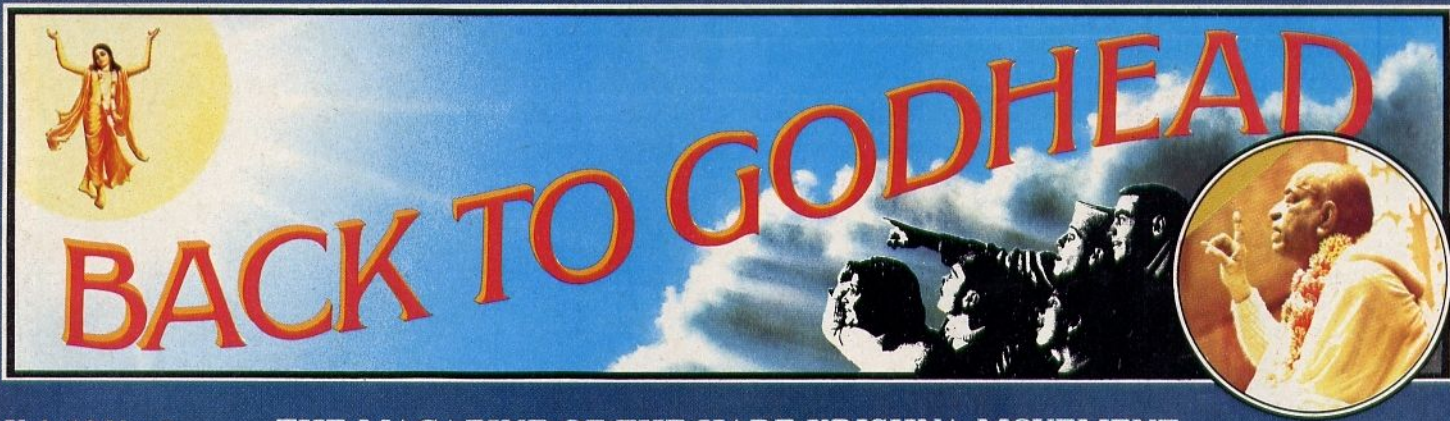
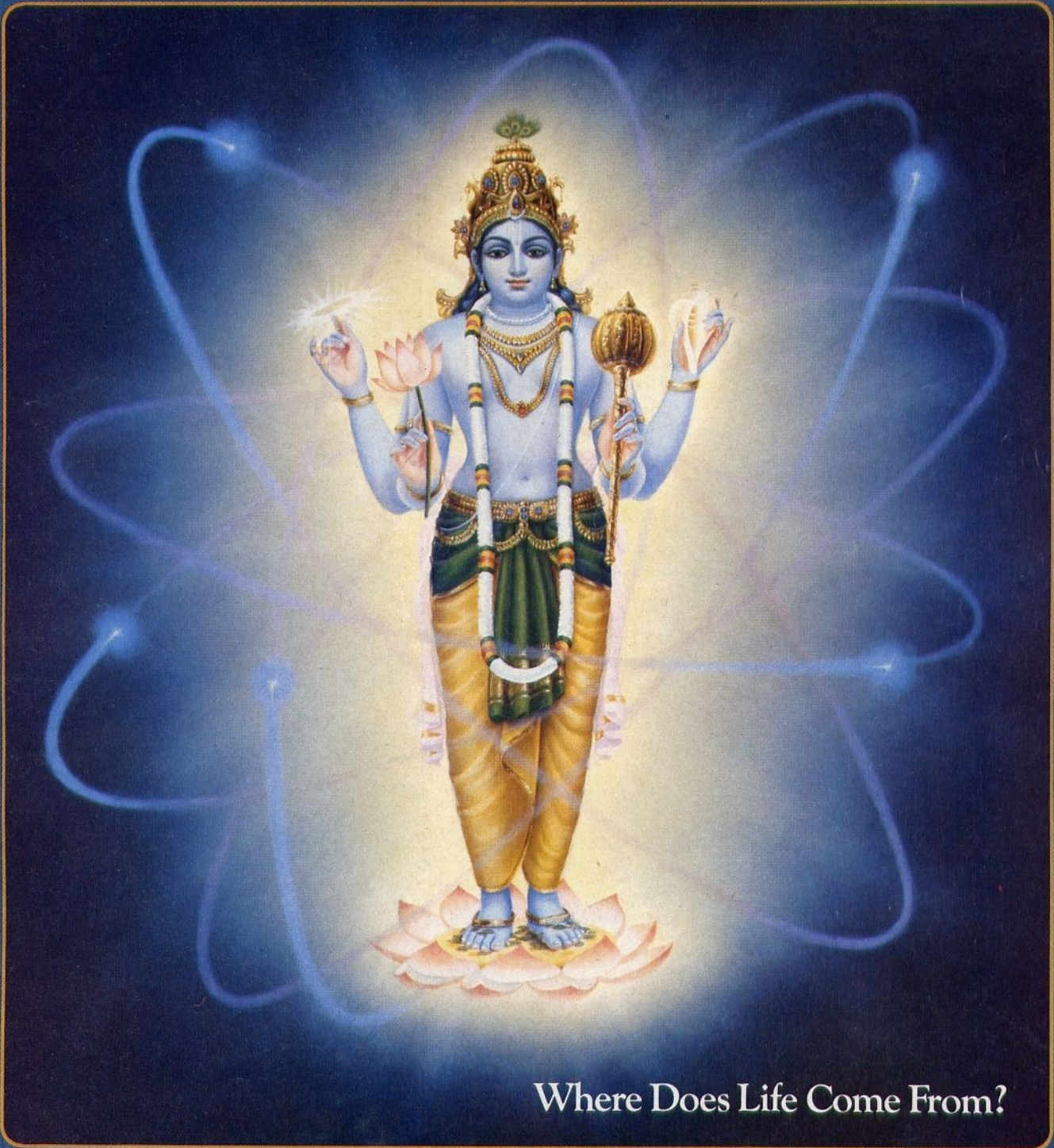


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol. 13 No. 3

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



Where Does Life Come From?

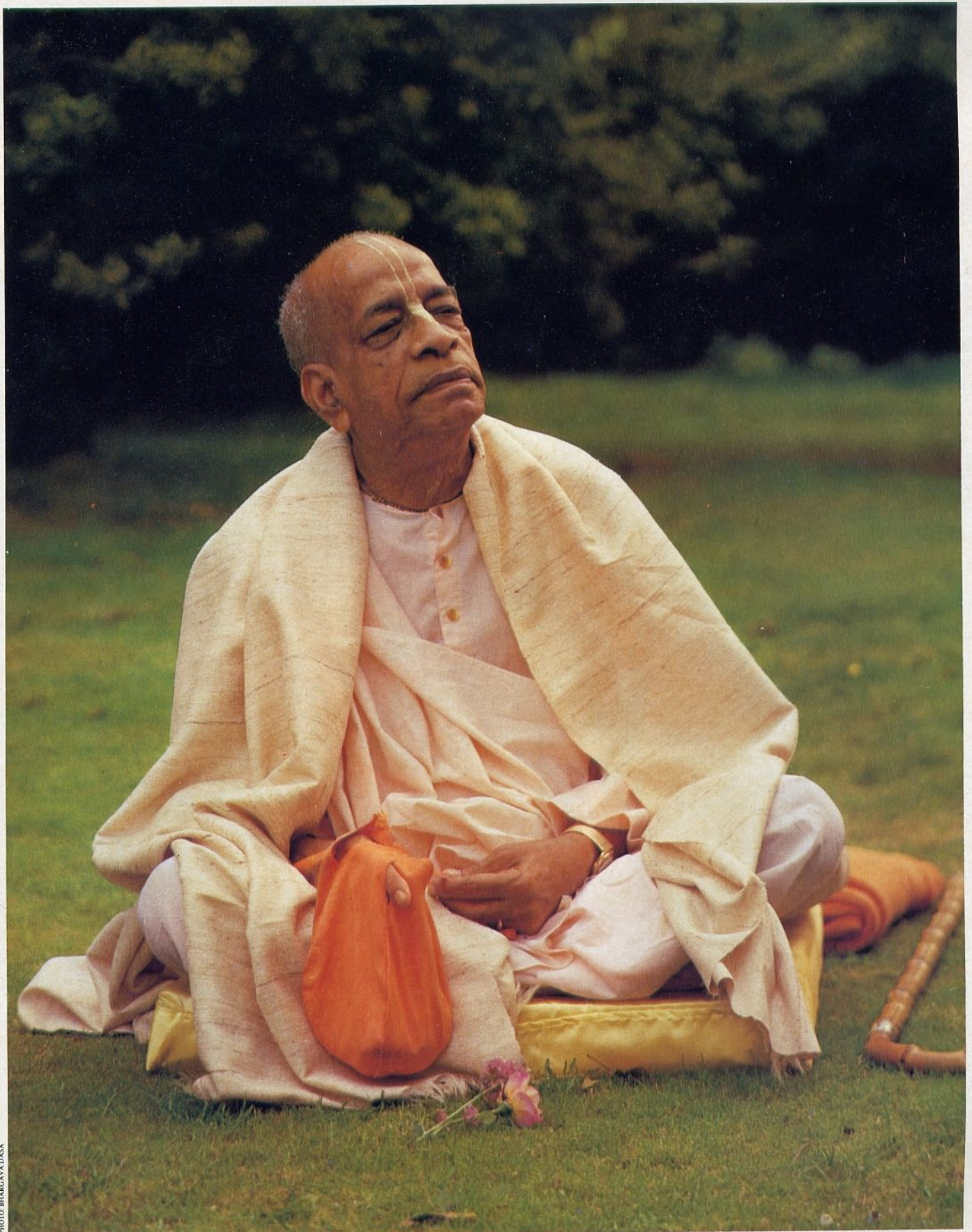


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DASA

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

VOL. 13, NO. 3

FOUNDER

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

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PRONUNCIATION. Sanskrit words and names in
BACK TO GODHEAD are spelled according to a scholarly
system that shows how to pronounce each word. The
sound of the short **a** is like the **u** in **but**. Long **ā** is like the
a in **far** and held twice as long as the short **a**, and **e** is like
the **a** in **evade**. Long **ī** is like the **i** in **pique**. The vowel **ṛ** is
pronounced like the **ri** in the English word **rim**. The **c** is
pronounced as in **chair**. The aspirated consonants (**ch**,
jh, **dh**, etc.) are pronounced as in **staunch-heart**, **hedg-**
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**.

◀ **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda** appeared in this world in 1896, in Calcutta, India. In 1922 he met his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, who asked him to teach the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the English-speaking world. In 1944 Śrīla Prabhupāda founded BACK TO GODHEAD, and in the early 1960's he published three volumes of his translation and commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, "the cream of the Vedic literatures."

After he arrived in America in 1965, Śrīla Prabhupāda published his *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and some seventy other large volumes, including thirty more of the *Bhāgavatam*. These publications have become standard textbooks and reference works in universities worldwide.

Traveling almost constantly, Śrīla Prabhupāda guided his international society from humble beginnings on New York's Second Avenue to a worldwide confederation of more than one hundred *āśramas*, schools, temples, institutes, and farm communities. He passed away in India's Vṛndāvana (the place most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa), on November 14, 1977. His disciples are carrying forward the movement he started.

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The continuing presentation of India's great spiritual classic.

Translation and commentary

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ABOUT BACK TO GODHEAD: "Godhead is light" has always been BACK TO GODHEAD's byword—"Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience."

"In the darkness of nescience," explained His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda in his introduction to the very first issue, "man is fully amazed with the mechanism of the gross body—just like a boy who is amazed with the mechanism of a motorcar but who cannot understand that without a driver it cannot move an inch. . . .

"Everyone is fully concerned with the comforts of the body and everything related with the body, and nobody is concerned with the spirit that moves the body—although even a boy can realize that the motorcar mechanism has little value if there is no driver of the car."

So this journal is, in Śrīla Prabhupāda's own words, "an instrument for training the mind and educating human nature to rise to the plane of the spirit soul." BACK TO GODHEAD draws from ancient India's Vedic literatures (especially Lord Kṛṣṇa's *Bhagavad-gītā*) and offers its readers the ultimate science—self-realization and realization of God.

As Śrīla Prabhupāda has also written, "Every member of human society should clearly understand the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, for only in this way can one be spiritually elevated and automatically give up the false, illusory knowledge by which one thinks, 'I am this body, and everything belonging to this body is mine.' One should be prepared to understand the spirit soul and the supreme spirit, God, who are eternally related. Thus one may return home, back to Godhead, having solved all the problems of life."

COVER: Where Does Life Come From? Ancient India's Vedic literatures inform us that life comes from the Supreme Living Being: here we see Lord Kṛṣṇa in His Viṣṇu (all-pervading) form, by which He is present even within the atom. But a skeptic scientist claimed recently that life comes from matter, so devotees of Kṛṣṇa challenged him to "Prove It!" (page 25) (Cover art by Rāmaprasāda dāsa)



Carl Jung (1875-1961)

PART ONE SEEKER WITHOUT A GUIDE

Swiss psychologist Carl Jung sought a way out of the ocean of material suffering. Yet he felt, “I had to make do with my own truth. . . .”

(A discussion with His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.)

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung gave the following criticism of Sigmund Freud: “Sexuality evidently meant more to Freud than to other people. For him it was something to be religiously observed. . . . One thing was clear: Freud, who had always made much of his irreligiosity, had now constructed a dogma. Or rather, in the place of a jealous God whom he had lost, he had substituted another compelling image, that of sexuality.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is a fact. He has taken sexuality to be God. It is our natural tendency to accept a leader, and Freud simply abandoned the leadership of God and took up the leadership of sex. On the other hand, if we accept the leadership of Kṛṣṇa, our life becomes perfect. All other leadership is the leadership of *māyā* [illusion]. There is no doubt that we have to accept a leader. Although Freud would not admit it, he accepted sex as his leader, and consequently he was constantly speaking about sex. Those who have taken God as their leader will speak only of God, nothing else. *Jīvera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa.'* According to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's philosophy, we are all eternal servants of God, but as soon as we give up God's service, we have to accept the service of *māyā*.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung sees the mind as being composed of a balance of the conscious and the unconscious, or subconscious. It is the function of the personality to integrate these. For instance, if one has a strong sex drive, he can sublimate or channel it into art or religious activity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is our process. The sex impulse is natural for everyone in the material world. But if we think of Kṛṣṇa embracing Rādhārāṇī or dancing with the *gopīs*, our sex impulse is sublimated and weakened. If one hears about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* from the right source, lusty

desire within the heart will be suppressed, and one will be able to develop devotional service.

Hayagrīva dāsa: This would be an example of what Jung would call integration or individuation, whereby the energies of the subconscious sex impulse are channeled into conscious, creative activity directed toward God-realization.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What we must understand is that Kṛṣṇa is the only *puruṣa*, the only enjoyer. If we help Him in His enjoyment, we also receive enjoyment. We are predominated, and He is the predominator. On the material platform, if a husband wants to enjoy the wife, the wife must voluntarily help him in that enjoyment. By helping him, the wife also becomes an enjoyer. Similarly, the supreme predominator, the supreme enjoyer, is Kṛṣṇa. And the predominated, the enjoyed, are the living entities. When the living entities agree to help Kṛṣṇa's sex desire, they become enjoyers.

Hayagrīva dāsa: What is meant by Kṛṣṇa's sex desire?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You might say “sense enjoyment.” Kṛṣṇa is the supreme proprietor of the senses, and when we help Kṛṣṇa in His sense enjoyment, we also naturally partake of that enjoyment. The sweet *rasagullā* [a candy made from milk] is meant to be enjoyed, and therefore the hand puts it into the mouth so that it can be tasted and go to the stomach. The hand cannot enjoy the *rasagullā* directly. Kṛṣṇa is the only direct enjoyer; all others are indirect enjoyers. By satisfying Kṛṣṇa, others will be satisfied. Upon seeing the predominator happy, the predominated become happy.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Psychologists say that quite often the subconscious is acting through the conscious, but that we do not know it.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The subconscious is there, but it is not always manifest. Sometimes a thought suddenly becomes manifest, just as a bubble will suddenly emerge in a pond. You may not be able to understand why it emerges, but we may assume that it was in the subconscious state and suddenly became manifest. That subconscious thought which is manifest does not necessarily have any connection with one's present consciousness. It is like a stored impression, a shadow or a photograph. The mind takes many snapshots, and they are stored.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung could see that the soul is always longing for light, and he wrote of the urge within the soul to rise out of darkness. He noted the pent-up feeling in the eyes of primitive people and a certain sadness in the eyes of animals. He wrote: “There is a sadness in animals' eyes, and we never know whether that sadness is bound up with the soul of the animal or is a poignant message which speaks to us out of that existence.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Every living entity, including man, is constitutionally a servant. Therefore everyone is seeking some master, and that is our natural propensity. You can often see a puppy attempt to take shelter of some boy or man, and that is his natural tendency. He is saying, “Give me shelter. Keep me as your friend.” A child or a man also wants some

shelter in order to be happy. That is our constitutional position. When we attain the human form, when our consciousness is developed, we should take Kṛṣṇa as our shelter and our leader. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa tells us that if we want shelter and guidance, we should take His. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*. This is the ultimate instruction of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung would say that our understanding of Kṛṣṇa as the supreme father and the cause of all causes is an archetypal understanding shared by all humans. All people have the tendency to understand someone to be their supreme father and primal cause, and they will represent Him in different ways. The archetype, however, is the same.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it is exactly the same. Kṛṣṇa, or God, is the supreme father. A father has many sons, and all men are sons of God, born of their father. This is an experience common to everyone at all times.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung believed that because there are so many subconscious factors governing our personality, we must awaken to them. Unless we do so, we are more or less slaves to our subconscious life. The point of psychoanalysis is to reveal as many aspects of our subconscious life as possible and enable us to face them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is what we are teaching. We say that presently the soul is in a sleeping state, and we are telling the soul, "Please wake up! Please wake up! You are not this body! You are not this body!" It is possible to awaken the human being, but other living entities cannot be awakened. A tree, for instance, has consciousness, but he is so packed in matter that you cannot raise him to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A human being, on the other hand, has developed consciousness, which is manifest in different stages. Lower life forms are more or less in a dream state.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Whereas Freud was sexually oriented, Jung was more or less spiritually oriented. In his autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung writes, "I find that all my thoughts circle around God like the planets around the sun, and are as irresistibly attracted by Him. I would feel it to be the grossest sin if I were to put up any resistance to this force." Jung sees all creatures as parts of God and at the same time unique in themselves. He writes, "Man cannot compare himself with any other creature; he is not a monkey, not a cow, not a tree. I am a man. But what is it to be that? Like every other being, I am a splinter of the infinite Deity. . . ."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is also our philosophy that we are part and parcel of God, just as sparks are part of a fire.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung further writes in his autobiography, "It was obedience which brought me grace. . . . One must be utterly abandoned to God; nothing matters but fulfilling His will. Otherwise, all is folly and meaningless."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Very good. Surrender unto God is real spiritual life. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya*. Surrender to God means accepting that which is favorable to God and rejecting that which is unfavorable. The devotee is always convinced that God will give him all protection. He remains humble and meek and thinks himself as one of the members of God's family. This is real spiritual communism. Communists think, "I am a member of a certain community," but it is a man's duty to think, "I am a member of God's family." God is the supreme father, material nature is the mother, and living entities are all sons of God. There are living entities everywhere—on land and in the air and water. There is no doubt that material nature is the mother, and according to our experience we can understand that a mother cannot produce a

child without a father. It is absurd to think that a child can be born without a father. A father must be there, and the supreme father is God. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a person understands that the creation is a spiritual family headed by one supreme father.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning God's personality, Jung writes this: "According to the Bible, God has a personality and is the ego of the universe, just as I myself am the ego of my psychic and physical being."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The individual is conscious of his own body, but not of the bodies of others. Besides the individual soul or consciousness in the body, there is the Paramātmā, the Supersoul, the superconsciousness present in everyone's heart. This is discussed in *Bhagavad-gītā* [13.3]:

*kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi
sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata
kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam
yat taj jñānam mataṁ mama*

"You should understand that I am also the knower in all bodies, and to understand this body and its owner is called knowledge."

Hayagrīva dāsa: Recalling his difficulties in understanding God's personality, Jung writes, "Here I encountered a formidable obstacle. Personality, after all, surely signifies character. Now, character is one thing and not another; that is to say, it involves certain specific attributes. But if God is everything, how can He still possess a distinguishable character? . . . What kind of character or what kind of personality does He have?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God's character is transcendental, not material, and thus He has attributes. For instance, He is very kind to His devotee, and this kindness may be considered one of His characteristics or attributes. Whatever qualities or characteristics we have are but minute manifestations of God's. God is the origin of all attributes and characteristics. As indicated in the *śāstras* [scriptures], He also has mind, senses, feelings, sense perception, sense gratification, and everything else. Everything is there unlimitedly, and since we are part and parcel of God, we possess His qualities in minute quantities. The original qualities are in God and are manifest minutely in ourselves.

