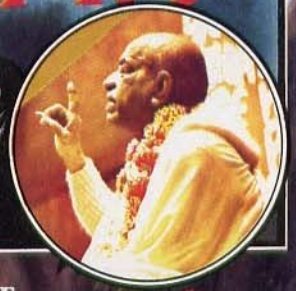


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



# BACK TO GODHEAD



Vol. 13 No. 7

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

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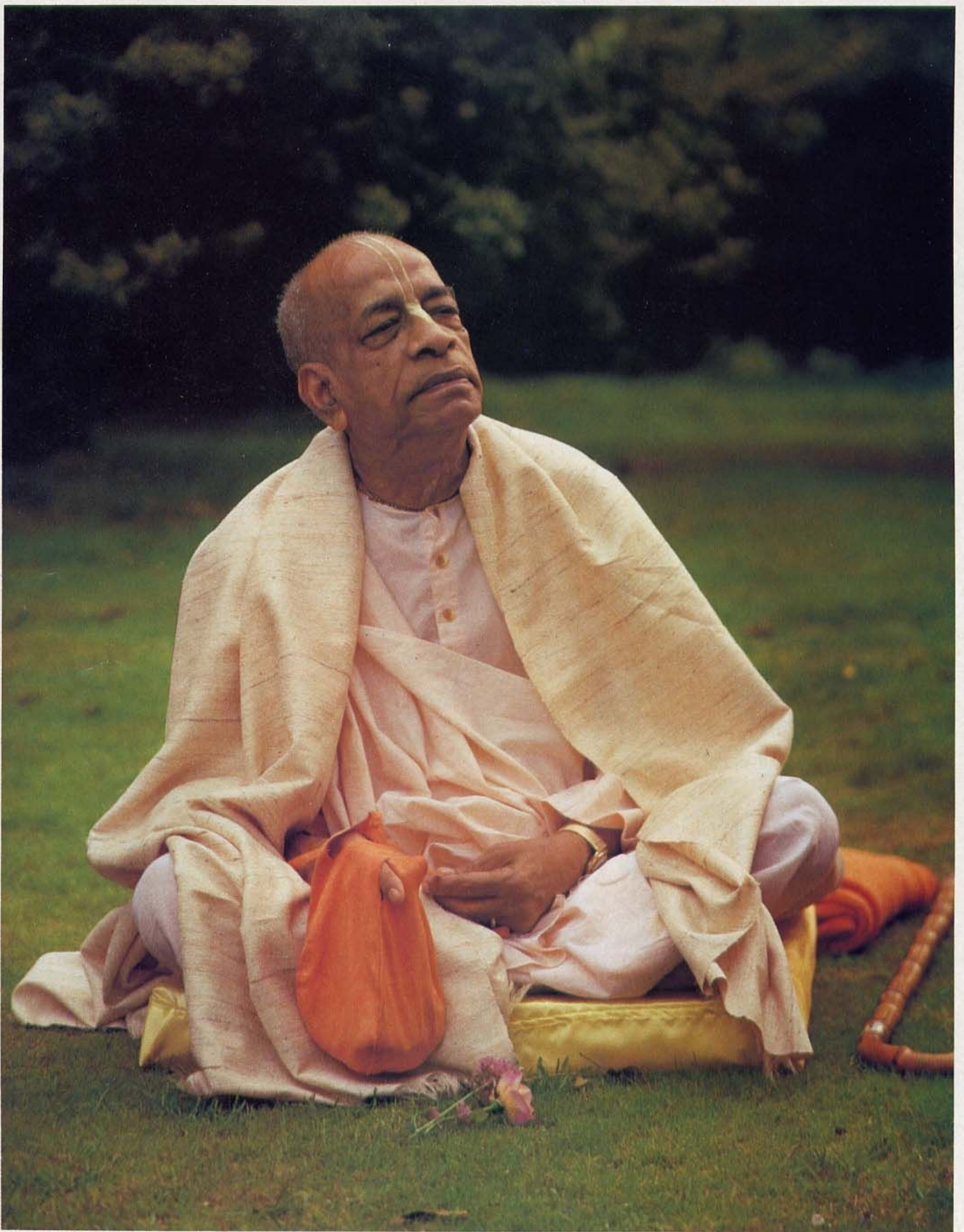


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His Divine Grace  
**A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

# BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 13, NO. 7

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FOUNDED 1944

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(under the direction of His Divine Grace  
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)  
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**A. C. Bhaktivedanta 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 **plique**. The vowel **ṛ** is pronounced like the **ri** in the English word **rim**. The **e** is pronounced as in **chair**. The aspirated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) are pronounced as in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog** and **red-hot**. The two spirants **ś** and **ṣ** are like the English **sh**, and **s** is like the **s** in **sun**. So pronounce *Kṛṣṇa* as KRISHNA and *Chaitanya* as CHAITANYA.

◀ **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda** came to America in 1965, at age seventy, to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the English-speaking world the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India's Vedic literatures, and these are now standard course and reference books in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his international society into a worldwide confederation of *āśramas*, schools, temples, and farm communities. He passed away at Lord Kṛṣṇa's dear-most town (Vṛndāvana, India) in 1977, and his disciples are carrying on the movement he started.

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**COVER:** One day an elderly woman came near Kṛṣṇa's house to sell fruit. She called out, "If anyone wants fruit, please come to me!" Kṛṣṇa took some grain in His hands and went to trade it for fruit, just as He had seen the older people do. But He was not very careful to hold His hands tight, and He was dropping all the grain as He walked. Still, captivated by Kṛṣṇa's beauty, the fruit vendor accepted the few grains left in His palm and filled His hands with fruit. At that moment, through His mystic power Kṛṣṇa filled the woman's basket with jewels and gold. Whoever gives something to the Lord is never the loser; he is the gainer millions of times over. (See page 32.) (Cover art: Muralīdhara dāsa.)

**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." Godhead means the source of everything, and this journal is meant to assist readers in cultivating practical, scientific realization of Godhead. To this end BACK TO GODHEAD explores the ideas presented in ancient India's Vedic literatures, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*. As the *Gītā* itself informs us, "When one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime."

# Understanding The Source of Everything

by HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Generally, a person with a philosophical mind is inquisitive to know what is the origin of all creations. At night he looks into the sky and naturally wonders what are the stars, how they are situated, who lives there, and so on. All these inquiries are quite natural for a human being, because he has a more developed consciousness than the animals. And to reply to such a sincere inquirer, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that the Lord is the origin of all creations. He is not only the creator, but also He is the maintainer of the cosmic situation, and He is also the destroyer of it. He is the supreme will behind all these activities.

There are atheists of various categories who do not believe in the conception of a creator, but that is due to their poor fund of knowledge only. Everything has its origin in the Supreme Lord. Everything, whatever you see, it has originated from the Supreme Lord. And this is confirmed in other Vedic literature: *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante. Imāni bhūtāni*—for all these things which are created, there is a source.

That source is Brahman [the Supreme]. The second code of *Vedānta-sūtra* confirms this—*janmādy asya yataḥ*: “The Supreme is that from which everything has come.” In the first code, it is said, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*: “Therefore one should inquire into Brahman, the Supreme.” What is Brahman? This is explained in the second code: *janmādy asya yataḥ*: “Brahman is that from whom” (or from which—whatever you like) “everything has emanated.”

And that supreme source, or *sum-mum bonum*, of everything is further described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: *janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāt*. Now, what are the qualifications of that supreme source of everything? The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says *abhijñāḥ*: “He is conscious.” The first qualification is that He is conscious. The supreme source cannot be un-

conscious. Why? Because we are conscious beings.

We, the living entities, are also emanations from the Supreme Lord. Some of the living entities are moving; some of the living entities do not move. The trees, the hills, the mountains—they also have life, but they are not moving. Human beings, cats, dogs, ants, and so many other species of life are moving. But moving or not moving, they are all conscious. So unless the Supreme Lord, the supreme source of all generation, is conscious, wherefrom has this consciousness come? How can you maintain the philosophy that the supreme source is void? *Wherefrom has this consciousness come?*

Some say that consciousness is generated by the combination of matter. But up till now no scientist has proved that by combining chemicals, physical things, one can produce consciousness. Rather, the *Bhāgavatam* very nicely describes that the supreme source of everything is conscious. *He is conscious*. And in the *Bhagavad-gītā* you'll find that Kṛṣṇa says, *vedāham samatītāni vartamānāni cārjuna*: “I know everything about *atītāni*” (what the past is), “and I know what the present is, and I know what the future is.” And, based on this understanding, Kṛṣṇa says in the Second Chapter, “You, Me, and all these persons who have assembled here—we were individual persons in the past, we are individual persons now, and we will continue to be individual persons in the future.”

The Lord is conscious in two ways: *anvayād itarataś ca*—directly and indirectly. God is the all-powerful supreme consciousness. Therefore He is directly conscious and indirectly conscious. The chief engineer of a complicated construction project does not personally take part in all aspects of the construction, but he knows every nook and corner, because everything is done under his direction.

Similarly, the Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme engineer of the cosmic creation, knows every nook and corner of the creation. He is conscious of all minute details.

Now, wherefrom has He gotten this consciousness? We have gotten our consciousness from the Supreme Lord, the supreme source. But wherefrom has the Supreme, or God, gotten *His* consciousness? The *Bhāgavatam* says He is *svarāt*. *Svarāt* means, “He is independent.” His consciousness is not dependent on another's consciousness. In other words, God has all knowledge. Now, our experience is that we go to school, or college, and get knowledge. But if we ask wherefrom God gets knowledge, the *Bhāgavatam* replies, *svarāt*: “He's self-sufficient, full of knowledge.” These are the differences between God and the ordinary living entities.

People may argue, “What about Brahmā, the first-born living creature in the creation? He has given us the Vedic knowledge, and he's the first living creature, so he must also be *svarāt*—he must also be independent. Why is only God independent? This first-born living creature is also independent. Otherwise, how could he give us the knowledge of the *Vedas*?”

The reply is “No.” *Tene brahma hṛdā*: Brahmā is also dependent, because he got his knowledge from the Supreme Lord. How is that? He's the first-born living creature—how did he get knowledge from God? *Tene brahma hṛdā*: the

The source is conscious, both of His superior, spiritual energy and of His inferior, material energy. In His original two-armed form, Lord Kṛṣṇa always resides on Goloka Vṛndāvana, the topmost of innumerable planets in the spiritual sky. In His expanded four-armed form as Mahā-Viṣṇu, He oversees the cloudlike material realm, and the universes emanate from the pores of His body like so many bubbles.



“There are atheists of various categories who do not believe in the conception of a creator, but that is due to their poor fund of knowledge only. Everything has its origin in the Supreme Lord.”

Vedic knowledge was imparted into the heart of Brahmā. How can that be? Because God is situated within everyone’s heart (*iśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām hṛd-deśe ’rjuna tiṣṭhati*).

Now, these things are very nicely described in the beginning of the *Bhāgavatam*: *tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye. Ādi-kavaye* indicates Brahmā. *Kavi* means “the learned one.” In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says He’s the *kaviṁ purāṇam*: He’s the oldest learned man—the oldest (*purāṇam* means “the oldest”). Then why is God not recognized? *Muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*: in trying to understand God, even the greatest of the great thinkers, philosophers, sages, and saintly persons are bewildered by the Lord’s illusory, material energy. They cannot understand Him (*panthās tu koṭi-sata-vatsara-sampragamyah*).

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* goes on to say, *tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo ’mṛṣā*. The word *yatra* means that in God rests the whole material manifestation. And what is this material manifestation? *Tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayah*. It is simply a combination of fire, water, and earth. Of course, there are other things also. There are five gross elements: fire, water, earth, ether, and air. These are the gross material elements. And the finer material elements are the mind, intelligence, and false ego. Kṛṣṇa discusses this in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So this material manifestation is nothing but a manipulation, or a preparation, of these things. It is just like when we prepare varieties of food—*kacauris, samosās, puris, rasagullā*, and so many other things. But what are these foods? Varieties of grain, vegetables, milk, and sugar—that’s all. Similarly, all these various manifestations in the material world are *tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayah*, simply a combination of fire, water, earth, and so on.

Another thing: *yatra tri-sargo ’mṛṣā. Amṛṣā*—this material world is false, but it appears to be real. Foolish living entities under the spell of the illusory energy have accepted this false combination of material elements as reality. This is called materialism. One who has accepted this false representation as reality is called a materialist. And one who knows the real position of this material world—he’s a spiritualist. That is the difference between materialism and spiritualism.

So this material representation, this false representation, is temporary. Of course, the Vaiṣṇava philosophers, the devotees of the Supreme Lord, do not usually say it is false. Why call it false? God is real—and His energy is real. It is just like when there is fire: the heat is there. It may be manifested at some time, or it may not be manifested. But you cannot say the heat is false. For instance, the heat of the sun is not perceived now, because it is the cold season. The sun stays the same, but it manifests its heat very strongly during June and July, and during the other seasons its heat is unmanifested. But the heat is not false. Similarly, you cannot say that this material energy is false. It is *temporary*, that’s all.

The ignorant materialists are captivated by the temporary, external manifestation (*durāśayā ye bahir-arthamāninaḥ*). What is the materialistic point of view? *Durāśayāḥ*: they are hoping to have peace and prosperity in this nonsensical material world. This is called *durāśaya*: hope that will never be fulfilled. The foolish people are trying for that which will never be fulfilled. Why are they trying so hard? *Na te viduḥ*: because they are fools. They do not know. What do they not know? *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatim*: they do not know their self-interest. And what is that self-interest? Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord. Their self-interest is to go back home, back to Godhead. That is their real self-interest. One should be interested in *this* goal. This is real “selfishness”—that I must know what I am and what the goal of my life is. But people do not know what the goal of life is. They are trying to adjust things here in this material world. Yet these things will *never* be adjusted, because the nature of this material world is to change (*bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate*).

So the conclusion is that the Supreme Lord (God, or Kṛṣṇa) has many diverse energies. All these energies are summarized in three divisions: the spiritual energy, the material energy, and the marginal energy. We living entities are the marginal energy. We are sometimes captivated by the material energy, and sometimes we are under the influence of the spiritual energy. Now, by practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness we try to transfer ourselves from this temporary, material energy to the permanent, spiritual energy. Therefore, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*

you’ll find that Kṛṣṇa says, *mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśrītāḥ*: “O Arjuna, the *mahātmās*, the great souls, take shelter of My spiritual energy.” [Bg. 9.13]

*Daivīm prakṛtim* means the superior energy, the divine energy. This temporary material energy is also indirectly divine energy, but the superior, spiritual energy is directly divine. Actually, everything that exists is divine, because everything is coming from the Lord (*sarvaṁ khalv idam brahma*). Therefore the impersonalists say that everything is Brahman. And that is true. Everything *is* Brahman—but everything is not the same. Take this store, for example. [The scene of this lecture was ISKCON’s first temple, a converted store on New York’s Second Avenue.] This whole thing is a store, but we have to take proper *advantage* of the store. Not that we sit in that toilet room and give the lecture. [Śrīla Prabhupāda points to an adjoining bathroom.] We have to sit here, in the main room. If you say, “That toilet room is also a sitting place—why not go there and deliver the lecture from there?” we will say, “No—we have to utilize this part.” So, you have to take advantage of the best. Everything is the energy of Kṛṣṇa. That’s all right. But there are two energies: the superior and the inferior—or, the spiritual and the material. We have to take advantage of the better energy, the superior energy. But *na te viduḥ*: people do not know how to take advantage of that superior energy.

So, the sum and substance of the definition and activities of the supreme summum bonum is *janmādy asya yataḥ*: He is the supreme source of everything—both the superior, spiritual energy and the inferior, material energy. But the superior energy is where the Supreme Lord is always staying (*goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūtaḥ*). In the *Bhagavad-gītā* also it is stated, *paras tasmāt tu bhāvo ’nyo ’vyakto ’vyaktāt sanātanaḥ*: “There is another nature, which is transcendental to this manifested and unmanifested matter.” [Bg. 8.20] And the person who lives in that world, the Supreme Lord, has to be understood by devotion (*bhakti*), not otherwise. That also is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā. Puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha bhakti*: “Only through Kṛṣṇa consciousness can we understand the Lord.” [Bg. 8.22] There is no other way.

# “Unless the Supreme Lord, the supreme source of all generation, is conscious, wherefrom has consciousness come? How can you maintain the philosophy that the supreme source is void?”

You cannot understand the Supreme Lord by any other means.

That Supreme Lord is *dhāmnā svena sadā*. *Sadā* means “always,” or “eternally,” and *dhāmnā svena* means “in His own abode.” *Dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakam*. *Nirasta-kuhakam* means “where there is no illusion.” Here everything is *kuhaka*, illusory. Everything is made of earth, water, and so forth—temporary things. The things of this world are just like dolls. Sometimes, in the storefront of a big mercantile firm, you find a nice girl doll standing with a dress. So, that girl is *kuhakam*, an illusion. Those who know will think, “Oh, it is only a doll.” And that is the difference between a man in knowledge and a man in ignorance: those in ignorance are accepting this material “doll,” this material world, as reality. That is materialism. And those who are in knowledge—they think, “No—it is a ‘doll,’ an illusion; the reality is different.” However, *sadā nirasta-kuhakam*, that doll-illusion is not there in the Lord’s abode. There the Supreme Truth exists (*satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi*).

So our aim should be to offer our obeisances unto the Supreme Lord along with His eternal abode. The impersonalists take it for granted that everything is God, so they think we can approach the Supreme Truth in any way. That is not accepted here in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Here it is clearly stated, *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi*: the eternal, spiritual part of the Supreme Lord should be worshiped, not the temporary manifestation.

In our bodies, also, there is a spiritual part (the soul) and a material part (the gross body). But unfortunately the people in this modern civilization are taking more care of the material part of the body. They have no information of the spiritual part of the body. But actually, one should take more care of the spiritual part of the body. The material part of the body is secondary. We can maintain our body for spiritual realization, but we should not sacrifice our spiritual needs by becoming too much attracted to the bodily necessities of life.

That is the defect of modern civilization: they have no information from the proper authorities, so they don’t care for the spiritual part of the body. Whenever we meet some gentlemen and begin to talk about the spiritual necessities of life,

they at once think, “Oh, Swamiji’s talking some nonsense; let us go away.” But if you talk of politics and every worldly thing, they become very much interested.

*Yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke*. In relationship with this body, we have manufactured so many things, so many bodily necessities. So the *Bhāgavatam* says, *tasya pramattaḥ nidhanaṁ paśyann api na paśyati*. *Pramattaḥ*: the people are mad, crazy. Although they are seeing that everything is being vanquished, that it is all being annihilated, still *na paśyati*—they do not see. Why? They are *pramattaḥ*, crazy. The *Bhāgavatam* has given a designation to these people who are materially interested: they are *pramattaḥ*, crazy.

*Tasya pramattaḥ nidhanaṁ paśyann api na paśyati*. I see that my father has died, my father’s father has died, his father has died, and I am going to die.

Similarly, my son will die and my grandson will die. And never will we come back again. Once this body has vanished, there is no chance of its coming back. It has vanished forever, just like a bubble in the ocean. Still, people are interested in bodily activities. Therefore, they have been described as *pramattaḥ*. *Pra* means “specifically.” *Mattaḥ* means “mad.” They are specifically mad. And therefore, *paśyann api na paśyati*: although they see, they do not see. We have seen that everything is going to be vanquished. In the past we have seen so many empires, so many Napoleons, so many Subash Boses, so many Gandhis—they have come and gone. What is the use of becoming a Subash Bose or a Gandhi or a Napoleon or a Hitler or a great politician? Rather, let us in this life be engaged in spiritual realization so that we can make a complete solution to the problems of life.

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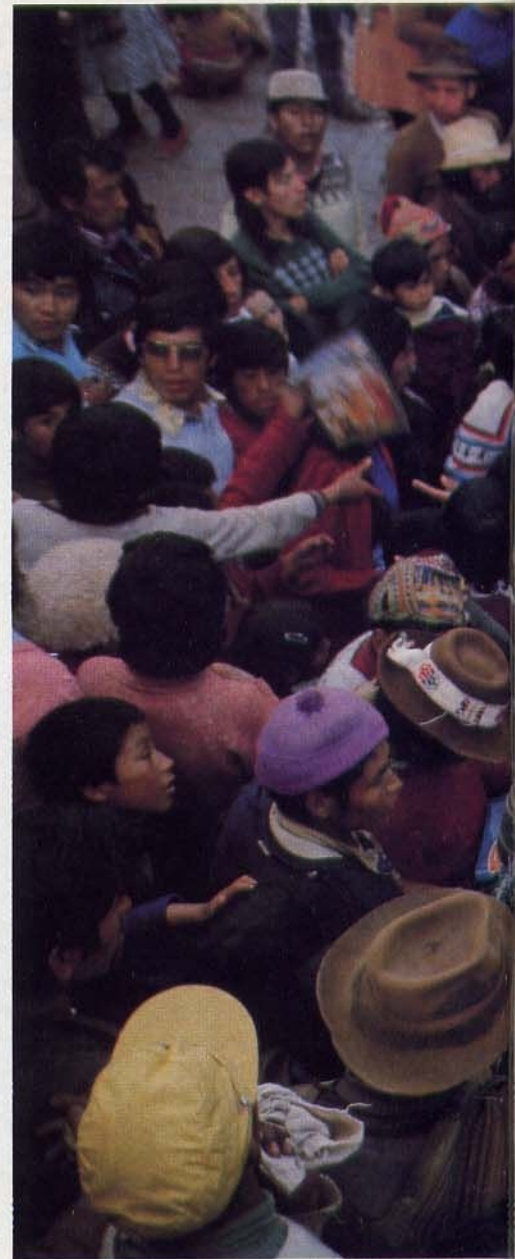
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A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

# The Kṛṣṇa Culture Comes to Latin America

by RĀDHĀ-KṚṢṆA SVĀMĪ  
PHOTOS BY BHĀRGAVA DĀSA



When I was a young boy growing up in Mexico City, I would sometimes meditate on what comes after death and why we have to die. And I would pray for more years to live, because I didn't want to die. I could see that even the most well-off people were distressed, because everybody knows you can't get away from disease, old age, death, and so many other things that just come of their own accord. You can't get away from them at all. And I was seeing that whatever kind of happiness you could find, it was just here-today-gone-tomorrow. I have an uncle who's a philosopher and a theologian, and I would ask him who I was, what God is like, whether I could go back to the spiritual world after finishing this lifetime, and how to live in a spiritual way. But all he knew about was rituals

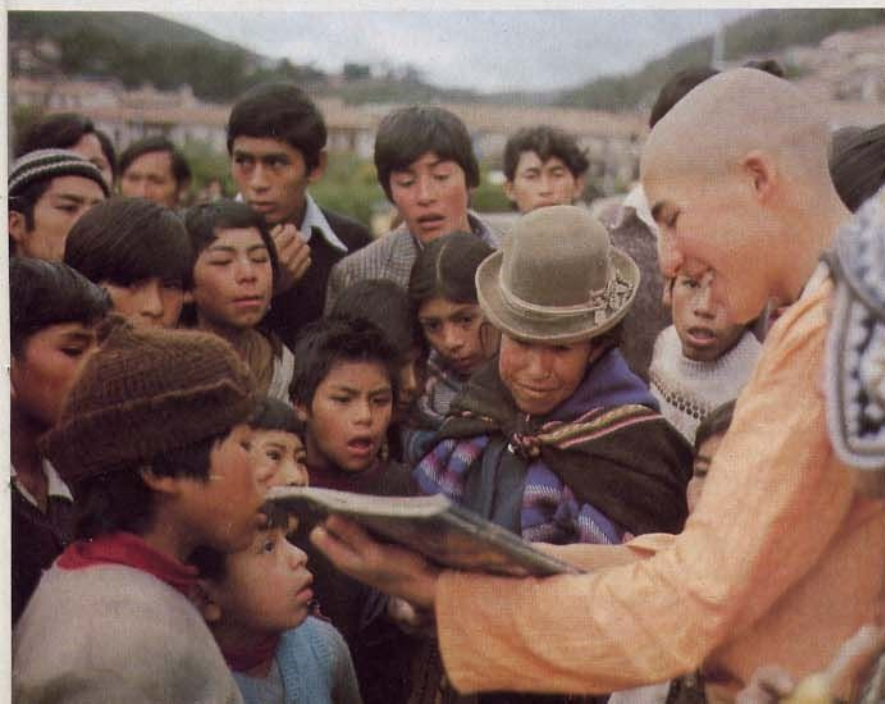
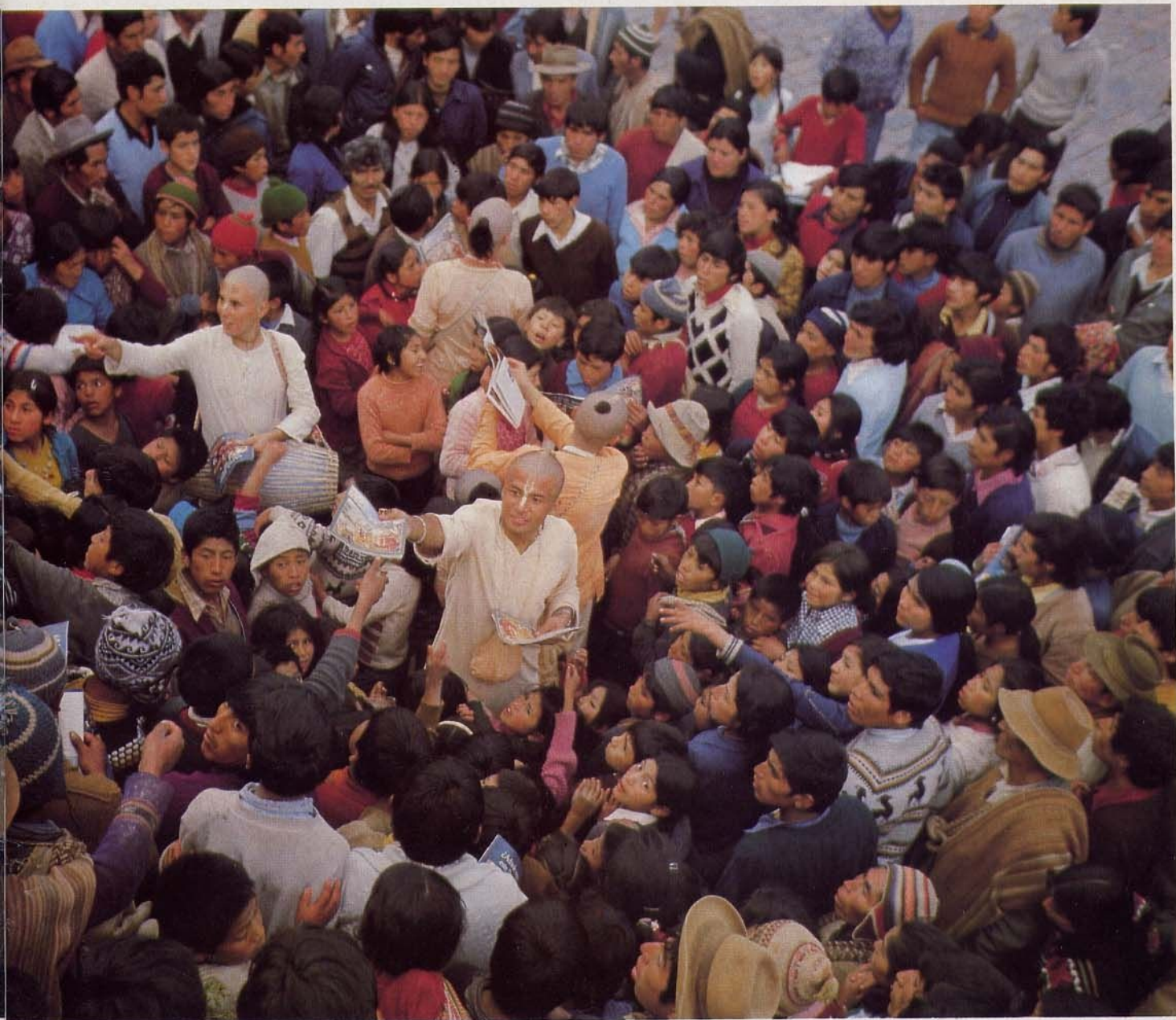
and that kind of thing. When it came to everyday living, he had about as much information as I did. It all left me feeling really disappointed. I felt disgusted with the ordinary materialistic way of life, but the taste I got of spiritual life left me feeling pretty much the same way.

So I was caught in a dilemma, until my teens, when a friend handed me an old copy of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Every day I would read one chapter, and every few days I would read all eighteen chapters, and I also started doing the *yoga* postures that the *Gītā* described. The postures gave me some relief, some peace of mind, and although the Sanskrit-to-Spanish translation seemed to leave something to be desired, I felt intrigued by the descriptions of good and bad *karma*, life after death, reincarnation, and the path to the transcendental world.

The *Gītā* said most people keep coming back to this world life after life, because they're too attached to its miragelike pleasures, and so they have to get old and diseased and die again and again. But the *Gītā* also said there was a way to become a "great soul" (a *mahātma*) and go back to the eternal world. It seemed a little like the old saying, "A coward dies a thousand deaths; a hero dies but one." Yet for me all of this was quite far-off and theoretical. My anxiety was going away, but I had a vague sense that I wasn't going anywhere.

One day in 1971, I was watching a tv variety show when the host introduced two Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees as his guests, and they answered his questions about who they were and what they were doing. One of them was a young man from Mexico, and the other was Cit-

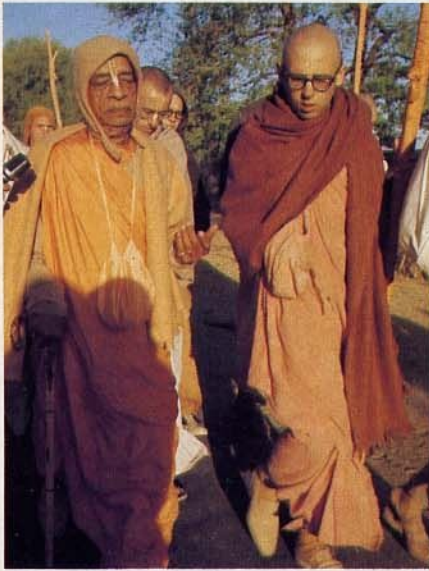




**Plaza Independencia, Guayaquil, Ecuador** (far left): devotees come together to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. The *mahā-mantra* releases the mind from anxiety and brings the realization, "I'm not my body—I'm the spirit within." In Cuzco, high in the Andes, Peruvian farming people (above) gather to get Kṛṣṇa conscious literature. A picture of Lord Kṛṣṇa, on the cover of *Back to Godhead's* Spanish edition, seems to attract their eyes (left).

In the Caracas hills (right), above the skyscrapers in the city's basin, devotees maintain the oldest Kṛṣṇa center on the continent.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda (below) instructs Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī, the disciple he appointed as his Latin American representative and one of eleven successor *gurus*.

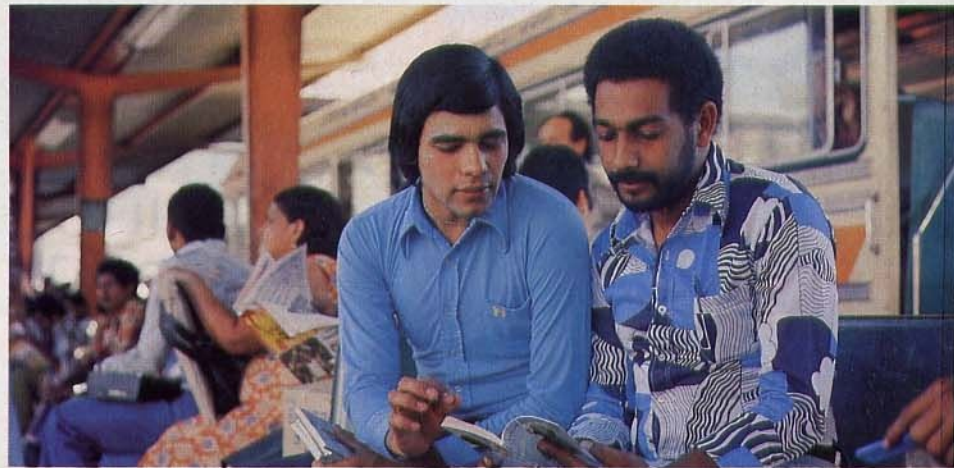


sukhānanda dāsa, a young North American of Latin descent. He said that his spiritual master had asked him to explain the *Bhagavad-gītā* to the people of Latin America and show them how to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Then the two of them chanted awhile. This was the first time I had heard about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, but I didn't take much interest in it.

A while later, on a Saturday afternoon, I was doing my *yoga* postures when a friend came over and said, "I've just gone to see the Hare Kṛṣṇa people at their new center. A lot of local people are becoming members, and they have a big festival every Sunday. So why don't we go tomorrow?"

I still wasn't very interested, but we went anyway and tried some of the Kṛṣṇa vegetarian feast, which I noticed had some dishes that were surprisingly pleasant-tasting. A few months later I went again, just to get some incense. Two months after that I paid another visit, and then the intervals between visits shortened from two months to one month to fifteen days to a week.

But when Śrīla Prabhupāda, the spiritual master, stopped in Mexico City in 1972, that really decided things for me. From the moment I saw him I knew: "Here is a saintly person, a pure devotee of God." I figured that if this was the Kṛṣṇa movement's founder, then I had to become a member. After that I started chanting the *mahā-mantra* a lot and

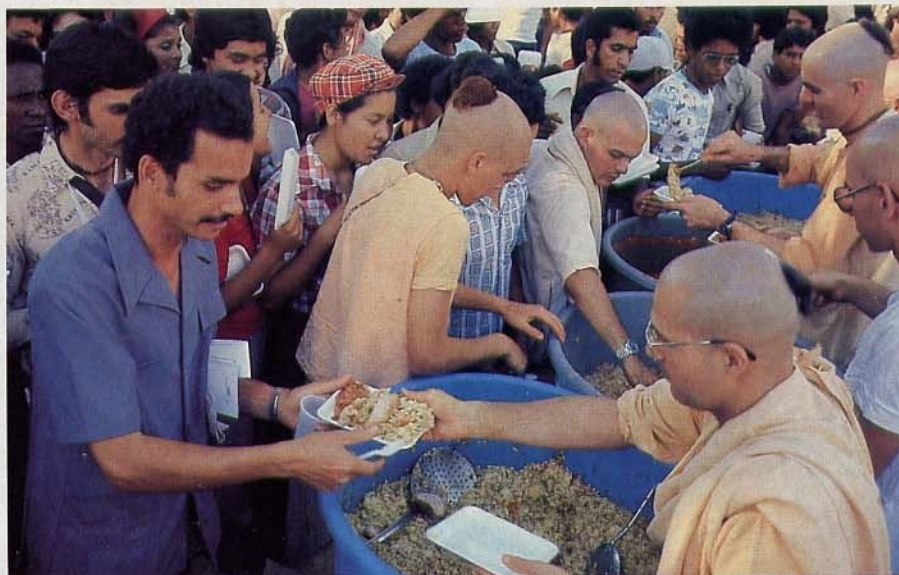
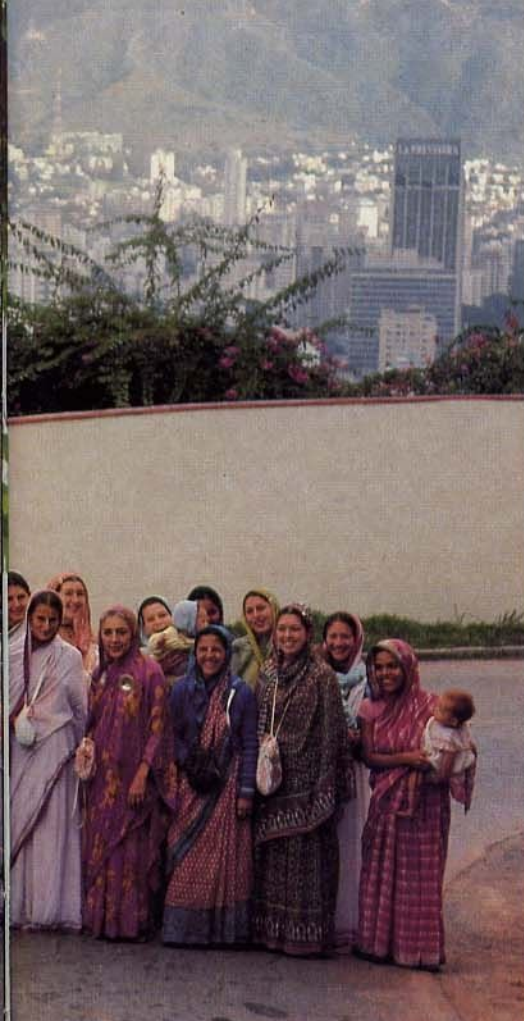


**The literature of self-realization:** at the Nuevo Circo bus station (above), in Caracas, a devotee offers *Viaje Fácil a Otros Planetas* (*Easy Journey to Other Planets*). The life of self-realization: at the Kṛṣṇa center in Bogotá, a devotee performs worship of the Lord.

