

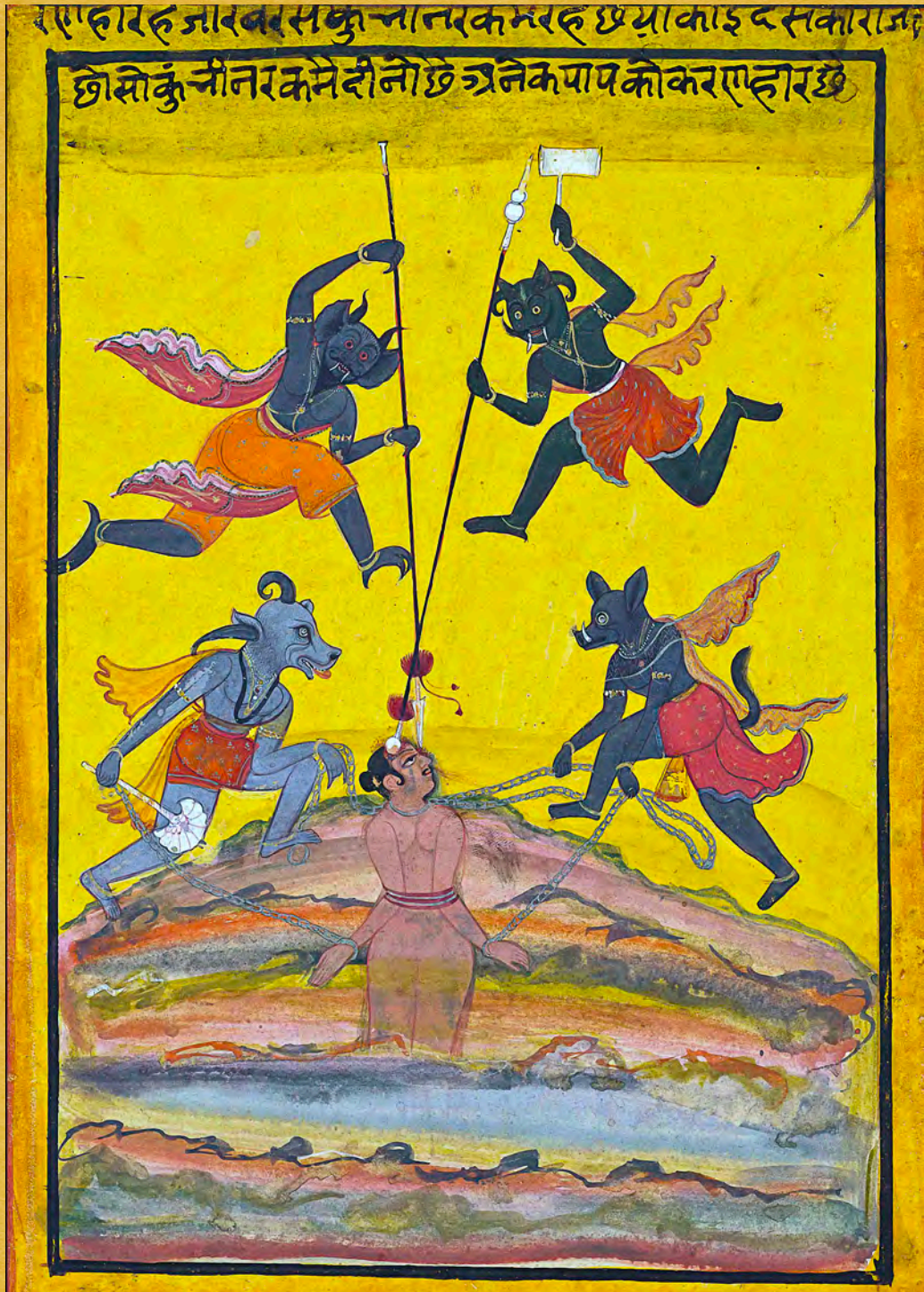
# Sri Krishna Kathamrita



## Bindu

Issue 557

Delivered from Hell







# Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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## NOT AFRAID OF HELL



