book will give you a jump start. Knowledge is

the process of personal empowerment, and no knowledge will give you more power than deep spiritual understanding. And those realizations described in the Vedic culture are the oldest and some of the most profound that humanity has ever known.

Published by iUniverse.com, 650 pages, \$35.95, 6" x 9" trim size, ISBN: 0-595-35075-5.

The Power of the Dharma

An Introduction to Hinduism and Vedic Culture

The Power of the Dharma offers you a concise and easy-to-understand overview of the essential principles and customs of Hinduism and the reasons for them. It provides many insights into the depth and value of the timeless wisdom of Vedic spirituality and why the Dharmic path has survived for so many hundreds of years. It reveals why the Dharma is presently enjoying a renaissance of an increasing number of interested people who are exploring its teachings and seeing what its many techniques of Self-discovery have to offer.

Herein you will find:

- Quotes by noteworthy people on the unique qualities of Hinduism
- Essential principles of the Vedic spiritual path
- Particular traits and customs of Hindu worship and explanations of them
- Descriptions of the main Yoga systems
- The significance and legends of the colorful Hindu festivals
- Benefits of Ayurveda, Vastu, Vedic astrology and gemology,
- Important insights of Dharmic life and how to begin.

The Dharmic path can provide you the means for attaining your own spiritual realizations and experiences. In this way it is as relevant today as it was thousands of years ago. This is the power of the Dharma since its universal teachings have something to offer anyone.

Published by iUniverse.com, 170 pages, 6" x 9" trim size, \$16.95, ISBN: 0-595-39352-7.

Seeing Spiritual India

A Guide to Temples, Holy Sites, Festivals and Traditions

This book is for anyone who wants to know of the many holy sites that you can visit while traveling within India, how to reach them, and what is the history and significance of these most spiritual of sacred sites, temples, and festivals. It also provides a deeper understanding of the mysteries and spiritual traditions of India.

This book includes:

- Descriptions of the temples and their architecture, and what you will see at each place.
- Explanations of holy places of Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, and Muslims.
- The spiritual benefits a person acquires by visiting them.
- Convenient itineraries to take to see the most of each area of India, which is divided into East, Central, South, North, West, the Far Northeast, and Nepal.
- Packing list suggestions and how to prepare for your trip, and problems to avoid.
- How to get the best experience you can from your visit to India.
- How the spiritual side of India can positively change you forever.

This book goes beyond the usual descriptions of the typical tourist attractions and opens up the spiritual venue waiting to be revealed for a far deeper experience on every level.

Published by iUniverse.com, 592 pages, \$33.95, ISBN: 978-0-595-50291-2.

Crimes Against India:

And the Need to Protect its Ancient Vedic Traditions

1000 Years of Attacks Against Hinduism and What to Do about It

India has one of the oldest and most dynamic cultures of the world. Yet, many people do not know of the many attacks, wars, atrocities and sacrifices that Indian people have had to undergo to protect and preserve their country and spiritual tradition over the centuries. Many people also do not know of the many ways in which this profound heritage is being attacked and threatened today, and what we can do about it.

Therefore, some of the topics included are:

- How there is a war against Hinduism and its yoga culture.
- The weaknesses of India that allowed invaders to conquer her.
- Lessons from India's real history that should not be forgotten.
- The atrocities committed by the Muslim invaders, and how they tried to destroy Vedic culture and its many temples, and slaughtered thousands of Indian Hindus.
- How the British viciously exploited India and its people for its resources.
- How the cruelest of all Christian Inquisitions in Goa tortured and killed thousands of Hindus.
- Action plans for preserving and strengthening Vedic India.
- How all Hindus must stand up and be strong for Sanatana-dharma, and promote the cooperation and unity for a Global Vedic Community.

India is a most resilient country, and is presently becoming a great economic power in the world. It also has one of the oldest and dynamic cultures the world has ever known, but few people seem to understand the many trials and difficulties that the country has faced, or the present problems India is still forced to deal with in preserving the culture of the majority Hindus who live in the country. This is described in the real history of the country, which a decreasing number of people seem to recall.

Therefore, this book is to honor the efforts that have been shown by those in the past who fought and worked to protect India and its culture, and to help preserve India as the homeland of a living and dynamic Vedic tradition of Sanatanadharma (the eternal path of duty and wisdom).

Available from iUniverse.com, 370 pages, \$24.95, ISBN: 978-1-4401-1158-7.

The Eleventh Commandment

The Next Step in Social Spiritual Development

A New Code to Bring Humanity to a Higher Level of Spiritual Consciousness

Based on the Universal Spiritual Truths, or the deeper levels of spiritual understanding, it presents a new code in a completely nonsectarian way that anyone should be able and willing to follow. We all know of the basic ten commandments which deal mostly with moralistic principles, but here is the Eleventh Commandment that will surely supplant the previous ones and provide a truly spiritual dimension to everything we do. It increases our awareness of the spiritual nature all around and within us.

