

Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol.10 No.10

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT





In Detroit, Michigan, and around the world...

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

God has an unlimited variety of names. Some of them—like Jehovah, Adonai, Buddha and Allah—are familiar to us, while the names Kṛṣṇa and Rāma may be less so. However, whatever name of God we may accept, we are enjoined by all scriptures to chant it for spiritual purification.

Muhammed counseled, "Glorify the name of your Lord, the most high." (*Koran* 87.2) Saint Paul said, "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." (*Romans* 10.13) Lord Buddha declared, "All who sincerely call upon my name will come to me after death, and I will take them to Paradise." (*Vows of Amida Buddha* 18) King David preached, "From the rising of the sun to its

setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised." (*Psalms* 113.3) And the world's oldest scriptures, the Vedas of India, emphatically state, "Chant the holy name, chant the holy name, chant the holy name of the Lord. In this age of quarrel there is no other way, no other way, no other way to attain spiritual enlightenment." (*Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāna*)

The special design of the Hare Kṛṣṇa chant makes it easy to repeat and pleasant to hear. Spoken or sung, by yourself or in a group, Hare Kṛṣṇa invariably produces a joyful state of spiritual awareness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Find out more about Kṛṣṇa in this issue of **BACK TO GODHEAD**.



**His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION OF SANSKRIT WORDS

Sanskrit words and names in *Back to Godhead* are spelled according to a system that scholars throughout the world use to show how to pronounce 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 *ē* is like the *e* in *evade*. Long *ī* is like the *i* in *pique*. The vowel *ī* is pronounced like the *er* in the English word *fiber*. The *c* is pronounced as in the English word *chair*. The aspirated consonants (*ch, jh, dh, etc.*) are pronounced as in *staunch-heart, hedge-hog* and *red-hot*. The two spirants *ś* and *ṣ* are like the English *sh*, and *s* is like the *s* in *sun*. So pronounce *Kṛṣṇa* as KRISHNA and *Caitanya* as CHAITANYA.

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ON THE COVER

Śrī Viṣṇu, the maintainer of the universe and goal of yogis' meditation. Oil painting by Yadurāṇī devī dāsi.

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Can communism take the greed out of human nature?
Karl Marx said "Yes," but Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that avarice
will continue until people are spiritually satisfied.

EVERYTHING BELONGS TO GOD

Part II

"The people are not happy simply reading Lenin's books," His Divine Grace said in last month's BACK TO GODHEAD. "Real happiness comes from spiritual understanding." Concluding his critique of communism, Śrīla Prabhupāda discusses the profit motive, human nature, and the Marxist misunderstanding of religion.



Part two of a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and his personal secretary, Śyāmasundara dāsa.

Śyāmasundara: Marx's definition of communism is "The common or public ownership of the means of production, and the abolition of private property." In our International Society for Krishna Consciousness, don't we have the same idea? We also say, "Nothing is mine." We have also abolished private property.

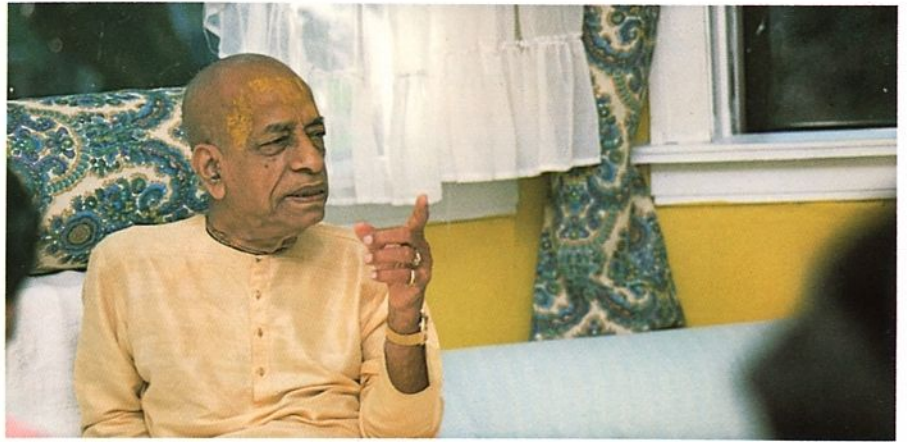
Prabhupāda: While the communist says, "Nothing is mine," he thinks everything belongs to the state. The state, however, is simply an extended "mine." For example, if I am the head of a family, I might say, "I do not want anything for myself, but I want many things for my children." Mahatma Gandhi, who was sacrificing so much to drive the English out of India, was at the same time thinking, "I am a very good man; I am doing national work." Therefore, this so-called nationalism or so-called communism is simply extended selfishness. The quality remains the same. The real change occurs when we say, "Nothing belongs to me, everything belongs to God, Kṛṣṇa, and therefore I should use everything in His service." That is factual.

Śyāmasundara: Marx says that the capitalists are parasites living at the cost of the workers.

Prabhupāda: But the communists are also living at the cost of the workers: the managers are drawing big salaries, and the common workers are dissatisfied. Indeed, their godless society is becoming more and more troublesome. Unless everyone accepts God as the only enjoyer and himself simply as His servant, there will always be conflict. In the broad sense, there is no difference between the communists and the capitalists because God is not accepted as the supreme enjoyer and proprietor in either system. Actually, no property belongs to either the communists or the capitalists. Everything belongs to God.

Śyāmasundara: Marx condemns the capitalists for making a profit. He says that profit-making is exploitation and that the capitalists are unnecessary for the production of commodities.

Prabhupāda: Profit-making may be wrong, but that exploitative tendency is



always there, whether it is a communist or a capitalist system. In Bengal it is said that during the winter season the bugs cannot come out because of the severe cold. So they become dried up, being unable to suck any blood. But as soon as the summer season comes the bugs get the opportunity to come out, so they immediately bite someone and suck his blood to their full satisfaction. Our mentality in this material world is the same: to exploit others and become wealthy. Whether you are a communist in the winter season or a capitalist in the summer season, your tendency is to exploit others. Unless there is a change of heart, this exploitation will go on.

I once knew a mill worker who acquired some money. Then he became the proprietor of the mill and took advantage of his good fortune to become a capitalist. Henry Ford is another example. He was an errand boy, but he got the opportunity to become a capitalist. There are many such instances. So, to a greater or lesser degree, the propensity is always there in human nature to exploit others and become wealthy. Unless this mentality is changed, there is no point in changing from a capitalist to a communist society. Material life means that everyone is seeking some profit, some adoration, and some position. By threats the state can force people to curb this tendency, but for how long? Can they change everyone's mind by force? No, it is impossible. Therefore, Marx's proposition is nonsense.

Śyāmasundara: Marx thinks the minds of people can be changed by forced conditioning.

Prabhupāda: That is not possible. Even a child cannot be convinced by

force, what to speak of a mature, educated man. We have the real process for changing people's minds: chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. *Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*: this process cleanses the heart of material desires. We have seen that people in Moscow are not happy. They are simply waiting for another revolution. We talked to one working-class boy who was very unhappy. When a pot of rice is boiling, you can take one grain and press it between your fingers, and if it is hot you can understand all the rice is boiling. Thus we can understand the position of the Russian people from the sample of that boy. We could also get further ideas by talking with Professor Kotofsky from the Indian Department of Moscow University. How foolish he was! He said that after death everything is finished. If this is his knowledge, and if that young boy is a sample of the citizenry, then the situation in Russia is very bleak. They may theorize about so many things, but we could not even purchase sufficient groceries in Moscow. There were no vegetables, fruits, or rice, and the milk was of poor quality. If that Madras gentleman had not contributed some dahl and rice, then practically speaking we would have starved. The Russians' diet seemed to consist of only meat and liquor.

Śyāmasundara: The communists play upon this universal profit motive. The worker who produces the most units at his factory is glorified by the state or receives a small bonus.

Prabhupāda: Why should he get a bonus?

Śyāmasundara: To give him some incentive to work hard.

Prabhupāda: Just to satisfy his ten-

“In the broad sense, there is no difference between the communists and the capitalists, because God is not accepted as the Supreme Enjoyer and Proprietor in either system.”

dency to lord it over others and make a profit, his superiors bribe him. This Russian communist idea is very good, provided the citizens do not want any profit. But that is impossible because everyone wants profit. The state cannot destroy this tendency either by law or by force.

Śyāmasundara: The communists try to centralize everything—money, communications, and transport—in the hands of the state.

Prabhupāda: But what benefit will there be in that? As soon as all the wealth is centralized, the members of the central government will appropriate it, just as Khrushchev did. These are all useless ideas as long as the tendency for exploitation is not reformed. The Russians have organized their country according to Marx's theories, yet all their leaders have turned out to be cheaters. Where is their program for reforming this cheating propensity?

Śyāmasundara: Their program is to first change the social condition and then, they believe, the corrupt mentality will change automatically.

Prabhupāda: Impossible. Such repression will simply cause a reaction in the form of another revolution.

Śyāmasundara: Are you implying that the people's mentality must first be changed, and then a change in the social structure will naturally follow?

Prabhupāda: Yes. But the leaders will never be able to train all the people to think that everything belongs to the state. This idea is simply utopian nonsense.

Śyāmasundara: Marx has another slogan: “Human nature has no reality.” He says that man's nature changes

through history according to material conditions.

Prabhupāda: He does not know the real human nature. It is certainly true that everything in this cosmic creation, or *jagat*, is changing. Your body changes daily. Everything is changing, just like waves in the ocean. This is not a very advanced philosophy. Marx's theory is also being changed; it cannot last. But man does have a fundamental nature that never changes: his spiritual nature. We are teaching people to come to the standard of acting according to their spiritual nature, which will never change. Acting spiritually means serving Kṛṣṇa. If we try to serve Kṛṣṇa now, we will continue to serve Kṛṣṇa when we go to Vaikuṅṭha, the spiritual world. Therefore, loving service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is called *nitya*, or eternal. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *nitya-yukta upāsate*: “My pure devotees perpetually worship Me with devotion.”

The communists give up Kṛṣṇa and replace Him with the state. Then they expect to get the people to think, “Nothing in my favor; everything in favor of the state.” But people will never accept this idea. It is impossible; let the rascals try it! All they can do is simply force the people to work, as Stalin did. As soon as he found someone opposed to him, he immediately cut his throat. The same disease is still there today, so how will their program be successful?

Śyāmasundara: Their idea is that human nature has no reality of its own. It is simply a product of the material environment. Thus, by putting a man in the factory and making him identify with the state and something like scientific achievement, they think they can

transform him into a selfless person.

Prabhupāda: But because he has the basic disease, envy, he will remain selfish. When he sees that he is working so hard, but the profit is not coming to him, his enthusiasm will immediately slacken. In Bengal there is a proverb: “As a proprietor I can turn sand into gold, but as soon as I am no longer the proprietor, the gold becomes sand.” The Russian people are in this position. They are not as rich as the Europeans or the Americans, and because of this they are unhappy.

Śyāmasundara: One of the methods the authorities in Russia use is to constantly whip the people into believing there may be a war at any moment. Then they think, “To protect our country, we must work hard.”

Prabhupāda: If the people cannot make any profit on their work, however, they will eventually lose all interest in the country. The average man will think, “Whether I work or not, I get the same result. I cannot adequately feed and clothe my family.” Then he will begin to lose his incentive to work. A scientist will see that despite his high position, his wife and children are dressed just like the common laborer.

Śyāmasundara: Marx says that industrial and scientific work is the highest kind of activity.

Prabhupāda: But unless the scientists and the industrialists receive sufficient profit, they will be reluctant to work for the state.

Śyāmasundara: The Russian goal is the production of material goods for the enhancement of human well-being.

Prabhupāda: Their “human well-being” actually means, “If you don't agree with me, I'll cut your throat.” This is their “well-being.” Stalin had his idea of “human well-being,” but anyone who disagreed with his version of it was killed or imprisoned. They may say that a few must suffer for the sake of many, but we have personally seen that Russia has achieved neither general happiness nor prosperity. For example, in Moscow none of the big buildings have been recently built. They are old and ravaged, or poorly renovated. Also, at the stores the people had to stand in long lines to make purchases. These are indications that economic conditions are unsound.

Śyāmasundara: Marx considered religion an illusion that must be condemned.

Prabhupāda: The divisions between different religious faiths may be an illusion, but Marx's philosophy is also an illusion.

Śyāmasundara: Do you mean that it's not being practiced?

Prabhupāda: In the sixty years since the Russian Revolution, his philosophy has become distorted. On the other hand, Lord Brahmā began the Vedic religion countless years ago, and though foreigners have been trying to devastate it for the last two thousand years, it is still intact. Vedic religion is not an illusion, at least not for India.

Śyāmasundara: Here is Marx's famous statement about religion. He says, "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, just as it is the spirit of the spiritless situation. It is the opiate of the people."

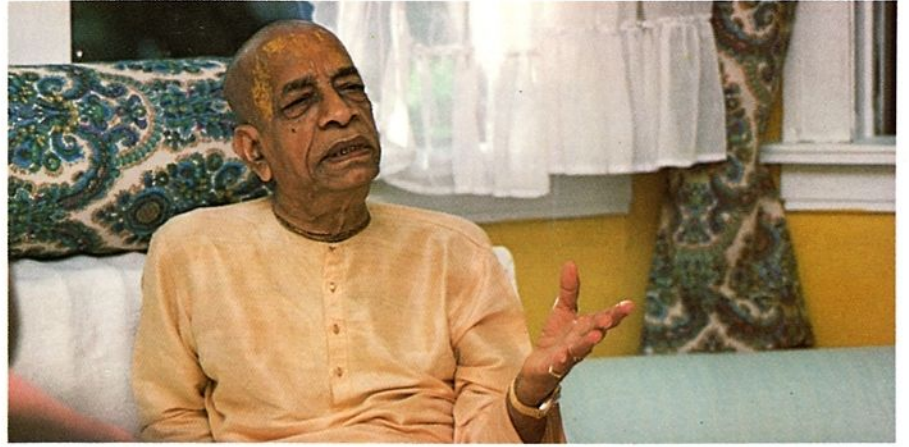
Prabhupāda: He does not know what religion is. His definition is false. The *Vedas* state that religion is the course of action given by God. God is a fact, and His law is also a fact. It is not an illusion. Kṛṣṇa gives the definition of religion in *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 18.66): *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*. To surrender unto God—this is religion.

Śyāmasundara: Marx believes everything is produced from economic struggle and that religion is a technique invented by the bourgeoisie or the capitalists to dissuade the masses from revolution by promising them a better existence after death.

Prabhupāda: He himself has created a philosophy that is presently being enforced by coercion and killing.

Śyāmasundara: And he promised that in the future things will be better. So he is guilty of the very thing that he condemns religion for.

Prabhupāda: As we have often explained, religion is that part of our nature which is permanent, which we cannot give up. No one can give up his religion. And what is that religion? Service. Marx desires to serve humanity by putting forward his philosophy. Therefore that is his religion. Everyone is trying to render some service. The father is trying to serve his family, the



statesman is trying to serve his country, and the philanthropist is trying to serve all humanity. Whether you are Karl Marx, or Stalin, or Mahatma Gandhi, a Hindu, a Muslim or a Christian, you must serve. Because we are presently rendering service to so many people and so many things, we are becoming confused. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa advises us to give up all this service and serve Him alone:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

"Abandon all varieties of service and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." (Bg. 18.66)

Śyāmasundara: The communists—and even to a certain extent the capitalists—believe that service for the production of goods is the only real service. Therefore they condemn us because we are not producing anything tangible.

Prabhupāda: How can they condemn us? We are giving service to humanity by teaching the highest knowledge. A high court judge does not produce any grains in the field. He sits in a chair and gets \$25,000 or \$30,000. Does that mean he is not rendering any service? Of course he is. The theory that unless one performs manual labor in the factory or the fields he is not doing service would simply give credit to the peasant and the worker. It is a peasant philosophy.

There is a story about a king and his prime minister. Once the king's salaried workers complained, "We are actually

working, and this minister is doing nothing, yet you are paying him such a large salary. Why is that?" The king then called his minister in and also had someone bring in an elephant. "Please take this elephant and weigh it," the king said to his workers. The workers took the elephant to all the markets, but they could not find a scale large enough to weigh the animal. When they returned to the palace the king asked, "What happened?" One of the workers answered, "Sir, we could not find a scale large enough to weigh the elephant." Then the king addressed his prime minister, "Will you please weigh this elephant?" "Yes sir," said the prime minister, and he took the elephant away. He returned within a few minutes and said, "It weighs sixteen hundred and fifty pounds." All the workers were astonished. "How did you weigh the elephant so quickly?" one of them asked. "Did you find some very large scale?" The minister replied, "No. It is impossible to weigh an elephant on a scale. I went to the river, took the elephant on a boat, and noted the water mark. After taking the elephant off the boat, I put weights in the boat until the same water mark was reached. Then I had the elephant's weight." The king said to his workers, "Now do you see the difference?" One who has intelligence has strength, not the fools and the rascals. Marx and his followers are simply fools and rascals. We don't take advice from them; we take advice from Kṛṣṇa or His representative.

Śyāmasundara: So religion is not simply a police force to keep people in illusion?

Prabhupāda: No. Religion means to

“If Kṛṣṇa is at the center of society, then people will be perfectly secure and prosperous. The communist idea is welcome, provided they replace the so-called state with God.”

serve the spirit. That is religion. Everyone is rendering service, but no one knows where his service will be most successful. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, “Serve Me, and you will serve the spiritual society.” This is real religion. The Marxists want to build a so-called perfect society without religion, yet even up to this day, because India’s foundation is religion, people all over the world adore India.

Śyāmasundara: Marx says that God does not create man; rather, man creates God.

Prabhupāda: That is more nonsense. From what he says, I can tell he is a nonsensical rascal and a fool. One cannot understand that someone is a fool unless he talks. A fool may dress very nicely and sit like a gentleman amongst gentlemen, but we can tell the fools from the learned men by their speech.

