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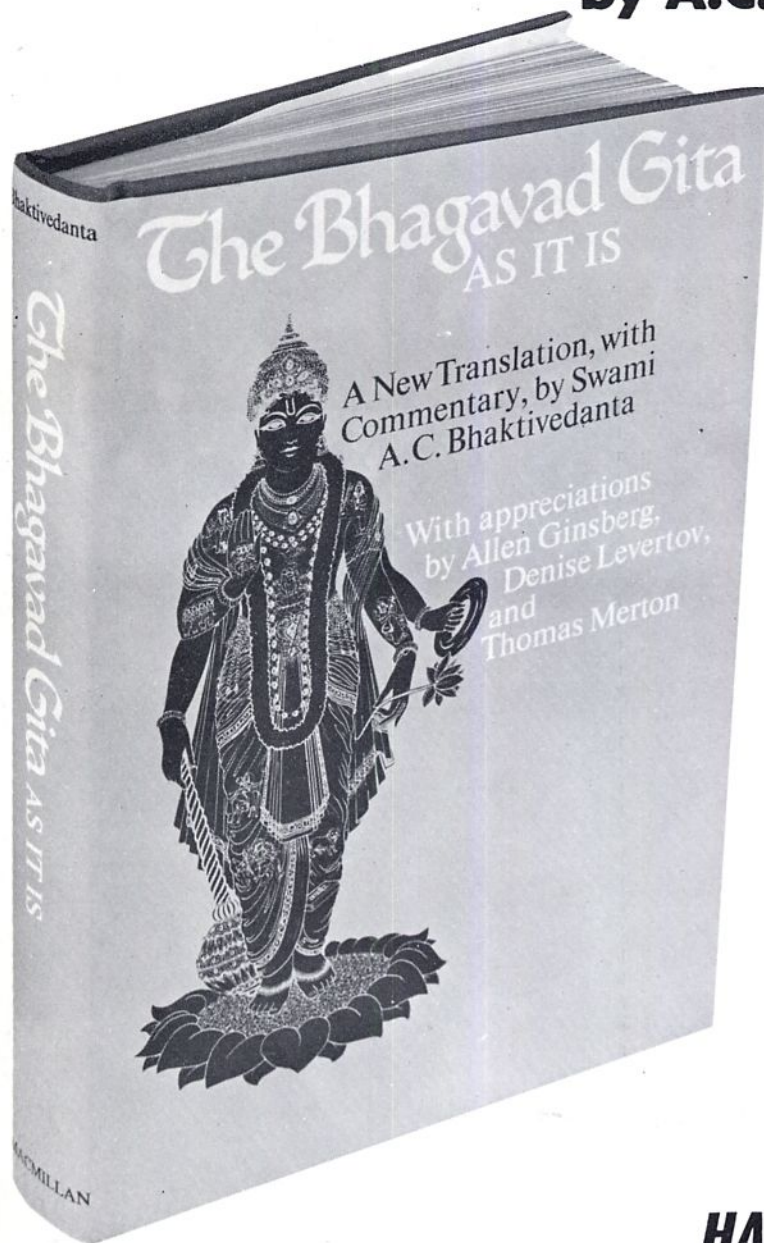
back to Godhead

The Magazine of The
Hare Krishna Movement



THE BHAGAVAD GITA AS IT IS

by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami



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Cover: The Absolute Truth, Radha Krishna, and the Creation.
For full explanation see page 15. Acrylic by Murlidhar.

“The recommended process for God realization in this Age is chanting of the Hare Krishna Mantra: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.”

—A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

BACK TO GODHEAD

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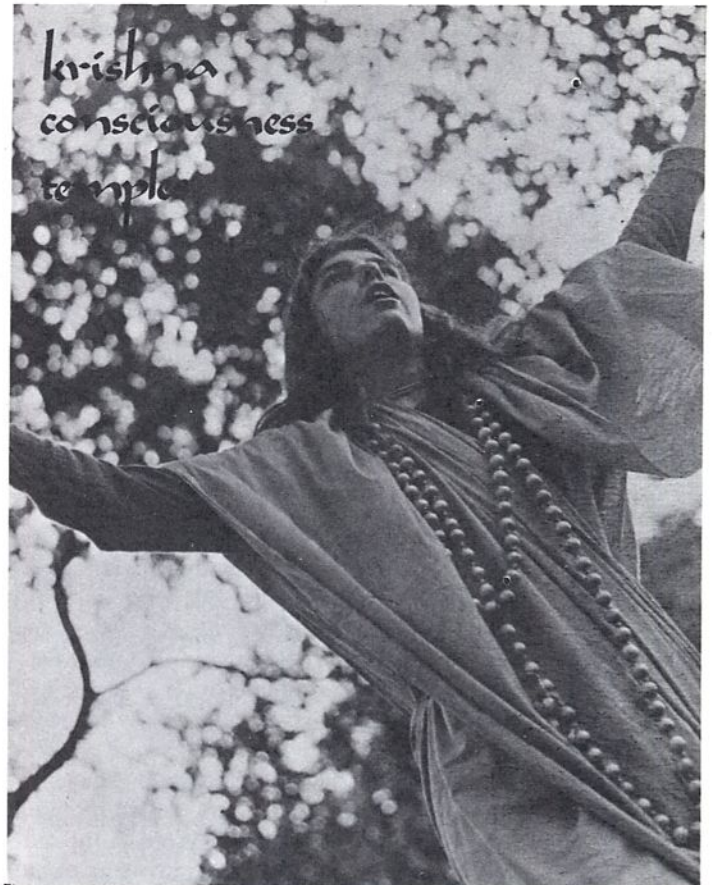
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Attend Bhakti Yoga and mantra meditation classes, lectures on The Bhagavad Gita and related Vedic literature, chanting the Hare Krishna Mantra—every Monday, Wednesday and Friday (or write for details) at any one of the following Krishna Consciousness Temples:

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Buffalo—15 LaSalle Avenue
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Hamburg—2 Hamburg 19, Eppendorfer WEG 11, West Germany
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San Francisco—518 Frederick Street
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Seattle—5516 Roosevelt Way, N.E.
Vancouver—1250 Grandville Street

According to the eternal Vedic calendar, this material world is now well advanced into the Age of Kali, the iron age of quarrel, during which the attractiveness of the temporary manifestations of material Nature constantly increases. Consequently, living entities taking human birth here are immediately drawn by their senses to work toward securing material objects for the purpose of sense enjoyment. By engaging in such fruitive activities and taking temporary pleasure in the results, these living entities develop a strong identification with the material bodies in which they are situated.

It is stated in all the revealed scriptures that the true identity of the living entity is eternal spirit soul, which is wholly transcendental to material Nature. This spirit soul is described as being an infinitesimal and subordinate part of the all-knowing and blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. But as a result of this material entanglement, the soul is thinking he is the body and that he can be happy by enjoying its senses.

Due to this attachment to the ever-changing material Nature, with its endless cycle of creation, maintenance and destruction, and its dualities (such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain) the living entities are sometimes enjoying and sometimes suffering in ever-varying situations. In addition, everyone is sure to suffer the fourfold miseries of old age, disease, death and rebirth. As the body decays and dies, the spirit soul transmigrates to a new form, suited to enjoy according to the desires he manifested in the old.

This deluded existence is certainly frustrating to the fallen conditioned soul, who has by his own nature an eternal desire to enjoy. Being transcendental to the material Nature, he can derive no satisfaction from the temporary engagement of his senses in material sense gratification. According to the scriptures the soul finds true bliss and the perfection of existence when he is fully engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Lord.

Unfortunately, due to their captivation by material attractions, the human entities in this dark age are wasting their lives and intelligence by acting only according to the bodily propensities for eating, sleeping, mating and defending, and they are therefore falling ever more deeply into the complexities of material existence.

Seeing this fallen and miserable condition of the living souls in this age, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, out of His causeless mercy, appeared here 500 years ago in Bengal, India, in the Golden Form of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Rather than appearing in His original form as the Personality of Godhead, the Lord appeared as a perfect devotee of Lord Krishna in order to set a perfect and practical example. We can therefore follow this example in reviving our blissful spiritual consciousness as loving servants of God.

Lord Chaitanya taught that engagement in devoted service for the pleasure of the Lord is the most effective method for clearing away our material contamination and reviving our Krishna (God) Consciousness. He particularly emphasized that Sankirtan, the congregational chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord, is the most essential part of this process, teaching that without this chanting there is no way to revive our spiritual consciousness in this age. He

Parts & Parcels

Los Angeles Sankirtan

was therefore constantly engaged in chanting the Maha Mantra, or Great Chanting for Deliverance—Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—and He instructed his followers to attempt to follow this example.

The Lord instructed His disciples to go out to the people in general and preach this philosophy of devotional service, and to encourage all to chant the Holy Names. He taught that work done in spreading this Krishna Consciousness process is the most pleasing service to Lord Krishna, who desires that all the fallen souls should turn to Him in order to be eternally blissful in His service.

In 1966 one pure devotee, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who is in direct disciplic succession from Lord Chaitanya Himself, came to the United States in order to spread Krishna Consciousness throughout the Western World. Since his coming he has mercifully accepted several hundred followers as his disciples. He has instructed these disciples to continue his work by publicly engaging in Sankirtan activities for the glorification of Lord Chaitanya.

The basic principle underlying these Sankirtan activities may be explained as follows: the Lord's Name, Krishna, means All-attractive. It can be understood from this that the Lord's Name, His form, His pastimes, His service and all other personal qualities are perfectly attractive in themselves. In most circumstances it is therefore not the policy of devotees engaged in Sankirtan to attempt to convince people they should engage in devotional service by logical argument, although the perfectly complete Vedic philosophy is available for that. Rather, we simply attempt to expose people to our activities in Krishna Consciousness, and we invite them to participate with us.

Contact with Lord Krishna by any means immediately brings a feeling of true spiritual pleasure to the soul of the conditioned living entity. This taste of real satisfaction after ages of frustration in seeking happiness from the material energy, where it is not to be found, changes the course of that living entity's meanderings in material existence.

This revived higher taste for spiritual activity will lead one back to Lord Krishna's association, until he can engage fully in the activities of devotional service, permanently ending his material entrapment.

Lord Krishna is so attractive that, if a person hears the Lord's Name but once, even by chance, or takes a bit of Prasadam (the spiritualized remnants of foodstuffs offered to the Lord), the course of his life is permanently altered and he is sure to return to Krishna's association in the near future. It is the bliss of Krishna conscious activities which is the strongest argument in bringing people back to Godhead.

An example of spreading Krishna Consciousness is found in the activities of the devotees at the Los Angeles Radha Krishna Temple, who are engaged in a full program of Sankirtan throughout the greater Los Angeles area. We are working under the loving guidance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, in order to attract all people to participate in praising and serving the Supreme Lord.

The present Los Angeles Temple is a small church containing a number of large rooms. This building has been renovated by the devotees to include a beautiful temple room, where worship of the installed Deity is performed; and also a nicely decorated activity room for informal gatherings and the taking of Prasadam. These rooms are decorated with beautiful pictures of Lord Krishna, Lord Chaitanya, Their associates and Their pastimes. Throughout the week public services are held in the temple, which include the chanting of the Hare Krishna Mantra and lectures by the devotees on The Bhagavad Gita As It Is, which forms the essence of all Vedic literature, as translated and explained by His Divine Grace.

On Sunday afternoons a special festival is held which includes chanting Hare Krishna, the offering and distribution of a feast of many delicious Prasadam preparations, and, frequently, simple plays and transcendental puppet shows depicting stories from the Vedic writings. All these activities are designed to inform the guests about the philosophy of devotional service to the Lord, and especially to involve them in these transcendental, blissful activities of devotional life. The basic principle again is that if the devotees make Lord Krishna's temple and the activities carried on there very pleasing to the Lord, then He will attract increasing numbers of people to participate in these affairs.

In addition to these events, it is the business of the devotees to go out and attempt to contact as many people as possible in the large Los Angeles community. This is done in order to expose them to the Holy Names and to preach Krishna Consciousness, as well as to invite them to attend our temple events.

This work is primarily done by Sankirtan parties of 5 to 20 people, who travel wherever there are numbers gathered for the pursuit of enjoyment. These parties publicly chant Hare Krishna and talk about Krishna Consciousness to those who gather to watch and listen. In Los Angeles these parties visit downtown shopping areas, entertainment centers and parks, and also colleges and universities. As the summer season advances, these activities have also been extended to the many beach communities along the West Coast.