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Those who are devotees, they are not afraid of going to hell. They are prepared going to hell, "All right, I shall go to hell and chant Hare Krishna. That's all. Finished. I want to chant Hare Krishna, so I can do it anywhere. I can do it in this corner. I can do in this building. I can do it in the airplane. I can do it in the hell. I can do it in India. I can do it in Los Angeles, anywhere. It doesn't matter what I am or what is my position. I may simply go on chanting. That's all." This is devotee. Therefore, he's happy. 🍊

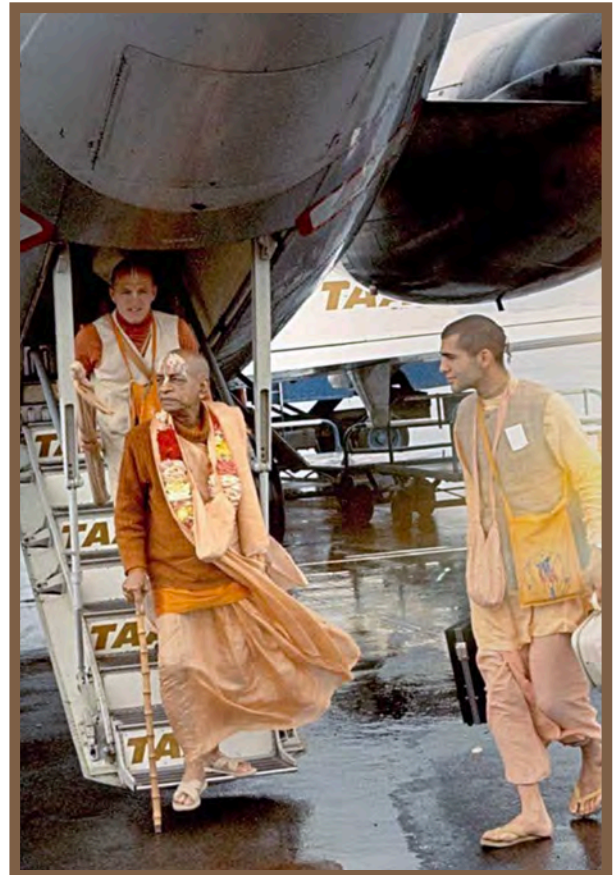
— Conversation in Los Angeles. 22 June 1975.