Herein is the next step for consideration, which can be used as a tool for guidance, and for setting a higher standard in our society today. This new commandment expects and directs us toward a change in our social awareness and spiritual consciousness. It is conceived, formulated, and now provided to assist humanity in reaching its true destiny, and to bring a new spiritual dimension into the basic fabric of our ordinary every day life. It is a key that unlocks the doors of perception, and opens up a whole new aspect of spiritual understanding for all of us to view. It is the commandment which precepts us to gain the knowledge of the hidden mysteries, which have for so long remained an enigma to the confused and misdirected men of this world. It holds the key which unlocks the answers to man's quest for peace and happiness, and the next step for spiritual growth on a dynamic and all-inclusive social level.

This 11th Commandment and the explanations provided show the means for curing social ills, reducing racial prejudices, and create more harmony between the races and cultures. It shows how to recognize the Divine within yourself and all beings around you. It shows how we can bring some of the spiritual atmosphere into this earthly existence, especially if we expect to reach the higher domain after death. It also explains how to:

- Identify our real Self and distinguish it from our false self.
- Open our hearts to one another and view others with greater appreciation.
- Utilize higher consciousness in everyday life.

- Find inner contentment and joy.
- Attain a higher spiritual awareness and perception.
- Manifest God's plan for the world.
- Be a reflection of God's love toward everyone.
- Attain the Great Realization of perceiving the Divine in all beings.

The world is in need of a new direction in its spiritual development, and this 11th Commandment is given as the next phase to manifest humanity's most elevated potentials.

This book is \$13.95, Size: 6" x 9", Pages: 128, ISBN: 0-595-46741-5.

Yoga and Meditation

Their Real Purpose and How to Get Started

Yoga is a nonsectarian spiritual science that has been practiced and developed over thousands of years. The benefits of yoga are numerous. On the mental level it strengthens concentration, determination, and builds a stronger character that can more easily sustain various tensions in our lives for peace of mind. The assortment of *asanas* or postures also provide stronger health and keeps various diseases in check. They improve physical strength, endurance and flexibility. These are some of the goals of yoga.

Its ultimate purpose is to raise our consciousness to directly perceive the spiritual dimension. Then we can have our own spiritual experiences. The point is that the more spiritual we become, the more we can perceive that which is spiritual. As we develop and grow in this way through yoga, the questions about spiritual life are no longer a mystery to solve, but become a reality to experience. It becomes a practical part of our lives. This book will show you how to do that. Some of the topics include:

- Benefits of yoga
- The real purpose of yoga
- The types of yoga, such as Hatha yoga, Karma yoga, Raja and Astanga yogas, Kundalini yoga, Bhakti yoga, Mudra yoga, Mantra yoga, and others.
- The Chakras and Koshas
- Asanas and postures, and the Surya Namaskar
- Pranayama and breathing techniques for inner changes
- Deep meditation and how to proceed
- The methods for using mantras
- Attaining spiritual enlightenment, and much more

This book is 6"x9" trim size, \$17.95, 240 pages, 32 illustration, ISBN: 1451553269.

Avatars, Gods and Goddesses of Vedic Culture

The Characteristics, Powers and Positions of the Hindu Divinities

Understanding the assorted Divinities or gods and goddesses of the Vedic or Hindu pantheon is not so difficult as some people may think when it is presented simply and effectively. And that is what you will find in this book. This will open you to many of the possibilities and potentials of the Vedic tradition, and show how it has been able to cater to and fulfill the spiritual needs and development of so many people since time immemorial. Here you will find there is something for everyone.

This takes you into the heart of the deep, Vedic spiritual knowledge of how to perceive the Absolute Truth, the Supreme and the various powers and agents of the universal creation. This explains the characteristics and nature of the Vedic Divinities and their purposes, powers, and the ways they influence and affect the natural energies of the universe. It also shows how they can assist us and that blessings from them can help our own spiritual and material development and potentialities, depending on what we need.

Some of the Vedic Divinities that will be explained include Lord Krishna, Vishnu, Their main avatars and expansions, along with Brahma, Shiva, Ganesh, Murugan, Surya, Hanuman, as well as the goddesses of Sri Radha, Durga, Sarasvati, Lakshmi, and others. This also presents explanations of their names, attributes, dress, weapons, instruments, the meaning of the Shiva lingam, and some of the legends and stories that are connected with them. This will certainly give you a new insight into the expansive nature of the Vedic tradition.

This book is: \$17.95 retail, 230 pages, 11 black & white photos, ISBN: 1453613765, EAN: 9781453613764.

The Soul

Understanding Our Real Identity

The Key to Spiritual Awakening

This book provides a summarization of the most essential spiritual knowledge that will give you the key to spiritual awakening. The descriptions will give you greater insights and a new look at who and what you really are as a spiritual being.