An example of how these Sankirtan parties operate

is found in their evening activities on Hollywood Boulevard, the main entertainment center in Los Angeles. A group of perhaps 10 devotees arrange themselves attractively on rugs along the sidewalk and chant Hare Krishna and dance to the accompaniment of traditional Indian musical instruments. Attracted by the beautiful sounds, dress and appearance of the dancing devotees, a crowd of interested on-lookers soon gathers to watch and listen. Between Kirtans (chants) one of the devotees preaches to the crowd, explaining briefly this process for the glorification of the Supreme Lord, and inviting the people to join in the singing.

Throughout the evening other devotees circulate through the crowd talking to people individually about Krishna Consciousness and inviting them to the temple, selling Back to Godhead Magazine and taking collections for the maintenance of temple activities and the propagation of Krishna Consciousness. Although the money collected in this way, to be used for the service of Lord Krishna, could be secured by other means, these collections are taken for the spiritual benefit of the contributor. Even if a person is not interested in chanting Hare Krishna or visiting the temple, if he can be induced to simply give a contribution, that offering is accepted by the Lord through His devotee as an act of service, and such an activity revives that person's dormant taste for devotional service to the Lord.

Devotees from this temple are also beginning to teach courses on Krishna Consciousness at several colleges and universities throughout the area. This is done in order to help young students understand that the perfection of education is to know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, who is the Fountainhead of all knowledge. The knowledge that we are all living parts of the Supreme Person and that, therefore, it is our constitutional, blissful nature to act in devotional service, is to acquire truly beneficial education.

Also forthcoming is a weekly program on a popular F.M. radio station (KPFK-WBAI) which will enable us to reach a wider audience with this most auspicious message. There are no restrictions on the means which can be used to spread Krishna Consciousness. The devotee strives to utilize everything available to him for the pleasure of the Lord, and in this way everything becomes spiritual.

In these ways the Sankirtan movement daily presents more and more members of the Los Angeles community with the chance to engage in Krishna Consciousness. These activities lead to a positive, blissful life of spiritual realization, culminating in one's eternal loving relationship with Lord Krishna. The gradually growing response from the people of Los Angeles is encouraging to the devotees, as it indicates that the Lord is pleased by our service.

It is ultimately Lord Krishna who calls the fallen souls to Godhead, and when He is pleased by His devotee's service, He rewards him with ever-increasing opportunities to further His purpose. As it is this service itself which is the highest bliss of spiritual life, we members of the Los Angeles Sankirtan Party take this opportunity to express our eternal gratitude to our Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, for giving us this work of spreading Lord Chaitanya's Sankirtan Movement.

-Rebatinandan

Parts & Parcels

Ohio:

The founding of the Ohio State University Yoga Society and the establishment of a new ISKCON center in Columbus, Ohio, by Hayagriva and Pradyumna, two disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad, was undertaken on direct instructions from Srila Prabhupad in the fall of 1968.

Since then, devotees from nearby New Vrindaban Ashram, along with some sincere students, have helped spread the movement all over Ohio. Kirtans on the OSU

campus and weekly love feasts have attracted many to inquire into the chanting-and-hearing meditation on the transcendental sound vibration of the Hare Krishna Mantra, recommended by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as the most efficacious method for attainment of spiritual realization. Devotees chanted with Poet Allen Ginsberg and a beautiful gathering of one thousand students at Ohio Wesleyan, and the response to Kirtan, the philosophy of The Bhagavad Gita and our Prasadam feasting has been very enthusiastic at

Ohio University in Athens.

The headquarters of Krishna Consciousness activities for Columbus and the surrounding region are newly located in a large house at 318 East 20th Avenue, Columbus, where ecstatic chanting and the teaching of all aspects of a functioning spiritual life are offered to those who wish to join in experiencing it. Classes are 7 a.m. daily, and 7 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings.

—Pradyumna

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THANK YOU. HARE KRISHNA!



BEYOND THE UNIVERSE

by **A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami**

Using the Vedic scriptural writings of India, the author makes an important contribution to our knowledge of man, his universe and the destiny of his life.

The scientist
has no
information
of the
velocity of
mind and
intelligence.

In the Brahma Samhita, one of the oldest and most important of Vedic scriptures, in the fifth chapter, there is a description of variegated planetary systems within the material world. And in The Bhagavad Gita such planetary systems—in thousands and millions of material universes—are considered to be one fourth part of the complete creative energy of Godhead. The major three-fourths of the Lord's creative energy is manifested in the spiritual sky, called "Paravyoma," or the "Vai-kuntha Loka."

The declaration of the Brahma Samhita is widely confirmed by material science today, both as regards varieties of habitable planets within the universe, and also insofar as there is the theoretical acceptance of an antimaterial world.

According to the Brahma Samhita there is not only an infinite number of habitable planets within the universe, as is confirmed by most leading contemporary astronomers, but there is also an infinite number of universes. And all these infinite universes with their infinitude of planets are floating on and are produced of the Brahman effulgence emanating from the transcendental body of Govinda, Lord Sri Krishna. This is the Primeval Lord who is worshiped by Brahma, the presiding deity of the universe where we are residing.

Various astronomers throughout the world have asserted their belief that beings capable of reason can and do dwell on the different planets throughout the universe. Such eminent minds as Drs. Nikolai Zhiron and Vladimir Alpatov of Russia, as well as Sir Harold Spencer Jones of England (author of the erudite "Life on Other Worlds") have expressed their agreement that life can adapt to the various atmospheres—such as that of Mars—which are to be found on the planets.

This adaptability of organisms to different varieties of planets is described in the Brahma Samhita as "Vibhuti bhinnam," i. e., each and every one of the innumerable planets within the universe is endowed with a particular type of atmosphere, and the living beings on some are more perfectly advanced in science and psychology on account of

a superior atmosphere for life.

"Vibhuti" means specific power and "Bhinnam" means variegated. Scientists who are attempting to explore outer space and are trying to reach other planets by mechanical arrangements should realize that organisms adapted to the atmosphere of the Earth cannot long exist under the atmospheric influences of other planets. As such, attempts to establish colonies on the Moon and on Mars will be an ultimately futile endeavor on account of the different atmospheres prevailing on those planets, as described in the Brahma Samhita.

INTERPLANETARY TRAVEL

Individually, however, one can attempt to go to any planet he desires. But this is only possible by psychological changes within the mind of a particular person. The mind is the nucleus of the material body. The gradual evolutionary process of the material body depends more or less on the psychological changes in the mind. The change of bodily construction of a caterpillar into a butterfly, and in modern medical science the conversion of a man's body into that of a woman or vice versa—all depend more or less on the psychological change of the mind.

In The Bhagavad Gita it is said that, at the time of death, if anyone concentrates his mind upon the form of the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, and thus doing relinquishes his body, he at once enters into the spiritual existence of the antimaterial world. This means that anyone who strives constantly for psychological changes within the mind, going from matter to the spiritual form of Godhead by the performance of the prescribed rules of devotional service, can easily attain to the Kingdom of God in the antimaterial sky.

And in the same way if anyone desires to enter into any planet of the material sky, he can go there just after quitting the present body—i. e., after death—and enter into the atmosphere of the particular planet he desires. Thus if someone wants to enter the Moon planet as

science is now attempting to do, or the Sun planet or Mars, one can do so simply by performing certain acts meant for that purpose.

The Bhagavad Gita confirms this in the following words: "In whatever condition one quits his present body, in his next life he will attain to that state of being without fail." (VIII/6) In the Mahabharata, of which the Gita is a part, we find the story of Maharaj Bharata, who in spite of a life of severe penances foolishly thought of his stag at the time of death, and thus became a deer in his next birth. But because of his life of austerity, he was granted clear consciousness of his past. This is a very important point. The atmosphere created at the time of death is but an aftereffect of the actual deeds which one performs during his life.

In the Gita the process of entering into the Moon planet is mentioned. There it states that materialistic men who have no information of the Kingdom of God are generally mad after the acquisition of wealth, fame and adoration. Such men are interested in progress and welfare work for the family and for self-satisfaction, and they may extend these activities into social or national welfare. Such men obtain the desired object by material activities, through the prescribed mechanical or ritualistic discharge of duties, and are thus inclined to satisfy the "Pitris," or the bygone forefathers, as well as other controlling gods by sacrifices such as are presented in the revealed scriptures.

Addicted to such acts of sacrifice and ceremonial observance, such men enter the Moon planet after death. When a person is thus promoted to the atmosphere of the Moon he gets the necessary strength to enjoy the drinking of Somarasa, a celestial beverage.

The Moon planet is the place where the demigod Chandra is the predominating deity. The atmosphere and amenities of life there are far more comfortable and advantageous than those that we have here. But, reaching there, if a person does not utilize the opportunity to get promotion to still better planets, then he is degraded and is made to come down again to this planet or some other

similar to Earth. And even though such materialistic persons may attain to the topmost planetary system, they ultimately are annihilated at the time of the periodic general disappearance of the cosmic manifestation.

So far as the planetary systems in the spiritual sky are concerned, there is an unlimited number of such "Vai-kunthas" there, and the ratio is that that manifestation of the Lord's internal potency is three times greater than this material sky, which is manifested by the external energy.

THE YOGA OF SPACE TRAVEL

The poor materialist is busy making his political adjustments in a place which is most insignificant in the evaluation of God. Not just to speak of this planet Earth, the whole universe with its innumerable planets has been compared by one saint with a grain of mustard seed amongst all the mustard seeds packed in a bag. But the poor materialist makes his plans to live here comfortably, and thus he wastes his most valuable human energy on a cause which is never to be realized. Instead of wasting time in that plan-making business, a plain and simple life with high thinking after spiritual matter would save the misguided human being from perpetual unrest, the only gift of matter.

Even if a materialist wants to enjoy developed material facilities, he can transfer himself to the many, many other material planets where he can experience more and more advanced material pleasures. The best plan of life is to prepare oneself for going back to the spiritual sky after leaving this body; but yet if anyone wants to enjoy the largest amount of material facilities, one can transfer himself to other planets—not by means of playful sputniks, which are simply childish entertainments—but by psychological effects and by learning the art of transferring the soul through mystic powers.

The Yoga system is also materialistic inasmuch as it teaches one to control the movements of air within the body. The

spiritual spark or soul is floating on air within the body, and inhalation and exhalation are the waves of that air containing the soul. Therefore the Yoga system is the materialistic art of controlling that air. By practice of such Yoga, the soul with all its energy and consciousness can be transferred from the stomach to the navel, from the navel to the chest, from the chest to collarbones, from the collarbones to the eyeballs, and from there to the cerebellum. From the cerebellum the expert yogi can convey his own soul to any planet he desires.

The velocity of light must be taken into consideration by the material scientist as the highest speed theoretically attainable by any object in travel, but the scientist has no information of the velocity of such forms of matter as the mind and intelligence. We have some experience of the velocity of the mind, because, in a moment, we can transfer the mind to places hundreds and thousands of miles away. Intelligence is a still finer form of matter. And finer than even intelligence is the soul, which is not matter at all but is spirit or anti-material, and which is many, many times finer and more powerful than intelligence. We can thus barely imagine the velocity of the soul and how quickly it can travel from one planet to another by its own strength, without any help from any sort of material vehicle.

Our animal's civilization of eating, sleeping, fearing and sense-gratifying has misled contemporary man and he has forgotten how powerful the soul is. The soul is in fact a spiritual spark which is many, many times more illuminating, dazzling and powerful than the Sun, the Moon or electricity. Human life is spoiled by not realizing this as one's own true identity.

How the yogis can travel to all the planets of the universe is described in the Srimad Bhagwatam as follows: When the vital force is lifted to the cerebellum there is every chance of this force bursting out from one of the bodily holes like the eyes, nose or ears. These places are known as the seventh orbit of the vital force. The yogis can, however, block these holes by complete

suspension of the passing air, and then the yogi carefully concentrates the vital force in the middle position, in between the eyebrows. At this point the yogi can think of which of the planets he wants to go to after leaving this body. He can decide either to go to the abode of Krishna in the Vaikunthas, which are transcendental places and from which no one is required to come back to the material world, or if he wants to travel to the higher planets in this universe, he is at liberty to do so.

For a perfect yogi, one who has attained success in the practice of leaving this material body in perfect consciousness, the process is as easy as it is for an ordinary man to go from one place to another. As we have already indicated, the material body is just a covering of the spiritual soul. Mind and intelligence compose the inner covering, and the gross body of earth, water, air, etc. is the outer covering of the soul. Any advanced soul who has realized himself by the yogic process (which means, literally, the linking up of matter with spirit) can leave these shirts and coats of the soul in perfect order as he desires. Such a one has complete freedom by the grace of God.