## EVEN IN HELL



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

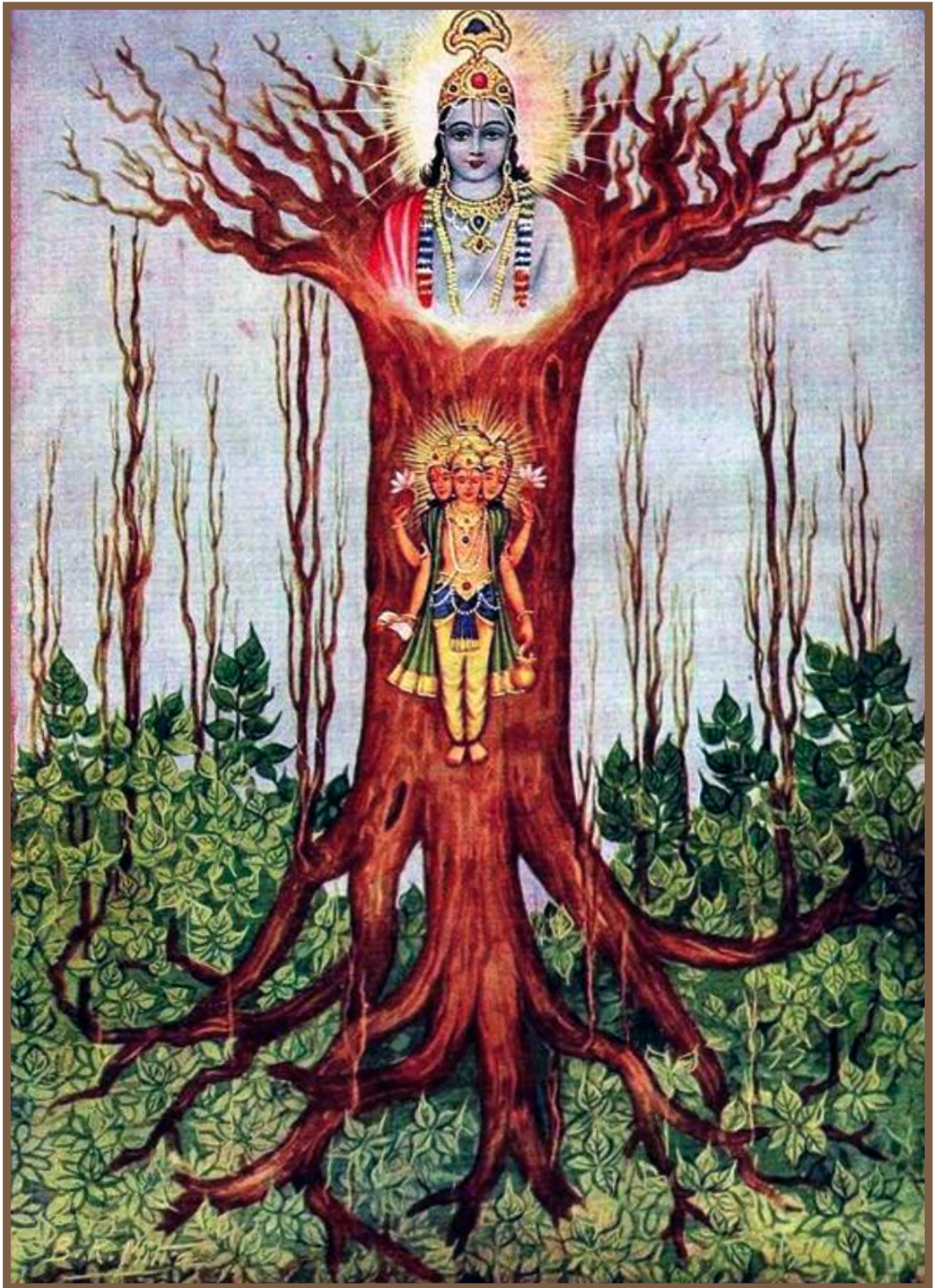
A real disciple accepts his spiritual master as servitor God, most dear to Krishna. He never considers his spiritual master inferior to the Lord in any way. A sincere disciple serves and worships his spiritual master as if he were God. Those who



Unknown photographer

Cover: "Yamadutas Torture a Sinful Soul in Hell". Unknown artist. From a folio from the *Tandan Ragamala Ragaputra Chandrakaya* of Malkos.





Unknown artist. From Kalyana magazine. Gita Press Gorakhpur. Circa 1950s.

*Samsāra-vṛkṣa, the Tree of Material Existence*



Unknown artist



Yamadutas cooking sinners in oil

do not follow this principle fall down from their position as disciples. Until we see the spiritual master as a manifestation of and nondifferent from the Supreme Lord, we will not be able to chant the Lord's name purely. A genuine disciple must possess firm determination and faith in his spiritual master, thinking, "I will serve my spiritual master and Lord Gauranga with utmost simplicity. I will follow my spiritual master's instructions, which have come down from the Supreme Lord. I will never disobey my spiritual master's orders under the influence of anyone in this world. If following my spiritual master means I must become proud, or an animal, or go to hell forever, I will never hesitate. I will not follow anyone other than my spiritual master. I will destroy the current of mundane thought by the strength of his instructions. If my spiritual master showers even a particle of pollen from his lotus feet upon the world, then millions of people will be delivered. There is no knowledge or proper code of conduct in the fourteen worlds that weighs more than a particle of dust from the lotus feet of my spiritual master." 🍌

— Amṛta Vani. A collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Text 3.50. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004.

