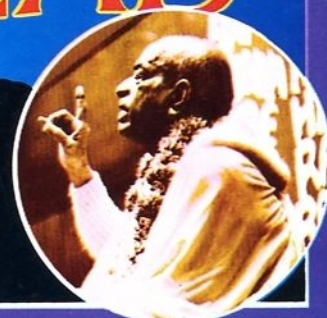


GODHEAD IS LIGHT. NESCIENCE IS DARKNESS. WHERE THERE IS GODHEAD THERE IS NO NESCIENCE.



BACK TO GODHEAD



THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

No. 44



*Krsna's Divine Anger
and His Devotee's Pure Love* p.22



His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

HARE KṚṢṆA
HARE KṚṢṆA
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA
HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA
HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA
HARE HARE

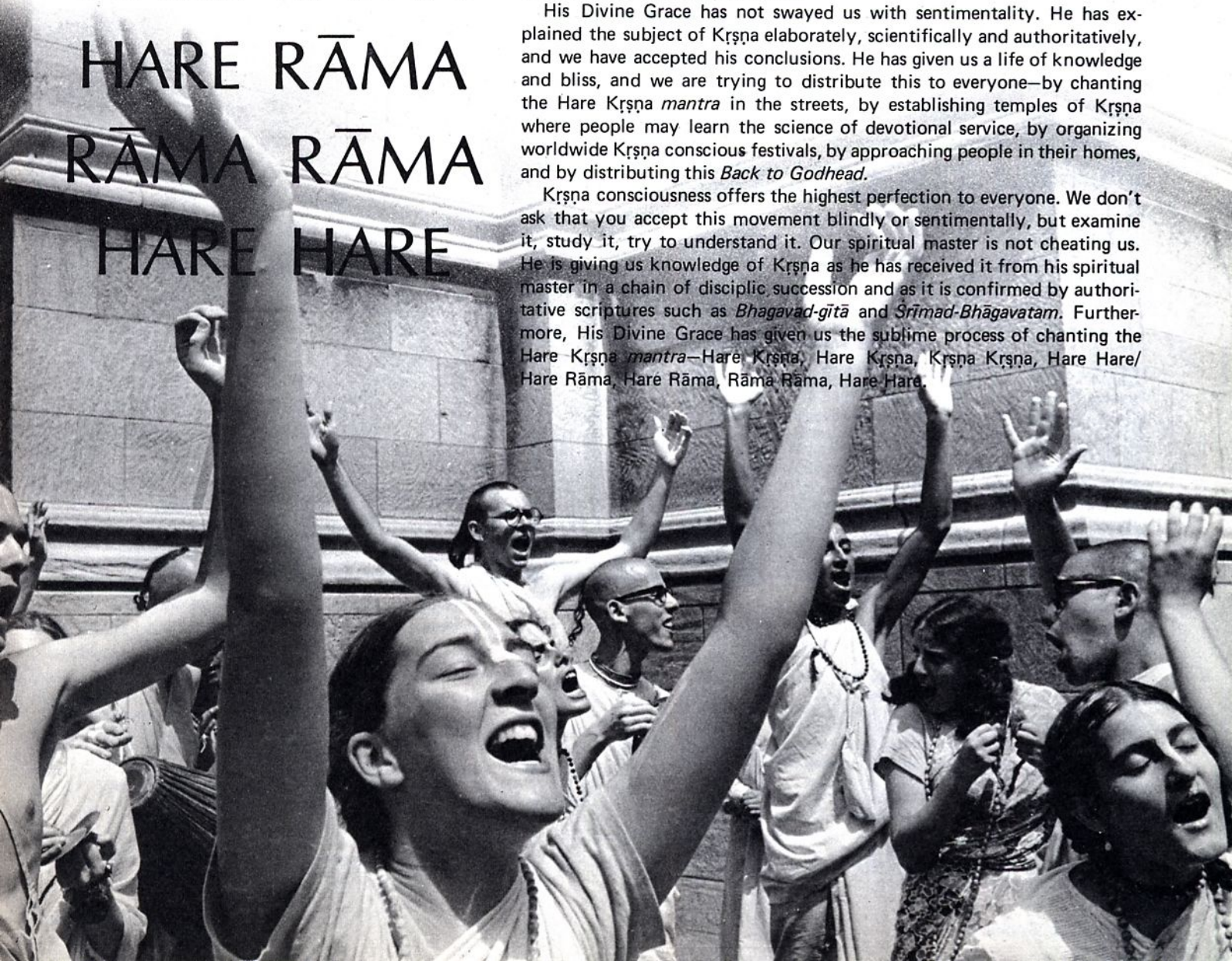
Back to Godhead is the monthly journal of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. It was founded in 1944 by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda is a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore there is no other topic in *Back to Godhead* except Kṛṣṇa. In other words, *Back to Godhead* deals with the essential aim of human life.

There are many magazines throughout the world devoted to the relative truths of politics, economics, sociology, psychology, religion, current affairs, etc., but *Back to Godhead* focuses upon the Absolute Truth, or the source of everything. "Where does everything come from? Who am I? What is the purpose of life?" These questions must arise in the mind of every intelligent human being. The purpose of *Back to Godhead* is to train the mind of the reader to find the ultimate answers to these questions.

The best way to get an answer to a question is to ask someone who knows. For answers to spiritual questions, one should approach a spiritual master. We devotees of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement have accepted His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda as our spiritual master because he is able to answer all of our questions perfectly. Śrīla Prabhupāda has convinced us that we are not merely our bodies but eternal spiritual living beings. He has convinced us that the Absolute Truth is Kṛṣṇa and that He is personal, not impersonal. And he has convinced us that the highest occupation for every living being is to engage in pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa in unalloyed love.

His Divine Grace has not swayed us with sentimentality. He has explained the subject of Kṛṣṇa elaborately, scientifically and authoritatively, and we have accepted his conclusions. He has given us a life of knowledge and bliss, and we are trying to distribute this to everyone—by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* in the streets, by establishing temples of Kṛṣṇa where people may learn the science of devotional service, by organizing worldwide Kṛṣṇa conscious festivals, by approaching people in their homes, and by distributing this *Back to Godhead*.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness offers the highest perfection to everyone. We don't ask that you accept this movement blindly or sentimentally, but examine it, study it, try to understand it. Our spiritual master is not cheating us. He is giving us knowledge of Kṛṣṇa as he has received it from his spiritual master in a chain of disciplic succession and as it is confirmed by authoritative scriptures such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Furthermore, His Divine Grace has given us the sublime process of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.



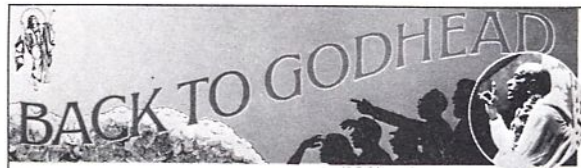
(continued from page 1)

This chanting is the method prescribed by authorities as the best means for self-realization in this age. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, there are no previous qualifications necessary for chanting, nor is there any need to understand the language of the chant. These holy names of the Lord come directly from the spiritual platform, and therefore by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we become blissful and happy because it cleanses our consciousness of all material dust and contamination and revives our relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Kṛṣṇa and *Rāma* are names of the Lord, and they mean the Supreme Pleasure Eternal. *Hare* is the energy of the Lord, who helps us to attain the grace of Kṛṣṇa. There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and His name, and therefore the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is as pure, perfect and liberated as Kṛṣṇa Himself. The chanting cannot be understood by mental speculation or logic, but simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one can understand Kṛṣṇa very easily. Therefore by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one can achieve the perfection of all spiritual knowledge.

Please examine the articles in this magazine carefully, and try to understand the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you cannot understand the philosophy, then simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and you can achieve the same result. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is very simple—it is simply chanting, dancing, feasting and philosophy. It is the essence of all spiritual culture. Therefore in this age of quarrel and disagreement it offers a universal platform of peace and happiness for all the people of the world.

Our spiritual master has given us this most valuable gift—Kṛṣṇa consciousness—and in the pages of this magazine we are trying to give this gift to you. We humbly beg you to please accept it.



Founder (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION Of Sanskrit Words

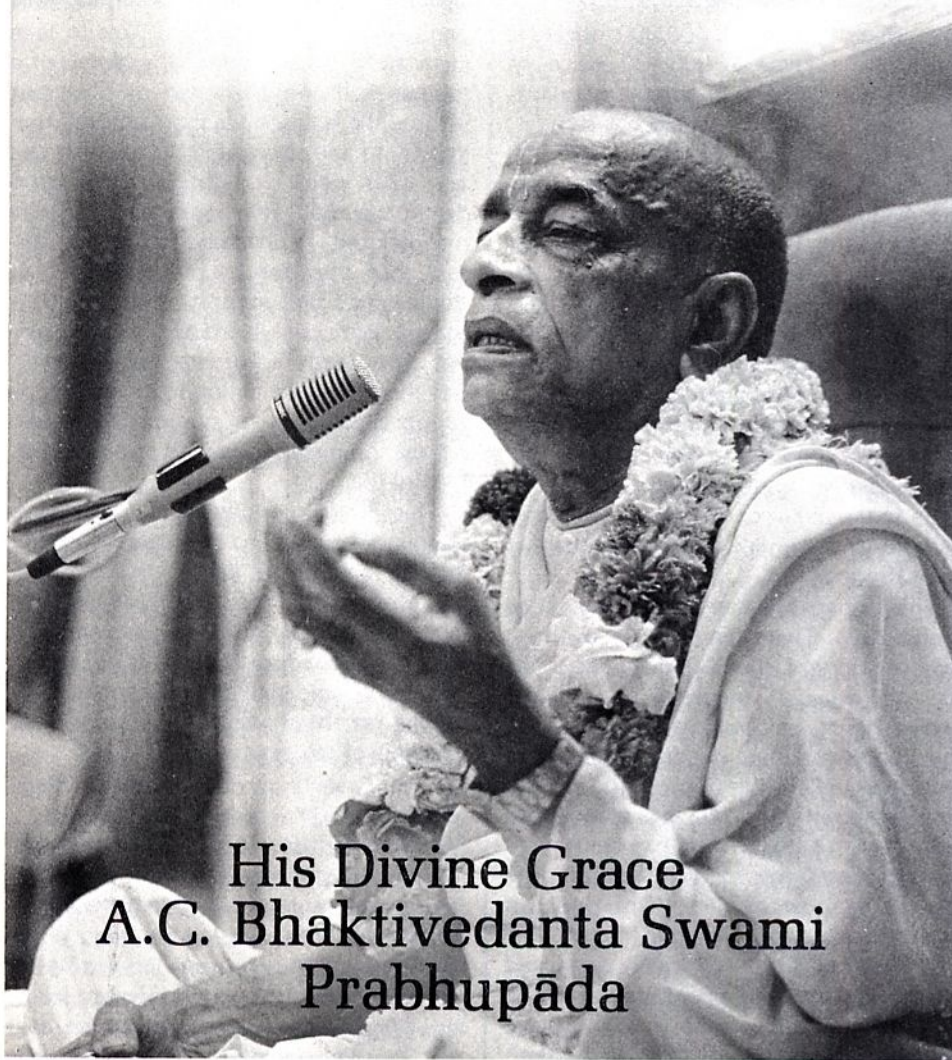
Sanskrit words and names in *Back to Godhead* are spelled according to a system accepted by scholars throughout the world which indicates the exact pronunciation of each word. Vowels in Sanskrit are pronounced almost as in Italian. The sound of the short *a* is like the *u* in *but*, the long *ā* is like the *a* in *far* and held twice as long as the short *a*, and *e* is like the *a* in *evade*. Long *ī* is like the *i* in *pique*. The vowel *r* is pronounced like the *re* in the English word *fibre*. The *c* is pronounced as in the English word *chair*, and the aspirated consonants (*ch*, *jh*, *dh*, etc.) are pronounced as in *staunch-heart*, *hedge-hog*, *red-hot*, etc. The two spirants *ś* and *ṣ* are pronounced like the English *sh*; *s* is pronounced as in *sun*. Thus Kṛṣṇa is pronounced *KRISHNA*, Caitanya is pronounced *CHAITANYA*, etc.

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It Is For The Greatest Scholar, It Is For The Innocent Boy...

A recent press interview
with Śrīla Prabhupāda at
ISKCON Headquarters
in Los Angeles.



perfect in fame and perfect in strength; in this way He is all-attractive. So, we must know our relationship with God. That is the first issue of this book, *Bhagavad-gītā*. After understanding what our relationship with God is, we can work accordingly. For example, when you are a citizen of America you have a particular relationship with the state, and you are expected to work according to that relationship; then you are a good, law-abiding citizen, and the state gives you all prosperity and protection. Similarly, if we know our relationship with God, whom we call Kṛṣṇa, then we can act accordingly.

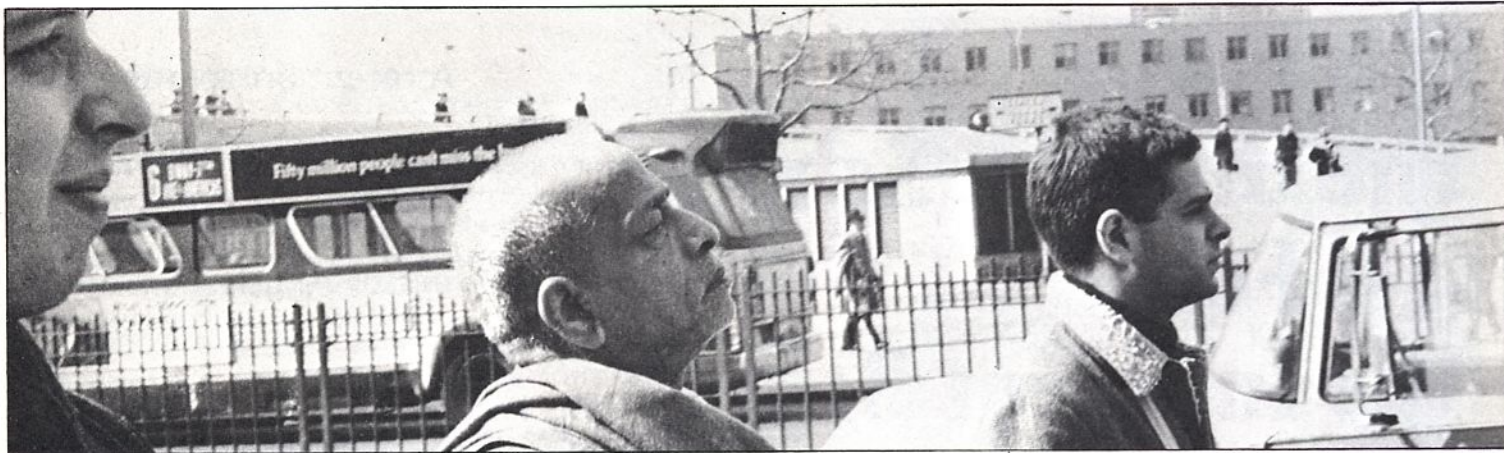
At the present moment, some of us are disclaiming God, saying that there is no God. Some people have little understanding of God; they know that God is great, but they do not try to understand their actual relationship with Him. They are not very serious. Actually, in this way, people are avoiding their eternal relationship with God and therefore not acting properly, and that is the cause of all miseries and all problems. For example, if you do not know the state laws, then you do not act properly; you are always a criminal. If you do not know how to drive on the right, and you drive on the left, even though you may think, "It is all driving, what difference does it make, right or left?" as soon as you drive left, you become a criminal. Similarly, because we do not know our relationship with God, we act wrongly, and therefore, under the laws of God, we become more and more criminal; and thus our problems are increasing. In spite of advancement of education, science and the accessories of civilization, such as nice dresses and cars, no one trusts anyone. Do you see? Everywhere you go, even at a gentleman's house, there is always suspicion: "Beware of the Dog." "No trespassing Allowed." An individual is suspicious of another individual, a nation is suspicious of another nation, a community is suspi-

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupāda

Q. Your Grace, what is the basis of your teaching?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The basis of this teaching is *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*; I have already published my book, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. This book is not new; it is very old, at least 5,000 years old, and it is very widely read all over the world. In your country, I have seen that there are more than twenty-five different English editions of *Bhagavad-gītā*. And similarly, it is very well known in Germany, England and Japan—everywhere.

This book teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness because the speaker is Lord Kṛṣṇa and the subject matter is our relationship with God. Kṛṣṇa means "all-attractive," and it is the perfect name of God. Unless the Supreme Person is all-attractive, He cannot be God. God cannot be the Hindus' God, or the Christians' God, or the Jews' or Mohammedans' God. No! God is for everyone, and He is all-attractive. He is fully opulent, full or perfect in knowledge, perfect in beauty, perfect in renunciation,



cious of another community; so how can we have peace and prosperity? Suspicion is animalistic; a dog is suspicious of another dog. As soon as he finds another dog, he immediately begins to bark: bow wow wow. Is that human civilization? What is the mistake of human civilization? The mistake of our present society is that people have forgotten their relationship with God. Here is a scientific statement of your relationship with God. By understanding it, just like by understanding your citizenship, you can act properly, and that is peaceful life.