The Lord is so kind upon us that we can live anywhere, either in the spiritual sky or in the material sky, and in any planet thereof. The misuse of this freedom makes one fall down in the material world and live a conditioned life, subject to the threefold miseries (those imposed by Nature, by other living beings and by the bodily condition itself.) To live a miserable life in the material world is a choice of the soul, as is nicely illustrated in Milton's "Paradise Lost," and is not a matter of chance. And from the material world, also by his own choice, one can go back to home, back to Godhead.

THE UPPER PLANETS

So in that critical time of placing the vital force between the eyebrows, one has to decide where he wants to go. If he is completely reluctant to keep any

connection with the material world, he can do so and within less than a second he can reach the transcendental Vaikuntha sky and appear there in a spiritual body just suitable for the spiritual atmosphere. One has simply to desire to leave the material world both in finer and grosser forms, and then fix the vital force at the topmost part of the skull and leave the body from the hole of the skull called "Brahmarandhra." That is the highest perfection in practicing the Yoga system.

But the yogi is endowed with free will, and as such if he does not wish to get completely free from the material world, but prefers to enjoy a life of "Brahma Pada," or to occupy the post of "Brahma," and if he wishes to see the place of materially perfect beings called "Siddha Lokā," where every living being has full capacity to control gravity, space, time, etc.—then he doesn't have to leave the mind and intelligence (finer forms of matter), but can simply give up the grosser matter and thus go up to the highest place of the material universe.

The sputniks and other man-made mechanical planets will never be able to carry human beings very far in interplanetary space. The reason is, again, that in the higher planetary systems the atmosphere is different from here. Each and every planet has its particular atmosphere, and if anyone wants to go to any planet anywhere within the material universe, he has to get his material shirt and coat (his body) made exactly adaptable to the climatic condition of that planet.

It is just like this: If a person wants to go from India to Europe, where the climate is different from India, then one has to change his dress accordingly. Similarly, a more complete change of dress, to the extent of changing the body itself, is necessary if we want to go up to the transcendental planets of Vaikuntha, or even to the upper worlds of this universe.

If we want to go to the highest material planet we need not change the finer dress of mind, intelligence and ego, but we do have to change the gross dress of earth, water, fire, air, etc.

The soul is a
spiritual spark
many times
more
illuminating,
dazzling and
powerful
than the Sun.

When we go to a transcendental planet, however, we require to change both the fine as well as the gross body and we have to arrive in the spiritual sky completely in spiritual form.

The change of dress will automatically take place simply by desiring it at the time of death. This desire, however, is possible only if we practice it during the conscious state of life. Such desires, when practiced in relation with the material world, are called fruitive actions, or Karma. When such desires are conducted in relation to the Kingdom of God, they are called divine or devotional service.

One can prepare himself for an easy journey to the Vaikuntha or antimaterial planets, where life is free from birth, death, disease and old age, by pursuit of the following principles:

1. The desiring candidate must accept a bona fide spiritual master in order to be trained scientifically to use the senses in devotional service. The senses are made of matter, and as such it is not at all possible to realize the Transcendence through the material senses. Therefore the senses have to be spiritualized by the prescribed method offered by the proper guide, who is himself Krishna conscious, or perfect in antimaterial activities.

2. When the choice of a bona fide spiritual master is made, the candidate must take rightful initiation from the spiritual master, which is the beginning of spiritual training.

3. The candidate must be prepared to satisfy the spiritual master in every way. A bona fide spiritual master who is fully cognizant of the effects of spiritual science, learned in the spiritual scriptures like The Bhagavad Gita, Vedanta, Bhagwatam, Upanishads, etc.—and who is also a self realized soul, having made tangible connection with the Supreme Lord—is the transparent medium to help the willing candidate on the path to Vaikuntha. He must therefore be satisfied in all respects, because simply by his good wishes a candidate can make wonderful progress in the line.

4. This service of the spiritual master is meant for the intelligent class of candidates who can place relevant ques-

tions before the master in order to clear the way. The spiritual master shows him the way not whimsically, but on the principles of authorities who have actually traversed the path. The names of such authorities are also disclosed in the scriptures and we have simply to follow them by the direction of the spiritual master. The true spiritual master never deviates from the path of the authorities.

5. The candidate must always try to follow in the footsteps of the great sages who have practiced the method and obtained success. This must be taken as the motto of life. Not to imitate them, but to follow them sincerely, in terms of the particular time and circumstances.

6. The candidate must be prepared to change his habits in terms of the instructions contained in the books of authority, and he must be prepared to sacrifice sense enjoyment as well as sense abnegation for the satisfaction of the Lord, as Arjuna did.

7. The candidate should live in a spiritual atmosphere.

8. He must be satisfied with as much wealth as is sufficient for maintenance only. He should not try to amass more wealth than is necessary for maintenance in the simple way.

9. He must observe certain fast days, such as the eleventh day after the growing and again after the waning moon (called Ikadasee).

10. He must show respect to the banyan tree, the cow, the learned Brahmin and the devotee.

11. One should avoid offenses in the discharge of duties, in devotional service and in chanting the Holy Name (the Hare Krishna Mantra).

12. He must leave the company of nondevotees, i.e., not associate with them intimately.

13. He must not create unlimited disciples. This means that a candidate who has successfully reached up to the 12th stage can also become spiritual master himself, just as a student becomes monitor in the class. He should have, however, a limited number of disciples.

14. He must not pose himself as a vastly learned man, simply quoting the

statements of books. He must have solid knowledge from others.

15. A regular and successful practice up to the 14th item will enable the candidate to have equilibrium of the mind even if there is a great trial of material loss or a great material gain in life.

16. And the next stage is that the candidate does not become afflicted by any lamentation or illusion.

17. He does not deride another's mode of religion or worship, neither does he indulge in deriding the Personality of Godhead or His devotees.

19. He must not indulge in topics regarding the relations of man and woman, or in the useless topics of others' family affairs.

20. He must not inflict pain either in the body or in the mind of another living being, whosoever he may be.

The latter ten items are negative injunctions while the first ten are positive. Out of these twenty the first three positive items are imperative and most essential for the desiring candidates. There are 44 other items to be followed by the desiring candidates, but Lord Chaitanya, the great Avatar of Godhead whose mission was to deliver the souls of this age, selected only five items from them as being most important, having regard for the conditions of the present mode of life. These five are as follows:

1. To associate with devotees. The association of devotees is made possible by hearing them attentively, by asking them relevant questions, by supplying them with foodstuff and accepting foodstuff from them, by giving them charity and accepting from them whatsoever they offer.

2. To chant the Holy Name of the Lord in all circumstances. The chanting of the Lord's Name is an easy job and the most inexpensive attempt also. One can chant any Name of the Lord from among His innumerable Names at any time, and try to make it offenseless. There are ten offenses in the method of such chanting of the transcendental Name, and those offenses must be avoided as far as possible. But at all cost the Holy Name of the Lord can be chanted without any restriction at all

times.

3. One should hear the transcendental topics enunciated in The Bhagavad Gita. This hearing is made possible through platform lectures as well as through press propaganda. And this item includes the other two items above.

4. One should make his home at Mathura or the birthplace of Lord Krishna, or should make his home as good as Mathura by installing the Deity of the Lord at home to be worshiped by all the members of the family after proper initiation from the spiritual master.

5. To worship the installed deity with attention and devotion so that the whole atmosphere at home becomes the replica of the Lord's abode. This is made possible by the direction of the spiritual master, who knows the transcendental art and can guide the candidate in the proper method.

The above-mentioned five items can be adopted by any man in any part or place of the world. Thus one can prepare himself for going back to home, back to Godhead by the simple method recognized by such authorities as Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who specifically advented Himself to deliver the fallen souls of this age.

TRANSCENDENTAL LOVE

The whole process of transferring oneself to the spiritual sky is to gradually liquidate the material composition of gross and subtle coverings over the spirit soul. And the last-named five items of devotional activities are so spiritually powerful that their performance by a devotee, even in the preliminary stage, can very quickly promote the sincere executor to the position of "Bhava"—emotion on the spiritual plane which is above the intellectual status of the mind. And complete absorption in such spiritual emotion is the perfect change which makes the candidate perfectly fit to be transferred to the spiritual sky just after leaving the present material tabernacle.

Such emotional perfection of the devotee—that is to say, the development of

love of God—causes him to be situated on the spiritual platform even from the outset, although he may remain superficially fixed in the way that an iron made red hot completely ceases to be an iron, and acts like fire. These things are made possible by the subtle cohesion of the Lord's inconceivable energy, a realm of action which material science has very little scope to calculate.

One should, therefore, engage himself in the task of devotional service with absolute faith, and to make that faith a steadfast affair the candidate should seek the association of standard devotees of the Lord. This will gradually develop into factual devotional service to the Lord, causing the disappearance of all material misgivings like a flash of lightning.

All these different stages of spiritual realization will be personally felt by the candidate and that will create in him a firm belief in this means of making positive progress, resulting finally in sincere attachment for the Lord and His abode. That is the gradual process of evolving love of God, the prime necessity of human life.

There are many instances in Vedic history of great personalities—both kings and sages—who attained perfection in this line. Some of them attained success by adhering to just a single item of devotional service with faith and perseverance. Some of the more important examples of such devotees are as follows:

1. Emperor Parikshit attained the spiritual platform simply by hearing from a great authority, Sri Sukhadeva Goswami.

2. Sri Sukhadeva Goswami attained success in this matter simply by recitation ad verbum of the transcendental message, as he had received it from his great father, Srila Vyasadeva.

3. Emperor Prahlad attained success in this matter simply by remembering the Lord constantly, in pursuance of the instruction of Srila Narada Muni, a great saint and devotee.

4. Lakshmi, the Goddess of Fortune, attained success simply by sitting and serving the Lotus Feet of the Lord.

5. King Prithu attained success sim-

A human being has no obligation save and except spiritual realization in his life.

ply by worshipping the Lord.

6. Akrura, the charioteer, attained success simply by chanting prayers for the Lord.

7. Hanuman (Mahabir), the famous nonhuman devotee of Lord Sri Rama Chandra, attained success simply by carrying out the orders of the Lord.

8. Arjuna, the great warrior, attained the same perfection simply by making friendship with the Lord, who delivered the message of The Bhagavad Gita to enlighten Arjuna and his followers.

9. Emperor Bali attained success by surrendering everything unto the Lord, including his personal body.

These are the nine standard items of devotional service to the Lord, and a candidate can make his choice to adopt any one, two, three, four—or all the items together—as he likes. As all these forms of service are rendered to the Absolute, the services themselves are Absolute and there is thus no real difference in quantity or quality, as in the case of inert matter. These are different varieties on the spiritual platform, where everything is identical with everything else.

Emperor Amburish stands as a very prominent example of devotion because he adopted all the above nine items in his practical life, and he also attained the supreme result. He engaged his mind just on the Lotus Feet of the Lord, his words in describing the spiritual world, his hands in cleansing the temple of the Lord and his ears in submissively hearing of the words of Lord Sri Krishna. He engaged his eyes in visualizing the Deities of the Lord, his body in touching the bodies of the devotees, his nostrils in smelling the flowers which had been first offered to the Deities, his legs in visiting the temple of the Lord and all his energy of life in the services of the Lord without the least desire for sense gratification. All these activities helped him to attain the perfect stage of spiritual life, a stage beyond the vision of the most brilliant experiment in material science.

It is therefore incumbent on all serious human beings to adopt these principles of spiritual realization for the perfection

of life. A human being has no obligation whatsoever save and except spiritual realization in his life. In the modern setup of things, human society is very busy in the discharge of national duties. But, in fact, national, social or humanitarian duties are obligatory only to those who are bereft of the spiritual duty.

As soon as a man takes his birth in any part of the globe he does not only have national, social and humanitarian obligations, but also has his obligations to the demigods who supply air, light, water, etc. He has obligations to the great sages who have left behind them a vast treasure house of directions in the conduct of human life. He has obligations to all kinds of living beings, to his forefathers and family members, and so on and so forth. But as soon as one engages himself in the single duty of spiritual perfection, he automatically liquidates—he in fact fulfills perfectly—all other obligations without any separate effort.