## THE DETERMINATION OF A DEVOTEE



*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode*

A neophyte devotee is different from *jñāni* and *karmi* beginners in that the *jñāni* is excessively detached from material life, and the *karmi* is too attached to it, but the devotee is neither. That is being further explained here. The devotee recognizes that his expectations of happiness in family life with his wife and children are in fact the source of unhappiness. Even so, he is incapable of renouncing them. Despite being in such a situation, he develops great determination. He prays, "Whether my attachment to family life increases or disappears, whether there are millions of impediments to my devotional life, or whether these impediments all disappear, even if I have to go to hell on account of all my offenses, I will accept it willingly, but I will not give up devotion to my Lord. I will never take up the paths of dry rituals or knowledge, even if Lord Brahma himself comes and tells me to." 🍌

— *Bhājana-rahasya* 2.34. Translated by Bhanu Swami.



Unknown artist. Early Bengali school. Mid 19th century

Prema-nāma saṅkīrtana of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and his associates

## THE HOLY NAME IS EVERYTHING



### Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

ataeva nāma mātra vaiṣṇavera dharma  
nāme prasphuṭita haya rūpa, guṇa, karma

Chanting the holy name is the prime religious activity of a vaiṣṇava. From the holy name gradually blossom the Lord's form, qualities and pastimes. (*Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi* 2.30)

kr̥ṣṇa-nāma cintāmaṇi anādi cinmaya  
yei kr̥ṣṇa, sei nāma—eka-tattva haya

Lord Krishna's name is like an eternal and transcendental touchstone. Krishna and his name are identical; they are one and the same absolute truth. (*Hnc.* 2.13)

nāmera smarāṇe āra nāma-saṅkīrtana  
ei mātra dharma jīva karibe pālana (*Hnc.* 1.78)

This is the only dharma in Kali-yuga: chanting the holy name and thinking of the holy name. Only this. This is the one dharma the jīvas in Kali-yuga should perform. In all the Vedas it has been said, *harināma-sāra*, the holy name is the essence.

harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam  
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā

In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord.

There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way. (*Bṛhad-nārādiya Purāṇa* 3.8.126)

Pāibe paramā prīti ānanda apāra (*Hnc.* 7.53) — by chanting this holy name of Krishna:

hare kr̥ṣṇa hare kr̥ṣṇa, kr̥ṣṇa kr̥ṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma, rāma rāma hare hare

you'll get extreme pleasure, supreme pleasure.