According to the *Vedas*, God is a person just like us, but His personality is unlimited. Just as my consciousness is limited to this body and His consciousness is the superconsciousness within every body, so I am a person confined to this particular body, and He is the superperson living within all. As Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.12], the personality of God and the personalities of the individual souls are eternally existing. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna on the battlefield, "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." Both God and the living entity are eternally persons, but God's personality is unlimited, and the individual's personality is limited. God has unlimited power, wealth, fame, knowledge, beauty, and renunciation. We have limited, finite power, knowledge, fame, and so on. That is the difference between the two personalities.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung found that philosophies and theologies could not give him a clear picture of God's personality. He writes this: "What is wrong with these philosophers?" I wondered—evidently, they know of God only by hearsay."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is also our complaint. The philosophers we have studied have failed to give any clear idea of

God. Because they are speculating, they cannot give concrete, clear information. As far as we are concerned, our understanding of God is clear because we simply receive the information given to the world by God Himself. Kṛṣṇa is accepted as the Supreme Person by Vedic authorities; therefore we should have no reason not to accept Him as such. Nārāyaṇa, Lord Śiva, and Lord Brahmā possess different percentages of God's attributes, but Kṛṣṇa possesses all the attributes cent percent, in totality. Rūpa Gosvāmī has analyzed this in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, which we have translated as *The Nectar of Devotion*. In any case, God is a person, and if we study man's attributes, we can also know something of God's. Just as we enjoy ourselves with friends, parents, and others, God also enjoys Himself in various relationships. There are five primary and seven secondary relationships that the living entities can have with God. Since the living entities take pleasure in these relationships, God is described as *akhilā-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the reservoir of all pleasure. There is no need to speculate about God or try to imagine Him. The process for understanding is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.1]:

*mayy āsakta-manāḥ pārtha
yogaṁ yuñjan mad-āśrayaḥ
asamśayaṁ samagraṁ mām
yathā jñāsyasi tac chr̥ṇu*

"The Lord said, 'Now hear, Arjuna, how by practicing *yoga* in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt.' " You can learn about God by always keeping yourself under His protection, or under the protection of His representative. Then without a doubt you can perfectly understand God; otherwise there is no question of understanding Him.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung goes on to point out the difference between theologians and philosophers. He writes, "At least they [the theologians] are sure that God exists, even though they make contradictory statements about Him. . . . God's existence does not depend on our proofs. . . . I understand that God was, for me at least, one of the most certain and immediate of experiences."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, that is a transcendental conviction. One may not know God, but it is very easy to understand that God is there. One has to learn about God's nature, but there is no doubt about the fact that God is there. Any sane man can understand that he is being controlled. So who is that controller? The supreme controller is God. This is the conclusion of a sane man. Jung is right when he says that God's existence does not depend on our proof.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung continues to recall his early spiritual quests in this way: "In my darkness . . . I could have wished for nothing better than a real, live *guru*, someone possessing superior knowledge and ability, who would have disentangled from me the involuntary creations of my imagination."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. According to the Vedic instructions, in order to acquire perfect knowledge, one must have a *guru*. *Tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet*. The *guru* must factually be a representative of God. He must have seen and experienced God in fact, not simply in theory. We have to approach such a *guru*, and by service, surrender, and sincere inquiry, we can come to understand God. The *Vedas* inform us that a person can understand God when he has received a little mercy from His Lordship; otherwise, one may speculate for millions and millions of years. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* [18.55], *bhaktiyā mām abhijānāti*: "One can understand the Supreme Personality as He is only by *bhakti*, devotional ser-

vice." This process of *bhakti* includes *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*—hearing and chanting about Lord Viṣṇu and always remembering Him. *Satataṁ kīrtayanto mām*: the devotee is always glorifying the Lord. As Prahāda Mahārāja says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [7.9.43]:

*naivodvije para duratyaya-vaitaraṇyās
tvad-vīrya-gāyana-mahāmṛta-māgna-cittaḥ*

"O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities." The devotee's consciousness is always drowned in the ocean of the pastimes and unlimited activities of the Supreme Lord. That is transcendental bliss. The spiritual master teaches his disciple how to always remain in the ocean of God consciousness. One who works under the directions of the *ācārya*, the spiritual master, knows everything about God.

Hayagrīva dāsa: In 1938 Jung was invited by the British government to participate in celebrations at the University of Calcutta. Of this Jung writes, "By that time, I had read a great deal about Indian philosophy and religious history and was deeply convinced of the value of Oriental wisdom." On this visit, Jung spoke with a celebrated *guru*, yet he avoided so-called holy men. He writes, "I did so because I had to make do with my own truth, not to accept from others what I could not attain on my own. I would have felt it as a theft had I attempted to learn from the holy men to accept their truth for myself."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: On the one hand, he says he wants a *guru*, and then on the other, he doesn't want to accept one. Doubtlessly there were many so-called *gurus* in Calcutta, and Jung might have seen some bogus *gurus* he did not like. In any case, the principle of accepting a *guru* cannot be avoided. It is absolutely necessary.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning consciousness after death, Jung feels that after death the individual must pick up at the level of consciousness which he left.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, and therefore, according to that consciousness, one has to accept a body. That is the process of the soul's transmigration. An ordinary person can see only the gross material body, but accompanying this body are the mind, intelligence, and ego. When the body is finished, these remain, although they cannot be seen. A foolish man thinks that everything is finished at death. But the soul carries with it the mind, intelligence, and ego—that is, the subtle body—into another body. This is confirmed by *Bhagavad-gītā*, which clearly explains that although the body is destroyed, the consciousness continues. According to one's consciousness, one acquires another body, and again, in that body, the consciousness begins to mold its future lives. If a person was a devotee in his past life, he will again become a devotee after his death. Once the material body is destroyed, the same consciousness begins to work in another body. Consequently we find that some people quickly accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness whereas others take a longer time. *Bahūnām janmanām ante*. This indicates that the consciousness is continuing, although the body is changing. Bharata Mahārāja, for instance, changed many bodies, but his consciousness continued, and he remained fully Kṛṣṇa conscious.

We may see a person daily, but we cannot visualize his intelligence. We can understand that a person is intelligent, but we cannot see intelligence itself. When one talks, we can understand that there is intelligence at work. But why should

(continued on page 32)

THE ISKCON



THE ISKCON
ECC

INSUPI RADHA BASABIHARI

BOMBAY'S NEW CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL CULTURE

“At the new Bombay center, India’s rich spiritual culture can express itself in a thoroughly modern setting. . . .”

by DRAVIḌA DĀSA

PHOTOS BY VIŚAKHĀ-DEVI DĀSĪ



HIS DIVINE GRACE A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda had a genius for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in any situation he encountered. Śrīla Prabhupāda applied this genius not only in the West but also in today’s Westward-looking India—as we can see in the just-opened Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī Temple and Vedic Cultural Center in Bombay.

At the new Bombay center, India’s rich spiritual culture can express itself in a thoroughly modern setting. The center lies on four acres in Bombay’s picturesque Juhu Beach and includes a spacious marble temple, a theater, a restaurant, a bank, a Vedic library, and a twin-towered seven-story hotel. The project cost more than \$2 million and took nearly three years to build.

Now, people who are unfamiliar with the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness might well ask, “Why would a spiritual group that prizes renunciation and detachment want to build a theater and a modern hotel?” For an answer, we may turn to one of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement’s spiritual giants and founders, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. In his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (*Nectar of Devotion*, written in the sixteenth century) he provides many of the philosophical and practical guidelines for today’s International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and here is what he writes about renunciation: “When one is not attached to anything but at the same time uses everything in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service, one is situated in complete renunciation. On the other hand, one who rejects everything, not knowing how to use things in Kṛṣṇa’s service, is not as complete in his renunciation.” So renunciation doesn’t mean walking around in a loincloth or fasting for weeks on end. Rather, in the spirit of detachment we should use everything (including modern hotels and theaters) to glorify God.

There are several reasons why Śrīla Prabhupāda chose Bombay for this ambitious project. First, Bombay is to India what New York or Los Angeles is to the United States—a leader in commerce and culture. (For instance, the main offices of Air-India are in Bombay, as are the headquarters of India’s burgeoning film industry.) Bombay is perhaps India’s most modern and cosmopolitan city, and more important, it is a city whose people cherish their spiritual heritage. In fact, many of its leading citizens are great devotees of Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa. So Śrīla Prabhupāda knew that Bombay would welcome the kind of center he envisioned. And through their overwhelming encouragement and assistance, these people have borne out not only Śrīla Prabhupāda’s clarity of vision but also modern India’s continuing spiritual vitality.

The Temple

The heart of the Bombay center is the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī. (*Rādhā* is the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s eternal consort, and *Rāsa-vihārī* is a name for Kṛṣṇa that means “the enjoyer of the transcendental *rāsa* dance.”) The temple is a majestic structure, replete with twenty-four domes of sculpted marble. The visitor passes through a finely carved red sandstone gate and up a short marble staircase. Then he enters a large courtyard bordered by marble pillars and floral-engraved arches. Graceful trees shade the courtyard’s marble floor.

In alcoves on either side of the courtyard, fifteen colorful dioramas depict scenes from the ancient *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and *Rāmāyaṇa*. (The *Rāmāyaṇa* is a classic Vedic scripture recounting the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared ages ago to show the world the behavior of an ideal ruler.) Another diorama shows Śrīla Prabhupāda speaking in New York’s Tompkins Square in the summer of 1966, when he was just starting the

International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

To the right of the courtyard, near the temple's front side, the visitor finds a *darśana-maṇḍapa* (a roofed area from which to view the Deity) and a *vyāsāsana* (a massive marble chair used only by the spiritual master). In front of the three altars are huge teakwood doors with brass castings that depict Kṛṣṇa's twenty-four main incarnations, and beyond the doors stand the Deities, on handsomely carved, silver-plated teakwood *siṃhāsanas* (altar platforms). On the left altar are Lord Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, two incarnations of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in India five hundred years ago to spread the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. At Their feet, carved in marble, sit Śrīla Prabhupāda and his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. On the center altar are Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī—Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—and Their companions Lalitā and Viśākhā. And on the right altar are Śrī Śrī Sitā-Rāmacandra, Their servant Hanumān, and Rāma's brother Lakṣmaṇa.

The Architect

The gifted young architect who designed the temple (and the entire Bombay project) is His Holiness Surabhī-abhipālayantam dāsa Gosvāmī. Now thirty-one, Surabhi Svāmī graduated from Amsterdam's Institute for Applied Arts before coming to Bombay and joining the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in March of 1972. It was then that he met Śrīla Prabhupāda, who told him, "Kṛṣṇa has sent you here for a special purpose. You should build temples for Him all over India. If you do this work for Kṛṣṇa, that will be the perfection of your life." Inspired by Śrīla Prabhupāda's words and his personal presence and further encouragement during the early days at Juhu Beach, Surabhi Svāmī began designing the Bombay project.

For the next three years the project ran into one problem after another, and Surabhi Svāmī had to devote much of his time to similar projects in Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana, and Hyderabad. But the experience he gained, especially his two-and-a-half-year stay in Vṛndāvana, proved invaluable. In Vṛndāvana he had a chance to examine the elegant temple architecture that developed during the Indian Renaissance of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and he later incorporated some of these Renaissance elements into the Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī temple.

One fascinating aspect of the Bombay project is that it represents a melding of



The heart of the new center is the temple, where Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī and Their companions (above) stand on handsomely carved, silver-plated altar platforms. (Rādhā is Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort; *Rāsa-vihārī* means "Kṛṣṇa, the enjoyer of the transcendental *rāsa* dance.")

Guests await moment when the teakwood altar doors (right) will open and reveal the Deities.





Fifteen colorful dioramas (above) grace the temple. They depict scenes from the treasury of India's spiritual culture—the Vedic literature.

Lord Kṛṣṇa advised Arjuna on the science of self-realization (left) in this scene from *Bhagavad-gītā*. Though Kṛṣṇa spoke for only half an hour, what He said has challenged the greatest minds for five thousand years.



traditional art forms from all over India. "There are two ways of designing," Surabhi Svāmī explained. "One way is that you sit down in an office somewhere and come up with a design, and you somehow have people execute it. No matter how difficult it is, you just tell them, 'I want it like this.' But, of course, this is very limited—especially for a Westerner like me, who naturally starts out knowing almost nothing about India. There are so many things I would never have thought of if I had just sat at my drawing table. But there's another way to

design, and that is to first see what people can do—and *then* create the design. I always work the second way.

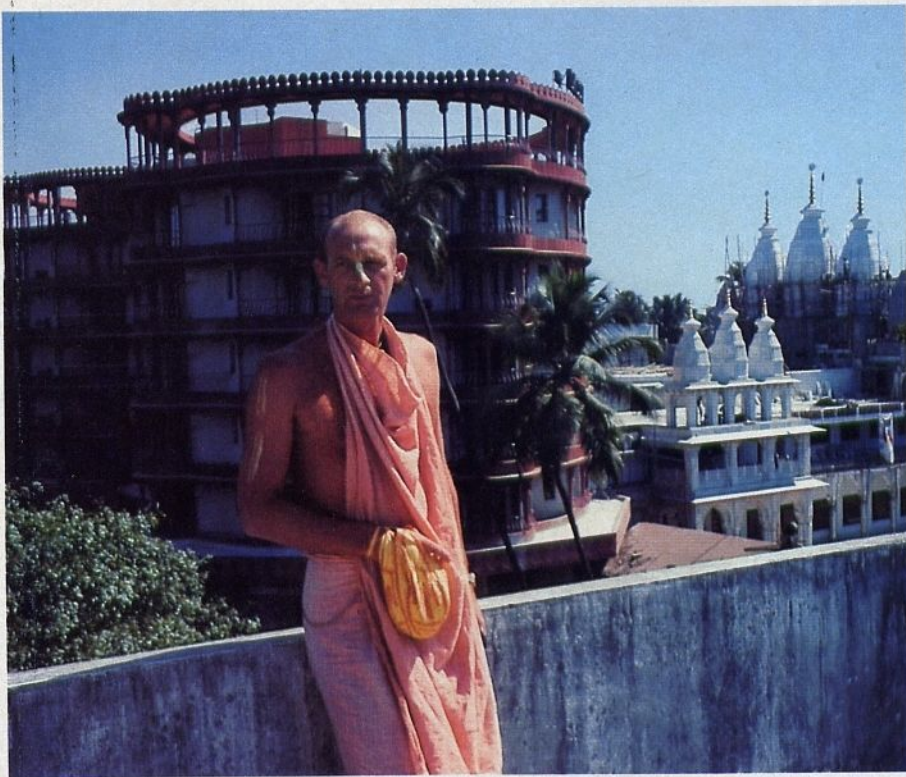
"For the Bombay project I went all over India and saw what people were doing. In India there's so much work going on already—it simply requires coordination. For the elements of the buildings—the furniture, the *simhāsanas*, the silver work, the marble work, the stone work—I went myself to the places where these things are being done most expertly. Then I either brought the artisans here or had them do

the work in their own locale. I simply had to coordinate and then bring everything to Bombay. So now in this project we have a combination of Indian cultural art forms, something which no one has done before in India, anywhere. . . . For instance, this furniture you see here is all manufactured in a small village named Sankheda, in Gujarat. One whole family has been working on it—the father, the wife, the children, everyone. They do all the carving, the paint work, the lacquering, and so on, and finally they bring everything here and put all the pieces together. That's how we get the furniture. Then there are the stone carvings. Most of the stone and marble carving is done in Rajasthan. Then there is the brass work from Benares, and the diorama craftsmen from Goa. . . ."

The result of Surabhi Svāmī's resourcefulness is a structure that tastefully combines modern structural engineering with traditional Indian craftsmanship, all to glorify Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. Unmistakably, the temple reflects Śrīla Prabhupāda's inspired vision.

The Guesthouse

Adjoining the temple is the guesthouse, a nonprofit hotel that offers both shelter and comfort to visitors from India and abroad. Under the expert management of Bali-mardana dāsa, the guesthouse offers visitors a peaceful, spiritual environment, just a few steps from the temple, a two-minute walk



from the ocean, and a ten-minute ride from Bombay's international airport (the first stop in India for many tourists).

The guesthouse consists of two seven-story towers finished in finely carved red and white sandstone. (The stone keeps the salty ocean air from penetrating the reinforced concrete and corroding the structural steel within.) Each of the fifty air-conditioned guest rooms has a balcony overlooking the palms of Juhu Beach. One tower has a branch of the Indian Overseas Bank on its ground floor and on its top floor Śrīla Prabhupāda's former quarters (soon to be a museum in his memory).

Also included in the guesthouse will be an international library, with editions of Vedic literature in some thirty languages. The library will permit guests from around the world to learn of India's glorious Vedic culture in their own language—while at the same time they reside in a Vedic community that embodies the very principles they are reading about. In addition to books by Śrīla Prabhupāda, the library will include an extensive collection of books by other important Vedic scholars.

The guesthouse also features the Bombay branch of Govinda's Restaurant, under the expert guidance of Mr. Michael Lord, who for a decade managed London's Carlton Club. Govinda's serves delicious continental and Indian-style vegetarian dishes, all offered to Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī before being relished as *prasāda*, "the mercy of the Lord."

Gifted young architect Surabhi Svāmī (above) stands before the twin-towered seven-story hotel. In the distance are the temple domes.

India's greatest artists are eager to perform in the devotional atmosphere of the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium (right). Famed architect Burjor Mistry spent long hours on the design.

The Book Trust and Research Institute

In separate buildings not far from the guesthouse, the Bombay project also serves as the Indian headquarters for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, the world's largest publisher of books on the philosophy, religion, and culture of India. The director of the Indian branch of the Book Trust is Gopāla Kṛṣṇa dāsa, son of a retired Indian naval commander and a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda since 1968. In India, the Book Trust publishes India's great spiritual classics in thirteen Indian languages, as well as in English. It also publishes *BACK TO GODHEAD* in Hindi, Gujarati, and several other major languages.

Another integral part of the Bombay cultural center is the Bhaktivedanta Institute. The institute promotes advanced study and research into Vedic information on the nature of consciousness and the self. This advanced academic division of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is led by a team of Indian, European, and American scientists who have recognized the importance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The

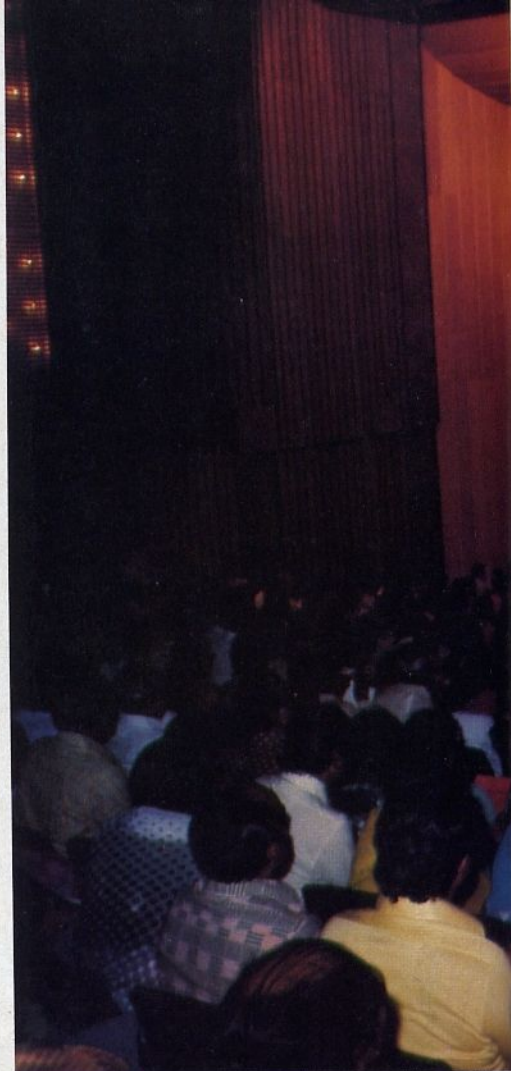
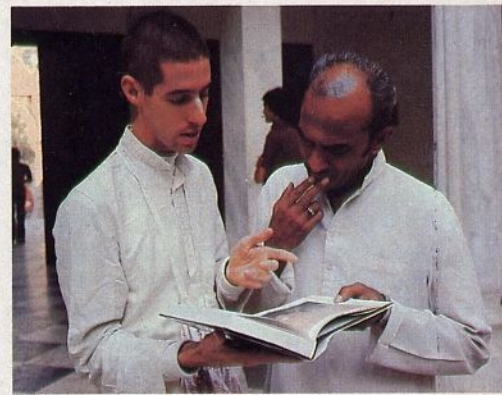


PHOTO HIRALAL C. MARJADI

Institute has published monographs on physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, and related disciplines, and its speakers travel widely. "Despite great scientific and technological advancements, our civilization has somehow missed the real goal of life," says Dr. Thoudam D. Singh (Svarūpa Dāmodara dāsa), the institute's director. "The Bhaktivedanta Institute provides a meaningful answer to this concern by proposing a new scientific paradigm—that life, not matter, is the basis of the world we perceive."

The Center for the Performing Arts

Finally, the Bombay center includes the new Bhaktivedanta Auditorium, where guests may enjoy performances by India's masters of dance, music, and drama. The theater—not large, but among India's most sophisticated and versatile—can seat 425. Every seat has headphones that provide simultaneous translation into any of three languages. Other features include the most advanced sound and lighting equipment, 16 and 35 mm projectors, stage lifts for special effects, a recording studio, and



The life membership program gets everyone involved, says Jagat-puruṣa (above, left).

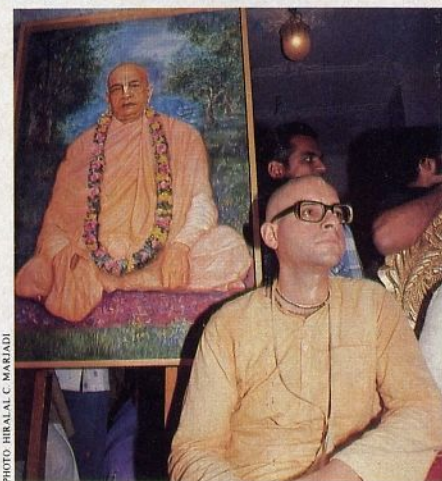


PHOTO: BHARAL C. MARIADI

Coordinator Girirāja dāsa (above) has overseen the project since it began, in 1972.

comfortable green rooms and dressing rooms for the performers.

Actually, there was no provision for a theater in the original design for the Bombay center—it seemed too ambitious a venture. But Surabhi Svāmī, Jagat-puruṣa dāsa, and other devotees felt inspired by Śrīla Prabhupāda’s desire for a full-fledged cultural center. They knew that the center should include a showcase for the best of India’s devotional performers.

Of course, back in April of 1972, when Jagat-puruṣa arrived in Bombay, what was needed most was a head cook. Since he had always been something of a jack-of-all-trades, Jagat-puruṣa filled the post for nearly a year and a half and then spent another year managing the day-by-day worship in the temple. But all during this time he never forgot what was really closest to his heart—Kṛṣṇa conscious theater. He would regularly visit Surabhi Svāmī in his little corner of the devotees’ shack, where the first sketches of the Bombay center were taking shape on a makeshift drafting table. On those occasions Jagat-puruṣa would remind the *svāmī* that some sort of theater should definitely be included. Surabhi Svāmī

was himself very much inclined toward the idea of Kṛṣṇa conscious theater, and he was further encouraged by yet another theater lover, fellow architect Mūrti dāsa. So Surabhi Svāmī included space for a theater in his design, and Śrīla Prabhupāda approved it.