Śyāmasundara: Marx’s follower was Nikolai Lenin. He reinforced all of Marx’s ideas and added a few of his own. He believed that revolution is a fundamental fact of history. He said that history moves in leaps, and that it progresses toward the communist leap. He wanted Russia to leap into the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he called the final stage of historical development.

Prabhupāda: No. We can say with confidence—and they may note it carefully—that after the Bolshevik Revolution there will be many other revolutions, because as long as people live on the mental plane there will be only revolution. Our proposition is to give up all these mental concoctions and come to the spiritual platform. If one comes to the spiritual platform, there

will be no more revolution. As Dhruva Mahārāja said, *nātaḥ param parama vedmi na yatra nādaḥ*: “Now that I am seeing God, I am completely satisfied. Now all kinds of theorizing processes are finished.” So God consciousness is the final revolution. There will be repeated revolutions in this material world unless people come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śyāmasundara: The Hare Kṛṣṇa revolution.

Prabhupāda: The Vedic injunction is that people are searching after knowledge, and that when one understands the Absolute Truth, he understands everything. *Yasmin vijñāte sarvam evaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati*. People are trying to approach an objective, but they do not know the final objective is Kṛṣṇa. They are simply trying to make adjustments with so many materialistic revolutions. They have no knowledge that they are spiritual beings, and that unless they go back to the spiritual world and associate with the Supreme Spirit, God, there is no question of happiness. We are like fish out of water. Just as a fish cannot be happy unless he is in the water, we cannot be happy apart from the spiritual world. We are part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit, Kṛṣṇa, but we have left His association and fallen from the spiritual world because of our desire to enjoy this material world. So unless we reawaken the understanding of our spiritual position and go back home to the spiritual world, we can never be happy. We can go on theorizing for many lifetimes, but we will only see one revolution after another. The old order changes, yielding its place to the new. Or in other words, history repeats itself. **Śyāmasundara:** Marx says that there

are always two conflicting properties in material nature, and that the inner pulsation of opposite forces causes history to take leaps from one revolution to another. He claims that the communist revolution is the final revolution because it is the perfect answer to all social contradictions.

Prabhupāda: If the communist idea is spiritualized, then it will become perfect. As long as the communist idea remains materialistic, it cannot be the final revolution. They believe that the state is the owner of everything. But the state is not the owner; the real owner is God. When they come to this conclusion, then the communist idea will be perfect. We also have a communistic philosophy. They say that everything must be done for the state, but in our International Society for Krishna Consciousness we are actually practicing perfect communism by doing everything for Kṛṣṇa. We know Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer of the result of all work (*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasam*). The communist philosophy as it is now practiced is vague, but it can become perfect if they accept the conclusion of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme proprietor, the supreme enjoyer, and the supreme friend of everyone. Then people will be happy. Now they mistrust the state, but if the people accept Kṛṣṇa as their friend, they will have perfect confidence in Him, just as Arjuna was perfectly confident in Kṛṣṇa on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. The great victory of Arjuna and his associates on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra showed that his confidence in Kṛṣṇa was justified:

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo
yatra pārtho dhanur-dharaḥ
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtīr
dhruvā nitir matir mama*

“Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystics, and wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality. That is my opinion.” (Bg. 18.78) So if Kṛṣṇa is at the center of society, then the people will be perfectly secure and prosperous. The communist idea is welcome, provided they are prepared to replace the so-called state with God. That is religion.



ISKCON NEWS

A brief look at the worldwide activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

LITERARY LANDMARK REACHED BY BBT



LOS ANGELES— The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust is proud to announce the completion of a major new publication: *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the jewel of medieval Indian literature. This devotional classic presents the life and teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who initiated the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement some 500 years ago. Originally written in Bengali by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavīrāja Gosvāmī, who completed it in 1616, it has now been rendered into English by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda in seventeen volumes containing about 7500 pages. The massive work features the original Bengali script, phonetic transliterations of each verse, word-for-word definitions, precise translations, purports, a variety of indexes, and 255 full-color illustrations.

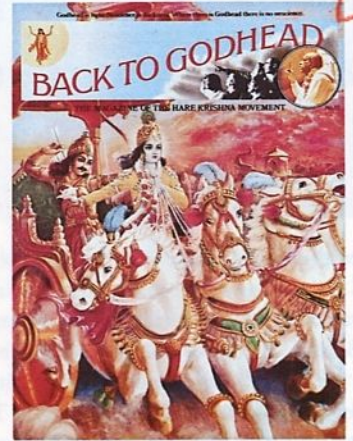
The translating and writing of com-

mentary for this work took His Divine Grace only eighteen months, and the last thirteen volumes of the set were prepared for printing by the BBT staff in less than two months—all with no loss of the BBT's standard of high quality printing and illustration.

* * *

DELTA CITY ACCLAIMS ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

NEW ORLEANS— Officials here praised the spiritual master of the Krishna Consciousness Society today for “establishing a workable alternative to the problem of drug addiction and alienation.” Representing Mayor Landrieu was welfare chief Morris Jeff, who presented His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda with honorary citizenship, a key to the city, and a fragrant garland of roses. Śrīla Prabhupāda reciprocated by handing Mr. Jeff a volume of his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The brief ceremony took place at a reception held July 31 in the spiritual master's honor. Mr. Jeff later commented that his meeting with Śrīla Prabhupāda was “a beautiful experience.”



TRANSCENDENTAL ART STYLE RECOGNIZED

NEW YORK— Kṛṣṇa conscious art made an impact in a recent competition here. The American Institute of Graphic Arts awarded a Certificate of Excellence to BACK TO GODHEAD magazine for the cover of issue No. 57, which featured a painting by Baradrāja dāsa of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on a chariot riding into battle. The cover was one of 135 book, record album, promotional and magazine covers selected out of 2400 entries. It is being displayed in AIGA's “Cover '75 / Catch the Eye” exhibition, which is touring the United States and Canada.

Farm Report

Over the past eight years, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness has established fourteen successful farming communities in various parts of the world. As national economies flounder and cities go bankrupt, ISKCON's farms flourish and grow, proving that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is providing not only potent spiritual knowledge, but a viable alternative lifestyle as well. There's full employment for everyone and natural prosperity when everything's done for Lord Kṛṣṇa. For more information please write ISKCON's Secretary at 3764 Watsaka Ave., Los Angeles, Ca. 90034

NEW VṚNDĀVANA (MOUNDSVILLE, W. VA.)— “While herding the beautiful bulls, the Lord, who was the reservoir of all opulence and fortune, used to blow His flute, and thus He enlivened His faithful followers, the cowherd boys.” (*Bhāg.* 3.2.29)

This past summer was definitely bull

season here. At Bahulaban, largest of New Vṛndāvana's six farms, eleven of the seventeen new arrivals were bull calves.

Most of our bulls are used for ox teams because we don't need so many for breeding. Right now our oxen program is in the rough stages, but what we have

going is very promising. We're working four teams regularly, and several others are being trained up. Many New Vṛndāvana residents enjoy watching the oxen as they haul the milk from the barn to the temple's milk separator twice a day. The bulls are working better together all the time.

The medical program is also being improved to properly care for the increased number of calves. We examine each of them twice a day for any abnormality which might indicate sickness, and the sick ones get more complete treatment.

Milk production from the herd is soaring because there are so many “fresh” cows now. All told, the cows at Bahulaban are giving almost a thousand pounds of milk daily, and they’re still increasing!



For Lord Kṛṣṇa’s birthday (Jan-māṣṭamī) we put the barn into excellent shape. Everyone who visited us for the holiday celebration was able to relish the purity and simplicity of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s cow protection program. It’s easy to appreciate this wonderful service when we see so many milk preparations—sweets, curd, yogurt and cream—offered to the Deity of Kṛṣṇa in the temple every day. When we satisfy the Supreme Lord, He satisfies us with His mercy.

* * *

NEW ORLEANS (PICAYUNE, MISS.)—ISKCON’s 200-acre farm here is only a year old, yet it’s already in full operation. Located in an ideal spot just sixty miles east of New Orleans, the farm enjoys abundant rainfall all year round. The trees and fields are always luxuriantly green, and for this reason we can let the cows wander freely in all seasons. We never have to confine them to barns. One or more kinds of vegetables can always be cultivated, and Lord Kṛṣṇa has blessed us with a nice orchard and many beehives.

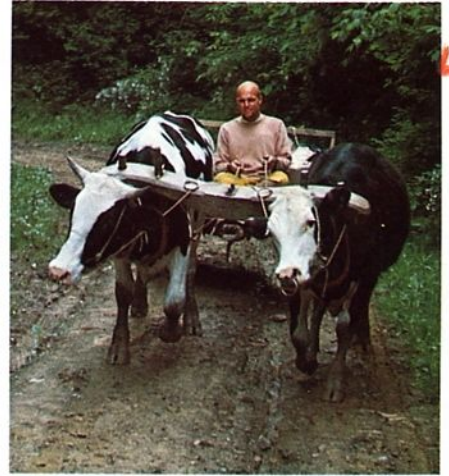
In early August we were given the great benediction of a personal visit from His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. As

his car pulled up to the main house, we all bowed down to offer our respects, humbly grateful for the opportunity to have our farm sanctified by the holy feet of our spiritual master, a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda toured the farm on foot late in the afternoon. When he saw all the tractors, binders, and other machinery we used for working the farm, Śrīla Prabhupāda was somewhat critical. We had spent thousands of dollars purchasing the most up-to-date farm machinery, yet he favored a simpler approach. “As far as possible,” he said, “machines should be avoided because they provide an opportunity for idleness, gossiping and excessive sleep. If every man works according to his innate nature, that is the healthy state, but if one man works a machine and all the others remain idle, then it is a devil’s workshop.” He suggested we begin training our five bull calves to replace the machines for farm labor.

Śrīla Prabhupāda then spoke to us for some time on how the natural way of life is superior to the artificial, mechanized life in the cities. He described how our farm could be modeled after village life in Vedic India: “The farm should be mainly run by householder couples. They can live in small cottages and take care of the cows and till the fields. In the

villages of India, where there are many cows, naturally there is also an abundant supply of milk. The residents don’t turn all the milk into ghee [clarified butter] for sale. Rather every day each family



puts their supply into one big pot with a fire under it and takes out as much as they need for drinking and cooking that day. At night, whatever milk is left is converted into yogurt, stored and then churned into butter. The buttermilk is fed to the calves, and the butter is turned into ghee. In this way, not a single drop of milk is wasted. So this is the formula for an abundant life: some land, hard work, cow protection, and doing everything for Lord Kṛṣṇa.”

Kṛṣṇa Conscious Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The year is full of Kṛṣṇa conscious festivals, and some of the upcoming ones are listed here. The devotees of the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you about the meaning of these festivals.

| Year 489, Caitanya Era | | |
|---|--|--|
| Vaiṣṇava Month of <i>Padmanābha</i> (September 21, 1975—October 20, 1975) | | |
| <i>Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa</i> (dark fortnight) | <i>Śukla-pakṣa</i> (bright fortnight) | |
| October 1 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 11) | October 14 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 24) | October 16 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 26) |
| Indirā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). | Śrī Rāmacandra-vijayotsava. Appearance of Śrī Madhvācārya. | Ekādaśī Pāraṇa before 9:27 a.m. Disappearance of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. |
| October 2 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 12) | October 15 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 25) | October 20 (<i>Padmanābha</i> 30) |
| Ekādaśī Pāraṇa before 9:28 a.m. | Pāśāṅkuṣā-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). | Śāradya-rāsayātrā of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Disappearance of Śrīla Murāri Gupta. Beginning of Ūrja-vrata. |

Over the past 150 years, the expanding role of science in almost every sphere of life has produced a revolution in ideas—a revolution epitomized by Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Although never proven more than a theory, it is accepted by millions as fact. In discussing the influence and implications of his theory, I shall suggest an alternative explanation of evolution that is both theistic and scientific, and which does not depend upon the imperfect methods of speculation used by Darwin. Because this account of man's origin has until only recently been confined to the Vedic literature originally written in Sanskrit, Western man has heretofore remained ignorant of its profound significance.

Science Versus Religion

Throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Western civilization held to a strong belief in the existence of one Supreme God, and the fabric of life was woven of this faith. With the advent of the Age of Reason, however, the credibility of Christianity was severely tested in the crucible of scientific scrutiny. Although many Christians saw in the discovery of scientific laws new revelations of God's glory, probing scientific criticism of the explanations of the creation given in the Bible undermined the traditional authority of Christian doctrine.

The literal Biblical description of man's origin was given its severest test in 1859, when Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, a treatise which was designed to prove the gradual evolution of man from lower forms of life. Until Darwin's time, Church doctrine was expressed by such authorities as Archbishop Ussher, who specified that the world was created at "9:00 a.m., October 23, 4004 B.C." This date was calculated from the Biblical record by tracing history back to Adam and Eve and then to the cosmic creation. But Church spokesmen found it difficult to refute Darwin's all-encompassing explanations. After some initial resistance, most advocates of the Biblical version of evolution realized the tide of the times and began to praise Darwin

for showing how intelligently God had arranged the evolution of species from lower life forms up to the human form. Darwin himself, however, avoided mention of God in his writings. Privately he admitted, "I look upon all human feeling as traceable to some germ in the animal."

By the late 19th century, fundamentalists could no longer hold the scientists at bay with their literal interpretations of the Bible, and Church authorities tried to adjust Christian theology to scientific change. An increasingly materialistic community of scientists saw that the time was ripe to attack man's faith in God and establish science as the new deity with themselves as its priests. For example, in 1893 Ernst Mach said, "The theological conception of things gave way to a more rigid conception; and this was accompanied with a considerable gain in enlightenment . . . The physical philosophy of theology is a fruitless achievement, a reversion to a lower state of scientific culture."

Today, the ideas of Darwin play an integral role in much scientific research. Modern geneticists and biochemists, for example, have expanded Darwinism by producing a theory of existence in which God has become extraneous. By promising life from the laboratory and immortality within the fleshly body, they have convinced the public that the origin of human life is a molecular accident and that man himself is nothing more than a complex combination of chemicals.

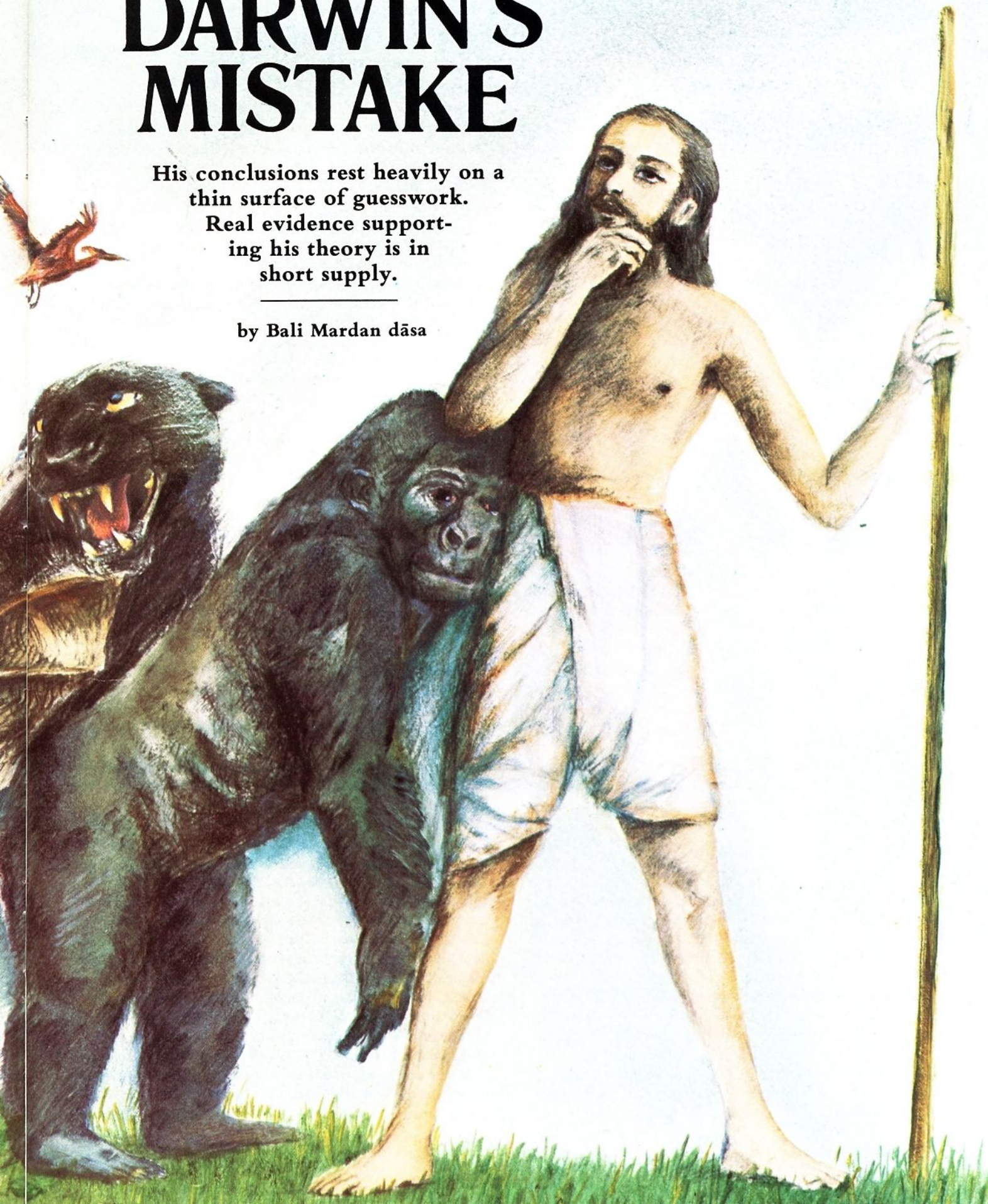


DARWIN'S MISTAKE

His conclusions rest heavily on a
thin surface of guesswork.