The idea that we are more than merely these material bodies is pervasive. It is established in every religion and spiritual path in this world. However, many religions only hint at the details of this knowledge, but if we look around we will find that practically the deepest and clearest descriptions of the soul and its characteristics are found in the ancient Vedic texts of India.

Herein you will find some of the most insightful spiritual knowledge and wisdom known to mankind. Some of the topics include:

- How you are more than your body
- The purpose of life
- Spiritual ignorance of the soul is the basis of illusion and suffering
- The path of spiritual realization
- How the soul is eternal
- The unbounded nature of the soul
- What is the Supersoul
- Attaining direct spiritual perception and experience of our real identity

This book will give you a deeper look into the ancient wisdom of India's Vedic, spiritual culture, and the means to recognize your real identity.

This book is 5 ½" x 8 1/2" trim size, 130 pages, \$7.95, ISBN: 1453733833.

Prayers, Mantras and Gayatris

A Collection for Insights, Spiritual Growth, Protection, and Many Other Blessings

Mantra-yoga especially for this age Using mantras or prayers can help us do many things, depending on our intention. First of all, it is an ancient method that has been used successfully to raise our consciousness, our attitude, aim of life, and outlook, and prepare ourselves for perceiving higher states of being.

The Sanskrit mantras within this volume offer such things as the knowledge and insights for spiritual progress, including higher perceptions and understandings of the Absolute or God, as well as the sound vibrations for awakening our higher awareness, invoking the positive energies to help us overcome obstacles and oppositions, or to assist in healing our minds and bodies from disease or negativity. They can provide the means for requesting protection on our spiritual path, or from enemies, ghosts, demons, or for receiving many other benefits. In this way, they offer a process for acquiring blessings of all kinds, both material and spiritual. There is something for every need.

Some of what you will find includes:

- The most highly recommended mantras for spiritual realization in this age.
- A variety of prayers and gayatris to Krishna, Vishnu and other avatars, Goddess Lakshmi for financial well-being, Shiva, Durga, Ganesh, Devi, Indra, Sarasvati, etc., and Surya the Sun-god, the planets, and for all the days of the week.
- Powerful prayers of spiritual insight in Shiva's Song, along with the Bhaja Govindam by Sri Adi Shankaracharya, the Purusha Sukta, Brahma-samhita, Isha Upanishad, Narayana Suktam, and Hanuman Chalisa.
- Prayers and mantras to Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda.
- Strong prayers for protection from Lord Narasimha. The protective shield from Lord Narayana.

- Lists of the 108 names of Lord Krishna, Radhika, Goddess Devi, Shiva, and Sri Rama.
- The Vishnu-Sahasranama or thousand names of Vishnu, Balarama, Gopala, Radharani, and additional lists of the sacred names of the Vedic Divinities;
- And many other prayers, mantras and stotras for an assortment of blessings and benefits.

This book is 6"x9" trim size, 760 pages, ISBN:1456545906, or 978-1456545901, \$31.95.

www.Stephen-Knapp.com

Be sure to visit Stephen's web site. It provides lots of information on many spiritual aspects of Vedic and spiritual philosophy, and Indian culture for both beginners and the scholarly. You will find:

- All the descriptions and contents of Stephen's books, how to order them, and keep up with any new books or articles that he has written.
- Reviews and unsolicited letters from readers who have expressed their appreciation for his books, as well as his website.
- Free online booklets are also available for your use or distribution on meditation, why be a Hindu, how to start yoga, meditation, etc.
- Helpful prayers, mantras, gayatris, and devotional songs.
- Over a hundred enlightening articles that can help answer many questions about life, the process of spiritual development, the basics of the Vedic path, or how to broaden our spiritual awareness. Many of these are emailed among friends or posted on other web sites.
- Over 150 color photos taken by Stephen during his travels through India. There are also descriptions and 40 photos of the huge and amazing Kumbha Mela festival.
- Directories of many Krishna and Hindu temples around the world to help you locate one near you, where you can continue your experience along the Eastern path.
- Postings of the recent archeological discoveries that confirm the Vedic version of history.
- Photographic exhibit of the Vedic influence in the Taj Mahal, questioning whether it was built by Shah Jahan or a pre-existing Vedic building.
- A large list of links to additional websites to help you continue your exploration of Eastern philosophy, or provide more information and news about India, Hinduism, ancient Vedic culture, Vaishnavism, Hare Krishna sites, travel, visas, catalogs for books and paraphernalia, holy places, etc.

- A large resource for vegetarian recipes, information on its benefits, how to get started, ethnic stores, or non-meat ingredients and supplies.
- A large “Krishna Darshan Art Gallery” of photos and prints of Krishna and Vedic divinities. You can also find a large collection of previously unpublished photos of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

This site is made as a practical resource for your use and is continually being updated and expanded with more articles, resources, and information. Be sure to check it out.