But who would actually work up the blueprints? Theater design is a highly specialized field and requires years of training, both in acoustical mathematics and the usual architectural disciplines. There was no way that Surabhi Svāmī could design it. Yet, fortunately, Burjor Mistry, the consulting architect for the city’s National Center for the Performing Arts and the foremost theater builder in India, stepped forward to help. When he heard that the International Society for Krishna Consciousness was planning a theater for Kṛṣṇa conscious performing arts, and that it would be part of a project that would include a modern hotel and classical temple, he felt moved to donate his expert services. His long hours of selfless effort made the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium what it is today.

Now only two questions remained: with the theater built, who would perform and who would attend? When

Jagat-puruṣa and others explored the possibilities of bringing some of India’s top-flight musicians, dancers, and actors to the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium, they got a warm response. Artists like Ravi Shankar, Lata Mangeshkar, M. S. Subalakhmi, Hari Om Sharan, Arvind Parikh, and Vyjayanthimala Bali—all devoted to Kṛṣṇa and the Vedic culture—were eager to perform in the devotional atmosphere of the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium. Along with many of Bombay’s leading industrialists, film personalities, and society figures, several of these artists also chose to join the congregation of the Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī Temple—and, as Jagat-puruṣa says, “to join the international family of devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa”—by becoming life members of ISKCON.

Jagat-puruṣa further explained, “The life membership program gives everyone the chance to take part in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in whatever way he can. Some people may want to express their devotion to Kṛṣṇa by living here and working with the devotees in the temple. Others may choose to express their devotion in other ways—for instance, by offering financial and artistic

contributions.” As hundreds and hundreds of Bombay’s leading citizens came forward to become life members, Jagat-puruṣa saw the opportunity to expand the movement’s cultural influence even further—by creating the Bhaktikalā-kṣetra.

“The Bhaktikalā-kṣetra,” Jagat-puruṣa says, “is an autonomous society dedicated to presenting the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* through the performing arts. It is an independent public trust, with its own constitution and its own executive committee. (Sri M. Deora, the mayor of Bombay, is a member of this committee.) The Bhaktikalā-kṣetra promotes theater, concerts, films, dance, and so on. And, of course, the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium is the medium through which the activities of the Bhaktikalā-kṣetra go on, at least for now. Ravi Shankar has offered to give a performance in April, and we have also invited the famous singer M. S. Subalaxmi, our life member in Madras, to give a concert. Vyjayanthimala Bali (India’s foremost exponent of classical *bhārata-nāṭyam* dance), Hari Om Sharan (a popular devotional singer), and Arvind Parikh (a master of the sitar) performed at the grand opening of the theater on January 14.”

So Śrīla Prabhupāda’s inspiration has provided a modern setting where everyone can delight in India’s rich devotional culture. In fact, many people say that the Bhaktivedanta Auditorium heralds a renaissance of devotion in the performing arts.

A Word from the Coordinator

As coordinator for the project, Girirāja dāsa has overseen the construction, the life membership program, the financing, and countless other matters. In the following conversation with a BACK TO GODHEAD staff reporter, Girirāja talks about some of the early events at Juhu Beach, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s original ideas for the project, and what the future holds.

BTG: Could you tell us how you got involved in the Bombay project?

Girirāja dāsa: In March of 1972, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked me to take charge. This was one month after we had gotten possession of this land at Juhu Beach. When the first few devotees came here, we were living in a hut. It was really difficult, but eventually we built an additional floor on top of some apartment buildings that were already on the land, and we moved up there. From the beginning Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized that this project is for spreading Kṛṣṇa con-

sciousness. Every time he would come to Bombay, he would ask us how the rooms were being used, and he was very critical if we were not making full use of each room. The point was that every available facility should be used for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

BTG: What were some of the highlights of those early days?

Girirāja dāsa: Well, as soon as we got possession of the land, which we named “Hare Kṛṣṇa Land,” Śrīla Prabhupāda had us put up a *paṇḍāl* [a large platform shaded by decorative canvas] and hold a big Hare Kṛṣṇa festival. We brought the Deities, Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī, from our temple in the city, and every night hundreds of people came to hear Śrīla Prabhupāda speak and also to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with us and take in a Kṛṣṇa conscious drama or musical performance. It was then that we started seeing how right Śrīla Prabhupāda had been in making Juhu Beach the site for a temple and

cultural center.

BTG: This was all in March of 1972?

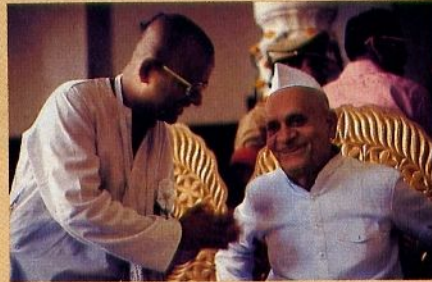
Girirāja dāsa: Yes, but because of legal difficulties, it wasn’t until October of 1973 that we finally acquired full title to the land and could really begin planning the center.

BTG: Now, this project is amazingly unique—whose idea was it, and what are its main features?

Girirāja dāsa: From the very beginning, the idea was completely Śrīla Prabhupāda’s. Although no one else could understand it at the time, Śrīla Prabhupāda knew that this land at Juhu Beach would make for a perfect center for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness: it was far enough from the city to have the peaceful, spiritual atmosphere of the country, but at the same time it was near enough to the city to be convenient for most people.

BTG: So the temple-hotel-theater complex was originally Śrīla Prabhupāda’s

GOVERNOR PATWARI HAILS THE NEW CULTURAL CENTER



Governor Patwari (on right) meets Gopāla Kṛṣṇa dāsa, director of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Bombay, at the new cultural center’s opening.

As governor of the southeast Indian state of Tamil Nadu, Śrī Prabhudas B. Patwari is understandably appreciative of India’s devotional culture: his state of forty million people is the home of India’s classical bhārata-nāṭyam dance, Karṇāṭic music, and some of the most ancient and striking temples in all of the subcontinent. The members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness felt honored when he gave the following inaugural address for the Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī Temple and Vedic Cultural Center.

Sisters and brothers,

I deem it a blessing to be associated with this solemn function. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a divine

spark, a movement which is meant to give peace and happiness to millions of people all over the world. So I welcome the construction of this temple and the opening of the Bhaktivedanta Center of Vedic Culture in this great cosmopolitan city of Bombay, where people of all races, nationalities, castes and communities, high and low, live in amity. I have no doubt that this Vedic institution will proclaim to the world that here flourishes a great movement, which has become the symbol of eternal religion (*sanātana-dharma*).

Kṛṣṇa appeared like a common cowherd boy, and therefore He is attractive to the common man. Numerous incidents of His life, from childhood onward, reveal how easily He destroyed evil forces and brought success for the good. Now the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has become an international movement, and this is due to the spiritual stature of Śrī A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who, with single-minded devotion, dedication, and love for humanity, spread the gospel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from continent to continent. Through the exalted mission of Svāmījī, the life and teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa have inspired millions of men and women throughout the world. The departure of this great world-teacher of God consciousness is a severe loss for the whole world, but I am sure he will continue to guide the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement through his teachings, as he was guided by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

What is Kṛṣṇa consciousness? It is an eternal awareness of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s greatness and glory as revealed by Him in His

idea—to make it easy for people to come and experience Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

Girirāja dāsa: Yes, exactly. Śrīla Prabhupāda has written that it is the duty of the *ācārya* [a spiritual master who teaches by his very life] to engage everyone in serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. So Śrīla Prabhupāda's idea was that whatever people like to enjoy—a comfortable building, good food, beautiful art, music, drama, dance—whatever they want they should have in superlative form, with Kṛṣṇa in the center. In other words, people should be able to experience what the Indian culture really is—glorification of the Lord. And above all, visitors should have the opportunity to chant the Lord's names and read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

BTG: Have the people of Bombay responded favorably?

Girirāja dāsa: Well, Śrīla Prabhupāda was so farsighted that at first the people here couldn't appreciate his vision. But

now that Juhu has developed into the most important section of Bombay, and now that the people have seen the project take shape, they're very enthusiastic about it. Many of them want to take an active part.

BTG: What does the future hold for the new cultural center? Do you have plans for more construction?

Girirāja dāsa: Yes. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted us to construct one more large building—six stories—that would include a children's school, a diorama museum, a retirement home, and a book warehouse. Śrīla Prabhupāda felt that many of Bombay's pious and aristocratic families would want to send their children to our school to cultivate character and self-realization—in other words, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda also said that we should include a section for older people. He said there are many old people who want to give everything up, surrender to Kṛṣṇa,

pass their last days in a Kṛṣṇa conscious community, and then go back home, back to Godhead. So we should provide a facility for them.

BTG: Now, when people come to stay here—at either the guesthouse or the retirement home—will there be guidelines for them to follow?

Girirāja dāsa: Yes. To preserve the spiritual atmosphere here, Śrīla Prabhupāda said we should begin by requesting every visitor to follow our four regulative principles—no gambling, no intoxication, no illicit sex, and no meat, fish, or eggs.

BTG: And this would keep the atmosphere pure.

Girirāja dāsa: Yes. "Purity is the force," Śrīla Prabhupāda always said. He told us never to concoct some materialistic scheme for becoming successful. He just wanted us to stay Kṛṣṇa conscious, do our best, and leave the rest to Kṛṣṇa.

avatāra [His descent on earth]. Kṛṣṇa consciousness teaches us that *prema-bhakti* and *nāma-saṅkīrtana* [loving devotion and the chanting of the Lord's holy name] constitute the best and easiest pathway to God for all people—a pathway free from perils and pitfalls. Śrī Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda added new dimensions to this divine mission.

No one in this world can call himself happy at all times, because trials and tribulations sometimes shake a man's faith, and life itself becomes a burden. Material prosperity alone cannot give us genuine peace. For that we need spiritual wisdom. Turn the pages of *Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Mahā-purāṇa*. Each verse in each chapter contains the quintessence of spiritual wisdom. Those scriptures have through the centuries inspired saints and sages in India. Mahatma Gandhī used to consult the *Gītā* whenever he was in doubt or difficulty. He once said, "The *Gītā* is the universal mother: she turns away nobody; her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the *Gītā* does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding, which are reserved only for the humble in spirit. When disappointment stares me in the face, and all alone I see not one ray of light, I go back to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. I find a verse here and a verse there, and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies. My life has been full of external tragedies, and if they have left no visible mark, no indelible scar, on me, I owe it all to the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā*."

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

*paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

"For the protection of the good, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness, I appear in every age." The greatest savants of the world have been moved by the Lord's teachings. Out of great concern for us the Lord, the supreme benefactor of mankind, teaches us through His *Gītā* to do every act as a *yajña* [sacrifice], without attachment to the fruit of our actions. It is only by a detached outlook in life that we can overcome sorrows and get peace of mind. Attachment takes us away from God, and detachment takes us nearer to Him. By doing everything as a sacrifice to Him, for His sake, we remove false egoism from ourselves and free ourselves from such ideas as "I," "my," and "mine." Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

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

"Abandoning all other duties of the body, mind, and intellect, ending the false ego and developing introspection, come to Me alone for shelter. I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not." What Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna in the *Gītā*, or what He teaches Uddhava in the *Bhāgavatam*, is the highest and most sublime philosophy, which offers wise

guidance to us in day-to-day life. The merciful Lord says that He expects nothing from His devotees except single-minded devotion. The devotee can offer Him even a leaf, a flower, or a drop of water, but it is the devotee's love for Him that matters. The Lord's love for us has to be matched by our love for Him.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam enjoys universal popularity as the *bhakti* scripture par excellence. It has inspired the writing of extensive devotional literature, not only in Sanskrit but also in many other Indian as well as foreign languages. The *Bhāgavatam* holds out hope even for the chronic sinner—if only he will open his heart to the gentle influence of the love and charm of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Like the *Gītā*, it presents a program of practical spiritual training through a harmonious combination of *jñāna*, *bhakti*, and *karma*, (knowledge, devotion, and action) suited to the temperament and limitations of the aspirant.

Let us, on this occasion, make a solemn resolve to strengthen the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement by untiringly spreading the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa through many languages, to all people in all the nooks and corners of the world. In this way, by our genuine devotion to Kṛṣṇa and by our austerities, we may create an international climate of peace and happiness and lay the foundation for a religious order acceptable to all on the basis of universal love and brotherhood. May we chant "Hare Kṛṣṇa! Jaya Śrī Kṛṣṇa!" to purify our hearts and minds, and may Lord Kṛṣṇa shower His blessings on humanity and make our humble endeavors a success.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On Seeing God

This discussion between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a reporter took place at ISKCON's center in Melbourne, Australia.

Interviewer: Your Divine Grace, is the purpose of human life to realize God?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes—that is the only purpose.

Interviewer: Śrīla Prabhupāda, have you realized God?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What do you think? What is your opinion?

Interviewer: I can't say.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then if I say yes, what will you have understood? If you are not expert, then even if I say, "Yes, I am God-realized," how will you take it? If you do not know what God-realization is, then how can you ask this question, and how will you be satisfied by the answer? Therefore, you should not ask this question. It has no value—unless, of course, you are prepared to accept whatever answer I give. Are you prepared?

Interviewer: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then it is all right. I am seeing God every moment. [Pause] But unless you are prepared to take the answer, you should not ask such questions.

Interviewer: Your Divine Grace, is meditation a means to realize God?

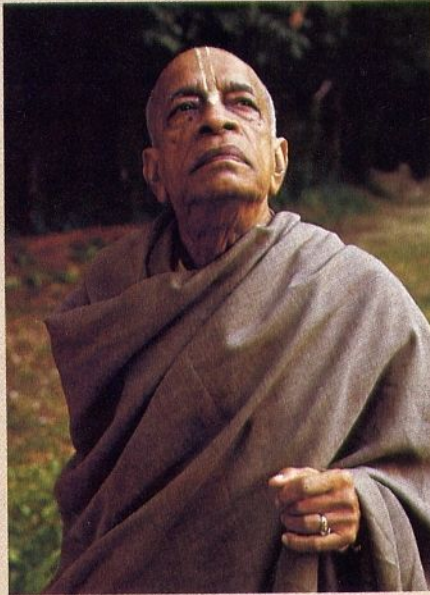
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Meditation is one means, but you cannot meditate now, because you do not know what God is. So how will you meditate? If you do not know what God is, upon whom will you meditate? First of all, you must know. We know God—Kṛṣṇa—and Kṛṣṇa says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktāḥ*: "Always think of Me." So we meditate upon Kṛṣṇa. That is perfect meditation, because meditation means to think of God. But if you do not know what God is, how can you think of Him?

Interviewer: It is written in many scriptures that God is light.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: God is everything. God is darkness, also. We say that God is that person from whom everything comes. So light comes from God, and darkness also comes from God.

Interviewer: Do you think that meditation is a way to see God inside yourself?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is the description of meditation. *Dhyānāvasthātad-gatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yoginaḥ*: by concentrating his mind, the *yogī* tries



to see God within. So you must know what God is. Consider our ISKCON institution, for example. My disciples know what God is, so they can think of God. But if you have no idea of God, how will you think of Him?

Interviewer: This path of devotional *yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*—is this the path for the present age?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, *bhakti-yoga* is the real *yoga*. You'll find that when the *yoga* system is described in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord says, "The first-class *yogī* is he who is always thinking of Me, Kṛṣṇa, within himself." So our students are being taught to think of Kṛṣṇa always, twenty-four hours a day, without stopping. That is first-class *yoga*.

Interviewer: If you are to think about something, you first have to see it. Do you show your devotees Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, yes. Certainly.

Interviewer: Then what . . . well . . . what is Kṛṣṇa? What does He look like?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: See—here is Kṛṣṇa.

Interviewer: But that's a painting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, it is a painting. But suppose a painting of you were there. Could I not say, "Here is Mr. such-and-such"?

Interviewer: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then what is the wrong there? Is your picture not yourself?

Interviewer: Yes, it is.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Similarly, this is

Kṛṣṇa's painting. But the difference is that we cannot talk with your picture but we can talk with Kṛṣṇa's picture. That is the difference.

Interviewer: But still, somebody must have seen Kṛṣṇa to actually paint Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. When Kṛṣṇa was present on this earth, so many people saw Him. And since then, there have been so many temples of Kṛṣṇa's Deity, Kṛṣṇa's form. The same form described in the Vedic literature appeared personally, and the devotees made statues. These forms of Kṛṣṇa are being worshiped regularly. There are thousands and thousands of Kṛṣṇa temples.

Interviewer: But has anybody actually seen Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, yes—just as your father has seen your grandfather. You may not have seen him, but your father can describe him—"My father was like this." What is the difficulty?

Devotee: He asked if anyone *now* has seen Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How can one see Him now? One has to see through the *paramparā*, the disciplic succession. You have not seen your grandfather, so how do you know who he was?

Interviewer: Your parents tell you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So you have to receive knowledge about God from the authorities, from the *paramparā*.

Interviewer: But supposedly Kṛṣṇa is eternal, so surely He exists today.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, Kṛṣṇa is existing. At night the sun is existing, but you have no eyes to see it. That does not mean the sun does not exist. It is your deficiency—you cannot see.

Interviewer: So we need divine sight?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: You require qualification. Kṛṣṇa is always existing, but you require the qualification to see Him. That is described in the Vedic scriptures. *Premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti*: those who are saintly persons in ecstatic love with Kṛṣṇa can see Him always, twenty-four hours a day. That is not very difficult to understand. If you love someone, you see him always. Is it not so? You need the qualification of love. Then Kṛṣṇa will be visible twenty-four hours a day and talk with you. So you have to qualify yourself to hear Kṛṣṇa, to see Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is always present. 🙏

The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

First Canto: "Creation"

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa

At this point in the continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Arjuna (Lord Kṛṣṇa's friend and the hero of Bhagavad-gītā) has just returned home from Kṛṣṇa's capital, Dvārakā. Seeing his brother Arjuna's unprecedented dejection, King Yudhiṣṭhira fears the worst—that Lord Kṛṣṇa has ended His pastimes on earth and returned to His own abode. Thus he anxiously questions Arjuna about the cause of his sadness.

TEXT 34

मगवानपि गोविन्दो ब्रह्मण्यो भक्तवत्सलः ।
कच्चिपुरे सुधर्मायां सुखमास्ते सुहृद्वृतः ॥३४॥

*bhagavān api govindo
brahmanyō bhakta-vatsalaḥ
kaccit pure sudharmāyām
sukham āste suhṛd-vṛtaḥ*

bhagavān—the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa; *api*—also; *govindaḥ*—one who enlivens the cows and the senses; *brahmanyah*—devoted to the devotees or the *brāhmaṇas*; *bhakta-vatsalaḥ*—affectionate to the devotees; *kaccit*—whether; *pure*—in Dvārakā Purī; *sudharmāyām*—pious assembly; *sukham*—happiness; *āste*—does enjoy; *suhṛd-vṛtaḥ*—surrounded by friends.

TRANSLATION

Is Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gives pleasure to the cows, the senses and the *brāhmaṇas*, who is very affectionate towards His devotees, enjoying the pious assembly at Dvārakā Purī surrounded by friends?

PURPORT

Here in this particular verse the Lord is described as *bhagavān*, *govinda*, *brahmanyā* and *bhakta-vatsala*. He is *bhagavān svayam*, or the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, full with all opulences, all power, all knowledge, all beauty, all fame and all renunciation. No one is equal to or greater than Him. He is Govinda because He is the pleasure of the cows and the senses. Those who have purified their senses by the devotional service of the Lord can render unto Him real service and thereby derive transcendental pleasure out of such purified senses. Only the impure conditioned living being cannot derive any pleasure from the senses, but being illusioned by false pleasures of the senses, he becomes servant of the senses. Therefore, we need His protection for our own interest. The Lord is the protector of cows and the brahminical culture. A society devoid of cow protection and brahminical culture is not under the direct protection of the Lord, just as the prisoners in the jails are not under the protection of the king but under the protection of a severe

agent of the king. Without cow protection and cultivation of the brahminical qualities in human society, at least for a section of the members of society, no human civilization can prosper at any length. By brahminical culture, the development of the dormant qualities of goodness, namely truthfulness, equanimity, sense control, forbearance, simplicity, general knowledge, transcendental knowledge, and firm faith in the Vedic wisdom, one can become a *brāhmaṇa* and thus see the Lord as He is. And after surpassing the brahminical perfection, one has to become a devotee of the Lord so that His loving affection in the form of proprietor, master, friend, son and lover can be transcendently achieved. The stage of a devotee, which attracts the transcendental affection of the Lord, does not develop unless one has developed the qualities of a *brāhmaṇa* as above mentioned. The Lord is inclined to a *brāhmaṇa* of quality and not of false prestige. Those who are less than a *brāhmaṇa* by qualification cannot establish any relation with the Lord, just as fire cannot be kindled from the raw earth unless there is wood, although there is a relation between wood and the earth. Since the Lord is all-perfect in Himself, there could not be any question of His welfare, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira refrained from asking this question. He simply inquired about His residential place, Dvārakā Purī, where pious men assemble. The Lord stays only where pious men assemble and takes pleasure in their glorifying the Supreme Truth. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was anxious to know about the pious men and their pious acts in the city of Dvārakā.

TEXTS 35-36

मङ्गलाय च लोकानां क्षेमाय च भवाय च ।
आस्ते यदुकुलाम्मोधावायोऽनन्तसखः पुमान् ॥३५॥
यद्बाहुदण्डगुप्तायां स्वपुर्यां यदवोऽर्चितः ।
क्रीडन्ति परमानन्दं महापौरुषिका इव ॥३६॥

*maṅgalāya ca lokānām
kṣemāya ca bhavāya ca
āste yadu-kulāmbhodhāv
ādyo 'nanta-sakhaḥ pumān*

*yad bāhu-daṇḍa-guptyāyām
sva-puryām yadavo 'rcitāḥ
krīḍanti paramānandam
mahā-pauruṣikā iva*

maṅgalāya—for all good; *ca*—also; *lokānām*—of all the planets; *kṣemāya*—for protection; *ca*—and; *bhavāya*—for elevation; *ca*—also; *āste*—is there; *yadu-kula-ambhodhau*—in the ocean of the Yadu dynasty; *ādyah*—the original; *ananta-sakhaḥ*—in the company of Ananta (Balarāma); *pumān*—the supreme enjoyer; *yat*—whose; *bāhu-daṇḍa-guptyāyām*—being protected by His arms; *sva-puryām*—in His own city; *yadavaḥ*—the members of the Yadu family; *arcitāḥ*—as they deserve; *krīḍanti*—are relishing; *paramānandam*—transcendental pleasure; *mahā-pauruṣikāḥ*—the residents of the spiritual sky; *iva*—like.