Besides that, this life, the present life, is not all. We have life after death—that is a fact. We are continuously alive throughout the stages of the present life. Every one of us was a child, and that was a life. Then we became boys, then youths, and now we are becoming old. And, generally, when this body becomes useless, we have to take another one. This is the law of nature. Unfortunately, people do not believe in the next life, although in everyday affairs they experience that they are eternal. Anyone can remember the days of his childhood, the days of his youth, his boyhood, and still he is alive. That means that he is continuously present although his body has changed in different ways. So it is a fact that even after changing this body, you'll have another body. You are sitting in this room now, but if you vacate this room, that does not mean that you are dead—you have gone into some other room. This understanding of birth and death is a great science, and yet people are neglecting it because they have no information about it. There are so many departments in a university: technological, medical, engineering, etc. But where is the department to know and understand what this life is, what God is, and what our relationship is? So, this is not a very good civilization.

There is life after this life. There are also different grades of life. Authoritative books

state that there are 8,400,000 different grades of life. There are 900,000 species of aquatic life, 2,000,000 species of plants and trees, 1,100,000 species of reptiles, 1,000,000 species of bird life, 3,000,000 species of beasts and 400,000 human species. And out of 400,000 different kinds of human bodies, the civilized body is a great boon. Upon attaining such a body we can make further spiritual progress by transferring to other planets where the standard of living is many, many thousands of times better than on this planet. But in *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, there is information that wherever you go within this material universe, whether you remain on this planet or go to the moon or the sun or any of the millions and trillions of planets, there is still suffering.

The highest planetary system is called Brahmaloaka. There the duration of life is very, very long. 4,300,000 solar years is one age, one *yuga*. A thousand *yugas* equal twelve hours on Brahmaloaka. Similarly, the inhabitants there live for one hundred such years. The duration of life is very, very great, just as our life is in comparison with the ant's life. The human being has a hundred years' age, so, to the ant, his life may be very astonishing. "Oh! How can one live such a great length of time?" But still, the four factors of birth, death, old age and disease are everywhere, no matter how elevated the planet is. We may be astonished by hearing of the long duration of life on Brahmaloaka, but actually death is still there. So, from *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand the version of Kṛṣṇa, or God, that even if you go to the highest planetary system, you have to come back again. In this way, all living entities are rotating from one planet to another and from one species of life to another.

But we don't want this, actually. If I offered to give you a youthful, eternal body, full of knowledge, would you not like to have it? No one likes old age, no

one likes death, and no one likes to take birth again, to enter into the womb of a mother and live there ten months; but what is the solution? Is there any solution known to the scientists? No scientist can say, "Ah well, all right, we shall stop death; we shall stop disease." They can manufacture medicine to counteract disease, but they cannot manufacture anything which will stop it. You can fight against death very vigorously, but you cannot stop death. There are the problems, but there is no education in modern civilization about how to stop death, disease, old age and birth and how to attain eternal, blissful life.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, although it appears to be a new movement in your country, is known to the world. I've already published my magazines and my books dealing with these problems, and if people take advantage of this movement and try to understand these books, they will be benefited greatly. That is the basic principle of my teaching.

Q. Your Grace, how does one attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There are several stages in attainment of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The first stage is faith, or inquisitiveness—just as you have come to me now, this is the first stage. Due to some inquisitiveness or some faith in the people who are teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who have said that it is very helpful, one comes to the first stage. One should be inquisitive and have a little faith, or a little respect for Kṛṣṇa consciousness: "It is very nice. They are speaking and working." This is the first stage.

If you find that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is interesting, then the second stage is to associate with us, to understand more. We have class in the morning daily, but for the public, we are holding classes in the evening from 7 to 9 p.m. at our temple, discussing this book, holding *kīrtana*, dis-



tributing *prasādam*. There is no labor—you simply come and hear songs, dance, take offered food, hear philosophy and think, and then you go home. We don't ask anyone to press his nose, to hold his head down or to exercise in a certain way. It is better that people automatically want to dance with us. Although dancing is labor, they like it. So, the next stage is to associate with us, to understand more and more. This is the second stage. The first stage is to have faith and respect, and the second stage is association.

If by association, one becomes serious about becoming a regular student, that is the third stage. That is called initiation. In that stage students are guided by me; they follow strictly. For the initiated students there are four principles: we don't allow students to take any foodstuffs which are not offered to the Deity. So we offer foodstuffs to the Deity: grains, fruits, flowers and milk products, but no meat, no eggs, or anything of that sort. Perhaps you have participated in our love feast on Sundays. Yes?

Comment From Audience: It was excellent! Śrīla Prabhupāda: [Laughing] They like it! There are many hundreds of preparations, at least 300, including many varieties of grains, milk products and fruits. We don't kill animals, but we make very nice preparations, and everyone likes them. It is one of the restrictions that we cannot eat anything which is not offered to Kṛṣṇa. Another restriction is no intoxication: no smoking, no drinking, even no tea or coffee. These American boys are accustomed to all these habits by nature, but they are giving them up. In our temple there is no tea drinking, no coffee, no cigarette smoking, nothing of the sort. This is a restriction. And another restriction is that we cannot take part in gambling or some unnecessary sport because we have to utilize our time. Our time is very short. Do not think that because I am old, I am

nearing death, and you are not nearing death because you are young—who knows? You may die before me. There is no certainty, and so the principle is that, because this human form of life is so important for perfecting one's self in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one should not waste even a minute. Therefore, we don't allow unnecessary sporting, which is simply a waste of time. The rules are: no illicit sex life, no meat eating, no intoxication and no gambling.

Every student has to follow these four principles, otherwise I don't initiate him. I don't take cheap students, who want to do whatever they like and pay me some money for some *mantra* that will make them "become God." I don't say that. I don't bluff like that. I have not come to your country for money, but I have come to your country to give you something sublime—not to take from you, not to exploit you, but to give you something sublime. So initiation is the third stage. If you are situated in the third stage nicely, if you follow the regulative principles under my direction, then the fourth stage automatically comes. After this third stage, the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth stages automatically come, by gradual development. So, in the third stage, if you follow the regulative principles and chant according to the prescribed number, then all your misapprehensions will leave automatically.

What are these misapprehensions? The first misapprehension is to think, "I am this body." Everyone is under the concept of the body. But I am not the body; that is a fact. The body is changing. There are many examples. A very common example is this: Suppose a man is dead; now everyone is crying, and if we ask, "Why are you crying?" they will say, "Oh, my son is dead!" I can say, "Your son is lying here; why are you saying that he is dead?" "Oh no, he is dead; he is gone. His body is lying there!" Therefore he is different from the

body. Immediately people understand. They say, "No, he is gone, his body is left lying there." So you understand how, at the time of death, the man is different from the body! But during his lifetime he was taking care of his body only. Why didn't he take care of himself? Because he did not know himself. You see? This is a misapprehension. In this way there are so many misapprehensions. We are situated on a platform of misgivings only, misunderstanding our present conditional life. For example, since I am different from this body, how can I claim that America is my country? I call myself an American because accidentally this body was born in the land of America, but, if I am not this body, how am I American? This is another misapprehension. Then, I call you my son, you call him your son, but who is he? He is a product of your body. So if you are not your body, how is he your son? In this way, you go on, and as soon as you understand that you are not your body, you will find that you belong to none of this material world. You are free.

This is called Brahman realization, spiritual realization. When you understand that you are not the body, you do not belong to this country, or to a certain family or society. Some philosophers try to make these things void by a negating process, but actually their existence is real; I exist. I am existing in misunderstanding, but that does not mean that I do not exist. I am not void. I exist within this apartment with myself. But simply to understand that I am not this apartment is not perfect knowledge. What is my position? What am I actually? At the present moment I am conscious of this body, of this country, of this society, of this family, but when I perfectly understand that I am not any of these, then my consciousness also changes because at the present moment my consciousness is absorbed in all these things. As soon as I understand that I am

not any of these, then my consciousness must change, but it does not stop. If I am in misunderstanding and I come to the right understanding, that does not mean that my understanding has stopped. Rather, my understanding becomes purified. That means that if I am not one thing, then I am something else. And that "something else" is what you have forgotten. What is it? That "something else" is Kṛṣṇa—Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

So, when you are freed from this illusory consciousness, if you are situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then you lose attachment to the body, the society, the country and so many things in relationship with the body. When you come to the right point, then you understand that you are Kṛṣṇa's. Then your attachment is for Kṛṣṇa, and it increases because you transfer the previous attachment to Him, just as a child who is attached to playing later transfers his attachment to studying. That does not mean that he gives up the attachment for playing. That attachment is not lost. Attachment must be there, but it is transferred or purified.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness means purified consciousness, real consciousness. And the next stage, after one is freed from misgivings, is attachment for the real identity, then greater attachment, and then ecstasy. That is when I come nearer to God, because I am God's. In the beginning I told you that we had forgotten our relationship with God, but when you are released from misgivings, you come to the platform of increasing attachment for God. The love is here also; but instead of loving God, we are now loving dog. Love is there, but when you are free from misgivings, you transfer your love from dog to God. These are different stages to come to in attaining Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So, if you follow conscientiously in these six stages of development, you come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Q. Your Grace, does Kṛṣṇa consciousness bring in karmic action as part of your belief?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, Kṛṣṇa conscious activities apparently seem to produce *karma*. We must understand what the difference is between *karma* and *bhakti*. We are using this tape recorder and this microphone, and if you go to a politician you will find the same paraphernalia. I am speaking, and he is also speaking. So apparently we are both the same. But this is *bhakti*, and that is *karma*. Then what is the difference between *bhakti* and *karma*?

In *karma*, when you do something, for whatever you do, there is a result, and you receive the result. Suppose you do some business. The result may be one million dollars profit, and so you take it. And the result may be one million dollars loss; you take it. This is *karma*. You act on your own account, and you take the result. But our activity is for Kṛṣṇa, so when we act, if there is profit, it is Kṛṣṇa's, and if there is loss, it is also Kṛṣṇa's. We are unaffected.

We are preaching this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and so, if someone joins, he is Kṛṣṇa's; he is not mine. These boys are



servicing me, not for my sense gratification, but to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Similarly, we go to serve a master; we serve the master for the sense gratification of the particular person, and therefore he pays us. So we do not serve that master; we serve that payment. And what is that payment? Sense gratification. Therefore, he serves his sense gratification. *Karma* is serving one's sense gratification, and *bhakti* is serving Kṛṣṇa's sense gratification. Kṛṣṇa will be satisfied by *bhakti*. We work in that way, so it is not *karma*. And as soon as a worker says, "Oh, I will get this money and satisfy my senses," that produces *karma*. He becomes subject to the result, be it good or bad; but when you work for Kṛṣṇa, it is all good, and there is no question of bad. All good goes to the All-Good. I am simply His eternal servant, that's all.

Another example is that the finger takes up foodstuff and gives to the stomach; when the stomach is satisfied, the finger is satisfied automatically. It does not need food separately. But the *karmīs* are trying to independently enjoy themselves, just as if the finger were to take a nice cake and think, "Why should I give it to the stom-

ach?" The finger cannot eat, and the cake simply becomes stale; that's all. So we are spoiling our energy without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that's why we are being subjected to the laws of transmigration from one species of life to another. We are simply spoiling our time and energy. If you take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is proper utilization of your energy given by God. When I am healthy, the finger is also healthy. What, then, is the duty of the healthy finger? To serve the body. Similarly, we received this energy from Kṛṣṇa, from God, so if we utilize this energy for Kṛṣṇa, that is proper utilization. If we utilize the energy for our sense gratification, then we are misusing it.

Anyone who is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spoiling his time, wasting his life and subjecting himself to so many laws of nature. These matters are very clearly explained in this *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. This is the preliminary study of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and if one studies this book seriously, he goes on to other books. I have the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is also Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy. But the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* project is very great. It will have to be finished in sixty volumes. About ten to twelve volumes are already finished, and I am working on this. It is a great subject matter for study. People should take interest in it, it is not anything trifling. People should come to us to understand. We have literature, we have philosophy—everything. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not a blind, imposing dogma. Everyone who actually wants to give some service to society, to humanity, must study this philosophy. And we are prepared to meet anyone—scientists, philosophers, poets, thoughtful men—and give the answers to all their questions.

Our method is very simple: We call everyone, even the child, to sit down and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. And there will be gradually realization. And if anyone wants to understand this philosophy through knowledge, through books, through philosophy and logic, we are also prepared. But for the mass of people we give the simple method, Hare Kṛṣṇa. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. All these boys are not philosophers, nor are they very highly learned, but they are developing knowledge simply by chanting. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so sublime. It is for the greatest scholar, and it is for the innocent boy; therefore it is universal.

END

Kṛṣṇa

In The Land Of Mandarins



A letter from an ISKCON missionary in China to a senior Godbrother in New York City.

My dear Rūpānuga Prabhu,

Please accept my very humble obeisances and prayers for our continuous association in the service of His Divine and Wonderful Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Yes, Hong Kong ISKCON lives! Please find enclosed several photos of our activities here, just 25 miles from Red China. I am sorry I have not sent them sooner, but things here are so amazing with just the two of us, Jagajjananī (my wife) and myself. Just today we have officially gotten our first temple here in Hong Kong. The address is 34 Cameron Road, IFD, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Telephone number K-678 240. I will send you our card if I have a chance.

So far our activities here have been mostly with the Indian population, and very much with the children of the Indian community. The children are like plants on the desert, thirsting from the heat of *māyā*, but ready to blossom with the water from the ocean of mercy. All glories to the

holy names. We have been making puppet shows, Kṛṣṇa conscious card games, Kṛṣṇa conscious crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, and soon we will start on Kṛṣṇa conscious coloring books—it's unlimited the nonsense that can be converted to spiritual energy by the mercy of the purest devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda.



Kṛṣṇa is so kind to me, and I would very much appreciate receiving a letter from you, because it is very rare that we hear of the wonderful activities from the U.S., the East Coast especially. I know you are busy, but maybe you or your good wife could find time to write back.

The people here are amazing. They have never seen anything like us, and they unabashedly stare and stare and stare. Some of the photos are in a market place in a district called Yau Ma Ti, and the pictures make the place look picturesque, but it is crores of times dirtier than the East Village. And everything is sold on the street for eating. Some people eat everything. One of the closest friends we have, and the most helpful, is a dog-eater.

In every town and village will the holy names be sung. So there is no worry. These people too will feel the ecstasy of the holy names.

This place is one market. Now the most valuable item is being offered to every-

one free—Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We have classes each Sunday and Monday for the children, and they all have devotional notebooks with pictures from “Back to Godhead” and pictures of all the devotees, and Śrīla Prabhupāda, and all the prayers in it, too. They sing prayers, dance, and want to learn everything. Their parents all worship Lord Śiva and work 12 hours each day at least, and they don’t have time to teach them about Kṛṣṇa. So we have based our movement in Hong Kong around the little devotees, and in this way we influence the parents. We have walked into homes and seen pictures of Śrīla Prabhupāda placed spontaneously on the family altar, and then we feel we are 100% successful.



We plan to start a school here, a public school eventually subsidized by the government. We are also starting to make incense, and our hopes are to have the temple supported by the Hare Kṛṣṇa Temple of Hong Kong Membership Program. Also, our idea is to have at least six temples in Hong Kong in the foreseeable future.

We have already printed a little in Chinese, so the Asia Branch of ISKCON Press is underway. We hope to get a small press donated, and we too will be heard all around the world. If people just read about Kṛṣṇa, they are sure to become purified and get started on the way back home, back to Godhead. We are distributing *Kṛṣṇa Books* here, and they are being received very enthusiastically. People love to look at the pictures and hear about Kṛṣṇa’s wonderful activities. Spiritually, everyone



is starving—we’re all so trapped by Kali-yuga [the Age of Quarrel]. But we are so kindly placed here by His Divine Grace to help overthrow the dictatorship of *māyā*. Sometimes it is so difficult here, but Kṛṣṇa has unfailingly protected us, taught us lessons, revealed Himself to us in so many ways.

Rūpānuga Prabhu, I have heard you have compiled one slide show. If you could please send me copies I would greatly appreciate it, and I would greatly be able to engage them, and also I would be able to distribute them all over Asia.

Sometimes it has been so difficult. We have been temporarily located for seven months. The day after my good wife came to Hong Kong, Bali Mardan Prabhu, after marrying us the night before, left to open the Singapore temple. So we were two strangers, left alone with Śrīla Prabhupāda, Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, and everything worked out O.K.

I am planning a simple article, mostly pictures, called “Kṛṣṇa Consciousness for the Children of Hong Kong” or something to that effect. I will send it after a little bit. Reality in the material world means birth, death, old age, and disease, and we tend to forget that people are really suffering these things, and they hurt, temporarily manifested as they are. Kṛṣṇa Consciousness is the only cure, presented freely and with the love of a father calling his children home. (Śrīla Prabhupāda calling us.)

It is late, and tomorrow maybe we will move into Kṛṣṇa’s home for us. So please write back. Some of the pictures are of Hong Kong University, some of an engagement at a Hindu temple here (no one

knows anything about Kṛṣṇa except Śrīla Prabhupāda), and the Yau Ma Ti shots. Please forward these and the letter to Back to Godhead, and I think maybe they can put together a short picture article. Please tell me how your good wife is doing, and also my dear Godbrother Ekendra dāsa [Rūpānuga’s son]. If he can, please ask him to write to me. Maybe I can fix him up to have a pen pal with a nice Indian devotee little boy here named Suresa. Can Ekendra write? How old is he? It has been about two years since I saw him. O.K., Prabhu, please accept my very humble obeisances and prayers that I will one day be able to serve you. If there is anything I can ever do to help you serve



His Divine Grace, I beg you to ask me please.