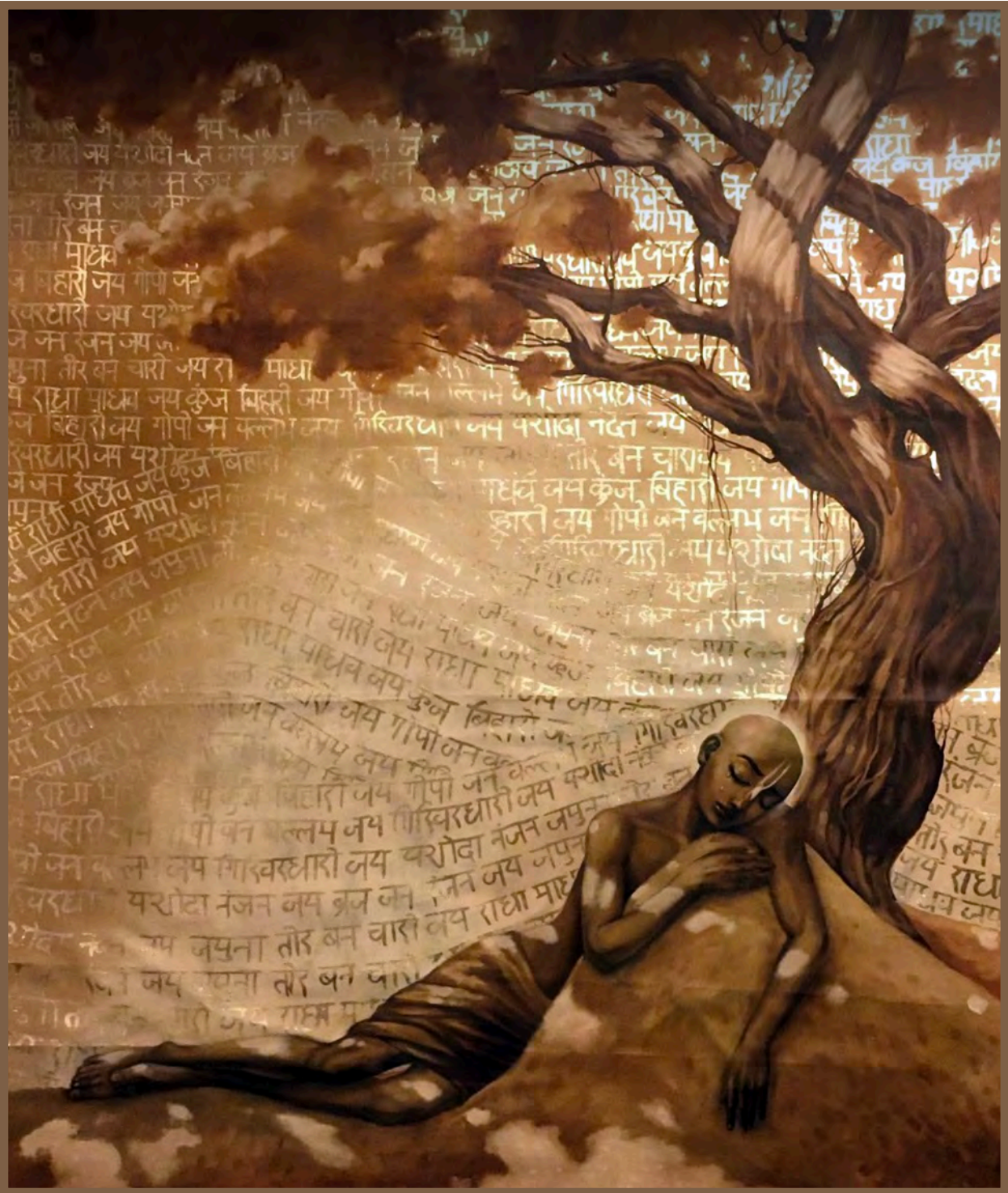
veda punaḥ bale, “yata mukti mahājana  
paravyome sadā kare nāma-saṅkīrtana”

Again, the Vedas say that all the liberated mahājanas always chant Hare Krishna in the spiritual sky. (*Hnc.* 7.54)

Yei kr̥ṣṇa, sei nāma — eka-tattva haya — there is no difference between the name of Krishna and Krishna himself — *abhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*. *Cintāmaṇi* means desire. Whatever you desire, the name will give you. (*Padma-purāṇa* quoted in *Cc. madhya* 17.133) *kr̥ṣṇa-nāma cintāmaṇi anādi cinmaya* — the holy name is spiritual, transcendental, and without beginning or end — *anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. (*Brahma-saṁhita* 5.1) There is no difference between the name of Krishna and Krishna himself, and especially in Kali-yuga Krishna has incarnated himself in the form of his holy name. No other incarnation is there in Kali-yuga. He is *nāma-avatāra*.

kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kr̥ṣṇa-avatāra  
nāma haite haya sarva-jagat-nistāra