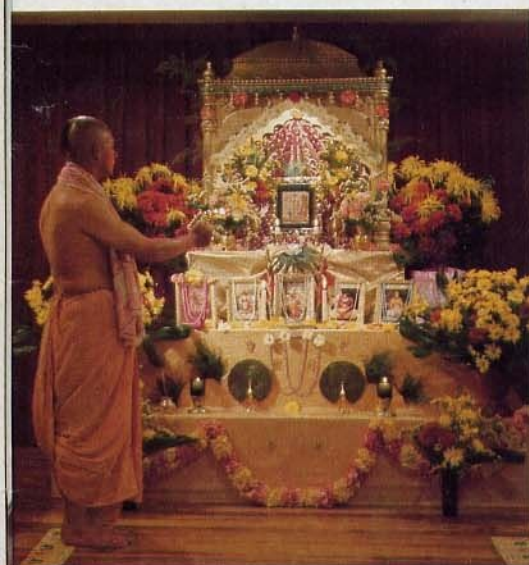
really getting to know the devotees and reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's translations, like *Nectar of Devotion* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. When I read his *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I knew I was seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa's treatise on spiritual life with every word intact. It was a new world (a taste of the spiritual world, I sensed, because I felt totally satisfied without the usual materialistic "pleasures," like smoking and drinking, meat, gambling,

and illicit sex). I was naturally satisfied, naturally happy from within.

That Mexico City Kṛṣṇa center was the first in all of Latin America, and the only one at the time I became a devotee. I remember that wherever I went (with my freshly-shaven head and saffron robes), people would immediately start asking me questions. It might begin as a two-person conversation, but before I could turn around, perhaps fifty people



**A Sunday afternoon crowd** (above) gathers in Caracas's Parque del Este (East Park) to sample *prasāda*, "the Lord's mercy," vegetarian food offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Among the dishes are *purīs*, wheat patties puffed in pure butter; rainbow rice, with bits of tomato, green pepper, and zucchini; *halavah*, butter-toasted sweet farina with raisins; fried eggplant and garbanzos in tomato-spice sauce; and deep-fried cauliflower and potatoes in yogurt sauce.



would have gathered, and we'd have a discussion on the ABC's of self-realization and spiritual life.

"The first point to get clear," I would explain, "is that you're not really the material body that you're living in right now—it's only an outer covering, a garment. What you really are is the spirit living within your body. We may have so many different kinds of garments," I would say, "—Latin American, Chi-

nese, French—but inside we're all very much the same. We're all spiritual, and we all come from the Supreme Spirit. If you want to have peace inside yourself and peace all around the world, that's the way you've got to see things."

Quite often someone would ask, "Do you believe in the theory of reincarnation?"

"It's not a theory," I would say. "It's a fact. Reincarnation is just like changing your garment at the end of the day. At the end of your life, you change your body—you get a new body. And what kind of body you get then depends on what kinds of things you're desiring now. To satisfy your desires you can transmigrate all over the world and all over the universe, from one body to another." And sometimes I would point out, "Here in Mexico City you see many signs that advertise, 'Fly to New York and Enjoy the Fun,' and if you fly to New York you'll see many signs that advertise, 'Fly to Mexico and Enjoy the Sun.' So your desires can carry you from one material situation to another—one body to another—all over the world and all over the universe, but you won't feel satisfied. Once a fish is out of the water, you can dress him in Levis or a tuxedo or a sequined jacket; it doesn't matter—he'll just be choking until you put him back in the water. And it's the same for us. Wherever we go in the material world, we'll just feel frustrated. We have to get back to the spiritual world."

It seemed that every day new people would come to the Mexico City Kṛṣṇa center and become full-time devotees. In fact, we were getting letters from people

in parts of the continent that we hadn't even been to as yet. Later we opened a second center, in Caracas, Venezuela, and people who had purchased one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books either there or in Mexico City would write to us. Usually they would tell us how interested they were, and they would ask whether the devotees were going to come to their town or city and open a center. They would also offer to cooperate with us in every possible way to get the new center established. So within a few years we had opened twenty-three centers, including ones in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Panama. It didn't seem to matter where we went; people from the area would come and join us. And if a person who had joined us happened to be from a place where we hadn't yet opened a center, quite often he would decide to go back there and do it himself.

Of course, not everybody felt so favorable. I remember that once when I was distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books on a bus in Bogotá, a man sitting with his arm around a young woman said, "Why don't you get a job? You're doing nothing—you're just parasites."

"Sir," I said, "we're distributing books about self-realization and love of God—this is our job. Now, you might think you're supporting yourself, keeping yourself alive, but actually it's God who's doing all of that. And anyone who doesn't know it is a parasite. We all have to learn to love God, that's all."

"I don't need you and your books to

tell me that," the man returned. "I already love God."

By now everyone in the bus was riveted to our conversation, and I went on. "Perhaps you do love God, sir, but in any case, there's a simple test you can give yourself—if you love God, are you following His laws?"

"Yes, of course."

"What about 'Thou shalt not kill'? Almost everybody today is eating animal flesh and in that way sending so many innocent creatures to be slaughtered. Is this following God's laws?"

The man was staring down at the floor of the bus. Once I'd make that point, hardly anyone ever knew what to say.

"All of us are worried sick over poverty and natural disasters and epidemics and war, but if we don't follow God's simple laws, what can we expect? If we don't want to watch our culture, our heritage, go down the drain, we've got to follow God's laws, because love of God—real love of God—is the core of that heritage."

Another time, also on a bus, a young woman asked, "Are you trying to run away? What about addiction, corruption, terrorism—are you just trying to escape the world's problems?"

"The world's real problem," I said, "is that we're all trying to escape from our relationship with the Supreme Lord. That's at the root of all our problems. And trying to solve our problems without reviving our relationship with Him is like trying to water a tree leaf by leaf—without watering the root."

Once a tv emcee made a blunt challenge to Hṛdayānanda dāsa Gosvāmī, the devotee Śrīla Prabhupāda appointed to represent him in Latin America. "What contribution are you making to society?" the man wanted to know. "So many people are coming into your movement, and isn't their service being lost to society? What are they actually doing—why don't they work?"

"I think we work," Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja replied. "In fact, we work harder than you."

The man was taken aback, and Mahārāja continued.

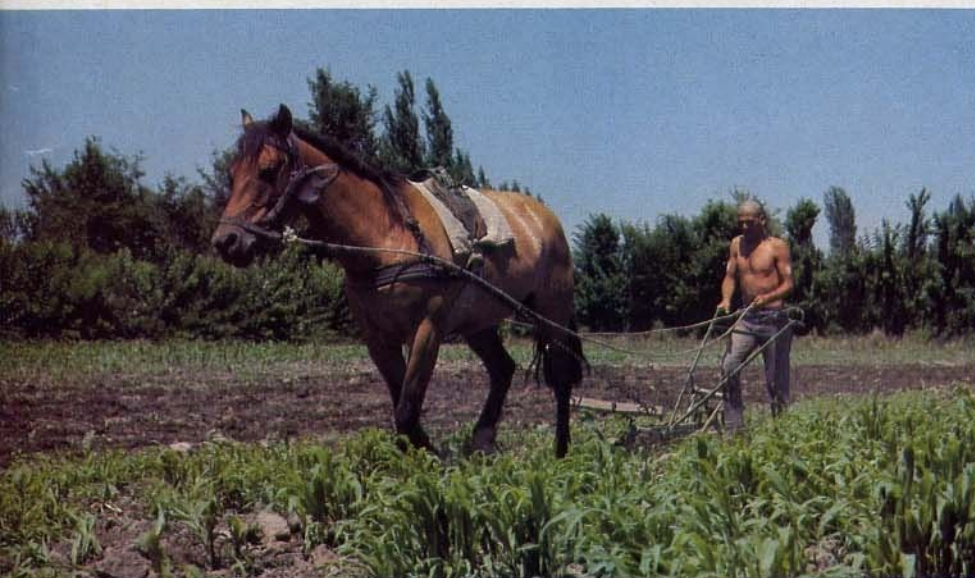
"Even the best plans of the most intelligent leaders haven't made the world any better," he said. "Why are all our cities still pocked by crime, drug abuse, and prostitution, even after all the plan-makers have worked so hard? We have to see, finally, that the real problem is spiritual. We've forgotten all about God. We're dreaming that He doesn't have any part in our world, and now the dream has turned into a nightmare. Now, people like you might choose to deal with the nightmare by falling asleep



**Santiago, Chile (above):** the devotees have opened a center in the Pointo Alto section, at the foot of the Andes.

**It's a Kṛṣṇa farm,** with plenty of fruit and vegetable gardens, a flower patch (right), and a growing number of cows and calves (below).





With the snow-covered Andes as a backdrop (above), devotees work their fertile eight-acre plot. Sometimes they use plows drawn by oxen or horses (left). It's "simple living and high thinking," and the bounty includes corn, squash, cauliflower, tomatoes, eggplant, spinach, asparagus, grapes, plums, apples, apricots, lemons, melons, cherries . . .

and becoming part of it, but no—you have to help everybody wake up. That's the only solution.

"So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is working very hard to wake everybody up from this nightmare—this bad dream that there's no God in control and that it's simply 'man against nature' and 'man against man.' This movement is trying to wake the world up to reality: everything we see around us belongs to Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller and the

supreme friend of everyone, and if we'll just stop hoarding things, He'll take care of everything we need."

Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja went on to say that the world needs a group of people who understand the science of God-realization and self-realization—people who can deal with the world's actual, spiritual problem. As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to me in April of 1977, "This is the success of our movement—that our devotees are becoming learned *brāh-*

*maṇas*, spiritual teachers. By your own personal example you have to teach others to become *brāhmaṇas*. Now all of you work together and very vigorously spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout Latin America." Many times he has remarked that if just one percent of the population became well-versed in spiritual science and really pure in their everyday living, then the rest of the world would say, "These men have ideal character," and they would follow their example. "It takes so many stars to fill the sky," Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, "but it takes only one moon to light it."

When we give seminars in colleges and universities, sometimes we talk about this urgent need for spiritually learned teachers, or *brāhmaṇas*. On one occasion a student asked Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja, "You're trying to make a caste system, aren't you?"

"Take any social body anywhere in the world," Mahārāja explained, "and you'll

Devotees chant the mahā-mantra in El Centro Simón Bolívar, Caracas (right).

Near Plaza Independencia, in Guayaquil, an Ecuadorian man (below) looks into ancient India's science of self-realization.



find it has its natural subdivisions, the same way your own body has its subdivisions: head, arms, belly, and legs. Everywhere you go you'll find some people who feel inclined to study and teach, others who want to administrate and protect, another group who do best in agriculture and trade, and still others who take an interest in assisting the rest of the people as workingmen. All over the world you'll find that these subdivisions are already there. The problem is, right now there's no system for training spiritual teachers or spiritually qualified administrators. So today's social body has no head and no arms, just a belly and legs. And that's why the whole world is in such complete chaos.

"Now, in a Kṛṣṇa conscious society anyone can get as much spiritual training as he can absorb. It doesn't depend on what family you were born in—that would be a caste system, a perversion of the real Kṛṣṇa conscious social system. No, everything depends on you and the way you want to live your life. For instance, many years ago in India a prostitute's son asked a great spiritual master to accept him as a student. Generally, a child's family background gives some hints about his aptitudes, so the master asked the boy who his father was. The boy said he didn't know, and when he went home and asked his mother, she said she didn't know, either. Finally he returned and told the master, 'Sir, my mother doesn't know who my

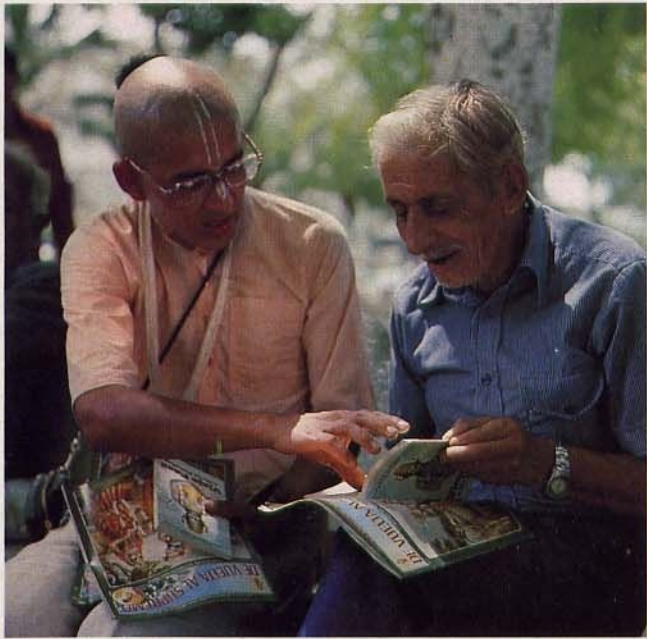


father is.' The master felt heartened that even in such an embarrassing situation the boy was so pure and honest. 'That's all right,' he said. 'You are a brāhmaṇa.'"

And even in the embarrassing, downright maddening situation called the modern city, the people of Latin America are learning the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and many are becoming brāhmaṇas and teaching the science to others. Every Sunday hundreds of people come to each of our centers for the Kṛṣṇa festival, and every summer they come to the Festival of the Chariots. (Last summer in Guadalajara, Mexico, five thousand came out, and this year the government has given us a parade route right through the center of the city.) Wherever they happen to be, we want people to chant and experience

the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. *Maha* means "great," *man* means "mind," and *tra* means "release." So the mahā-mantra releases the mind from all anxieties and helps the chanter revive his eternal loving relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda has also asked us to introduce the Latin American people to *prasāda* ("the Lord's mercy," spiritual food offered to Kṛṣṇa). So much devotion goes into these vegetarian dishes that anyone who tastes *prasāda* feels an instant uplift in consciousness. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has always said, "Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practical."

Of course, urban-industrial society is little more than a scheme for fetching food from the nearly uninhabited farmlands, so to be totally practical, people can just live on the land, grow their own



**Feeling independent:** a man in Guayaquil (left) seems glad to hear that he's not his aging body but an eternal soul.

**Bogotá, Colombia** (below): the *mahā-mantra* sounds through the city's federal district. In the center, leading the chanting, is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Svāmī.




**Residents of Guatemala City** (left) listen as a devotee offers a book on the liberation of the self.

fruit and vegetables and grain, and keep cows for milk, butter, yogurt, and cheese. This is the ideal Kṛṣṇa conscious social setting. Farms provide the perfect economic base and the perfect atmosphere, where workingmen, agriculturalists, administrators, and spiritual teachers can live simply and peacefully. It's what Śrīla Prabhupāda calls "simple living and high thinking."

Recently, a man in Guatemala donated seven hundred acres so that we could start a Kṛṣṇa conscious farm community there, and we've just started another farm community in Brazil. Not long ago a Costa Rican gentleman arranged meetings for us with that country's vice-president and president. And the same man has arranged for several meetings of the national religious council at our center. The religious leaders have become fond of *prasāda* (especially *pakorās*, breaded cauliflower chunks deep-fried in pure butter), and they visit often. In Lima, Peru, we stop at the correctional institutions each week and distribute *prasāda* to the inmates. The government has written us several letters of appreciation.

In Mexico we've also opened a *guru-kula* ("school of the spiritual master"), so that from their earliest years the devotees' children can learn the science of the soul. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has so often said, ours is an educational movement, and we're convinced that every student has a right to learn this most essential of all sciences. Many educators are beginning to feel the same way. A short while back, for instance, a large parochial school in Costa Rica invited us to talk about the *Bhagavad-gītā* at an assembly, and the students and teachers just kept asking more and more questions. They wouldn't let us go. Whether you present it in Spanish or Portuguese or English or German or the ancient Sanskrit, India's Vedic literature offers the same original science—the science of the soul, the science of self-realization and realization of God. I recall many times when people have seen us distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and they have come over to shake our hands and thank us.

The gratitude all goes to Śrīla Prabhupāda, actually, for books that are literally blueprints for the respiritualization of the world. In January of 1977, he wrote a glowing letter to Pañcadraviḍa Svāmī, who along with Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja Gosvāmī directs the movement's Latin American activities. "I am very pleased to note your book distribution figures in Latin America," Śrīla Prabhupāda said. "The seed is already there. Now water it and let it grow, and fruit will come out, the fruit of love of Godhead." 

# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

## On “Slave Mentality”

What follows is a conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, one of his disciples, and a reporter from a leading Paris newsweekly.

**Interviewer:** To me, God means freedom.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes—God means freedom, provided you surrender to God. That is real freedom.

**Interviewer:** But I may not accept your idea of God. I may want to worship God, or I may not want to worship God. That is my freedom, and that’s the most important thing to me.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** A child’s freedom, for instance, is to live completely under the protection of his parents—then he has freedom. But without their protection, he’ll have no freedom, only suffering. If the child is very rebellious, he may think he doesn’t need his parents—he wants to be free. But he is just a rascal. He does not really know what freedom is. Similarly, if you don’t surrender to God, then you are misusing your freedom. And you’ll lose your freedom. The *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā*: “Material nature is so strong that she will not allow you to get free.” But, *mām eva ye prapadyante*: “If you surrender to Kṛṣṇa instead of Kṛṣṇa’s māyā, then you’ll become free.” If you don’t agree to accept the control of Kṛṣṇa, you’ll be forced by Kṛṣṇa’s material energy. So what is this so-called freedom? You have to surrender.