All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

RESPECTFULLY,

Your servant,
Bhurijana dāsa

Kṛṣṇa consciousness means God consciousness. We all have consciousness or awareness, but of what are we aware? For example, if you are pinched you will feel it—that is consciousness. In our normal everyday activities we are conscious of so many things like our stomach, our dress, our relationship with others, and so on. This particular facility of consciousness is the symptom of life. Without it there exists only inert matter, lifeless and dull. What is absent from the corpse that qualifies it as “dead”? The missing ingredient is consciousness, or life. We all have consciousness, and furthermore we have free will. Just as with a T.V. set you can tune in any program you like, similarly, with our conscious mind we can pay attention to whatever we choose.

The *Vedas* and virtually all revealed scriptures of the world inform us that the perfection of our lives, the proper utilization of our consciousness, is to be Kṛṣṇa conscious, or aware of God. And the perfection of this awareness is called *samādhi*, or trance. In this state one is never deviated from God, and his mind is always fixed in meditation upon the Lord.

The Lord is perfect and is the reservoir of all pleasure. When we can become totally aware of the Lord, who lies within our hearts as well as being present everywhere, then we share in that pleasure and perfection with the Lord, Kṛṣṇa or God.

Who is Kṛṣṇa? Who is God? If we want to meditate on Him always, how shall we do so? If I ask you, “Now you please meditate on my brother,” you would inquire, “Very well, what does your brother look like? What are his activities? Please give me some information about him.” In the same way, if we are to meditate on God we must have some information about Him. Our imagination will not be sufficient for this purpose because God lies beyond our imaginary powers. And where shall we find such information? The revealed scriptures teach us about God and His attributes.

The most complete and comprehensive of all revealed scriptures are the *Vedas*. The *Vedas* give us information not only of the greatness of God (all scriptures describe the greatness of God), but also such detailed information as what God looks like, what He does and what He eats; everything is included within the Vedic literatures. They are, therefore, the most

valuable sources for learning about God. Other scriptures are not false. Revealed scripture is always perfect and absolute, but, at the same time, some are more complete than others. When you want knowledge of vocabulary, either a small pocket dictionary or a large library edition will do, but the latter gives the most complete knowledge. Similarly, all revealed scriptures will afford knowledge, but the *Vedas* are by far the most complete. It is only the small mind which will discount the authenticity of the *Vedas* because they appear different from other scriptures, for the reason that they offer greater knowledge. Actually the apparent difference is only due to the observer’s lack of comprehensive perspective. For example, if I am in possession of the large dictionary and I quote some information from it, and if you are holding the pocket volume, you may try to find the same information. If what I have referred to is not mentioned in the small dictionary, you may conclude, “Oh, you are wrong, my good sir. I do not find what you say in my dictionary, so therefore it cannot be factual.” Is this very intelligent? No. The small dictionary and the large one are in absolute agreement; there is no contradiction, but greater knowledge is available in the large edition. It is only when a viewpoint is eclipsed from a lower platform that the discrepancy arises in our consideration.

The *Vedas* are the source of the most perfect knowledge, and therefore the intelligent person, seeking the most advanced knowledge of God, will do well to hear from them about the science of God.

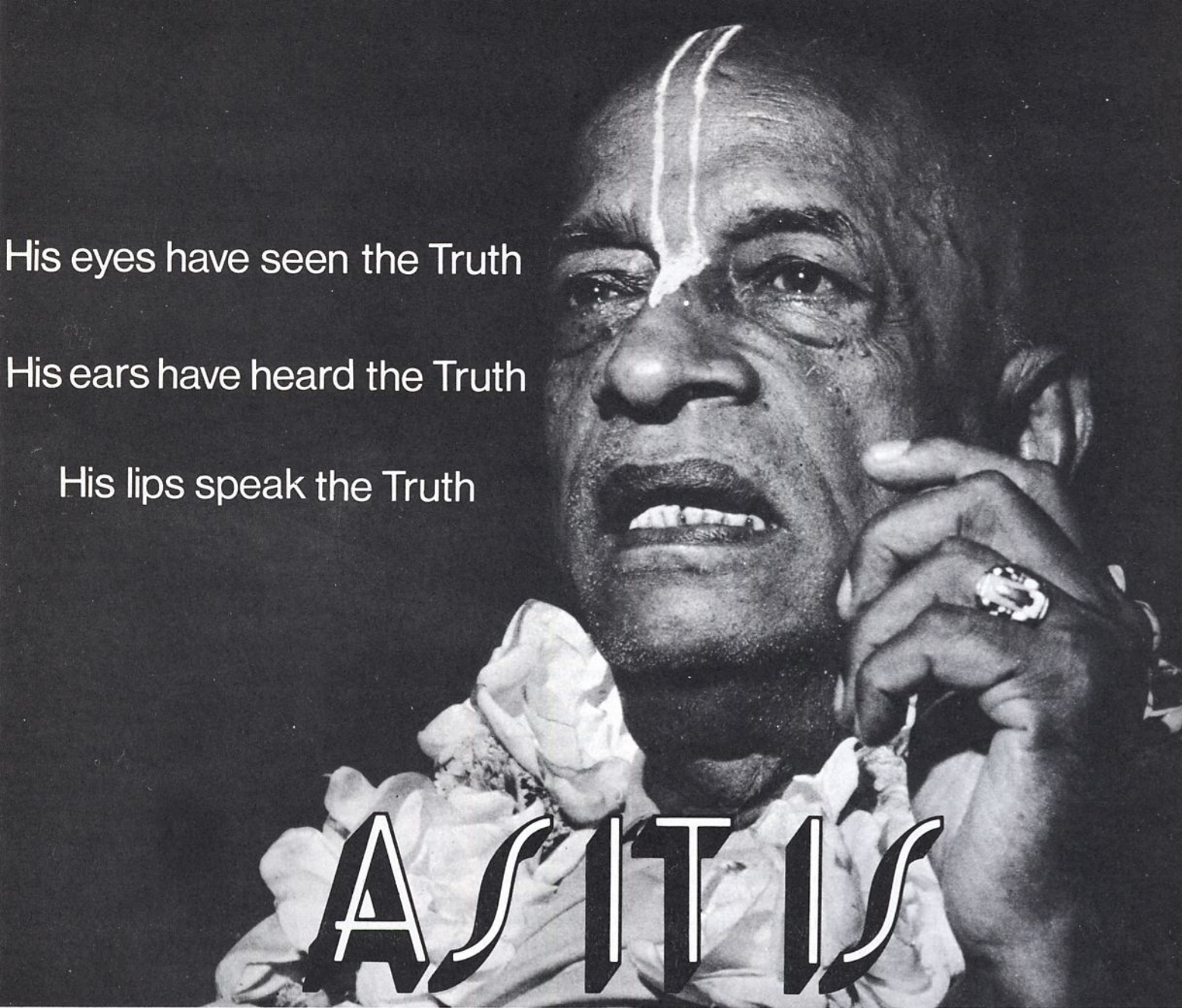
And what is the information we receive from the *Vedas*? The Supreme Absolute Truth is an eternal person, fully possessing transcendental and spiritual qualities, and His form or body is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. The transcendental nomenclature ascribed to this transcendental Supreme Personality is given as Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is God, and God is Kṛṣṇa. I am a person, an individual, and I have my name. Similarly God also has a name, Kṛṣṇa. This denotes that He is a person, an individual, just as my name denotes my individuality. Actually, there are unlimited names of God in every language and culture, but Kṛṣṇa is all-inclusive because Kṛṣṇa means all-attractive. Without being all-attractive, there is no meaning to God. We all possess some features or attractiveness. We might be very beauti-

The Perfection of Consciousness

by Karandhara dāsa

(ISKCON—Los Angeles)





His eyes have seen the Truth

His ears have heard the Truth

His lips speak the Truth

AS IT IS

Bhagavad-gītā As It Is

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Published by
Collier-Macmillan

ful or very rich, very intelligent or very strong, but we cannot honestly claim that we possess all or even one of these qualities in fullness.

Who among us can say, "I am the most beautiful person in all the world; no one can match me in this opulence"? Even if we could make such a claim, then it would have to be asked, "Yes, you are very nice, but for how long will you be the most beautiful?" Soon your youthfulness will be gone, and, along with it, your so-called beauty will vanish. So our claim to greatness is very limited and temporary at best, but Kṛṣṇa is not like that. "God" means that no one is equal to Him and no one is greater than Him and that His qualities are eternal. He is the supreme possessor of all opulences. Therefore He is the supreme object of worship and glorification.

The propensity to glorify is naturally present in everyone. We can see that people are always glorifying someone—a movie star or a famous historical figure. How often have we heard the glories of Mahātmā Gandhi or Socrates? How many advertisements have we seen or heard commending someone for his activities or personality? Everywhere this is going on. Generally, of course, people are most fond of glorifying themselves. Just listen to the subject matter of almost any conversation, and invariably you will notice that the topic concerns the individuals who are speaking. The perfection of this glorifying process is, however, to praise the greatest, the supreme object of glory, who is more worthy than anyone else. That is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is in that position. When we see someone who is very nice, we think, "Oh, he is so nice." Similarly, when we can see Kṛṣṇa we will understand that He is the nicest, the most beautiful, the richest, all wrapped into one. Actually, Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all opulence. Whatever opulence we perceive around us is simply a tiny fraction of the total opulence of Kṛṣṇa. For example, whatever quantity of money we may come across, we know that it has originally come from the Treasury Department, and it is only a portion of the total amount of money issued by the Treasury. Some less intelligent man may think, "Now that I have \$100 I am certainly the richest person existing," but it is to be understood that he is speaking with a poor fund of knowledge. Similarly if someone claims to be great in opulences, it only points out his ignorance of the opulence of Kṛṣṇa. This program of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to worship and and become conscious of the highest person, the most perfect being, Kṛṣṇa. This is not undesirable. It is the most advantageous position. If you worship a very strong person you may receive some protection from him. In the same way, if you worship Kṛṣṇa you will share the unlimited opulences of strength, fame, beauty, wisdom, renunciation and wealth with Kṛṣṇa.

Attaining to this platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the ultimate goal of everyone. Kṛṣṇa is the perfection of everything; therefore every endeavor is meant to culminate in Kṛṣṇa. What is the basic reason for all activity? Why do we get out of bed in the morning, work so hard and struggle for existence? What compels us? It is certainly the search for pleasure, the seeking of perfection. If I were to offer you, "Now you come, I will give you whatever you desire, and you will be perfectly satisfied," would you not take the offer? Is that not your reason for living? Everyone is moving on this principle, whether it be the ant seeking the grain of sugar, or the dog the bone, or the adventurer wondering what lies beyond the next hill, or the artist trying to put into form the perfect artistic conception; everyone is trying to find perfection. But the anomaly is, as we actually experience,

that we have not found that perfection in anything we have done. Even if we have achieved some projected goal, upon that achievement, we have instantly realized, "This is not perfection. I must find something more." If we could factually run the gamut of all endeavors, fulfilling each one, and then aspiring to something more, something higher, all the way to the limit of experience, then at the end we would find Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa would be there, and upon attaining His association we would be completely satisfied. That is the position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thus instead of going the long route, which is troublesome and virtually impossible, the intelligent person will simply acknowledge, "Yes, it is only Kṛṣṇa that will satisfy me; enough with all this other peripheral nonsense," and then he will make a beeline to Kṛṣṇa by practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the process for attaining Kṛṣṇa. Another name for the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *bhakti-yoga*. *Bhakti-yoga* means to link with Kṛṣṇa through *bhakti* or devotion. This devotional, loving consciousness is the medium by which we make the connection with Kṛṣṇa. We must apply our consciousness to Kṛṣṇa and topics relating to Him in a devotional mood. Then Kṛṣṇa consciousness naturally develops. If you want to become "President conscious," then what would you do? Naturally you would study the President by hearing about him from authority, following his activities, watching his motions and analyzing his behavior. Or if you wanted to become law conscious, you would attend law school and learn the science by regulated, systematic research and study. Similarly, to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, we must take to a systematic method of hearing from an authority, or *guru*, and following his instruction, just as one might take instruction from a law professor. He assigns, "Now you do this; read this book; take this test," and in the same way the *guru* or spiritual master gives all necessary instruction to his disciple. If the disciple hears submissively and follows the instruction, then he is assured of success.

This process of *bhakti-yoga* is given by the spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, as the curriculum for attaining God consciousness. It is a bona fide course of study, fully accredited. We should accept it like that, and if we really desire to attain the perfection of our lives, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then we should execute it with full-hearted faith and enthusiasm.

The basic principle is simply to fix the mind on Kṛṣṇa. *Bhakti-yoga* is the practical way of doing this. In *bhakti-yoga* the idea is simply to direct our consciousness towards Kṛṣṇa. And what are the faculties for accomplishing this? What instruments do we have at hand? Our senses. Sight, touch, smell, taste, hearing, are the instruments by which we perceive, or in other words, by which we are conscious. When we look at a billboard sign, our minds, receiving a perception from the eyes, automatically go into action, developing associations and making impressions, and thus we are thinking about or are conscious of that sign. Or if we eat an apple, we experience a particular sensation of taste which is another quality of consciousness. In this way, by dint of our senses of perception, we are conscious of so many things. Recently a specially designed space capsule successfully landed on the moon. Complete with a computer and various types of instruments, the complex machinery began to study the moon in various ways. The instruments would receive data by way of some type of sensitivity (heat sensitivity, light sensitivity, etc.) and would transmit the information to the computer. The computer would then analyze and synthesize this data and produce

(continued on page 21)

SOUL research

In 1968, speaking before a gathering of students at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda pointed out an important lag in technological research. "Although you have so many departments of knowledge," he said, "there is no department aiming to find the difference between a living body and a dead body."

Although advanced in understanding the mechanical workings of the physical body, modern science has given but little attention to studying the spiritual spark that animates the body. In a recent article in the *Montreal Gazette*, world-famous cardiologist Wilfred G. Bigelow urges the undertaking of systematic research to determine what the soul is and where it comes from. Responding to this plea in a letter to Dr. Bigelow, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda offers substantial Vedic knowledge on this topic and suggests a practical method for scientifically understanding the spiritual spark.

Heart Surgeon Wants To Know What A Soul Is

by Rae Corelli

WINDSOR—A world-famous Canadian heart surgeon says he believes the body has a soul which departs at death and theologians ought to try to find out more about it.

Dr. Wilfred G. Bigelow, head of the cardio-vascular surgery unit at Toronto General Hospital, said that "as a person who believes there is a soul" he thought the time had come "to take the mystery out of this and find out what it is."

THE MOMENT OF DEATH

Bigelow was a member of a panel which appeared before the Essex County Medical-Legal Society to discuss problems associated with attempts to define the exact moment of death.

The question has become vital in the age of transplants of hearts and other organs in cases when the donors are inevitably dying.

The Canadian Medical Association has produced a widely accepted definition of death as the moment when the patient is in coma, responds to no stimulus of any kind, and brain waves recorded on a machine are flat.

The other members of the panel were Mr. Justice Edson L. Haines of the Ontario Supreme Court and J. Francis Leddy, President of the University of Windsor.

HE HAS HIS DOUBTS

Bigelow, elaborating on points he had raised during the discussion, said in an interview later that his 32 years as a surgeon had left him no doubts that there is a soul.

"There are certain cases where you happen to be present at the moment when people pass from a living state to death, and some mysterious changes take place.

"One of the most noticeable is the sudden lack of life or lustre to the eyes. They become opaque and literally lifeless.

"It's difficult to document what you

observe. In fact, I don't think it can be documented very well."

Bigelow, who became world renowned for his pioneering work in the "deep freeze" surgical technique known as hypothermia and for his heart valve surgery, said "soul research" should be undertaken by theology and allied disciplines within the university.

YOU CAN'T FIND IT

During this discussion Leddy said that "if there is a soul, you are not going to see it. You are not going to find it."

"If there is a principle of vitality or life, what is it?" The problem was that "the soul doesn't exist anywhere specifically, geographically. It's everywhere and yet it's nowhere in the body."

It would "be nice to start experimenting, but I don't know how you are going to get on any of these things," Leddy said. He said the discussion reminded him of the Soviet cosmonaut who returned from space to report there was no God, because he didn't see Him up there.

Maybe so, said Bigelow, but in modern medicine when something was encountered that could not be explained, "the watchword is discover the answer, take it into the laboratory, take it somewhere where you can discover the truth."

The central question, said Bigelow, was "where is the soul and where does it come from."

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Ten thousand times more brilliant than the sun, the soul, covered by layers of gross and subtle matter (earth, water, fire, etc.), pervades the body with consciousness, as the sun pervades the universe with light.

VEDIC EVIDENCE and The Scientific Conclusion

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letter to Dr. Bigelow

My Dear Dr. Bigelow:

Please accept my greetings. Recently I have read an article in the Gazette by Rae Corelli entitled "Heart Surgeon Wants to Know What a Soul Is," and it was very interesting. Your comments show great insight, and so I thought to write you on this matter. Perhaps you may know that I am the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. I have

several temples in Canada—Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Hamilton. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is specifically meant to give every soul his original spiritual position.

Undoubtedly the soul is present in the heart of the living entity, and it is the source of all the energies for maintaining the body. The energy of the soul is spread all over the body, and this is known as

consciousness. Since this consciousness spreads the energy of the soul all over the body, one can feel pains and pleasures in any part of the body. The soul is individual, and he is transmigrating from one body to another, just as a person transmigrates from babyhood to childhood, from childhood to boyhood, from boyhood to youth and then to advanced old age. Then the change called death takes place when we change to a new body just as we change our old dress to a new dress. This is called transmigration of the soul.