Unknown artist

*Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu brought the holy name*

In this Age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, the *Hare Krishna mahā-mantra*, is the incarnation of Lord Krishna. Simply by chanting the holy name one associates with the Lord directly. Anyone who does this is certainly delivered. (Cc. ādi 17.22)

*nāma vinu kali-kāle nāhi āra dharma  
sarva-mantra-sāra nāma, ei śāstra-marma*

In this Age of Kali there is no religious principle other than the chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all Vedic hymns. This is the purport of all scriptures. (Cc. ādi 7.74)

A *vaiṣṇava* chants only one name. He has only one dharma, which is *hari-nāma*. If you chant the holy name without offense — in other words,





Painting by Kunjabihari Das, Radhakund.

Mahaprabhu gets the animals of Jharikhand forest to chant the holy names

the pure name — then the all-beautiful form of Krishna, the transcendental pastimes of Krishna, and the attributes of Krishna — everything will be manifested to you. *nāme prasphuṭita haya rūpa, guṇa, karma.*

The name is everything. The name is everything. 🍊

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, date unknown.

## JANAK MAHARAJA'S VISIT TO HELL



### From Padma Purāṇa

Janak Maharaja was the father of Sita and a great devotee of Lord Ramachandra. It is described in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (6.3.20) that he is one of the twelve great authorities on religious principles in this universe. The following story from Padma Purāṇa (pātālakhaṇḍa 18.31-77) of how Janak Maharaja once visited hell illustrates the supreme potency of the holy name and the association with saintly persons.

## I'LL REMEMBER MY DEVOTEE AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH

### Varāha Purāṇa

*yadi vātādi-doṣeṇa mad-bhakto mām na ca smaret  
ahaṁ smarāmi mad-bhaktaṁ nayāmi paramām gatim*

If my devotee is not able to remember me at the time of his death because of the great disturbances felt within the body at that time, then I shall remember my devotee and take him back to the spiritual world.

— Quoted by Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan in his commentary on text 88 of *Viṣṇu Sahasra Nāma*. Translated into English by Kusakratha Das. The Krishna Library. Culver City, CA.











Painting attributed to the artist Gursahai, ca. 1800, Gulfer

*The Court of Yamaraja*

Thinking like this, the king stayed there by the gateway to hell. After some time, Yamaraj himself, who inflicts severe torment upon sinners, came to that gateway. There he saw Maharaja Janak, full of mercy and a doer of great meritorious deeds, standing by the doorway.

Yamaraj smiled and said to Janak, “O king! You are *sarva-dharma-śiromaṇi* — the crest jewel of piety. Why have you come here? This is a place for wicked sinners who cause harm to others. Men like you who perform meritorious deeds do not come to this place. Only those persons who deceive others, who are engaged in criticizing others, and who are intent on stealing others’ wealth come here. A man who abandons a religious wife who is serving him without fault comes here. One who, out of greed for wealth, deceives his friend, comes here and receives intense punishment from me.”

Yamaraj then said, “Those persons who do not remember Lord Ramachandra with their mind, words, or deeds, I throw into hell and have boiled. Those who

have remembered the Lord of the goddess of fortune leave the sufferings of hell and quickly go to Vaikuntha.

“O very intelligent king, my servants, unable to even look at persons like you, bring those who are great sinners. Therefore, you should leave this place and go

### THE POWER OF THE NAME

#### *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 9.4.62

*mucyeta yan-nāmya udite nārako 'pi*

The sage Durvasa described the power of Krishna’s name: “... by chanting your name, even a person fit for hell is liberated.”





Sculpture by Chalermchai Kositpipat.



enjoy many pleasures. Enter the excellent airplane and go reap the fruits of the religious merits you have earned.”

Hearing the words of Yamaraj, with great compassion Janak replied, “O lord, out of pity on these beings I shall not go to Vaikuntha. Although situated in this place, they are feeling some comfort due to the breezes blowing past my body. If you release all of these persons living in hell then I shall be happy and will proceed to Vaikuntha.”