A devotee of the Lord is never a disturbing element in society, but on the contrary he becomes an asset to all others. As far as possible no devotee is attracted by any sinful action, and as soon as a man becomes a devotee he can do inestimable service to his society, bringing peace and prosperity to all concerned, both in this life and in the next. Even if by chance a devotee may commit something undesirable, the Lord Himself rectifies that in no time.

Therefore, there is no necessity for a devotee to culture superfluous knowledge or abnegation. A devotee can safely remain at his place and execute devotional service smoothly in any order of life. There are instances in history where the cruelest man became the most kind-hearted simply by the execution of devotional service. Knowledge and abnegation follow automatically in the life of a pure devotee without any extraneous effort by him.

THE ETERNAL

This spiritual art and science of devotional service is the great contribution of the Indian sages to the rest of the

world. Everyone, therefore, who has taken his birth in India has an obligation to make his life perfect by adopting the principles of this great art and science, and then to distribute this to the rest of the world, to offer mankind the ultimate aim of life.

Human society is destined to reach this stage of perfection by the gradual development of knowledge. Many Indian sages have already reached this position, while other men still have to tread on the path for many more thousands of years. It is this writer's hope that the true sages of India today will make a serious and sustained effort to give the world this sublime information immediately, in a systematic way, so that they may not only save humanity's time and energy for this progress of life, but also so that all men may immediately take advantage of this human form of life—a form which they may well obtain again only through the labor of millions of years.

Many writers of philosophy and even of fiction advocate the concept of the eternal life of man. They contribute various literary suggestions to the rest of the world indicating that scientific progress can help man to live forever. But they do not generally believe in the concept of a Supreme Being as the Creator. We welcome the suggestions of such writers because we know that any actual progress in scientific knowledge will certainly take man to the spiritual sky, and that the advancement of knowledge will ultimately inform the scientist that the Supreme Creator exists, full with inconceivable potencies that lie beyond the calculation of material science.

As suggested hereinbefore, although every living being is eternal in form, one has to periodically change his outer coverings of gross and subtle matter. This changing process is technically known as life and death. So long as a living being has to wear the shackles of material bondage there is no relief from this changing process, which continues even at the highest stage of material life.

Our fiction writers may go on with their imaginings, as fiction writers are apt to do, but the saner section of the people, in studying natural law, will not

agree that man can live forever within this material world.

A naturalist can observe the overall action of material Nature by simply studying fruit on a tree. A small fruit develops from a flower, and it continues to develop more and more. It stays for some time and then it becomes full grown and ripen. After the ripe stage it begins to dwindle day by day, and on some day it falls down from the tree to the earth and begins its decomposition. And at last it becomes dust, leaving behind its seed, which again springs up to become a tree and produces many, many fruits which in due course meet the same fate already described.

Similarly, a living being (the spiritual spark which is part and parcel of the Supreme Being) takes its organic form in the womb of the mother just after sexual intercourse. It grows little by little within the womb, and afterwards outside the womb, gradually becoming a child, a boy, a youth, an adult and so on. In old age a man begins to dwindle, and at a certain period he falls down in the grip of cruel death in spite of all the good wishes and desires of all sections of humanity, fiction writers included. So, by comparison, there is no difference between the two organic bodies—namely, the man and the fruit. As such the man may leave behind him seeds in the form of numerous children, but by Nature he cannot exist permanently within the material body.

How can our writers ignore the law of material Nature? No material scientist can change the stringent rules of Nature, however boastful he may be. No astronomer can change the course of the planets, although he can manufacture a toy planet under the name and style of Apollo. Foolish children may give much credit to the flying of a modern space capsule, but the saner section of the people will give more credit to the Creator of the truly gigantic “capsules”—namely, the stars and planets. If a small playful capsule has a creator in Russia or the West, why should the Creator of these gigantic capsules not exist in the spiritual sky? If a toy spaceship requires the assistance of so many scientific brains, why should we not believe

in the existence of a more perfect and subtle brain which has created the gigantic spaceships? So far we have received no good answer from the nonbelieving class of men with their poor fund of knowledge about this suggestion of the Supreme Creator.

These unbelieving men put forward their theories of the Creation with so many doubtful wordings, some of which are as follows: “It is hard to understand...Our imagination cannot conceive of it...But it is quite possible that...” etc., which shows that the ideas put forward by such men are not based on authorized and scientific data. They are simply hypotheses resulting from imperfect induction.

But we can give an authorized account from The Bhagavad Gita of how, within this material world, there are living beings who possess a duration of life covering $1,000 \times 4,300,000 \times 12 \times 2 \times 30 \times 100$ solar years of our calculation. We call The Bhagavad Gita authorized because this book of knowledge has been widely accepted by India’s great sages even in modern times, and by many of the greatest spiritual personalities, such as Sri Shankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Madhyacharya, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and so on.

VARIETIES OF PLANETARY SYSTEMS

Even possessing so long a duration of life does not guarantee deathlessness within matter. Therefore, all material shapes are subject to the law of change, although potentially the material energy is conserved. Potentially everything is eternal, but in matter the form, or phase as the scientists sometimes call it, takes place, remains for some time, develops to full maturity, becomes old, begins to dwindle and at last disappears. That is the position of all material objects. The current suggestions of the scientists that beyond the material sky there may be some other form, lying outside the boundary of visibility, strange and inconceivable, is a faint idea of the basic principle of the spiritual sky.

This basic principle of spirit is pre-

One should not be illusioned by the gigantic universes, but must learn of the gigantic brain behind these manifestations.

sent within all living beings. When the spiritual principle is out of the material body, then no change takes place in that body. Within the body of a child the same spiritual principle is there, and therefore changes take place in the body and it develops. But if somehow or other the spirit has to go away, the same body may be preserved by chemical adjustment; but there will be no more development.

This law is applicable in every material object. Matter transforms from one shape to another when it is in contact with the spirit. Without spirit there is no such transformation. The whole universe is developed in this way. It emanates from the energy of the Transcendence, and on account of the spiritual force the body develops into gigantic forms like the Sun, Moon, Earth, etc.

There are fourteen divisions of planetary systems, each different from the others in dimension and quality, and everywhere the same principle of development holds good. Therefore the spiritual force is the creator, because, entirely on account of this principle, transformation, transition and development take place.

So far as life is concerned, we can know definitely that life is not generated by any kind of material reaction, like a chemical combination. Material interaction, set in agitation by a Superior Being, creates a favorable circumstance for accommodating the spiritual living force, and the superior energy handles matter in a suitable way by the free will of the spiritual being. For example, building materials do not automatically react and then turn into the suitable shape of a residential house. The living spiritual being handles the matter suitably by his free will and thus constructs a residential house.

And so matter is only the ingredient, while spirit is the creator. The creator may remain unseen in the background, but that does not mean that there is no creator. Such a faulty conclusion will be made by a man with a poor fund of knowledge. One should not therefore be illusioned simply by the gigantic form of the material universes, but must learn to admit the existence of a gigantic

brain behind all these material manifestations. The Supreme Being who has such a gigantic brain, quantitatively greater than ours, is the ultimate Creator, the all-attractive Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. For one who does not have the necessary information about the Creator, there is definite information of Him in the Vedic literature, and especially in the Srimad Bhagwatam.

When a capsule is thrown into outer space, a child may not understand that it is sent aloft by some scientific brain, but an older man knows fully well that there is a brain behind the machine. Similarly, a less intelligent person may not have any information of the Creator and His eternal abode in the spiritual world, but actually there exists a spiritual sky more spacious with spiritual planets more numerous than in the material one. From The Bhagavad Gita we get information that the material planets are only one-fourth of the Creation—or a third the number of spiritual planets. Such information is extensively available in the Bhagwatam and other Vedic writings.

A UNIVERSAL SOCIALISM

If living energy could be generated in the physical laboratory by the interaction of chemical compositions, why then are creatures not being manufactured by the boastful material scientists? We should know definitely that the spiritual force is distinct from matter, and that it is not possible to produce such energy by any amount of material adjustment.

At present the Russian nation, though undoubtedly very much advanced in many departments of technological science, is of all nations most glaringly lacking knowledge of spiritual science. The Russians have yet to learn from the superior brain in order to make a perfect society of progressive humanity, and the practical breakdown of their so-called Communist system can be traced to this.

In the Srimad Bhagwatam a socialist philosophy is most perfectly described

which our Russian brothers have yet to learn. The Bhagwatam directs that whatever wealth arises, either by agriculture, mining or otherwise, is supposed to be given by the ultimate Creator, and therefore every living being has a right to partake of such wealth. It is said there that a man can possess only as much wealth as will be sufficient to maintain his body, and if he desires more than that, then he is liable to be punished. It is further said there that all living beings who live with man, like cats, dogs, camels, cows, mice, monkeys or even serpents—all should be treated as one's own children.

I believe that no nation on the globe can conceive of socialism so perfectly as it is thus described in the Srimad Bhagwatam. Living beings other than humans can be treated as brothers and children only when one has a full conception of the Creator and of the actual constitution of the living being.

The principle of deathlessness is possible in the spiritual world. A desire for eternal life or deathlessness is in fact the sign of one's dormant spiritual life and the aim of human civilization should be to develop the fullness of spiritual awareness. It is possible for every human being to transfer himself to that spiritual realm by the process of Bhakti Yoga, as described above. This is a great science and India has produced many scientific writings for such a perfection of life.

Bhakti Yoga is the eternal religion of man. At a time when material science is preponderant over all subjects, including the tenets of religion, it will be a greatly enlivening event if we can see the principles of this eternal religion from the point of view of the modern scientist. Even Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the famous philosopher and former President of India, admitted at a world religion conference held some time ago in Delhi that religion will not be acceptable in modern civilization if it is not offered from the scientific point of view. And in reply to all these different propositions the writer is very glad to put forward in this article for the lovers of Truth the firm idea that Bhakti Yoga is

the eternal religion of the world, and is meant for all living beings.

Sripad Ramanujacharya has explained the word "Sanatan," eternal, as that which has neither any beginning nor any end. And when we speak of "Sanatan Dharma," eternal religion, we may take it on the authority of Sripad Ramanujacharya that this has no beginning and no end. The thing which has no beginning and no end cannot be sectarian or limited by any boundary. In the light of modern science it will be possible for us to see Sanatan Dharma as the business of all the people of the world—of all living entities of the universe. Noneternal religious faith may have some beginning in the annals of human history, but there cannot be any history of Sanatan Dharma because it continues always within the history of the living entities.

When a man professes to belong to a particular type of faith with reference to the particular time and circumstances of his birth, thus claiming to be a Hindu, Moslem, Christian, Buddhist or member of any other sect, such designations are not Sanatan Dharma. A Hindu may change his faith to become a Moslem or a Moslem may change his faith to become a Hindu or a Christian, etc. But in all circumstances such a change of religious faith does not allow one to change his eternal engagement—rendering service to others. A Hindu or a Moslem or a Christian, in all circumstances, is the servant of someone and thus, while to profess a particular type of faith is not to be considered Sanatan Dharma, the constant companion of the living being—the rendering of service—is itself Sanatan Dharma, the true eternal religion.

THE FOUNTAINHEAD OF EXISTENCE

In The Bhagavad Gita there are several references in this matter of "Sanatanam." Let us see some of the statements of the Gita and try to take the import of Sanatan Dharma from the authority.

There is one reference to the word Sanatanam in the 10th verse of the Seventh Chapter, in which the Lord says that He is the original Fountainhead of everything and, therefore, Sanatanam—

the Eternal or Unchanging. The Fountainhead of everything is described in the Upanishads as the Complete Whole. All emanations from that Fountainhead are also complete in themselves, and in spite of many such complete units having emanated from Him, this Eternal Whole and Eternal Source does not diminish in quality or quantity. This is the nature of the Unchanging.

Anything that wears or tears under the influence of time and circumstances is not Sanatan. Therefore, anything which has a circumstantial change in whatsoever form or quality cannot be accepted as Sanatan. The Sun is disseminating its rays for hundreds and millions of years and yet there is no perceptible change in the formation or radiation of the Sun. That is a materially created object, but the substance which is never created cannot, therefore, have any change in form or quality, even though He may be the seedling Source of everything.

The Lord claims to be the Father of all species of life. He claims all living beings, regardless of form or species, as parts and parcels of Himself. And The Bhagavad Gita is meant for all these beings.