When a soul wants to enjoy this material world, forgetting his real home in the spiritual world, he takes this life of hard struggle for existence. This unnatural life of repeated birth, death, disease and old age can be stopped when his consciousness is dovetailed with the supreme consciousness of God. That is the basic principle of our Kṛṣṇa movement.

As far as heart transplant is concerned, there is no question of success unless the soul is there in the heart. So it has to be accepted. In sexual intercourse, if there is no soul, there is no conception, no pregnancy. Contraception deteriorates the womb so that it no longer is a good place for the soul. That is against the order of God. By the order of God, a soul is sent to a particular womb, but by this contraceptive he is denied that womb and has to be placed in another. That is disobedience to the Supreme. For example, take a man who is supposed to live in a particular apartment. If the situation there is so disturbed that he cannot enter the apartment, then he is put at a great disadvantage. That is illegal interference and is punishable.

The undertaking of "soul research" would certainly mark the advancement of science. But advancement of science will not be able to find the soul. It can simply be accepted on circumstantial understanding. You will find in the Vedic literature that the dimension of the soul is one ten-thousandth the size of a point. The material scientist cannot measure the length and breadth of a point. Therefore it is not possible for the material scientist to capture the soul. You can simply accept the soul's existence by taking it from authority. What the greatest scientists are finding, we've explained long ago.

As soon as one understands the existence of the soul, he can immediately understand the existence of God. The

difference between God and the soul is that God is a very great soul and the living entity is a very small soul, but qualitatively they are equal. Therefore God is all-pervading, and the living entity is localized. The nature and quality are the same.

The central question, you say, is "Where is the soul, and where does it come from?" That is not difficult to understand. We've already discussed that the soul is residing in the heart of the living entity and that it takes shelter after death in another body. Originally the soul comes from God. Just as a spark comes from fire, and when the spark falls down it appears to be extinguished, the spark soul originally comes from the spiritual world to the material world. In the material world he falls down

into three different conditions which are called the modes of nature. When a spark of fire falls on dry grass, the fiery quality continues. When the spark falls on the ground, it cannot display its fiery manifestation unless the ground is favorably situated. And when the spark falls on water, it becomes extinguished. As such, we find three kinds of living conditions. One living entity is completely forgetful of his spiritual nature; another is almost forgetful, but still there is an instinct of spiritual nature; and another is completely in search of spiritual perfection. There is a bona fide method for the attainment of spiritual perfection by the spiritual spark soul, and if he is properly guided then he is very easily sent back home, back to

Godhead, wherefrom originally he fell down.

It will be a great contribution to human society if this authorized information from the Vedic literature is presented to the modern world on the basis of modern scientific understanding. The fact is already there. It simply has to be presented for modern understanding. If you desire, I shall give you more information in this connection, and you can present it in scientific words. If you so desire, you can publish this letter in the paper also.

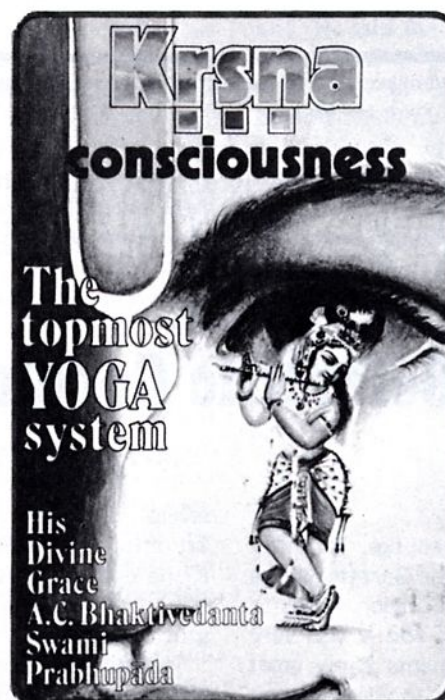
Hoping to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

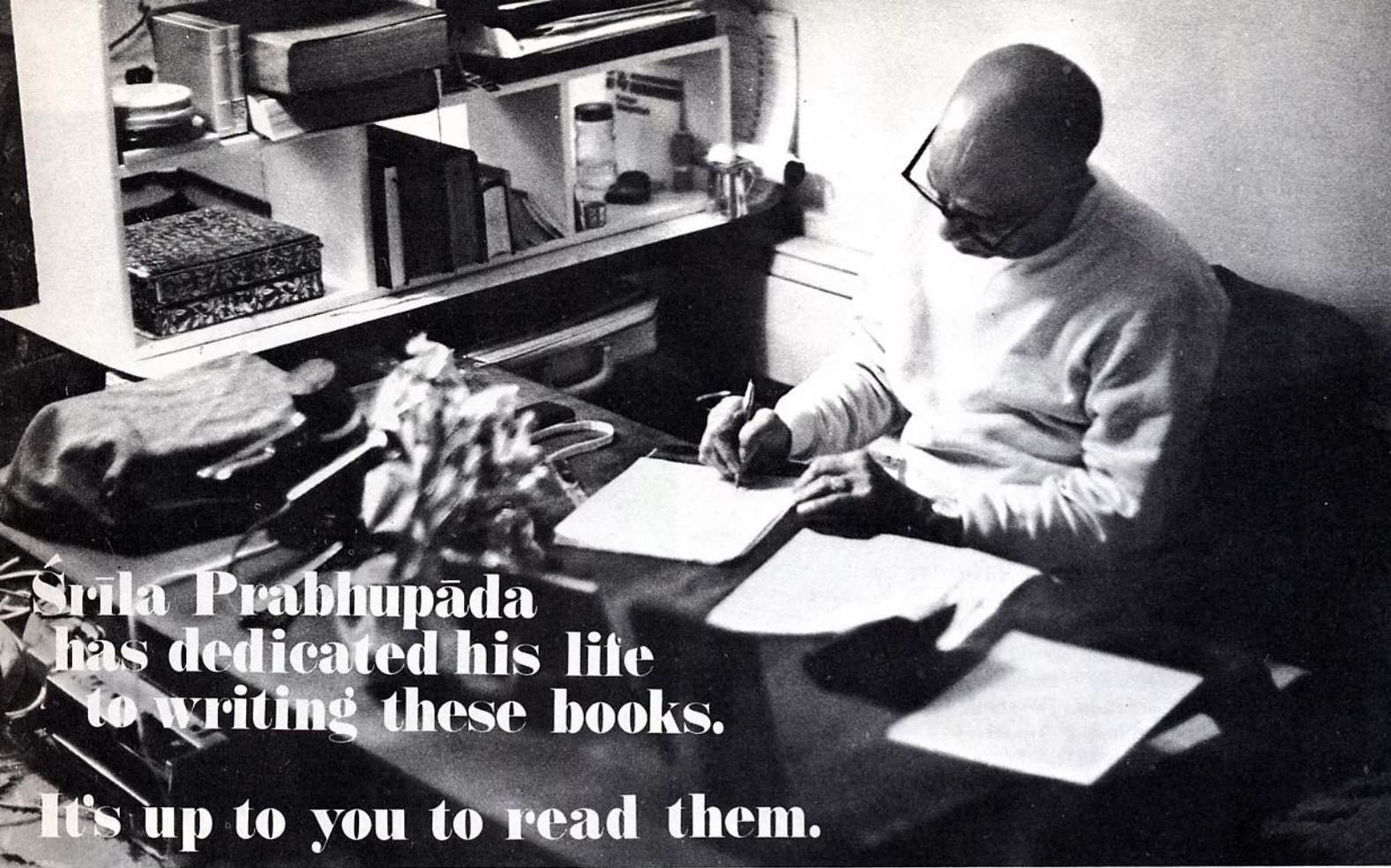
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One can attempt to go to any planet he desires, but this is only possible by psychological changes in the mind or by yogic powers. Mind is the nucleus of the material body. Anyone who trains the mind to turn from matter to the spiritual form of the Godhead by performance of *bhakti-yoga* can easily attain the kingdom of God in the anti-material sky. Of this there is no doubt.



The Blessed Lord said: "The *yogī* whose mind is fixed on Me verily attains the highest happiness. A true *yogī* observes Me in all beings and also sees every being in Me. Indeed, the self-realized man sees Me everywhere. And of all *yogīs*, he who always abides in Me with great faith, worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately united with Me in *yoga* and is the highest of all." (*Bhagavad-gītā*, 6.27, 29, 47)

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The first part of “Chant,” a four-part Kṛṣṇa conscious poem, was published in *Back to Godhead* Number 36. It describes the transcendental activities of the spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, from his landing in New York in 1965 to the end of 1969.

The second part is addressed to Jagannātha Svāmī (literally, “Lord of the Universe”), the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa as He specifically appears in the Deity manifestation carved hundreds of years ago by Viśvakarmā, the sculptor incarnation. The statue or Deity of Jagannātha, which is worshiped in the famous Jagannātha Temple in Purī, India, is unique in Indian art. Almost primitivistic in style, He looks like this:



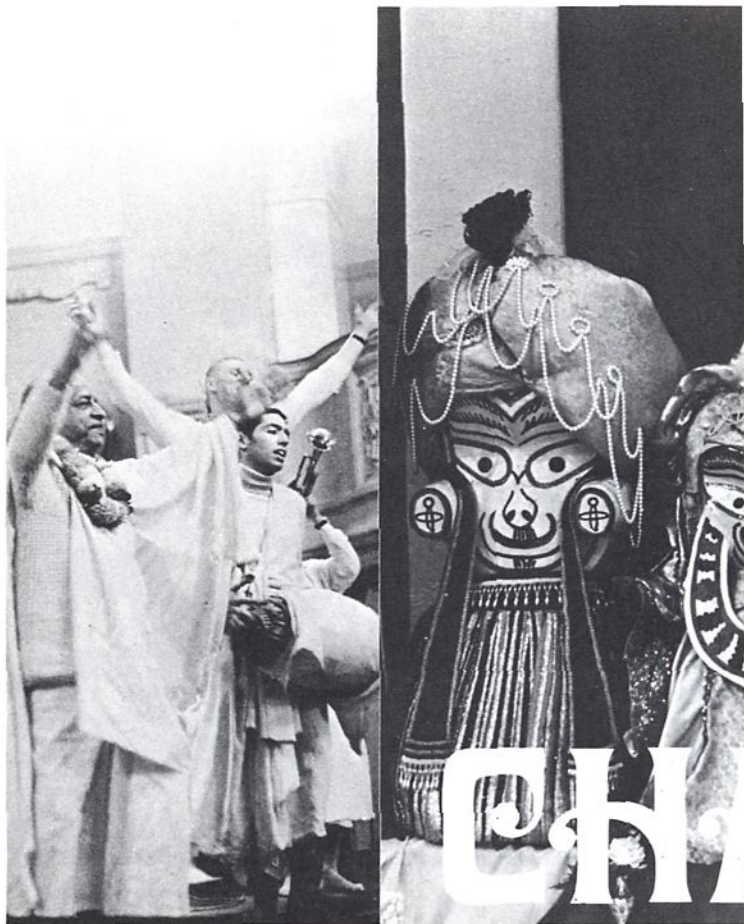
The third part of the poem is a meditation of the transcendental body of the Spiritual master, the mere thought of whom purifies the mind.

The fourth part, a Gloria, praises the body, form, pastimes, entourage and paraphernalia of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Part Two

Jagannātha svāmī nayana paṭhagami bhavatu me—

Lord of the universe, kindly be visible unto me,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, Your two round eyes rivet to my soul,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You are possessed of unlimited intellect, and
 we must look very silly to You,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, I think it must be You alone who knows
 Your universe, America, myself.
 Jagannātha Svāmī, nobody really knows who You are, staring
 out from behind those eyes, giving everyone a tiny,
 amused smile,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You are the Lord of infinite worlds, and You
 wield the power to create unlimited others—is it all just
 for sport?
 Jagannātha Svāmī, I hear You are unborn and can be vanquished
 by exclusive devotion—grant me the grace to defeat You,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You dissolve all heterogeneous views, and
 now You are looking our way,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You are the inner guide of all, universal *guru*—
 show America, China, Russia, Europe who’s really lord,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You ordain the worldly course for the con-



ceited and grant salvation to those free from vanity—is that why we’re all locked in our dreams?

Jagannātha Svāmī, I also hear that You’re the Primal Person, an overwhelming flood of bliss, master and nourisher of the universe, the stay, the witness, the seer, the refuge, the cause—are You smiling at all this empty word-praise?
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You are self-delighted and are the special mercy manifestation for Kali-yuga, for You can go into any bar and brothel in the land and still smile,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You are sung in exalted hymns—forgive my linguistic barbarism,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, I think that those eyes of Yours are looking at me through death. . . I think that smile pierces decay . . . I know roses and lilacs will blossom for You out of my corpse,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, Your tiny arms swing as You slap Kali’s face and dispel the night of pseudo-religions,
 Jagannātha Svāmī, You must have been especially pleased when Lord Caitanya fainted in love before You, crying, “Ah! Here is Kṛṣṇa!”
 Jagannātha Svāmī, when will I be able to faint before You? When



Hayagrīva dāsa

(ISKCON—New Vr̥ndāvana)

will everybody?

Jagannātha Svāmī, You must know how tired I get looking at a thousand sleepy students in the classroom, wondering how long I'll keep my job, worrying about money, wishing I could think more of You,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You are looking not only through Your own saucer-like eyes but through the eyes of the young man prowling for sex and the old man fencing in his geraniums, Jagannātha Svāmī, You must get a strange view of things looking through the eyes of soldiers, prostitutes, murderers, leprechauns and Presidents,

Jagannātha Svāmī, do You see Madison Avenue? Mott Street? St. Mark's? Haight-Ashbury? Bronx? Washington Square? Miami Beach? Boston Common? Times Square? Do you see the dark faces of Harlem and the pale faces of Greenwich, Conn? Do you see the Arkansas governor barring the schoolhouse door? The judge throwing the book? Do You see Dr. Leary taking off on another trip? I really think I know why You must be smiling,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You are time personified, and I can see You breaking down everything moment by moment,



Jagannātha Svāmī, You are the only Truth—why do You brook all this nonsense? If You got as angry as me You'd wrap the whole thing up,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You're compassionate and generous to everyone because You're latent in the heart of every entity, like fire within wood—O please burst forth in flames!

Jagannātha Svāmī, You're the cause of everything—but You don't look like one who's serious and responsible. You look like You've just played a joke,

Jagannātha Svāmī, when I first saw You I thought You looked like one of those Easter Island sculptures. . . now I love Your circles and rectangles,

Jagannātha Svāmī, I'm fed up with books, mental speculative philosophy, causes, fads, sex, dope, squares, suits, ties, long hair, rock, Bach, beards, bellbottoms, psychedelic messiahs and serious men,

Jagannātha Svāmī, I just want to see You shine, O Jagannātha Svāmī, You fourth dimensioned, self-manifested darling of the universe—You're nectar to my eye,

Jagannātha Svāmī, I know You punish the naughty boys, and I'm glad, even though I'm one of them,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You mock the sandcastles of man for "time writes no wrinkle on Thine azure brow,"

Jagannātha Svāmī, why are there no poets now to praise You? Jagannātha Svāmī, You're always on vacation, yet You're doing everything—How do You get around? Where are Your feet hid?

Jagannātha Svāmī, You're the supreme sorcerer, and this dream of life You've conjured is a sleight of hand trick,

Jagannātha Svāmī, after the cataclysm You're the self-applauding residue—Who pays to see Your show? I think we all do,

Jagannātha Svāmī, do you love me?

Jagannātha Svāmī, I love You semi-circle head, Your jutting arms, Your rectangular, legless torso, Your big white-&-black disc-eyes, Your crescent-moon smile,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You're the embodiment of all the gods,

Jagannātha Svāmī, You are Śrī Guru's own Self!

O Jagannātha Svāmī, Jagannātha Svāmī

Jagannātha Svāmī

(Lord of the Universe)

nayana paṭhagami

(if it please Your Grace)

bhavatu me

(be visible unto me.)

Part Three

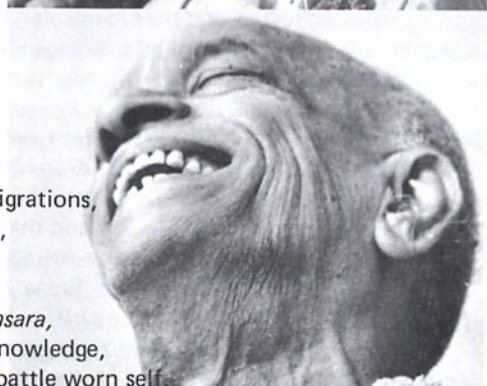
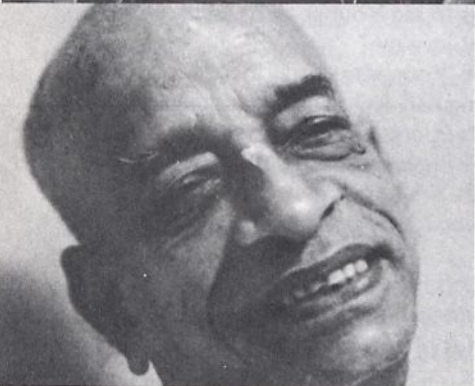
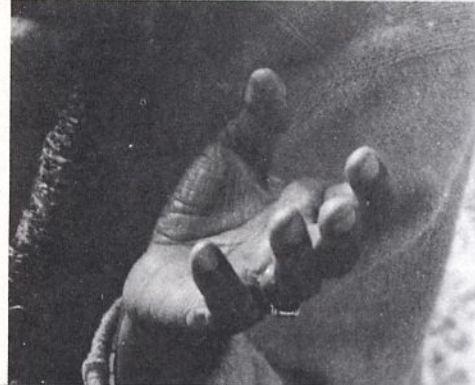
May my mind seek the shelter of him
Whose lotus feet destroy *kalpas* of sin,
Whose feet are garlanded with flowers,
Whose feet are eternally auspicious,
Whose feet traverse the three worlds,
Whose feet dance to a thousand drums,
Whose feet appear to me in dreams,
Whose feet, I, unworthy, touch.