**Interviewer:** But isn’t that a rather stifling kind of slave mentality?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We want to become the slave of Kṛṣṇa, and you want so-called freedom. But you do not know that if you don’t become a slave of Kṛṣṇa, then you must become a slave of māyā. The nature of the soul is to be a slave—that is your natural position. And we can see this practically: if people are not slaves of this material nature, then why are they dying? You don’t want to die, but you’ll be forced to die. So how are you free? But because people are rascals, they don’t understand this. They are imagining themselves free.

**Interviewer:** But throughout history people have fought valiantly for the freedom to enjoy life to the fullest—



the pursuit of happiness.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That means that they’re thinking that freedom means to become the servant of the senses. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy teaches, “Don’t become the servant of your senses.” And people think, “Oh, but this is our freedom.” They do not know that by trying to become free, they are becoming servants of their senses. Where is your freedom? To freely enjoy sense gratification means to become the servant of your senses. This is māyā’s illusion. You are voluntarily accepting māyā’s slavery and thinking, “Now I’m free.” This is illusion. Your senses are pulling you by the ear—“Come here. Do this and you’ll be happy.” Just like a dog: as soon as his master pulls the leash—“Come on! Come on!”—he has to follow. So people are becoming just like dogs, and they are thinking “free.” Because they are unintelligent rascals, they cannot understand what real freedom is. But we are teaching that real freedom comes when you surrender to God.

**Interviewer:** But how can you surrender to something you don’t know? You can’t really know God. You can’t even speak about Him.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Our position is that we know God from God’s explanation of Himself. We don’t try to speculate about God like you. We’re not such rascals. I agree that I cannot know God, but in the *Bhagavad-gītā* God Himself says, “I am

like this,” and I accept it. That’s all. That is my position—this is my full surrender to God. I may not know what He is, but when He says, “I am like this,” I accept it. I never say, “I have understood God.” How can I know God? I am limited, and God is unlimited. But He says, *matteḥ parataram nānyat*: “There is no greater truth than Me.” And I accept this. You can call it “slave mentality” or whatever you like, but I accept the words of Kṛṣṇa. Instead of endeavoring foolishly to know God by mental speculation, I submit to the statement of God that He is the Supreme Person. So which way is better: to speculate on God foolishly, or to accept the statements of God? Which is better?

**Interviewer:** To accept the statements of God.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So, you are more intelligent than the rascals. The rascals will remain fools by speculating on God for many, many lives. And when they become actually wise, they’ll surrender to God. This is also stated by the Lord in *Bhagavad-gītā*—*bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate*: “After many, many births of mental speculation, when one actually becomes wise he surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa.” I have already surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. Why should you wait?

**Devotee:** One problem is that they never had authorities they could surrender to. Even their parents have cheated them.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is a fact. The parents are also rascals. Unless you approach a person who is the representative of Kṛṣṇa, who has understood Kṛṣṇa, then the rascaldom continues. You have to find out a person who has understood the Supreme Truth—otherwise, you’ll simply find another rascal, another rascal, another, another.

But you should not think that just because you have been cheated, there is no genuine authority. That’s simply another kind of rascaldom. If someone has been cheated with counterfeit money, he should not conclude that there is no real money. So, don’t become illusioned just because you were cheated by counterfeit authorities in the past. Unfortunately, people are so unintelligent that they cannot judge what is the real authority and what is unreal. They take the real to be counterfeit and then follow the blind rascals.



The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

# ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

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

## First Canto: "Creation"

### CHAPTER SIXTEEN

#### How Parikṣit Received the Age of Kali

In this part of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the personality of religious principles (in the form of a bull) questions mother earth (in the form of a cow) about the cause of her sorrow. She replies that since Lord Kṛṣṇa left the planet, the age of Kali has spread its dark influence everywhere and she is therefore in a distressed condition.

#### TEXT 21

अरक्ष्यमाणाः स्त्रिय उर्वि बालान्  
शोचस्यथो पुरुषादैरिवार्तान् ।  
वाचं देवीं ब्रह्मकुले कुकर्मा-  
प्यब्रह्मण्ये राजकुले कुलाग्रयान् ॥२१॥

araksyamāṇāḥ striya urvi bālān  
śocasy atho puruṣādair ivārtān  
vācam devīm brahma-kule kukarmany  
abrahmanyē rāja-kule kulāgrayān

araksyamāṇāḥ—unprotected; striyaḥ—women; urvi—on the earth; bālān—children; śocasi—you are feeling compassion; atho—as such; puruṣa-ādaiḥ—by men; iva—like that; ārtān—those who are unhappy; vācam—vocabulary; devīm—the goddess; brahma-kule—in the family of the brāhmaṇa; kukarmani—acts against the principles of religion; abrahmanyē—persons against the brahminical culture; rāja-kule—in the administrative family; kula-agryān—most of all the families (the brāhmaṇas).

#### TRANSLATION

Are you feeling compunction for the unhappy women and children who are left forlorn by unscrupulous persons? Or are you unhappy because the goddess of learning is being handled by brāhmaṇas addicted to acts against the principles of religion? Or are you sorry to see that the brāhmaṇas have taken shelter of administrative families that do not respect brahminical culture?

#### PURPORT

In the age of Kali, the women and the children, along with brāhmaṇas and cows, will be grossly neglected and left unprotected. In this age illicit connection with women will render many women and children uncared for. Circumstantially, the women will try to become independent of the protection of men, and marriage will be performed as a matter of formal

agreement between man and woman. In most cases, the children will not be taken care of properly. The brāhmaṇas are traditionally intelligent men, and thus they will be able to pick up modern education to the top-most rank, but as far as moral and religious principles are concerned, they shall be the most fallen. Education and bad character go ill together, but such things will run parallel. The administrative heads as a class will condemn the tenets of Vedic wisdom and will prefer to conduct a so-called secular state, and the so-called educated brāhmaṇas will be purchased by such unscrupulous administrators. Even a philosopher and writer of many books on religious principles may also accept an exalted post in a government which denies all the moral codes of the śāstras. The brāhmaṇas are specifically restricted from accepting such service. But in this age they will not only accept service, but they will do so even if it is of the meanest quality. These are some of the symptoms of the Kali age which are harmful to the general welfare of human society.

#### TEXT 22

किं क्षत्रबन्धून् कलिनोपसृष्टान्  
राष्ट्राणि वा तैरवरोपितानि ।  
इतस्ततो वाशनपानवासः-  
स्नानव्यवायोन्मुखजीवलोकम् ॥२२॥

kiṁ kṣatra-bandhūn kalinopasṛṣṭān  
rāṣṭrāṇi vā tair avaropitāni  
itas tato vāśana-pāna-vāśaḥ-  
snāna-vyavāyonmukha-jīva-lokam

kiṁ—whether; kṣatra-bandhūn—the unworthy administrators; kalinā—by the influence of the age of Kali; upasṛṣṭān—bewildered; rāṣṭrāṇi—state affairs; vā—or; taiḥ—by them; avaropitāni—put into disorder; itaḥ—here; tataḥ—there; vā—or; āśana—accepting foodstuff; pāna—drink; vāśaḥ—residence; snāna—bath; vyavāya—sexual intercourse; un mukha—inclined; jīva-lokam—human society.

#### TRANSLATION

The so-called administrators are now bewildered by the influence of this age of Kali, and thus they have put all state affairs into disorder. Are you now lamenting this disorder? Now the general populace does not follow the rules and regulations for eating, sleeping, drinking, mating, etc., and they are inclined to perform such anywhere and everywhere. Are you unhappy because of this?

#### PURPORT

There are some necessities of life on a par with those of the lower animals, and they are eating, sleeping, fearing and mating. These bodily demands are for both the human beings and the animals. But the human

being has to fulfill such desires not like animals, but like a human being. A dog can mate with a bitch before the public eyes without hesitation, but if a human being does so the act will be considered a public nuisance, and the person will be criminally prosecuted. Therefore for the human being there are some rules and regulations, even for fulfilling common demands. The human society avoids such rules and regulations when it is bewildered by the influence of the age of Kali. In this age, people are indulging in such necessities of life without following the rules and regulations, and this deterioration of social and moral rules is certainly lamentable because of the harmful effects of such beastly behavior. In this age, the fathers and the guardians are not happy with the behavior of their wards. They should know that so many innocent children are victims of bad association awarded by the influence of this age of Kali. We know from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that Ajāmila, an innocent son of a *brāhmaṇa*, was walking down a road and saw a *śūdra* pair sexually embracing. This attracted the boy, and later on the boy became a victim of all debaucheries. From a pure *brāhmaṇa*, he fell down to the position of a wretched urchin, and it was all due to bad association. There was but one victim like Ajāmila in those days, but in this age of Kali the poor innocent students are daily victims of cinemas which attract men only for sex indulgence. The so-called administrators are all untrained in the affairs of a *kṣatriya*. The *kṣatriyas* are meant for administration, as the *brāhmaṇas* are meant for knowledge and guidance. The word *kṣatrabandhu* refers to the so-called administrators or persons promoted to the post of the administrator without proper training by culture and tradition. Nowadays they are promoted to such exalted posts by the votes of the people who are themselves fallen in the rules and regulations of life. How can such people select a proper man when they are themselves fallen in the standard of life? Therefore, by the influence of the age of Kali, everywhere, politically, socially or religiously, everything is topsy-turvy, and therefore for the sane man it is all regrettable.

## TEXT 23

यद्दाम्ब ते भूरिमरावतार-  
कृतावतारस्य हरेर्धरित्रि ।  
अन्तर्हितस्य स्मरती विसृष्टा  
कर्मणि निर्वाणविलम्बितानि ॥२३॥

*yadvāmba te bhūri-bharāvātāra-  
kṛtāvātārasya hareḥ dharitri  
antarhītasya smarati viśṛṣṭā  
karmāṇi nirvāṇa-vilambitāni*

*yadvā*—that may be; *amba*—O mother; *te*—your; *bhūri*—heavy; *bhara*—load; *avatāra*—decreasing the load; *kṛta*—done; *avatārasya*—one who incarnated; *hareḥ*—of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *dharitri*—O earth; *antarhītasya*—of Him who is now out of sight; *smarati*—while thinking of; *viśṛṣṭā*—all that were performed; *karmāṇi*—activities; *nirvāṇa*—salvation; *vilambitāni*—that which entails.

## TRANSLATION

O mother earth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, incarnated Himself as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa just to unload your heavy burden. All His activities here are transcendental, and they cement the path of liberation. You are now bereft of His presence. You are probably now thinking of those activities and feeling sorry in their absence.

## PURPORT

The activities of the Lord include liberation, but they are more relishable than the pleasure derived from *nirvāṇa*, or liberation. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, the word used here is *nirvāṇa-vilambitāni*, that which minimizes the value of liberation. To attain *nirvāṇa*, liberation, one has to undergo a severe type of *tapasya*, austerity, but the Lord is so merciful that He incarnates to diminish the burden of the earth. Simply by remembering such ac-

tivities, one can defy the pleasure derived from *nirvāṇa* and reach the transcendental abode of the Lord to associate with Him, eternally engaged in His blissful loving service.

## TEXT 24

इदं ममाचक्ष्व तवाधिमूलं  
वसुन्धरे येन विकर्षितासि ।  
कालेन वा ते बलिनां बलीयसा  
सुरार्चितं किं हृतमम्ब सौभागम् ॥२४॥

*idaṁ mamaācakṣva tavādhi-mūlaṁ  
vasundhare yena vikarṣitāsi  
kālena vā te balinām baliyasā  
surārcitaṁ kiṁ hṛtam amba saubhagam*

*idaṁ*—this; *mama*—unto me; *ācakṣva*—kindly inform; *tava*—your; *ādhi-mūlam*—the root cause of your tribulations; *vasundhare*—O reservoir of all riches; *yena*—by which; *vikarṣitā asi*—reduced to much weakness; *kālena*—by the influence of time; *vā*—or; *te*—your; *balinām*—very powerful; *baliyasā*—more powerful; *sura-arcitam*—adored by the demigods; *kim*—whether; *hṛtam*—taken away; *amba*—mother; *saubhagam*—fortune.

## TRANSLATION

Mother, you are the reservoir of all riches. Please inform me of the root cause of your tribulations by which you have been reduced to such a weak state. I think that the powerful influence of time, which conquers the most powerful, might have forcibly taken away all your fortune, which was adored even by the demigods.

## PURPORT

By the grace of the Lord, each and every planet is created fully equipped. So not only is this earth fully equipped with all the riches for the maintenance of its inhabitants, but also when the Lord descends on the earth the whole earth becomes so enriched with all kinds of opulences that even the denizens of heaven worship it with all affection. But by the will of the Lord, the whole earth can at once be changed. He can do and undo a thing by His sweet will. Therefore no one should consider himself to be self-sufficient or independent of the Lord.

## TEXT 25

धरण्यावाच

भवान् हि वेद तत्सर्वं यन्मां धर्मानुपृच्छसि ।  
चतुर्भिवर्तसे येन पादैर्लोकसुखावहैः ॥२५॥

*dharanyā vāca  
bhavān hi veda tat sarvaṁ  
yaṁ mām dharmānupṛcchasi  
caturbhir vartase yena  
pādair loka-sukhāvahaiḥ*

*dharanī uvāca*—mother earth replied; *bhavān*—your good self; *hi*—certainly; *veda*—know; *tat sarvaṁ*—all that you have inquired from me; *yaṁ*—that; *mām*—from me; *dharmā*—O personality of religious principles; *anupṛcchasi*—you have inquired one after another; *caturbhiḥ*—by four; *vartase*—you exist; *yena*—by which; *pādaiḥ*—by the legs; *loka*—in each and every planet; *sukha-āvahaiḥ*—increasing the happiness.

## TRANSLATION

The earthly deity [in the form of a cow] thus replied to the personality of religious principles [in the form of a bull]: O Dharma, whatever you have inquired from me shall be known to you. I shall try to reply to all those questions. Once you too were maintained

by your four legs, and you increased happiness all over the universe by the mercy of the Lord.

### PURPORT

The principles of religion are laid down by the Lord Himself, and the executor of such laws is Dharmarāja, or Yamarāja. Such principles work fully in the age of Satya-yuga; in the Tretā-yuga they are reduced by a fraction of one fourth; in the Dvāpara-yuga they are reduced to one half, and in the Kali-yuga they are reduced to one fourth, gradually diminishing to the zero point, and then devastation takes place. Happiness in the world depends proportionately on the maintenance of the religious principles, individually or collectively. The best part of valor is to maintain the principles despite all kinds of odds. Thus one can be happy during the span of life and ultimately return to Godhead.

### TEXTS 26-30

सत्यं शौचं दया क्षान्तिस्त्यागः सन्तोष आर्जवम् ।  
 शमो दमस्तपः साम्यं तितिक्षोपरतिः श्रुतम् ॥२६॥  
 ज्ञानं विरक्तिरैश्वर्यं शौर्यं तेजो बलं स्मृतिः ।  
 स्वातन्त्र्यं कौशलं क्षान्तिरैश्वर्यं मार्दवमेव च ॥२७॥  
 प्रागल्भ्यं प्रश्रयः शीलं सह ओजो बलं भगः ।  
 गाम्भीर्यं स्वैर्यमास्तिक्यं कीर्तिर्मानोऽनहङ्कृतिः ॥२८॥  
 एते चान्ये च भगवन्नित्या यत्र महागुणाः ।  
 प्रार्थ्या महच्चमिच्छद्भिर्न विद्यन्ति स कर्हिचित् ॥ २९॥  
 तेनाहं गुणपात्रेण श्रीनिवासेन साम्प्रतम् ।  
 शोचामि रहितं लोकं पाप्मना कलिनेक्षितम् ॥३०॥

*satyaṁ śaucaṁ dayā kṣāntiḥ  
 tyāgaḥ santoṣa ārjavam  
 śamo damaś tapah sāmyam  
 tīkṣoparatiḥ śrutam*

*jñānam viraktir aiśvaryaṁ  
 sauryam tejo balaṁ smṛtiḥ  
 svātantryam kauśalam kāntir  
 dhairyam mārḍavam eva ca*

*prāgalbhyam praśrayaḥ śīlam  
 saha oja balaṁ bhagaḥ  
 gāmbhīryam śhairyam āstikyaṁ  
 kīrtir māno 'nahaṅkṛtiḥ*

*ete cānye ca bhagavan  
 nityā yatra mahā-guṇāḥ  
 prārthyā mahattvam icchadbhir  
 na viyanti sma karhicit*

*tenāhaṁ guṇa-pātreṇa  
 śrī-nivāseṇa sāmpratam  
 śocāmi rahitam lokam  
 pāpmanā kalinekṣitam*

*satyam*—truthfulness; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *dayā*—intolerance of others' unhappiness; *kṣāntiḥ*—self-control even if there is cause of anger; *tyāgaḥ*—magnanimity; *santoṣaḥ*—self-satisfaction; *ārjavam*—straightforwardness; *śamaḥ*—fixing of the mind; *damaḥ*—control of the sense organs; *tapaḥ*—trueness to one's responsibility; *sāmyam*—indiscrimination between friend and foe; *tīkṣā*—tolerance of the offenses of others; *uparatiḥ*—indifference to loss and gain; *śrutam*—following scriptural injunctions; *jñānam*—knowledge (self-realization); *viraktiḥ*—detachment from sense enjoyment; *aiśvaryaṁ*—leadership; *sauryam*—chivalry; *tejaḥ*—influence; *balaṁ*—to render possible that which is impossible; *smṛtiḥ*—to find one's proper duty; *svātantryam*—

not to depend on others; *kauśalam*—dexterity in all activities; *kāntiḥ*—beauty; *dhairyam*—freedom from disturbance; *mārḍavam*—kindheartedness; *eva*—thus; *ca*—also; *prāgalbhyam*—ingenuity; *praśrayaḥ*—gentility; *śīlam*—mannerliness; *sahaḥ*—determination; *ojaḥ*—perfect knowledge; *balaṁ*—proper execution; *bhagaḥ*—object of enjoyment; *gāmbhīryam*—joyfulness; *śhairyam*—immovability; *āstikyaṁ*—faithfulness; *kīrtiḥ*—fame; *mānaḥ*—worthy of being worshiped; *anahaṅkṛtiḥ*—pridelessness; *ete*—all these; *ca anye*—also many others; *ca*—and; *bhagavan*—the Personality of Godhead; *nityāḥ*—everlasting; *yatra*—where; *mahā-guṇāḥ*—great qualities; *prārthyāḥ*—worthy to possess; *mahattvam*—greatness; *icchadbhiḥ*—those who desire so; *na*—never; *viyanti*—deteriorates; *sma*—ever; *karhicit*—at any time; *tena*—by Him; *aham*—myself; *guṇa-pātreṇa*—the reservoir of all qualities; *śrī*—the goddess of fortune; *nivāseṇa*—by the resting place; *sāmpratam*—very recently; *śocāmi*—I am thinking of; *rahitam*—bereft of; *lokam*—planets; *pāpmanā*—by the store of all sins; *kalinā*—by Kali; *iṣitam*—is seen.