TRANSLATION

The original Personality of Godhead, the enjoyer, and Balarāma, the primeval Lord Ananta, are staying in the ocean of the Yadu dynasty for the welfare, protection and general progress of the entire universe. And the members of the Yadu dynasty, being protected by the arms of the Lord, are enjoying life like the residents of the spiritual sky.

PURPORT

As we have discussed many times, the Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu resides within each and every universe in two capacities, namely as the Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and the Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. The Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu has His own planet on the northern top of the universe, and there is a great ocean of milk where the Lord resides on the bed of the Ananta incarnation of Baladeva. Thus Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira has compared the Yadu dynasty to the ocean of milk and Śrī Balarāma to the Ananta where Lord Kṛṣṇa resides. He has compared the citizens of Dvārakā to the liberated inhabitants of the Vaikuṅṭhalokas. Beyond the material sky, further than we can see with our eyes and beyond the sevenfold coverings of the universe, there is the Causal Ocean in which all the universes are floating like footballs, and beyond the Causal Ocean there is an unlimited span of spiritual sky generally known as the effulgence of Brahman. Within this effulgence there are innumerable spiritual planets, and they are known as the Vaikuṅṭha planets. Each and every Vaikuṅṭha planet is many, many times bigger than the biggest universe within the material world, and in each of them there are innumerable inhabitants who look exactly like Lord Viṣṇu. These inhabitants are known as the Mahā-pauruṣikas, or persons directly engaged in the service of the Lord. They are happy in those planets and are without any kind of misery, and they live perpetually in full youthfulness, enjoying life in full bliss and knowledge without fear of birth, death, old age or disease, and without the influence of *kāla*, eternal time. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira has compared the inhabitants of Dvārakā to the Mahā-pauruṣikas of Vaikuṅṭhaloka because they are so happy with the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* there are many references to the Vaikuṅṭhalokas, and they are mentioned there as *mad-dhāma*, or the kingdom of the Lord.

TEXT 37

यत्पादशुश्रूषणमुत्स्यकर्मणा
सत्यादयो द्वयष्टसहस्रयोषितः ।
निर्जित्य संख्ये त्रिदशान्तदाशिषो
हरन्ति वज्रायुधवल्लभोचिताः ॥३७॥

yat-pāda-śuśrūṣaṇa-mukhya-karmaṇā
satyādayo dvy-aṣṭa-sahasra-yoṣitaḥ
nirjitya saṅkhye tri-daśāns tad-āśiṣo
haranti vajrāyudha-vallabhocitāḥ

yat—whose; pāda—feet; śuśrūṣaṇa—administration of comforts; mukhya—the most important; karmaṇā—by the acts of; satyādayaḥ—queens headed by Satyabhāmā; dvi-aṣṭa—twice eight; sahasra—thousand; yoṣitaḥ—the fair sex; nirjitya—by subduing; saṅkhye—in the battle; tri-daśān—of the denizens of heaven; tat-āśiṣaḥ—what is enjoyed by the demigods; haranti—do take away; vajrāyudha-vallabhā—the wives of the personality who controls the thunderbolt; ucitāḥ—deserving.

TRANSLATION

Simply by administering comforts at the lotus feet of the Lord, which is the most important of all services, the queens at Dvārakā, headed by Satyabhāmā, induced the Lord to conquer the demigods. Thus the queens enjoy things which are prerogatives of the wives of the controller of thunderbolts.

PURPORT

Satyabhāmā: One of the principal queens of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā. After killing Narakāsura, Lord Kṛṣṇa visited the palace of Narakāsura accompanied by Satyabhāmā. He went to Indraloka also with Satyabhāmā, and she was received by Śacidevī, who introduced her to the mother of the demigods, Aditi. Aditi was very much pleased with Satyabhāmā, and she benedicted her with the blessings of permanent youth as long as Lord Kṛṣṇa remained on the earth. Aditi also took her with her to show her the special prerogatives of the demigods in the heavenly planets. When Satyabhāmā saw the *pārijāta* flower, she desired to have it in her palace at Dvārakā. After that, she came back to Dvārakā along with her husband and expressed her willingness to have the *pārijāta* flower at her palace. Satyabhāmā's palace was especially bedecked with valuable jewels, and even in the hottest season of summer the inside of the palace remained cool, as if air-conditioned. She decorated her palace with various flags, heralding the news of her great husband's presence there. Once, along with her husband, she met Draupadī, and she was anxious to be instructed by Draupadī in the ways and means of pleasing her husband. Draupadī was expert in this affair because she kept five husbands, the Pāṇḍavas, and all were very much pleased with her. On receipt of Draupadī's instructions, she was very much pleased and offered her good wishes and returned to Dvārakā. She was the daughter of Satrājīt. After the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa, when Arjuna visited Dvārakā, all the queens, including Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī, lamented for the Lord with great feeling. At the last stage of her life, she left for the forest to undergo severe penance.

Satyabhāmā instigated her husband to get the *pārijāta* flower from the heavenly planets, and the Lord got it even by force from the demigods, as a common husband secures things to please his wife. As already explained, the Lord had very little to do with so many wives to carry out their orders like an ordinary man. But because the queens accepted the high quality of devotional service, namely administering the Lord all comforts, the Lord played the part of a faithful and complete husband. No earthly creature can expect to have things from the heavenly kingdom, especially the *pārijāta* flowers, which are simply to be used by the demigods. But due to their becoming the Lord's faithful wives, all of them enjoyed the special prerogatives of the great wives of the denizens of heaven. In other words, since the Lord is the proprietor of everything within His creation, it is not very astonishing for the queens of Dvārakā to have any rare thing from any part of the universe.

TEXT 38

यद्बाहुदण्डाभ्युदयानुजीविनो
यदुप्रवीरा ह्यकुतोभया मुहुः ।
अधिक्रमन्त्यङ्घ्रिभिराहतां बलात्
समां सुधर्मा सुरसत्तमोचिताम् ॥३८॥

yad bāhu-daṇḍābhyudayaṇujivino
yadu-pravīra hy akutobhayā muhuḥ
adhikramanty aṅghribhir āhṛtām balāt
sabhām sudharmān sura-sattamocitām

yat—whose; bāhu-daṇḍa—arms; abhyudaya—influenced by; anujivinaḥ—always living; yadu—the members of the Yadu dynasty; pravīrāḥ—great heroes; hi akutobhayāḥ—fearless in every respect; muhuḥ—constantly; adhikramanti—traversing; aṅghribhiḥ—by foot; āhṛtām—brought about; balāt—by force; sabhām—assembly house; sudharmām—Sudharmā; sura-sat-tama—the best among the demigods; ucitām—deserving.

TRANSLATION

The great heroes of the Yadu dynasty, being protected by the arms of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, always remain fearless in every respect. And therefore their feet trample over the Sudharmā assembly house, which the best demigods deserved but which was taken away from them.

PURPORT

Those who are directly servitors of the Lord are protected by the Lord from all fearfulness, and they also enjoy the best of things, even if they are forcibly accumulated. The Lord is equal in behavior to all living beings, but He is partial to His pure devotees, being very affectionate toward them. The city of Dvārakā was flourishing, being enriched with the best of things in the material world. The state assembly house is constructed according to the dignity of the particular state. In the heavenly planets, the state assembly house called Sudharmā was deserving of the dignity of the best of the demigods. Such an assembly house is never meant for any state on the globe because the human being on the earth is unable to construct it, however far a particular state may be materially advanced. But during the time of Lord Kṛṣṇa's presence on the earth, the members of the Yadu family forcibly brought the celestial assembly house to earth and placed it at Dvārakā. They were able to use such force because they were certain of the indulgence and protection of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. In other words, the Lord is provided with the best things in the universe by His pure devotees. Lord Kṛṣṇa was provided with all kinds of comforts and facilities available within the universe by the members of the Yadu dynasty, and in return such servitors of the Lord were protected and fearless.

A forgetful, conditioned soul is fearful. But a liberated soul is never fearful, just as a small child completely dependent on the mercy of his father is never fearful of anyone. Fearfulness is a sort of illusion for the living being when he is in slumber and forgetting his eternal relation with the Lord. Since the living being is never to die by his constitution, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.20), then what is the cause of fearfulness? A person may be fearful of a tiger in a dream, but another man who is awake by his side sees no tiger there. The tiger is a myth for both of them, namely the person dreaming and the person awake, because actually there is no tiger; but the man forgetful of his awakened life is fearful, whereas the man who has not forgotten his position is not at all fearful. Thus the members of the Yadu dynasty were fully awake in their service to the Lord, and therefore there was no tiger for them to be afraid of at any time. Even if there were a real tiger, the Lord was there to protect them.

TEXT 39

कच्चित्तेऽनामयं तात भ्रष्टतेजा विमासि मे ।
अलब्धमानोऽवज्ञातः किंवादात चिरोषितः ॥३९॥

*kaccit te 'nāmayam tāta
bhraṣṭa-tejā vibhāsi me
alabdha-māno 'vajñātaḥ
kim vā tāta ciroṣitaḥ*

kaccit—whether; *te*—your; *anāmayam*—health is all right; *tāta*—my dear brother; *bhraṣṭa*—bereft; *tejāḥ*—luster; *vibhāsi*—appear; *me*—to me; *alabdha-mānaḥ*—without respect; *avajñātaḥ*—neglected; *kim*—whether; *vā*—or; *tāta*—my dear brother; *ciroṣitaḥ*—because of long residence.

TRANSLATION

My brother Arjuna, please tell me whether your health is all right. You appear to have lost your bodily luster. Is this due to others disrespecting and neglecting you because of your long stay at Dvārakā?

PURPORT

From all angles of vision, the Mahārāja inquired from Arjuna about the welfare of Dvārakā, but he concluded at last that as long as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself was there, nothing inauspicious could happen. But at the same time, Arjuna appeared to be bereft of his bodily luster, and thus the King inquired of his personal welfare and asked so many vital questions.

TEXT 40

कच्चिन्नाभिहतोऽभावैः शब्दादिभिरमङ्गलैः ।
न दत्तमुक्तमर्थिभ्य आशया यत्प्रतिश्रुतम् ॥४०॥

*kaccin nābhihato 'bhāvaiḥ
śabdādibhir amaṅgalaiḥ
na dattam uktam arthibhya
āśayā yat pratiśrutam*

kaccit—whether; *na*—could not; *abhihataḥ*—addressed by; *abhāvaiḥ*—unfriendly; *śabda-ādibhiḥ*—by sounds; *amaṅgalaiḥ*—inauspicious; *na*—did not; *dattam*—give in charity; *uktam*—is said; *arthibhyaḥ*—unto one who asked; *āśayā*—with hope; *yat*—what; *pratiśrutam*—promised to be paid.

TRANSLATION

Has someone addressed you with unfriendly words or threatened you? Could you not give charity to one who asked, or could you not keep your promise to someone?

PURPORT

A *kṣatriya* or a rich man is sometimes visited by persons who are in need of money. When they are asked for a donation, it is the duty of the possessor of wealth to give in charity in consideration of the person, place and time. If a *kṣatriya* or a rich man fails to comply with this obligation, he must be very sorry for this discrepancy. Similarly, one should not fail to keep his promise to give in charity. These discrepancies are sometimes causes of despondency, and thus failing, a person becomes subjected to criticism, which might also be the cause of Arjuna's plight.

TEXT 41

कच्चिच्च ब्राह्मणं बालं गां वृद्धं रोगिणं स्त्रियम् ।
शरणोपसृतं सच्चं नात्याक्षीः शरणप्रदः ॥४१॥

*kaccit tvam brāhmaṇam bālam
gām vṛddham rogiṇam striyam
śaraṇopasṛtam sattvam
nātyākṣiḥ śaraṇa-pradaḥ*

kaccit—whether; *tvam*—yourself; *brāhmaṇam*—the *brāhmaṇas*; *bālam*—the child; *gām*—the cow; *vṛddham*—old; *rogiṇam*—the diseased; *striyam*—the woman; *śaraṇa-upasṛtam*—having approached for protection; *sattvam*—any living being; *na*—whether; *atyākṣiḥ*—not given shelter; *śaraṇa-pradaḥ*—deserving protection.

TRANSLATION

You are always the protector of the deserving living beings, such as *brāhmaṇas*, children, cows, women and the diseased. Could you not give them protection when they approached you for shelter?

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇas*, who are always engaged in researching knowledge for the society's welfare work, both materially and spiritually, deserve the protection of the king in all respects. Similarly, the children of the state, the cow, the diseased person, the woman and the old man specifically require the protection of the state or a *kṣatriya* king. If such living beings do not get protection by the *kṣatriya*, or the royal order, or by the state, it is certainly shameful for the *kṣatriya* or the state. If such things had actually happened to Arjuna, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was anxious to know about these discrepancies.

TEXT 42

कच्चिच्च नागमोऽगम्यां गम्यां वासत्कृतां स्त्रियम् ।
पराजितो वाय मवान्नोत्तमैर्नासमैः पथि ॥४२॥

*kaccit tvam nāgamo 'gamyāṁ
gamyāṁ vāsat-kṛtāṁ striyam*

parājito vātha bhavān
nottamair nāsamaih pathi

kaccit—whether; *tvam*—yourself *na*—not; *agamaḥ*—did contact; *agamyām*—impeachable; *gamyām*—acceptable; *vā*—either; *asat-kr̥tām*—improperly treated; *striyam*—a woman; *parājitah*—defeated by; *vā*—either; *atha*—after all; *bhavān*—your good self; *na*—nor; *ut-tamaiḥ*—by superior power; *na*—not; *asamaiḥ*—by equals; *pathi*—on the road.

TRANSLATION

Have you contacted a woman of impeachable character, or have you not properly treated a deserving woman? Or have you been defeated on the way by someone who is inferior or equal to you?

PURPORT

It appears from this verse that during the time of the Pāṇḍavas free contact between man and woman was allowed in certain conditions only. The higher caste men, namely the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas*, could accept a woman of the *vaiśya* or the *śūdra* community, but a man from the lower castes could not contact a woman of the higher caste. Even a *kṣatriya* could not contact a woman of the *brāhmaṇa* caste. The wife of a *brāhmaṇa* is considered one of the seven mothers (namely one's own mother, the wife of the spiritual master or teacher, the wife of a *brāhmaṇa*, the wife of a king, the nurse, and the earth). Such contact between man and woman was known as *uttama* and *adhama*. Contact of a *brāhmaṇa* with a *kṣatriya* woman is *uttama*, but the contact of a *kṣatriya* with a *brāhmaṇa* woman is *adhama* and therefore condemned. A woman approaching a man for contact should never be refused, but at the same time the discretion as above mentioned may also be considered. Bhīma was approached by Hidimbi from a community lower than the *śūdras*, and Yayāti refused to marry the daughter of Śukrācārya because of Śukrācārya's being a *brāhmaṇa*. Vyāsadeva, a *brāhmaṇa*, was called to beget Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Satyavati belonged to a family of fishermen, but Parāśara, a great *brāhmaṇa*, begot in her Vyāsadeva. So there are so many examples of contacts with woman, but in all cases the contacts were not abominable nor were the results of such contacts bad. Contact between man and woman is natural, but that also must be carried out under regulative principles so that social consecration may not be disturbed or unwanted worthless population be increased for the unrest of the world.

It is abominable for a *kṣatriya* to be defeated by one who is inferior in strength or equal in strength. If one is defeated at all, he should be defeated by some superior power. Arjuna was defeated by Bhīṣmadeva, and Lord Kṛṣṇa saved him from the danger. This was not an insult for Arjuna because Bhīṣmadeva was far superior to Arjuna in all ways, namely age, respect and strength. But Karṇa was equal to Arjuna, and therefore Arjuna was in crisis when fighting with Karṇa. It was felt by Arjuna, and therefore Karṇa was killed even by crooked means. Such are the engagements of the *kṣatriyas*, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira inquired from his brother whether anything undesirable happened on the way home from Dvārakā.

TEXT 43

अपि खित्पर्यशुद्धकथास्त्वं सम्भोज्यान् वृद्धबालकान् ।
जुगुप्सितं कर्म किञ्चित्कृतवान् यदक्षमम् ॥४३॥

*api svit parya-bhukthās tvam
sambhojyān vṛddha-bālakān
jugupsitaṁ karma kiñcit
kṛtavān na yad akṣamam*

api svit—if it were so that; *parya*—by leaving aside; *bhukthāḥ*—have dined; *tvam*—yourself; *sambhojyān*—deserving to dine together; *vṛddha*—the old men; *bālakān*—boys; *jugupsitam*—abominable; *karma*—action; *kiñcit*—something; *kṛtavān*—you must have done; *na*—not; *yat*—that which; *akṣamam*—unpardonable.

TRANSLATION

Have you not taken care of old men and boys who deserve to dine with you? Have you left them and taken your meals alone? Have you committed some unpardonable mistake which is considered to be abominable?

PURPORT

It is the duty of a householder to feed first of all the children, the old members of the family, the *brāhmaṇas* and the invalids. Besides that, an ideal householder is required to call for any unknown hungry man to come and dine before he himself goes to take his meals. He is required to call for such a hungry man thrice on the road. The neglect of this prescribed duty of a householder, especially in the matter of the old men and children, is unpardonable.

TEXT 44

कच्चित् प्रेष्ठतमेनाथ हृदयेनात्मबन्धुना ।
शून्योऽस्मि रहितो नित्यं मन्यसे तेऽन्यथा न रुक् ॥४४॥

*kaccit preṣṭhatamenātha
hṛdayenātma-bandhunā
śūnyo 'smi rahito nityam
manyase te 'nyathā na ruk*

kaccit—whether; *preṣṭha-tamena*—unto the most dear one; *atha*—my brother Arjuna; *hṛdayena*—most intimate; *ātma-bandhunā*—own friend Lord Kṛṣṇa; *śūnyah*—void; *asmi*—I am; *rahitaḥ*—having lost; *nityam*—for all time; *manyase*—you think; *te*—your; *anyathā*—otherwise; *na*—never; *ruk*—mental distress.

TRANSLATION

Or is it that you are feeling empty for all time because you might have lost your most intimate friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa? O my brother Arjuna, I can think of no other reason for your becoming so dejected.

PURPORT

All the inquisitiveness of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira about the world situation was already conjectured by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira on the basis of Lord Kṛṣṇa's disappearance from the vision of the world and this was now disclosed by him because of the acute dejection of Arjuna, which could not have been possible otherwise. So even though he was doubtful about it, he was obliged to inquire frankly from Arjuna on the basis of Śrī Nārada's indication.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the First Canto, Fourteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Pāṇḍavas Retire Timely

TEXT 1

सूत उवाच

एवं कृष्णसखः कृष्णो भ्रात्रा राज्ञाविकल्पितः ।
नानाशङ्कास्पदं रूपं कृष्णविरलेषकर्षितः ॥ १ ॥

*sūta uvāca
evaṁ kṛṣṇa-sakhaḥ kṛṣṇo
bhrātrā rājñā vikalpitaḥ
nānā-śaṅkāspadaṁ rūpaṁ
kṛṣṇa-viśleṣa-karṣitaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca—Sūta Gosvāmī said; *evam*—thus; *kṛṣṇa-sakhaḥ*—the celebrated friend of Kṛṣṇa; *kṛṣṇaḥ*—Arjuna; *bhrātrā*—by his elder brother; *rājā*—King Yudhiṣṭhira; *vikalpitah*—speculated; *nānā*—various; *śaṅka-āspadam*—based on many doubts; *rūpam*—forms; *kṛṣṇa*—Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *viśeṣa*—feelings of separation; *karsitah*—became greatly bereaved.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Arjuna, the celebrated friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, was griefstricken because of his strong feeling of separation from Kṛṣṇa, over and above all Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's speculative inquiries.

PURPORT

Being too much aggrieved, Arjuna practically became choked up, and therefore it was not possible for him to reply properly to the various speculative inquiries of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

TEXT 2

शोकैः शुष्यद्दहनहृत्सरोजो हतप्रभः ।
विभुं तमेवानुस्मरन्नाशक्तोत्प्रतिमाषितुम् ॥ २ ॥

*śokena śuṣyat-vadana-
hṛt-sarojo hata-prabhaḥ
vibhuṁ tam evānusmaran
nāśaknot pratibhāṣitum*

śokena—due to bereavement; *śuṣyat-vadana*—drying up of the mouth; *hṛt-sarojaḥ*—lotuslike heart; *hata*—lost; *prabhaḥ*—bodily luster; *vibhuṁ*—the Supreme; *tam*—unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; *eva*—certainly; *anusmaran*—thinking within; *na*—could not; *āśaknot*—be able; *pratibhāṣitum*—properly replying.

TRANSLATION

Due to grief, Arjuna's mouth and lotuslike heart had dried up. Therefore his body lost all luster. Now, remembering the Supreme Lord, he could hardly utter a word in reply.

TEXT 3

कृच्छ्रेण संस्तभ्य शुचः पाणिनामृज्य नेत्रयोः ।
परोक्षेण समुन्नद्धप्रणयौत्कण्ठकातरः ॥ ३ ॥

*kṛcchreṇa saṁstabhya śucaḥ
pāṇināmṛjya netrayoḥ
parokṣeṇa samunnaddha-
praṇayautkaṅṭhya-kātarah*

kṛcchreṇa—with great difficulty; *saṁstabhya*—by checking the force; *śucaḥ*—of bereavement; *pāṇinā*—with his hands; *amṛjya*—smearing; *netrayoḥ*—the eyes; *parokṣeṇa*—due to being out of sight; *samunnaddha*—increasingly; *praṇaya-autkaṅṭhya*—eagerly thinking of the affection; *kātarah*—distressed.

TRANSLATION

With great difficulty he checked the tears of grief that smeared his eyes. He was very distressed because Lord Kṛṣṇa was out of his sight, and he increasingly felt affection for Him.

TEXT 4

सख्यं मैत्रीं सौहृदं च सारथ्यादिषु संस्मरन् ।
नृपमग्रजमित्याह बाष्पगद्गदया गिरा ॥ ४ ॥

*sakhyam maitrīm sauhṛdam ca
sārathyādiṣu saṁsmaran
nṛpam agrajam ity āha
bāṣpa-gadgadayā girā*

sakhyam—well-wishing; *maitrīm*—benediction; *sauhṛdam*—intimately related; *ca*—also; *sārathyā-ādiṣu*—in becoming the chariot driver; *saṁsmaran*—remembering all these; *nṛpam*—unto the King; *agrajam*—the eldest brother; *iti*—thus; *āha*—said; *bāṣpa*—heavily breathing; *gadgadayā*—overwhelmingly; *girā*—by speeches.