Hearing the words of Janak, Yamaraj pointed out to him each of those living in hell and said:



*“Hands from Hell”. A sculpture from the White Temple, a Buddhist temple in Pa O Don Chai, Mueang District, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand.*





Unknown artist. From Kalyana magazine. Gita Press Gorakhpur. Circa 1950s.

*Sri Krishna brings his devotees across the ocean of material existence which is full of the crocodiles of various theories*

“This one had sex with his friend’s wife that had confided in him, therefore I am having him roasted on an iron stake for thousands of years. Afterwards he will be born as a pig. Then when he again takes birth in a human body he will be a eunuch. This one repeatedly raped the wife of another man. Therefore, he will be roasted in the hell known as Raurava for a hundred years. This wicked one stole the wealth of others and enjoyed it. Therefore, having cut off his hands, I shall cook him in pus and blood. This one did not honor or welcome, even with words, a guest who had come to him, oppressed by hunger. He will be dropped into the Tamisra hell, which is full of fire. There, bees will torment him for a hundred years.

*ayaṁ tavaṁ parasyocair nindāṁ kurvanna lajjitah  
ayam apyaśṛṇot karnau prerayan bahuśasta tām*

“This shameless person loudly criticized another. This one here, with great interest, listened to that criticism many times. Therefore, these two have fallen into a dark well.

“This one, who deceived his friend, is being roasted in the hell known as Raurava. After making all these persons eat the fruit of their sins, I shall release them. O best among men who have accumulated vast amounts of religious merit, please leave this place.”

Having pointed out the sinful persons, Yamaraj became quiet. With his eyes full of tears, Janak, the great devotee of Lord Rama, said, “Tell me, how can these miserable beings quickly be set free from hell and attain happiness?”

Yamaraj replied, “These persons have never worshiped Lord Vishnu. They have never listened to the transcendental accounts of the Lord’s activities. How then can they be free from hell? O great king, if you desire to release them, even though they are great sinners, then give them the following religious merit possessed by you: Once, upon getting up in the morning, you meditated with a pure heart upon Lord Raghunath [Ramachandra], who is known as *mahā-pāpa-harābhidhaḥ* — the remover of great sins. Give them the religious merit which you obtained that morning when with a pure heart you uttered, “Rama, Rama.” Obtaining that merit, they will get freedom from hell.”



Unknown artist. From Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. 13th Century



*Yamaraja has several traditional items that are associated with him. In this sculpture we see his club known as yama-danḍa that he uses to destroy the bodies of conditioned souls, his rope known as kāla-pāśa, by which he catches souls, and his water buffalo carrier named Paundraka. In Tantra and Buddhism he is also sometimes depicted as carrying the mirror of karma, the sword of wisdom, and the wheel of life.*





Unknown artist.

Purāṇic descriptions of suffering in hell

Hearing these words of the intelligent Yamaraj, the great king Janak gave those persons the religious merit obtained by him from his birth. Janak said, “Let these persons be released from hell due to the religious merit earned by me from birth by the worship of Raghunath.”

As soon as he said this, those persons dwelling in hell immediately were freed from their suffering condition and obtained divine bodies. They said to King Janak, “O king, by your favor, in one moment we have been freed from miserable hell and will now go to the highest position, *paramaṁ padam*.”

Seeing those now-effulgent persons freed from hell, Janak Maharaja, who desired the welfare of all living beings, was very pleased in his mind. All those persons praised the great King Janak, the very treasure-house of compassion, and went to the spiritual world. 🍌

— Translated from the Navabharat Publishers edition of *Padma Purāṇa*, Calcutta, 1402 jyeṣṭha.