Real evidence support-
ing his theory is in
short supply.

by Bali Mardan dāsa



“The actual fact is that there is no solid evidence for Darwinian evolution. Millions accept it blindly, not daring to question the scientific community that has given the theory its stamp of approval.”

But if we examine Darwin's methods, we will find his conclusions to be less “scientific” than the certainty with which he states them would suggest. In theorizing that all life forms have developed from one remote ancestor, Darwin decided that some unknown force must have combined with the time factor to cause the evolution of the different species we see today. He thought that the final stage of this process was the development of man from the monkey. In the writings of Thomas Malthus (*An Essay on Population*) Darwin found the mechanism that seemingly gave evolution its conclusive rationale. Malthus said that animals and man reproduce in geometric progression, whereas the supply of food in the world increases only arithmetically. He argued that if even one species of life reproduced without any check, it would soon overrun the world. (Fish and insects lay many thousands of eggs.) Malthus described a constant struggle for existence in which the population of living organisms is trimmed, thus keeping an equilibrium in nature. Darwin suggested that the struggle for existence would favor certain varieties of life, and that the fittest of those would survive, fitness being measured in terms of the capability of an organism to gather food, defend itself, and reproduce. He called this the process of “natural selection,” which supposedly was the mechanism nature provided to guide the changing species along the path of evolution. Later, the genetic theories of Gregor Mendel and others provided explanations for the occurrence of mutations.

In his diary, Darwin admits “a constant tendency to fill up the wide gaps of knowledge by inaccurate and superficial hypotheses.” This suggests that Darwin's theory, however well it may explain his collected data, rests merely on circumstantial evidence. Neither Darwin nor anyone since has directly observed a transition from one species to another. No one has ever seen a parent from one species give birth to an offspring initiating a new species. The best Darwin could do was claim that such an event must have happened in the past. He felt this was the only way to explain his observations.

Alive and Well

Peking Man, Neanderthal Man and like discoveries have made headlines throughout the world as primitive human forms that have preceded the evolutionary development of modern man. Such claims are closer to propaganda than to scientific truth. As we see around us, primitive forms live side by side with more advanced ones. The Darwinists once declared that a primitive fish, the Coelacanth, had been extinct for the last seventy million years. But quite surprisingly, the Coelacanth has since turned up alive and well in the waters off South Africa, unchanged from fossilized forms hundreds of millions of years old. There are many similar examples, and in each instance the scientists cleverly rearrange their theories to fit the changing evidence.

That primitive men exist, in the past or in the present, does not prove that civilized men are a recent development. The evidence found by Dr. Leakey in Africa within the last few years definitely shows more advanced humans living at a much earlier period than less developed human species found living at a later date. There is no real evidence of higher forms evolving from lower ones. Were future scientists to discover the remains of twentieth century aboriginal tribes in New Guinea, would it be valid for them to conclude that such were the dominant form of human life in the twentieth century? Of course not, because the aborigines of New Guinea represent only a small fraction of the human race at the present time.

Furthermore, in India, the center of the ancient world, the civilized method of disposing of the dead has always been to cremate the bodies, thus leaving no evidence for future paleontologists to speculate about. Excavated bones come from aboriginal tribes living side by side with the advanced Vedic culture. Proof of Darwinism rests on a very thin surface of empirical guesswork. It is actually no proof at all.

Missing Links

The best known and most obvious evidence against Darwinism is the virtual absence of intermediary forms of species, either alive or fossilized. Without these missing links, there are no connecting links through which evolution could have proceeded. In addition, Darwinists cannot explain the development of fish, birds, whales or dolphins. The duckbilled Platypus also defies their explanation, as do thousands of other wonderful creatures. A few quotes from the scientists themselves will reveal Darwin's theory for what it is—an unscientific claim to satisfy the minds of atheistic men:

“The fossil record does not tell us how fishes came into existence . . . we can only guess as to the way in which the first fishes originated.” (Url Lanham, *The Fishes*)

“The origin of the birds is largely a matter of deduction. There is no fossil evidence of the changes through which the remarkable change from reptile to bird was achieved.” (A.J. Marshal, *Biology and Comparative Physiology of Birds*)

Not only is there no proof that lower forms of life develop into more complex and advanced ones, but even the theory of change by mutation, which had been so readily accepted, has now been shown to be faulty. Dr. Alan Wilson, professor of biochemistry at the University of California at Berkeley, and Dr. M. King, a research geneticist, presented evidence in *Science* magazine, April 11, 1975, that mutation cannot possibly account for the changes in life forms necessary for evolutionary development. The pillars of Darwinism are crashing to the ground, for without a valid explanation of variation, Darwin's whole idea becomes absurd.

The actual fact is that there is no solid evidence for Darwi-

nian evolution. Millions accept it blindly, not daring to question the scientific community that has given the theory its stamp of approval.

The Vedic View of Evolution

Darwin's error was to minimize his own human frailty. Overlooking the limitations of his own senses and mind, and ignoring the inevitable human tendency to become illusioned and make mistakes, he cheated the public by claiming as fact that which could only be tentative hypothesis. To find the conclusive explanation of the origin of species, we must approach a source of knowledge which is beyond the imperfections of our tiny brains. This infallible source of knowledge is the Vedic scriptures which, unlike the speculative postulates of empirical scientists, are spoken directly by the Supreme Lord Himself.

In the Vedic literature, we find a well substantiated explanation of the origin of the many species from a theistic, yet thoroughly scientific, point of view. The theists of Darwin's time had no scientifically viable arguments with which to defend and explain divine creation. For instance, why does life display such a varied gradation of organisms, from the most simple amoeba to the complex human being? What is the relationship between animal and human life? The answers to these questions are given in the *Vedas*.

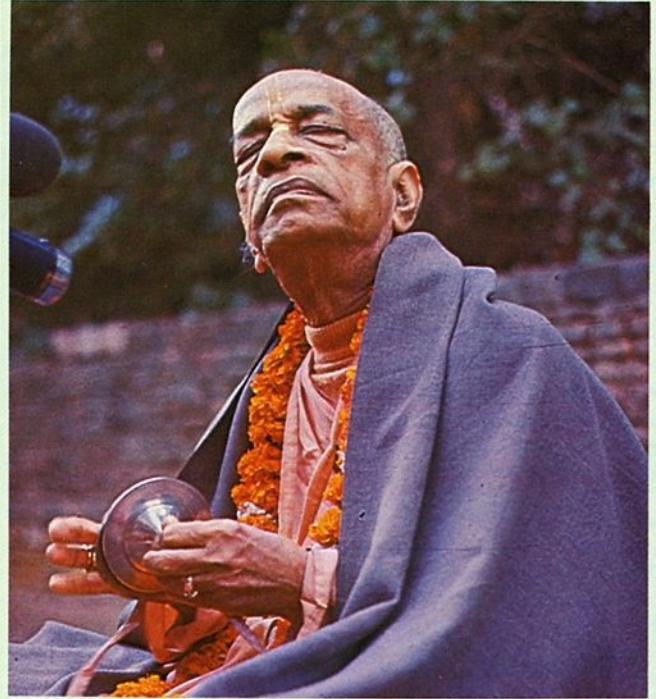
According to the Vedic information, the material body is only a temporary covering of the eternal soul—a puppet that dances for some time until the soul passes on to the next life form. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, a manual for spiritual life spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa (God) Himself: "As the embodied soul continually passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death." (Bg. 2.13)

The soul, the vital spiritual spark in each material body, is thus understood to be the active principle in the cycle of birth and death. The nature of the soul is described as follows: "Know that which pervades the entire body to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy the imperishable soul. Only the material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living entity is subject to destruction." (Bg. 2.17-18) Scientists have no access to knowledge of the soul through their methods of empirical observation and experimentation, because the soul is described as being beyond the purview of the mundane world, immeasurable by the blunt instruments of our senses.

Modern Darwinists postulate a common ancestor for all species—a single-celled organism with minimal life functions. The *Vedas* also specify one origin for all living entities, but the Vedic conclusion is that the origin of all species is God. As Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father." (Bg. 14.4) "I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me." (Bg. 10.8) Many present-day followers of Darwin maintain that life originated by accident in a primeval chemical soup, but when the Vedic scientist asks to know where the soup came from—or the universe for that matter—

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Darwinists cannot reply. The theory of accidental creation of the universe is based simply on unproved assumptions and an unwillingness to admit ignorance.

Darwin theorized that the varieties of life forms gradually evolved from one another over a great span of time. The *Vedas*, however, explicitly describe the process by which all species were created at the beginning of the universe. The *Vedas* categorize 900,000 species of aquatic life, 2,000,000 species of plant and tree life, 1,100,000 species of insects, 1,000,000 species of birds, 3,000,000 species of beasts and 400,000 species of human beings. The *Vedas* do not say that all 8,400,000 species of life must exist simultaneously on any one planet. There are countless millions of planets within God's creation, each with life forms suitable for its environment. Simply because a particular species—such as the dinosaur—is no longer visible on earth is no proof that it does not exist somewhere else.

The material world is created for the small minority of souls who rebel against the supremacy of God. The Lord provides a place for them where they may act out their fantasies as tiny gods of the mundane sphere. At the same time, however, God provides the means by which the fallen souls may revive their God consciousness and return to the spiritual world.

Perfect Plan

The apparent lack of God's mercy in nature caused Darwin to disbelieve in a creator. He lamented, "I can see no evidence of beneficent design." Actually, the miseries that all creatures are heir to in this world are, in one sense, a blessing, for they prompt the living entity, when he reaches the human form of life, to inquire into the means of escape from this painful condition. Suffering exists as long as we try to exploit nature and remain in ignorance of our true spiritual position.

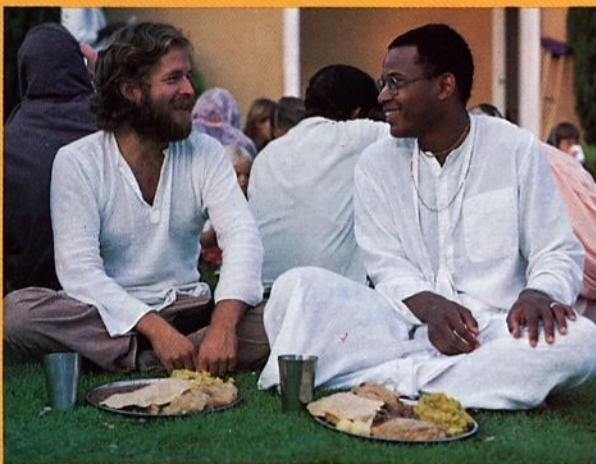
Evolution is the means by which the Supreme Lord grad-

ually brings the living entity to full consciousness, and the varieties of life are the various prisons the soul must pass through on his sojourn within matter. The culmination of the soul's evolution is the human form of life, where one may at long last end the cycle of birth and death and re-enter the spiritual realm. If, however, one misuses human life by neglecting spiritual culture, he must again descend into the animal species and once more be subject to the process of evolution. The *Brahma-vaivarta Purāna* states that: "One attains the human form of life after transmigration through 8,400,000 species of life by the process of gradual evolution. The human form of life is spoiled for those conceited fools who do not take shelter of the lotus feet of Govinda [God]."

The fate of those who misuse human life is further described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Those who are envious and mischievous, who are the lowest among men, are cast by Me into the ocean of material existence into various demoniac species of life. Attaining repeated births among the species of demoniac life, such persons can never approach Me. Gradually they sink down to the most abominable type of existence." (Bg. 16.20)

The *Vedas* emphatically declare that having now achieved the extremely rare human form, we should use the opportunity to inquire about God, the origin of everything. The most complete and authoritative information on God and His creation is to be found in the *Vedas* themselves, and the essence of the Vedic wisdom is contained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This literature, presented in English for the first time without adulteration by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, provides the seriously inquisitive seeker with a totally theistic and scientific explanation of the creation of the universe and the origin of species, and explicit instructions on how he can complete the evolutionary process by becoming God conscious in the human form of life.

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ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

This is the continuing presentation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, India's great spiritual classic written 5,000 years ago by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, and now presented in a new translation with commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* provides the key to how humanity can become united in peace, prosperity and friendship around a common cause. That common cause is the spiritual oneness of all living beings, and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presents a revolutionary ideology which can serve as the basis for the re-spiritualization of society. There is no lack of mundane scientific advancement in today's world, but what is lacking is knowledge of the science of God. Therefore, in a world suffering from universal discord, anxiety and confusion, there is no more important literature than this brilliant *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. If you would like to obtain any single volume or the entire series of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* currently in print, please see page 15.

First Canto "Creation"

Chapter Two Divinity and Divine Service (continued)

TEXT 10

कामस्य नेन्द्रियप्रीतिर्लाभो जीवेत यावता ।
जीवस्य तत्त्वजिज्ञासा नार्थो यद्वेह कर्मभिः ॥१०॥

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir
lābho jīveta yāvata
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā
nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*

kāmasya—of desires; *na*—not; *indriya*—senses; *prītiḥ*—satisfaction; *lābhah*—gain; *jīveta*—self preservation; *yāvata*—so much so; *jīvasya*—of the living being; *tattva*—Absolute Truth; *jijñāsā*—inquiries; *na*—not; *arthah*—end; *yaś ca iha*—whatsoever else; *karmabhiḥ*—by occupational activities.

TRANSLATION

Life's desires should never be aimed at gratifying the senses. One should desire to live only because human life enables one to inquire about the Absolute Truth. This should be the goal of all works.

PURPORT

The completely bewildered material civilization is wrongly directed towards the fulfillment of desires in sense gratification. In such civilization, in all spheres of life, the ultimate end is sense gratification. In politics, social service, altruism, philanthropy and ultimately in religion or even in salvation, the very same tint of sense gratification is ever increasingly predominant. In the political field the leaders of men fight with one another to fulfill their personal sense gratification. The voters adore the so-called leaders only when they promise sense gratification. As soon as the voters are dissatisfied in their own sense satisfaction, they dethrone the leaders. The leaders almost always disappoint the voters by not satisfying their senses. The same is applicable in all other fields; no one is serious about the problems of life. Even those who are on the path of salvation desire to become one with the Absolute Truth and desire to commit spiritual suicide for sense gratification. But the *Bhāgavatam* says that one should

not live for sense gratification. One should satisfy the senses only inasmuch as is required for self-preservation, and not for sense gratification. Because the body is made of senses, which also require a certain amount of satisfaction, there are regulative directions for satisfaction of such senses. But the senses are not meant for unrestricted enjoyment. For example, marriage or the combination of a man with a woman is necessary for progeny, but it is not meant for sense enjoyment. In the absence of such voluntary restraint, there is propaganda for family planning, but foolish men do not know that family planning is automatically executed as soon as there is search after the Absolute Truth. Seekers of the Absolute Truth are never allured by unnecessary engagements in sense gratification because the serious students seeking the Absolute Truth are always overwhelmed with the work of researching the Truth. In every sphere of life, therefore, the ultimate end must be seeking after the Absolute Truth, and that sort of engagement will make everyone happy because they will be less engaged in varieties of sense gratification. And what that Absolute Truth is explained as follows.

TEXT 11

वदन्ति तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम् ।
ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दते ॥११॥

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

vadanti—they say; *tat*—that; *tattva-vidas*—the learned souls; *tattvaṁ*—the Absolute Truth; *yaj*—which; *jñānam*—knowledge; *advayam*—nondual; *brahma iti*—known as Brahman; *paramātmēti*—known as Paramātmā; *bhagavān iti*—known as Bhagavān; *śabdyate*—it so sounded.

TRANSLATION

Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā or Bhagavān.

PURPORT

The Absolute Truth is both subject and object, and there is no qualitative difference there. Therefore, Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān are qualitatively one and the same. The same substance is realized as impersonal Brahman by the students of the *Upaniṣads*, as localized Paramātmā by the Hiraṇyagarbhas or the *yogīs*, and as Bhagavān by the devotees. In other words, Bhagavān or the Personality of Godhead is the last word of the Absolute Truth. Paramātmā is the partial representation of the Personality of Godhead, and impersonal Brahman is the glowing effulgence of

the Personality of Godhead, as the sun rays are to the sun-god. Less intelligent students of either of the above schools sometimes argue in favor of their own respective realization, but those who are perfect seers of the Absolute Truth know well that the above three features of the one Absolute Truth are different perspective views seen from different angles of vision.

As it is explained in the first *śloka* of the First Chapter of the *Bhāgavatam*, the Supreme Truth is self-sufficient, cognizant and freed from the illusion of relativity. In the relative world the knower is different from the known, but in the Absolute Truth both the knower and the known are one and the same thing. In the relative world the knower is the living spirit or superior energy, whereas the known is inert matter or inferior energy. Therefore, there is a duality of inferior and superior energy, whereas in the absolute realm both the knower and the known are of the same superior energy. There are three kinds of energies of the supreme energetic. There is no difference between the energy and energetic, but there is a difference of quality of energies. The absolute realm and the living entities are of the same superior energy, but the material world is inferior energy. The living being in contact with the inferior energy is illusioned, thinking he belongs to the inferior energy. Therefore there is the sense of relativity in the material world. In the Absolute there is no such sense of difference between the knower and the known, and therefore everything there is absolute.

TEXT 12

तच्छ्रद्धधाना मुनयो ज्ञानवैराग्ययुक्त्या ।
पश्यन्त्यात्मनि चात्मानं भक्त्या श्रुतगृहीतया ॥१२॥

*tac śraddadhānāḥ munayo
jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā
paśyanty ātmani cātmānaḥ
bhaktiā śruta-grhītayā*

tat—that; *śraddadhānāḥ*—seriously inquisitive; *munayaḥ*—sages; *jñāna*—knowledge; *vairāgya*—detachment; *yuktayā*—well equipped with; *paśyanti*—see; *ātmani*—within himself; *ca*—and; *ātmānam*—the Paramātmā; *bhaktiā*—in devotional service; *śruta*—the *Vedas*; *grhītayā*—well received.