In The Bhagavad Gita there is information of the Sanatan nature of the Supreme Lord, of His abode which is far away from the material sky, and of the Sanatan nature of the living beings. He also gives information that this material world is full of miseries in the shape of birth, death, old age and disease, and even up to the topmost planet of the universe—that is to say, in the Brahma Loka—the same miseries are current in some form or other. Only in His own abode is there no misery at all. In that abode there is no need of light from the Sun, nor from the Moon, nor from fire. And the life there is perpetual, with full knowledge and bliss. That is called Sanatan Dham—the Eternal Abode.

It is quite natural, therefore, to conclude that the living entities must go back to home, back to Godhead to enjoy life in the Eternal Abode along with the "Sanatan Purusha," the eternal Lord, Sri Krishna; and further to conclude that they must not rot in this miserable land of material existence. There is no happiness in the material sphere, even in-

cluding the Brahma Loka, and the plans and activities to elevate oneself to the higher planes within the material universe are done by those who are less intelligent. The less intelligent men also take shelter of demigods and various objects of devotion other than the Lord Himself, and derive some benefit which is to endure for a limited period. In this way all such noneternal religious principles are only temporary measures for the temporary benefit of the less intelligent.

The intelligent person gives up all such engagements of religiousness and takes shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; and there is the absolute assurance of immunity from sin from the part of the Almighty Father. Sanatan Dharma—eternal religion—is, then, the process of Bhakti Yoga, by which one can know the eternal Lord and His Eternal Abode, and by that process only can one go back to the Sanatan Dham, the Kingdom of God, to take part in the eternal enjoyment prevailing there.

Those who are followers of the eternal religion of devotional service to God may henceforward take up the principles of Sanatan Dharma in the spirit of The Bhagavad Gita. There is no bar against anyone taking up these eternal principles, and even those who are less enlightened can go back to Godhead in this way. Such is the verdict of the Srimad Bhagwatam, as well as of the Supreme Lord Himself in the Gita.

People should be given the chance to take advantage of this opportunity, and, because The Bhagavad Gita was spoken in the land of "Bharatavarsha," every Indian has the responsibility to broadcast the message of real Sanatan Dharma in the world. The misguided men of the world, especially at the present moment, are suffering greatly in the darkness of the material atmosphere, and the result is that the so-called advancement of learning has only helped foolish mankind to discover lethal weapons in the form of nuclear bombs. Humanity is practically on the verge of ruin because, as soon as there is a declaration of war, no one knows what will happen to the human race on earth. The eternal religion will teach man about the real aim of life, and all will benefit by such propagation of Krishna Consciousness. END

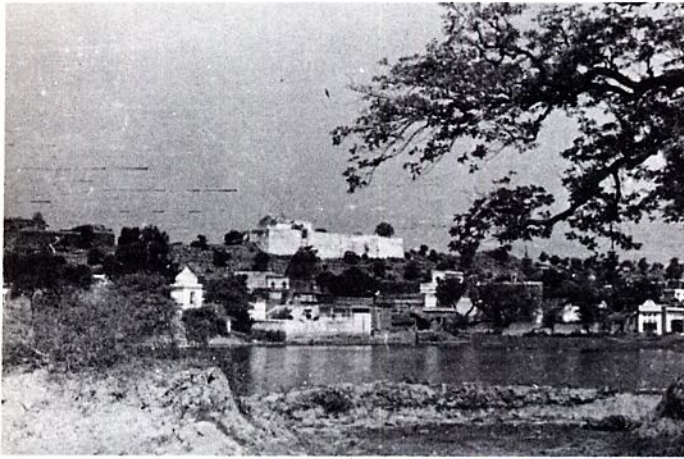
goverdhan

photos and text by JayaGovinda

Little known to most of the world, there is a spot in India where the Supreme Godhead, Krishna, once displayed the eternal pastimes of His spiritual kingdom. This is the story of that place as it still endures.

hill

Left: In the background of this photo is the low, plateau-like Goverdhan Hill which Lord Krishna once picked up with one hand. right: An old palace at the foot of Goverdhan Hill.



Goverdhan hill is inseparable from Krishna, the Supreme Lord. Goverdhan was manifested in the land called Vrindaban when Krishna appeared there to display His incredible array of transcendental pastimes from the spiritual world. Krishna always remains the unbound blissful Supreme Entity, and everything and every living being is His creation. All living entities are only expansions of His own Self, and bear His own subtle and transcendental qualities when they are in a reciprocation of action with Him.

In the spiritual realm, which exists outside the purview of the entities in this temporal or mundane world, even inanimate objects have consciousness; and every being's action, whether as a young boy or as the soil beneath Krishna's feet, is a part of an intense love relationship between himself and Krishna. This eternal relationship is ever-increasing in its fulfillment and is unbounded by time or space.

Every object of the eternal realm is

simply a manifestation of love for the Lord, coming originally from Himself. There is no lack of the necessary implements of service, because those implements have become manifest by the sentiment of serving the Lord in some particular way. Thus there is never any frustration in the eternal realm, because every deed is performed as an act of devotion to the Lord. In short, the only thing which does not exist in this realm is the absence of love for the Lord.

Everything being the Lord's manifestation, at the same time both conscious and active, it is to be understood that the Lord is omnipotent. And one of His energies, called His internal potency, is created to give pleasure to His own Self in the form of conscious and independently acting living beings. From the Vedic writings we can understand that the beings of this temporal world are originally a part of this internal potency.

Krishna advented Himself in this

world for the purpose of recalling the fallen living entities to their original place in the spiritual world, and also in order to please the hearts of His devotees here on earth. When He came, He told Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva (the three ruling powers of this universe) that they could all incarnate as mountains; and so Brahma incarnated as a hill in Varsana (Radha's home), Shiva incarnated as a hill in Nandagam (Krishna's father's home), and Vishnu incarnated as Goverdhan Hill, a hill in Braja where Krishna engaged in childhood pastimes with the cowherd boys and girls.

Brahma is Krishna's special agent for the creation of this material world. Shiva is a form of the Lord that results from the Lord contacting the energy of this material world we see. This is often compared to milk turned into yogurt. Though made of milk, it can never be turned back to milk again. Shiva's position is like that. Both these agents have some direct connection with the



material sphere of activities, but the third party, Vishnu, has no connection with this material world. Still, He is not a complete form of the Lord, for Krishna is the embodiment of more qualities than even Vishnu. He will reciprocate not only a feeling of servitude for Himself, but feelings also of friendship and of filial and amorous affection. Vishnu is an expansion of Krishna for the purpose of ruling, and He is created by Krishna in the way that one candle lights another candle. When Krishna lifts Goverdhan, then, we might say it

is the Lord lifting the Lord.

Being especially merciful, Krishna allows the Brijbasis, the residents of Braja (Vrindaban), to gaze on His Eternal blue moonlike face for 14 days without a moment's interruption, and to drink the limitless ambrosial nectar emanating therefrom. Meanwhile, He accomplishes the equally supramundane purpose of protecting all the residents of Braja from the torrential rains sent by Indra, the vain king of the heavenly planets of this cosmos.

The story of this event is as follows:

Krishna's father Nanda was in the custom of performing sacrifices to please the demigod of the heavens, Indra, in order to receive good rains for his crops. But seven-year-old Krishna told him there was no need to perform sacrifices for Indra, that it was Indra's duty to supply rain anyway. Therefore His father stopped the sacrifices, and the people resumed their usual work. Meanwhile, Indra, who was not receiving his sacrifices, became angered and sent torrential rains down upon the Brijbasis. At that time it was the Lord's



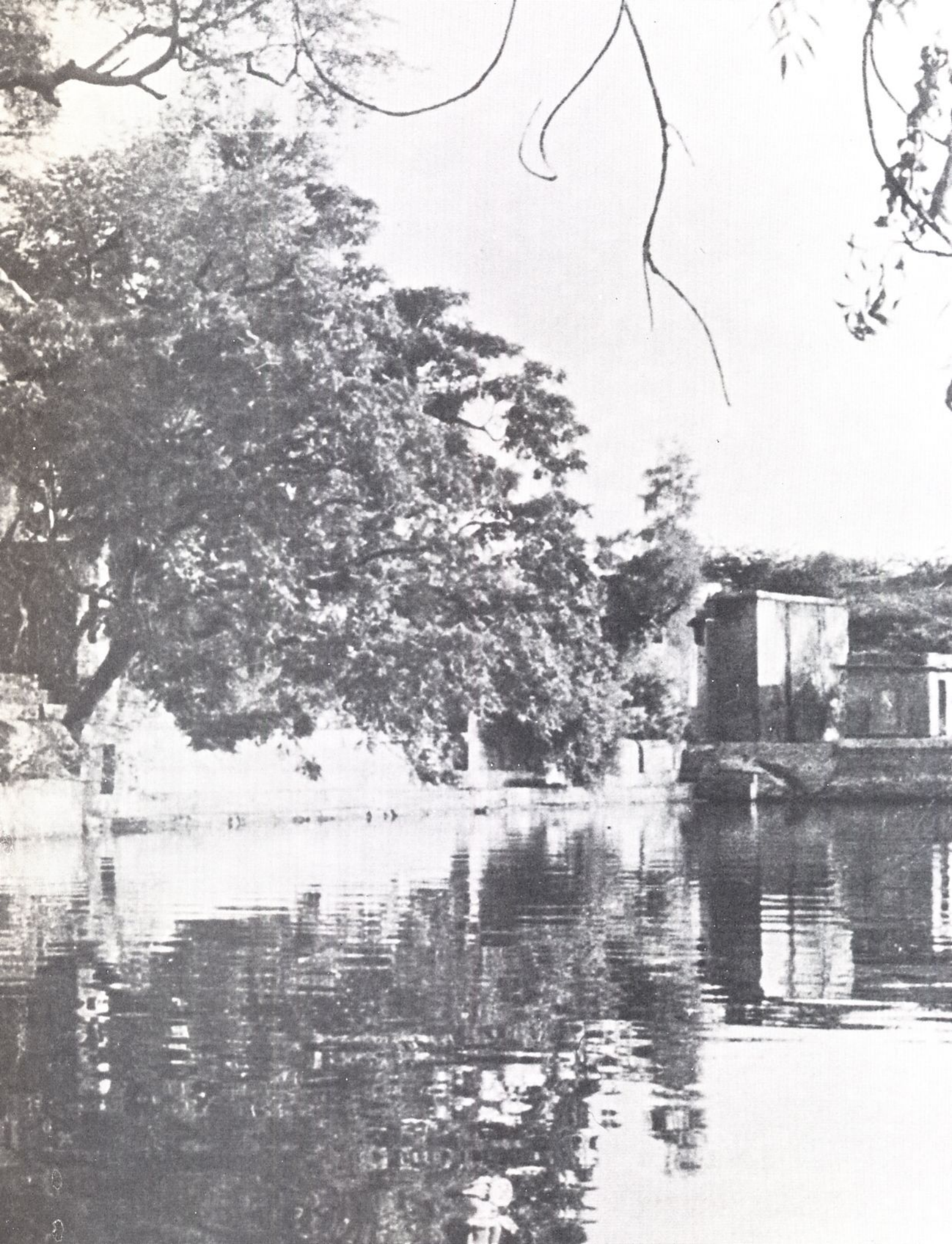
grace to perform the superhuman feat of lifting Govardhan on His little finger, to act as an umbrella for His friends and kinsmen. He thereby showed that simply to follow the Lord's advice is better than following all the scriptural injunctions, because He remains supreme over all the demigods, who are only His agents. And He will protect His devotees personally in all circumstances.

Of course, the scriptural injunctions are not without purpose. But they are meant to help one attain to love of the

Left: In a manner similar to Krishna and the cowherd boys, children still tend herds of cows in the fields and forests surrounding Govardhan Hill today. right: Black-faced monkeys such as are frequently to be seen along the Parikram path.