## THE RESIDENTS OF HELL DELIVERED



From *Thirumālai*  
By *Thondaradipodi Alwar*

In his book *Mudalayiram*, K. R. Krishnaswami has described *Thondaradipodi Alwar* as follows:

Deep devotion to Sri Ranganatha and innate faith in the power of reciting the Lord's names paraphrase the life of *Thondaradipodi*

*Alwar*. This *Alwar* has sung only on Sri Ranganath and spent his time in the vicinity of the temple at Srirangam by growing tulasi and flower plants in a garden adjacent to the temple. The *Alwar* as per accepted belief (*sampradāya*) would have been born in 2803 BC, but later research based on *Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa* have fixed the year of birth as 727 AD. He was born in a place known as *Thirumandangudi*, which is close to *Pullam Bhoothangudi* and is a *divya-deśa* [sacred place]. He was born in a *vaiṣṇava* family and was given the name *Vipra Narayan*.

*Thondaradipodi Alwar* wrote a forty-five-verse composition called *Thirumālai* in which each

### DELIVER THE RESIDENTS OF HELL

#### Nṛsimha Purāṇa 8.31

This verse is quoted in in *Jaiva Dharma*, *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, as well as *Srila Jiva Goswami's Krama and Bhakti-sandarbhāsa*, and in *Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur's commentary on Bhāgavatam 2.9.36*:

yathā yathā harer-nāma kīrtayanti sma nārakāḥ  
tathā tathā harau bhakti mudva hanto divaṁ yayuḥ

When those in hell chant the name of the Lord they develop *bhakti* to the Lord and go to the spiritual world.

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Sārārtha Darśini* commentary of *Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur*. English translation by *Bhanu Swami*. Sri Vaikuntha Enterprises. Chennai, India. 2009.











Unknown artist.

*Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu blesses a group of hunters*

verse is a fragrant flower which together forms a magnificent garland to offer the Lord. The Thirumālai is composed of various verses called thanian, which is a Tamil word that refers to a verse that glorifies an ācārya. The following verse is text twelve which summarizes a famous story from the Viṣṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa:

*kāladalli mudgala ṛṣi hāgū yamarājanu narakada  
aillō oṃdu mūleyalli 'gōvinda' ainnuva dēvaranāmada  
mahimeyannu kuritu mātanāḍuttiddāga idu narakadalli*

*toḷaluttiruva kelavu pāpigaḷa kivigaḷalli bidduā narka  
svargavē āyitante. ī oṃdu nāmada mahime iṣṭiruva  
namma dēvarige sahasanāmaḡaḷuṇṭu. uttamavāda  
manuṣya janmadalli huṭṭiyū śrīraṅgadalliruva  
dēvarannu nenesadē duḡkhadha suraḷiyalli toḷalutāre.*

Once upon a time in a corner of Hell, Yamaraj and Mudgala Rishi were speaking together about the greatness of the name of Lord Govinda, when suddenly the various sections of hell momentarily overheard this. At that time all those sinful souls



Unknown artist. Pahari painting. Circa 1710



*Krishna swallows the forest fire*

who were undergoing punishment were witness to “Hell turning into Heaven” — such is the power of uttering the Lord’s name. And our Lord of Srirangam has a thousand such names. Learned men, despite a good family background, forget

to think of you, the Lord residing in Arangam, and get thrown into the abyss of worries. That bothers me no end. 🍊

— K. R. Krishnaswami. *Mudalayiram, Compositions of the Last Three Alwars*. Page 17. Published by A & K Prakashana. Bangalore. 2009.





Unknown artist.

*Sri Panca-tattva and Sri Sri Radha-Krishna*

#### SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

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#### HEAVEN OR HELL

*His Divine Grace*

*A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

I do not agree with your wife's statement that New York is unfit for human habitation. A real Krishna Conscious person can adjust things nicely even in hell. A fully Krishna Conscious person is always in a transcendental position, and he is not afraid of any place which is so called unfit for human habitation. A Krishna Conscious person is always satisfied whether in Vaikuntha or in hell. His satisfaction is not in the particular place but in his sincere service attitude towards Krishna.

— Letter to Gargamuni, 13 November 1967.