TRANSLATION

That Absolute Truth is realized by the seriously inquisitive student or sage who is well equipped with knowledge and who has become detached by rendering devotional service and hearing the Vedānta-śruti.

PURPORT

The Absolute Truth is realized in full by the process of devotional service to the Lord Vāsudeva or the Personality of Godhead who is the full-fledged Absolute Truth. Brahman is His transcendental bodily effulgence, and Paramātmā is His partial representation. As such, Brahman or Paramātmā realization of the Absolute Truth is but a partial realization. There are four different types of living beings, the *karmīs*, the *jñānīs*, the *yogīs* and the devotees. The *karmīs* are materialistic, whereas the other three are transcendental. The first-class transcendentalists are the devotees who have realized the Supreme Person. The second-class transcendentalists are those who have partially realized the plenary portion of the absolute person. And the third-class transcendentalists are those who have barely realized the spiritual focus of the absolute person. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic literatures, the Supreme Person is realized by devotional service, which is backed by full knowledge and detachment from the material association. We have already discussed the point that devotional service is followed by knowledge and detachment from material association. As Brahman and Paramātmā realization are imperfect realizations of the Absolute Truth, so the means of realizing Brahman and Paramātmā, i.e., the paths of *jñāna* and *yoga*, are also imperfect means of realizing the Absolute Truth. Devotional service, which is based on the

foreground of full knowledge combined with detachment from material association fixed up on the aural reception of the *Vedānta-śruti*, is the only perfect method of realizing the Absolute Truth by the seriously inquisitive student. Devotional service is not, therefore, meant for the less intelligent class of transcendentalist. There are three classes of devotees, namely first, second, and third class. The third-class devotees, or the neophytes, who have no knowledge nor are detached from the material association, but who are simply attracted by the preliminary processes of worshipping the Deity in the temple, are called material devotees. Material devotees are more attached to material benefit than transcendental profit. Therefore, one has to make definite progress from the position of material devotional service to the second-class devotional position. In the second-class position, the devotee can see four principles in the devotional line, namely the Personality of Godhead, His devotees, the ignorant and the envious. One has to raise himself at least to the stage of a second-class devotee and thus become eligible to know the Absolute Truth.

A third-class devotee, therefore, has to receive the instructions of devotional service from the authoritative sources of *Bhāgavatam*. The number one *Bhāgavatam* is the established personality of devotee, and the other *Bhāgavatam* is the message of Godhead. The third-class devotee has, therefore, to go to the personality of devotee in order to learn the instructions of devotional service. Such a personality of devotee is not a professional man who earns his livelihood by the business of *Bhāgavatam*. Such a devotee must be a representative of Śukadeva Gosvāmī, like Sūta Gosvāmī, and must preach the cult of devotional service for the all-around benefit of all people. A neophyte devotee has very little taste for hearing from the authorities. Such a neophyte devotee makes a show of hearing from the professional man to satisfy his senses. This sort of hearing and chanting has spoiled the whole thing, so one should be very careful about the faulty process. The holy messages of Godhead, as inculcated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* or in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, are undoubtedly transcendental subjects; but even though they are so, such transcendental matters are not to be received from the professional man who spoils them like the serpent spoils the milk simply by the touch of his tongue.

A sincere devotee must, therefore, be prepared to hear the Vedic literature like the *Upaniṣads*, *Vedānta* and other literatures left by the previous authorities or Gosvāmīs, for the benefit of his progress. Without hearing such literatures, one cannot make actual progress. And without hearing and following the instructions, the show of devotional service becomes worthless and therefore a sort of disturbance in the path of devotional service. Unless, therefore, devotional service is established on the principles of *śruti*, *smṛti*, *purāṇa* or *pañcarātra* authorities, the make-show of devotional service should at once be rejected. An unauthorized devotee should never be recognized as a pure devotee. By assimilation of such messages from the Vedic literatures, one can see the all-pervading localized aspect of the Personality of Godhead within his own self constantly. This is called *samādhi*.

TEXT 13

अतः पुम्भिर्द्विजश्रेष्ठा वर्णाश्रमविभागशः ।
स्वनुष्ठितस्य धर्मस्य संसिद्धिर्हरितोषणम् ॥१३॥

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā
varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśah
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*

ataḥ—so; *pumbhiḥ*—by the human being; *dvija-śreṣṭhāḥ*—O best among the twice-born; *varṇāśrama*—institution of four castes and orders of life; *vibhāgaśah*—by the division of; *svanuṣṭhitasya*—of one's own prescribed duties; *dharmasya*—occupational; *saṁsiddhiḥ*—highest perfection; *hari*—the Personality of Godhead; *toṣaṇam*—pleasing.

TRANSLATION

O best among the twiceborn, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve, by discharging his prescribed duties [dharma] according to caste divisions and order of life, is to please the Lord Hari.

PURPORT

Human society all over the world is divided into four castes and four orders of life. The four castes are the intelligent caste, the martial caste, the productive caste and the laborer caste. These castes are classified in terms of one's work and qualification, and not by birth. Then again there are four orders of life, namely the student life, the householder's life, the retired and the devotional life. In the best interest of human society there must be such divisions of life, otherwise no social institution can grow up in a healthy state. And in each and every one of the above-mentioned divisions of life, *the aim must be to please the supreme authority of the Personality of Godhead*. This institutional function of human society is known as the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, which is quite natural for the civilized life. The *varṇāśrama* institution is constructed to enable one to realize the Absolute Truth. It is not for artificial domination of one division over the other. When the aim of life, i.e., realization of the Absolute Truth, is missed by too much attachment for *indriya-prīti* or sense gratification, as it is already discussed hereinbefore, the institution of the *varṇāśrama* is utilized by selfish men to pose an artificial predominance over the weaker section. In the Kali-yuga, or in the age of quarrel, this artificial predominance is already current, but the saner section of the people know it well that the division of castes and orders of life are meant for smooth social intercourse and high thinking self-realization and not for any other purpose.

Herein the statement of *Bhāgavatam* is that the highest aim of life or the highest perfection of the institution of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* is to cooperate jointly for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, which is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 4.13).

TEXT 14

तस्मादेकेन मनसा भगवान् सात्वतां पतिः ।
श्रोतव्यः कीर्तितव्यश्च ध्येयः पूज्यश्च नित्यदा ॥१४॥

*tasmāt ekena manasā
bhagavān sātvatām patih
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityadā*

tasmāt—therefore; *ekena*—by one; *manasā*—attention of the mind; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *sātvatām*—of the devotees; *patih*—protector; *śrotavyaḥ*—is to be heard; *kīrtitavyaḥ*—to be glorified; *ca*—and; *dhyeyaḥ*—to be remembered; *pūjyaḥ*—to be worshiped; *ca*—and; *nityadā*—constantly.

TRANSLATION

Therefore devotees should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead [Bhagavān], who is their protector.

PURPORT

If realization of the Absolute Truth is the ultimate aim of life, it must be carried out by all means. In any one of the above-mentioned castes and orders of life, the four processes, namely glorifying, hearing, remembering and worshiping, are general occupations. Without these principles of life, no one can exist. Activities of the living being involve engagements in these different four principles of life. Especially in modern society, all activities are more or less dependent on hearing and glorifying. Any man from any social status becomes a well-known man in human society within a very short time if he is simply glorified truly or falsely in the daily newspapers. Sometimes political leaders of a particular party are also advertised by newspaper propaganda, and by such glorifying method an insignificant man becomes an important man—within no time. But such propaganda work by false glorification of an unqualified person cannot bring about any good, either for the particular man or for the society. There may be some temporary reactions to such propaganda, but there are no permanent effects. Therefore such activities are a waste of time.

The actual object of glorification is the Supreme Personality of Godhead who has created everything manifested before us. We have broadly discussed this fact from the beginning of the "*janmādy asya*" *sloka* of this *Bhāgavatam*. The tendency to glorify others or hear others must be turned to the real object of glorification—the Supreme Being. And that will bring happiness.

TEXT 15

यदनुध्यासिना युक्ताः कर्मग्रन्थिनिवन्धनम् ।
छिन्दन्ति कोविदास्तस्य को न कुर्यात्कथारतिम् ॥१५॥

*yad anudhyāsina yuktāḥ
karma-granthi-nibandhanam
chindanti kovidās tasya
ko na kuryāt kathā-ratim*

yat—which; *anudhyā*—remembrance; *asinā*—sword; *yuktāḥ*—being equipped with persons; *karma*—reactionary work; *granthi*—knot; *nibandhanam*—interknit; *chindanti*—cut; *kovidāḥ*—intelligent; *tasya*—His; *kaḥ*—who; *na*—not; *kuryāt*—shall not do; *kathā*—messages; *ratim*—attention.

TRANSLATION

With sword in hand, intelligent men cut through the labyrinthine knots of reactionary work [karma] by remembering the Lord. Therefore who will not pay attention to His message?

PURPORT

The spiritual spark contacted with material elements creates a knot which must be cut if one wants to be liberated from the actions and reactions of fruitive work. Liberation means freedom from the cycle of reactionary work. This liberation automatically follows for one who constantly remembers the transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead. This is because all activities of the Supreme Lord (His *līlā*) are transcendental to the modes of the material energy. They are all attractive spiritual activities, and therefore constant association with the spiritual activities of the Supreme Lord gradually spiritualizes the conditioned soul and ultimately severs the knot of material bondage.

Liberation from material bondage is, therefore, a by-product of devotional service. Attainment of spiritual knowledge is not sufficient to insure liberation. Such knowledge must be overcoated with devotional service so that ultimately the devotional service alone predominates. Then liberation is made possible. Even the reactionary work of the fruitive workers can lead one to liberation when it is overcoated with devotional service. *Karma* overcoated with devotional service is called *karma-yoga*. Similarly, empirical knowledge overcoated with devotional service is called *jñāna-yoga*. But pure *bhakti-yoga* is independent of such *karma* and *jñāna* because it alone can not only endow one with liberation from the conditional life but can also award one with the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

Therefore, any sensible man who is above the average man with a poor fund of knowledge must constantly remember the Personality of Godhead by hearing about Him, by glorifying Him, by remembering Him and by worshiping Him always, without cessation. That is the perfect way of devotional service. The Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana who were authorized by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to preach the *bhakti* cult, rigidly followed this rule and made immense literatures of transcendental science for our benefit. They have chalked out ways for all classes of men in terms of the different castes and orders of life in pursuance of the teachings of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and similar other authoritative scriptures.

TEXT 16

शुश्रूषोः श्रद्धानस्य वासुदेवकथारुचिः ।
स्यान्महत्सेवया विप्राः पुण्यतीर्थनिषेवणात् ॥१६॥

*śuśrūṣoḥ śraddadhānasya
vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ*

syān mahat-sevayā viprāḥ
puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt

śuśrūṣoḥ—one who is engaged in hearing; śraddadhānasya—with care and attention; vāsudeva—in respect to Vāsudeva; kathā—message; ruciḥ—affinity; syāt—is made possible; mahat-sevayā—by service rendered to pure devotees; viprāḥ—O twice-born; puṇya-tīrtha—those who are cleansed of all vice; niṣevanāt—by service.

TRANSLATION

O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vāsudeva.

PURPORT

The conditioned life of a living being is caused by his revolting against the Lord. There are men called *deva*, or godly living beings, and there are men called *asuras*, or demons, who are against the authority of the Supreme Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Sixteenth Chapter) a vivid description of the *asuras* is given in which it is said that the *asuras* are put into lower and lower states of ignorance life after life and so sink to the lower animal forms and have no information of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. These *asuras* are gradually rectified into God consciousness by the mercy of the Lord's liberated servitors in different countries according to the supreme will. Such devotees of God are very confidential associates of the Lord, and when they come to save the human society from the dangers of godlessness, they are known as the powerful incarnations of the Lord, as sons of the Lord or as servants of the Lord or as associates of the Lord. But none of them falsely claim to be God themselves. This is a blasphemy declared by the *asuras*, and the demonic followers of such *asuras* also accept pretenders as God or His incarnation. In the revealed scriptures there is definite information of the incarnation of God. No one should be accepted as God or an incarnation of God unless he is confirmed by the revealed scriptures.

The servants of God are to be respected as God by the devotees who actually want to go back to Godhead. Such servants of God are called *mahātmās*, or the *tīrthas*, and they preach according to particular time and place. The servants of God urge people to become devotees of the Lord. They never tolerate being called God. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was God Himself according to the indications of the revealed scriptures, but He played the part of a devotee. People who knew Him to be God addressed Him as God, but He used to block His ears with His hands and chant the name of Lord Viṣṇu. He strongly protested against being called God, although undoubtedly He was God Himself. The Lord behaves so to warn us against unscrupulous men who take pleasure in being addressed as God.

The servants of God come to propagate God consciousness, and intelligent people should cooperate with them in every respect. By serving the servant of God, one can please God more than by directly serving the Lord. The Lord is more pleased when He sees that His servants are properly respected because such servants risk everything for the service of the Lord and so are very dear to the Lord. The Lord declares in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 18.69) that no one is dearer to Him than one who risks everything to preach His glory. By serving the servants of the Lord, one gradually gets the quality of such servants, and thus one becomes qualified to hear the glories of God. The eagerness to hear about God is the first qualification of a devotee for entering the kingdom of God.

TEXT 17

शृण्वतां स्वकथाः कृष्णः पुण्यश्रवणकीर्तनः ।
हृद्यन्तःस्यो ह्यभद्राणि विधुनाति सुहृत्सताम् ॥१७॥

śṛṇvatām *sva-kathāḥ* kṛṣṇaḥ
puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadraṇi
vidhunoti *su-hṛt-satām*

śṛṇvatām—those who have developed the urge to hear the message of; *sva-kathāḥ*—His own words; *kṛṣṇaḥ*—the Personality of Godhead; *puṇya*—virtues; *śravaṇa*—hearing; *kīrtanaḥ*—chanting; *hṛdy antaḥ-sthaḥ*—within one's heart; *hi*—certainly; *abhadraṇi*—desire to enjoy matter; *vidhunoti*—cleanses; *su-hṛt*—benefactor; *satām*—of the truthful.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Super-soul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who relishes His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.

PURPORT

Messages of the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa are nondifferent from Him. Whenever, therefore, offenseless hearing of God is undertaken, it is to be understood that Lord Kṛṣṇa is present there in the form of transcendental sound, which is as powerful as the Lord personally. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, declares clearly that the holy name of the Lord has all the potencies of the Lord and that He has endowed His innumerable names with the same potency. There is no rigid fixture of time, and anyone can chant the holy name with attention and reverence at his convenience. The Lord is so kind to us that He can be present before us personally in the form of transcendental sound, but unfortunately we have no taste for hearing and glorifying the Lord's name and activities. We have already discussed developing a taste for hearing and chanting the holy sound. It is done through the medium of service to the pure devotee of the Lord.

The Lord is reciprocally respondent to His devotees. When He sees that a devotee is completely sincere in getting admittance to the transcendental service of the Lord and thus becomes eager to hear about Him, the Lord acts from within the devotee in such a way that the devotee may easily go back to Him. The Lord is more anxious to take us back into His kingdom than we can desire. Most of us do not desire at all to go back to Godhead. Only a very few men want to go back to Godhead. But anyone who desires to go back to Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa helps in all respects.

One cannot enter into the kingdom of God unless one is perfectly cleared of all sins. The material sins are products of our desires to lord it over material nature. It is very difficult to get rid of such desires. Women and wealth are very difficult problems for the devotee making progress on the path back to Godhead. Many stalwarts in the devotional line fell victim to these allurements and thus retreated from the path of liberation. But when one is helped by the Lord Himself, the whole process becomes as easy as anything by the divine grace of the Lord.

To become restless in the contact of women and wealth is not an astonishment, because every living being is associated with such things from a remote time, practically immemorial, and it takes time to recover from this foreign nature. But if one is engaged in hearing the glories of the Lord, gradually he realizes his real position. By the grace of God such a devotee gets sufficient strength to defend himself from the state of disturbances, and gradually all disturbing elements are eliminated from his mind.

TEXT 18

नष्टप्रायेष्वभद्रेषु नित्यं भागवत्सेवया ।
भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके भक्तिर्भवति नैष्ठिकी ॥१८॥

naṣṭa-prāyeṣu abhadreṣu
nityam bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttama-śloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī

naṣṭa—destroyed; *prāyeṣu*—almost to nil; *abhadreṣu*—all that is inauspicious; *nityam*—regularly; *bhāgavata*—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, or the pure devotee; *sevayā*—by serving; *bhagavati*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *uttama*—transcendental; *śloke*—prayers; *bhaktiḥ*—loving service; *bhavati*—comes into being; *naiṣṭhikī*—irrevocable.

TRANSLATION

By regularly hearing the Bhāgavatam and rendering service unto the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is practically destroyed, and loving service unto the glorious Lord, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

PURPORT

Here is the remedy for eliminating all inauspicious things within the heart which are considered to be obstacles in the path of self-realization. The remedy is the association of the Bhāgavatas. There are two types of Bhāgavatas, namely the book Bhāgavata and the devotee Bhāgavata. Both the Bhāgavatas are competent remedies, and both of them or either of them can be good enough to eliminate the obstacles. A devotee Bhāgavata is as good as the book Bhāgavata because the devotee Bhāgavata leads his life in terms of the book Bhāgavata, and the book Bhāgavata is full of information about the Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees, who are also Bhāgavatas. Bhāgavata book and person are identical.