May my mind seek the service of him
Whose hand, electric, awakens me to life,
Whose hand points out the Vedic open road,
Whose hand opens the ancient sacred books,
Whose hand writes absolute and golden words,
Whose hand beats the *mṛdāṅgas* of Bengal,
Whose hand plays shining cymbals to the Lord,
Whose hand counts prayers upon a million beads,
Whose hand benedicts and fills the empty heart,
Whose hand soweth unknown seeds in the soul,
Whose hand gatherest the fruits,
Whose hand bestoweth copious gifts,
Whose hand is a hand of fire,
Whose hand pats my head as I weep.

May my mind seek the mercy of him
Whose eyes are great springs of compassion,
Whose eyes see Him behind materials,
Whose eyes strike the flame of devotion,
Whose eyes sparkle kindly with wisdom,
Whose eyes are the eyes of a child,
Whose eyes survey all in eternity,
Whose eyes are the sun and the moon,
Whose eyes close in rapt meditation,
Whose eyes have beheld the Great God,
Whose eyes are the soul and the Self.

May my mind seek the presence of him
Whose voice now disturbs my long sleeping,
Whose voice calls the true names of youth,
Whose voice chastiseth the demons,
Whose voice answers all yet is silent,
Whose voice chokes with longing and love,
Whose voice sings the *mantras* of praise,
Whose voice summons cows in *Vaikuṅṭha*,
Whose voice Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā must know,
Whose voice I will hear at my death.

May my mind seek the vision of him
Whose smile spreads a blissful effulgence,
Whose smile conquers legions of skeptics,
Whose smile uproots the weeds of my doubt,
Whose smile lightens the burdens of Kali,
Whose smile is worth the tears of my endless migrations,
Whose smile severs the tree with its roots above,
Whose smile dissolves my pride and illusion,
Whose smile is a downpour of mercy,
Whose smile extinguishes the blazing fire of *saṁsara*,
Whose smile draws nectar from bright seas of knowledge,
Whose smile, amidst two armies, speaks to my battle worn self.



Part Four

All glory to Lord Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, the Supreme Godhead!
Glory to His eternal blissful spiritual youthful body!
Glory to Him who is the origin and prime cause of all!
Glory to Gokula, His supernal abode!
Glory to the lotus of a thousand petals sprung from a part of His infinitude!
Glory, all glory to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī who stands there beside Him!
Glory to the Holy Names! Glory to the Great *mantra* of Deliverance!
Glory to the cowherd boys and girls, the eternal consorts of Kṛṣṇa!
Glory to the *surabhi* cows, givers of abundant milk, who graze in Vāikunṭha!
Glory to the Lord of Gokula, the Transcendent Supreme, the very Self of eternal ecstasies!
Glory to Him who is the reservoir of pleasure for all the senses!
Glory to the Supreme Male, the Puruṣa, the seed-giving Father of all!
Glory to Him of thousands and thousands of heads, eyes, bellies, hands! To Him who is the Source of countless *avatāras*!
Glory! All glory to Him whose golden sperm resides in the skin pores of the Great Viṣṇu!
Glory to Him who is the object of worship of the hymns of the *Vedas*!
Glory to Him from whom Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva spring!
Glory to Him as the God of gods!
Glory! Glory! Glory to Him in pursuance of whose order the sun performs his journey, mounting the wheel of time!
Glory to Him who lies in an ocean of milk! From whose navel a golden lotus, the abode of Brahmā, blossoms!
Glory to Him who exhales decillions of universes, inhales then exhales them again and again!
Glory to the Eternal Youth who sits on the Divine Throne! To His form of eternal effulgence and transcendental bliss!
Glory to His divine flute resonating from the touch of His lotus mouth!
Glory to that Primeval Lord, the first progenitor! Glory to His abode of gems! To the thousands of goddesses who tend Him!
Glory! All Glory to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's figure of beauty tinged with the hue of blue clouds! All glory to His pink-bottom'd feet!
Glory to the peacock feathers in His hair! Glory! Glory to His lustrous limbs charming the eyes of cupid!
Glory to His legs! Glory to His hands! Glory to His chest, the abode of the golden Lakṣmī! Glory to the garlands and His feet!
Glory! Glory! Glory! Glory to His eyes! Glory to His teeth!
Glory to His throat! His nose! His ears and cheeks!
Glory to His earrings and bangles! Glory to the moons of His fingers! Glory! All Glory to His three-fold bending stance!
Glory to the gold of His dress, flashing like lightning!
All glory to His form of bliss! Glory to His form of truth, substantiality, dazzling splendor!
Glory! Glory to His pastimes of love! Glory to the prowess of His arms!
Glory to the mystery of His birth in the womb of Devakī!





Glory! All glory to His sucking the life from the breast of the Demoness Pūtanā!

Glory to His lotus, conchshell, mace and disc! Glory to His killing Tṛṇāvarta, the whirlwind demon!

Glory to His childhood pastimes! All glory to His revealing the universe in His mouth to Mother Yaśodā!

Glory to His stealing butter! Glory to His deliverance of the sons of Kuvera!

Glory! All Glory to His killing countless horrendous demons! Bakāsura! Aghāsura! Śaṅkhāsura! Keśī and Vyomāsura! Kaṁsa!

Glory to His expansions as the cowherd boys and calves! Glory to His subduing the great serpent Kaliya!

Glory to His inhaling the forest fire! Glory to His lifting Govardhana Hill with one finger! All glory to His saving Vṛndāvana from the torrents of Indra!

Glory to His stealing the garments of the bathing *gopī* girls!

Glory! All glory to His holy and mysterious *rāsa* dance!

Glory to His entrance into Mathurā! To His countless miracles!

Glory to His defeating Kaṁsa's mighty wrestlers! Glory! All glory to Balarāma, His brother, equal in prowess, in strength!

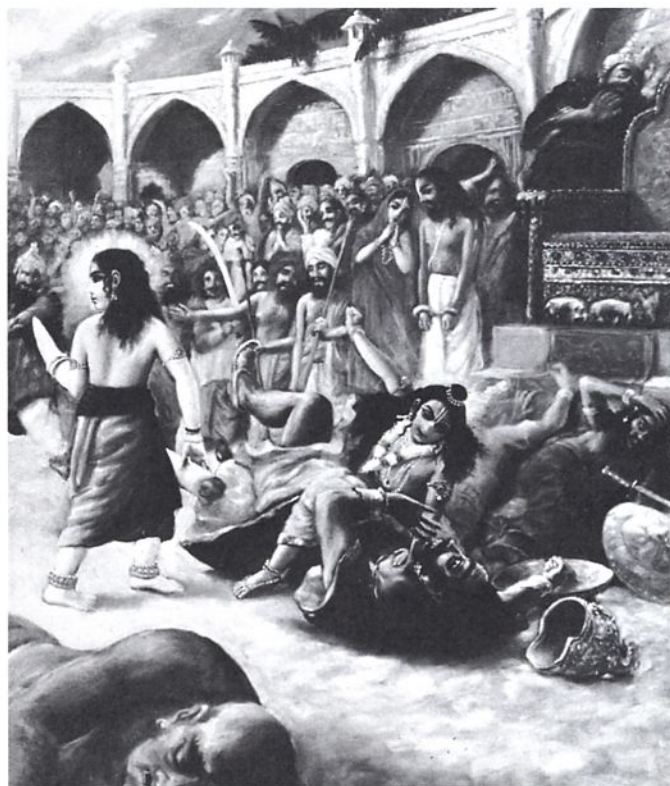
Glory to His descent as Nṛsimha, half-man half-beast, to destroy Hiraṇyakaśipu!

Glory to Him as Varāha, the Primal Boar, who lifted the earth on His tusks!

Glory! All glory to His countless incarnations as tortoise, as fish, as Garuḍa-bird, and horse! As the moon! As Viṣṇu! As Śiva! As the celestial serpent Ananta! As the elephant Gaṇeśa! As Yama, death!

Glory to His appearance as Vāsudeva! Nārada! As Vyāsa! Vāmana! Śukadeva! Lord Rāma! Arjuna! Lord Buddha! Lord Jesus! Śaṅkara!

Glory to His pure manifestation as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most merciful golden avatar, the embodiment of pure love for Kṛṣṇa!



Glory! Glory! Glory to His divine instructions at Kurukṣetra!
 Glory to His universal form of unlimited eyes, mouths,
 heads, legs, bellies!

Glory to the all-pervading effulgence emanating from His
 Primeval Body!

All Glory to His eyes, the sun and moon! To His form that
 reaches the highest planets, that fills the spaces between!

Glory to His fiery mouths that devour all! Glory to Him of un-
 bounded power, of limitless might!

Glory to Him as the beginning, middle and end of all! As being,
 nonbeing and that beyond! As the eternal Soul!

Glory! Glory! Glory! Glory to His ever blossoming Youth!
 Glory to His beautiful name—Kṛṣṇa! Glory to the Tip
 of His Toe!

Glory to Him in the hearts of all! Glory to Him in His supreme
 planet! Glory to Him everywhere!

Glory, all glory to His Names sung by Gaurāṅga, Lord Caitanya,
 by His disciples, Haridāsa, Nityānanda, Advaita, Śrīni-
 vāsa, Gadādhara, by the Gosvāmīs, Jīva, Rūpa, Sanātana,
 Raghunātha! By their countless followers, all glorified!

Glory! Glory! Glory to our grand *Gurus*, Śrīla Bhaktivinode!
 Śrīla Gaur Kīśore! Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī!

All glories to the assembled devotees!
 Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

All glories to the assembled devotees!
 Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

All glories to the assembled devotees!
 Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga! Glories! Glories! Glories!
 All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!



The Perfection of Consciousness *(continued from page 11)*

knowledge of the moon. This is a crude example of how the senses, sight, touch, smell, etc., which are sensitive to different types of energy, work in coordination with the mind and produce knowledge or consciousness.

From this, we can understand that consciousness merely reflects the experience of whatever it is directed towards, just as the space capsule reflects information from wherever it is directed. If you walk into a store, you can purchase whatever you like—some ice cream, some fruit, or some milk. You make the choice. And according to whatever you select, you will have a certain taste experience. Similarly, in our lives and with our consciousness, we can be aware and have experience of whatever we choose. And the highest choice, that experience or taste which is the most perfect, the absolute and supreme, is Kṛṣṇa, or God, and it is not abstract or impersonal. It is not some obscure conception. Kṛṣṇa is never impersonal. He is a person, transcendental and complete.

The *Vedas*, and especially the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (science of God), give us all this personal information about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's qualities, form and attributes are described extensively in a simple and pure manner. Anyone can understand, and the result of exposing ourselves to this experience will be the perfection of our lives, God consciousness.

The human form of life is especially meant for this purpose of reviving our God consciousness. Only humans can practice *bhakti-yoga* because the better development of consciousness is only found in the human body. Animal propensities are found both in animal life and human life. Unfortunately people are

nowadays more concerned with the principles of material sense gratification because they have no knowledge of spiritual or transcendental sense gratification. In other words they are only animal conscious and are negligent of God consciousness. This tendency is becoming more and more developed, producing an increasingly degrading effect. People are becoming more and more animalistic.

We should not continue on this path. We are all implicated. If we do not elevate ourselves in God consciousness, then we shall degrade ourselves to the level of dog consciousness.

Bhakti-yoga is the process of elevating oneself to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This cannot be artificially attained, but it is acquired by association with devotees of the Lord, hearing from authorized scriptures and chanting the holy names of the Lord. This chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, is the simplest and most expedient means for developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And it is practical. Anyone can very easily master the practice and immediately feel the blissful results of transcendental experience. Kṛṣṇa is there, right in front of you, and by this transcendental sound vibration, Hare Kṛṣṇa, you gradually come to the position of realizing that fact. When you have mastered the chanting and are fixed in continuously resounding the name, Kṛṣṇa will then appear in the soul's eye, and He will dance upon your tongue. You will then taste the Supreme; your thoughts will be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, and your consciousness will be perfect.

END

Grandfather Bhīṣma was lying at the point of death on a bed of arrows which had been shot through his body. Because he was the most famous warrior of his time and an

expert *yogī*, all the great men of the universe went to the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra where he lay dying.

King Yudhiṣṭhira, who had ascended to the throne by winning the battle, felt a horrible responsibility for all the killing which had taken place in the war, and in hopes of getting counsel he also went at once when he heard that Grandfather Bhīṣma was about to pass away from this mortal world. Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was appearing at that time within human society and was involved in all the affairs of Kurukṣetra. Therefore, He also came to see Bhīṣma, driving the chariot for His famous disciple, Arjuna. Many sages and demigods had traveled even from other planets, and the greatest scholars and personalities and their disciples had gathered from everywhere just to be present at this auspicious occasion.

This opens a scene from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, First Canto. The *Bhāgavatam* is a Vedic literature of historical fact recorded 5,000 years ago and handed down from disciple to disciple by the great scholars and spiritual masters of India. More important, however, than the fact that this story of Bhīṣma and Kṛṣṇa actually took place long, long ago is that it can teach us the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by which we can find eternal happiness, as did Bhīṣma. The fruit of hearing stories told in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very valuable, beyond comparison to worldly wealth or temporary happiness. Simply by hearing,



The Passing of Grandfather Bhīṣma

by Satsvarūpa dāsa

(ISKCON Dallas)

we can revive our eternal relationship with God. Grandfather Bhīṣma's passing away is unique in history. We hope that the reader will enjoy this ancient battlefield story.

We cannot imagine how great a *yogī* was Bhīṣma, for he was able to keep a sound mind even though his body was pierced by many arrows. He thus welcomed the many sages who had come to see him at his last hour. It is stated that Bhīṣma was such an expert religionist that although the great sages and *yogīs* present had different understandings of philosophy—just as we have so many apparently different religious sects—he was able to speak with such command of the Absolute Truth that he adjusted all their differing opinions and had everyone listening with rapt attention, in agreement with his authoritative conclusions.

The sages, eager to hear his instructions, were listening very quietly—that was their qualification for greatness. Anyone interested in making spiritual progress in his own life in this day and age should similarly try to approach the authoritative or bona fide spiritual master from whom he can learn the Absolute Truth.

It was very wonderful that Bhīṣma was able to welcome such a large aristocratic gathering, even though he was neither at home nor in a normal healthy condition. But we should not think that Bhīṣma was writhing in excruciating pain. He was such a great *yogī* that he was in full control of his senses. Moreover, in passing away he was victorious. He was endowed with the power to leave his body at will, and so his passing was by his own choice. Such power over death is beyond our imaginations at present, and there is no sense in arguing the point. If we can accept this authorized narrative, all questions will be revealed gradually in the course of the story.

Bhīṣma was soon to leave this mortal world to gain eternal liberation in the kingdom of God. By the will of God, Bhīṣma was to give instructions, before leaving, to the guilty Yudhiṣṭhira about his duties, and he was also to make his last prayer to the Supreme Lord, who had kindly come to the gathering. The illustrations which accompany this story are done exactly according to descriptions in the *Bhāgavatam*, and thus we can truly place ourselves amongst the fortunate persons who gathered in close to see and hear the events which led to Bhīṣma's immortality.

Seeing the distressed Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and his four brothers, the

Pāṇḍavas, sitting nearby with great affection for their dying grandfather, Bhīṣma shed tears of ecstasy. Allow us to briefly relate the background for Bhīṣma's being called "Grandfather" and for his deep emotion at the sight of these Pāṇḍava brothers who had gathered beside him as he prepared to breathe his last. Some time before this scene, the world was ruled by King Pāṇḍu, who died at an early age when his five sons were all young children. These boys, the Pāṇḍavas, were brought up by the affectionate elder members of the royal family, especially by Bhīṣmadeva. Later on, when they grew up, they were cheated by a rival in the palace and exiled from the court, although they were the rightful heirs to the throne.

Bhīṣma knew that the Pāṇḍavas were innocent and had been unnecessarily put into trouble, but he could not take their side since he had already promised to support the rival party led by Duryodhana, the Pāṇḍavas' cousin. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains why Grandfather Bhīṣma opposed the Pāṇḍavas in the civil war: "Bhīṣmadeva was not at all satisfied to fight against the Pāṇḍavas, who were his beloved fatherless grandchildren. But the warrior class is very stern, and therefore he was obliged to take the side of Duryodhana because he was maintained at the expense of Duryodhana."

When the Pāṇḍavas came back from exile and asked to have at least a little land to rule, they were driven away by the rival party of cheaters headed by Duryodhana. Lord Kṛṣṇa also appeared in the royal court at that time and asked that peace be kept and that the brothers be given some land, but He was ignored. Duryodhana's party told the Pāṇḍavas, "If you want as much land as can fit under a pin, you'll have to fight for it." Thus, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas were forced to fight in the great war of Kurukṣetra, a huge family feud in which many brothers, students, teachers and friends found themselves on opposite sides. It appears that Bhīṣma was forced by political intrigue to fight opposite the Pāṇḍavas and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The ultimate reason why all these events happened as they did and Yudhiṣṭhira and the others were brought together at Bhīṣma's deathbed of arrows can only be explained as the will of the Lord. It is not difficult to understand that everything is happening under a plan of the Supreme Lord. Pure devotees of the Lord are completely agreeable to the fact that nothing happens except by the will of Kṛṣṇa, and

the desire of a devotee is to learn Kṛṣṇa's will and carry it out as His servant in a loving mood. It is said that not a blade of grass moves without the will of the Lord.