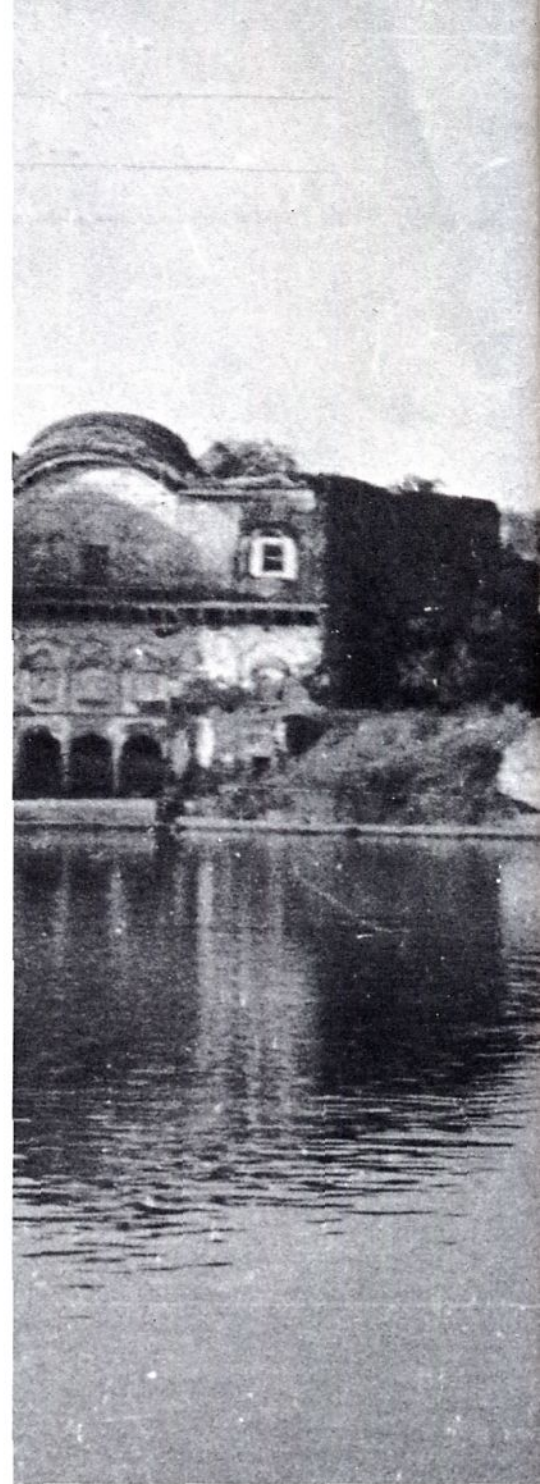
Next page: A view of Krishna Kunde (His bathing place).







Left: A small Gopal (Krishna as a cowherd boy) Murti (Diety) seated atop a mountain of rice representing Goverdhan Hill during a special Goverdhan holiday. right: Here Krishna once made the Ganges come up from the ground when He desired to take a bath. This pond is the result.



Supreme Lord, which is the be-all and the end-all of existence.

During the 14 days of torrential rain, all the residents of Vrindaban were protected by standing under the umbrella of the uplifted hill. By the end of that time Indra, realizing his mistake, came down to earth and bowed down before the Lotus Feet of Sri Krishna, his worshipable Lord.

Goverdhan also gives unlimitedly to Krishna. And when Krishna and His cowherd friends come to Goverdhan,



Goverdhan prepares many lush groves and clear silver streams for them. Soft grasses and gently-stirring breezes lure the Lord closer. And when Krishna comes, all Nature sighs in ecstasy, and with a quickened pulse-beat, all living things become a harmony of joy. All the creatures of the forest—even those most shy of animals, the deer and the small birds—come out to frolic with Krishna and the cowherd boys. There is no fear, but only unbounded love, in the presence of Krishna. Nature then abounds in a wealth of beauties, many-

colored butterflies fill the air, and the earth sprouts forth with love all its wealth of flowers.

Here Krishna and the cowherd boys play at many games. Finding in the woods many types of colored clay, they smear their arms and faces with it, and make designs on one another with much laughing and joking. Some follow the brooks after the frogs, imitating their way of jumping, and others chase through the fields after the shadows of the birds flying overhead, or stand imitating the way of the cranes. Looking into the clear

ponds, they make faces into the reflections. And a group of boys, finding a deep cave, shout insults into it to hear the cave's echoed reply. They discard their clothing and instead wear suits of leaves and flowers, and decorate themselves by wearing pretty flower garlands around their necks and in their hair. Then Krishna sits beneath a tree whose branches, laden with fruit, droop heavily, almost touching the ground. The cows and deer all flock around Him to lick His moonlike face, and the honey bees fly nearer, attracted by the unfolding



red petals of His ambrosial lips.

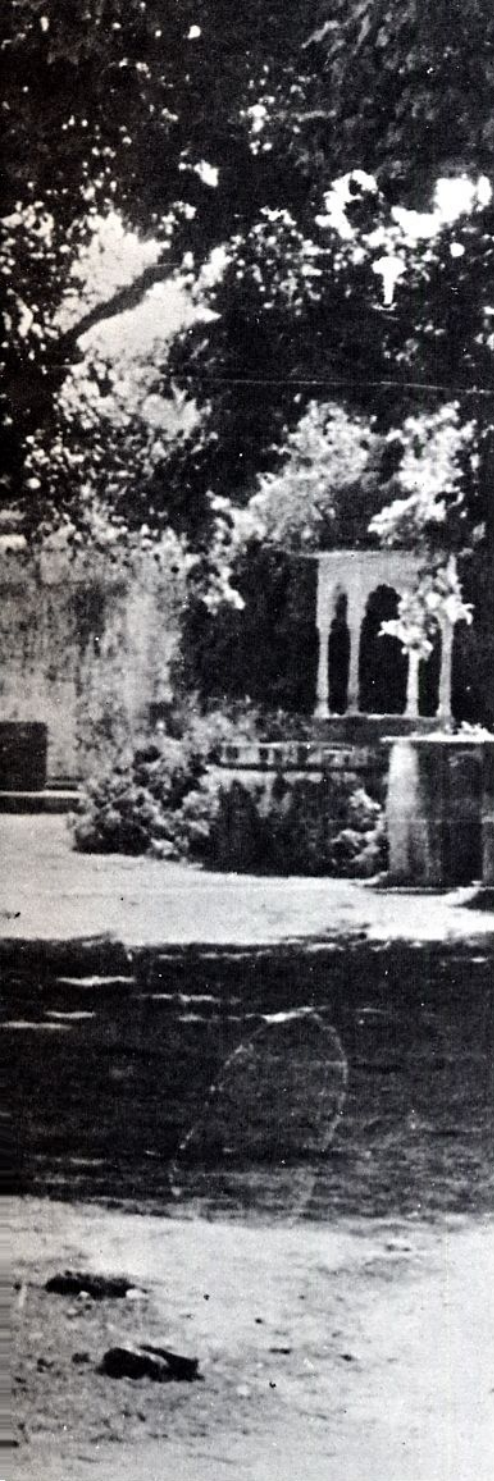
When Krishna and the boys walk together with the cows, returning home at the end of the day, sometimes Krishna plays His soul-enchancing flute. And, receiving the ocean of nectar that out-pours from its silvered strains, all the animals of the forest stand like stone, transfixed by the coursing of His music which, like a living vine, twists gently about the very heart of Creation. All natural laws are crumpled and melted by this sweetness, and the rocks begin to flow like liquid, and the brooks and

streams sit stilled by the music which penetrates to the very core of existence. Mother Earth heaves a sigh, relieved of her burdens, as the cowherd boys dance together with Krishna, frolicking all the way home. And this is the nature of the pastimes of the Supreme Lord.

Today, people erect tiny houses of bricks or stones all around Govardhan Hill. It is their prayer to be born in that most holy of places. And people press their faces into the holy dust of this land for miles around. And

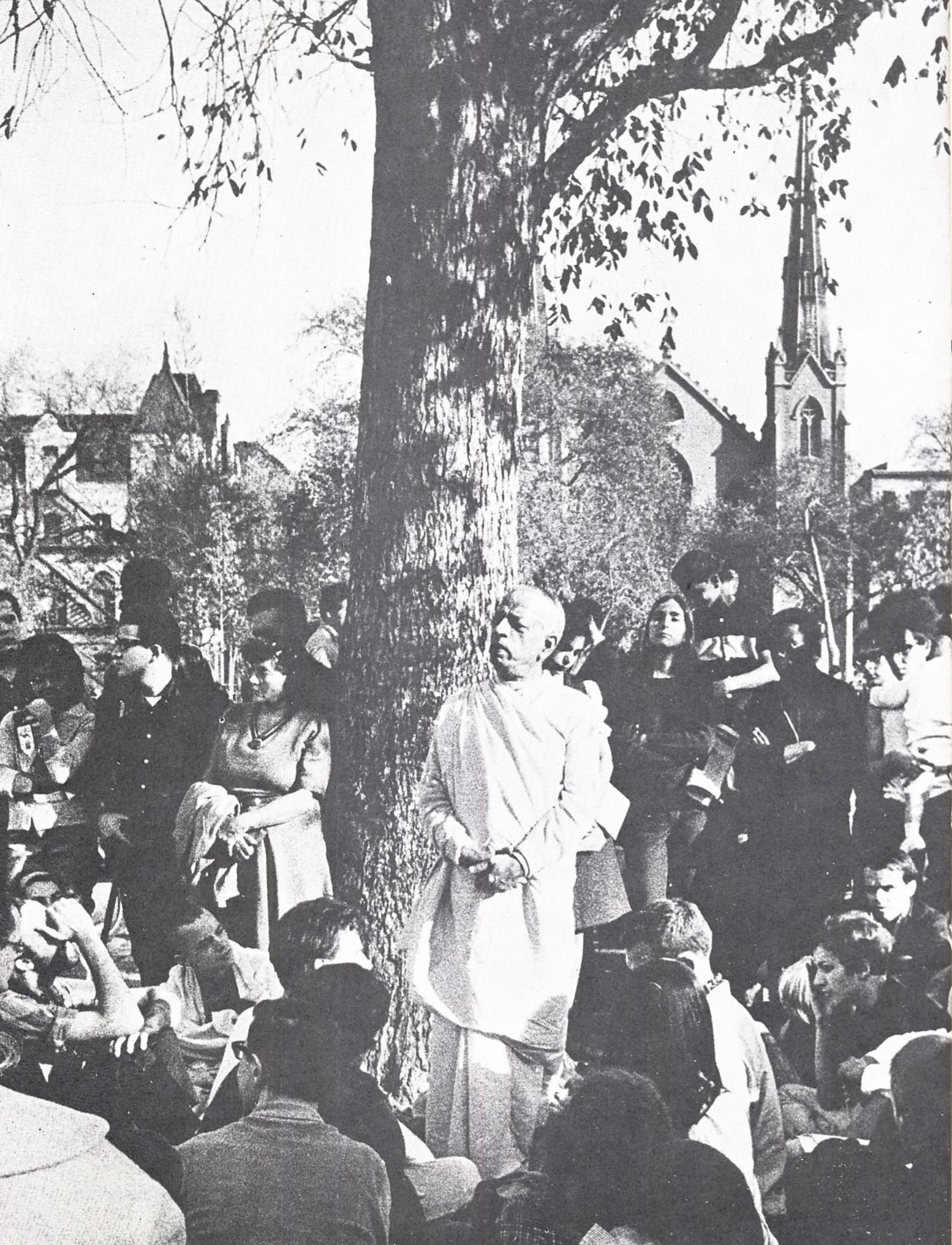
even this extreme form of worship is not for any personal benefit in terms of material remuneration, but is conducive only to Bhakti, or love for the Lord, which is to be understood as the greatest benediction on the living entity.

Why do devotees of Govardhan and Krishna ceaselessly offer their bowing obeisances? And why do they constantly sing the Names of the Lord with loving affection? It is because we have all become trapped in a world of temporal things, which is not our natural position; and the Lord in His blissful compassion



has enacted the pastimes of Govardhan to present us with the key to the shackles of birth and death and illusion. We are thus invited by Him to enter into that spiritual realm of bliss and happiness for which we were all created. Of course, it is not possible for anyone to imitate these pastimes of the Lord, but if we hear about them from the authorized source, the disciplic succession, then we can partake eternally of that full life which is to be had in the highest and most blissful of all realms, the Abode of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna. END

Left: A scene along the "Parikram"(circumambulation) path on Govardhan. right: Krishna's bathing place.



THE HARE KRISHNA EXPLOSION

The joyful history of a dynamic transcendental movement

by Hayagriva

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare vibrates from a walkup temple on New York's Lower East Side, from the sidewalks of Haight Ashbury, from Golden Gate Park, from a London flat, from student quarters in Hamburg and Amsterdam, from a storefront in Santa Fe, an ex-bowling alley in Montreal, a sprawling university campus in Ohio, from Old Vrindaban in India to New Vrindaban in the West Virginia mountains, and from Boston and Buffalo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Vancouver and across the Pacific to Hawaii.