The devotee Bhāgavata is a direct representative of Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead. So by pleasing the devotee Bhāgavata one can receive the benefit of the book Bhāgavata. Human reason fails to understand how by serving the devotee Bhāgavata or the book Bhāgavata one gets gradual promotion on the path of devotion. But actually these are facts explained by Śrīla Nārada-deva, who happened to be a maidservant's son in his previous life. The maidservant was engaged in the menial service of the sages, and thus he also came into contact with them. And simply by associating with them and accepting the remnants of foodstuff left by the sages, the son of the maidservant got the chance to become the great devotee and personality, Śrīla Nārada-deva. These are the miraculous effects of the association of Bhāgavatas. And to understand these effects practically, it should be noted that by such sincere association of the Bhāgavatas one is sure to receive transcendental knowledge very easily, and the result is that he becomes fixed in the devotional service of the Lord. The more progress is made in devotional service under the guidance of the Bhāgavatas, the more one becomes fixed in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The messages of the book Bhāgavata, therefore, have to be received from the devotee Bhāgavata, and the combination of these two Bhāgavatas will help the neophyte devotee to make progress on and on.

TEXT 19

तदा रजस्तमोभावाः कामलोभादयश्च ये ।
चेत एतैरनाविद्धं स्थितं सत्त्वे प्रसीदति ॥१९॥

tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ
kama-lobhādayaś ca ye
ceta etair anāvīddham
sthitam sattve prasīdati

tadā—at that time; rajāḥ—in the mode of passion; tamaḥ—the mode of ignorance; bhāvāḥ—the situation; kāma—lust and desire; lobha—hankering; ādayaḥ—others; ca—and; ye—whatever they are; cetaḥ—the mind; etaiḥ—by these; anāvīddham—without being affected; sthitam—being fixed up; sattve—in the mode of goodness; prasīdati—thus becomes fully satisfied.

TRANSLATION

At the time loving service is established in the heart, the modes of passion [rajas] and ignorance [tamas] and lust and desire [kāma] disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness and he becomes happy.

PURPORT

A living being in his normal constitutional position is fully satisfied in spiritual bliss. This state of existence is called brahma-bhūta or ātmānandī or the state of self-satisfaction. This self-satisfaction is not like the

satisfaction of the inactive fool. The inactive fool is in the state of foolish ignorance, whereas the self-satisfied ātmānandī is transcendental to the material state of existence. This stage of perfection is attained as soon as one is fixed up in irrevocable devotional service. Devotional service is not inactivity, but the unalloyed activity of the soul.

The soul's activity becomes adulterated in contact with matter, and as such the diseased activities are expressed in the form of lust, desire, hankering, inactivity, foolishness and sleep. The effect of devotional service becomes manifest by complete elimination of these effects of passion and ignorance. The devotee is fixed at once in the mode of goodness, and he makes further progress to rise up to the position of Vāsudeva, or the state of unmixed sattva or śuddha-sattva state. In this śuddha-sattva state only can one always see Kṛṣṇa eye to eye by dint of pure affection for the Lord.

A devotee is always in the mode of unalloyed goodness; therefore he harms no one. But the nondevotee, however educated he may be, is always harmful. A devotee is neither foolish nor passionate. The harmful, foolish and passionate cannot be devotees of the Lord, however they may advertise themselves as devotees by outward dress. A devotee is always qualified with all the good qualities of God. Quantitatively such qualifications may be different, but qualitatively both of them are one and the same.

TEXT 20

एवं प्रसन्नमनसो भगवद्भक्तियोगतः ।
भगवत्त्वविज्ञानं मुक्तसङ्गस्य जायते ॥२०॥

evam prasanna-manaso
bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ
bhagavat-tattva-vijñānam
mukta-saṅgasya jāyate

evam—thus; prasanna—enlivened; manasaḥ—of the mind; bhagavad-bhakti—devotional service of the Lord; yogataḥ—by contact of; bhagavat—regarding the Personality of Godhead; tattva—knowledge; vijñānam—scientific; mukta—liberated; saṅgasya—of the association; jāyate—becomes effective.

TRANSLATION

Thus established in the mode of goodness, the man rejuvenated by loving service to the Lord gains liberation from material association [mukti] and comes to know scientifically of the Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

In the Bhagavad-gītā (Bg. 7.3) it is said that out of many thousands of ordinary men, one fortunate man endeavors for perfection of life. Mostly they are conducted by the modes of passion and ignorance, and thus they are engaged always in lust, desire, hankering, ignorance and sleep. Out of many such manlike animals, there is actually a man who knows the responsibility of human life and thus tries to make life perfect by following the prescribed duties. And out of such many thousands of persons who have thus attained success in human life, one may know scientifically about the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the same Bhagavad-gītā (Bg. 18.55) it is also said that scientific knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is understood only by the process of devotional service (bhakti-yoga).

The very same thing is confirmed herein in the above words. No ordinary man, or even one who has attained success in human life, can know scientifically or perfectly the Personality of Godhead. Perfection of human life is attained when one can understand that he is not the product of matter but is in fact spirit. And as soon as one understands that he has nothing to do with matter, he at once ceases his material hankering and becomes enlivened as a spiritual being. This attainment of success is possible when one is above the modes of passion and ignorance, or, in other words, when one is actually a brāhmaṇa by qualification. Brāhmaṇa is the symbol of sattva-guṇa, or the mode of goodness. And others, who are not in the mode of goodness, are either kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra or less than the śūdras. The brahminical stage is the highest stage of human life

because of its good qualities. So one cannot be a devotee unless one at least qualifies as a *brāhmaṇa*. The devotee is already a *brāhmaṇa* by action. But that is not the end of it. As referred to above, such a *brāhmaṇa* has to become a Vaiṣṇava in fact to be actually in the transcendental stage. A pure Vaiṣṇava is a liberated soul and is transcendental to the position of a *brāhmaṇa* even. In the material stage even a *brāhmaṇa* is also a conditioned soul because in the brahminical stage the conception of Brahman or transcendence is realized, but in that stage scientific knowledge of the Supreme Lord is lacking. One has to surpass the brahminical stage and reach the Vāsudeva stage to understand the Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa. The science of the Personality of Godhead is the subject matter for study by the postgraduate students in the spiritual line. Foolish men, or men with a poor fund of knowledge, do not understand the Supreme Lord, and they interpret Kṛṣṇa according to their respective whims. The fact is, however, that one cannot understand the science of the Personality of Godhead unless one is freed from the contamination of the material modes, even up to the stage of a *brāhmaṇa*. When a qualified *brāhmaṇa* factually becomes a Vaiṣṇava, in the enlivened state of liberation he can know what is actually the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 21

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिच्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि दृष्ट एवात्मनिश्वरे ॥२१॥

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthīś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi
dṛṣṭa evātmaniśvare*

bhidyate—pierced; *hṛdaya*—heart; *granthīś*—knots; *chidyante*—cut to pieces; *sarve*—all; *saṁśayāḥ*—misgivings; *kṣīyante*—terminated; *ca*—and; *asya*—his; *karmāṇi*—chain of fruitive actions; *dṛṣṭa*—having seen; *eva*—certainly; *ātmani*—unto the self; *īśvare*—dominating.

TRANSLATION

Thus the knots of the heart and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions [karma] is terminated when one sees the self as master.

PURPORT

Attainment of scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead means seeing one's own self simultaneously. As far as the identity of the living being as spirit self is concerned, there are a number of speculations and misgivings. The materialist does not believe in the existence of the spirit self, and empiric philosophers believe in the impersonal feature of the whole spirit without individuality of the living beings. But the transcendentalists affirm that the soul and the Supersoul are two different identities qualitatively one but quantitatively different. There are many other theories, but all these different speculations are at once cleared off as soon as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is realized in truth by the process of *bhakti-yoga*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like the sun, and the materialistic speculations about the Absolute Truth are like the darkest midnight. As soon as the Kṛṣṇa sun is arisen within one's heart, the darkness of materialistic speculations about the Absolute Truth and the living beings is at once cleared off. In the presence of the sun, the darkness cannot stand, and the relative truths that were hidden within the dense darkness of ignorance become clearly manifested by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, who is residing in everyone's heart as the Supersoul.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 10.11) the Lord says that in order to show special favor to His pure devotees, He personally eradicates the dense darkness of all misgivings by switching on the light of pure knowledge within the heart of a devotee. Therefore, because of the Personality of Godhead's taking charge of illuminating the heart of His devotee, certainly a devotee, engaged in His service in transcendental love, cannot remain in darkness. He comes to know everything of the absolute and the relative truths. The devotee cannot remain in darkness, and because a devotee is enlightened by the Personality of Godhead, his knowledge is certainly perfect. This is not the case for those who speculate on the Absolute Truth by dint of their own limited power of approach. Such knowledge is called *paramparā*, or deductive knowledge coming down from the

authority to the submissive aural receiver bona fide by service and surrender. One cannot challenge the authority of the Supreme and know Him also at the same time. He reserves the right of not being exposed to such a challenging spirit of an insignificant spark of the whole subjected to the control of illusory energy. The devotees are submissive, and therefore the transcendental knowledge descends from the Personality of Godhead to Brahmā and from Brahmā to his sons and disciples in succession. This process is helped by the Supersoul within such devotees. That is the perfect way of learning transcendental knowledge.

This enlightenment perfectly enables the devotee to distinguish spirit from matter because the knot of spirit and matter is untied by the Lord. This knot is called *ahaṅkāra*, and it falsely obliges a living being to become identified with matter. As soon as this knot is loosened, therefore, all the clouds of doubt are at once cleared off. He sees his master and fully engages himself in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, making a full termination of the chain of fruitive action. In material existence, a living being creates his own chain of fruitive work and enjoys the good and bad effects of those actions life after life. But as soon as he engages himself in the loving service of the Lord, he at once becomes free from the chain of *karma*. All his actions no longer create any reaction.

TEXT 22

अतो वै कवयो नित्यं भक्तिं परमया मुदा ।
वासुदेवे भगवति कुर्वन्त्यात्मप्रसादनीम् ॥२२॥

*ato vai kavayo nityaṁ
bhaktim paramayā mudā
vāsudeve bhagavati
kurvanti ātma-prasādanīm*

ataḥ—therefore; *vai*—certainly; *kavayaḥ*—all transcendentalists; *nityam*—from time immemorial; *bhaktim*—service unto the Lord; *paramayā*—supreme; *mudā*—with great delight; *vāsudeve*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *bhagavati*—the Personality of Godhead; *kurvanti*—do render; *ātma*—self; *prasādanīm*—that which enlivens.

TRANSLATION

Therefore all transcendentalists have been rendering loving service with great delight to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, from time immemorial because such devotional service is enlivening to the self.

PURPORT

Speciality of devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is specifically mentioned herein. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *svayam-rūpa* Personality of Godhead, and all other forms of Godhead, beginning from Śrī Baladeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Nārāyaṇa, *puṣpa-avatāras*, *guṇa-avatāras*, *līlā-avatāras*, *yuga-avatāras* and many other thousands of manifestations of the Personality of Godhead, are Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's plenary portions and integrated parts. The living entities are separated parts and parcels of the Personality of Godhead. Therefore Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original form of Godhead, and He is the last word in the Transcendence. Thus He is more attractive to the higher transcendentalists who participate in the eternal pastimes of the Lord. In other forms of the Personality of Godhead (except Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva) there is no facility for intimate personal contact, as in the case of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord at Vrajabhūmi. The transcendental pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa are not newly accepted, as argued by some less intelligent persons, but His pastimes are eternal and are manifested in due course once in a day of Brahmāji, as the sun rises on the eastern horizon at the end of every twenty-four hours.

TEXT 23

सच्चं रजस्तम इति प्रकृतेर्गुणास्तै-
र्युक्तः परः पुरुष एक इहास्य धत्ते ।
स्थित्यादये हरिविरिञ्चिहरेति संज्ञाः
श्रेयांसि तत्र खलु सच्चतनोर्ज्ञां स्युः ॥२३॥

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti prakṛteḥ guṇās tair
yuktaḥ paraḥ puruṣa eka ihāsyā dhatte
sthiti-ādāye hari-virīñci-hareti sañjñāḥ
śreyāṁsi tatra khalu sattva-tanoḥ nṛṇāṁ syuḥ*

sattvam—goodness; *rajaḥ*—passion; *tamaḥ*—darkness of ignorance; *iti*—thus; *prakṛteḥ*—of the material nature; *guṇāḥ*—qualities; *taiḥ*—by them; *yuktaḥ*—associated with; *paraḥ*—transcendental; *puruṣaḥ*—the personality; *ekah*—one; *ihāsyā*—of this material world; *dhatte*—accepts; *sthiti-ādāye*—for the matter of creation, maintenance and destruction, etc.; *hari*—Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead; *virīñci*—Brahmā; *hara*—Lord Śiva; *iti*—thus; *sañjñāḥ*—different features; *śreyāṁsi*—ultimate benefit; *tatra*—therein; *khalu*—of course; *sattva*—goodness; *tanoḥ*—form; *nṛṇām*—of the human being; *syuḥ*—derived.

TRANSLATION

The transcendental Lord is indirectly associated with the three modes of material nature, namely passion, goodness and ignorance, and just for the material world's creation, maintenance and destruction He accepts the three qualitative forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Of these three, all living beings can derive ultimate benefit from Viṣṇu, the form of the quality of goodness.

PURPORT

That Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by His plenary parts, should be rendered devotional service as explained above, is confirmed by this statement. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all His plenary parts are *Viṣṇu-tattva*, or the Lordship of Godhead. From Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the next manifestation is Baladeva. From Baladeva is Saṅkarṣaṇa, from Saṅkarṣaṇa is Nārāyaṇa, from Nārāyaṇa there is the second Saṅkarṣaṇa, and from this Saṅkarṣaṇa the Viṣṇu *puruṣa-avatāras*. The Viṣṇu or the Deity of the quality of goodness in the material world is the *puruṣa-avatāra* known as Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu or Paramātmā. Brahmā is the deity of *rajas* (passion), and Śiva of ignorance. They are the three departmental heads of the three qualities of this material world. Creation is made possible by the goodness of Viṣṇu, and when it is required to be destroyed, Lord Śiva does it by *tāṇḍava-nṛtya*. The materialists and the foolish human beings worship Brahmā and Śiva respectively. But the pure transcendentalists worship the form of goodness, Viṣṇu, in His various integrated forms and separated forms. The integrated forms are called Godhead, and the separated forms are called the living entities or the *jīvas*. Both the *jīvas* and Godhead have their original spiritual forms. *Jīvas* are sometimes subjected to the control of material energy, but the Viṣṇu forms are always controllers of energy. When Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead, appears in the material world, He comes to deliver the conditioned living beings who are under the material energy. Such living beings appear in the material world with intentions of being lords, and thus they become entrapped by the three modes of nature. As such, the living entities have to change the material coverings for undergoing different terms of imprisonment. The prison house of the material world is created by Brahmā under instruction of the Personality of Godhead, and at the conclusion of a *kalpa* the whole thing is destroyed by Śiva. But as far as maintenance of the prison house is concerned, it is done by Viṣṇu, as much as the state prison house is maintained by the state. Anyone, therefore, who wishes to get out of this prison house of material existence, which is full of miseries like repetition of birth, death, disease and old age, must please Lord Viṣṇu for such liberation. Lord Viṣṇu is worshiped by devotional service only, and if anyone has to continue prison life in the material world, he may ask for relative facilities from the different demigods like Śiva, Brahmā, Indra, Varuṇa, etc., for temporary relief. No demigod can, however, release the imprisoned living being from the conditioned life of material existence except Viṣṇu. Therefore, the ultimate benefit may be derived from Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 24

पार्थिवादारुणो धूमस्तसादभिस्र्वयीमयः ।
तमसस्तु रजस्तसात्सर्वं यद्द्रव्यदर्शनम् ॥२४॥

*pārthivād dāruṇo dhūmas
tasmād agniḥ trayimayaḥ*

*tamasas tu rajas tasmāt
sattvaṁ yad brahma-darśanam*

pārthivāt—from earth; *dāruṇaḥ*—firewood; *dhūmaḥ*—smoke; *tasmāt*—from that; *agniḥ*—fire; *trayī*—Vedic sacrifices; *mayaḥ*—made of; *tamaṣaḥ*—in the mode of ignorance; *tu*—but; *rajaḥ*—the mode of passion; *tasmāt*—from that; *sattvam*—the mode of goodness; *yad*—which; *brahma*—the Absolute Truth; *darśanam*—realization.

TRANSLATION

Coal [firewood] is better than raw wood, and fire is even better, for fire is the soul of Vedic sacrifice. Similarly passion [rajas] is better than ignorance [tamas], but goodness [sattva] is best because by goodness one can come to realize the Absolute Truth [Brahman].

PURPORT

As explained above, one can get release from the conditioned life of material existence by devotional service to the Personality of Godhead. It is further comprehended herein that one has to rise up to the platform of the mode of goodness (*sattva*) so that one can be eligible for the devotional service of the Lord. But if there are impediments on the progressive path, anyone, even from the platform of *tamas*, can gradually rise up to the *sattva* platform by the expert direction of the spiritual master. Sincere candidates must, therefore, approach an expert spiritual master for such a progressive march, and the bona fide expert spiritual master is competent to direct a disciple from any stage of life: *tamas*, *rajas* or *sattva*.

It is a mistake, therefore, to consider that worship of any quality or any form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is equally beneficial. Except Viṣṇu, all separated forms are manifested under the conditions of material energy, and therefore the forms of material energy cannot help anyone to rise to the platform of *sattva*, which alone can liberate a person from the material bondage.

The uncivilized state of life, or the life of the lower animals, is controlled by the modes of *tamas*. The civilized life of man, with a passion for various types of material benefits, is the stage of *rajas*. The *rajas* stage of life gives a slight clue to the realization of the Absolute Truth in the forms of fine sentiments in philosophy, art and culture with moral and ethical principles, but the mode of *sattva* is a still higher stage of material quality, which actually helps one in realizing the Absolute Truth. In other words, there is a qualitative difference between the different kinds of worshiping methods as well as the respective results derived from the predominating deities, namely Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara.

