

Kṛṣṇa Maintains Everyone?!

— Illuminations by Śrīla Prabhupāda —

How's That?

What is the difference between God and us? The difference is that He is the maintainer and we are maintained. This is the difference. We are not maintainer. Nobody can say... One can say that “I am God,” but nobody can say that “I am maintaining everyone.” No, that is not possible. These are the simple definition of God given in the Vedic literature. *Eko yo bahūnām vidadhāti kāmān* [Kāṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.13]. We have necessities of life, but who is supplying the necessities of life? That *eka*, that one person, *eka*.

— SPL, 30th June 1963, Calcutta

God maintains all other living entities, but no one can maintain God. That is His svacchanda-śakti; He is not dependent on others. Someone may call himself independent, but he is still dependent on someone higher. The Personality of Godhead, however, is absolute; there is no one higher than or equal to Him.

— ŚB 3.24.33p

God is supplying everyone's necessities. Either you are cat or dog or demigod or President Johnson or anyone, everyone is dependent on God's supply. We cannot be independent. If God stops supplying, you cannot manufacture. If there is food grains, there is no food grain, you cannot chew your dollar notes. What you will do [with] your hundred dollar notes?

— SPL, 19th Dec 1966, New York

When Kṛṣṇa wants to do something, simply by His willing, everything is performed so perfectly that one cannot imagine how it is being done. The Lord explains this fact: although He is the maintainer and sustainer of the entire material manifestation, He does not touch this material manifestation. Simply by His supreme will, everything is created, everything is sustained, everything is maintained, and everything is annihilated.

— Bg 9.5p

Why Should I Depend on Him?

What is the difference between God and ourself? God is also a living entity like us, but He's the chief living entity. He's maintaining all others. Therefore we have to ask God, “Give us our daily bread.” He's the maintainer; we are maintained. Just like in a family, the father is the maintainer, and the mother and the children and the servants, they are maintained. Similarly, the whole universe, whole creation, it is maintained by God, and we living entities within this universe or within this creation, we are maintained. So as we are maintained, it is better to remain dependent on God than to declare our freedom.

— Room conversation, 11th July 1973, London

The Lord is eternally the maintainer of the individual living entities both in their conditioned and in their liberated situations.

— **Bg 2.12p**

In reality, the Supreme Lord is always protecting us. The inmates of a prison are being punished by the government, yet the same government feeds them and looks after them. Similarly, sinful, atheistic people, though punished by the Lord's illusory energy (*māyā* personified as *Durgā-devī*), are still fed and cared for by the Lord Himself. And if the Supreme Lord feeds and maintains even the worst sinners, reprobates, and helpless souls, then what to speak of those who are eternally surrendered to His lotus feet?

— **Renunciation through Wisdom, Ch. 2**

Sanātana-dharma means devotional service. The word sanātana refers to that which is eternal, which does not change but continues in all circumstances. We have several times explained what the eternal occupational duty of the living being is. Indeed, it has been explained by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Jīvera 'svarūpa' haya-kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa': [Cc. Madhya 20.108] the real occupational duty of the living entity is to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even if one prefers to deviate from this principle he remains a servant because that is his eternal position; but one serves māyā, the illusory, material energy.

— **ŚB 7.11.2p**

How Should I Relate to Him?

So we should not approach God as supplying agent. That is the lowest stage. He is supplying even to the cats and dogs. Then what is the difference between human being and the cats and dogs? Just like a small child, he is supplied all necessities by the father, but when the child is grown, he wants to serve the father.

— **SPL, 19th Dec 1966, New York**

Devotional service means that one does not do anything independently of the sanction of the *ācāryas*. The actions of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are directed by the previous *ācāryas*, headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; in the association of devotees following these principles, a devotee is able to perfectly maintain his transcendental position.

— **KB, Ch. 87**

A devotee takes even an unfavorable condition to be the special favor of the Personality of Godhead. Actually, there are no unfavorable conditions for a devotee. Knowing that everything is coming by the will of the Lord, he sees every condition as favorable, and in any condition of life he is simply enthusiastic to discharge his devotional service. This devotional attitude is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: a devotee is never distressed in reverse conditions of life, nor is he overjoyed in favorable conditions. In the higher stages of devotional service, a devotee is not even concerned with the list of do's and do not's. Such a position can be maintained only by following in the footsteps of the *ācāryas*.

— **KB, Ch. 87**

If a Vaiṣṇava is completely engaged in devotional service, he need not be anxious for his maintenance.

— CC Madhya 24.179p

How Does He Maintain His Devotees?

He is like a king who takes proper care of his subjects, but who especially looks after the needs of his near and dear relatives. Therefore it is not true that a comfortable life can be enjoyed only by those who perform ordinary pious activities, but not by the devotees, who are free from fruitive action and empirical knowledge. The devotees do not always suffer, for the Supreme Lord personally takes care of them. The devotees are the Lord's relatives and family members. Just as ordinary people feel joy and satisfaction when they look after the needs and comforts of their family, the Lord also feels pleasure when he tends to the well-being of His devotees. Thus the Supreme Lord is known as *Bhakta-vatsala*, “the maintainer of the devotees.”

— **Renunciation through Wisdom, Ch. 2**

A devotee is automatically maintained by the Lord's mercy. A devotee's ordinary dealings and religious activities are also all dedicated to the Personality of Godhead; thus there is nothing but Kṛṣṇa in a devotee's life. Kṛṣṇa gives all protection and maintenance, and the devotee gives everything to Kṛṣṇa. This natural liberated situation is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

— ŚB 11.21.4p

The Lord fully maintains His unalloyed devotees, and He guides them progressively on the path toward devotional perfection. As the leader of His devotees, He ultimately awards the desired results of devotional service by giving Himself to them.

— Śrī Īsopaniṣad, Mantra 16p