TRANSLATION

Remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa and His well wishes, benefactions, intimate familial relations and His chariot driving, Arjuna, overwhelmed and breathing very heavily, began to speak.

PURPORT

The Supreme Living Being is perfect in all relations with His pure devotee. Śrī Arjuna is one of the typical pure devotees of the Lord reciprocating in the fraternal relationship, and the Lord's dealings with Arjuna are displays of friendship of the highest perfect order. He was not only a well-wisher of Arjuna but actually a benefactor, and to make it still more perfect the Lord tied him into a family relationship by arranging Subhadrā's marriage with him. And above all, the Lord agreed to become a chariot driver of Arjuna in order to protect His friend from warfare risks, and the Lord became actually happy when He established the Pāṇḍavas to rule over the world. Arjuna remembered all these one after another, and thus he became overwhelmed with such thoughts.

TEXT 5

अर्जुन उवाच

वञ्चितोऽहं महाराज हरिणा बन्धुरूपिणा ।
येन मेऽपहतं तेजो देवविस्मापनं महत् ॥ ५ ॥

*arjuna uvāca
vañcito 'ham mahā-rāja
hariṇā bandhu-rūpiṇā
yena me 'pahr̥tam tejo
deva-vismāpanam mahat*

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *vañcitatā*—left by Him; *aham*—myself; *mahā-rāja*—O King; *hariṇā*—by the Personality of Godhead; *bandhu-rūpiṇā*—as if an intimate friend; *yena*—by whom; *me*—my; *apahr̥tam*—I have been bereft; *tejaḥ*—power; *deva*—the demigods; *vismāpanam*—astounding; *mahat*—astounding.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O King! The Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who treated me exactly like an intimate friend, has left me alone. Thus my astounding power, which astonished even the demigods, is no longer with me.

PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.41) the Lord says, "Anyone specifically powerful and opulent in wealth, strength, beauty, knowledge and all that is materially desirable is to be considered but a product of an insignificant portion of the complete whole of My energy." No one, therefore, can be independently powerful in any measure without being endowed by the Lord. When the Lord descends on the earth along with His eternal ever-liberated associates, He not only displays the divine energy possessed by Himself, but also empowers His associate devotees with the required energy to execute His mission of incarnation. It is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.5) that the Lord and His eternal associates descend on the earth many times, but the Lord remembers all the different

roles of incarnations, whereas the associates, by His supreme will, forget them. Similarly, the Lord takes away with Him all His associates when He disappears from the earth. The power and energy which were bestowed upon Arjuna were required for fulfillment of the mission of the Lord, but when His mission was fulfilled, the emergency powers were withdrawn from Arjuna because the astounding powers of Arjuna, which were astonishing even to the denizens of heaven, were no longer required, and they were not meant for going back home, back to God-head. If endowment of powers and withdrawal of powers by the Lord are possible even for a great devotee like Arjuna, or even the demigods in heaven, then what to speak of the ordinary living beings who are but figs compared to such great souls. The lesson is, therefore, that no one should be puffed up for his powers borrowed from the Lord. The sane man should rather feel obliged to the Lord for such benefactions and must utilize such power for the service of the Lord. Such power can be withdrawn at any time by the Lord, so the best use of such power and opulence is to engage them in the service of the Lord.

TEXT 6

यस्य क्षणवियोगेन लोको ह्यप्रियदर्शनः ।
उक्थेन रहितो क्षेप मृतकः प्रोच्यते यथा ॥ ६ ॥

yasya kṣaṇa-viyogena
loko hy apriya-darśanaḥ
ukthēna rahito hy eṣa
mṛtakāḥ procyate yathā

yasya—whose; kṣaṇa—a moment; viyogena—by separation; lokah—all the universes; hi—certainly; apriya-darśanaḥ—everything appears unfavorable; ukthēna—by life; rahitah—being devoid of; hi—certainly; eṣah—all these bodies; mṛtakah—dead bodies; procyate—are designated; yathā—as it were.

TRANSLATION

I have just lost Him whose separation for a moment would render all the universes unfavorable and void, like bodies without life.

PURPORT

Factually for a living being there is no one dearer than the Lord. The Lord expands Himself by innumerable parts and parcels as *svāṁśa* and *vibhinnāṁśa*. Paramātmā is the *svāṁśa* part of the Lord, whereas the *vibhinnāṁśa* parts are the living beings. As the living being is the important factor in the material body, for without the living being the material body has no value, similarly without Paramātmā the living being has no *status quo*. Similarly, Brahman or Paramātmā has no *locus standi* without the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is thoroughly explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. They are all interlinked with one another, or interdependent factors; thus in the ultimate issue the Lord is the *summum bonum* and therefore the vital principle of everything.

TEXT 7

यत्संश्रयाद् द्रुपदगेहसुपागतानां
राज्ञां स्वयंवरमुखे स्मरदुर्मदानाम् ।
तेजो हृतं खलु मयाभिहतश्च मत्स्यः
सञ्जीकृतेन धनुषाधिगता च कृष्णा ॥ ७ ॥

yat-saṁśrayād drupada-geham upāgatānām
rājñāṁ svayaṁvara-mukhe smara-durmadānām
tejo hṛtam khalu mayābhihataś ca matsyaḥ
sajjīkrtena dhanuṣādhiगतā ca kṛṣṇā

yat—by whose merciful; saṁśrayāt—by strength; drupada-geham—in the palace of King Drupada; upāgatānām—all those assembled; rājñām—of the princes; svayaṁvara-mukhe—on the occasion of the selection of the bridegroom; smara-durmadānām—all lusty in thought;

tejah—power; hṛtam—vanquished; khalu—as it were; mayā—by me; abhihataḥ—pierced; ca—also; matsyaḥ—the fish target; sajjī-krtena—by equipping the bow; dhanuṣā—by that bow also; adhiगतā—gained; ca—also; kṛṣṇā—Draupadi.

TRANSLATION

Only by His merciful strength was I able to vanquish all the lusty princes assembled at the palace of King Drupada for the selection of the bridegroom. With my bow and arrow I could pierce the fish target and thereby gain the hand of Draupadi.

PURPORT

Draupadī was the most beautiful daughter of King Drupada, and when she was a young girl almost all the princes desired her hand. But Drupada Mahārāja decided to hand over his daughter to Arjuna only and therefore contrived a peculiar way. There was a fish hanging on the inner roof of the house under the protection of a wheel. The condition was that out of the princely order, one must be able to pierce the fish's eyes through the wheel of protection, and no one would be allowed to look up at the target. On the ground there was a waterpot in which the target and wheel were reflected, and one had to fix his aim towards the target by looking at the trembling water in the pot. Mahārāja Drupada well knew that only Arjuna or alternately Karṇa could successfully carry out the plan. But still he wanted to hand his daughter to Arjuna. And in the assembly of the princely order, when Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the brother of Draupadī, introduced all the princes to his grown-up sister, Karṇa was also present in the game. But Draupadī tactfully avoided Karṇa as the rival of Arjuna, and she expressed her desires through her brother Dhṛṣṭadyumna that she was unable to accept anyone who was less than a *kṣatriya*. The *vaiśyas* and the *śūdras* are less important than the *kṣatriyas*. Karṇa was known as the son of a carpenter, a *śūdra*. So Draupadī avoided Karṇa by this plea. When Arjuna, in the dress of a poor *bṛāhmaṇa*, pierced the difficult target, everyone was astonished, and all of them, especially Karṇa, offered a stiff fight to Arjuna, but as usual by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa he was able to emerge very successful in the princely fight and thus gain the valuable hand of Kṛṣṇā, or Draupadī. Arjuna was lamentingly remembering the incident in the absence of the Lord, by whose strength only he was so powerful.

TEXT 8

यत्संनिधावहसु खाण्डवमग्नयेऽदा-
मिन्द्रं च सामरगणं तरसा विजित्य ।
लब्धा सभा मयकृताद्भुतशिल्पमाया
दिग्भ्योऽहरन्नृपतयो बलिमध्वरे ते ॥ ८ ॥

yat-sannidhāv aham u khāṇḍavam agnaye 'dām
indram ca sāmara-gaṇam tarasā vijitya
labdhā sabhā maya-kṛtādbhuta-śilpa-māyā
digbhyo 'haran nrpatayo balim adhware te

yat—whose; sannidhau—being nearby; aham—myself; u—note of astonishment; khāṇḍavam—the protected forest of Indra, King of heaven; agnaye—unto the fire-god; adām—delivered; indram—Indra; ca—also; sa—along with; amara-gaṇam—the demigods; tarasā—with all dexterity; vijitya—having conquered; labdhā—having obtained; sabhā—assembly house; maya-kṛtā—built by Maya; adbhuta—very wonderful; śilpa—art and workmanship; māyā—potency; digbhyah—from all directions; aharan—collected; nrpatayah—all princes; balim—presentations; adhware—brought; te—your.

TRANSLATION

Because He was near me, it was possible for me to conquer with great dexterity the powerful King of heaven, Indradeva, along with his demigod associates and thus enable the fire-god to devastate the Khāṇḍava Forest. And only by His grace was the demon

named Maya saved from the blazing Khāṇḍava Forest, and thus we could build our assembly house of wonderful architectural workmanship, where all the princes assembled during the performance of Rājasūya-yajña and paid you tributes.

PURPORT

The demon Maya Dānava was an inhabitant of the forest Khāṇḍava, and when the Khāṇḍava forest was set on fire, he asked protection from Arjuna. Arjuna saved his life, and as a result of this the demon felt obliged. He reciprocated by building a wonderful assembly house for the Pāṇḍavas, which attracted the extraordinary attention of all state princes. They felt the supernatural power of the Pāṇḍavas, and thus without grudge all of them submitted and paid tributes to the Emperor. The demons possess wonderful and supernatural powers to create material wonders. But they are always disturbing elements of the society. The modern demons are the harmful material scientists who create some material wonders for disturbance in the society. For example, the creation of nuclear weapons has caused some panic in human society. Maya was also a materialist like that, and he knew the art of creating such wonderful things. And yet Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to kill him. When he was chased both by the fire and by the wheel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he took shelter of such a devotee as Arjuna, who saved him from the wrath of the fire of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Devotees are therefore more merciful than the Lord, and in devotional service the mercy of a devotee is more valuable than the mercy of the Lord. Both the fire and the Lord ceased from chasing the demon as soon as both of them saw that the demon was given shelter by such a devotee as Arjuna. This demon, feeling obliged to Arjuna, wanted to do him some service to show his gratefulness, but Arjuna declined to accept anything from him in exchange. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however, being pleased with Maya for his taking shelter of a devotee, asked him to render service unto King Yudhiṣṭhira by building a wonderful assembly house. The process is that by the grace of the devotee the mercy of the Lord is obtained, and by the mercy of the Lord a chance to serve the Lord's devotee is obtained. The club of Bhīmasena was also a gift of Maya Dānava.

TEXT 9

यत्तेजसा नृपशिरोऽङ्घ्रिं महन्मखार्थम्
आर्योऽनुजस्त्व गजायुतसत्त्वर्षियः ।
तेनाहृताः प्रमथनाथमखाय भूप
यन्मोचितास्तदनयन् बलिमध्वरे ते ॥ ९ ॥

yat-tejasā nṛpa-śiro-’ngḥrim ahan makhārtham
āryo ’nujaṣ tava gajāyuta-sattva-ṛṣyaḥ
tenāhṛtāḥ pramatha-nātha-makhāya bhūpā
yan-mocitāḥ tad-anayan balim adhvare te

yat—whose; tejasā—by influence; nṛpa-śiraḥ-aṅghrim—one whose feet are adored by the heads of kings; ahan—killed; makha-artham—for the sacrifice; āryaḥ—respectable; anujaḥ—younger brother; tava—your; gaja-ayuta—ten thousand elephants; sattva-ṛṣyaḥ—powerful existence; tena—by him; ahṛtāḥ—collected; pramatha-nātha—the lord of the ghosts (Mahābhairava); makhāya—for sacrifice; bhūpāḥ—kings; yat-mocitāḥ—by whom they were released; tad-anayan—all of them brought; balim—taxes; adhvare—presented; te—your.

TRANSLATION

Your respectable younger brother, who possesses the strength of ten thousand elephants, killed, by His grace, Jarāsandha, whose feet were worshiped by many kings. These kings had been brought for sacrifice in Jarāsandha's Mahābhairava-yajña, but they were thus released. Later they paid tribute to Your Majesty.

PURPORT

Jarāsandha was a very powerful king of Magadha, and the history of his birth and activities is also very interesting. His father, King

Bṛhadratha, was also a very prosperous and powerful King of Magadha, but he had no son, although he married two daughters of the King of Kāśī. Being disappointed in not getting a son from either of the two queens, the King, along with his wives, left home to live in the forest for austerities, but in the forest he was benedicted by one great ṛṣi to have a son, and he gave him one mango to be eaten by the queens. The queens did so and were very soon pregnant. The King was very happy to see the queens bearing children, but when the ripe time approached, the queens delivered one child in two parts, one from each of the queens' wombs. The two parts were thrown in the forest, where a great she-demon used to live, and she was glad to have some delicate flesh and blood from the newly born child. Out of curiosity she joined the two parts, and the child became complete and regained life. The she-demon was known as Jarā, and being compassionate on the childless King, she went to the King and presented him with the nice child. The King was very pleased with the she-demon and wanted to reward her according to her desire. The she-demon expressed her desire that the child be named after her, and thus the child was surnamed Jarāsandha, or one who was joined by Jarā, the she-demon. In fact, this Jarāsandha was born as one of the parts and parcels of the demon Vipracitti. The saint by whose benedictions the queens bore the child was called Candra Kauśika, who foretold of the child before his father Bṛhadratha.

Since he possessed demonic qualities from birth, naturally he became a great devotee of Lord Śiva, who is the lord of all ghostly and demonic men. Rāvaṇa was a great devotee of Lord Śiva, and so also King Jarāsandha. He used to sacrifice all arrested kings before Lord Mahābhairava (Śiva) and by his military power he defeated many small kings and arrested them to butcher before Mahābhairava. There are many devotees of Lord Mahābhairava, or Kālabhairava, in the province of Bihar, formerly called Magadha. Jarāsandha was a relative of Kāṁsa, the maternal uncle of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore after Kāṁsa's death King Jarāsandha became a great enemy of Kṛṣṇa, and there were many fights between Jarāsandha and Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to kill him, but He also wanted that those who served as military men for Jarāsandha might not be killed. Therefore a plan was adopted to kill him. Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma and Arjuna together went to Jarāsandha in the dress of poor brāhmaṇas and begged charity from King Jarāsandha. Jarāsandha never refused charity to any brāhmaṇa, and he performed many sacrifices also, yet he was not on a par with devotional service. Lord Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma and Arjuna asked Jarāsandha for the facility of fighting him, and it was settled that Jarāsandha would fight with Bhīma only. So all of them were both guests and combatants of Jarāsandha, and Bhīma and Jarāsandha fought every day for several days. Bhīma became disappointed, but Kṛṣṇa gave him hints about Jarāsandha's being joined together as an infant, and thus Bhīma dissected him again and so killed him. All the kings who were detained in the concentration camp to be killed before Mahābhairava were thus released by Bhīma. Feeling thus obliged to the Pāṇḍavas, they paid tribute to King Yudhiṣṭhira.

TEXT 10

पत्न्यास्तवाधिमखक्लृप्तमहाभिषेक-
श्लाघिष्ठचारुक्वरं कितवैः समायाम् ।
स्पृष्टं विकीर्य पदयोः पतिताश्रुमुख्या
यस्तत्त्रिषोऽकृतहृते शविमुक्तकेशाः ॥ १० ॥

patnyās tavādhimakha-klpta-mahābhiṣeka-
ślāghiṣṭha-cāru-kabaraṁ kitavaiḥ sabhāyām
sprṣṭam vikīrya padayoḥ patitāśru-mukhyā
yaṣ tat-striyo ’kṛta-hateṣa-vimukta-keśāḥ

patnyāḥ—of the wife; tava—your; adhimakha—during the great sacrificial ceremony; klpta—dressed; mahā-abhiṣeka—greatly sanctified; ślāghiṣṭha—thus glorified; cāru—beautiful; kabaram—clustered hair; kitavaiḥ—by the miscreants; sabhāyām—in the great assembly; sprṣṭam—being caught; vikīrya—being loosened; padayoḥ—on the feet; patitā-āśru-mukhyāḥ—of the one who fell down with tears

in the eyes; *yah*—He; *tat*—their; *striyah*—wives; *akṛta*—became; *hata-iśa*—bereft of husbands; *vimukta-keśah*—loosened hair.

TRANSLATION

It was He only who loosened the hair of all the wives of the miscreants who dared open the cluster of your Queen's hair, which had been nicely dressed and sanctified for the great Rājasūya sacrificial ceremony. At that time she fell down at the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa with tears in her eyes.

PURPORT

Queen Draupadī had a beautiful bunch of hair which was sanctified in the ceremonial function of Rājasūya-yajña. But when she was lost in a bet, Duḥśāsana touched her glorified hair to insult her. Draupadī then fell down at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Kṛṣṇa decided that all the wives of Duḥśāsana and company should have their hair loosened as a result of the Battle of Kurukṣetra. Thus after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, after all the sons and grandsons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra died in battle, all the wives of the family were obliged to loosen their hair as widows. In other words, all the wives of the Kuru family became widows because of Duḥśāsana's insulting a great devotee of the Lord. The Lord can tolerate insults upon Himself by any miscreant because the father tolerates even insults from the son. But He never tolerates insults upon His devotees. By insulting a great soul, one has to forego all the results of pious acts and benedictions also.

TEXT 11

यो नो जुगोप वन एत्य दुरन्तकृच्छ्रद्
दुर्वाससोऽरिरचित्तादयुताग्रभुग् यः ।
शाकान्निशिष्टमपयुज्य यत्त्रिलोकीं
वृत्ताममंस्त सलिले विनिमग्नसङ्घः ॥११॥

*yo no jugopa vana etya duranta-kṛcchrād
durvāsaso 'ri-racitād ayutāgra-bhug yah
śākānna-śiṣṭam apayujya yatas tri-lokīm
trptām amamsta salile vinimagna-saṅghah*

yah—one who; *naḥ*—us; *jugopa*—gave protection; *vane*—forest; *etya*—getting in; *duranta*—dangerously; *kṛcchrāt*—trouble; *durvāsasah*—of Durvāsā Muni; *ari*—enemy; *racitāt*—fabricated by; *ayuta*—ten thousand; *agra-bhuk*—one who eats before; *yah*—that person; *śāka-anna-śiṣṭam*—remnants of foodstuff; *apayujya*—having accepted; *yataḥ*—because; *tri-lokīm*—all the three worlds; *trptām*—satisfied; *amamsta*—thought within the mind; *salile*—while in the water; *vinimagna-saṅghah*—all merged into the water.

TRANSLATION

During our exile, Durvāsā Muni, who eats with his ten thousand disciples, intrigued with our enemies to put us in dangerous trouble. At that time He [Lord Kṛṣṇa], simply by accepting the remnants of food, saved us. By His accepting food thus, the assembly of munis, while bathing in the river, felt sumptuously fed. And all the three worlds were also satisfied.

PURPORT

Durvāsā Muni: A powerful mystic *brāhmaṇa* determined to observe the principles of religion with great vows and under strict austerities. His name is associated with many historical events, and it appears that the great mystic could be both easily satisfied and easily annoyed, like Lord Śiva. When he was satisfied, he could do tremendous good to the servitor, but if he was dissatisfied he could bring about the greatest calamity. Kumārī Kuntī, at her father's house, used to minister all kinds of services to all great *brāhmaṇas*, and being satisfied with her good reception Durvāsā Muni benedicted her with a power to call any demigod she desired. It is understood that he was a plenary incarnation of Lord Śiva, and thus he could be either easily satisfied or annoyed. He was a great de-

votee of Lord Śiva and by Lord Śiva's order he accepted the priesthood of King Śvetaketu because of the King's performance of sacrifice for one hundred years. Sometimes he used to visit the parliamentary assembly of the heavenly kingdom of Indradeva. He could travel in space by his great mystic powers, and it is understood that he traveled a great distance through space, even up to the Vaikuṅṭha planets beyond material space. He traveled all these long distances within one year, during his quarrel with King Ambariṣa, the great devotee and Emperor of the world.

He had about ten thousand disciples, and wherever he visited and became a guest of the great *ksatriya* kings, he used to be accompanied by a number of followers. Once he visited the house of Duryodhana, the enemy cousin of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. Duryodhana was intelligent enough to satisfy the *brāhmaṇa* by all means, and the great *ṛṣi* wanted to give some benediction to Duryodhana. Duryodhana knew his mystic powers, and he knew also that the mystic *brāhmaṇa*, if dissatisfied, could cause some havoc, and thus he designed to engage the *brāhmaṇa* to show his wrath upon his enemy cousins, the Pāṇḍavas. When the *ṛṣi* wanted to award some benediction to Duryodhana, the latter wished that he should visit the house of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, who was the eldest and chief among all his cousins. But by his request he would go to him after he had finished his meals with his Queen, Draupadī. Duryodhana knew that after Draupadī's dinner it would be impossible for Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira to receive such a large number of *brāhmaṇa* guests, and thus the *ṛṣi* would be annoyed and would create some trouble for his cousin Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. That was the plan of Duryodhana. Durvāsā Muni agreed to this proposal, and he approached the King in exile, according to the plan of Duryodhana after the King and Draupadī had finished their meals.

On his arrival at the door of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, he was at once well received, and the King requested him to finish his noontime religious rites in the river, for by that time the foodstuff would be prepared. Durvāsā Muni, along with his large number of disciples, went to take a bath in the river, and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was in great anxiety about the guests. As long as Draupadī had not taken her meals, food could be served to any number of guests, but the *ṛṣi*, by the plan of Duryodhana, reached there after Draupadī had finished her meals.