### TRANSLATION

In Him reside (1) truthfulness, (2) cleanliness, (3) intolerance of another's unhappiness, (4) the power to control anger, (5) self-satisfaction, (6) straightforwardness, (7) steadiness of mind, (8) control of the sense organs, (9) responsibility, (10) equality, (11) tolerance, (12) equanimity, (13) faithfulness, (14) knowledge, (15) absence of sense enjoyment, (16) leadership, (17) chivalry, (18) influence, (19) the power to make everything possible, (20) the discharge of proper duty, (21) complete independence, (22) dexterity, (23) fullness of all beauty, (24) serenity, (25) kindheartedness, (26) ingenuity, (27) gentility, (28) magnanimity, (29) determination, (30) perfection in all knowledge, (31) proper execution, (32) possession of all objects of enjoyment, (33) joyfulness, (34) immovability, (35) fidelity, (36) fame, (37) worship, (38) pridelessness, (39) being (as the Personality of Godhead), (40) eternity, and many other transcendental qualities which are eternally present and never to be separated from Him. That Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of all goodness and beauty, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has now closed His transcendental pastimes on the face of the earth. In His absence the age of Kali has spread its influence everywhere, so I am sorry to see this condition of existence.

### PURPORT

Even if it were possible to count the atoms after smashing the earth into powder, still it would not be possible to estimate the unfathomable transcendental qualities of the Lord. It is said that Lord Anantadeva has tried to expound the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord with His numberless tongues, and that for numberless years together it has been impossible to estimate the qualities of the Lord. The above statement of the qualities of the Lord is just to estimate His qualities as far as a human being is able to see Him. But even if it is so, the above qualities can be divided into many subheadings. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmi, the third quality, intolerance of another's unhappiness, can be subdivided into (1) protection of the surrendered souls and (2) well wishes for the devotees. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord states that He wants every soul to surrender unto Him only, and He assures everyone that if one does so He will give protection from the reactions of all sins. Unsurrendered souls are not devotees of the Lord, and thus there is no particular protection for everyone in general. For the devotees He has all good wishes, and for those who are actually engaged in loving transcendental service of the Lord, He gives particular attention. He gives direction to such pure devotees to help them discharge their responsibilities on the path back to Godhead. By equality (10), the Lord is equally kind to everyone, as the sun is equal in distributing its rays over everyone. Yet there are many who are unable to take advantage of the sun's rays. Similarly, the Lord says that surrendering unto Him is the guarantee for all protection from Him, but unfortunate persons are unable to accept this proposition, and therefore they suffer from all material miseries. So

even though the Lord is equally well-wishing to everyone, the unfortunate living being, due to bad association only, is unable to accept His instructions *in toto*, and for this the Lord is never to be blamed. He is called the well-wisher for the devotees only. He appears to be partial to His devotees, but factually the matter rests on the living being to accept or reject equal treatment by the Lord.

The Lord never deviates from His word of honor. When He gives assurance for protection, the promise is executed in all circumstances. It is the duty of the pure devotee to be fixed in the discharge of the duty entrusted to him by the Lord or the Lord's bona fide representative, the spiritual master. The rest is carried on by the Lord without a break.

The responsibility of the Lord is also unique. The Lord has no responsibility because all His work is done by His different appointed energies. But still He accepts voluntary responsibilities in displaying different roles in His transcendental pastimes. As a boy, He was playing the part of a cowboy. As the son of Nanda Mahārāja, He discharged responsibility perfectly. Similarly, when He was playing the part of a *kṣatriya* as the son of Mahārāja Vasudeva, He displayed all the skill of a martially spirited *kṣatriya*. In almost all cases, the *kṣatriya* king has to secure a wife by fighting or kidnapping. This sort of behavior for a *kṣatriya* is praiseworthy in the sense that a *kṣatriya* must show his power of chivalry to his would-be wife so that the daughter of a *kṣatriya* can see the valor of her would-be husband. Even the Personality of Godhead Śrī Rāma displayed such a spirit of chivalry during His marriage. He broke the strongest bow, called Haradhanur, and achieved the hand of Sitādevī, the mother of all opulence. The *kṣatriya* spirit is displayed during marriage festivals, and there is nothing wrong in such fighting. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa discharged such responsibility fully because although He had more than sixteen thousand wives, in each and every case He fought like a chivalrous *kṣatriya* and thus secured a wife. To fight sixteen thousand times to secure sixteen thousand wives is certainly possible only for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, He displayed full responsibility in every action of His different transcendental pastimes.

The fourteen quality, knowledge, can be further extended into five subheadings, namely (1) intelligence, (2) gratefulness, (3) power of understanding the circumstantial environments of place, object and time, (4) perfect knowledge of everything, and (5) knowledge of the self. Only fools are ungrateful to their benefactors. The Lord, however, does not require benefit from anyone besides Himself because He is full in Himself; still He feels benefited by the unalloyed services of His devotees. The Lord feels grateful to His devotees for such unsophisticated, unconditional service and tries to reciprocate it by rendering service, although the devotee also has no such desire in his heart. The transcendental service of the Lord is itself a transcendental benefit for the devotee, and therefore the devotee has nothing to expect from the Lord. On the assertion of the Vedic aphorism *sarvaṁ khalv idam brahma*, we can understand that the Lord, by the omnipresent rays of His effulgence, called *brahmajyoti*, is all-pervading inside or outside of everything, like the omnipresent material sky, and thus He is also omniscient.

As far as the beauty of the Lord is concerned, He has some special features that distinguish Him from all other living beings, and over and above that He has some special attractive beautiful features by which He attracts the mind of even Rādhārāṇī, the supermost beautiful creation of the Lord. He is known, therefore, as Madana-mohana, or one who attracts the mind of even Cupid. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu has scrutinizingly analyzed other transcendental qualities of the Lord and affirms that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead (Parabrahman). He is omnipotent by His inconceivable energies, and therefore He is the Yogeśvara, or the supreme master of all mystic powers. Being the Yogeśvara, His eternal form is spiritual, a combination of eternity, bliss and knowledge. The nondevotee class cannot understand the dynamic nature of His knowledge because they are satisfied to reach up to His eternal form of knowledge. All great souls aspire to be equal in knowledge with Him. This means that all other knowledge is ever insufficient, flexible and measurable, whereas the knowledge of the Lord is ever fixed and unfathomable. Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī affirms in the *Bhāgavatam* that although He was observed by

the citizens of Dvārakā every day, they were ever increasingly anxious to see Him again and again. The living beings can appreciate the qualities of the Lord as the ultimate goal, but they cannot attain the status quo of such equality. This material world is a product of the *mahat-tattva*, which is a state of the Lord's dreaming condition in His *yoga-nidrā* mystic slumber in the Causal Ocean, and yet the whole creation appears to be a factual presentation of His creation. This means that the Lord's dreaming conditions are also factual manifestations. He can therefore bring everything under His transcendental control, and thus whenever and wherever He does appear, He does so in His fullness.

The Lord, being all that is described above, maintains the affairs of the creation, and by His so doing He gives salvation even to His enemies who are killed by Him. He is attractive even to the topmost liberated soul, and thus He is worshipable even by Brahmā and Śiva, the greatest of all demigods. Even in His incarnation of *puruṣa-avatāra* He is the Lord of the creative energy. The creative material energy is working under His direction, as confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10). He is the control switch of the material energy, and to control the material energy in the innumerable universes, He is the root cause of innumerable incarnations in all the universes. There are more than five hundred thousand incarnations of Manu in only one universe, besides other incarnations in different universes. In the spiritual world, however, beyond the *mahat-tattva*, there is no question of incarnations, but there are plenary expansions of the Lord in different Vaikuṅṭhas. The planets in the spiritual sky are at least three times the number of those within the innumerable universes in the *mahat-tattva*. And all the Nārāyaṇa forms of the Lord are but expansions of His Vāsudeva feature, and thus He is Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa simultaneously. He is *śrī-kṛṣṇa govinda hare murāre, he nātha nārāyaṇa vāsudeva*, all in one. His qualities, therefore, cannot be counted by anyone, however great one may be.

#### TEXT 31

आत्मानं चानुशोचामि भवन्तं चामरोत्तमम् ।  
देवान् पितृनुषीन् साधून् सर्वान् वर्णास्तथाश्रमान् ॥ ३१ ॥

ātmānam cānuśocāmi  
bhavantāṁ cāmarottamam  
devān pīṭṇ ṛṣīn sādḥūn  
sarvān varṇāns tathāśramān

ātmānam—myself; ca—also; anuśocāmi—lamenting; bhavantam—yourself; ca—as well as; amara-uttamam—the best amongst the demigods; devān—about the demigods; pīṭṇ—about the denizens of the Pitrloka planet; ṛṣīn—about the sages; sādḥūn—about the devotees; sarvān—all of them; varṇān—sections; tathā—as also; āśramān—orders of human society.

#### TRANSLATION

I am thinking about myself and also, O best amongst the demigods, about you, as well as about all the demigods, sages, denizens of Pitrloka, devotees of the Lord and all men obedient to the system of varṇa and āśrama in human society.

#### PURPORT

To effect the perfection of human life there is cooperation between men and demigods, sages, denizens of the Pitrloka, devotees of the Lord and the scientific system of *varṇa* and *āśrama* orders of life. The distinction between human life and animal life therefore begins with the scientific system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*, guided by the experience of the sages in relation with the demigods, gradually rising to the summit of reestablishing our eternal relation with the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When God-made *varṇāśrama-dharma*, which is strictly meant for developing animal consciousness into human consciousness and human consciousness into godly consciousness, is broken by advancement of foolishness, the whole system of peaceful and progressive life is at once disturbed. In the age of Kali, the first at-

tack of the venomous snake strikes against the God-made *varṇāśrama-dharma*, and thus a person properly qualified as a *brāhmaṇa* is called a *śūdra*, and a *śūdra* by qualification is passing as a *brāhmaṇa*, all on a false birthright claim. To become a *brāhmaṇa* by a birthright claim is not at all bona fide, although it may be a fulfillment of one of the conditions. But the real qualification of a *brāhmaṇa* is to control the mind and the senses, and to cultivate tolerance, simplicity, cleanliness, knowledge, truthfulness, devotion and faith in the Vedic wisdom. In the present age, consideration of the necessary qualification is being neglected, and the false birthright claim is being supported even by a popular, sophisticated poet, the author of *Rāma-carita-mānasa*.

This is all due to the influence of the age of Kali. Thus mother earth, represented as a cow, was lamenting the regrettable condition.

## TEXTS 32-33

ब्रह्मादयो बहु तिथं यदपाङ्गमोक्ष-  
कामास्तपःसमचरन् भगवत्प्रपन्नाः ।  
सा श्रीः स्वासमरविन्दवनं विहाय  
यत्पादसौभाग्यमलं भजतेऽनुरक्ता ॥३२॥  
तस्याहमञ्जकुलिशाङ्कुशकेतुकेतैः  
श्रीमत्पदैर्भगवतः समलंकृताङ्गी ।  
त्रीनत्यरोच उपलभ्य ततो विभृति  
लोकान् स माम् व्यसृजदुत्सयतीं तदन्ते ॥३३॥

*brahmādayo bahu-tiṭham yad-apāṅga-mokṣa-  
kāmās tapaḥ samacaran bhagavat-prapannāḥ  
sā śrīḥ sva-vāsam aravinda-vanam vihāya  
yat-pāda-saubhagam alam bhajate 'nuraktā*

*tasyāham abja-kuliśāṅkuśa-keṭu-keṭaiḥ  
śrīmat-padair bhagavataḥ samalanṅkṛtāṅgi  
trīn atyaroca upalabhya tato vibhūtim  
lokān sa mām vyasṛjat utsmayatīm tad-ante*

*brahma-ādayaḥ*—demigods such as *Brahmā*; *bahu-tiṭham*—for many days; *yat*—of *Lakṣmī*, the goddess of fortune; *apāṅga-mokṣa*—glance of grace; *kāmāḥ*—being desirous of; *tapaḥ*—penances; *samacaran*—executing; *bhagavat*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *prapannāḥ*—surrendered; *sā*—she (the goddess of fortune); *śrīḥ*—*Lakṣmī*; *sva-vāsam*—her own abode; *aravinda-vanam*—the forest of lotus flowers; *vihāya*—leaving aside; *yat*—whose; *pāda*—feet; *saubhagam*—all-blissful; *alam*—without hesitation; *bhajate*—worships; *anuraktā*—being attached; *tasya*—His; *aham*—myself; *abja*—lotus flower; *kuliśa*—thunderbolt; *āṅkuśa*—rod for driving elephants; *keṭu*—flag; *keṭaiḥ*—impressions; *śrīmat*—the owner of all opulence; *padaiḥ*—by the soles of the feet; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *samalanṅkṛta-āṅgi*—one whose body is so decorated; *trīn*—three; *ati*—superseding; *aroca*—beautifully decorated; *upalabhya*—having obtained; *tataḥ*—thereafter; *vibhūtim*—specific powers; *lokān*—planetary systems; *sā*—He; *mām*—me; *vyasṛjat*—gave up; *utsmayatīm*—while feeling proud; *tad-ante*—at the end.

## TRANSLATION

*Lakṣmī*, the goddess of fortune, whose glance of grace was sought by demigods like *Brahmā* and for whom they surrendered many a day unto the Personality of Godhead, gave up her own abode in the forest of lotus flowers and engaged herself in the service of the lotus feet of the Lord. I was endowed with specific powers to supersede the fortune of all the three planetary systems by being decorated with the impressions of the flag, thunderbolt, elephant-driving rod and lotus flower, which are signs of the lotus feet of the Lord. But at the end, when I felt I was so fortunate, the Lord left me.

## PURPORT

The beauty and opulence of the world can be enhanced by the grace of the Lord and not by any man-made planning. When the Lord *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* was present on this earth, the impressions of the special signs of His lotus feet were stamped on the dust, and as a result of this specific grace, the whole earth was made as perfect as possible. In other words, the rivers, the seas, the forests, the hills and the mines, which are the supplying agents for the necessities of men and animals, were fully discharging their respective duties. Therefore the riches of the world surpassed all the riches of all other planets in the three planetary systems of the universe. One should, therefore, ask that the grace of the Lord always be present on earth so that we may be favored with His causeless mercy and be happy, having all necessities of life. One may ask how we can detain the Supreme Lord on this earth after His mission is fulfilled and He has left this earth for His own abode. The answer is that there is no need to detain the Lord. The Lord, being omnipresent, can be present with us if we want Him at all. By His omnipresence, He can always be with us if we are attached to His devotional service by hearing, chanting, remembering, etc.

There is nothing in the world with which the Lord is disconnected. The only thing we must learn is to excavate the source of connection and thus be linked with Him by offenseless service. We can be connected with Him by the transcendental sound representation of the Lord. The holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical, and one who chants the holy name of the Lord in an offenseless manner can at once realize that the Lord is present before him. Even by the vibration of radio sound, we can partially realize sound relativity, and by resounding the sound of transcendence we can verily feel the presence of the Lord. In this age, when everything is polluted by the contamination of Kali, it is instructed in the scriptures and preached by Lord *Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu* that by chanting the holy name of the Lord, we can at once be free from contamination and gradually rise to the status of transcendence and go back to Godhead. The offenseless chanter of the holy name of the Lord is as auspicious as the Lord Himself, and the movement of pure devotees of the Lord all over the world can at once change the troublesome face of the world. Only by the propagation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord can we be immune from all effects of the age of Kali.

## TEXT 34

यो वै ममातिभरमासुरवंशराज्ञा-  
मक्षौहिणीशतमपाणुददात्मन्त्रः ।  
त्वां दुःस्यमूनपदमात्मनि पौरुषेण  
सम्पादयन् यदुषु रम्यमविभ्रदङ्गम् ॥३४॥

*yo vai mamātibharam āsura-varṣa-rājñām  
akṣauhīṇi-śataṁ apāṇudad ātma-tantraḥ  
tvām duḥstham ūna-padam ātmani pauruṣeṇa  
sampādayan yaduṣu ramyam abibhrad aṅgam*

*yaḥ*—He who; *vai*—certainly; *mama*—mine; *ati-bharam*—too burdensome; *āsura-varṣa*—unbelievers; *rājñām*—of the kings; *akṣauhīṇi*—one military division; \* *śataṁ*—hundreds of such divisions; *apāṇudat*—extirpated; *ātma-tantraḥ*—self-sufficient; *tvām*—unto you; *duḥstham*—put into difficulty; *ūna-padam*—devoid of strength to stand; *ātmani*—internal; *pauruṣeṇa*—by dint of energy; *sampādayan*—for executing; *yaduṣu*—in the Yadu dynasty; *ramyam*—transcendentally beautiful; *abibhrat*—accepted; *aṅgam*—body.

## TRANSLATION

O personality of religion, I was greatly overburdened by the undue military phalanxes arranged by atheistic kings, and I was relieved by the grace of the Personality of Godhead. Similarly you

\*An *akṣauhīṇi* phalanx consists of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 109,350 infantrymen and 65,610 horses.

were also in a distressed condition, weakened in your standing strength, and thus He also incarnated by His internal energy in the family of the Yadus to relieve you.

### PURPORT

The *asuras* want to enjoy a life of sense gratification, even at the cost of others' happiness. In order to fulfill this ambition, the *asuras*, especially atheistic kings or state executive heads, try to equip themselves with all kinds of deadly weapons to bring about a war in a peaceful society. They have no ambition other than personal aggrandizement, and thus mother earth feels overburdened by such undue increases of military strength. By increase of the asuric population, those who follow the principles of religion become unhappy, especially the devotees, or *devas*.