TEXT 25

भेजिरे मुनयोऽथाग्रे भगवन्तमबोधजम् ।
सत्त्वं विशुद्धं क्षेमाय कल्पन्ते येऽनु तानिह ॥२५॥

*bhejire munayo 'thāgre
bhagavantam adhoḥśajam
sattvaṁ viśuddham kṣemāya
kalpante ye 'nu tān iha*

bhejire—rendered service unto; *munayaḥ atha agre*—thus before all the sages; *bhagavantam*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *adhoḥśajam*—the Transcendence; *sattvam*—existence; *viśuddham*—above the three modes of nature; *kṣemāya*—to derive the ultimate benefit; *kalpante*—deserve; *ye*—those; *anu*—follow; *tān*—those; *iha*—in this material world.

TRANSLATION

Previously all the great sages rendered service unto the transcendental Personality of Godhead [Bhagavān] due to His existence above the three modes of material nature. They worshiped Him to become free from material conditions. Whoever follows such sages is also eligible for liberation from the material world.

PURPORT

The purpose of performing religion is neither to profit by material gain nor to get the simple knowledge of discerning matter from spirit. The

ultimate aim of religious performances is to release oneself from material bondage and regain the life of freedom in the transcendental world where the Personality of Godhead is the Supreme Person. Laws of religion are, therefore, directly enacted by the Personality of Godhead, and except the *mahājanas*, or the authorized agents of the Lord, no one knows the purpose of religion. There are twelve particular agents of the Lord who know the purpose of religion, and all of them render transcendental service unto Him. Persons who desire their own good may follow these *mahājanas* and thus attain the supreme benefit.

TEXT 26

मुमुक्षवो घोररूपान् हित्वा भूतपतीन् य ।
नारायणकलाः शान्ता भजन्ति ह्यनख्यवः ॥२६॥

*mumukṣavo ghora-rūpān
hitvā bhūta-patīn atha
nārāyaṇa-kalāḥ śāntā
bhajanti hy anasūyavaḥ*

mumukṣavaḥ—persons desiring liberation; *ghora*—horrible, ghastly; *rūpān*—forms like that; *hitvā*—rejecting; *bhūta-patīn*—demigods; *atha*—for this reason; *nārāyaṇa*—the Personality of Godhead; *kalāḥ*—plenary portions; *śāntāḥ*—all-blissful; *bhajanti*—do worship; *hi*—certainly; *anasūyavaḥ*—non-envious.

TRANSLATION

Those who are serious about liberation are certainly nonenvious, and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the all-blissful forms and plenary portions of Lord Viṣṇu.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the original person of the Viṣṇu categories, expands Himself in two different categories, namely integrated plenary portions and separated parts and parcels. The separated parts and parcels are the servitors, and the integrated plenary portions of *Viṣṇu-tattvas* are the worshipful objects of service.

All demigods who are empowered by the Supreme Lord are also separated parts and parcels. They do not belong to the categories of *Viṣṇu-tattva*. The *Viṣṇu-tattvas* are equally powerful living beings like the original form of the Personality of Godhead, and they display only different categories of power in consideration of different times and circumstances. The separated parts and parcels are powerful by limitation. They do not have unlimited power like the *Viṣṇu-tattvas*. Therefore, the *Viṣṇu-tattvas*, or the plenary portions of Nārāyaṇa, the Personality of Godhead, are never to be classified in the same categories with the parts and parcels. If anyone does so he becomes at once an offender by the name *pāśaṇḍī*. In the age of Kali many foolish persons commit such unlawful offenses and equalize the two categories.

The separated parts and parcels have different positions in the estimation of material powers, and some of them are like Kālabhairava, Śmaśābhairava, Śani, Mahākālī, Caṇḍikā. These demigods are worshiped mostly by those who are in the lowest categories of the mode of darkness or ignorance, and there are others who are in the mode of passion and worship demigods like Brahmā, Śiva, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa and many similar deities, urged by the desire for material enjoyment. But those who are actually situated in the mode of goodness (*sattva-guṇa*) of material nature worship only *Viṣṇu-tattvas*. *Viṣṇu-tattvas* are represented by various names and forms such as Nārāyaṇa, Dāmodara, Vāmana, Govinda, Adhokṣaja, etc. The qualified *brāhmaṇas* worship the *Viṣṇu-tattvas* represented by the *śalagrāma-śilā*, and so also some of the higher castes like the *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* worship the *Viṣṇu-tattvas* generally.

Highly qualified *brāhmaṇas* situated in the mode of goodness have no grudges against the mode of worship of others. They have all respect for other demigods, even though they are ghastly looking, like the Kālabhairava or Mahākālī, etc. They know very well that these horrible features of the Supreme Lord are all different servitors of the Lord under different conditions, yet they reject the worship of both horrible and attractive features of the demigods, and they concentrate only on the forms of Viṣṇu because they are serious about liberation from the ma-

terial conditions. The demigods, even to the stage of Brahmā, the supreme of all the demigods, cannot offer liberation to anyone. Hiranyakaśipu underwent a severe type of penance to become eternal in life, but his worshipful deity, Brahmā, could not satisfy him with such blessings. Therefore Viṣṇu is called *mukti-pāda*, or the Personality of Godhead who can bestow upon us *mukti*, liberation, and none else. The demigods, being like other living entities in the material world, are all liquidated at the time of the annihilation of the material structure. They are themselves unable to get liberation, and what to speak of giving liberation to their devotees. The demigods can award the worshipers some temporary benefit only and not the ultimate one.

It is for this reason only that candidates for liberation deliberately reject the worship of the demigods, although they have no disrespect for any one of them.

TEXT 27

रजस्तमःप्रकृतयः समशीला भजन्ति वै ।
पितृभूतप्रजेशादीन् श्रियैश्वर्यप्रजेप्सवः ॥२७॥

*rajas tamaḥ prakṛtayaḥ
sama-śilā bhajanti vai
pitṛ-bhūta-prajesaādīn
śriyaiśvarya-prajepsavaḥ*

rajaḥ—the mode of passion; *tamaḥ*—the mode of ignorance; *prakṛtayaḥ*—of that mentality; *sama-śilāḥ*—of the same categories; *bhajanti*—do worship; *vai*—actually; *pitṛ*—the forefathers; *bhūta*—other living beings; *prajesa-ādīn*—controller of cosmic administration; *śriyā*—enrichment; *aiśvarya*—wealth and power; *prajā*—aristocracy; *īpsavaḥ*—so desiring.

TRANSLATION

Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance worship the forefathers, other living beings and the demigods who are in charge of cosmic activities, for they are urged by a desire to be materially benefited with women, wealth, power and aristocratic birth.

PURPORT

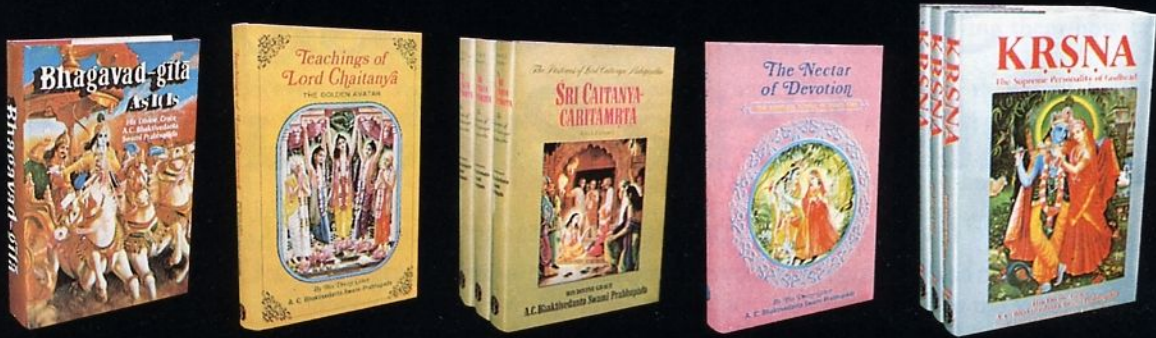
There is no need to worship demigods of whatsoever category if one is serious about going back to Godhead. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (Bg. 7.20, 23) it is clearly said that those who are mad after material enjoyment approach the different demigods for temporary benefits, which are meant for men with a poor fund of knowledge. We should never desire to increase the depth of material enjoyment. Material enjoyment should be accepted only up to the point of the bare necessities of life and not more or less than that. To accept more material enjoyment means to bind oneself more and more to the miseries of material existence. More wealth, more women and false aristocracy are some of the demands of the materially disposed man because he has no information of the benefit derived from Viṣṇu worship. By Viṣṇu worship one can derive benefit in this life as well as in life after death. Forgetting these principles, foolish people who are after more wealth, more wives and more children worship various demigods. The aim of life is to end the miseries of life and not to increase them.

For material enjoyment there is no need to approach the demigods. The demigods are but servants of the Lord. As such, they are duty-bound to supply necessities of life in the form of water, light, air, etc. *One should work hard and worship the Supreme Lord by the fruits of one's hard labor for existence, and that should be the motto of life.* One should be careful to execute occupational service with faith in God in the proper way, and that will lead one gradually on the progressive march back to Godhead.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when He was personally present at Vrajadhāma, stopped the worship of the demigod Indra and advised the residents of Vraja to worship by their business and to have faith in God. Worshiping the multi-demigods for material gain is practically a perversity of religion. This sort of religious activity has been condemned in the very beginning of the *Bhāgavatam* as *kaitava-dharma*. There is only one religion in the world to be followed by one and all, and that is the *Bhāgavata-dharma*, or the religion which teaches one to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead and no one else.

(continued in next issue)

"In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the self within himself in due course of time."—Bhagavad-gītā As It Is



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As pleased to see his disciples as they are to see him, Śrīlā Prabhupāda glides down an airport escalator surrounded by song.

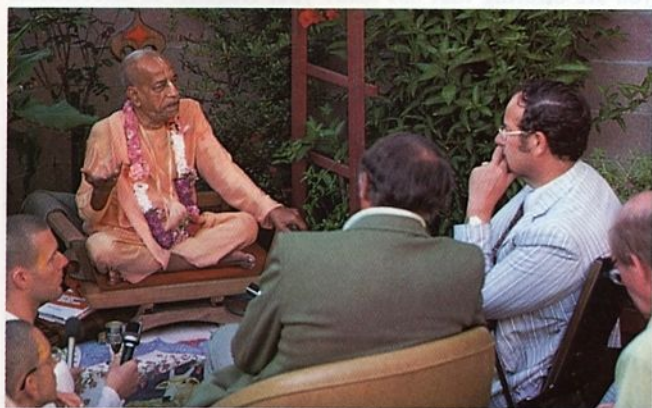
Article and photography by Viśākhā-devī dāsi

He's probably logged as much flight time in the past ten years as any other travelling emissary. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has gone around the world twelve times visiting his ISKCON centers, lecturing and insuring a high stan-

dard of spiritual life among his disciples. The author travelled with him this past summer as he shuttled from West to East coast and back again, holding informal meetings and having dialogues with those who came to ask questions no one else could answer.

Los Angeles: June 24—28

SHORTLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL at the Los Angeles temple, disciples arranged for a meeting between Śrīla Prabhupāda and Dr. John B. Orr (Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Southern California), Dr. Stillson Judah (Chairman of the Department of Phenomenology and History of Religion, and head librarian at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California), Dr. John P. Crossley (University of Southern California), Dr. Mize (Long Beach City College), and other scholars from various universities. After all the guests had assembled and were seated comfortably in a small garden within the Los Angeles temple complex, Śrīla Prabhupāda walked in with a quick step, sat down before them, and began to speak.



Teaching the Teachers. West Coast scholars listen as His Divine Grace reveals the essence of Vedic knowledge.

“All the revealed scriptures indicate that having achieved the human form of life, we should now find out what God is. That is real science—to inquire about the problems of life. And what are those problems? The real problems are birth, death, old age and disease.

“Our struggle for existence means that we try to avoid distress, and we seek happiness. Our real distress is that we have to die. You may have taken birth in a rich American family, and you may work in a big skyscraper and drive a very nice automobile, but at any moment you can be kicked out by death. We are looking for happiness, but we must find out where there is permanent happiness. That is intelligence; not that I create a circumstance where I am happy for some years and then get kicked out.”

Prabhupāda finished his brief talk and the guests were introduced to him. A lively conversation ensued that continued late into the evening.

Denver: June 28—July 5

AFTER HIS FOUR-DAY VISIT to Los Angeles, Śrīla Prabhupāda travelled to Denver, where a family of devotees was pleased to give their house, right across the street from the temple, for their spiritual master to live in during his

visit. There Prabhupāda would have mock debates with his *sannyāsī* (renounced) disciples, showing them how to defeat other philosophies.

Prabhupāda: What is the meaning of the Absolute Truth?

Devotee: That from which everything emanates.

Prabhupāda: So everything must have come from something. No one can deny that. Now if you know what the Absolute Truth is we challenge you to present it.

Devotee: We agree that there is an Absolute Truth, but we cannot at this time say exactly what it is.

Prabhupāda: Then you cannot say that the Vedic explanation is wrong. If you don't know what gold is and a friend gives it to you, saying, “Here is gold” how can you deny it? You have no knowledge, therefore you cannot claim it is not gold. Similarly, if you don't know what the Absolute Truth is, what grounds do you have for denying that Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth? If you don't accept our philosophy, then you must present your philosophy. But if you don't have a philosophy you must agree to hear from an authority who does.

Devotee: Yes, that argument is logical; we should at least listen to you. But we have heard so many versions of the “truth.” Why should we accept your version?

Prabhupāda: That is like saying, “I have come across so many counterfeit coins, why should I think there is a real coin?” No. Because there are counterfeit coins, therefore there must also be genuine coins. It is our misfortune that we are unable to distinguish the real coins from the counterfeit ones.

Devotee: You say that you are presenting the Absolute Truth and that the Absolute Truth is God, Kṛṣṇa. But I think your position is dogmatic. There are many truths, many gods.



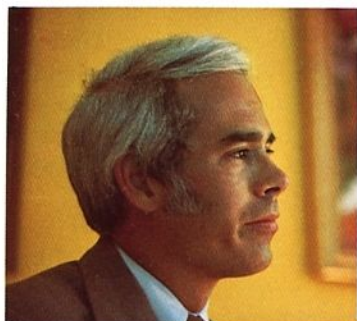
Defeated! Students delight in a well-turned phrase from Śrīla Prabhupāda during a mock debate.

Prabhupāda: The Absolute Truth is one; God is one. God cannot be many. If God has competition He cannot be God. If you don't admit Kṛṣṇa is God then you present who God is. But if you don't know who God is or what God is then you cannot say that Kṛṣṇa is not God. If you speak that way then you are being dogmatic. You do not know what God is, yet dogmatically you are saying that Kṛṣṇa is not God. Therefore, we say that those who deny the supremacy of Lord Kṛṣṇa are members of the owl civilization. The owls never open their eyes to see the sun. This is the unfortunate defect of conditioned souls; they demand to see God, but when God comes before them personally, or when He sends His pure representative, they cannot see.

Chicago: July 5—11

ON THE PLANE FROM DENVER TO CHICAGO Śrīla Prabhupāda scanned the lead article in an international news magazine entitled, "Crime: Why and What to Do." He noted that the overwhelming problem was lucidly presented, but that no practical solution was offered. So, in Chicago, when the local mayor, a representative from the police force and a state assemblyman came individually to visit Prabhupāda, he spoke to them for three consecutive days about the Kṛṣṇa conscious solution to the problem of crime.

All three gentlemen were very receptive, especially the state senator, Mr. John Porter, who came with his wife:



Mr. Porter: I understand you were speaking to some police officials about crime.

Prabhupāda: Crime means anything you do without Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is simply a question of degree. Material life is criminal life. Everyone is busy. So many cars are

going this way and that, here and there, but ask anyone what is God, he'll be disturbed; "What is this nonsense?" He thinks it is a waste of time to talk about God. But one in spiritual life is only interested in God. Actually, human life is perfect when one remembers only God.

Mrs. Porter: Can you live a spiritual life outside the temple?

Prabhupāda: Yes. It is a simple method: chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. You can do it anywhere, even while walking on the street. There is no tax, no loss and you can develop your spiritual life. Is it difficult? You have a tongue, you can chant. Do it and see the practical result. The temple is a place where you can come once in a day and get inspiration. But if you have no time, you can chant the *Mahāmantra* anywhere you are and gradually make advancement. If you have more time, you can read our books.

Mr. Porter: Christians have the concept of original sin and salvation. What is your view of that?

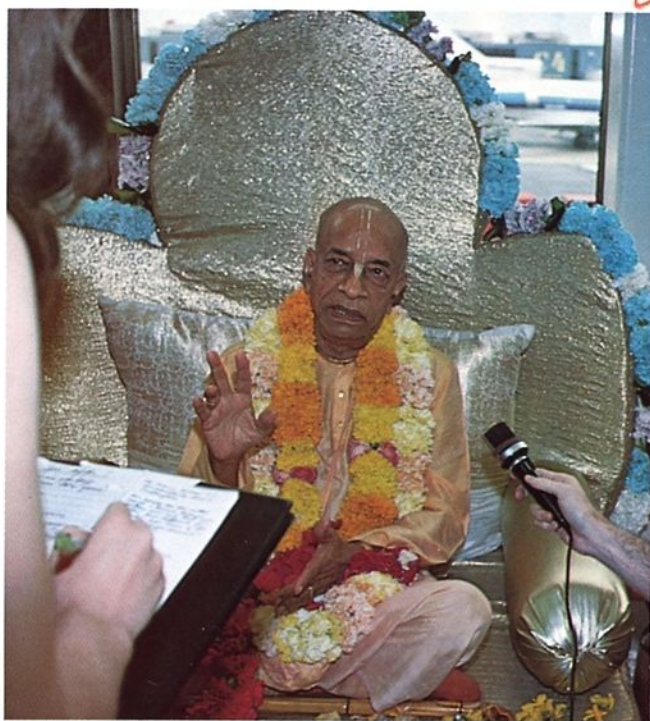
Prabhupāda: As I mentioned, anyone who is in the material world is criminal. It is like a prison house—everyone there is a criminal except the officers. Everyone in the material world is sinful to some degree. Those who are completely purified understand God, love Him and go back home, back to Godhead. In different countries, at different times and under different circumstances, there are different religious principles and methods of purification. Just like in the Christian religion there are ten commandments how to become pure. But if you do not follow them and still say that you are Christian, that is hypocrisy. If you follow the instruction given by God or God's representative, then you are religious; but if you don't follow, simply to say, "I am Hindu, I am Christian, I am Muslim," has no meaning. The main business is how to understand God.