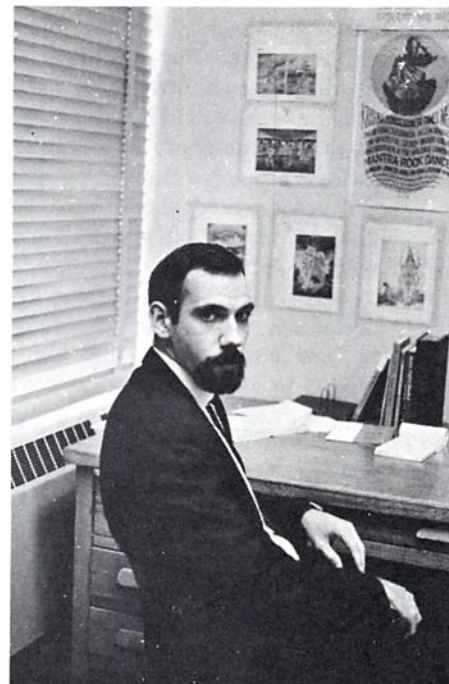
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. The voices chanting the magic vibrations are invariably young. The chanting, accompanied by khartals (small hand cymbals), tambourines and drums, is often loud and frenetic. The dancing is vigorous. The middle-aged and elderly usually stand in doorways or look through windows, watching in amazement, unaware that they are witnessing a process of spiritual realization that has been practiced on this planet for thousands of years. They do not understand. No one really understands. The chanting just spreads. Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna...

In a brief three years, the chanting of the Hare Krishna Mantra has exploded all over the Western world. Its chief propagator is a 73-year-old Indian monk,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who came as a nearly penniless stranger to America in 1965 to spread the transcendental message of The Bhagavad Gita. Whoever encounters Prabhupad, as he is called by his disciples, is immediately struck by his sincerity and magnetism.

I first met him in 1966 on a bright July morning in New York City. At the time I was living in a low-rent apartment on Mott Street near Houston, on the Lower East Side. That particular July morning I remember hurrying down Houston and across Bowery, past the numberless bums and drunks, on my way to see friends at Tompkins Square. It was after I had crossed Bowery (just before Second Avenue) that I saw Prabhupad strolling down Houston, head raised, seeming a million miles away. A 70-year-old man, he looked around 50 and ambled along like a man in his 30's. He was wearing the traditional saffron-colored robes of a sannyasi, monk in the renounced order, and quaint white shoes with points. Coming down the street, he looked like the genie that popped out of Aladdin's lamp. I was fresh from a trip to India, and Prabhupad reminded me of the many holy men I had recently seen walking the dirt roads of Hardwar and Rishikesh and bathing in the Ganges. But Houston Street wasn't the Ganges.

I had to stop him, so I asked the most



HAYAGRIVA - HOWARD WHEELER - IS AN INSTRUCTOR OF ENGLISH AT OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE NEW VRINDABAN COMMUNITY IN WEST VIRGINIA

Opposite page: A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad speaking at a Kirtan in Tompkins Square Park, October 1966. Courtesy EVO.

stupid, obvious question: "Are you from India?" and of course he stopped and beamed cordially, "Oh yes. And you?" I thought he mistook me for a Sikh because of my beard. I told him that I had just returned from India and that I was very interested in his country and Indian thought. He smiled happily and told me that he had been in New York almost ten months. Although an old man, his eyes flashed with the freshness of a child's, and I was immediately charmed.

He seemed to anticipate my questions and took a lively interest in my India trip. Then he told me, "I've a place around the corner. Perhaps you can see it and tell me if it's suitable. I plan to hold some classes." We walked around the corner of Second Avenue, and he pointed out a small storefront building between 1st and 2nd Streets next door to a filling station. It had been a curiosity shop, and someone had painted the words "Matchless Gifts" over the outside door. At the time I didn't realize how prophetic the words were.

"How is the area for having classes?" he asked me.

"I think it's all right," I said. I knew he wouldn't attract wealthy or influential New Yorkers downtown, but I thought the East Village hippies would be interested enough in Indian philosophy or whatever he was offering to give him some patronage. I really didn't know what he intended to do, but I told him that his storefront was suitable just to reassure him. I recalled how hospitable the Indians were to me, and I wanted somehow to return their hospitality. I told him I would drop in to his classes with some of my friends, and he told me to come any Monday, Wednesday or Friday night at 7. Then we parted, and I hurried off to see my friends.

I'll never forget the first night I went to see Prabhupad. Four of my friends were sufficiently interested to attend his "class." When we began chanting the Hare Krishna Mantra for the first time that July night, I was reminded of the services of the monks up in Hardwar. We played khartals and answered Prabhupad with the sixteen word chant: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Prabhupad led the chant, sitting on a dais clanging khartals rhythmically.

"It is not necessary to understand the words of the mantra," he told us.

"Just chant and listen."

He explained, however, that "Hare" was an address to the universal energy, "Rama" meant Enjoyer, and "Krishna" meant all-attractive and indicated the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Godhead. His lecture was our first introduction to what he called "Krishna Consciousness," that is, God consciousness. I think at the first meeting my friends were more impressed than I was, for I was afraid his approach was a little too esoteric to appeal to most Americans, but after the first two weeks I didn't care about his mass appeal. I became conscious that I could learn something. I remember asking him about using psychedelic drugs for self realization.

"You don't need to take anything for your spiritual life," he told me. "Your spiritual life is already here."

I knew he was right. He seemed naturally in a state of exalted consciousness, a state many try to trigger via psychedelics, and he promised he could teach me the same. "Krishna is Absolute," he told me. "Krishna and Krishna's Name are nondifferent. They are the same. You may not realize this at first, but the more you chant the clearer this will become. Now everyone is claiming God is dead or that I am God.' You just chant. Eventually you will have God dancing on your tongue."

I was willing to give it a try. When he talked about Krishna, he spoke with authority. He seemed the only person who actually knew beyond the shadow of all doubt what was really happening in the universe. He had the Vedas and Lord Krishna behind him, and he certainly made sense. My friends and I attended more meetings, and we found ourselves rising sleepily at 6 a.m. to attend morning classes too.

I hoped to get Prabhupad the support of many of the Lower East Side youth (whom the press was just beginning to call "hippies"), and knowing that poet Allen Ginsberg was in town, I sent him an invitation to one of our "Kirtans," as the ceremony of chanting and hearing a lecture is called. One evening he arrived in a Volkswagon bus accompanied by Peter Orlovsky. He brought a harmonium—a hand-pumped Indian reed organ—as a gift and joined in chanting. One night he even came with the Fugs, a popular rock group. The East Village Other gave Prabhupad a cover story and then The New York Times printed a story on the "new Lower East Side Swami,"

quoting Ginsberg that the mantra was instant "ecstasy." Prabhupad's classes were suddenly being transformed into a movement. During the night meetings the small storefront was packed. Kirtans were getting livelier. The music was sounding better and better, and people were loosening up and even dancing. The chanting, khartals, drums and harmonium were so loud that the inevitable complaints from neighbors started coming in. Curious New Yorkers crowded about the storefront window. Some laughed. Some cursed. One even threw a rock through the window, and the neighbors upstairs poured boiling water through the floor. We were in ecstasy.

Prabhupad had prodigious energy. He was up every morning before any of us. He pounded the drum, exhausted everyone at Kirtan, chanted hymns, danced, delivered lectures, translated books, cooked and supervised all affairs. And he was triple the age of any one of us. To help spread the movement, Ginsberg suggested chanting in Tompkins Square Park where the hippies were starting to congregate. For four consecutive Sunday afternoons we held Kirtan in the center of the park. Prabhupad kept the rhythm of the Hare Krishna Mantra by pounding a small bongo drum somebody had given him. One Sunday he played the drum two hours incessantly, and his disciples practically fell out.

The crowd accepted us at first with mild enthusiasm, but they gradually warmed up, and finally the Kirtans expanded into three-hour marathons. Many of the youth would join in and dance. Some of the old Ukrainian and Polish residents would stare uncomprehendingly, then walk away, shaking their heads and grumbling. Many people stood for hours on the hard concrete to join in the chanting. Poet Ginsberg joined every Sunday. I recall one Sunday when a New York Times reporter asked me to bring Ginsberg over to talk to him. Ginsberg was absorbed in the chanting, but I asked him anyway. It was the only time I ever saw him annoyed. "He shouldn't interrupt a man worshipping," he said. "Tell him that." And he went right on chanting.

There were fifteen initiated disciples by that time, and our fervor was fresh. I remember writing up handbills and passing them out at Tompkins Square during our Kirtans. They were glaring, evangelical, ambitious:

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Expand your consciousness by practicing the

TRANSCENDENTAL SOUND VIBRATION

HARE KRISHNA * HARE KRISHNA * KRISHNA KRISHNA * HARE HARE

HARE RAMA * HARE RAMA * RAMA RAMA * HARE HARE

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TURN ON

through music, dance, philosophy, science, religion and prasadam (spiritual food.)

TUNE IN

AWAKEN YOUR TRANSCENDENTAL NATURE!

REJOICE IN THE OCEAN OF BLISS!

The process of Sankirtan (chanting of Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, krishna Krishna, Hare Hare; Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) brings about transcendental ecstasy.

DROP OUT

of movements employing artificially induced states of self-realization and expanded consciousness. Such methods only lead to spiritual laziness and chaos. End all bringdowns, flip out and stay for eternity. Bhaktiyoga has been practiced for many centuries and is authorized by India's great acharyas. Swami Bhaktivedanta is in the bonafide line of Krishna's disciplic succession. He has especially come to this country to spiritually guide young Americans.

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YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO COME AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS

5000 hippies, teenieboppers and Hell's Angels stood reverently when Prabhupad entered

I don't know what the Polish housewives thought about staying high forever, but most of the young renegades from middle-class suburbia liked the idea. I remember literally throwing those handbills to thousands in '66 at the November 5th Peace Parade from Tompkins and Washington Squares to Times Square. That was a marvelous parade. Some 30,000 joined the three-hour jaunt for world peace that brisk autumn morning. Poet Ginsberg, wearing white Gandhi pajamas and a stars and stripes top hat and playing a portable harmonium led the Hare Krishna Mantra. Hundreds in the parade took up the chant. Some were so electrified that they continued chanting on into the night, the world peace issue seeming insignificant in the light of the "Maha Mantra," the Great Hymn. Prabhupad's injunction came to mind: "Take up Krishna Consciousness and peace in the world will automatically come."

In January '67 we descended on Frisco and opened up the Radha Krishna Temple on Frederick Street, smack in the middle of the Haight Ashbury scene. During the spring and early summer of '67, Haight culture was at its peak. We were flying high with the mantra, and thousands opened up to us. We splashed in the Haight pond with a mammoth mantra-rock dance at the Avalon Ballroom. Prabhupad and Ginsberg danced on stage with upraised hands. Multi-colored lights swirled across huge wall slides of Krishna and Rama. The Grateful Dead, Moby Grape and Big Brother blared away. Even Tim Leary garlanded one of us and salaamed, "A beautiful night, a beautiful night."

Five thousand hippies, teenieboppers and Hell's Angels stood reverently when Prabhupad entered and listened attentively while he talked. After the chant, someone in the crowd asked him about death. "Oh, death is not such a wonder," I remember Prabhupad replying. "Death is there, of course. But it is life that's the constant wonder. And this is life."

Later, at the Frederick Street center,

Prabhupad told his audience that the real life for which man is intended is "to praise his Creator through song, through dance, through study of scripture, through meditation, through renounced action." Many of the young found some of the disciplines hard at first, but they were encouraged by Krishna's injunction in the Gita: "That happiness which is like poison in the beginning and nectar at the end is of the nature of goodness."

And many tasted nectar at the beginning. Every Sunday we chanted in Golden Gate Park and hundreds joined, holding hands and dancing in a ring. At any time of the day I could walk down Haight Street playing khartals (the small hand cymbals) and chanting and pick up at least a dozen enthusiasts. People were also attracted by our free Prasadam (food) program—we would feed dozens daily. The Radha Krishna Temple quickly became a dynamic influence in Haight Ashbury life.

Shortly after the Frisco center opened, the movement really began to explode. People were chanting the mantra at all sorts of gatherings: sit-ins, demonstrations, be-ins. Prabhupad was whizzing via jet from the West Coast to the New York center. Then some of his disciples began opening centers in other areas: Montreal, Boston, Santa Fe, Los Angeles, Buffalo, Seattle, Columbus, Vancouver, Hawaii and in Europe—London and Hamburg.