In the ordinary events of the material world—such as the operation of the physical laws in the universe by which the planets orbit in space and different living entities are awarded different births in varieties of species of life according to their work—Kṛṣṇa acts through His representative agent, which is called the material energy. The science of how God works and is present everywhere is dealt with in the scripture *Bhagavad-gītā*, and we shall not go into it here. When it comes to the welfare of Kṛṣṇa's devotees, however, it is stated that Kṛṣṇa personally arranges each situation; He even brings them trial and tribulation at certain times just for their ultimate glorification. In other words, God acts through His deputed agents, His energies, in all matters of the material world pertaining to persons who are interested in worldly gain, but for a devotee He does not employ agents; rather, He personally takes charge of their destiny and sees that they become purified.

The passing of Bhīṣma was personally arranged by God for His pleasure, just to exchange love with His devotees. He wanted King Yudhiṣṭhira to receive instructions from a great authority like Bhīṣma, and He wanted to appear before Bhīṣma so that His devotee could see Him in his last hour. That is the explanation of why this scene took place. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the speaker of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, stood peacefully beside His dear devotee, Bhīṣma, while Bhīṣma distinguished himself before all the learned sages by his instructions to the new king.

The first advice Bhīṣma gave to Yudhiṣṭhira was that he should not feel sorry for the death of those who had been killed in that way. "In my opinion," Bhīṣma said, "It is all due to inevitable time." As long as one is within the material world, he has to bear the actions and reactions of time, which brings about so many wars and sufferings. Even if one is pious, the conditions of material life are such that suffering and devastation will take place. Truly, the world is a shaky place with danger at every step, and even the greatest personalities suffer many reverses in the course of time.

Bhīṣma explained that this time factor was the wish of the Lord Himself, and so it was not right to think that the deaths

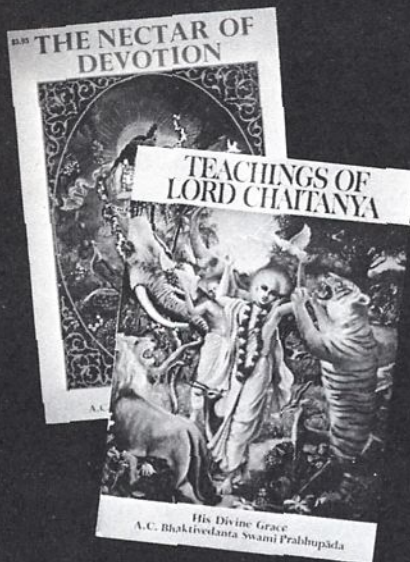
were the responsibility of Yudhiṣṭhira. It was not by his will that these things were happening; the actual doer was Kṛṣṇa. In His form of time, He annihilated thousands of soldiers of both parties. "Since it is beyond the control of any human being," Bhīṣma said, "there is nothing you can do. So why should you lament?" Bhīṣma said: "All these demonstrations are within the plan of the Lord. Accepting this inconceivable plan, you must follow it."

Bhīṣma knew that since the Pāṇḍavas' cause was just, virtue had triumphed over vice. Yudhiṣṭhira was not personally to blame for deaths which had taken place by the agency of all-devouring time. His duty now was to take over the administration of the people and protect them so that they could perfect their lives and go back to Godhead—that is the sum and substance of Bhīṣma's instructions to Yudhiṣṭhira.

When we speak of the will of God or the plan of God, these words indicate that God is not a dead lump or desireless void—He is the Supreme Person. In fact, as a person, Kṛṣṇa appeared amidst this clan of Pāṇḍavas as one of their family members. His position is bewildering to the common people. He is the Almighty God by whose will the movement of a blade of grass or the outcome of a spectacular event like the Kurukṣetra War takes place, yet He was present as a friend at the passing away of Bhīṣma. Devotees accept Him both ways, for anything is possible for God. There is no question of restricting Him only to managing the destiny of the universe by saying, "No, God can't come into the human society personally. He can't stand before His devotee and speak loving words. He can't smile. He can't bless. He can't do this. He can't do that." God can do what He likes, as He likes. God is God. He is independent, and when He comes, He comes in His eternal spiritual form. As cousin, friend, well-wisher and messenger of the Pāṇḍavas, He was still the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although it is bewildering that God can be present as an ordinary family member, it is certainly possible for Him. He appeared, by His mercy, as the unconquerable and eternal Supreme Person and was accepted by Bhīṣma, His devotee. Therefore, we can also accept Kṛṣṇa as He appears in this narrative by His will.

Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared at the deathbed of Bhīṣma because Bhīṣma was a great unalloyed devotee of the Lord. Bhīṣma took it as a great favor that he could see the Lord. We have seen pictures of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the

WHEN THERE IS AN INCARNATION OF GOD, THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND THOSE WHO DO NOT.



Of those who believe, only a handful may know Him, live with Him, and know what He is teaching. Lord Caitanya appeared in India 500 years ago. As *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* predicted and the great spiritual masters have attested, Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa Himself, playing the role of His own devotee.

The intimate revelations of Lord Caitanya to His most confidential associates are disclosed in these extraordinary books. Here for the first time the loftiest, most intimate topics of God consciousness are presented to the western world for the serious student of spiritual science and bhakti-yoga.

Supreme Personality of Godhead. His transcendental body of eternal youth is of a bluish hue. He is smiling, and in His four-armed form He holds a disc, conchshell, wheel and lotus. He wears brilliant yellow garments and is opulently ornamented and helmeted. His eyes are beautiful like a lotus.

Kṛṣṇa was standing before Bhīṣma at the time of his death. No general or philosopher in the history of the rise and fall of mundane empires was ever blessed in this way—to have God appear before him, in a friendly reassuring mood, just to satisfy his vision. Bhīṣma was thinking, in all humility, that he might not see God after his death. Therefore he requested the Lord to stay before him so that he could concentrate on His form before passing away.

This scene is unique and astonishing, but it is an authorized description of dealings between the Supreme Lord and one of His devotees. The scene and the intimate relationship which the Lord had with Bhīṣma are verified by the most perfect process of receiving knowledge—to hear it from the Vedic sources, the spiritual master and the scriptures. Such knowledge is never dogmatic. Just as the mother is the bona fide authority for the confidential knowledge

of the identity of one's father, so Vedic scripture is the perfect authority for information about the transcendental world. Hearing such literature is a regular process for receiving perfect knowledge.

Bhīṣma's activities have been accepted by all authorities in this spiritual line of disciplic succession, including Lord Caitanya and our spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. They all accept the version of the *Bhāgavatam* as the word of God. Modern man believes that spaceships have gone to the moon on the authority of modern science. Whatever the scientist or newspaper says is imperfect, whereas the word of God is perfect. If we attempt to guess or theorize about God's existence and appearance rather than accept the authority of scriptures and the spiritual master, we will never have access to this vital information about our eternal relation with God. It is beyond our guessing. What's more, by rejecting the spiritual master's authority, today's society has been degraded by all manner of vices, illicit sex and intoxication, and thus modern society has become very uncongenial for anyone interested in spiritual progress.

When Bhīṣma speaks about Kṛṣṇa, we

can accept what he says, since he knows the principles of transcendental knowledge. He appears in Vedic literature as an outstanding authority on Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Before the great assembly who had come to see and hear him, Bhīṣma prayed to Kṛṣṇa, "Now I am going to die. So in these last moments, let me remember You in the mood in which we met each other as opponents on the battlefield. That vision of You, out of all, is the most attractive to me. Since I am a warrior, I long to see You in that fighting spirit. You came before me like an attacking lion, carrying a chariot wheel in Your hand, because I was about to kill Your disciple, Arjuna."

Bhīṣma said: "In the battlefield, the wavy hair of Lord Kṛṣṇa turned an ashen color from the dust raised by the hoofs of the horses. His hair was scattered; there was perspiration on His face. All these decorations, intensified by the wounds made by my arrows, were enjoyed by Him. Let my mind rest upon that Kṛṣṇa."

Bhīṣma was a warrior by quality and work, and so he worshiped Kṛṣṇa by shooting arrows at Him. Of all bewildering things about Bhīṣma and the Lord, this is the most bewildering—that a devotee expressed his love for Kṛṣṇa by inflicting wounds upon Him on the battlefield as His enemy. It is stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, "The Lord, being absolute, can accept service from His pure devotee even in the garb of an enemy." Actually, the Lord, the Unconquerable, has no real enemy. The wounds from Bhīṣma's arrows were enjoyed by the Lord as much as the service of devotees who worship by throwing soft roses upon Him or bowing before an altar.

Of course, since the Lord has an eternal spiritual body, there was no question of His actually being bruised or cut. Transcendental bliss is of different varieties and is always completely pure. Therefore, the Lord enjoyed the wounds created by His great devotee Bhīṣma, and because Bhīṣma was a devotee in the chivalrous military mood, he fixed his mind on Kṛṣṇa in that wounded condition.

Bhīṣma prayed: "Let my mind be fixed on the Lord's activities on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra as He fought as the chariot-driver of Arjuna." Bhīṣma reflected, "Just by seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield, the opposing soldiers gained liberation in their next lives."

While the day grew near its close, as indicated by the sun's rays, the great host of eminent personalities from all over the



universe listened eagerly and with full faith to the authorized instructions of Bhīṣma. The speaking of Bhīṣma and the hearing by the sages can only be appreciated on the platform of devotional service or transcendental life. There was no mental speculator or doubter present at that meeting. Such persons do not have entrance into the pastimes between Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotee because they think that such activities are material or impossible or just stories. Those who are qualified to actually be an audience to such a transcendental narration were thrilled, and they forgot all miseries and circumstances of the material world and listened with full feelings of ecstasy and rapt attention.

It is said that actually a devotee cannot completely understand the Supreme Lord because the nature of God is that He is ultimately inconceivable and not subject to our understanding. But a measure of a devotee's advancement is that he increasingly relishes hearing these stories about the Lord. If we hear this narration without envy, we can be included in that host of eternal liberated listeners of the *Bhāgavatam*.

Bhīṣma recalled the battle. One day, after long fighting, Duryodhana criticized Bhīṣma, hinting that Bhīṣma was not fighting as hard as he could because of his reluctance to kill Arjuna and the other Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana accused Bhīṣma: "Your grandfatherly feelings have made you soft-hearted." In those days, warriors fought with great sporting spirit, as a friend fights with a friend, and Bhīṣma could not tolerate this criticism from Duryodhana. "I vow," promised Bhīṣma, "that tomorrow I will kill all the Pāṇḍava brothers."

Duryodhana had inspired Bhīṣma to a rage. Bhīṣma said: "Kṛṣṇa is the chariot-

driver of Arjuna, and He Himself will have to take weapons tomorrow. Otherwise His friend Arjuna will die. Kṛṣṇa has promised to be neutral in this war and not to actually fight. But if He wishes to protect Arjuna, He shall be forced to fight me!"

The next day, Bhīṣma drove his chariot across the field, broke and scattered all opposition before him, and headed straight for Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. His chariot moved against all resistance. Dust arose in clouds. Soldiers fought, knocking each other from their carts. Fully decorated bodies lay dead on the field along with horses and mangled bodies.

Bhīṣma fought so violently that both Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were in trouble. Arjuna became separated from Kṛṣṇa and put at a military disadvantage. This stalwart fighter Bhīṣma, who is praised as the greatest of all generals, came upon Arjuna with raised weapons, prepared to kill him in a moment.

Then Kṛṣṇa moved to save His devotee, Arjuna. He picked up a large chariot wheel from the battlefield and rushed toward Bhīṣma in an angry mood, as a lion charges to kill an elephant. He ran in such haste that His covering cloth fell from His shoulder without His knowing where it fell.

Bhīṣma at once gave up his weapons and stood ready to be killed by the Lord. The Lord was the ultimate destination of Bhīṣma's life, and to see the Lord in this mood was the fulfillment of Bhīṣma's chivalrous dealings with the Lord. Although Kṛṣṇa had promised not to lend His fighting strength to either side, He broke that promise on Bhīṣma's insistence, just to save His devotee, Arjuna. This was all an arrangement by the Lord to favor His great devotee, Bhīṣma. Bhīṣma wanted to see the Lord break His promise and save His devotee; therefore, the Lord's running towards Bhīṣma with the wheel in His hand was like a lover's going to a lover without caring for checking hindrances.

This cannot be understood by those who try to restrict God by saying, "He cannot do such and such." Devotional service is dynamic, far beyond the selfish aspirations of *yogīs* and impersonal meditators who seek self-satisfaction by mechanical *yoga* processes. Everyone has a unique, eternal, active relationship with God. We can recover our original mellow relationship with Kṛṣṇa by beginning our practice of devotional service according to regulative principles under the guidance of a spiritual master. Those who know even a

little of pure devotional service can penetrate the mystery of this loving exchange between Bhīṣma and Kṛṣṇa as so-called enemies. It is astounding that a devotee can please God by playing the part of an enemy. This can happen only in the case of a completely pure devotee like Bhīṣma, who is not actually an enemy but an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. At his last moments, Bhīṣma clearly saw and cherished this vision of Lord Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield.

Thinking of Kṛṣṇa in so many ways as his supreme beloved object, Bhīṣma finally left this world for the next. Because he was thinking of Kṛṣṇa in love and Kṛṣṇa was actually present before him, it was assured that he would enter the spiritual realm which lies beyond these material universes to join the Lord in one of the spiritual Vaikuṅṭha planets and constantly engage in loving service without anxiety or misery.

The perfection achieved by Bhīṣmadeva at the time of death can be attained even if Lord Kṛṣṇa is not personally present. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa or by hearing narrations about Kṛṣṇa, one can attain this stage. Every man or animal must ultimately die, but one who dies like Bhīṣmadeva attains perfection, and one who dies forced by the laws of nature dies like a cat or dog. That is the difference between a man and an animal.

Human life is especially meant for dying like Bhīṣmadeva. The atheist thinks that at death he is finished and that everything else is finished and there is no after-life or spiritual world. The only possible way to receive knowledge about what is beyond this material world is from the authorities who speak information from the spiritual world. There is a process of spiritual knowledge. If one wishes to know who his father is, the mother is the authority. In the same way, God Himself, or revealed scriptures, can tell us about this eternal life. The human being who takes up the responsibility of recovering his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa fulfills the responsibility of human life. As for the atheist, he denies God up until the time of death, and then he is conquered by time, which is the direct representative of Kṛṣṇa.

We should not consider the story of Bhīṣma to be unimportant. It is not simply the story of an old warrior dying, but it is the narration of a great soul leaving this mortal world for the spiritual world. Bhīṣmadeva was perfect because he never forgot the Lord in His transcendental feature as the chariot-driver of Arjuna on the

battlefield and because the Lord was personally present before Bhīṣmadeva while he passed to the transcendental world.

Sūta Gosvāmī, the speaker of this narration, describes the final moments of Bhīṣma: "Bhīṣmadeva, merging himself in the Supersoul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, with his mind, speech, sight and activities, became silent and stopped breathing. Thus, knowing that Bhīṣmadeva had merged into the unlimited eternity of the Supreme Absolute, all present there became silent like birds at the end of day. Thereafter, both men and demigods sounded respectful honor by beating on drums. The honest royal order offered honor and respect, and from the sky there was a shower of flowers."

The shower of flowers by the heavenly beings has no comparison in the funeral rites performed for an ordinary common man in our materialistic civilization today. In the case of an ordinary funeral, people glorify and lament over the dead body, but in the case of Bhīṣmadeva the men and demigods present were glorifying the ascension of the spiritual body. They were glorifying the passing of Bhīṣma because he was attaining the spiritual planets.

The passing away of a devotee is, therefore, unique and exalted. The *Bhāgavatam* says that the men of this present age are always disturbed and filled with so many cares that they do not have the time and inclination to hear about spiritual life. We are so surrounded by this disturbed civilization that it is very difficult for us to hear about and understand a great Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee like Bhīṣma. But God Himself says that if we can remember and recite about these devotees, it is even more beneficial than trying to connect directly with the Lord Himself.

If we can try to retain a summary of the narrations of Bhīṣma in our minds, if we try to tell others about this great devotee, who met the Lord in a fighting mood, spoke great instructions on a deathbed of arrows, and, passing away at a moment of his own choosing, attained the spiritual world—if we can just experiment in this way by reciting the activities of a devotee in a submissive rather than skeptical mood—then we will be able to feel spiritual pleasure. We highly recommend discussion of these topics about the transference of our real self at the time of death into the next world, and we urge the reader to direct any questions to the editors of *Back to Godhead* so we can discuss this matter clearly, since it is the most important business of life—to fix our own passage from this world into the spiritual world.

The example of Bhīṣmadeva is one of perfect death. It is not that he died only because he was an old warrior. Even if a young man is twenty-five years old, he has already died twenty-five years. So, for all of us, our immediate concern should be how to prepare for death and what our responsibility is. The Vedic literature is full of many satisfying stories and teachings which answer this all-important question. This material is given to us out of the compassion of the great sages who are directed by Kṛṣṇa Himself.