In such a situation, the Personality of Godhead incarnates to vanquish the unwanted *asuras* and to reestablish the true principles of religion. This was the mission of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and He fulfilled it.

### TEXT 35

का वा सहेत विरहं पुरुषोत्तमस्य  
प्रेमावलोकुरुचिरस्मितवल्गुजल्पैः ।  
स्थैर्यं समानमहरन्मधुमानिनीनां  
रोमोत्सवोममयदङ्घ्रि विटङ्कितायाः ॥३५॥

*kā vā saheta virahaṁ puruṣottamasya  
prema-valoka-rucira-smita-valgu-jalpaiḥ  
sthairyaṁ samānam aharan madhu-māninīnāṁ  
romotsavo mama yad-āṅghri-ṣiṭaṅkitāyāḥ*

*kā*—who; *vā*—either; *saheta*—can tolerate; *virahaṁ*—separation; *puruṣa-uttamasya*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *prema*—loving; *avaloka*—glancing; *rucira-smita*—pleasing smile; *valgu-jalpaiḥ*—hearty appeals; *sthairyaṁ*—gravity; *sa-mānam*—along with passionate wrath; *aharat*—conquered; *madhu*—sweethearts; *māninī-nām*—women such as Satyabhāmā; *roma-utsavaḥ*—hair standing on end out of pleasure; *mama*—mine; *yat*—whose; *āṅghri*—feet; *ṣiṭaṅkitāyāḥ*—imprinted with.

### TRANSLATION

Who, therefore, can tolerate the pangs of separation from that Supreme Personality of Godhead? He could conquer the gravity and passionate wrath of His sweethearts like Satyabhāmā by His sweet smile of love, pleasing glance and hearty appeals. When He traversed my [earth's] surface, I would be immersed in the dust of His lotus feet and thus would be sumptuously covered with grass which appeared like hairs standing on me out of pleasure.

### PURPORT

There were chances of separation between the Lord and His thousands of queens because of the Lord's being absent from home, but as far as His connection with earth was concerned, the Lord would traverse the earth with His lotus feet, and therefore there was no chance of separation. When the Lord left the surface of the earth to return to His spiritual abode, the earth's feelings of separation were therefore more acute.

### TEXT 36

तयोरेवं कथयतोः पृथिवीधर्मयोस्तदा ।  
परीक्षिन्नाम राजर्षिः प्राप्तः प्राचीं सरस्वतीम् ॥३६॥

*tayor evaṁ kathayatoḥ  
pṛthivī-dharmayoḥ tadā  
parikṣin nāma rājāṛṣiḥ  
prāptaḥ prācīm sarasvatīm*

*tayor*—between them; *evaṁ*—thus; *kathayatoḥ*—engaged in conversation; *pṛthivī*—earth; *dharmayoḥ*—and the personality of religion; *tadā*—at that time; *parikṣit*—King Parikṣit; *nāma*—of the name; *rājā-ṛṣiḥ*—a saint amongst kings; *prāptaḥ*—arrived; *prācīm*—flowing towards the east; *sarasvatīm*—River Sarasvatī.

### TRANSLATION

While the earth and the personality of religion were thus engaged in conversation, the saintly King Parikṣit reached the shore of the Sarasvatī River, which flowed towards the east.

*Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the First Canto, Sixteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "How Parikṣit Received the Age of Kali."*

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### Punishment and Reward of Kali

#### TEXT 1

सूत उवाच  
तत्र गोमिथुनं राजा हन्यमानमनायवत् ।  
दण्डहस्तं च वृषलं ददृशे नृपलान्छनम् ॥ १ ॥

*sūta uvāca  
tatra go-mithunam rājā  
hanyamānam anāthavat  
daṇḍa-hastam ca vṛṣalam  
dadṛśe nṛpa-lāñchanam*

*sūtaḥ uvāca*—Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said; *tatra*—thereupon; *go-mithunam*—a cow and a bull; *rājā*—the King; *hanyamānam*—being beaten; *anātha-vat*—appearing to be bereft of their owner; *daṇḍa-hastam*—with a club in hand; *ca*—also; *vṛṣalam*—lower-caste *sūdra*; *dadṛśe*—observed; *nṛpa*—a king; *lāñchanam*—dressed like.

### TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: After reaching that place, Mahārāja Parikṣit observed that a lower-caste *sūdra*, dressed like a king, was beating a cow and a bull with a club, as if they had no owner.

### PURPORT

The principal sign of the age of Kali is that lower-caste *sūdras*, i.e., men without brahminical culture and spiritual initiation, will be dressed like administrators or kings, and the principal business of such non-*ksatriya* rulers will be to kill the innocent animals, especially the cows and the bulls, who shall be unprotected by their masters, the bona fide *vaiśyas*, the mercantile community. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.44), it is said that the *vaiśyas* are meant to deal in agriculture, cow protection and trade. In the age of Kali, the degraded *vaiśyas*, the mercantile men, are engaged in supplying cows to slaughterhouses. The *ksatriyas* are meant to protect the citizens of the state, whereas the *vaiśyas* are meant to protect the cows and bulls and utilize them to produce grains and milk. The cow is meant to deliver milk, and the bull is meant to produce grains. But in the age of Kali, the *sūdra* class of men are in the posts of administrators, and the cows and bulls, or the mothers and the fathers, unprotected by the *vaiśyas*, are subjected to the slaughterhouses organized by the *sūdra* administrators.

#### TEXT 2

वृषं मृणालधवलं मेहन्तमिव बिभ्यतम् ।  
वेपमानं पदैकेन सीदन्तं शूद्रताडितम् ॥ २ ॥

*vṛṣam mṛṇāla-dhavalam  
mehantam iva bibhyatam  
vepamānam padaikena  
śīdantam śūdra-tāḍitam*

*vṛṣam*—the bull; *mṛṇāla-dhavalam*—as white as a white lotus; *mehantam*—urinating; *iva*—as if; *bibhyatam*—being too afraid; *vepamānam*—trembling; *padā ekena*—standing on only one leg; *śīdantam*—terrified; *śūdra-tāḍitam*—being beaten by a *śūdra*.

#### TRANSLATION

The bull was as white as a white lotus flower. He was terrified of the *śūdra* who was beating him, and he was so afraid that he was standing on one leg, trembling and urinating.

#### PURPORT

The next symptom of the age of Kali is that principles of religion, which are all spotlessly white, like the white lotus flower, will be attacked by the uncultured *śūdra* population of the age. They may be descendants of *brāhmaṇa* or *kṣatriya* forefathers, but in the age of Kali, for want of sufficient education and culture of Vedic wisdom, such a *śūdra*-like population will defy the principles of religion, and persons who are religiously endowed will be terrified by such men. They will declare themselves as adherents of no religious principles, and many “isms” and cults will spring up in Kali-yuga only to kill the spotless bull of religion. The state will be declared to be secular, or without any particular principle of religion, and as a result there will be total indifference to the principles of religion. The citizens will be free to act as they like, without respect for *sādhu*, *śāstra* and *guru*. The bull standing on one leg indicates that the principles of religion are gradually diminishing. Even the fragmental existence of religious principles will be embarrassed by so many obstacles as if in the trembling condition of falling down at any time.

#### TEXT 3

गां च धर्मदुषां दीनां भृशं शूद्रपदाहताम् ।  
विवत्सामाश्रुवदनां क्षामां यवसमिच्छतीम् ॥ ३ ॥

*gām ca dharmā-dughām dīnām  
bhṛśam śūdra-padāhatām  
vivatsām āśru-vadanām  
kṣāmām yavasam icchatīm*

*gām*—the cow; *ca*—also; *dharmā-dughām*—beneficial because one can draw religion from her; *dīnām*—now rendered poor; *bhṛśam*—distressed; *śūdra*—the lower caste; *padā-āhatām*—beaten on the legs; *vivatsām*—without any calf; *āśru-vadanām*—with tears in her eyes; *kṣāmām*—very weak; *yavasam*—grass; *icchatīm*—as if desiring to have some grass to eat.

#### TRANSLATION

Although the cow is beneficial because one can draw religious principles from her, she was now rendered poor and calfless. Her legs were being beaten by a *śūdra*. There were tears in her eyes, and she was distressed and weak. She was hankering after some grass in the field.

#### PURPORT

The next symptom of the age of Kali is the distressed condition of the cow. Milking the cow means drawing the principles of religion in a liquid form. The great *ṛṣis* and *munis* would live only on milk. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī would go to a householder while he was milking a cow, and he would simply take a little quantity of it for subsistence. Even fifty years ago, no one would deprive a *sādhu* of a quart or two of milk, and every householder would give milk like water. For a Sanātānist (a follower of Vedic principles) it is the duty of every householder to have cows and bulls as household paraphernalia, not only for drinking milk, but also for

deriving religious principles. The Sanātānist worships cows on religious principles and respects *brāhmaṇas*. The cow's milk is required for the sacrificial fire, and by performing sacrifices the householder can be happy. The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible. But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The cow stands with tears in her eyes, the *śūdra* milkman draws milk from the cow artificially, and when there is no milk the cow is sent to be slaughtered. These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the troubles in present society. People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development. The influence of Kali will keep them in the darkness of ignorance. Despite all endeavors for peace and prosperity, they must try to see the cows and the bulls happy in all respects. Foolish people do not know how one earns happiness by making the cows and bulls happy, but it is a fact by the law of nature. Let us take it from the authority of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and adopt the principles for the total happiness of humanity.

#### TEXT 4

पप्रच्छ रथमारूढः कार्तस्वरपरिच्छदम् ।  
मेघगम्भीरया वाचा समारोपितकार्षुकः ॥ ४ ॥

*papraccha ratham ārūḍhaḥ  
kārtasvara-paricchadam  
megha-gambhīrayā vācā  
samāropita-kārmukhaḥ*

*papraccha*—inquired; *ratham*—chariot; *ārūḍhaḥ*—seated on; *kārtasvara*—gold; *paricchadam*—embossed with; *megha*—cloud; *gambhīrayā*—exonerating; *vācā*—sound; *samāropita*—well equipped; *kārmukhaḥ*—arrows and bow.

#### TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parikṣit, well equipped with arrows and bow and seated on a gold-embossed chariot, spoke to him [the *śūdra*] with a deep voice sounding like thunder.

#### PURPORT

An administrative head or king like Mahārāja Parikṣit, with full majestic authority, well equipped with weapons to chastise miscreants, can challenge the agents of the age of Kali. Then only will it be possible to counteract the degraded age. And in the absence of such strong executive heads, there is always disruption of tranquillity. The elected show-bottle executive head, as representative of a degraded public, cannot be equal with a strong king like Mahārāja Parikṣit. The dress or style of royal order does not count. It is one's actions which are counted.

#### TEXT 5

कस्त्वं मच्छरणे लोके बलाद्दंस्वबलान् बली ।  
नरदेवोऽसि वेषेण नटावत्कर्माद्विजः ॥ ५ ॥

*kaṣṭvaṁ mac-charaṇe loke  
balād dhaṁsy abalān bali  
nara-devo 'si veṣeṇa  
naṭavat karmaṇā 'dvijaḥ*

*kaḥ*—who are; *tvam*—you; *mat*—my; *śaraṇe*—under protection; *loke*—in this world; *balāt*—by force; *haṁsi*—killing; *abalān*—those who are helpless; *bali*—although full of strength; *nara-devaḥ*—man-god; *asi*—appear to be; *veṣeṇa*—by your dress; *naṭa-vat*—like a theatrical player; *karmaṇā*—by deeds; *advi-jah*—a man not twice-born by culture.

## TRANSLATION

Oh, who are you? You appear to be strong and yet you dare kill, within my protection, those who are helpless! By your dress you pose yourself to be a godly man [king], but by your deeds you are opposing the principles of the twice-born kṣatriyas.

## PURPORT

The brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are called twice-born because for these higher classes of men there is one birth by parental conjugation and there is another birth of cultural rejuvenation by spiritual initiation from the bona fide ācārya, or spiritual master. So a kṣatriya is also twice-born like a brāhmaṇa, and his duty is to give protection to the helpless. The kṣatriya king is considered to be the representative of God to give protection to the helpless and chastise the miscreants. Whenever there are anomalies in this routine work by the administrators, there is an incarnation of the Lord to reestablish the principles of a godly kingdom. In the age of Kali, the poor helpless animals, especially the cows, which are meant to receive all sorts of protection from the administrative heads, are killed without restriction. Thus the administrative heads under whose noses such things happen are representatives of God in name only. Such powerful administrators are rulers of the poor citizens by dress or office, but factually they are worthless, lower-class men without the cultural assets of the twice-born. No one can expect justice or equality of treatment from once-born (spiritually uncultured) lower-class men. Therefore in the age of Kali everyone is unhappy due to the maladministration of the state. The modern human society is not twice-born by spiritual culture. Therefore the people's government, by the people who are not twice-born, must be a government of Kali in which everyone is unhappy.

## TEXT 6

यस्त्वं कृष्णे गते दूरं सहगाण्डीवधन्वना ।  
शोच्योऽस्यशोच्यान् रहसि प्रहरन् वधमर्हसि ॥ ६ ॥

yas tvam kṛṣṇe gate dūram  
saha-gāṇḍīva-dhanvanā  
śocyo 'sy aśocyān rahasi  
praharan vadham arhasi

yaḥ—on account of; tvam—you rogue; kṛṣṇe—Lord Kṛṣṇa; gate—having gone away; dūram—out of sight; saha—along with; gāṇḍīva—the bow named Gāṇḍīva; dhanvanā—the carrier, Arjuna; śocyah—culprit; asi—you are considered; aśocyān—innocent; rahasi—in a secluded place; praharan—beating; vadham—to be killed; arhasi—deserve.

## TRANSLATION

You rogue, do you dare beat an innocent cow because Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the carrier of the Gāṇḍīva bow, are out of sight? Since you are beating the innocent in a secluded place, you are considered a culprit and therefore deserve to be killed.

## PURPORT

In a civilization where God is conspicuously banished, and there is no devotee warrior like Arjuna, the associates of the age of Kali take advantage of this lawless kingdom and arrange to kill innocent animals like the cow in secluded slaughterhouses. Such murderers of animals stand to be condemned to death by the order of a pious king like Mahārāja Parikṣit. For a pious king, the culprit who kills an animal in a secluded place is punishable by the death penalty, exactly like a murderer who kills an innocent child in a secluded place.

## TEXT 7

त्वं वा मृणालधवलः पादैर्न्यूनः पदा चरन् ।  
वृषरूपेण किं कश्चिद् देवो नः परित्सेदयन् ॥ ७ ॥

tvam vā mṛṇāla-dhavalah  
pādair nyūnah padā caran  
vṛṣa-rūpeṇa kiṁ kaścīd  
devo naḥ parikhedayan

tvam—you; vā—either; mṛṇāla-dhavalah—as white as a lotus; pādaiḥ—of three legs; nyūnah—being deprived; padā—on one leg; caran—moving; vṛṣa—bull; rūpeṇa—in the form of; kiṁ—whether; kaścīd—someone; devah—demigod; naḥ—us; parikhedayan—causing grief.

## TRANSLATION

Then he [Mahārāja Parikṣit] asked the bull: Oh, who are you? Are you a bull as white as a white lotus, or are you a demigod? You have lost three of your legs and are moving on only one. Are you some demigod causing us grief in the form of a bull?

## PURPORT

At least up to the time of Mahārāja Parikṣit, no one could imagine the wretched conditions of the cow and the bull. Mahārāja Parikṣit, therefore, was astonished to see such a horrible scene. He inquired whether the bull was not a demigod assuming such a wretched condition to indicate the future of the cow and the bull.

## TEXT 8

न जातु कौरवेन्द्राणां दोर्दण्डपरिरम्भिते ।  
भूतलेऽनुपतन्त्यसिन् विना ते प्राणिनां शुचः ॥ ८ ॥

na jātu kauravendrāṇām  
dordaṇḍa-parirambhite  
bhū-tale 'nupatanty asmin  
vinā te prāṇinām śucaḥ

na—not; jātu—at any time; kaurava-indrāṇām—of the kings in the Kuru dynasty; dordaṇḍa—strength of arms; parirambhite—protected by; bhū-tale—on the surface of the earth; anupatanti—grieving; asmin—up till now; vinā—save and except; te—you; prāṇinām—of the living being; śucaḥ—tears in the eyes.

## TRANSLATION

Now for the first time in a kingdom well protected by the arms of the kings of the Kuru dynasty, I see you grieving with tears in your eyes. Up till now no one on earth has ever shed tears because of royal negligence.

## PURPORT

The protection of the lives of both the human beings and the animals is the first and foremost duty of a government. A government must not discriminate in such principles. It is simply horrible for a purehearted soul to see organized animal-killing by the state in this age of Kali. Mahārāja Parikṣit was lamenting for the tears in the eyes of the bull, and he was astonished to see such an unprecedented thing in his good kingdom. Men and animals were equally protected as far as life was concerned. That is the way in God's kingdom.

(continued in next issue)





# Every Town and Village

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

## Guru to Islanders: Protect the Cows



Auckland mayor Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson receives the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from His Holiness Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī. Also present: Hari-śauri dāsa (left), ISKCON's coordinator for the South Pacific, and Yaśomatīnandana dāsa (right), the president of the Auckland center.

On a recent journey to the South Pacific, His Holiness Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī (one of ISKCON's eleven initiating spiritual masters) visited the island nation of New Zealand. While there he met with the mayor of Auckland, addressed a large gathering at the Auckland Town Hall, and stopped at ISKCON's new farm community just north of the capital.

Throughout his visit, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī urged the people of New Zealand (one of the world's largest meat-producing nations) to "work the land and protect the cows." In front-page coverage the national press quoted him as saying, "Why don't New Zealanders show the world that people can live off the land without anxiety? By protecting the cow, rather than killing it, we can be very happy."

Later, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī presented Auckland mayor Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson with *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, which affirms that the basis for a peaceful, God conscious society is agriculture and the protection of cows. Mayor Robinson related that when his hosts had offered him meat at a business luncheon earlier that day, he had replied, "No, thank you. I'm not a cannibal—I don't eat my relatives."

At ISKCON's newly acquired farm-lands on Auckland Harbor, Tamāla

Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī asked the New Zealand devotees to demonstrate to their countrymen the practical advantages of the Kṛṣṇa conscious life-style of simple living and high thinking.