When the devotees are put into difficulty, they have an opportunity to recollect the Lord with rapt attention. So Draupadī was thinking of Lord Kṛṣṇa in that dangerous position, and the all-pervading Lord could at once know the dangerous position of His devotees. He therefore came there on the scene and asked Draupadī to give whatever food she might have in her stock. On her being so requested by the Lord, Draupadī was sorrowful because the Supreme Lord asked her for some food and she was unable to supply it at that time. She said to the Lord that the mysterious dish which she had received from the sun-god could supply any amount of food if she herself had not eaten. But on that day she had already taken her meals, and thus they were in danger. By expressing her difficulties she began to cry before the Lord as only a woman would do in such a position. The Lord, however, asked Draupadī to bring up the cooking pots to see if there was any particle of foodstuff left, and on Draupadī's doing so, the Lord found some particle of vegetable sticking to the pot. The Lord at once picked it up and ate it. After doing so, the Lord asked Draupadī to call for her guests, the company of Durvāsā.

Bhīma was sent to call them from the river. Bhīma said, "Why are you delaying, sirs? Come on, the food is ready for you." But the *brāhmaṇas*, because of Lord Kṛṣṇa's accepting a little particle of food, felt sumptuously fed, even while they were in the water. They thought that since Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira must have prepared many valuable dishes for them and since they were not hungry and could not eat, the King would feel very sorry, so it was better not to go there. Thus they decided to go away.

This incident proves that the Lord is the greatest mystic, and therefore He is known as Yogeśvara. Another instruction is that every householder must offer food to the Lord, and the result will be that everyone, even a company of guests numbering ten thousand, will be satisfied because of the Lord's being satisfied. That is the way of devotional service. (continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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



Indian Health Minister Raj Narain gives opening address. At his left are Śrī Prabhudas Patwari, governor of Tamil Nadu province, and Mr. Vasantao Patil, chief minister of Maharashtra.

New Cultural Center Opens in Bombay

In January some of India's foremost political and cultural figures took part in the inaugural ceremonies for ISKCON's new Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsavihārījī Temple and Vedic Cultural Center in Bombay.

Two provincial chief executives and a member of the Indian Cabinet delivered speeches to an audience that included hundreds of Bombay's leading citizens, representatives of the international news media, and guests from around the world. The officials stressed the center's future role in spreading the ideals of India's ancient Vedic culture worldwide.

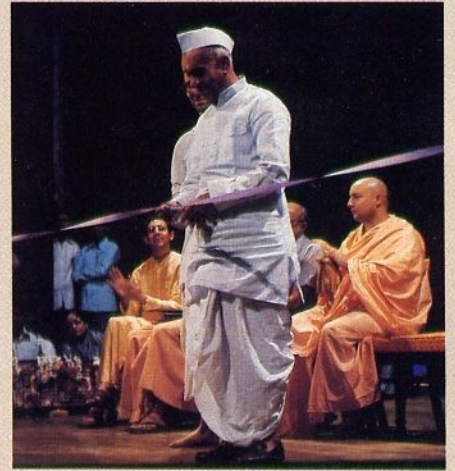
Śrī Prabhudas Patwari, governor of the Tamil Nadu province, said he hopes to help spread the teachings of Kṛṣṇa "through many languages, to all people in all the nooks and corners of the world. In this way . . . we may create an international climate of peace and happiness. . . ." (For the full text of the governor's speech, see page 12.)

Mr. Vasantao Patil, the chief minister of Maharashtra (the province in which Bombay is located), said that all people should follow Lord Kṛṣṇa's advice in

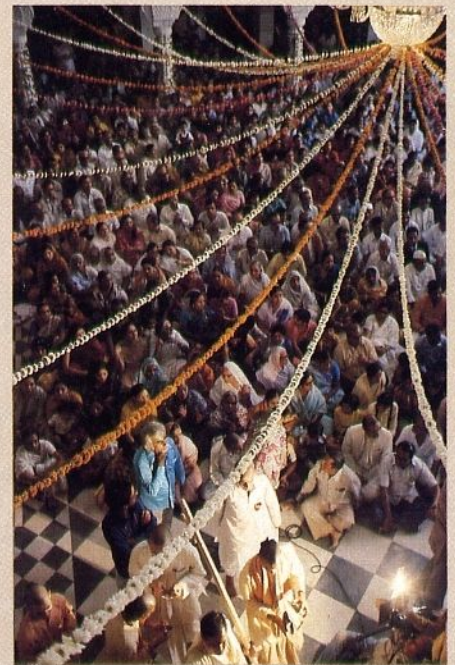
the *Bhagavad-gītā* for eternal peace and happiness.

Indian Health Minister Raj Narain remarked, "It is amazing to me that now Westerners have taken to the Indian culture just when we are losing it." Yet at the opening of the Bombay center's Bhaktivedanta Auditorium, well-known Indian classical dancers and dramatists proved that Kṛṣṇa conscious culture is still going strong in its homeland. After an opening address by Śrī D.T. Rupavate (the cultural minister of Maharashtra), Śrīmatī Vyjayanthimala Bali, one of India's foremost classical dancers, delighted the audience with dances based on the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Vocalist Śrī Hari Om Sharan presented a special song he had composed in honor of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, as well as traditional Indian songs in praise of Kṛṣṇa. Then Arvind Parikh, who ranks high among India's masters of the sitar, played morning *rāgas*.

An estimated twenty thousand visitors attended the two days of ceremonies.



Governor Patwari cuts ribbon for Bhaktivedanta Auditorium. Noted Indian artists glorified Kṛṣṇa through dance and music.



Viewing the temple are representatives of international news media and honored guests from Bombay and around the world.

ISKCON Food Relief in Action

Last November a cyclone devastated coastal areas of India's Andhra province. It killed tens of thousands of villagers and left millions homeless and hungry. In the cyclone's wake, a team of ISKCON Food Relief workers took part in emergency food distribution.

The food relief team, based at

ISKCON's Hyderabad farm community, is supported by monthly contributions of funds from ISKCON centers worldwide. Soon after the cyclone struck, leaders of the team contacted the agriculture minister of Andhra Pradesh and quickly received clearance to enter the disaster area.

A convoy of vehicles carrying tons of food and cooking equipment departed at once for the town of Guntur, in the coastal lowlands. There, at a jute mill, the team set up an emergency food preparation center and began their work. For the next few days they stayed in the disaster area and fed the hungry.

The ISKCON Food Relief program had a spiritual focus that set it apart from similar efforts by other international agencies. "Come and take Kṛṣṇa's *prasāda*!" the team members shouted as they entered demolished villages. *Prasāda* ("mercy") is the name for food offered to Kṛṣṇa, God.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, India's most widely-read scripture, Kṛṣṇa states that by eating *prasāda*, people are released from the bad effects of their *karma*. According to the law of *karma*, miseries result from past misdeeds, including those committed in previous lifetimes. Unfavorable karmic reactions may occur in the form of war, disease, famine, or natural disasters.

ISKCON, Red Cross Supply Food, Shelter in Blizzard

During the worst blizzard in Cleveland's history, the local branch of Govinda's restaurant became an emergency kitchen. While the late-January storm was still raging, ISKCON leaders conferred with Red Cross officials at the local disaster headquarters and learned that most of the Red Cross manpower was already tied up. Workers were sorely needed to prepare hot meals.

So ISKCON volunteers quickly converted Govinda's restaurant in downtown Cleveland into a Red Cross shelter and started giving out piping hot *prasāda*. They also fed people at the main Red Cross shelter in city hall, at the Greyhound bus station shelter, and at a senior citizens home in East Cleveland. When a radio operator at a CB base station got a call from a group of truckers stranded on an outlying highway, she dispatched a driver with hot *prasāda* and copies of *BACK TO GODHEAD*. And so it went, on through the night.

The next morning, Red Cross disaster chief Bill Lentz thanked Arjita dāsa, the president of ISKCON's Cleveland center, and he asked the devotees to stay on the ready for future emergencies. "One more thing," he added—"could you give us all a hot breakfast?"

Thank You, Mr. Carter

During the 1976 election campaign, candidate Jimmy Carter received some literature from an ISKCON devotee and wrote him a polite thank-you note. "We have received your gift, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* [by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda] and two copies of *BACK TO GODHEAD*. Rosalyn and I appreciate your thoughtfulness."

But that wasn't all. When President Carter arrived in India for a state visit this past January, he was carrying the *Gītā* with him. He had studied the book in preparation for his trip, and while in India he discussed it with Prime Minister Desai.

Mr. Carter told Mr. Desai, "I woke up early this morning and read the *Bhagavad-gītā* for a couple of hours. It is a very beautiful work, very exciting too. It was quite interesting in that it demonstrated the unimportance of the length of physical life. . . . I am going to do some more study."

In the *Gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa stresses the importance of the soul over the body. At another point during his visit President Carter also remarked, "The most important bond between India and the United States is our emphasis on the questions and commitments of the spirit."

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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PROVE IT!

Devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa challenge a skeptic scientist to back up his claim that life comes from matter.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KRṢṆA KATHĀ DĀSA

Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov is president of the Sri Lanka branch of the Rationalist Association, an organization especially dedicated to disproving the existence of God and the soul. On August 14, 1977, the Colombo (Sri Lanka) *Sunday Times* published an article by Dr. Kovoov entitled, "Is There Life After Death?" In this article, Dr. Kovoov maintained that life is merely a complex chemical activity and that the soul cannot survive death, since there is actually no such thing as the soul. This article led to a heated debate, both in the *Sunday Times* and in correspondence, between Dr. Kovoov and members of the Sri Lanka branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The *Sunday Times* articles and a portion of the correspondence are reproduced here.

Sunday Times
August 21, 1977

IT'S BEYOND KOVOOR'S POWER OF OBSERVATION

by Hamsaduta Swami and
Mahakanta dasa

Although Dr. Kovoov and men of his stamp stand proudly on their platform of knowledge, it should be pointed out for the benefit of members of the public not expert in sophistry that men like Dr. Kovoov, who pose as the guardians of logic, reason, and the advancement of science, are sailing on a sinking

ship when they meddle in matters that lie beyond the purview of their limited senses. This particularly applies to the question of life after death.

The very first line of Dr. Kovoov's article is, "I do not hold the view that my life is located in a particular spot in my body." This statement as well as a later one—"I do not believe that I have a soul or spirit to survive my death"—betrays the flimsy platform upon which he has chosen to make his stand. Throughout the article Dr. Kovoov gives his views, beliefs, and opinions regarding a subject completely beyond his power of observation, and he tries to pass these imaginative speculations off as infallible scientific truths.

With all due respect to Dr. Kovoov, I beg to point out that the process of direct sensory perception, on the strength of which he has made so many statements

regarding life after death, is completely limited and imperfect.

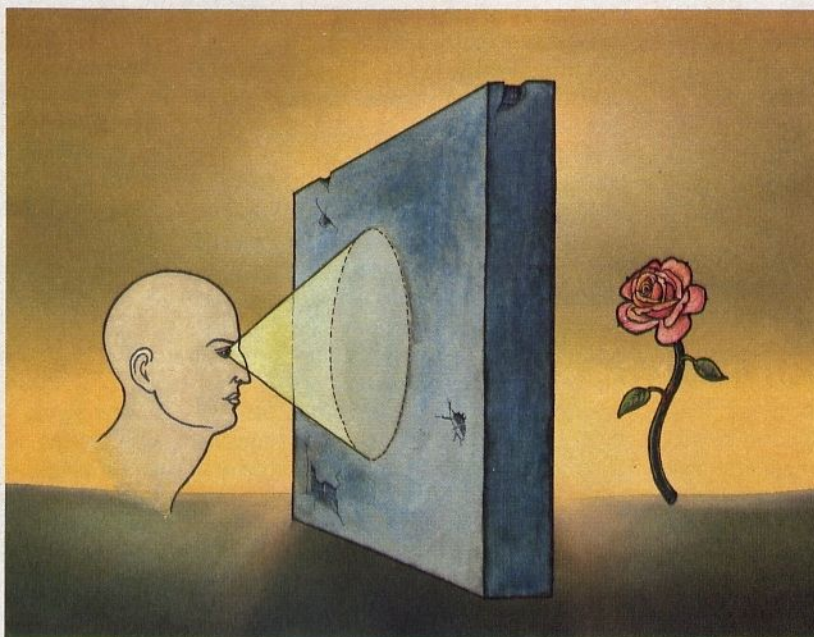
Example

Consider, for example, the eyes. They function only under certain conditions: if there is no light, I cannot even see my hand in front of my face. We cannot see the nearest object to the eye—the eyelid—nor can we see that which is farthest away, the outer limits of the universe. Indeed, the eyes are imperfect. Similarly, the senses of touch, taste, and smell are limited, and the mind, too, is imperfect. Therefore any conclusions based on imperfect sensory perception must necessarily be imperfect.

Research, experimentation, and speculation conducted on the basis of imperfect sensory perception are meaningless when applied to matters that do not come within their purview.

Attempting to apply sensory perception to such matters would be like a child's trying to find who his father is by asking every man in the world—a preposterous idea, to say the least. To understand the identity of one's father, one must accept the authority of one's mother—there is no other way. Since no one is able to see his father at the time of conception, one must accept the version of one's mother. Any sane man must accept this.

Regarding souls and rebirth, Dr. Kovoov writes, "I have not any valid reason or



Direct sensory perception goes only so far. . . .

evidence to believe it." This statement only goes to show that the process of direct sensory perception is limited and imperfect and that it therefore yields no result when applied to matters beyond its jurisdiction. Rather than foolishly declaring, "I do not believe that I have a soul or spirit to survive my death," Dr. Koor would be much safer and more faithful to his professional ethic if he were simply to admit his inability or incompetence to deal with the subject matter in question. There is the soul, there is rebirth of the soul, and there is a Supreme Soul—God. However, we should point out that because the soul is categorically different from matter, the techniques of material science must fail when applied to understanding the soul's existence and nature.

This does not mean, however, that the subject is open to the random speculation and opinion-making so fashionable today. Just as we have a material science to deal with material phenomena, so also we have a spiritual scientific process which allows its practitioner to penetrate the walls of gross and subtle matter and directly experience the truths of the soul, its rebirth, and its relationship with God, the Supreme Soul.

A true scientist would never prematurely declare, "I do not believe that I have a soul or spirit to survive my death." Rather, he would enthusiastically embrace a standard technique accepted by respected and recognized men of spiritual science. Such a scientist and sincere seeker of truth would then, in the interests of science, submit himself to that process and make himself the object of experimentation. Only after he had perfectly applied all the practices and techniques to himself, under the guidance of an authorized professor of spiritual science, would he dare make judgmental remarks about the subject in question. Theory, observation, and experimentation are the true methods of science, and they apply equally to spiritual science.

Generation of Life

Life is not generated from a combination of chemicals, as some scientists would have us believe. Rather, it is life which generates matter. A living man and a living woman combined in sexual intercourse are the cause for generating a living child. A dead man and a dead woman have no power to generate living offspring. A living tree has the power to generate fruit; a dead tree, however, has no such power. The difference between life and death is the soul, which is described in *Bhagavad-gita* as superior en-

ergy (*para prakriti*). It is this superior energy which manifests all phenomena within our experience.

If life is a display of chemical combinations only, as some scientists suggest, why can't science inject a life-giving chemical into a dead body and make a man live forever? If we give a scientist the chemical ingredients of the material body, why can't he combine the chemicals and bring them to life?

When confronted with these questions, materialistic scientists will answer, "We are trying. We will do it in the future." But this is not science. This is a bluff.

These scientists proudly declare, "There is no soul. There is no God. Everything has come about by chance." But when asked to do something substantial to back up their claim, they can offer us only a postdated check: "We are trying. We shall do it in the future." Dr. Koor, being a typical materialistic scientist, resorts to this same bluff when he says, "The time will not be far off when man will be using his advanced knowledge in genetics to improve the quality of his own species."

Challenge

Here is my challenge to Dr. Koor. Let him inject the appropriate chemicals into a dead body to bring it back to life. Or let him inject the appropriate chemicals into himself to check his own death and restore his old and worn out body to its youthful luster and beauty.

If he finds this task too difficult, perhaps he could just produce a simple form of life, such as a mosquito or a bed-bug. Better still, let him recombine the chemicals of the praying mantis he decapitated (as described in his article) and bring it back to life. Or is the science of Dr. Koor only a one-way road to the destruction of life?

It may be that science is not yet ready with a one-step process by which to produce life as a finished product. If this be so, let Dr. Koor merely make a plastic egg, inject it with yellow and white chemicals, incubate his artificial egg, and thereby produce even one chicken that could go on laying eggs and produce more and more chickens.

Even this task may be a little too difficult for Dr. Koor. Perhaps, then, he could simply produce a drop of milk or a grain of rice by chemical combination. Then we could start taking him seriously.

Of course, everyone knows that these are impossible tasks for even the most powerful so-called scientist. Dr. Koor, in his next exposition, will undoubtedly

give the reader a long-winded barrage of words to cover up his bluff. The sum and substance of it will be "We will do it in the future. We are trying." In any language, this is merely a bluff.

*Hamsaduta Swami
Mahakanta Dasa
International Society
for Krishna Consciousness*

*Sunday Times
August 28, 1977*

IT'S NOT BEYOND KOOOR'S POWER OF OBSERVATION

[by Dr. Abraham Koor]

In the article titled "It's Beyond Koor's Power of Observation," in the *Sunday Times* of August 21st, Messrs. Mahakanta dasa and Hamsaduta Swami of the "Hare Krishna" cult betray their appalling ignorance of modern branches of biological science such as biochemistry, molecular biology, neurobiology; eugenics, genetic engineering, extra-uterine insemination, parthenogenesis, and so on.

It is clear from what they have written that they are equating life with mind and the nonexistent spirit or soul. They do not seem to know that while all organisms have life, only those animals which possess nervous systems have mind, and that mental faculties in animals vary in direct proportion to the development of their nervous systems. Despite the beliefs of millions of religionists for thousands of years, there is absolutely no biological evidence for the existence of souls in organisms. Messrs. Dasa and Swami say that according to the "professors of spiritual science," there is the soul, there is rebirth of the soul, and there is the Supreme Soul—God.

I should like to know on what objective evidence these so-called professors make this fantastic statement. According to the two writers, life is prior to matter. They say, "Life is not generated from a combination of chemicals, as some scientists would have us believe. Rather, it is life that generates matter."

Solar Energy

The prime source of life on the planet earth is the sun. Solar energy is fixed in green plants when sunlight is converted into chemical energy by the reaction sequence known as photosynthesis. Organisms other than plants obtain their energy by eating green plants or some of the eaters of green plants. These food substances serve as fuel for supplying vital energy to organisms. The energy in

the food is liberated as vital energy by slow oxidation during respiration.

Dasa and Swami say that scientists, with their imperfect sensory powers, are incapable of understanding the reality of things as "spiritual scientists" do. Are the sensory powers of these pseudo-scientists more efficient than those of real scientists? Or do the so-called spiritual scientists possess any form of perception other than sensory perception?

Knowledge and enlightenment cannot be had through meditation, which is only a form of self-hypnosis.

Scientists

Dasa and Swami ask whether scientists can make a chicken come out of a plastic egg.

I do not know whether they are aware that scientists have made over ten elements, such as fermium, plutonium, and einsteinium, which God could not create because he did not know the technology involved in making them. Are these two men aware of the success of the Sri Lankan scientist Dr. Cyril Ponnampereuma and the Indian scientist Dr. Bal Gobind Khorana, the Nobel Prize winner, in synthesizing amino acids, the building blocks of living protoplasm, from inert substances, simulating the conditions that prevailed in the primitive atmosphere of the earth? Do they know that human egg and sperm cells could be fertilized in test tubes, and the fetus developed in an artificial womb or in the womb of a hired woman?

Among animals that have evolved on

this planet, man is the only animal that has progressed in all his activities. This he has achieved through his knowledge and science. While all organisms continue to live even today as their forebears did millions of years ago, man alone has progressed from the caveman state to the present spaceman state by using science and technology, and not by the help of any God or knowledge obtained from any scripture!

Advancements in medical science and social welfare services are helping more and more misfits survive to procreate more and more misfits as future citizens. While the short-term goal is achieved, the long-term goal is jeopardized. Future governments are not going to allow the misfits to procreate misfit children on the ground that "life originates from the Supreme Soul."

Man's Ability

It is the unique ability of man to engage in creative thinking that has made him succeed in his fight against the laws of nature. The highly developed forebrain and the deeply convoluted cortex have helped him to think creatively. Scientists, as a general rule, are objective thinkers because they base their thoughts on empirical knowledge. Mystics and visionaries, the so-called spiritual scientists of Dasa and Swami, on the other hand, build up their thoughts on their subjective perceptions. Books on chemistry, physics, mathematics, geography, history, geology, anthropology, paleontology, engineer-

ing, medical science, astronomy, etc., are the products of objective thinkers. On the other hand, books like *Arabian Nights*, *Gulliver's Travels*, fairy stories, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, the Bible, the Koran, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Jataka* stories astrology, palmistry, numerology, theology, demonology, etc., are the products of subjective thinkers. While the former are factual, the latter are fictitious.

Some of the marvelous achievements of mankind in recent years have been the liberation of atomic energy, space flight, landing on the moon, organ transplantation, satellite communication, etc. All these were achieved through science. Mentally deranged intellectuals are capable of expatiating on their hallucinations and often become founders and preachers of diverse types of religious cults.