The final conclusion is that by chanting in a humble state of mind the names of God—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—we can achieve the stature of this great warrior devotee of the old days, Bhīṣmadeva. Just as He did for Bhīṣmadeva, Kṛṣṇa will come before us in the mood in which we most desire Him, and He will fulfill all our desires. END

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS MEMBERSHIP

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is presenting a scientific program for the respiritualization of all of human society. Although man has made rapid material progress, there is a need for a spiritual method by which all men can become one in peace, friendship and prosperity through a common cause. The greatest cause for all men is devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and this is being introduced all over the world by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in a simple, practical and universal way that can be accepted by men of any race, religion or nationality. For information on how you can become a registered member of this important spiritual movement, please write to the Society's secretary at ISKCON Press, 32 Tiffany Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11231

Surat, India
17 July 1971

Tokyo, Japan

Dear A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,

Please allow me to offer my respectful obeisances unto your lotus feet. And please allow me to introduce myself. I am 26 years old boy. I have spent about two years and a half in a hippy-like way after escaping out of the society and family. Meanwhile I have tried to get on the way for the salvation. I have studied about Indian religions including some Buddhist Texts. But every effort I made was quite in vain and illusion because I was just trying to forget my sins and mistakes and to hide them from myself and others. People calls me by the nickname Damari, meaning keeping silent or the mouth is locked. It shows how my deeds and words have been meaningless. I did not know how foolish I have ever been, living in the false world.

About two weeks ago came the change. I was forced to see the reality what I had ever been. I found my mind quite dead. I felt myself as an evil spirit, following the path of a demon. It was hell of faithless, cold and painful. I got insane. I wandered out of the city and walked on for four days without eating but some small cookies and two bottles of milk. Actually I was thinking of killing myself. But it was a great fortune for me that I knew the Mantra of Hare Kṛṣṇa. While walking I often chanted. My mind was rushing back and forth between death and life. But finally chanting made me to think that I should try the last chance of liberation. I knew the law of *karma*, so I knew killing myself does not help. To be killed is not this life but this ego. Then new self appears.

Fortunately I knew International Society since its beginning in this country, and lately I have visited New Gaya often. So I have come here. Already a week has passed. Sudama and I are working very hard every day. I'm sure making devotion helps me alot. Chanting, too. But still I do not have confidence that I can be good as devotee. I must learn how to love Kṛṣṇa from the beginning.

Oh Prabhupāda, please teach this stupid boy how to make devotion out of love. Please help me to become the servant of Kṛṣṇa. I do not want to come back to *māyā*. Please accept my obeisance, or I am hopeless. All glories to Your lotus feet.

Your humble servant,
Damari, Toshio Inoue

My Dear Śrī Satsvarūpa dāsa Adhikārī:

On page 32 of BTG No. 32 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, in reply to a disciple's inquiry, observes: "Hearing the vibration of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* automatically reminds one of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes, Form, Qualities, etc."

Apropos to this, some of my friends quite at home in comparative religion humbly ask: What about those born before the advent of the Kṛṣṇa *avatāra* [incarnation] who never heard and never had the haziest notion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or His Pastimes, etc.?

They believed in the prior *avatāra* of Rāma and what went before, and so how could they be established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or endeavor to attain Kṛṣṇa-loka or even aspire to be "Kṛṣṇa-ized"?

This just defies our comprehension, as the Supreme Cosmic Personality of Kṛṣṇa appeared only 5000 years ago.

So will you very kindly enlighten and satisfy our consciousness on the subject?

Sincerely thanking you in anticipation, and with respectful obeisances.

Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa!
Mulchand Deomal
Life Member ISKCON

Boston, Mass.
July 29, 1971

Dear Mulchand Deomal:

It was very encouraging to hear from you again. Please accept my humble obeisances. It is so nice to understand that you are discussing and meditating upon the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy.

Regarding your question: Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, "Hearing the vibration of Hare Kṛṣṇa automatically reminds one of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, form, qualities, etc." So you have asked, how could people who lived before the advent of Kṛṣṇa *avatāra* "who never heard or had the haziest notion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa" meditate on Him by chanting? The fact is that information about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, His words and His glories is eternally existent. In the first verse of the Fourth Chapter of the *Gītā* we read that Kṛṣṇa spoke the *bhakti-yoga* principles to the sun-god long, long ago (it is calculated at 140 million years ago).

The Vedic literature was compiled 5,000 years ago, but prior to that the Vedic information was passed down by hearing from bona fide spiritual masters. And what

is the purport of that Vedic science? You will find it in the Third Chapter of First Canto, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: although there are many *avatāras* and they are all parts of the Supreme Godhead, Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavan Himself, the source of all incarnations.

It is not that Kṛṣṇa is a mundane historical person who appeared 5,000 years ago and had no previous existence. He is the eternal Absolute Truth. So information of Kṛṣṇa was available from bona fide spiritual masters, even before the advent of Kṛṣṇa and even before Vyāsadeva compiled the Vedic literature in writing. In the Satya-yuga, the Golden Age, thousands of years ago, spiritual perfection was attained by the process of meditation for thousands of years. But the goal of that meditation was the same as the perfection of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa: realization that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the source of all emanations. This realization culminates in performing acts of devotional service.

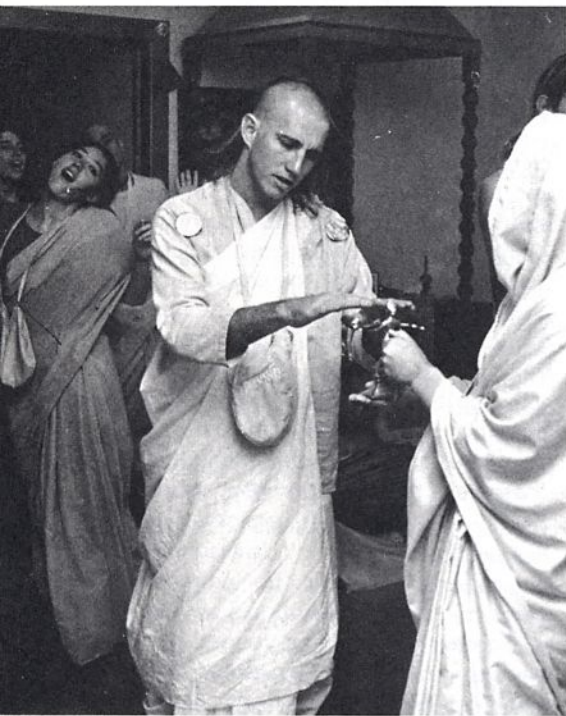
Another point is that you say that people only knew about the *avatāra* of Rāma. But Lord Rāma is also Kṛṣṇa. Meditating upon or glorifying the pastimes of Lord Rāma is the same as glorifying Kṛṣṇa. The only difference is that Lord Rāma is a Viṣṇu expansion, and Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is the original form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

We conditioned souls have all forgotten Kṛṣṇa's pastimes—whether we lived before, during or after the advent of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, we have all forgotten Him and haven't the "haziest notion" of Him. But love of Kṛṣṇa is our original, constitutional state of consciousness. The Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is to bring back our eternal memory of Kṛṣṇa.

I hope you can understand that knowledge and memory of Kṛṣṇa is natural to us; it is not a mundane historical thing, that some have it and some don't—everyone is servant of Kṛṣṇa. Moreover, it is not that Kṛṣṇa only appeared in one place at one time, but His pastimes, as manifested with Yaśodā and the cowherd men and *gopīs*, are eternally manifest, in one universe after another, one second after another, eternally. Our perfection will be to become liberated from the recurring process of birth and death in the material world and to join Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes as they occur within the material universes and eternally exist in Goloka Vṛndāvana in the spiritual sky.

Your servant,
Satsvarūpa dāsa Adhikārī

"I Offer My Respectful Obeisances To His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda..." Siddhara-svarūpa dāsa



I offer my respectful obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, so dear to Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at the Lord's lotus feet.

He is always engaged in worship of the Lord, he feels he is the lowest and most fallen of us all, he is not desirous of being worshiped. Therefore he is worshipable by me. He only accepts his position because his spiritual master has ordered him to do so. One should never take on disciples unless ordered to do so by the spiritual master. I have committed the greatest offense by taking disciples without the direct order of the bona fide spiritual master. Yet Prabhupāda is so merciful that he has even forgiven me.

*Disciples not abandoned—but saved.
Placed securely at the feet of His
Divine Grace and the disciplic succes-
sion.*

*Set our clocks to the eternal time
scale, where example counts more
than words; there a million disciples
are but a drop in the ocean.*

My message, spoken by my words and action, is specifically for those who (1) desire spiritual realization or (2) have achieved spiritual realization.

I've relinquished my position as spiritual

master and offered myself, my disciples, and all our wealth at the feet of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Here is why:

In this age of confusion, souls seeking spiritual realization don't know which path *really* leads to God, and the spiritually advanced don't know how best to serve God. So everyone mentally speculates. The searchers for God go from one spiritual path to another, from one so-called spiritual master and theory to the next. The advanced soul spends his time speculating how he can help others.

Those who rely on mental speculation are bound to be misled and to mislead others because the mind is material; and that which is material is imperfect—subject to making mistakes.

I've surrendered to Śrīla Prabhupāda because he, being in the disciplic succession from Kṛṣṇa Himself, is the way out of this maze of speculation. He is the bona fide representative of the Lord, and he is therefore infused with absolute knowledge and potency. He can easily take one to God; and for those who are beyond the illusion that happiness lies in the material world, he shows exactly what actions they should engage in. No longer are independent, mentally concocted attempts at "turning on others" necessary.

As the Kali age gets thicker and more confused, so will the phone book's yellow pages under Meditation Centers, Spiritual Master, etc. Up to this time, I've been a so-called spiritual master, thus adding to the confusion, making it harder for everyone to know which path is actually absolute.

*Kaṭha Upaniṣad: "In order to learn the
transcendental science, one must approach
the spiritual master in disciplic succession,
fixed in the Absolute Truth."*

To be a spiritual master, one must be in the line of disciplic succession to Kṛṣṇa Himself and must be an *ācārya*, a perfect example.

As an example to others, Lord Caitanya, who was God Himself, humbly submitted Himself at the feet of Īśvara Purī, the contemporary spiritual master in disciplic succession. Yet I am such an arrogant fool that I, who am nothing more than a lowly maggot, believed that I did not need a spiritual master in disciplic succession.

The first time I received the association of Śrīla Prabhupāda's devotees was at the very much celebrated Sunshine Music Festival held in Diamond Head crater, New Year's Day, 1969. I had flown over from our meditation center on Maui to help conduct the Festival's religious function and meditation classes.

Being inquisitive about them and their "Hare Kṛṣṇa" chanting, I wandered over to their booth. The devotees were very kind to me. I sat and chanted with them for a while, and one of them showed me how to play the *kartāls* (finger cymbals), although to this day I still haven't succeeded in learning to play them correctly. I also glanced through a *Back to Godhead* Magazine for the first time.



Thus the seed of the perfect tree was planted. But because I knew nothing of the sweet fruit of that tree of devotional service, I took no effort to water it nicely. Besides, I was too busy trying to turn people on to the Lord's clear light energy and His all-pervasive feature.

One should understand my position at that time. There was no desire for "spiritual realization." I had some realization of





the impersonal feature of God, and because the bliss derived from this was so much greater than any bliss possible in material life, I was moved to turn others on to it. I had no idea of God in His original personal feature. Much of my time and energy was spent trying to find or learn the easiest and quickest means of spiritual realization of God. Having sensed the spiritual power of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, I became interested in using it as a tool for impersonal realization. So I incorporated the chanting into our Maui āśrama program.

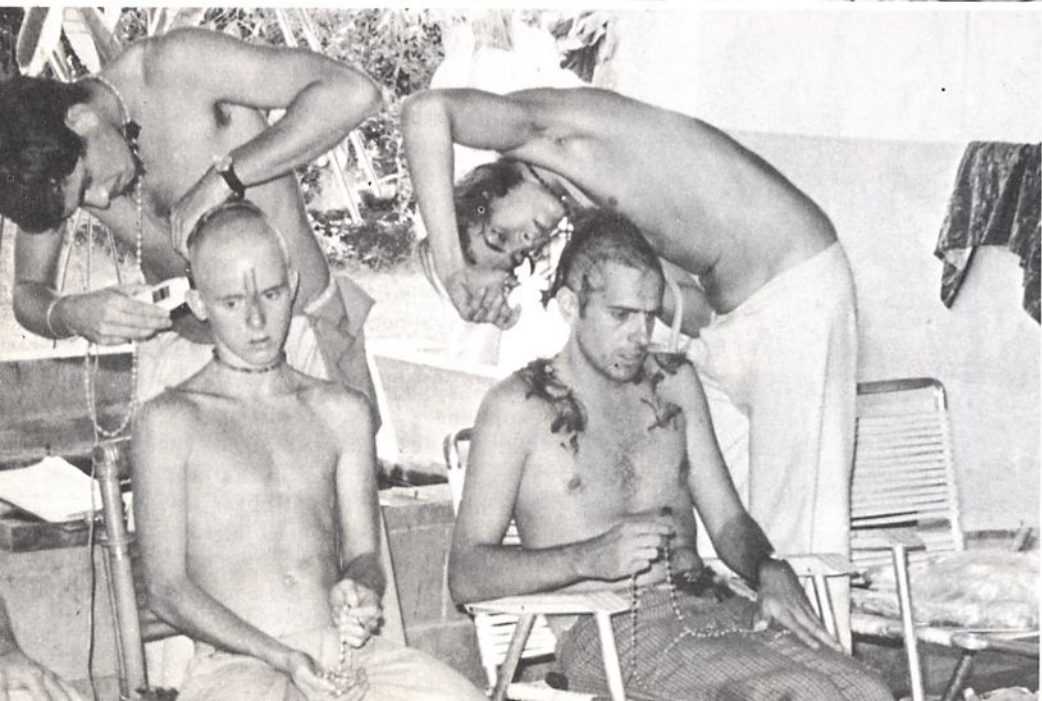
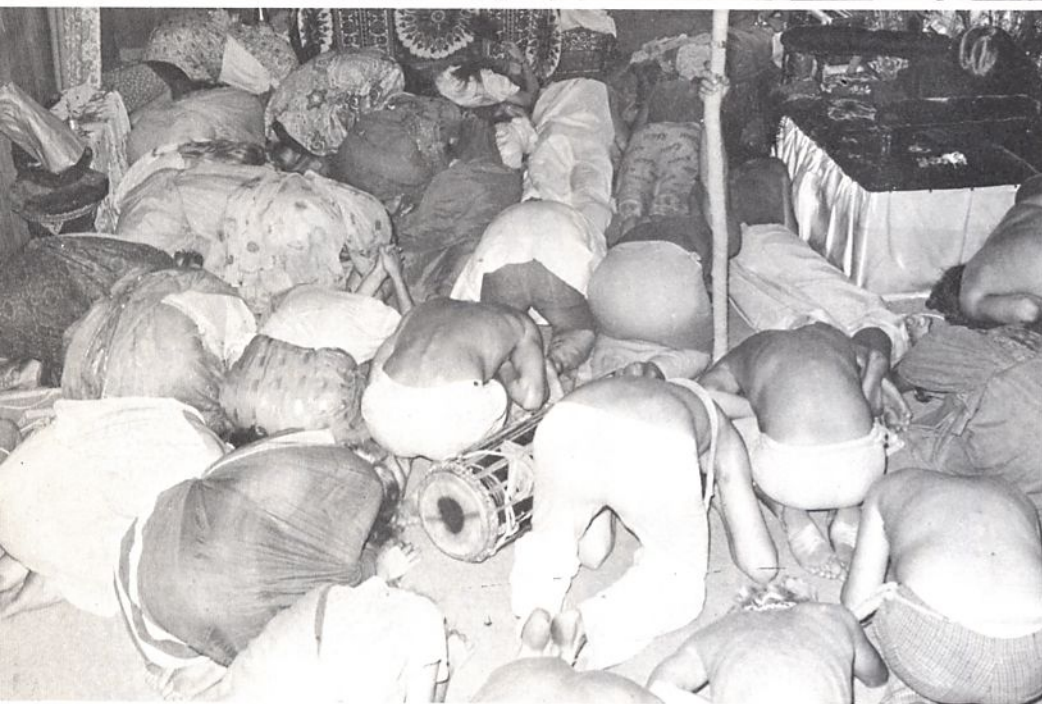
The invisible potency of the mahā-mantra soon began to have visible effects.

Beautiful forms of Kṛṣṇa supplanted pictures of impersonalist gurus and mystics. *Bhagavad-gītā* had been our main textbook for a long time, but we had been using an edition by an impersonalist who, like myself, used the mahāmantra to gain the experience of merging with God. Now we began to use Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, which has a much more devotional attitude. Yoga exercises, breathing, and silent meditation occupied a less and less important part of our program.

The sweet nectar of devotional service I had begun to taste by the causeless mercy of His Divine Grace. Impersonalist experiences now seemed dry and void—with as little significance as children's toys. Chanting the holy name for mokṣa ended. A bigger fool could not exist than I, for I had been thinking of using Kṛṣṇa to gain mokṣa. Only a fool would exchange a diamond for a one-dollar bill.

Although I was beginning to relish the sweetness of the name, I had no appreciation for Śrīla Prabhupāda. Out of his mercy he handed me the gem of love for God, and in return I gave him only trouble and more trouble. Yet he has forgiven me. He has no merchant in his heart.

