

Conversation with  
Vedic Astronomer  
Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya  
—  
April 30, 1977, Bombay

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**Prabhupāda:** Hmm. Hare Kṛṣṇa. *Jaya*. I am little weak.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes, yes. All weak.

**Prabhupāda:** So Surabhi, come here. You can come.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** And I am very glad to meet Your Holiness.

**Prabhupāda:** Hare Kṛṣṇa.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Till now I saw only in the papers, newspapers and magazines and pamphlets and books. I am so fortunate to gain *darśana* directly at your...

**Prabhupāda:** It is very kind of you. So...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** As Patita-pāvana dāsa told me... I informed him, I am a student of religion and also working for religion. Single-hand, I made attempt to propagate Vedic concept and Vedic religion for the past forty years. I am not able to find out any help. But fortunately, when I informed about Your Holiness and saw in newspapers also, I have found you are the incarnation of Indian gods, [Prabhupāda chuckles] from my point of view. Because the mission which is not fulfilled by other *ācāryas*, even Swami Vivekananda, so many. I know... I studied all variety of prophets. But it is only fulfilled by Your Holiness.

**Prabhupāda:** Hare Kṛṣṇa.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Because we must place our *Vedas* before the people on the way of science without sacrificing tradition. It is also applicable to our minds. So all things are accumulated in Your Holiness, thoughts and...

**Prabhupāda:** You have seen our books?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes, yes. Oh, yes, yes, thoroughly.

**Prabhupāda:** So...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Great estimation, all your books. Even Christ is not able to do some things. But all our *ācāryas* incarnated in your body and your thinking. I know *guru-ācārya*... I made a contact with your *ācārya* of Gauḍīya Maṭha. I have made contact with him in Madras. Twice I met him.

**Prabhupāda:** He is now dead.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, that I know. I know.

**Prabhupāda:** He is my Godbrother.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Ah.

**Prabhupāda:** So you live in Madras?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, not in Madras. Kumbha-grama. Near the Madras also, my one of the *yajñas* there. But my *agni-hotra* place is at Kumbha-grama. We are following *agni-hotra* tradition for more than ten generations. I myself performed so many *yajñas*. And now I am performing *yajñas* also, day and night, morning and evening.

**Prabhupāda:** So...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** I am also a great lover of *Bhāgavata*. That is my life.

**Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** *Bhāgavata* is my solace of my life.

**Prabhupāda:** So we are presenting this planetarium...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** *Bhāgavata*, yes?

**Prabhupāda:** From *Bhāgavatam*.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Ah-hah. Yes, yes.

**Prabhupāda:** In the Fifth Canto there is description of the planetary system.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes, yes.

**Prabhupāda:** So we want a diagram.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes, yes.

**Prabhupāda:** So kindly help us.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** With your Your Holiness permission, he told all these things to me. I use some *Bhāgavata śloka* before. [quotes Sanskrit *ślokas* from *Bhāgavata*, Tenth Canto]

**Prabhupāda:** Hare Kṛṣṇa. Now find out that Fifth Canto. So this planetary system is hanging.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes.

**Prabhupāda:** *Ūrdhva-mūlam adhah-śākham* [Bg. 15.1]. Same thing is explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Now, how it is hanging and where are different situation of the planets and plateaus and hills and... So as far as the book is concerned, kindly make a diagram so that we shall execute.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes, yes. *Ūrdhva-mūlam adhah-śākham aśvattham prāhur avyayam*. That means, this, about the life.

**Prabhupāda:** Not life. This planetary system is like that.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Oh, yes.

**Prabhupāda:** *Ūrdhva-mūlam adhah-śākham* [Bg. 15.1]. That is... That is explained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Which chapter it is?

**Surabhīr Abhipālayantam:** This is a description of Jambu-dvīpa.

**Prabhupāda:** There is Jambu-dvīpa and...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Where is this? *Pañcama-skandha*.

**Prabhupāda:** Eh? It is not *daśama-skandha*.

**Surabhīr Abhipālayantam:** Jambu-dvīpa.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Jambu-dvīpa.

**Prabhupāda:** It is...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** The *pañcama-skandha*.

**Prabhupāda:** *Pañcama-skandha*, yes.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** There we find there about the Priyavrata. Priyavrata's sons, they divided the world [indistinct].

**Prabhupāda:** No, persons we are not very much concerned. We are... Immediately we want the diagram how to fix it up so that people can see, "This is the situation." So you make this diagram.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** It is first attempt to give in picture the ideas of *Bhāgavatam*.

**Prabhupāda:** Yes. So we... We are... We have got very good scheme so that people from the world will come to see the Vedic idea of planetary system. This is the ambition. So you kindly help us.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** As far as possible, as our Lord moves, I am prepared to serve Him.

**Prabhupāda:** So you sit down and take paper and make it and..., so that he can understand. You have already studied that.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Several times.