Dr. Abraham T. Kovoor

Sunday Times
September 4, 1977

THE CHALLENGE STILL STANDS

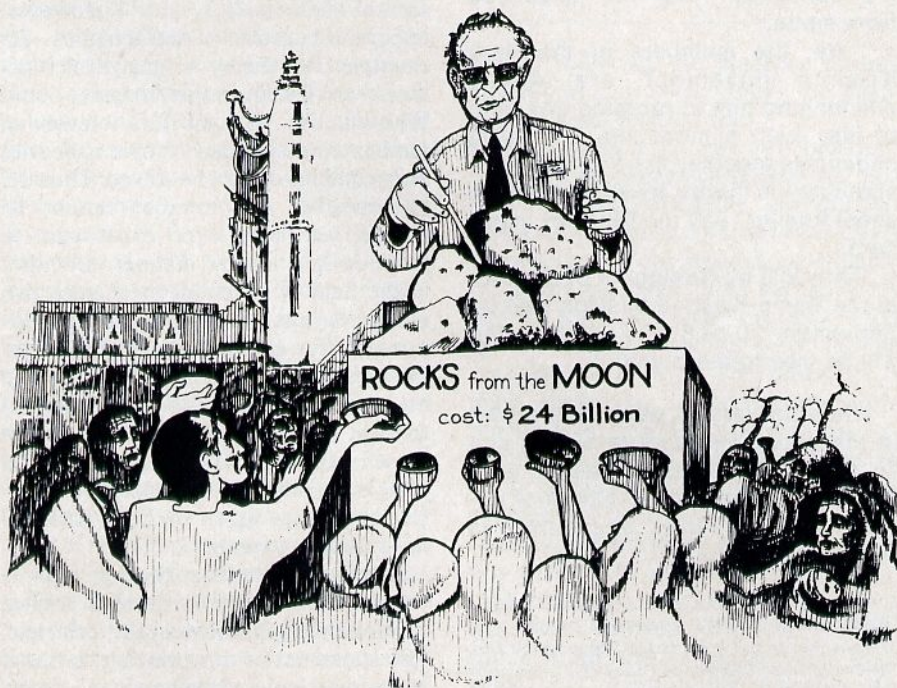
by Hamsaduta Swami

First of all, it should be noted that Dr. Kovoor has done exactly what I predicted in my last article he would do—namely, he has swamped the reader with a deluge of word jugglery in order to avoid the main issue, which is this: if life is generated by chance biochemical combinations, as some scientists claim, can the scientist Kovoor, given the proper chemicals, make the chemicals come to life?

Instead of answering this point, he has cleverly written, "Scientists have created over ten elements, such as fermium, plutonium, and einsteinium."

But elements are a far cry from living beings. Dr. Kovoor says that Dr. Cyril Ponnampereuma and Dr. Bal Gobind Khorana, the Nobel Prize winner, have synthesized the building blocks of living protoplasm. If this is a fact, why hasn't Dr. Kovoor met the challenge by creating life with these building blocks? My challenge still stands.

As for incubating a baby in the test tube, this can be done only if you take the sperm and ovum of a *living man and woman*. In other words, the seed of life required to produce the baby in the test tube cannot be created by so-called scientists. What is their credit if they produce a baby in a test tube? God is already producing millions of babies daily in nature's test tube, the womb. On the other hand, scientists are killing thousands of babies in the womb by abortion and calling it "scientific advancement."



Can scientists turn moon rocks into bread and cheese by applying some chemicals?

Dr. Kovoov's statement that scientists are "objective thinkers because they base their thoughts on empirical knowledge" only goes to emphasize our point that the soul lies beyond the jurisdiction of the limited senses. Therefore, a completely different process of approach has to be adopted. The definition of *empirical* is "that which is based on observation and experiment." Observation and experiment are conducted with limited senses, and therefore the conclusions thus derived are naturally limited and imperfect. Thus, the soul and the existence of God are in fact quite beyond Dr. Kovoov's power of observation. Why should he be so obstinate? This is a commonsense point that anyone can understand.

Dr. Kovoov says, "It is the unique ability of man to engage in creative thinking that has made him succeed in his fight against the laws of nature." This is a preposterous claim that only a fool would make. Nature forces everyone to undergo old age, disease, and finally death. Even the world's most powerful conquerors are helplessly dragged off the stage of life by nature in the shape of all-devouring death. Will Dr. Kovoov be the first living being in history who will not die? That remains to be seen.

Finally, Dr. Kovoov says, "Some of the marvelous achievements of mankind in recent years have been the liberation of atomic energy, space flight, landing on the moon," etc. Everyone knows that the first thing scientists did after discovering atomic energy was to manufacture the atomic bomb and promptly drop it on Japan, thus annihilating tens of thousands of innocent victims in a flash. Marvelous, indeed.

At the expense of untold billions of dollars and years of research and hard labor, scientists have supposedly gone to the moon. Of course, all they have "brought back" is a few blurry photos, a handful of rocks, and the revelation that the moon is barren. And now they want more money to go to Mars. What is so marvelous about this? It is complete lunacy. On our own planet earth, millions of people are without food, shelter, and basic education. Scientists would be more credible if instead of spending billions of dollars to bring rocks from the moon, they would spend the taxpayer's hard-earned money to improve his own lot on earth. Rocks are rocks, whether from China, from the moon, or from Mars. Or is it that science can turn the rocks into bread and cheese by applying some chemicals?

Now, to get to the main point, Dr. Kovoov asks on what objective evidence we have made the fantastic statements

that life and matter both come from life, that there is a soul, that there is rebirth of the soul, and that there is a supreme soul, or God. It is said, "Fight fire with fire." Therefore, I may simply refer Dr. Kovoov to the authoritative, rational, and thoroughly scientific findings of three researchers, all with doctorates, who are members of the Bhaktivedanta Institute. After examining the evidence they have presented,* one who is truly a rationalist should agree with their conclusion that life never comes from matter, but only from life.

Hamsaduta Swami
ISKCON Sri Lanka

After the *Sunday Times* had printed this exchange of articles, the Hare Krishna movement publicly challenged Dr. Kovoov to prove his statement that life originates from chance biochemical combinations. ISKCON publicly offered Dr. Kovoov five hundred thousand rupees (sixty thousand dollars) if he could create any form of life—a mouse, a cat, a mosquito, or any other plainly visible creature—from inert chemicals. The *Sunday Times* ran this story:

"The high priest of Sri Lanka rationalists, Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov, who has been challenging people for decades to prove the existence of God, the soul, and rebirth, is now on the receiving end.

"ISKCON (The International Society for Krishna Consciousness) has now challenged Dr. Kovoov to prove his contention that life originated from matter.

"We, the members of the Hare Krishna movement, are openly challenging him to produce any form of life, even a mosquito, by mixing chemicals together. If he cannot substantiate his theory, he should remain silent forever," say the ISKCON members.

"They will be waiting for Dr. Kovoov at the Rama-Krishna Mission Hall on September 20, at 6:30 P.M. Admission will be free to the public."

While the issues were thus drawn in the press, Hamsaduta Swami and Dr. Kovoov crossed swords on their own in a continuing exchange of letters. Part of that exchange is reproduced here.

*Bhaktivedanta Institute monograph number one: *What Is Matter and What Is Life?* Monograph two: *Demonstration by Information Theory That Life Cannot Arise From Matter.* Monograph three: *Consciousness and the Laws of Nature.*

Hamsaduta Swami
ISKCON Sri Lanka
September 6, 1977

Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov
Sri Lanka Rationalist Association

Dear Dr. Kovoov,

I have further deliberated and have decided to write you a few more words on the existence of God, the soul, and the rebirth of the soul. I trust they may be of interest to you.

The greatest disease in the minds of the scientists is that they do not believe that something is a fact unless it is proved by scientific experiments. When a scientist makes a statement and he supports that statement with scientific experiments, everyone is completely convinced, and no questions are asked. When we talk about the spirit soul to these scientists, their usual response is, "How can one detect the presence of the soul?" Because they have been conditioned to working with machines, they wonder whether the soul can be detected by scientific experiments. However, scientists have to agree that even in their own scientific realm there are many facts that cannot be proved by experiments. The fact is that the soul is there, but in order to understand its existence we have to accept knowledge from the right person—Sri Krishna (God) or His representative in disciplic succession, the spiritual master.

Everyone in the scientific community knows that mathematicians work with an imaginary number called "i," which is the square root of minus one ($\sqrt{-1} = i$). This number does not figure among the natural numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.). However, important branches of mathematics—for example, the theory of analytical functions—are based on this imaginary unit. Without the help of this branch of mathematics, various complex theories and problems cannot be solved. Thus the existence of this number cannot be denied; yet there is no experiment to prove it. In a similar manner, scientists in the field of statistical mechanics also utilize various conceptual models—ensembles, for example—to explain their theories and arguments. These are all beyond the realm of experimental science. If scientists are willing to accept these imaginary and conceptual models, what is the difficulty in accepting the perfect knowledge given by Lord Krishna, the supreme scientist?

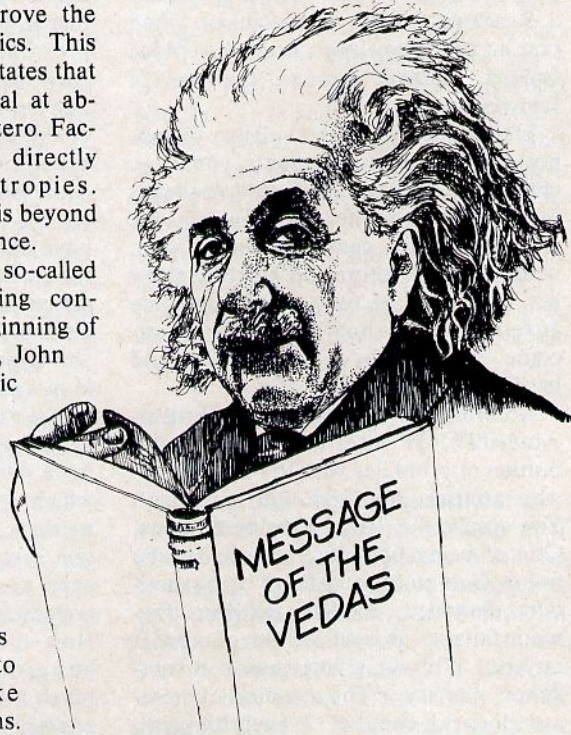
Another scientific theory that is beyond the limit of experimental science is Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. The statement of this principle is that it is impossible to simultaneously determine the position and momentum of any

object. In mathematical language, it is stated that the product of the uncertainties in the measured values of the position and momentum (product of mass and velocity) cannot be smaller than Planck's constant. No existing experimental technique can prove this principle. However, scientists all over the world accept this statement as a fact, knowing that the experimental proof is beyond their ability. Similarly, there is no scientific experiment to prove the Third Law of Thermodynamics. This law, as formulated by Planck, states that the entropy of a perfect crystal at absolute zero degrees is equal to zero. Factually, there is no way to directly measure the absolute entropies. Therefore the proof of this law is beyond the realm of experimental science.

It is also to be noted that so-called scientific theories are changing constantly. For example, at the beginning of the nineteenth century (1808), John Dalton, in developing his atomic theory, stated that atoms could not be further divided. However, toward the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, it was found that Dalton's atomic theory could no longer be considered correct. It was observed that atoms could be further divided into fundamental particles like electrons, protons, and neutrons. It was also found that some atoms could emit alpha and beta particles, thereby producing new atoms, and so on. As a matter of fact, the so-called nuclear bombs are a result of these findings. In a similar manner, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Newton's mechanics had a tremendous influence on the minds of scientists, since they could be applied to gross material objects. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the discoveries of the fundamental particles, it was realized that Newton's mechanics failed in describing the motions of these particles. Thus quantum mechanics has been developed to explain the phenomena they exhibit. These theories are filled with speculation, and they are also changing. Just as past and present scientific theories are changing, so we can understand that future scientific theories will also change.

All of this simply shows that the brains of the highly honored scientists are imperfect, and as a result the theories proposed by these brains will always remain imperfect. Actually, perfect knowledge cannot be changed, but in order to get perfect knowledge one has to approach a

perfect source. That source is Krishna and the Vedic literature. Of course, this may seem like an incredible statement to a scientific brain like yours, which is accustomed to testing everything with scientific instruments and so-called logic, reason, deduction, hypothesis, and theory, but it is nonetheless a fact. This can be understood by anyone who is scientific enough to experiment on him-



If the Vedas are full of "superstitions and deranged ideas," how did they attract the attention of Einstein?

self by following the practices recommended in the *Vedas*, under the guidance of a self-realized soul.

The process is actually very practical. The spiritual master prescribes the process of spiritual discipline, and the student carries it out according to the directions given. If the student experiences the predicted result, then he concludes that the spiritual master was right. If the spiritual master is actually bona fide, the result will be positive. This procedure is quite similar to an honest scientist's reporting his results along with his experimental method. One who wants to verify the result can perform the same experiment himself. When the same result is reproduced by several scientists, it is accepted as a scientific fact.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that when someone believes that life comes from matter rather than from spirit, his concern for morality diminishes considerably. If all life is

merely a complex combination of chance chemical reactions and if there is no supreme consciousness, no creator and controller, what need is there for moral restraint? This is not a new philosophy. In ancient Greece, Epicurus postulated that everything is simply a combination of atoms and void, nothing more. Today the word "epicure" describes a person whose main activity is to enjoy fine food and drink. The conclusion is that the philosophy that chance biochemical combinations are the origin of life is a philosophy that leads to unrestricted sense gratification, but it is by no means scientific. We can see one vivid example of how demoralizing and vicious this philosophy is in the present worldwide practice of abortion. Because of being taught that the embryo is not actually a living being but only a mass of inanimate chemicals, people have been convinced to kill their unborn children mercilessly within the womb.

I will be very interested in receiving your thoughts on these points and am prepared to discuss the matter further if you have any doubts about them.

I hope this letter meets you well.

*Respectfully yours,
Hamsaduta Swami*

*Dr. Abraham T. Kovoora
Sri Lanka Rationalist
Association
September 10, 1977*

*Mr. Hamsaduta Swami
ISKCON Sri Lanka*

Dear Sir:

From [your] letters it is clear that it is futile for me, who base my philosophy on available scientific evidence, and you, who base your faith on dubious scriptures called *Vedas*, to try to convince each other.

If you insist that I should substantiate, by a demonstration before the public eye, my view that life originated from inert substances by chemical evolution under suitable conditions, I too have an equal right to ask you to substantiate your statement that "whatever we see in existence is the creation of the Lord, and that creation is going on at every moment" by demonstrating it before the public eye. As long as you are not going to get your "Lord" to demonstrate this, you need not expect me to conduct a one-sided show.

As far as I am concerned, the universe is only matter and energy in time and space. The question of a creator does not come in, because matter, energy, space, and time have neither beginning nor end. The various forms of terrestrial

organisms, extinct as well as extant, are the products of millions of years of biological evolution of macromolecules of protein that were formed on earth as a result of chemical evolution under suitable conditions.

Can you tell me who created your "Lord," and where he was before the universe was created?

*Yours in search of truth,
Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov*

*Hamsaduta Swami
ISKCON Sri Lanka
September 15, 1977*

*Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov
Sri Lanka Rationalist Association*

Dear Dr. Kovoov,

I am in due receipt of your letter dated September 10, 1977, and have noted the contents carefully.

If it is futile to try to convince each other of our respective points of view, then what is the meaning of your science, rationalism, and search for truth? The close of your letter—"Yours in search of truth"—suggests that you have not yet found the truth. That is your defect: you have not yet found truth, yet you pose and speak as if you were in knowledge of truth.

The first aphorism of the *Vedanta-sutra* is *athato brahma-jijnasa*: "In the human form of life, one should inquire about the Absolute Truth, or God." You do not know what God is, yet still you have written, "The question of the creator does not come in. . . . The various forms of terrestrial organisms, extinct as well as extant, are products of millions of years of biological evolution of macromolecules of protein that were formed on earth as a result of chemical evolution under suitable circumstances." In simple English, you mean to say that life is a result of chance biochemical combinations. So if this is a fact—and if by this statement you wish to establish your credibility as a rationalist, scientist, and seeker of truth—then why do you repeatedly fail to combine some chemicals and bring them to life, as I have challenged you so many times to do?

You say your philosophy is based on "existing scientific evidence." So where is the scientific evidence that life comes from chemicals? Mix the chemicals and prove it! You say, "As far as I am concerned, the universe is only matter and energy in time and space." Where did this matter and energy and time and space come from? Without giving any reason or evidence, you state, "The question of a creator does not come in, because matter, energy, time, and space

have neither beginning nor end." Then again you ask me, "Who created your 'Lord,' and where was he before the universe was created?" Your statements are inconsistent. First you say that matter, energy, time, and space have neither beginning nor end, and then you ask where the Lord was before the creation of the universe. This is clearly contradictory. This shows that you still have a long way to go in your search for truth.

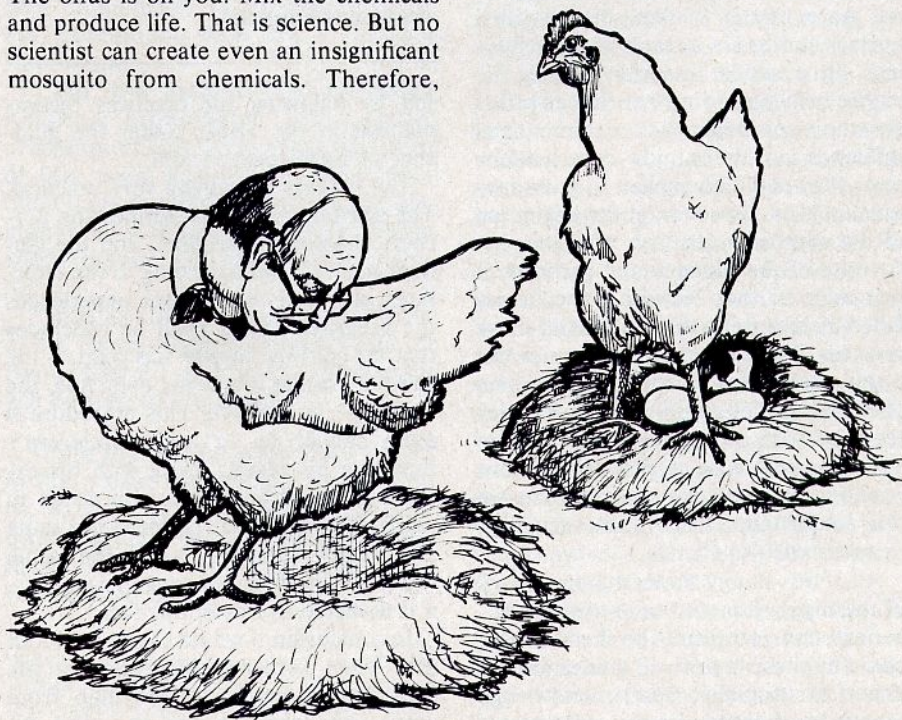
Research reaches its conclusion when one accepts knowledge from the *Vedas*. Indeed, *Vedanta* means "the end of knowledge."

Instead of providing evidence to support your fantastic statements, you try to cloud the real issue by counterchallenging God to create life. This kind of tactic is like that of a penniless beggar who, when brought before the judge to show his means of income, challenges the government to show its source of income first. Such a challenge would hardly be entertained.

According to Roman, Greek, British, American, or international law, the burden of proof lies with the plaintiff, he who accuses, not with the defendant. You accuse the *Vedas* of being dubious, God of being fictitious, and those who follow God and the *Vedas* of being mentally deranged, foolish, gullible, dogmatic fanatics. But the burden of proof is on you. Without giving reason or evidence, you say, "The question of a creator does not come in . . . everything is a matter of chance biochemical combination." Do I have to accept this blindly? The onus is on you. Mix the chemicals and produce life. That is science. But no scientist can create even an insignificant mosquito from chemicals. Therefore,

under the circumstances, it appears that it is you, and not we, who may be mentally deranged, foolish, gullible, dogmatic, and totally fanatic.

Scientists like to discredit the *Vedas* by saying that they are the writings of superstitious aborigines. But what kind of aborigines were they who wrote in a language so perfect in grammar, composition, poetry, and meter that a scholar needs twelve years to master the grammar alone? What kind of aborigines were they who thousands of years ago formulated divisions of time beginning with one ten-thousandth of a second up to the complete duration of universal time? What kind of aborigines were they who could describe, thousands of years ago, all the planets that modern scientists have only recently discovered? Where is the scientist today who can perfectly describe the process of conception taking place in the womb, as the Vedic so-called aborigines did thousands of years ago? How could these uncivilized aborigines categorize and enumerate in the *Vedas* all the different species of life, numbering 8,400,000? How is it that the *Vedas*, which are supposed to be the dubious writings of uncivilized aborigines, contain systematic information on subjects such as music, medicine, art, politics, architecture, warfare, and psychology? How could uncivilized aborigines even know the arts of reading and writing, much less describe the atom and atomic energy? How could they give descriptions of the orbits of the planets, their



"I asked you to produce an egg—where is it? The chicken is a better scientist than you. . . ."

size, their eclipses, and the size of the universe, and how could they describe the soul and the Supersoul, God?

If Krishna is the Hindu aboriginal God, why did such a scientist as Oppenheimer pay Him heed by studying the *Bhagavad-gita* spoken by Him? Why did Einstein, Schopenhauer, Kant, Hegel, Emerson, Thoreau, Schweitzer, and scores of scientists more important and brilliant than you read Vedic literature—especially *Bhagavad-gita*—if these are books full of superstitions and the deranged ideas of uncivilized aborigines? What is your authority? Are you greater than God? Do you think that these highly learned and honored men were all fools and rascals who had nothing better to do than spend their valuable time reading the writings of uncivilized aborigines? Or could it be that the *Vedas* are books of knowledge originally given by God at the beginning of the creation, and that they are preserved by being handed down in a Vedic tradition of disciplic succession about which you unfortunately know nothing?

As a scientist, you would do well to take out some time and sincerely examine the *Vedas* on their own merit, not in terms of preconceived notions resulting from limited, imperfect speculations and experiments.

Whether one speaks for or against the existence of God, the central point is God. You say, "I hope you understand that it is not the way with science to provide proof for things that do not exist." But we see that the so-called scientist is very busy trying to prove the nonexistence of God. If God has no existence, why bother about Him? According to logic, one cannot conceive of a thing that does not exist. And if a nonexistent entity is inconceivable, where is the question of even discussing it, whether positively or negatively?

It is the peculiar madness of many so-called scientists that they cannot seem to get off the subject of God, who according to them has no existence. We see that the whole aim of their scientific research is to justify their rebellion against the authority of God and the scriptures by trying to find an alternative cause and reason for life and creation. Although these scientists would like to believe that life originated from inert chemicals, no one has ever observed such an event. Therefore, a science based on such beliefs can only be a science of rascals and fools.

My challenge to you, or to any scientist who claims that life originates from chemicals, still stands: mix the chemicals and produce life. Why can't you do it?

You say, "It is like this. It is like that," so then why can't you produce life? Sunshine is available, the earth is present, the water, air, fire, and all other ingredients are present, and life is being produced by God. If you are greater than God, why can't you produce something? What is the use of your talk if you cannot produce life? Nor can you stop old age, disease, or death. Your talk is simply empty nonsense. You cannot do anything, yet still you are talking, saying that life comes from chemicals. You are a talking scientist, and I am a practical scientist. Take some chemicals and save yourself from old age, disease, and death. I asked you to produce an egg—where is it? The chicken is a better scientist than you, because it lays an egg and within a month produces another chicken. Therefore you are less important than a chicken. Chickens are producing life, but you cannot produce anything but empty sounds.