### Editorial Correspondence

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### Hare Kṛṣṇa Calendar

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees follow a spiritual calendar that divides the year into twelve months, each named for a different form of Kṛṣṇa. The devotees at the ISKCON center nearest you will gladly tell you the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Year 493 Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava month of Śrīdhara (July 21–August 18, 1978)		
July 24 (Śrīdhara 4)	July 27 (Śrīdhara 7)	July 31 (Śrīdhara 11)
Disappearance of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.	Disappearance of Śrīla Lokanātha Gosvāmī.	Pakṣa-vardhini Mahādvādāśī (fasting from grains and beans).
August 14 (Śrīdhara 25)	August 15 (Śrīdhara 26)	August 18 (Śrīdhara 29)
Beginning of Jhulana-yātrā of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.	Pavitrāropanī-ekādaśī (fasting from grains and beans). Disappearance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita Gosvāmī, and Śrī Govinda dāsa Paṇḍita.	End of Jhulana-yātrā of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. Appearance of Lord Baladeva (fasting).

## Bombay Mayor Tours New Cultural Center

The mayor of Bombay recently joined ten thousand of his fellow citizens at ISKCON's new cultural center on Juhu Beach to celebrate one of India's main national holidays.

Mayor Sri Wamanrao Mahadik was the chief guest at the festival marking the appearance day of Lord Rāmacandra, an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who long ago ruled India as the perfect monarch. Regarding the work of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the mayor said, "We feel very proud today to see how you are propagating Indian culture. This is a great day in our lives. We want to extend all facilities to help this great cause."

After touring the ultramodern International Guesthouse at the Juhu Beach complex, the mayor remarked, "This place is so nice that I am sure Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma will personally come here to take rest."



Bombay mayor Śrī Wamanrao Mahadik (left) tours ISKCON's new Bombay center with His Holiness Girirāja Svāmī.



# TANTRA

## Can Sex Be Yoga?

by ACYUTĀNANDA SVĀMĪ

Ever since Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* first captured the fancy of Westerners, it has indeed caused a wave of thought and action, especially among young people. Though the book says nothing new, it seems to offer the best of both worlds. In essence, it promises that one can indulge his senses to the highest (and mostly the lowest) limit of enjoyment, and that in this way one can come to superconsciousness.

Of course, the ultimate material pleasure is sex, and genuine spiritual methods prescribe substantial if not total abstinence. So this new wave may seem like a pleasant alternative for people who take things superficially and want only profit with no loss—or, as a Bengali proverb says, for people who want only the back half of the cow, the part that gives milk, and not the front half, the part that must be fed.

Many so-called spiritual leaders who have ridden in on this wave call themselves "tantrics" and call their dubious process "Tantra Yoga." They teach what they claim is a genuine process of "burning out the mind" through sensual exhaustion—a sexual exercise called "tantra" that is supposedly found in the Vedic literature. As we might expect, in this way they meet a lot of women.

As followers of the Vedic literature, the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness want to expose this erroneous and abominable practice and save the naive from being exploited by cunning cheats.

First, let's take a look at the word *tantra* itself. *Tantra* means "a strict *yoga* system of injunctions, rules, and regulations." There are four progressive levels of *tantras*: (1) *tantras* for people who are in nature's mode of darkness or ignorance, (2) *tantras* for people in the mode of passion, (3) *tantras* for people in the mode of goodness, and (4) Vaiṣṇava *tantras*, those for people

who are devotees of the Lord and are thus transcending the modes of this world.

The Western seeker finds all this Vedic literature shrouded in mystery, and until he finds a bona fide *guru*, a genuine spiritual preceptor, he will remain in illusion. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has dispelled this mystery by teaching the Vedic literature purely and without divergent commentaries. "I have no secrets," said Śrīla Prabhupāda. "I will give you everything as it is." Usually, the so-called *gurus* maintain a secluded mystery about themselves, a sort of "I-know-something—I-won't-tell" attitude that keeps the followers always groping for answers. Śrīla Prabhupāda was never like that. He broke open the treasure-house that is the Vedic literature.

There are three Vaiṣṇava *tantras*: *Nārada-pañcarātra*, *Pañcarātra*, and *Vaikhānasa*. These offer rules and regulations that free the mind from material attachments and fix the consciousness on the forms, names, qualities, and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. These *tantras* describe how a Vaiṣṇava (a *yogī* who is devoted to the Lord) should regulate his life: how he should use beads for chanting spiritual *mantras*, how he should worship the Lord's revealed Deity forms, and many other techniques of God realization. The *Vaikhānasa* and other *pañcarātric tantras* are very rigorous, and to make spiritual progress one must follow their regulations flawlessly. So the members of ISKCON follow the *Nārada-pañcarātra*.

Basically, all the rules and regulations of the *Nārada-pañcarātra* are explained by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his book *The Nectar of Devotion*. There are sixty-four main guidelines, of which five are very important: (1) accepting a spiritual master, (2) worshipping the Deity, (3) studying the *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam*, (4) chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-*

*mantra*, both congregationally and individually (that is, softly, on chanting beads), and (5) living in a holy place like Mathurā-Vṛndāvana (the area of Lord Kṛṣṇa's birth and childhood pastimes). To follow these guidelines properly, one must receive formal initiation from a spiritual master and observe four basic prohibitive principles: no illicit sex, no intoxication, no gambling, and no meat, fish, or eggs.

The Vaiṣṇava *tantras* quickly remove the illusory sense that the physical body is the self. In a short time the devotional *yogī* realizes that he is a pure, blissful, eternal spiritual soul, and he engages in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa with full enthusiasm. Soon obstacles vanish, and he experiences a taste for hearing and chanting Kṛṣṇa's names. This higher taste surpasses all material pleasures, and physical or mental circumstances cannot spoil it. The taste develops into pure devotion (*bhāva-bhakti*), in which the *yogī* experiences every emotion at its peak in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. When the waves of *bhāva* crash together in the heart, the devotional *yogī* experiences full love of Godhead, and this is the highest perfection of life.

The *tantras* for people who are attached to the mundane mode of goodness describe the process of *karmakāṇḍa*, or sense gratification combined with some opportunity for spiritual advancement. This branch of the Vedic literature offers marriage ceremonies, birth ceremonies, funeral ceremonies, and ceremonies for worshipping various demigods and gaining material success. According to these *tantras*, if one engages himself in family life, obeys all scriptural regulations, and commits no sin for one hundred human births, he will go back to the spiritual world, back to Godhead. Clearly, it is a slow process—and to risk even one more birth in the material world is foolish, since the senses are so strong that at any time one



**Kālī, the deity of destructive energy, may bring severe and incurable disease, madness, or sudden death to those who tamper with "Tantra."**

could commit sins and ruin his chances for liberation.

The *tantras* for people in the mode of passion offer methods of rectifying past sins through difficult and costly sacrifices or through long pilgrimages to holy places. But even after one performs all these rites, he may still have the desire in his heart to go on sinning. And although this process of worshiping minor deities can promote one to higher, superhuman planets, one quickly uses up his good *karma* and must soon fall down to lower planets and start all over again. It is a slow process without any lasting benefit.

For those in the mode of ignorance—those who are envious of Kṛṣṇa or too impatient to follow a spiritual path, or those who want magical powers, wealth, and quick liberation—there is the process called *śrī-vidyā*. (This is the yogic code that bogus *gurus* have perverted to the level of gross sensuality; it is what Westerners have come to know as "Tantra.") If one fails to follow *śrī-*

*vidyā's* rules and regulations flawlessly, he will experience not a quick attainment of mystical powers but a quick downfall and utter ruination. In many cases severe and incurable disease, madness, or sudden death has resulted from tampering with this path.

(As I describe the items in this tantric process, I hope the reader will be able to catch the thread of how each point has been misrepresented to appear fascinating, easy, and enjoyable.)

For success on the tantric path, the *yogī* tries to please the deity of destructive illusory energy, Kālī (or Durgā). And the process is rarely carried out to the end. The aspirant must completely control his physical organs by practicing the sitting postures and fasts of the *haṭha-yoga* process, and this is simply the beginning. The *yogī* must meditate according to strict rules. He must sit atop a deer skin, *kuśa* grass, and a cotton cloth, and must fix his eyes on the tip of his nose. Further, he must renounce all intoxication, gambling, and animal foods,

and he must practice celibacy. Yes, restraining the sex urge is most important if one is to perfect the so-called *yoga* of sex. Contrary to much of today's advertising, physical pleasure is not the true point of *haṭha-yoga*.

When the *yogī* has complete and utter control of all his external and internal organs, then he must gradually clear his mind of all attractions and repulsions toward material things. He must neither love nor hate anything. Now the *guru* will advise terrible austerities that test the *yogī's* tolerance of heat and cold. If the *yogī* passes through these calmly, then he begins a still more grueling process.

First, the *yogī* must cook meat and eat it without relish and also without disgust (since, more than likely, he has been a vegetarian). Then he goes to a cremation ground, where he searches through the ashes until he finds the one part of the human body that does not burn. This is a cylindrical piece of tissue about two inches long and one-half inch thick that is situated behind the navel. It does not get consumed in the flames, but glows with an eerie green light. The *yogī* must say the appropriate *mantras* and, without cringing, eat it. Then, at a time prescribed by the *guru*, he must cook a dead fish in a skull and similarly eat it without disgust. Then he must drink wine without being influenced by its effect. All of this prepares his nerves and emotions and makes him totally indifferent to the urges of the body. Then he kills five animals and makes their heads into a kind of seat. After the *yogī* sits down, the *guru* invokes the spirits of the animals, and they attack the *yogī's* mind. If he remains sane, he can go on to the next stage—sex.

A *yoginī* (female *yogī*) who has been trained in the arts of the flesh is called, and under the guidance of the spiritual master, a kind of sex act is performed. During intercourse the *yogī* must control his mind and constrict his stomach muscles so that he doesn't lose his seminal fluid but instead removes the woman's fluid. The *yogī* keeps the mixture of these two fluids in the base of his spine. There it will eventually enkindle the *kuṇḍalīnī* (or "serpent power"), which will rise up the spine through the *suṣumṇā* nerve and actually rip the *yogī's* soul out of its situation in the heart and then out of the body and into the clear white light. (With their crippled minds, today's cheaters have misconstrued this severe discipline into a license for orgies.)

Now the *yogī* sits for meditation and begins *rāja-yoga*. He raises the *kuṇḍalīnī*  
(continued on page 35)

# Exploding the Big Bang Theory

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

Like an AM radio song or a first-run movie, a scientific theory has to be catchy if it's going to get anywhere. To begin with, it has to have a name that people will remember. Bright high school students should be able to make science fair displays out of it. *Time* and *Newsweek* readers should want to tell their friends about it. Members of key congressional committees should be able to get the drift of it at the first or second briefing.

Take the big bang theory, for instance; the scientists have reason to be proud of this one. It goes something like this. . . . Sixteen or twenty billion years ago, when the only thing in existence was a superdense cosmic chunk, a big bang took place and set in motion a random evolution that has led to today's living world (with its plants and animals and government appropriations for scientific theories).

As we might expect, in their 1977 report to NASA the leading men at the Goddard Space Flight Center and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory had fond words for the big bang:

A concept of cosmic evolution . . . is receiving considerable attention today. This does not mean that it has been proven, nor that all scientists concerned with the broad range of studies involved with this theory agree with it—either in its detail or its overall structure. Yet it serves as a useful framework within which to define general themes of extraterrestrial investigation and . . . to help guide the planning of specific programs in Space Sciences. (*Report to the NASA Administrator by the Outlook for Space Study Group*)

In other words, the big bang theory may not be true, "but," say the scientists, "we're using it anyway, to plan out the next stage of our multibillion-dollar space program." They're using the big bang to get the big buck.

Shortly after the statement we've just read, the scientists offer a modest summary, in the form of an easy-to-digest table:

## Steps in Cosmic Evolution

?

Big Bang  
Matter  
Galaxies and Stars  
Suns and Planets  
Earth  
Oceans and Atmosphere  
Life  
Intelligence  
?

A little puzzling, perhaps, but a clear sign that the scientists are attuned to the American psyche. For one thing, we don't like know-it-alls, and the scientists do everything they can to avoid seeming dogmatic. They couch their theory in question marks, and sure enough, it catches our fancy all the more. As the table reveals so unabashedly, the big bang theory is a doubt on top and a doubt on the bottom, with a few slices of guesswork sandwiched in between. But somehow it's irresistible.

Well, not quite irresistible, at least not anymore. It's starting to look more and more like what my *Webster's New Collegiate* calls a "myth": "an ill-founded belief held uncritically, especially by an interested group."

Mainly, though, the big bang theory just doesn't make sense. After all, how could all the complex life-forms in our world have come from an exploding chunk? As far as I can see, explosions cause death and disintegration, not life and ongoing creation. Explosions make piles of rubble, not plants and flowers and butterflies and human beings.

Happily, many scientists are starting to see things the same way. Richard L. Thompson, Ph.D. (American Mathematical Society) has shown that it's statistically impossible for complex life-forms to evolve from simpler inorganic forms—explosions or other "natural" processes notwithstanding. (See his *Demonstration by Information Theory That Life Cannot Arise from Matter*, 1977.) Dr. Thompson finds that the laws of mathematics point to a universal controlling intelligence.

And this is just what the Vedic literature tells us: "In the beginning of

the creation there was only the Supreme Personality. There was no sun, no moon, no stars. There was only Kṛṣṇa, who creates and enjoys all." And when He desired, He manifested the universe, in an orderly way. As His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda explains, "The whole process of creation is a gradual development from one element to another, reaching up to the variegatedness of the earth as so many plants, mountains, reptiles, birds, animals, and varieties of human beings."

NASA's own latest findings support this conclusion, if only unintentionally. Not long ago, a team of scientists sent ultrasensitive radio equipment aloft in a NASA U-2 jet and measured "the cosmic microwave background"—the radiation they think the big bang left behind. Dr. Richard Muller, Dr. George Smooty, and graduate student Marc Gorenstein reported, "Our measurements give a picture of an extremely smooth process. The big bang, the most cataclysmic event we can imagine, on closer inspection appears finely orchestrated." Then might there be an orchestrator?

The U-2 data report (*NASA Activities*, February 1978) goes on to say that the expansion of the universe was "serene, highly controlled, and completely uniform"—not explosive, but more like "the blossoming of a plant or flower."

We may be a little amazed to discover that the five-thousand-year-old *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* offers the same description: "The bud of a lotus flower generated from the Personality of Viṣṇu, and by His supreme will it illuminated everything, like the sun. . . ." Then Brahmā, the first living being, was born atop the lotus flower and "saw that the lotus was spread throughout the universe."

Of course, if we go to Mt. Palomar we might not be able to see Lord Viṣṇu or the universal lotus, just as when we watch a TV show we probably won't be able to see the producer or director. The Vedic literature informs us, "No one can grasp the universal controlling intelligence with his blunt material senses." Yet from this controlling intelligence the whole universe has sprung (as NASA says) just like a blossoming flower. 🌺



# Questions People Ask About Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa

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

**Q.** *What are the instruments I see the Kṛṣṇa people playing when they chant in the streets?*

**A.** When the chanters go out into the streets, they play the *mṛdaṅga* (which in Bengali means “the drum you can walk with”) and *karatālas*, small hand cymbals. Five centuries ago Lord Caitanya and His followers traveled through India’s towns and villages and chanted to the accompaniment of these same instruments. The traditional drums are made of clay and break quite easily, so it has proven a wise idea to manufacture them out of fiberglass. In quieter settings chanters may also play the harmonium (a hand-pumped organlike instrument) and the tamboura (a stringed drone instrument).

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, was especially fond of the *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*, and he personally taught his disciples how to play them. As the famed poet Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura wrote three centuries ago, “The spiritual master is always happy to chant the Lord’s names, dance in ecstasy, and play musical instruments for the Lord’s pleasure.”

**Q.** *When I meditate I want to experience higher energy levels. Does chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa help you do this?*

**A.** Yes. Actually, everything we experience is simply a combination of the Supreme Lord’s energies. Kṛṣṇa has three principal energies. First there’s the spiritual energy, which is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. Then there’s the material energy, which is temporary and full of ignorance and distress. Between these two is the Lord’s marginal energy, which is made up of the living beings (ourselves) who emanate from Him. Our situation is that we can be in contact with either the material energy or the spiritual energy, and according to the choice we make, we experience either recurring material discomforts (like disease, old age, and rebirth) or eternal spiritual pleasure. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa we can again experience the eternal knowledge and bliss of the spiritual energy. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa has invested all His spiritual energy in the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

**Q.** *What’s the best time of day to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?*

**A.** Lord Caitanya said we should always chant Kṛṣṇa’s names—twenty-four hours a day. If that’s not possible, then chant whenever you can; there are no hard and fast rules.

**Q.** *Why chant “Kṛṣṇa”? Why not just say “God, God”?*

**A.** The word “president” describes the highest post in a country or company, but don’t we want to know the name of the person who occupies the post? In the same way, the word “God” describes the highest of all posts, that of the supreme controller, but don’t we want to know His name? The Vedic literatures tell us that God’s original name is Kṛṣṇa. Of course, God has many other names—such as Govinda, Yahweh, Jehovah, and Allah—but Lord Caitanya (the incarnation of God for this age, who appeared in India in 1486) recommended the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa.

**Q.** *Isn’t it limiting God to call Him by a name?*

**A.** Actually, isn’t it limiting God not to call Him by a name? All of us have names, so why shouldn’t He? As the Vedic literatures explain, God has millions of names, but *Kṛṣṇa* (“the all-attractive one”) is the most universal.

**Q.** *Will chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa put you in samādhi?*

**A.** First of all we might ask, “Just what is *samādhi*?” As the *Bhagavad-gītā* explains, “*Samādhi*, or trance, is the state in which one completely restrains his mind from material mental activities by practice of *yoga*. In that joyous state, one is situated in boundless transcendental happiness and enjoys himself through transcendental senses, in his relationship with the Supreme.”

The *yoga* of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the easiest and most practical way to attain *samādhi* in the present age. Anyone, even a child, can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. All you have to do is focus your mind on the transcendental sound vibration of the *mahā-mantra*, and you’ll absorb your consciousness in the Supreme, which is the same result that *hatha-yogis* formerly achieved after much difficulty.