At Prabhupad's advice, we purchased some 135 acres of land in the mountains near Wheeling, West Virginia and are now developing a transcendental community named New Vrindaban, modeled after Vrindaban in India, where Lord Krishna sported as a Youth. Last winter The Macmillan Company published Prabhupad's translation of The Bhagavad Gita As It Is. Throughout last year Prabhupad delivered lectures on Krishna Consciousness at Harvard, MIT, the University of California and innumerable other colleges and universities.

At this point many who have never

heard of Krishna, Rama, The Bhagavad Gita or A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who always equated swamis with crystal-ball gazers, might ask how so many Americans—especially young Americans—are being swept up in a movement whose basic philosophy is spiritualistic.

The answer is simple, though many may not find it credible. There is an old Hindu proverb which says, "By the grace of Krishna one gets Guru, and by the grace of Guru, one gets Krishna." Krishna, by definition, is all-attractive. As the Supreme, Krishna is the repository of all beauty, all wealth, all fame, all power, all knowledge and all renunciation. Prabhupad has the power to deliver Krishna to his students. This is a spiritual power given by Krishna. When his students dance and chant Hare Krishna, they are actually participating in bliss. They are actually experiencing Krishna Consciousness. There are many swamis who come to America with a familiar storehouse of Oriental claptrap. They woo rich women and take money as favors, or charge for "initiation." Swami Bhaktivedanta simply delivers the goods.

"How do you know he's not a phoney like all the others?" one girl at Ohio State asked me.

"How do you know an electric wire's live?" I asked her.

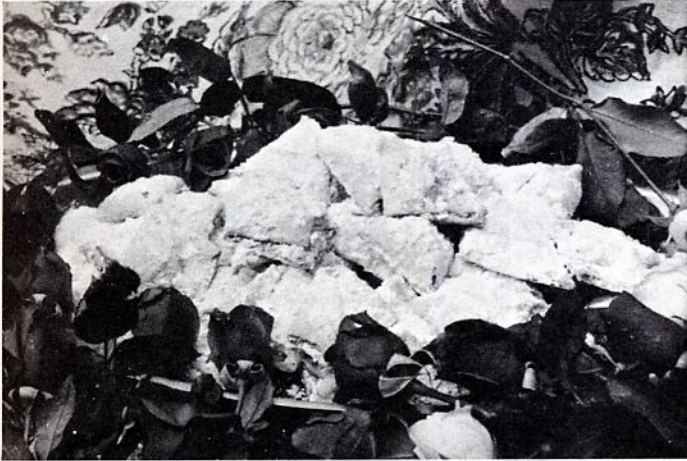
"I don't know," she said. "I'm not an electrician."

"You don't have to be. Just touch it and you can feel the current. The real Guru is a transparent medium. You just meet him and you'll feel the current going through you. That's because he's plugged in to the real Powerhouse."

The girl simply looked at me skeptically, but later I saw her chanting with closed eyes. She was already feeling the current.

"Just vibrate Hare Krishna once," Prabhupad has often said, "and your spiritual life has begun. There is no expense. And if there is some gain, why not try it?"

Who would want to doubt him? END



Bhava Sakti

Krishna is eternally situated on the transcendental plane, and all items associated with Him are fixed in that desirable location. In that spiritual atmosphere, no entities exist for the slightest moment without their consciousness merged in thinking of how they can please the senses of Krishna, and for this purpose they have mastered the art of preparing nice foodstuffs, which they always offer to the Lord with love. By Krishna's mercy we on the transitory plane can also learn this great art and enter into the spiritual activities of direct devotional service to God. The spiritual master is expert in preparing these foodstuffs, and is always offering instructions to us with love. So, following his example, we are offering to everyone some suggestions for preparing foodstuffs for the Lord, to be offered, we hope, with love.

Food for Krishna

Bhava Sakti

1/2 lb. cream cheese 2 cups flour
1/2 lb. butter crushed fruit

Let cream cheese and butter soften in large bowl, mix together when soft. Add 2 cups flour, mix and make into dough. Separate dough into 4 parts and chill. Roll each part out on floured board and cut into small triangles. Fill each triangle with small amount of crushed fresh fruit such as pineapple, strawberries, cherries, mango, figs, or raisins. Fold two of the sides together over the fruit to form a little cup. Bake 10 minutes at 400 degrees or until light golden in color. Sprinkle with confectioners sugar. Makes about 3 doz.

Lime Puffies

4 cups puffed rice 2 tbsp. fresh squeezed lime juice
1/4 cup butter salt to taste
3 tbsp. sugar

In a large frying pan over a medium high flame fry puffed rice, stirring constantly, until gently golden brown. Set aside. In a smaller pan melt butter. When butter bubbles stir in sugar and lime juice. Cook gently for one minute. Allow butter to cool for about ten minutes then mix well with puffed rice and salt to taste. Serves 4-5.

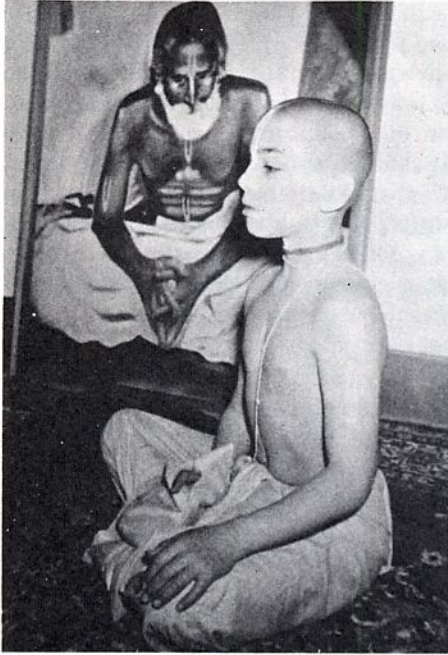
Dahi

3 cups yogurt 1 cup sugar
2 cups cold water 2 cups fresh fruit juice

Squeeze pineapples, tomatoes, oranges, lemons, papayas, watermelons in any combination to make two cups of juice. Then thoroughly mix all of the ingredients together. Serve cold. Makes about 7 cups.

By Uddhava

by *Birbhadra*



Birbhadra is an 11-year-old devotee shown here before a painting of one of the great saints in the disciplic succession, Gour Kishore Das Babaji Maharaj.

Long, long ago there once lived a brahmin devotee of Lord Krishna. One day a mercantile man came to the brahmin's house and said, "My dear brahmin, will you marry my daughter? She is very pretty and so nice. Please marry her."

The holy brahmin said, "I cannot marry her on my own free will. I can only marry her at Krishna's will. If Lord Jagannath will come to witness this marriage, the big Lord Jagannath which is six feet tall, I will marry your daughter." Of course, the huge Jagannath Deity installed in the temple was never seen to move at all, except by pure devotees who can see transcendently.

So, the mercantile man went happily home and told his son all that happened: "O my sons, I have good news! A holy brahmin has said he will marry my daughter. Isn't that nice?"

The sons said, "Oh, father—what have you done? This brahmin has no money! What have you done? You cannot allow this marriage to take place."

"But I have promised," said the mercantile man. "I cannot go back on my word."

"We have a plan," said the sons. "Just do as we say and all will be well. Go out through the village and tell everyone you meet that the brahmin is crazy and that you never said he could marry your daughter. They will all believe you over him, and he will become the laughingstock of the village."

And so it happened. When next the brahmin walked down the village road all the people laughed at him. He asked them why they were laughing, and they said, "Oh, you're the one who thinks you are going to marry the rich man's daughter! You are so crazy!" And immediately they would fall into fits of

laughter, because everybody knows that no rich man would marry his daughter to such a poor fellow.

When the day came for him to marry the mercantile man's daughter, the brahmin went to Lord Jagannath and said, "O Lord Jagannath! If You want me to marry the mercantile man's daughter, please witness this marriage."

Lord Jagannath replied, "I want you to be married to her, so I will witness this marriage. Go to the gate now—but you must not look back."

As the brahmin walked to the gate he heard the beautiful sound of Sri Krishna's ankle bells and he knew that the Lord was walking behind him; but he would not turn around. Finally at the gate he could resist the sound of the bells no longer; it was too beautiful. He looked back and immediately Lord Krishna turned back into His wooden incarnation, Lord Jagannath!

At once all the village heard the news and came to see Lord Jagannath standing before the gate. They all knew that the brahmin could not have picked up Lord Jagannath and moved Him out of the temple, for He was too heavy. Those that had laughed before laughed no longer. They knew now that this was not just a poor man, but a very holy brahmin, and that the Lord had bestowed great mercy upon him.

The wedding took place that very afternoon with great feasting and rejoicing in the Holy Name of Hari. Through the association of such a holy brahmin the rich man's daughter also became a great devotee of the Lord, and together the holy brahmin and the rich man's daughter are eternally chanting the Holy Names of God: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

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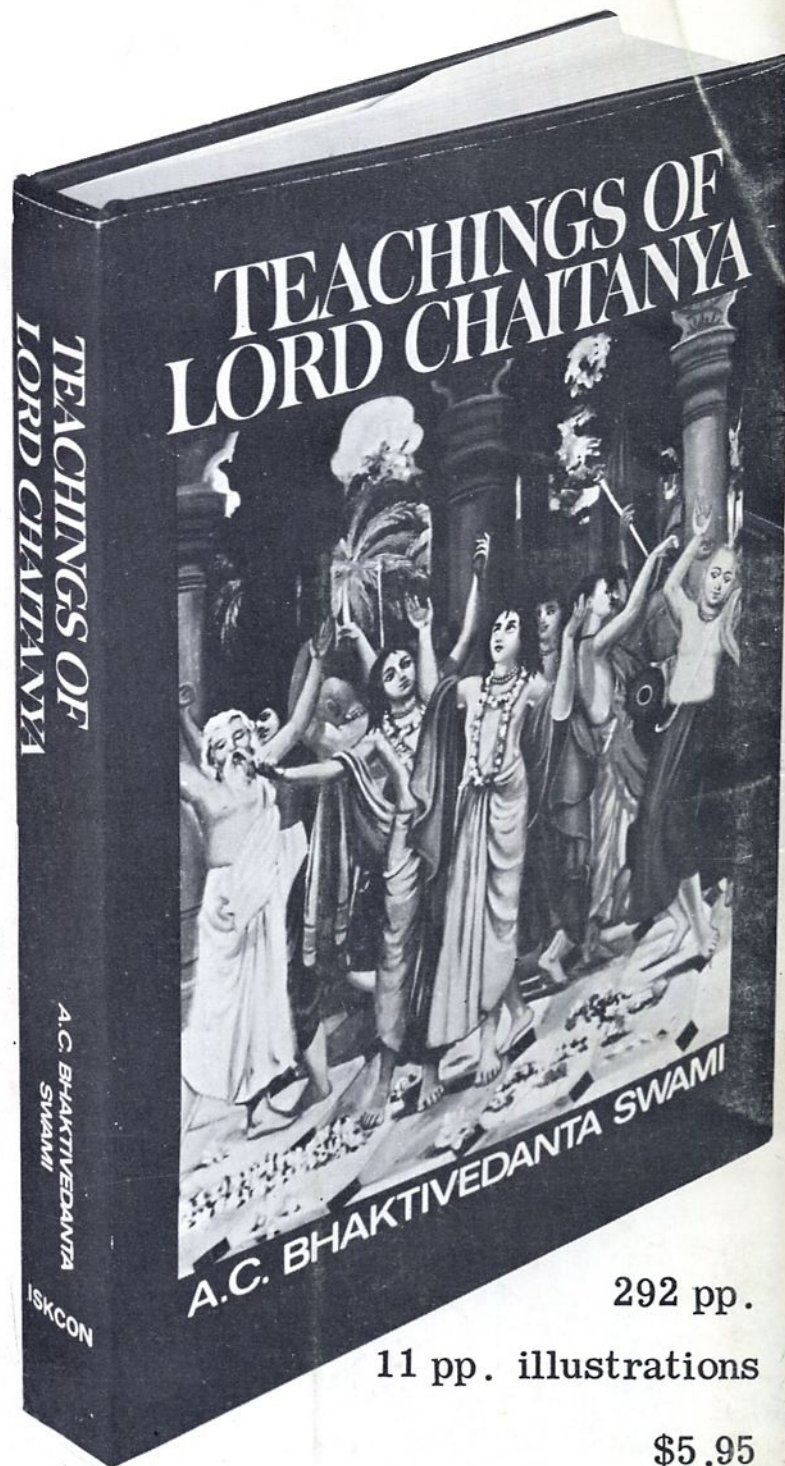
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