Philadelphia: July 11—15

IN HIS QUARTERS AT THE PHILADELPHIA TEMPLE, Śrīla Prabhupāda explained to a young man from India the process of understanding God:

"Kṛṣṇa Himself says, 'I can be understood only by devotional service, sincere service.' It is very easy to learn this art; there is no distinction as to caste, creed, color. Now so many people are loving Kṛṣṇa. One doesn't have to be expert in philosophy or science or be very rich and intelligent. No. Simply love Kṛṣṇa.

"Even the priests are surprised. They have told me, 'These boys and girls used to be our students, but they never wanted to go to church. Now they spend all their time for God.' And just today at the airport one reporter asked, 'What is it that you are offering that has made your students so affectionate and enthusiastic and loving?' I told him, 'I have simply tried to give them Kṛṣṇa. I have not bribed them.' "

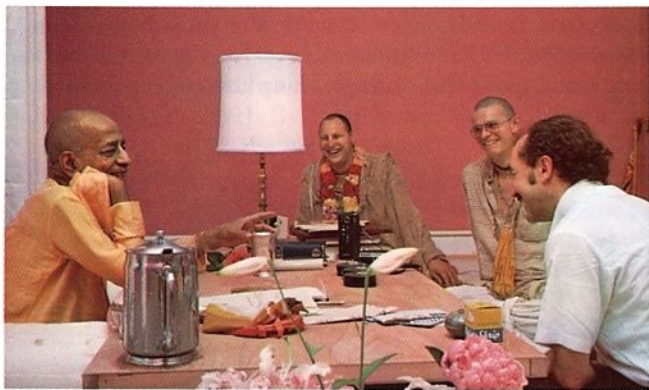


"**Human life** is meant for self-realization, not sense gratification," His Divine Grace explains to reporters during a Philadelphia airport news conference.

PROFESSOR THOMAS J. HOPKINS is the Chairman of the Department of Religious Thought at Franklin and Marshall College. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and has been closely following the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement since its beginning in America in 1966. For these reasons Professor Hopkins has long been anxious to meet with Śrīla Prabhupāda, and in Philadelphia he finally had the opportunity.

Dr. Hopkins: Of all the things which you have written, which is the most important?

Prabhupāda: The most important thing is how to love God.



Early days of ISKCON are fondly recalled by Śrīla Prabhupāda, devotees, and Prof. Thomas J. Hopkins of Franklin and Marshall College.

Dr. Hopkins: But which book?

Prabhupāda: The Vedānta philosophy; first the *Bhagavad-gītā*, then the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Dr. Hopkins: But is there one of the translations or purports which you would want everybody to read?

Prabhupāda: Yes. The *Bhāgavatam* says that the ultimate goal in life is how to become liberated, not how to develop economically. (*Bhāg.* 1.2.9) We should just get money honestly, not for sense gratification but for the necessities of life; to fulfill the bodily demands, not artificially to create them. Why? Because the ultimate goal is to attain liberation. It is not to make a new model car every year. We should not work hard day and night and go to church for material profit, praying to God to get money. People want material gain because they have no spiritual information; therefore they are described as “*mūḍhas*,” fools and rascals. If I take care of my shirt very nicely but I do not care for the person inside the shirt, then what is my position? Similarly, this whole material world is busy taking care of the body, not the soul inside the body. Therefore, all these so-called educational institutions are blind. It is a society of the blind leading the blind.

Dr. Hopkins: What is the solution?

Prabhupāda: First of all understand you are spirit. Find out what is your relationship with God and act accordingly. That is the perfection of life.



Evening Study Session. A devotee assists his spiritual master by citing pertinent scriptural evidence.

En Route

THE CAPTAIN OF THE UNITED AIRLINES JET that took Prabhupāda from Philadelphia to Berkeley, California, took advantage of the long flight to talk with His Divine Grace. Later on, Prabhupāda recalled the conversation. The captain asked that if God is all good, then why is there evil in the world? “I explained that for God there is no evil, just good. Just as my chest is as important to me as my back; if there is pain in my back I take care of it. I do not ignore it thinking that the front is more important. Evil is compared to the back of God. It is not different from His front, or goodness.

“Then the question came, ‘If everything is good from God’s point of view, then how can there be evil?’ I gave another example to explain. It is just like the sun. On the body of the sun there is no shadow. We create shadow by turning our back to the sun. Similarly, when we turn away from God there is evil.”



The captain inquired further, “How is it possible to attain peace?” Prabhupāda replied, “By understanding that God is the supreme proprietor, the supreme enjoyer, and the supreme friend.” Prabhupāda explained

these three aspects of God in detail, and showed the captain a few of the sixty volumes of books that have been published by the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement on the science of God consciousness.

Berkeley: July 15—21

THE DAY AFTER PRABHUPĀDA ARRIVED a press conference was held, with all the major newspapers and television stations represented. Sitting under the glare of TV lights in the large Berkeley temple room, Prabhupāda was faced with the question, “What will happen to the movement when you die?” His answer came back immediately: “I will never die.” All the guests and devotees cheered and Prabhupāda continued, “I live in my books.”

* * *

THE PRESIDENT of the Assembly of World Citizens came to visit His Divine Grace. His society is dedicated to bringing peace in the world, and Śrīla Prabhupāda was very stern with him. Prabhupāda told him, “The world can never be united if we maintain our [bodily] designations. How can you unite people of different designations? If someone is thinking, ‘I am American, I am Russian, I am black, I am white, I am a woman, a man, communist, capitalist, etc., there will always be disunity. But in our movement we never think of ourselves as any material [bodily] designation. We understand all living entities are spirit souls, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. This is

the actual platform of unity. If you bring together people who don't understand this simple fact, they will simply talk nonsense. So without spiritual understanding, the idea of a 'world citizen' is foolish. It will never be successful."



Cal State Prof. James Freeman and student hear. . .

A PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY, Dr. James Freeman of the California State University, and some of his students paid a visit. The discussion turned to the reason for all the different species of life. Śrīla Prabhupāda began, "The basic defect is that scientists do not know that the soul is different from the body. According to my activities I get a different body. The body is like a dress. According to the price you pay [your activities] you get a different dress [body]. For example, when you go to court, you are punished or rewarded according to your activities. The judge is impartial; it is your activities that determine if you are punished or rewarded. The supreme judge is the Supreme Lord.

"Devotees of the Lord, however, are not under *karma* [the laws of material nature]. Just as a king or president can overrule the decision of a judge, similarly, Kṛṣṇa promises that those who surrender to Him will be protected by Him; He takes charge of the devotee, and the laws of material nature cannot then act. To reach this perfection we must fulfill Kṛṣṇa's desire. If we maintain personal desires, then we are still under the law of *karma*." Dr. Freeman then asked, "How do we know when we are acting according to Kṛṣṇa's desire and when we are acting according to our own desire?" Śrīla Prabhupāda answered, "When we manufacture our own plan, we are subject to the law of *karma*. We should act according to Kṛṣṇa's order; that is His desire. This is called *bhakti* [devotion]."

At this point an Indian gentleman who was present commented that in his opinion everyone should have the right to worship the way they want. Prabhupāda objected: "Then everyone in the state can do what they want?" "No," came the reply. Prabhupāda continued, "If you can't make your own law, then how can you make your own religion? It is not possible. Religion means to follow God's law."

The conversation turned to politics. Prabhupāda's arguments persuaded everyone present that democracy was not the best form of government. "The common man has no sense whom to elect; he proves this by electing an unqualified

leader and later trying to change him or pull him down. Meanwhile, thousands of bureaucrats live off the taxes of the people and spend their time planning how to keep themselves in power.



. . . Śrīla Prabhupāda explain the law of *karma*.

"The ideal government is that which is administered by a perfect, saintly person. We can see from the Vedic histories, a benevolent king is responsible to see that the citizens in his kingdom are well situated both materially and spiritually."

* * *

SWAMI CHIDANANDA, President of the Divine Life Mission, and some of his young followers sat before Prabhupāda one afternoon and expressed their opinion about the merits of *haṭha-yoga*, which is a process of different bodily exercises. Prabhupāda explained that the idea of making spiritual advancement by manipulating the body is wrong because, "I am not the body, I am spirit soul." *Bhakti-yoga*, the process of linking up with God through devotion, begins with the proprietor of the body, the spirit soul. Other *yogas*, including *haṭha-yoga*, begin on the material platform by prescribing different ways to control the senses artificially. But this is very difficult in this age. Even Viśvāmītra Muni, a very great *yogī* of the past, fell down after meditating for many years because he became attracted to a woman. Similarly, nowadays so-called *yogīs* cannot control their sexual urges.

Śrīla Prabhupāda continued, "It is described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy men have short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and above all always disturbed. (*Bhāg.* 1.1.10) Therefore, this *yoga* practice will never be successful.

"Practically speaking these boys and girls in Kṛṣṇa consciousness have taken directly to the spiritual platform. How? *Harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam/ kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā.* (*Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa*) In this fallen age the only way, the only way, the only way to attain self realization is by chanting the names of the Lord. If you really want to help people, preach *this* philosophy, the philosophy from the scriptures."

Swami Chidananda agreed that all the great saints tended to emphasize *bhakti* and that even his *guru* brought chanting of the holy names to many parts of India.

JUST FIVE MINUTES AWAY from the Berkeley temple is the sprawling campus of the University of California. In the morning Prabhupāda would walk there, past somber grey buildings and carefully manicured lawns. Once he challenged, “For all the ‘advancement’ of modern civilization, how is the problem of death being solved?” A devotee responded, “People are trying to learn how to meet death cheerfully.” Prabhupāda laughed, “It is like the man who is sentenced to death by the judge, but the lawyer consoles him, ‘That is all right, you can be hanged cheerfully.’ ”

The devotees informed Śrīla Prabhupāda that the university authorities had to put glass in the clock tower on the campus to prevent suicides. Prabhupāda responded, “Education which leads to hopelessness is not education.”

* * *

A PRACTICING CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, Dr. Allan Gerson, had been testing devotees in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement to convince his colleagues of the validity of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His tests showed that devotees are markedly calmer, milder, more unbiased, and freer from anxieties than non-devotees. When he came to see Prabhupāda in San Francisco, however, Prabhupāda explained that since the soul is beyond the body, mind and intelligence, psychology does not apply. Dr. Gerson: “If the soul is at peace, then wouldn’t the mind and intelligence be at peace also?”

Prabhupāda: “Yes, these tests may show this, but they will not give you any help. A diseased man will have certain symptoms, and a healthy man will have certain symptoms. Our goal is not to study the symptoms; we want to touch the origin of the disease and clear it away.

“You and your colleagues have no information of the spirit soul. So how will you understand the cure? The first business is to understand the soul—but not by mental activities, mental concoction. Kindly explain to your colleagues these simple facts: there is a soul beyond the mind and intelligence, and that soul is eternal and is transmigrating from one body to another. Open their eyes so that they can see how ‘drug addicted hippies have become loving servants of Kṛṣṇa and humanity’ [from a letter from Dr. Judah]. We can see practically that these boys and girls have become happy. How have they become happy? They have been following the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we take up this simple formula, the whole human society will become happy.”

Los Angeles: July 21—25

DURING HIS MORNING WALKS in Los Angeles, Śrīla Prabhupāda took pleasure verbally sparring with his disciples by refuting their various atheistic arguments. As he spoke, the devotees would gather around him, straining to hear his soft voice over the ocean waves.

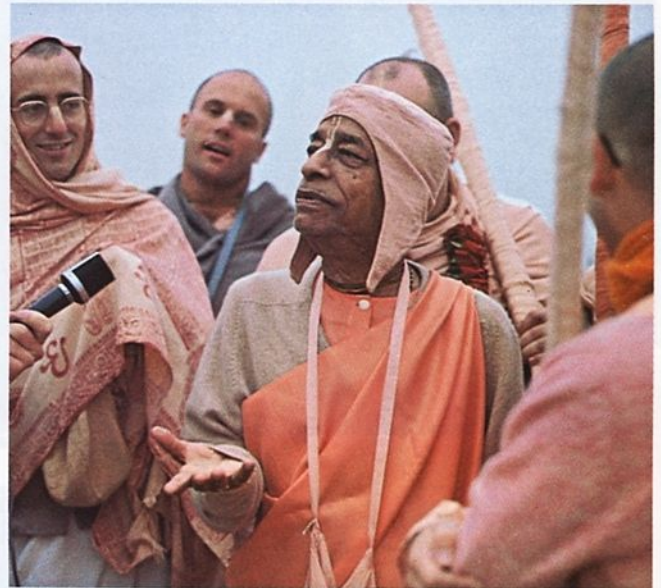
Prabhupāda: Everywhere the spiritual touch is required before matter will work. (A computer needs a person to push the buttons, a watch requires someone to wind it or put the bat-

teries in it, etc.) In the same way, there is a brain behind nature, but because material scientists cannot imagine this brain, they say creation takes place by chance. Is it a very good explanation that by chance certain chemicals came together and there is life? The whole problem is they cannot distinguish between matter and spirit.

Devotee: But scientists can point to so much progress they have made—time and labor-saving machines.

Prabhupāda: The real progress they do not know. The real progress is to check death. We are simply trying to serve Kṛṣṇa. And Kṛṣṇa says, He promises, “One who understands Me need never return to this material world of birth and death but comes to My eternal abode.” (Bg. 4.9)

Devotee: How do we know Kṛṣṇa’s words are true? Is it simply blind faith?



Disciples gather around His Divine Grace at Venice Beach in Los Angeles to hear their guru’s timeless teachings.

Prabhupāda: No, not blind. Just as I know that on the other side of this ocean is Japan. I may never have been there, but I believe the authorities. Everyone without exception must have faith in something. You have faith that when you give your money for an airline ticket, you will get to your destination. Similarly, I am walking, I do not know the way, but someone I trust tells me, “Now go this way.” I have faith that this person will direct me properly. According to our purity we have faith in different authorities. Faith in the scriptural authority will grow with good association. You don’t need to have knowledge to have faith in God. Simply by having such faith knowledge will come. Kṛṣṇa will give you knowledge. And how to begin this whole process? By hearing from a self realized soul, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and by taking Kṛṣṇa prasāda [food which has been offered to Kṛṣṇa with devotion]. It has nothing to do with the mind or intelligence or any other material condition. But if one has no faith, not even enough to hear and chant, then he must remain in this world of birth and death.

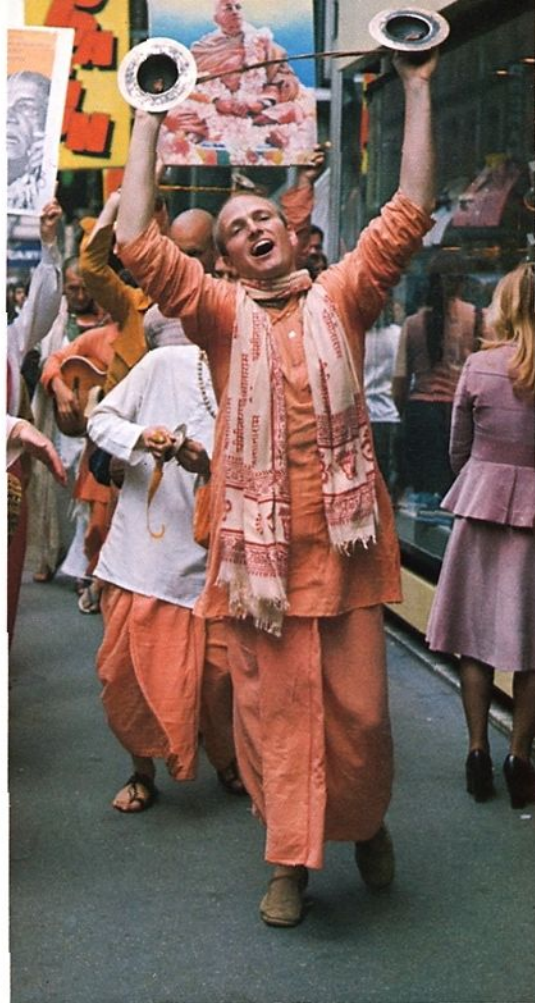


BLISSFUL SONG and bright banner attract students at University of Puerto Rico. San Juan is one of eleven Latin American cities hosting centers of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.





PROPHECY COMES TRUE (left) in Stockholm as spirited band of devotees advertise glories of the Lord. Five hundred years earlier, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu foretold global scope of Sāṅkīrtana. Cymbals aloft, (right) chanter leaps along Parisian thoroughfare.



STREET SĀṅKĪRTANA

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu unleashed a spiritual revolution and a tidal wave of love.

THE FIRST TIME devotees of Kṛṣṇa took their chanting to the street was in India five hundred years ago. Except for religious holidays it had never been done before, but on this occasion in the city of Navadvīpa, West Bengal, it *had* to be done.

Most of the people in Navadvīpa joined the Sāṅkīrtana movement as soon as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu began it. He recommended always chanting the names of God, and they readily took up the practice. Especially in the evenings, households rang with the cheerful music of devotion.