**Prabhupāda:** So that you can do immediately. You do. Can you make a rough sketch immediately?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** First [indistinct]. Because after he came there I told him that we must prepare a diagram which is acceptable to all, acceptable to all.

**Prabhupāda:** No, acceptable, the, I mean to say, Western astronomers. They...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, we... If you prefer *Bhāgavatam* and if

you give only *Bhāgavatam*...

**Prabhupāda:** Yes.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** ...whether Western accepts or not, that is not worthwhile.

**Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Whether Westerners or modern scientists accept or not, that is not worthwhile.

**Prabhupāda:** No, we want do it according to *Bhāgavatam*.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** That is what I mean.

**Prabhupāda:** Yes. So when you'll do it?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** When the order is, I will start.

**Prabhupāda:** Hmm?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** On your order, holy order, I will start on work immediately.

**Prabhupāda:** No, my order... It is for this purpose I sent him, so you can begin immediately or...

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Surabhi has an office with all things ready—drawing board...

**Prabhupāda:** You can go to his office. You can give him instruction how the planetary system is hanging. The polestar, *dhruva-tārā*, is the center, and it is moving. That at night you can see. It is moving.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** In *Vedas* also description, [quotes Sanskrit verses].

**Prabhupāda:** No, what is the first, beginning? You just give him. Read it. The Sanskrit reading.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** [reads Sanskrit from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Fifth Canto]

**Prabhupāda:** *Sapta-sindhu*... You have to make diagram where the *sapta-sindhu*

are.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes. All...

**Prabhupāda:** No, all...

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** ...because as we prepare diagram on the basis of *pañcama-skandha*, *Bhāgavata*, all must be given there. [continues reading verses from *Bhāgavatam* in Sanskrit]

**Prabhupāda:** So you can... Why not begin it in my presence?

**Gopāla Kṛṣṇa:** Begin the drawing now, so that Prabhupāda can see it before he leaves.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, because I am not able to prepare the diagrams and other things. With the help of my friends only I can do. I give the translation to them and all do the work. Simply we can show to them.

**Prabhupāda:** I have tried to translate it as far as possible, but I am not satisfied.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** A deep study of the text is absolutely necessary.

**Prabhupāda:** Hmm?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Deep study of text, and also with a mind of preparing diagram, study of the..., that is... We ask Padma-bhūṣaṇa. How is Padma-bhūṣaṇa...

**Prabhupāda:** What is your idea of the seven planets, sun...?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** You see, planets, in our system planets comes in the history very late.

**Prabhupāda:** Very...?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Late, very. Because you won't find any reference to *grahas* in the *Vedas*. As a student of *Veda*, I can guarantee that there is no reference to the *grahas* in the *Vedas*. Because *nava-grahas* are only important *mantras*, not they are [indistinct]. So when because these things comes later on, *Kalpa-sūtra*, for those adopted the *grahas* and prepared the

*mantras* from the *Vedas* for the *grahas*. So historically we must have come down. Now we'll find out in what date they are presented. Till now I was told all these things after only... I am also preaching *Bhāgavata*.

**Prabhupāda:** Now, where is the situation of the *grahas* in this planetary system? Whether sun is first or moon is first?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Sun is first. Definitely sun is first because the moon is the reflection of sunshine. [quotes Sanskrit verse] *Vedas* say [Sanskrit].

**Prabhupāda:** *Candrama* has... *Candrama* has got his own light. It is not reflection.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Not reflection. It has its own importance. But about the lights...

**Prabhupāda:** As *sūrya* is blazing, similarly, *candrama* is also blazing, but it is surrounded by cool cloud. Therefore it is so soothing. But it is above the sun planet, so far it is stated there.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Natural... Naturally *sūrya*, our astronomy says, *sūryaḥ agni* [Sanskrit]. *Vedas* say, [Sanskrit]. Because the way we read the *nakṣatras* only.

**Prabhupāda:** So when you begin this diagram?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** After going my town.

**Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** After going my town I begin.

**Prabhupāda:** Going?

**Gopāla Kṛṣṇa:** To his town.

**Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** After going back to his town he's going to begin.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** See to all those things.

**Prabhupāda:** So you'll go there, then... But we have brought him to make here.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** Can you not work with us here for some time on this chart?

**Prabhupāda:** No, no, why sometimes? This purpose, you went there to bring him, and now he'll go to town and do.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** When I met...

**Prabhupāda:** No, no question of when you met. This was the purpose.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** Can we not begin the chart immediately?

**Prabhupāda:** I wanted to make it before me. [pause]

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** The difficulty is, we never studied in this way *Bhāgavatam*, so it is not easy to paint a diagram immediately. That is the point. It will take time. Studying *Bhāgavata*, simply what is the text.