Since I already held the post of spiritual master, I retained it, but now I was teaching primarily devotional service—though obviously not pure devotional service. I had no thoughts at this time of surrendering to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I was simply taking from his teaching what I wanted and applying it. The more I engaged in what Śrīla Prabhupāda said to engage in, the more I realized, within, the absoluteness of his words. The stronger my internal relationship with Kṛṣṇa became, to that



same degree the Lord let me know of the absoluteness of His representative, Śrīla Prabhupāda. The more I began to act on this realization, the larger our group got. Thus the public in Hawaii got the unfortunate impression that I was the spiritual master of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. This disturbed many members of ISKCON because I wasn't really the bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa. Yet still they were tolerant towards me. Along with mercifully chastising me for my "independent nonsense," they helped the community to become Kṛṣṇa conscious by supplying us with books, musical instruments, *mantras*, instruction, etc.

Approximately seven months before my surrender to Śrīla Prabhupāda, it became clear to me that such surrendering would take place. These seven months were a time of realizing more deeply the necessity for such surrender.

The more I accepted Śrīla Prabhupāda's words as absolute and the more I simply repeated his words—without adding or subtracting anything to my preaching—and the more I surrendered to him in my heart as my spiritual master, the more people joined our community. They were treating me as their spiritual master, yet in my heart I knew that Śrīla Prabhupāda was really their spiritual master. Also at this time the Lord provided us with greater facilities to spread the holy names. Both disciples and facilities came in proportion to the degree of surrender to Śrīla Prabhupāda. While accepting disciples, it was now with full knowledge that I would be placing them, along with myself, at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda. In that sacred knowledge lay my only strength.

Unfathomable is Kṛṣṇa's mercy—for He has sent Śrīla Prabhupāda to distribute absolute knowledge to us. Unfathomable is Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy—for he is freely distributing absolute knowledge of Kṛṣṇa to everyone.

I just recently learned of an incident where Śrīla Prabhupāda and a disciple at the Honolulu ISKCON temple were talking about "that boy Sai and his rascal *sankīrtana* party." The disciple was quite perturbed, but Śrīla Prabhupāda was not. He simply said, "If they continue to read my books and chant, they will become purified." He fully knew the absolute potency of the knowledge he was passing

on. Thus the more I read, the more deeply did I realize that Śrīla Prabhupāda's words were actually the words of the Absolute, with the potency of the Absolute, and the more I realized this, the more I took the words and instructions as my life and soul. The more I took his words as my life and soul, the clearer it became to me that I had to follow exactly what he was saying. That which I heard him say most often was, "Surrender to the bona fide spiritual master and learn the science of God from him."

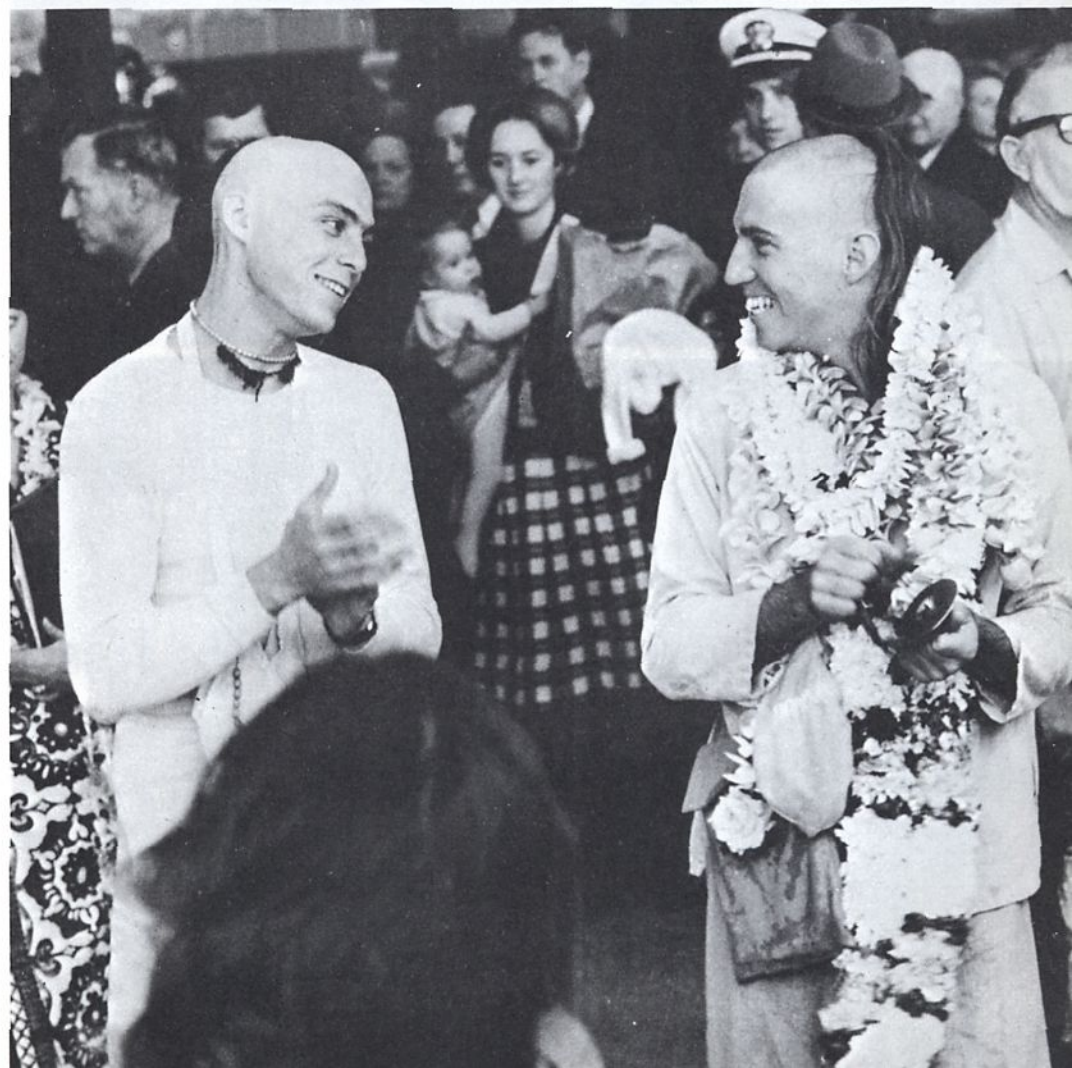
The highest pleasure is in pleasing the Lord—so that is my desire. To please the Lord I must please the spiritual master; to please the spiritual master I must follow his instructions, knowing full well that they are the instructions of the Lord.

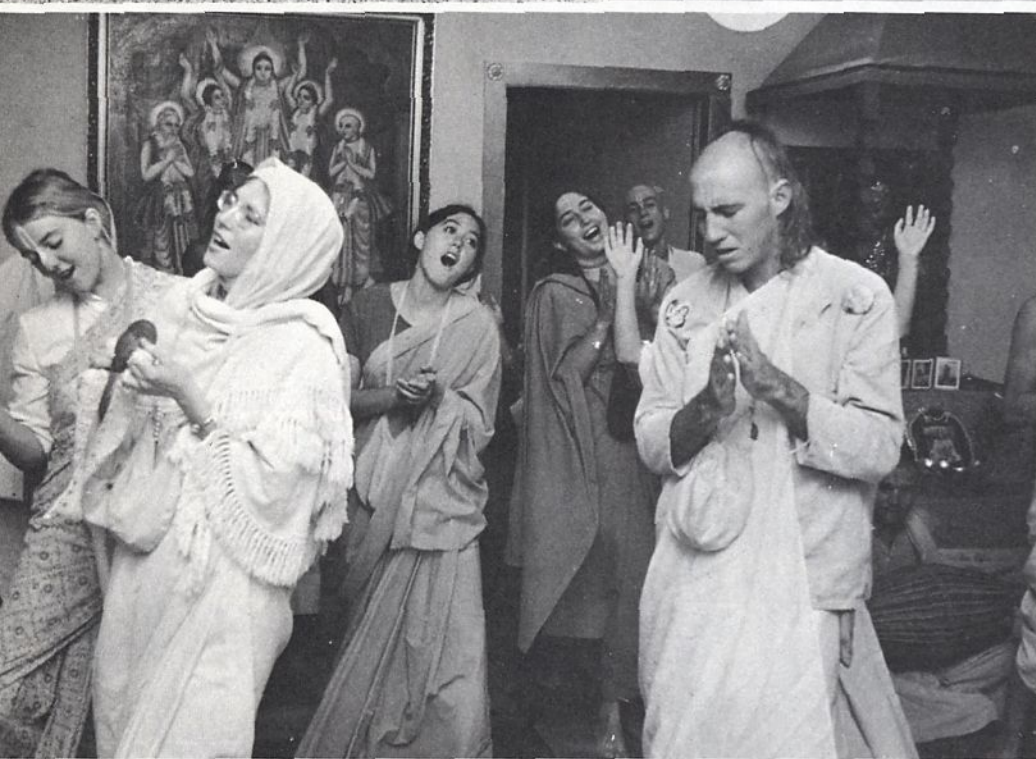
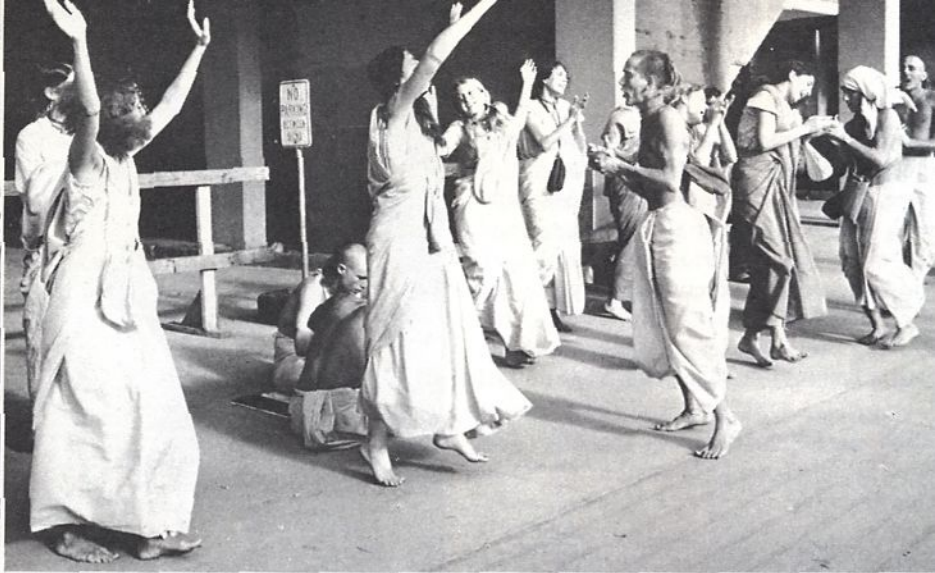
I felt perfectly secure from this point on because no more speculation was needed in order to know how to please God. I knew from that point on that Kṛṣṇa would be pleased simply by my pleasing Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Lord Caitanya's attitude left a deep impression on me. I desired to be in the position of which He spoke: "I am the servant of the servant of the servant—one hundred times the servant—of Kṛṣṇa." By my serving the servant of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord would be pleased with me. The Lord chooses those devotees who feel too impure to be with Kṛṣṇa, and He hugs them as they futilely struggle to run from His arms.

I knew that Śrīla Prabhupāda would be pleased if I stopped my independent nonsense and entered into ISKCON temples and learned submissively the science of love of God from his disciples. And so the specific plan of action was begun.

Because my followers were sincere and serious in their endeavor to serve and love God, there was little trouble in the change. The only devotees who were confused were the few who had been trying to impress upon others that I was Kṛṣṇa. They were suffering from the same disease that Śrīla Prabhupāda desires to free the world from: "I am God-ism." No one left the movement, however, for out of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy they had already tasted the sweet nectar of devotional service. This can be seen by the fact that they had given up the carnival-like material life. They weren't like the pseudo-





yogīs who “meditate” a few minutes or hours a day and then go and engage in all sorts of nonsense.

We had our fill of encounters with such “yogīs” and “swāmīs.” In fact, recent encounters with a few Indian “swāmīs” on their way from India to the USA mainland (to get disciples) freed many devotees of their idealistic illusion about these cheaters in the garb of “Indian holy men” and simultaneously let me see that I was lending authority to these yogīs’ independent rascaldom by my not surrendering to the bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa.

I didn’t inform most of my followers of my plan of action until only two days before I took it. I explained at length my desire to please my spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and said that if they would like to follow my example they were encouraged to do so. The talk was long, serious and confidential. Many were sad; they didn’t know if they would be able to treat me as their spiritual master, and I said, “In small ways you won’t be able to treat me as your spiritual master, but in the most important sense you can. You can please me by doing what I want you to, and I want you to learn the science of devotional service from Śrīla Prabhupāda. So there’s no problem, no conflict.”

A deep feeling of relief filled the air, a feeling that was free from any doubts of the correctness of my action. Safe in the hands of Śrīla Prabhupāda, at the feet of the disciplic succession, a feeling of soul security prevailed. And added to this was the excitement at gaining so many new Godbrothers and sisters. As one devotee joked, “Our community has not dissolved, it has expanded. We now have temples and Godbrothers all over the world!” Spontaneous chanting and dancing began, and no one wanted to stop. Shouts of, “All Glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda! Gaurāṅga! Hari Bol!”

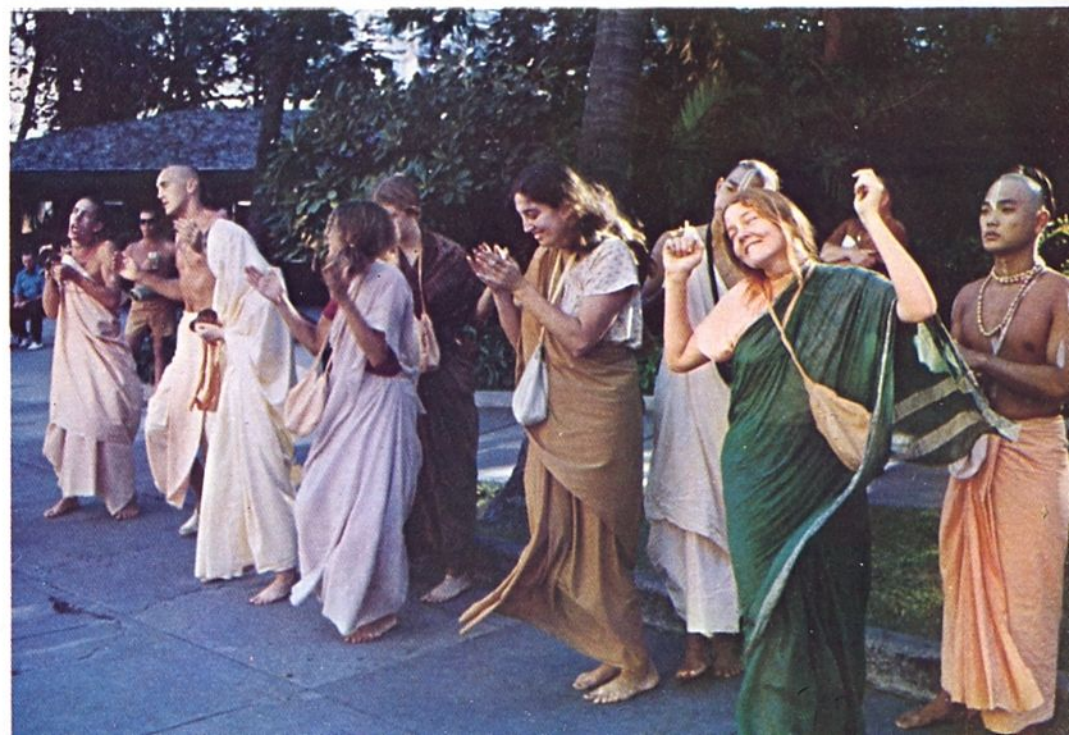


burst forth, opening a whole new chapter in our lives. All sectarian feelings had disappeared. Surely the Lord was very pleased!

After *prasādam* and more chanting, the boys who wanted to follow my example began cutting their hair. To us the hair cutting meant surrender to Śrīla Prabhupāda and the disciplic succession. For the next two days, organizing for the exodus to the different ISKCON temples took place. All our wealth was distributed to different temples, and our vehicles, property, etc., were handed over to Śrīla Prabhupāda's bona fide representative in Hawaii, Gaurasundar dāsa Adhikāri.

Nothing is or ever was mine. So I could not have given up anything at all. Materialists understand not the laws of the spiritual world; to move forward, one must move backwards. With each back-step, a step forward is gained. As water seeks always the lowest point, so should the devotee of the Lord. To move forward, then, is to surrender to the bona fide spiritual master. To be attached to serving and pleasing such a spiritual master is to be attached eternally to Kṛṣṇa's feet. There, securely stationed at the lowest point, in bliss, he is never attracted by the mundane "glory" or "pleasure" offered by the material circus world.

I am certainly unworthy of giving anyone any advice, yet I would like to, at least, pass on to my innumerable brothers and sisters the wish of my most humble spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda. His wish is that you take to the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, regardless of your particular situation in life. You are all much more qualified than I to bathe in the nectarean ocean of Lord Caitanya's mercy; therefore you should not hesitate to chant, read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, and visit or join any ISKCON Temple at any time. END





KṚṢṆA

The Supreme Personality of Godhead

The women entered the forest of Vṛndāvana which was verdant with vegetation and newly grown vines and flowers. Within that forest, they saw Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma engaged in tending the cows.

“Kṛṣṇa wore a nice garland of forest flowers and a peacock feather on His head. He was holding a lotus flower and was

smiling charmingly. With their very eyes, the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, of whom they had heard so much, who was so dear to them, and in whom their minds were always absorbed. Now they saw Him eye to eye and face to face, and Kṛṣṇa entered within their hearts through their eyes.”