However, both Hindu and Muslim partisans came before the district's governor, Chand Kazi, complaining that the devotees' singing was too loud for

them. The Kazi reacted to the complaints by bursting into a home, angrily breaking a drum and prohibiting any further chanting.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu boldly retaliated, ordering Sāṅkīrtana groups brought into the streets for a mass march through all the neighborhoods of the city. On the appointed night, tens of thousands of devotees streamed through Navadvīpa in a torch-light parade. With Lord Caitanya leading they made their way to the governor's mansion, chanting and dancing with great enthusiasm.

Hearing the chanting throng, the Kazi immediately hid himself in the upstairs quarters of his home. When some local notables were sent to get him, however, he came outside to meet the crowd. He

and Lord Caitanya exchanged pleasantries, then launched into an extensive philosophical discussion. The Kazi finally confessed an affection for the new devotional style, and was moved to proclaim, "To as many descendants as take birth in my dynasty in the future, I give this grave admonition: no one should check the Sāṅkīrtana movement."

Five hundred years after that initial success, Lord Caitanya's Sāṅkīrtana movement is flourishing. Public chanting of the holy names of God is now commonplace in the streets of cities throughout the world, and Lord Caitanya's famous prediction, "In every town and village the holy name will be sung," is quickly being fulfilled. ❀

Letters

The editors of BACK TO GODHEAD welcome correspondence pertaining to spiritual enlightenment. All letters will receive personal replies, and correspondence of general interest will be published regularly.

Dear Editors,

The *Bhagavad-gītā* speaks of re-incarnation. Why can't we remember our past lives?

Francie Cappucci
San Marino, California

Dear Ms. Capucci,

We forget our past lives in the same way that a person with amnesia forgets his past. Just as amnesia is caused by a traumatic psychological experience or physical injury, the severe trauma of death and rebirth erases the memory of our previous life.

But what is the ultimate importance of my knowing that in my past life I had the body of an American or a Russian, a cow or a dog? The crucial thing is to remember who the eternal "I" is who undergoes all these changes of bodies. The Vedic scriptures, especially *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, can reveal to us who we really are behind the facade of bodily identification. By hearing Lord

Kṛṣṇa's instructions in the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and acting on them, we gradually awaken to our real identity as a pure spiritual being, an eternal loving servant of the Supreme Spirit, God. With this understanding all our curiosity about past, present or future lives will be satisfied.

* * *

Dear Editors,

I am confused by the great variety of spiritual reading matter available today. Each author claims that his is "The Way." But I need more than just a book. I need someone I can trust to guide me on the spiritual path. How can I make such a decision?

Georgia Callahan
Kenyon, Rhode Island

Dear Ms. Callahan,

Your confusion is well justified. Anyone interested in spiritual life today is

confronted by such an array of *gurus*, *yogis*, priests, sages and self-made gods—each claiming his teachings alone to be the "Truth"—that reasoned choice seems impossible. Here are a few time-tested guidelines by which any honest seeker can judge a prospective spiritual master and the path he advocates.

First we must understand the meaning of the word "spiritual." It indicates something in relation to the Supreme Spirit, God. The goal of a spiritual discipline should be realization of God and our relationship with Him. This eliminates the great majority of groups on the market today—from *yoga* and meditation societies to the so-called human potential movements—because their aim is only improvement of the body or mind. They give no information on how we can discover our spiritual identity.

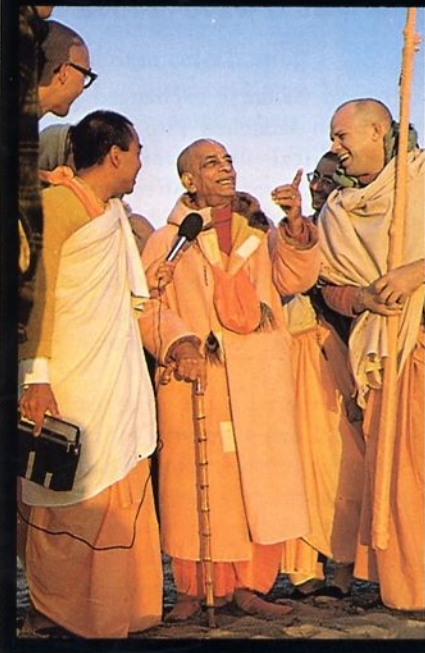
Your observation that you "need more than just a book" is a good one, and is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (The Song of God): "Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth." (Bg. 4.34)

The *Gītā* goes on to state the necessary qualifications of a genuine *guru*: First and foremost, he must be part of a disciplic chain of spiritual masters beginning with the speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa (God) Himself. Furthermore, he must be humble, self-controlled, peaceful, completely uninterested in personal gain, and always glorifying God with his words and deeds.

Finally, the *Gītā* tells us that "such a great soul is very rare." (Bg. 7.19) Few people make the grade. But, we do know that His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the spiritual master of ISKCON, lives up to the expectations of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. You can find this out for yourself by reading his books. If you choose to become his disciple, you will have made a good decision. He is a person you can trust to guide you safely on the spiritual path.

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The Gopīs Enchanted by the Flute

*an excerpt from Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda*

Kṛṣṇa was very pleased with the atmosphere of the forest, where flowers bloomed and bees and drones hummed very jubilantly. While the birds, trees and branches were all looking very happy, Kṛṣṇa, tending the cows and accompanied by Śrī Balarāma and the cowherd boys, began to vibrate His transcendental flute. After hearing the vibration, the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana remembered Him and began to talk amongst themselves about how nicely Kṛṣṇa was playing His flute. When the *gopīs* were describing the sweet vibration of Kṛṣṇa's flute, they also remembered their pastimes with Him; thus their minds became disturbed, and they were unable to fully describe the beautiful vibrations. While discussing the trans-

cidental vibration, they also remembered how Kṛṣṇa dressed, decorated with a peacock feather on His head, just like a dancing actor, and with blue flowers pushed over His ear. His garment glowed yellow-gold, and He was garlanded with a *vaijayanti* necklace. Dressed in such an attractive way, Kṛṣṇa filled up the holes of His flute with the nectar emanating from His lips. So they remembered Him, entering Vṛndāvana forest, which is always glorified by the footprints of Kṛṣṇa and His friends.

Kṛṣṇa was very expert in playing the flute, and the *gopīs* were captivated by the sound vibration, which was not only attractive to them, but to all living creatures who heard it. One of the *gopīs* told her friends, "The highest perfection



Illustration: Yashwantrao Chavan

“The highest perfection of the eyes is to see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entering the forest and playing Their flutes and tending the cows with Their friends.”

of the eyes is to see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entering the forest and playing Their flutes and tending the cows with Their friends.”

Persons who are constantly engaged in the transcendental meditation of seeing Kṛṣṇa, internally and externally, by thinking of Him playing the flute and entering the Vṛndāvana forest, have really attained the perfection of *samādhi*. *Samādhi* (trance) means absorption of all the activities of the senses on a particular object, and the *gopīs* indicate that the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are the perfection of all meditation and *samādhi*. It is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that anyone who is always absorbed in the thought of Kṛṣṇa is the topmost of all *yogīs*.

Another *gopī* expressed her opinion that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, while tending the cows, appeared just like actors going to play on a dramatic stage. Kṛṣṇa was dressed in glowing garments of yellow, Balarāma in blue, and They held new twigs of mango tree, peacock feathers, and bunches of flowers in Their hands. Dressed with garlands of lotus flowers, They were sometimes singing very sweetly among Their friends. One *gopī* told her friends, “How is it Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are looking so beautiful?” Another *gopī* said, “My dear friend, we cannot even think of His bamboo flute—what sort of pious activities did it execute so that it is now enjoying the nectar of the lips of Kṛṣṇa?” Kṛṣṇa sometimes kisses the *gopīs*; therefore the transcendental nectar of His lips is available only to them, and His lips are considered their property. Therefore the *gopīs* asked: “How is it possible that the flute, which is nothing but a bamboo rod, is always engaged in enjoying the nectar from Kṛṣṇa’s lips? Because the flute is engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord, the mother and the father of the flute must be happy.”

The lakes and rivers are considered to be the mothers of the trees because the trees live simply by drinking water. The waters of the lakes and rivers of Vṛndāvana were full of happy lotus flowers because the waters were thinking, “How is it that our son, the bamboo rod, is enjoying the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips?” The bamboo trees standing by the banks of the rivers and lakes were also happy to see their descendant engaged in

the service of the Lord, just as persons advanced in knowledge take pleasure to see their descendants engage in the service of the Lord. The trees were overwhelmed with joy and were incessantly yielding honey, which flowed from the beehives hanging on their branches.

Sometimes the *gopīs* spoke about Kṛṣṇa to their friends: “Dear friends, our Vṛndāvana is proclaiming the glories of this entire earth because this planet is glorified by the lotus footprints of the son of Devaki. Besides that, when Govinda plays His flute, the peacocks



immediately become mad. When all the animals, trees and plants—either on top of Govardhana Hill or in the valley—see the dancing of the peacock, they all stand still and listen to the transcendental sound of the flute with great attention. We think that this boon is not possible or available on any other planet.” Although the *gopīs* were village cowherd women and girls, they had knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, one can learn the highest truths simply by hearing the *Vedas* from authoritative sources.

Another *gopī* said, “My dear friends, just see the deer! Although they are

dumb animals, they have approached Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mahārāja Nanda. Not only are they attracted by the dress of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, but as soon as they hear the playing of His flute, the deer, along with their husbands, offer respectful obeisances unto the Lord by looking at Him with great affection.” The *gopīs* were envious of the deer because the deer were able to offer their service to Kṛṣṇa along with their husbands. The *gopīs* thought themselves not so fortunate because whenever they wanted to go to Kṛṣṇa, their husbands were not very happy.

Another *gopī* said, “My dear friends, Kṛṣṇa is so nicely dressed that He appears to be the impetus for various kinds of ceremonies held by the womenfolk. Even the wives of the denizens of heaven become attracted after hearing the transcendental sound of His flute. Although they are travelling in their airplanes, enjoying the company of their husbands, upon hearing the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute they immediately become perturbed. Their hair loosens and their tight dresses slacken.” This means that the transcendental sound of the flute of Kṛṣṇa extended to all corners of the universe. It is also significant that the *gopīs* knew about the different kinds of airplanes flying in the sky.

Another *gopī* said to her friends, “My dear friends, the cows are also charmed as soon as they hear the transcendental sound of the flute of Kṛṣṇa. It sounds to them like the pouring of nectar, and they immediately spread their long ears just to catch the liquid nectar of the flute. As for the calves, they are seen with the nipples of their mothers pressed within their mouths, but they cannot suck the milk. They remain struck with devotion, and tears glide down their eyes, illustrating vividly how they are embracing Kṛṣṇa heart to heart.” These phenomena indicate that even the cows and calves in Vṛndāvana knew how to cry for Kṛṣṇa and embrace Him heart to heart. Actually, Kṛṣṇa conscious affection is culminated in shedding tears from the eyes.

A younger *gopī* told her mother, “My dear mother, the birds, who are all looking at Kṛṣṇa playing on His flute, are sitting very attentively on the branches and twigs of different trees. From their


features it appears that they have forgotten everything and are engaged only in hearing Kṛṣṇa's flute. This proves that they are not ordinary birds; they are great sages and devotees, and just to hear Kṛṣṇa's flute they have appeared in Vṛndāvana forest as birds." Great sages and scholars are interested in Vedic knowledge, the essence of which is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*. Through the knowledge of the *Vedas*, Kṛṣṇa has to be understood. From the behavior of these birds, it appears that they were formerly great Vedic scholars who took to Kṛṣṇa's transcendental vibration and rejected all branches of Vedic knowledge. Even the River Yamunā, being desirous to embrace the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa after hearing the transcendental vibration of His flute, broke her fierce waves to flow very nicely with lotus flowers in her hands, to present them to Mukunda with deep feeling.

The scorching heat of the autumn sun was sometimes intolerable, and therefore out of sympathy the clouds in the sky appeared above Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Their boy friends while They engaged in blowing Their flutes. The clouds served as a soothing umbrella over Their heads just to make friendship with Kṛṣṇa.

Another *gopī* began to praise the unique position of Govardhana Hill. "How fortunate is Govardhana Hill, for it is enjoying the association of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who are accustomed to walk on it. Thus Govardhana is always in touch with the lotus feet of the Lord. And because Govardhana Hill is so obliged to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, it is supplying different kinds of fruits, roots and herbs, as well as very pleasing crystal water from its lakes, as a presentation to the Lord." The best presentation offered by Govardhana Hill, however, was newly grown grass for the cows and calves. Govardhana Hill knew how to please the Lord by pleasing His most beloved associates, the cows and the cowherd boys.

Another *gopī* said that everything appeared wonderful when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma travelled in the forest of Vṛndāvana playing Their flutes and making intimate friendship with all kinds of moving and nonmoving living creatures. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma played on Their transcendental flutes, the moving creatures became stunned and stopped their activities, and the nonmoving living creatures, like trees and plants, began to shiver with ecstasy.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma carried binding ropes on Their shoulders and in Their

hands, just like ordinary cowherd boys. While milking the cows, the boys bound their hind legs with a small rope. This rope almost always hung from the shoulders of the boys, and it was not absent on the shoulders of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. In spite of Their being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, They played exactly like cowherd boys, and therefore everything became wonderful and attractive. While Kṛṣṇa was engaged in tending the cows in the forest of Vṛndāvana or on Govardhana Hill, the *gopīs* in the village were always absorbed in thinking of Him and discussing His different pastimes. This is the perfect example of Kṛṣṇa consciousness: somehow or other to remain always engrossed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. The vivid example is always present in the behavior of the *gopīs*. Therefore, Lord Caitanya declared that no one can worship the Supreme Lord better than by the method of the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* were not born in very high *brāhmaṇa* or *kṣatriya* families. They were born in the families of *vaiśyas*—not big mercantile communities, but the families of cowherd men. They were not well educated, although they heard all sorts of knowledge from the *brāhmaṇas*—authorities of Vedic knowledge. The *gopīs*' only purpose was to remain always absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. 

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A SHORT STATEMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF KR̥ṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

The International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON) is a worldwide community of devotees practicing bhakti-yoga, the eternal science of loving service to God. The Society was founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, a pure devotee of God representing an unbroken chain of spiritual masters originating with Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

The following eight principles are the basis of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We invite all our readers to consider them with an open mind and then visit one of the ISKCON centers to see how they are being applied in everyday life.

1. By sincerely cultivating a bona fide spiritual science, we can be free from anxiety and come to a state of pure, unending, blissful consciousness in this lifetime.
2. We are not our bodies but eternal, spirit souls, parts and parcels of God (Kṛṣṇa). As such, we are all brothers, and Kṛṣṇa is ultimately our common father.
3. Kṛṣṇa is eternal, all-knowing, omnipresent, all-powerful, and all-attractive. He is the seed-giving father of all living beings, and He is the sustaining energy of the entire cosmic creation.
4. The Absolute Truth is contained in the *Vedas*, the oldest scriptures in the world. The essence of the *Vedas* is found in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, a literal record of Kṛṣṇa's words.
5. We should learn the Vedic knowledge from a genuine spiritual master—one who has no selfish motives and whose mind is firmly fixed on Kṛṣṇa.
6. Before we eat, we should offer to the Lord the food that sustains us. Then Kṛṣṇa becomes the offering and purifies us.
7. We should perform all our actions as offerings to Kṛṣṇa and do nothing for our own sense gratification.
8. The recommended means for achieving the mature stage of love of God in this age of Kali, or quarrel, is to chant the holy names of the Lord. The easiest method for most people is to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

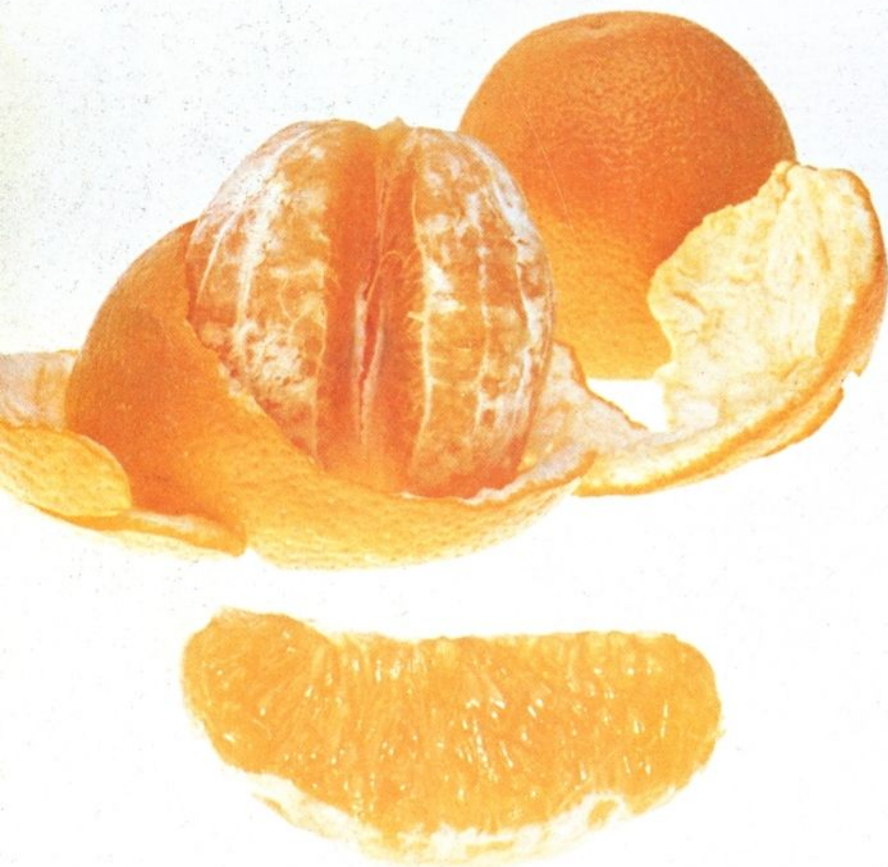
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