**Prabhupāda:** So you have no practical idea?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Eh?

**Prabhupāda:** You have no practical idea?

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, I have some ideas, vague, not practical. This is here in five days[?].

**Prabhupāda:** No, no, vague idea is not good. You for some days stay here and do it here.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** I am told that Arkasomayaji is also coming here.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** No, he's not. I never said he was coming.

**Prabhupāda:** What is the difficulty? The *śāstra* is there. You have to make drawing according to *śāstra*. That's all.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** You see, everything is separate author. Preparing diagram is separate author.

**Prabhupāda:** Why separate au...? If you understand clearly, you can make it.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** No, no, not like Your Holiness... We'll be able to... We all will go, deeply penetrate in the ideas of scriptures, and find out



the facts.

**Prabhupāda:** At least you make some attempt. Let us see.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Pardon?

**Prabhupāda:** You make some attempt. Go to the offices.

**Gopāla Kṛṣṇa:** Please just try.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes. I will explain again to you later.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** You must try.

**Agnihotram Rāmānuja Tattvācārya:** Yes. Yes.

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** Yes. [indistinct background discussion]

**Gopāla Kṛṣṇa:** *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.*

**Prabhupāda:** *Jaya.*

**Patita Uddhāraṇa:** *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda.* [aside:] Please come.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Phew! This boy, Patita Uddhāraṇa, has spoiled thousands of rupees for months. He has no knowledge or intelligence, and he's going around and thinking that this man is the foremost...

**Prabhupāda:** Useless.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** To fly him from Madras to here and back is twelve hundred rupees, and Patita has been traveling for months all over India. Who knows how much they have spent on him? And he doesn't have the intelligence to ask the questions which Your Divine Grace just asked. Otherwise he could have known from the beginning that the man doesn't know a thing.

**Prabhupāda:** He cannot, cannot explain.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** This man will not be able to. I mean, the things you were saying, Śrīla Prabhupāda, he was thinking... When you started to describe them, he was thinking it had to do with the individual soul. He said that "You're desc..." You said, "No, I'm talking about the universe." He said, "Oh, the universe."

**Prabhupāda:** He does not know anything. Now he goes away. He goes back and

he... Why he has come?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** For your blessings. Twelve-hundred-rupee blessing. There are learned men in India, there's no doubt. There must be learned men.

**Prabhupāda:** All bogus.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** All?

**Prabhupāda:** Hmm?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Just like that...?

**Prabhupāda:** *Bokā*.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** There's that one man, Gangeshvara..., Gange.... That one blind...

**Prabhupāda:** Gangeshvarananda.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** I mean, he's a learned person.

**Prabhupāda:** He has no clear idea.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** And what to do? How to get...?

**Prabhupāda:** Kṛṣṇa will help.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Hmm?

**Prabhupāda:** Kṛṣṇa will help. He has no idea.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** He says, "We never thought to read *Bhāgavatam* as you are now talking. We have not read like this yet, so I will have to begin to read it again as..." I mean, what... I'm only wondering what kind of talk Patita Uddhāraṇa must have had with him that he felt that this man was qualified.

**Prabhupāda:** So how he'll make diagram? He has no idea.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** No, he doesn't. He never thought about it. No one reads the *Bhāgavatam* as a scientific book, Śrīla Prabhupāda. That's the point. Except for Your Divine Grace, they are thinking it's story: "It is stories."

**Prabhupāda:** Yes, they do not believe.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** No. And therefore no one takes it seriously. Modern people

don't take it seriously.

**Prabhupāda:** There was a *gosāi*. He was reading *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. So the description of the planetary system there is. He used to say to his audience, "Actually, these things are not there. These are imaginary descriptions." He was such a fool. So the whole world has taken like that: "symbolic," "imagination."

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** And he was lecturing on *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. I think you mentioned that one of your Godbrothers once said to you, "You really believe that there is such a place, Kṛṣṇaloka, Vaikuṇṭhaloka?" He was himself...

**Prabhupāda:** Bon Mahārāja did not believe. No... Nobody ever thought of it.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** You are the only representative, the lone representative of religion left on this planet, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

**Prabhupāda:** So what to do? He has wasted so much money. He's not the proper man.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** No. Why not let us try to find out some man locally here in Bombay?

**Prabhupāda:** Very difficult. You can try.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** I mean, there's just as good a chance he'll find him here as anywhere else. And it won't cost anything.

**Prabhupāda:** "Astronomer knowing the planetary system," you can advertise. "Expert astronomer who knows the planetary systems as described..."

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** "...in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*."

**Prabhupāda:** Hmm.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Yeah, we can advertise. Instead of having somebody going all over India.

**Prabhupāda:** He assured that he has found out an expert. The other man did not come because he does not know.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa:** Patita said that these were the two top men in all of India,

guaranteed.

**Prabhupāda:** Let us see what does he do. [end]