*In the service of Krishna,
Hamsaduta Swami*

Having been challenged to demonstrate that he could create life at a public meeting, Dr. Kovoov declined to attend, saying that he would not feel obliged to demonstrate that he could create life unless God Himself were to appear in person to demonstrate the same thing. The *Times* reported this with the headline "Flummoxed Kovoov Passes the Buck." Then Hamsaduta Swami sent Dr. Kovoov this final letter.

*Hamsaduta Swami
ISKCON Sri Lanka
September 21, 1977*

*Dr. Abraham T. Kovoov
Sri Lanka Rationalist Association*

Dear Dr. Kovoov,

You wanted to place yourself above God, but God's devotees defeated you, as the newspaper correctly noted. I'm sure that the readers were also enlightened regarding the theory that life comes from chemicals.

You may be interested to know that you are the first so-called scientist in the world to be officially challenged by ISKCON, and you are also the first to be totally exposed in the public press. Your case is a landmark in history. Because the spiritual life in most religious communities has long ago died out, practically no one has been able to properly put forward the theistic point of view in the modern age. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, however, is presenting the *yuga-dharma*,

the truly scientific method of religion for this age: it is perfectly teaching and following the Vedic religion. Of course, every religious movement claims to be genuine, but we have to distinguish the genuine from the fraudulent. Your defect is that because you have been repeatedly frustrated by encountering spiritual frauds, you have prematurely concluded that all religions are bogus. You want to brand God and religion fraudulent, but fraud can be understood only in relation to its genuine counterpart. That you fail to know. You do not know what is genuine.

I don't say that all scientists are frauds, but I do say that you or anyone claiming that life is generated from inert matter is definitely a fool or a fraud. In fact, you are both—because you obstinately cling to the foolish notion that life comes from chemicals. What is the difference between your theory and that of the alchemists, who attempted (and failed) to produce gold from chemicals? A modern scientist scoffs at the alchemists—yet he proposes to create life from chemicals. Isn't this the height of folly? I'm still open to be convinced that life comes from chemicals, if you can provide evidence by creating life from chemicals.

Now your life is nearly at an end, and at the time of death, when the messengers of death come for your soul, perhaps you will remember all this and understand everything. But then it will be too late, for you will be helplessly dragged off to repeat another life of material struggle in the shape of birth, death, old age, and disease. But if one simply chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, he can be saved from this great struggle. I hope you will do that.

Hamsaduta Swami



From the start of his Krishna conscious career eleven years ago, His Holiness Hamsaduta das Goswami has shown his fiery missionary spirit. After joining ISKCON in New York City, he helped establish centers in Montreal, Boston, Vancouver, and Berkeley. In 1969, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked him to go to Germany, and for five years he traveled throughout that country, teaching the science of Krishna consciousness, opening centers, and overseeing the German translation and publication of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Teachings of Lord Caitanya, and other books. In 1976 Śrīla Prabhupāda gave Hamsaduta the renounced (sannyasa) order, and today, as a member of the Governing Body Commission and a trustee of the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust, he directs ISKCON's activities in Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and spreads Krishna consciousness throughout South India.

(continued from page 5)

we conclude that when the gross body is dead and no longer capable of talking, the intelligence is finished? The instrument for speech is the gross body, but we should not conclude that when the gross body is finished, intelligence is also finished. *Na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*: after the destruction of the gross body, the mind and intelligence continue. Because they require a body to function, they develop a body, and that is the process of the soul's transmigration.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung felt that the individual's level of consciousness could not supersede whatever knowledge is available on this planet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. One can supersede it, provided one can acquire knowledge from the proper authority. You may not have seen India, but a person who *has* seen India can describe it to you. We may not be able to see Kṛṣṇa, but we can learn of Him from an authority who knows. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.20] Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that there is an eternal nature. On this earth we encounter temporary nature. Here things take birth, remain for some time, change, grow old, and are finally destroyed. There is dissolution in this material world, but there is another world, in which there is no dissolution. We have no personal experience of that world, but we can understand that it exists when we receive information from authority. It is not necessary to know it by personal experience. *Parataḥ svato vā*. There are different stages of knowledge, and not all knowledge can be acquired by direct perception. That is not possible.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung sees earthly life to be of great significance, and what a man carries with him at the time of his death to be very important. He writes, "Only here, in life on earth, can the general level of consciousness be raised. That seems to be man's metaphysical task." Since consciousness survives death, it is important that a man's consciousness be elevated while he is on this earth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, one's consciousness should be developed. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, if one's *yoga* practice is incomplete or if one dies prematurely, his consciousness accompanies him, and in the next life he begins at the point where he left off. His intelligence is revived. *Tatra taṁ buddhi-samyogaṁ labhate paurva-dehikam*. [Bg. 6.43] In an ordinary class we can see that some students learn very quickly, while others cannot understand. This is evidence for the continuation of consciousness. If one is extraordinarily intelligent, the consciousness he developed in a previous life is being revived. The fact that we have undergone previous births is also evidence for the immortality of the soul.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung points out that there is a paradox surrounding death. From the point of view of the ego, death is a horrible catastrophe—"a fearful piece of brutality." Yet from the point of view of the psyche—the soul—death is "a joyful event. In the light of eternity, it is a wedding."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, death is horrible for one who is going to accept a lower form of life, and it is a pleasure for the devotee, because he is returning home, back to Godhead.

Hayagrīva dāsa: So death is not always joyful for the soul?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. How can it be? If one has not developed his spiritual consciousness—Kṛṣṇa consciousness—death is very horrible. The tendency in this life is to become very proud, and often people think, "I don't care for God. I am independent." Crazy people talk in this way, but after death they have to accept a body according to the dictations of nature. Nature says, "My dear sir, since you have worked like a dog, you can become a dog," or, "Since you

have been surfing in the sea, you can now become a fish." These bodies are awarded according to a superior order. *Karmaṇā daiva-netrena*. In whatever way we interact with the modes of material nature, in that way we are creating our next body. How can we stop this process? This is nature's way. If we are infected by some disease, we will necessarily get that disease. There are three modes of material nature—*tamo-guṇa*, *rajo-guṇa*, and *sattva-guṇa* [the modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance]—and our bodies are acquired according to our association with them. In general, the human form affords us a chance to make progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, especially when we are born in an aristocratic family, a *brāhmaṇa* [intellectual] family, or a Vaiṣṇava [devotee] family.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Despite his many interesting points, Jung seems to have had a limited understanding of Indian philosophy. He does not understand that *samsāra* [the cycle of birth and death] has a goal, although it appears to be endless. Nor does he seem to know of Kṛṣṇa's promise in *Bhagavad-gītā* that man can overcome earthly existence by surrendering unto Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Overcoming earthly existence means entering into the spiritual world. The spirit soul is eternal, and it can enter from this atmosphere into another. That is clearly explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* [4.9]:

*janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

"One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode." Those who continue to revolve in the cycle of birth and death require another material body, but those who are Kṛṣṇa-conscious go to Kṛṣṇa. They do not acquire another material body.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Śrī Kṛṣṇa says this repeatedly throughout *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, and those who are not envious of Kṛṣṇa accept His instructions, surrender unto Him, and understand Him. For them, this is the last material birth. For those who are envious, however, transmigration is continuous.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Concerning *karma*, Jung writes this: "The crucial question is whether a man's *karma* is personal or not. If it is, then the preordained destiny with which a man enters life presents an achievement of previous lives, and a personal continuity therefore exists. If, however, this is not so, and an impersonal *karma* is seized upon in the act of birth, then that *karma* is incarnated again without there being any personal continuity."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: *Karma* is always personal.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung goes on to point out that Buddha was twice asked by his disciples whether man's *karma* is personal or not, and each time he fended off the question and did not discuss the matter. To know this, the Buddha said, "would not contribute to liberating oneself from the illusion of existence."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Buddha refused to answer because he did not teach about the soul or accept the personal soul. As soon as you deny the personal aspect of the soul, there is no question of a personal *karma*. Buddha wanted to avoid this

(continued on page 36)

Killing Pūtanā The Great Witch

Even five thousand years ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa had His enemies. One was Pūtanā, the great witch. . . .

by SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOŚVĀMĪ



In the present age it is fashionable for aspiring intellectuals to discount the existence of God and eternal life. They say that there are no “hard facts” to prove God’s existence. Actually, one who is trained in the science of God knows that there is a great wealth of data about the Absolute Truth, but this information is simply closed to the atheist’s untrained, material vision.

Even though armed with “hard facts,” the atheist cannot adequately explain the cause of the cosmos. To say that everything has happened by chance is not an explanation but an admission of ignorance. “It all happened by chance” does not mean that there *isn’t* any cause, but that one *doesn’t know* the cause. Because the atheist has taken such an obstinate position, he cannot accept the obvious fact that an intelligence beyond man has created and is controlling everything in existence.

Yet the control of the Supreme is so overwhelming that even the atheist must submit to it. Unlike the theist, the atheist doesn’t worship God by faithfully hearing the authorized version of saints and scriptures, nor does he worship God with prayers, but he, too, is forced to submit to the will of the Supreme. Whereas the devotee sees God in His beautiful form as Kṛṣṇa and enjoys hearing of His pastimes, the atheist denies this personal aspect of the Supreme—but still he has to face God in the form of inevitable death.

Happily, there is strong evidence that the influence of hard-core atheism is

waning. For example, ninety-four percent of the people interviewed in a recent Gallup poll said they believe in the existence of God. There is, however, a great deal more to theism than vaguely believing in God. Too often, a person accepts that “God is great,” but does not know anything about His greatness. So the unique contribution of ancient India’s Vedic literatures is that not only do they give the full scientific description of the eternal soul and God, but also they reveal everything about God’s intimate pastimes. *Bhagavad-gītā*, the most widely read of all the Vedic literatures, describes the essential science of the soul and its transmigration. Anyone sincerely eager to receive knowledge from beyond the cramped perimeters of this temporary material life will find all the answers in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Further, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find the postgraduate curriculum on the science of God. The *Bhāgavatam* reveals intimate pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and answers the questions that naturally occur to a God-seeking person—What

does God look like? Where does He live? What are His activities? None of the world’s other scriptures answer these questions as thoroughly as do the Vedic literatures, especially *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we get full descriptions of the personal features and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As *Bhagavad-gītā* discloses, God is known by many names, but the name *Kṛṣṇa* (which means “all-attractive”) is supreme. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Kṛṣṇa’s personal activities with His pure devotees are fully described.

Five thousand years ago, when the Vedic king Parīkṣit first heard the account of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī, he said that hearing about Kṛṣṇa will benefit all classes of people. First of all, those who are already liberated from all material miseries will certainly be interested in hearing about Kṛṣṇa, since they have attained the exalted state of love of God. Similarly, those who are not yet liberated but are following religious principles and striving for liberation will be purified by hearing about Kṛṣṇa. And even those who are not spiritually inclined will be captivated if they simply hear about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, because Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes are naturally appealing to everyone.

When Kṛṣṇa appeared on this earth five thousand years ago, His adventures resembled the affairs between ordinary boys and girls and heroes and villains. But advanced devotees understand that

since Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, so also are His activities. At any rate, even a person in mundane consciousness will be drawn to hearing about Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, says that the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa will purify not only the person who inquires about them but also the person who hears the answers—and even the place where the discussion occurs. Upon the recommendation of the great authorities, let us therefore give a submissive hearing to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world when it was overburdened by demoniac forces. According to the *Vedas*, Lord Brahmā, the overseer of universal affairs, was approached by the earth's presiding deity, Mother Bhūmi. Bhūmi lamented that demoniac leaders had overburdened the planet, and she convinced him that only the Supreme Lord could bring relief. So Brahmā communicated with the Supreme Lord by meditation, and the Lord assured him that He and His associates would soon come to the earth.

At that time the leader of the demoniac forces was the tyrannical King Kāmsa, who was trying to bring the world under his dictatorship. Kāmsa, particularly, was fearful of Kṛṣṇa's advent, because he had heard an omen that Kṛṣṇa would kill him. Kāmsa was so terrified that he attempted to kill all the children born at the supposed time of Kṛṣṇa's appearance. But Kṛṣṇa, by His unlimited mystic power, escaped Kāmsa's notice. Kṛṣṇa appeared as the son of a king named Vasudeva, but Vasudeva hid Him away in the village of Vṛndāvana, where He lived with the devoted cowherd man Nanda and his wife Yaśodā. Afraid that any small child of that time might grow up to be Kṛṣṇa, Kāmsa enlisted various witches and practitioners of the black arts to travel through the countryside and kill all small children. The first demon who came to Vṛndāvana and made an attempt on Kṛṣṇa's life was Pūtanā.

When Pūtanā came to Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa was still a small baby. Although she was a gigantic and fierce witch who drank children's blood, Pūtanā was able to assume the form of a beautiful woman. When she arrived in the village, she boldly entered Kṛṣṇa's bedroom without asking anyone's permission, and since her bodily features were quite beautiful and she approached Kṛṣṇa in a motherly way, Kṛṣṇa's actual guardians, Yaśodā and Rohiṇī, did not object. When this beautiful woman asked Kṛṣṇa's mother and nurses whether she could pick up the beautiful child and feed Him

milk from her breast, they trusted her. But when Pūtanā picked up Kṛṣṇa, He closed His eyes and would not even look at her. Pūtanā became a little perplexed. She was getting an intimation that Kṛṣṇa was not an ordinary child—that in fact He could destroy the entire universe—but still she went ahead with her plot to kill Him.

Pūtanā had smeared a deadly poison on the nipples of her breasts, and she hoped that when Kṛṣṇa took her milk He would die instantly. But though Kṛṣṇa looked like a small, helpless child, actually He was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When she took Kṛṣṇa to her poisonous breast, He became very angry. Taking hold of the breast, He squeezed it very hard with both hands. Then He sucked out the poison—and her life. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* narrates:

“Unbearably pressed in every vital point, the demon Pūtanā began to cry, ‘Please leave me, leave me! Suck my breast no longer!’ Perspiring, her eyes wide open and her arms and legs flailing, she cried very loudly again and again.

“As Pūtanā screamed loudly and forcefully, the earth with its mountains, and outer space with its planets, trembled. . . . She ran out of the room. . . .” Pūtanā ran out of the room and out of the village, into the pasturing ground. There, screaming and spreading her arms and legs and hair, she fell down and assumed her original form as a gigantic witch. Though just a few moments earlier she had looked like a normal-sized and extremely attractive woman, now she was a dead witch with a body some twelve miles long. Her fall had toppled trees in every direction, and her dead body was so gigantic that no one could reckon its actual size.

According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, “The mouth of the *rākṣasi* [demoness] was full of teeth, each resembling the front of a plow. Her nostrils were deep like mountain caves, and her breasts resembled big slabs of stone fallen from a hill. Her scattered hair was the color of copper. The sockets of her eyes appeared like deep blind wells. Her thighs resembled the banks of a river.” Pūtanā's screaming had shocked all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, and now the horrible sight of her body frightened them even more.

But Kṛṣṇa was unafraid, although He continued to act like an infant. He climbed upon the gigantic body of the witch and crawled across her breast. To kill Pūtanā, Kṛṣṇa had not needed to assume any especially gigantic form of His own, because even as a child He had all the potency of the Supreme.

The residents of Vṛndāvana have such

intense devotion to Kṛṣṇa that they treat Him not as the Supreme but as their most lovable object—as their child, their friend, or their lover. Usually they do not offer Kṛṣṇa the distant awe and reverence accorded Him by His ordinary religious worshipers. As the Vedic literatures explain, Vṛndāvana is a spiritual abode and is accessible only to those who have intense and spontaneous attraction to the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, the cowherd women did not offer reverential prayers to Kṛṣṇa, though clearly He was all-powerful. On the contrary, the women were deeply grateful that their dear Kṛṣṇa had not been hurt by the demon. They assumed that Kṛṣṇa was simply blessed by God, and they proceeded to wash Him and chant *mantras* they hoped would protect Him from further danger. In this way they showed their faith in the Vedic rituals and their love for Kṛṣṇa.

The Vṛndāvana residents' chanting of *mantras* to assure Kṛṣṇa's protection is instructive for all people living in the material world. Obviously, this world is a catastrophic place; there is danger at every step. So the simple system of protecting ourselves by chanting the name of God is recommended here. The material world's greatest danger is that one may suddenly meet his death before he has established himself in God consciousness. One who dies in forgetfulness of his real, spiritual self may have to take a lower birth in the next life—even among the animal species. In the human form of life, we have to overcome this great danger by taking shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And the recommended method for seeking this shelter is to chant the names of Kṛṣṇa. Everyone is seeking shelter, either in his own prowess or in medicine or insurance policies or the national defense force, but ultimately no one can avoid the dangers of nature. One can be saved only by taking constant shelter of the Lord's names—as in the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*—because only one who dies absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa can go to Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode. Therefore, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana chanted *mantras* to give Kṛṣṇa all protection. In this way Kṛṣṇa became pacified, and He lay down on His bed and sucked the milk from His mother's breast.

When Pūtanā attacked Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's foster father Nanda and the other cowherd men had been away from Vṛndāvana. When they returned they were shocked to see Pūtanā's gigantic body. Although she was dead, they took the precaution of cutting her body to pieces with their



ILLUSTRATION: DHRITI DESAI

Pūtanā was infamous as a murderess of small children, but for baby Kṛṣṇa she was simply child's play.

axes. Then they set it aflame, and strangely enough, the smoke was fragrant, like *aguru* incense. Apparently, Kṛṣṇa's touch had purified Pūtanā's body of all material contamination.

Finally, the *Bhāgavatam* describes the spiritual significance of Pūtanā's attempt to kill Kṛṣṇa: "Pūtanā was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Kṛṣṇa; but because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement. What, then, is to be said of those who had natural devotion and affection for Kṛṣṇa as mothers, and who offered Him their breasts to suck or offered something very dear,

as a mother offers something to a child? . . . Because Kṛṣṇa embraced Pūtanā's body with great pleasure and sucked her breast, although she was a great witch she attained the position of a mother in the transcendental world, and thus she achieved the highest perfection."

Kṛṣṇa is such a well-wisher and His association is so purifying that even the demons who came to kill Him were liberated. Pūtanā did not care for Kṛṣṇa; out of envy she wanted to kill Him. But Kṛṣṇa considered only the favorable aspect of her activity—that she had offered her breast—and He accepted her as His mother. In the Vedic culture there

are seven mothers: the earth, the natural mother, the *guru's* wife, the king's wife, the *brāhmaṇa's* wife, the nurse, and the cow. Since Pūtanā had acted as a nurse, Kṛṣṇa accepted her as His mother, and she achieved the highest perfection in the next life. This fact suggests the unimaginably glorious place of those people who relate with Kṛṣṇa in intimacy and love. If a woman who goes to Kṛṣṇa to kill Him is liberated from birth and death, then what place is awarded to a devotee—someone who loves Kṛṣṇa as all in all and offers Him everything for His satisfaction? This is the position of the cowherd men and women who associate with Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

After the killing of Pūtanā, many other demons came to attack Kṛṣṇa, and the residents of Vṛndāvana encountered many other dangers. No matter what happened, however, these people trusted Kṛṣṇa with all their hearts, and He remained the object of their love.

It is practically impossible for atheists to appreciate these transcendental affairs. And since atheists simply cannot understand, one should not listen to their interpretations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Just as one who is ignorant of medicine or nuclear science has no right to speak in the company of experts, so one who does not even know of God's existence can say nothing valid about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes them. We should hear about these pastimes only from authorized representatives of the disciplic chain of spiritual masters. If we hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from such pure devotees, we will surely attain the highest standard of God consciousness.

The atheistic attitude so common in our time cannot satisfy the human being's innate spiritual consciousness and intelligence. Since human beings inevitably want to know about God—the conscious intelligence behind the workings of nature—they will be very fortunate if they can hear the Vedic explanation of the science of God. There is no possibility that any human being can know everything about God, but if one is attracted to Him and understands that He has to be approached through devotional service, and if one submissively hears Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, one can quickly understand the principles of God consciousness. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* contains countless other pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and we shall go on relating them in the pages of *BACK TO GODHEAD*. According to the Vedic saints, such dissemination of transcendental knowledge is the highest welfare activity for the world.

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(continued from page 32)

question. He did not want the whole philosophy dismantled.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung gives his own conclusion in this way: "Have I lived before in the past as a specific personality, and did I progress so far in that life that I am now able to seek a solution?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* [6.43]. *Labhate paura-dehikam:* "On taking rebirth, one revives the consciousness of his previous life and tries to make further progress."

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung continues, "I imagine that I have lived in former centuries and there encountered questions I was not yet able to answer, that I had to be born again to fulfill the task that was given to me."

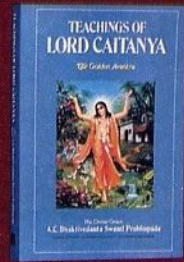
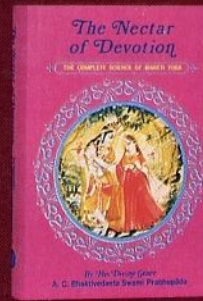
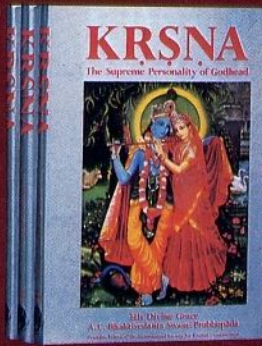
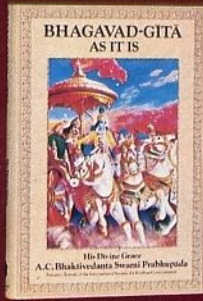
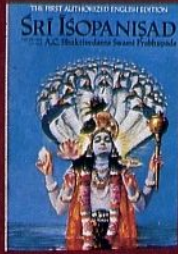
Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is a fact.

Hayagrīva dāsa: "When I die, my deeds will follow along with me—that is how I imagine it."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is personal *karma*.

Hayagrīva dāsa: Jung continues, "I will bring with me what I have done. In the meantime it is important to insure that I do not stand at the end with empty hands."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If you are making regular progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, your hands will not be empty at the end. Completeness means returning home, back to Godhead. (To be continued)



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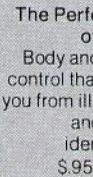
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