In ages gone by, a *hatha-yogī* would go to the forest and hold difficult postures for many years so that he could focus his attention on the Lord in his heart. Of course, this is hardly possible for us today; a lotus posture makes us uncomfortable after only a few minutes. But you can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa for hours, whether you’re standing, walking, sitting, dancing, or whatever.

No matter what you’re doing, the *mahā-mantra* keeps your mind in spiritual consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And this is *samādhi*.



Dear Editor,

In my opinion, the name "Rāma" is a symbol of standard ethics and principles. When Lord Rāma ruled the earth, His life was an excellent example of human behavior toward parents, family, public, friends, and subjects. He revealed the best possible integration of human virtues. His universal affection, prideless sacrifice, and matchless humane nature attracted millions of people to preserve their faith in humanity. Respectfulness toward those of pious intellect was another outstanding quality of His life.

To follow goodness it is not essential to be great, but to remain human is the best qualification. Saint Mohandas Gandhi is the foremost exponent of the holy name of Rāma in the modern era. I believe that the second part of the *mahā-mantra* (Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare) should promote humanism and secularism.

Shashi O. Bhatnagar

Dear Mr. Bhatnagar,

The name *Rāma* is not a symbol of ethics and principles; rather, it is a transcendental name of God. To try to justify one's own philosophical views by speculative interpretation of the name *Rāma* is an offense to the name itself, as mentioned in the *Padma Purāna* (*tathārthavādaḥ*).

Lord Rāma's life was not at all an ex-

## LETTERS

ample of human behavior, excellent or otherwise. Rather, it was an example of the behavior of the Supreme Lord Himself. By His mere desire, Lord Rāmacandra floated huge boulders in the Indian Ocean to form a bridge to Sri Lanka. Is this an example of human behavior? Even by the best possible integration of human virtues, it is not possible to match the transcendental prowess of the Supreme Lord. Those who try to bring the Supreme Lord down to the level of a mere virtuous human are not very much appreciated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.11), which distinctly tells us that such mental speculators are unaware of the transcendental supremacy of the Lord.

The word *secularism* means "indifference to or exclusion of religion," and *humanism* refers to a system of thought that asserts the paramount importance of man and generally minimizes the idea of a transcendental Absolute Truth. Both these ideas are utterly antithetical to the Vedic teachings. Lord Rāmacandra taught the world by playing the role of an ideal king completely obedient to religious principles. So He could never approve of such useless doctrines as

secularism and humanism. Lord Rāmacandra appeared in this world to reestablish religious principles (*dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya*), and the kingdom He guided was one of unalloyed devotion to the Supreme Lord. What does this have to do with secularism and humanism? Those who are genuinely attracted to Lord Rāmacandra with true understanding place their faith in Him, the Lord, the Personality of Godhead—not in humanity, as you have wrongly suggested.

The ideals of humanism and secularism were better represented by Rāvaṇa, who sought to promote his own human interests and those of his human followers in a secular state that ignored the superhuman power of the Godhead. Lord Rāmacandra killed Rāvaṇa and lived the life of an ideal religious king to teach the world that pious intellect, ethical behavior, and all the best human qualities culminate in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Lord. Without such devotion, these pious qualities have no substantial value. One should therefore chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare to develop and promote this unalloyed devotion, and nothing else.

Sincerely yours,  
Jayādvaīta Svāmi  
Senior Editor

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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# REMEMBERING ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

## Some Personal Recollections by His Disciples

In October of 1971, my parents came to see me in Calcutta. Śrīla Prabhupāda was talking with some of his disciples in his quarters. As soon as my parents entered, Śrīla Prabhupāda greeted them. After hearing him speak for some time, they finally came to the point—they wanted me back.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “I have no objection; ask your son.”

I said, “I want to stay with Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

“We want to set up a big trust for Girirāja,” my father said. “And we want him to come home to sign the papers.”

“Yes, you can send the papers,” Śrīla Prabhupāda replied. “He can sign.”

My parents said that they had no objection to my remaining in the movement, but they did not want my health to deteriorate. So they wanted me to be stationed near home.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Do not worry. I will take personal care of him.”

My parents were still apprehensive, so Śrīla Prabhupāda added, “Let him stay with me in India for some more months, and I will take personal care of him. Then, when I return to America in April, he can come with me.”

With my parents somewhat relieved, I said, “Just see how intelligent Śrīla Prabhupāda is. In the winter, when the Western countries are cold and dark, Śrīla Prabhupāda stays in India. And in the summer, when the West is warm and sunny, Śrīla Prabhupāda goes there.”

My father was becoming enlivened by Śrīla Prabhupāda, and he affirmed, “Yes, he is very intelligent.”

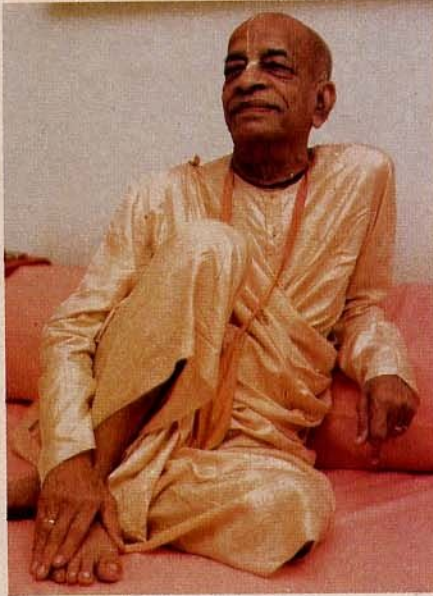
Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “No, your son is—he has understood my strategy.”

My father said, “No! You are intelligent, actually.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “Yes, I have to be intelligent; otherwise how could I attract so many intelligent young men like your son?”

My mother was still thinking of my poor health and long absence from home, and she began to cry.

To cheer her, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave her a *sandēśa* (a milk sweet). At first my mother wouldn't accept, but Śrīla Prabhupāda's kind and gentle persistence prevailed. Then he declared, “Girirāja, you must take at least two dozen of these sweets daily. Then you



will become strong and healthy.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda assured my parents, “I will personally see that he is supplied with sufficient *sandēśa*. Do not worry.”

Everyone was thoroughly pleased and satisfied by Śrīla Prabhupāda's loving dealings. As my father was leaving the temple he remarked, “Your spiritual master certainly knows how to deal with people.”

Meanwhile Śrīla Prabhupāda's secretary marveled, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, everybody likes you so much!”

“Yes,” he said, “because I like everybody.”

Girirāja Svāmī

Among many other things, Śrīla Prabhupāda taught his disciples how to worship the Deity forms of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His eternal consort Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. For instance, he told us that we should dress the Deities very opulently, which meant that we had to make special garments for Them. I was in Bombay in 1972 when I made my first attempt at sewing outfits.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda walked into the temple one day to see the Deities, he smiled broadly. Even as he was prostrating himself before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, he looked up at Them repeatedly and smiled. Then he arose, and he said to me, “Thank you very much. Make thousands of outfits like this. And always

make Rādhārāṇī more beautiful than Kṛṣṇa—then Kṛṣṇa will never leave.”

One other time, while Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Los Angeles in July of 1974, he remarked how nicely the Deities were dressed and asked who had done it. The other devotees told him that it was Mañjuali dāsī and I. That afternoon Śrīla Prabhupāda's secretary told us that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to speak to us in his quarters. When we got there he gave us twenty dollars for the Deities, and we said we'd buy more cloth and make more garments for Them. Śrīla Prabhupāda was smiling beautifully. “So always engage in this way,” he told us. “Then your present life will be perfect, and your next life will be perfect. You'll go back home, back to Godhead.”

Tuṅgabhadrā-devī dāsī

One day at our Los Angeles center, Śrīla Prabhupāda was walking behind the temple and down the narrow, sandy pathway that led to his garden. As he passed through the gateway, he glanced lovingly at every plant and flower. Then he slipped his shoes off and took his place on the cushioned platform we had made for him. Along with some other devotees, I followed him in through the gateway. Just then an older disciple told him, “Here's Jalaśayī. She's the gardener.” And although I'd done really nothing, Śrīla Prabhupāda folded his hands and bowed his head toward me. When he said “Thank you very much,” I realized he knew just how to encourage each of us.

Meanwhile, some of the temple *pūjārīs* (the devotees who are in charge of Deity worship) began asking Śrīla Prabhupāda detailed questions, and he gave thoughtful, detailed answers. I simply sat there listening and watching every gracious move he made. When there were pauses between questions, Śrīla Prabhupāda would softly chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, his right hand fingering the beads in his saffron-colored bead bag. I could see his eyes still moving around the garden and taking in all the plants and flowers. Suddenly he stopped, and said, “This is just like the spiritual world.”

Jalaśayī-devī dāsī

# Lord Kṛṣṇa's Childhood Activities

To His mother and father, Lord Kṛṣṇa was an endearing child.  
To the demons, He was death personified.



ILLUSTRATION: PARASURAMA DAS

Playing like an ordinary child, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was a constant source of pleasure to His parents. His mother Yaśodā would say, "My dear Kṛṣṇa, please bring my wooden measuring pot," and somehow little Kṛṣṇa would bring it to her. Or Kṛṣṇa's father Nanda Mahārāja would say, "Please bring me my wooden slippers." And with great difficulty Kṛṣṇa would put the slippers on His head and bring them. Every so often Nanda and Yaśodā would ask Kṛṣṇa to lift some heavy object, and He would simply stand and touch it, as if He were at a loss what to do.

At times the neighboring cowherd women (the *gopīs*), would clap their hands and promise, "If You dance for us, dear Kṛṣṇa, we shall give You half a sweetmeat." Kṛṣṇa would smile and dance as if He were a wooden doll in their hands. Sometimes at their bidding

He would sing very loudly. In this way He became submissive to the *gopīs*. Through these pastimes Kṛṣṇa wanted to show great philosophers and sages that although He controls the universe, His pure devotees control Him.

One day an elderly woman came near Kṛṣṇa's house to sell fruit. She called out, "If anyone wants fruit, please come to me and get it!" Kṛṣṇa immediately took some grain in His hands and went to barter for fruit, just as He had seen the older people do. But He was not very careful to hold His hands tight, and He was dropping all the grain as He walked. Still, being captivated by Kṛṣṇa's beauty, the fruit vendor accepted whatever few grains were left in His palm. Then she affectionately filled His hands with fruit. At that moment, through His mystic power Kṛṣṇa filled the woman's basket with jewels and gold. Whoever gives something to the Lord is never the loser; he is the gainer millions of times over.

Some time later, Kṛṣṇa was playing with His older brother Balarāma and some other children on the bank of the River Yamunā. When Yaśodā went to call Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma for lunch, They were so busy playing that They didn't come. "Kṛṣṇa!" she called. "Please come home! It's already past time for Your lunch! Balarāma, please come back. You boys have been playing all morning, and now You must be very tired and hungry. Please come home and take Your lunch. Your father Nanda Mahārāja is waiting for You. He won't eat until You come back, so please hurry."

As soon as Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma heard that Nanda Mahārāja was waiting for Them, They started to return. But just then Kṛṣṇa's playmates complained,



ILLUSTRATION: JAGATKARANA DEVI DAS



“Kṛṣṇa, You’re leaving just when we’re having the most fun. Next time we won’t let You leave. Or maybe we won’t even let You play with us at all.”

Little Kṛṣṇa became afraid, and instead of going back home for lunch, He went back again to play with the boys. Mother Yaśodā scolded Him. “My dear Kṛṣṇa, do You think You are just a street boy? You have no home? Please come home right this minute. Besides, today is Your birthday. You can’t just play all day—You have some important things to do. Every little boy that has a birthday must give some cows in charity to the good *brāhmaṇa* priests. And just look at Yourself! You’re all covered with dust and sand, so come home and let me give You a bath. Don’t You know that all Your friends at home are very clean?” Finally Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma came home. There mother Yaśodā bathed and dressed Them very nicely and decorated Them with ornaments. Then she called for the *brāhmaṇas* and held a birthday celebration for her wonderful child.

After all of this, the elder cowherd men met with Nanda Mahārāja to consider how to deal with some recent disturbances in their village. Nanda’s brother Upānanda, who was very learned and experienced, began to speak. “My dear friends,” he said gravely, “now we should leave this place, because great demons are always coming here to disturb our peaceful lives. Mostly, they are trying to kill the small children. Just consider the witch Pūtānā—it is simply the Lord’s mercy that Kṛṣṇa escaped her hands. Next the whirlwind demon took Kṛṣṇa into the sky to kill Him, but by the grace of the Lord, this demon fell down on a stone slab and died. More recently, Kṛṣṇa was playing between two trees, and they almost fell down right on top of Him. Just imagine the calamity if He or any of the other children had been crushed by the falling trees! This place is no longer safe. I think that all of us should go to the forest called Vṛndāvana. That place is very suitable for us, because it is lush with grass, herbs, and creepers for our cows. Also, it has nice gardens and tall mountains. We can all be happy there—let us go today.”

The rest of the cowherd men agreed, and they began loading their household belongings onto their bullock carts. The women, children, and old men of the village sat in the carts, while the cowherd men, who carried bows and arrows, walked in front and looked after the cows, bulls, and calves. With horns and bugles sounding, the caravan set off for Vṛndāvana. Along the way, mother Yaśodā sat with Kṛṣṇa on her lap, and

she enjoyed talking with Him.

Soon the caravan reached Vṛndāvana, where all the seasons are pleasing. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma saw Govardhana Hill and the River Yamunā, They were very happy. The cowherd men made a camp by drawing their bullock carts around them in the shape of a half-moon, and later they built permanent houses.

Before long the cowherd men placed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in charge of the calves, and every day the brothers would go along with the other cowherd boys into the pasturing ground. Sometimes all the boys played football with *āmalakī* and bael fruits, and their ankle bells


jingled as they ran. Sometimes they made themselves into cows and bulls by covering themselves with blankets. Then they roared and fought with one another. They also imitated the sounds of swans, peacocks, cranes, and monkeys.

Once, while Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were playing on the bank of the Yamunā, a demon named Vatsāsura took the shape of a calf and came to kill Them. Vatsāsura mingled with the other calves, but Kṛṣṇa noticed this and signaled to Balarāma. Although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord and knows everything, He pretended He didn't understand what the demon was up to. Both brothers followed Vatsāsura and sneaked up on

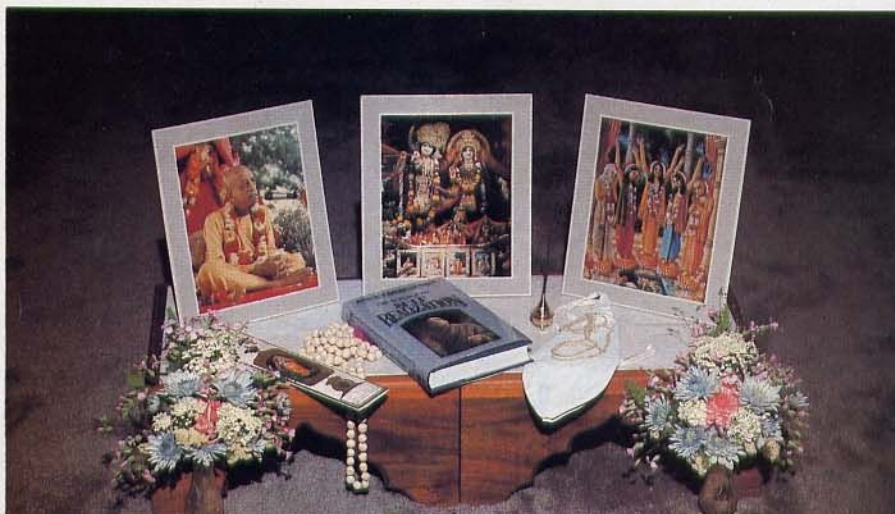
him. Suddenly Kṛṣṇa caught the demon-calf by his hind legs and tail, whipped him around, and threw him into a *kappitha* tree. The demon lost his life and fell down to the ground along with many *kappitha* fruits. (This fruit is sweet and sour, and all the cowherd boys liked to eat it.) Kṛṣṇa's playmates gathered around Him and said, "Well done!" And the demigods in the sky showered flowers. With the trouble past, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma ate Their breakfast. In this way Kṛṣṇa, who maintains the whole creation, used to take care of the calves.

Every day the cowherd boys would go to the bank of the Yamunā to water their calves, and the boys would also drink. One day they had taken a drink and were sitting on the riverbank when they saw a huge ducklike animal. It was as big as a hill, and the boys were afraid. Suddenly the demon, who was called Bakāsura, came at Kṛṣṇa with his sharp beak and swallowed Him up. All the cowherd boys were stunned and breathless, as if they had died. But Kṛṣṇa became like a fire and burned the demon's throat. Then Bakāsura threw Kṛṣṇa up and tried to kill Him by pinching Him with his beak. But Kṛṣṇa caught hold of the gigantic duck's beak and pulled it apart. He split Bakāsura down the middle, just as an ordinary child splits a blade of grass. From the sky the demigods showered *mallikā* flowers and sounded celestial kettledrums and conchshells. Now that Kṛṣṇa had come out victorious, the boys felt as if they had regained the very source of their life. One after another, they embraced Kṛṣṇa. After this they rounded up all their calves and headed home.

When the boys arrived in the village, they told everyone what had happened. On hearing how Kṛṣṇa had done away with Bakāsura, all the cowherd men and women felt deeply moved, because they loved Kṛṣṇa very much. "It is astonishing that this boy Kṛṣṇa has faced so many causes of death," they thought. "But the demons have not harmed Him at all. They themselves have died, like flies rushing into a fire."

The residents of Vṛndāvana always talked about the wonderful activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma. They were so absorbed in these discussions that they forgot about the miseries of material life. And what they enjoyed five thousand years ago is open today to anyone who hears or speaks about the transcendental pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. 

[Adapted by Drutakarmā dāsa from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.]



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## TANTRA

(continued from page 26)

force in the spine to the six centers of psychic power. At each of the six *cakras*, or psychic centers, deities who reside there offer him material powers and pleasures of inconceivable dimension. These are all tricks of Kālī (Durgā) to divert the *yogī* from success. When and if his *kuṇḍalīnī* force reaches the center located at his eyes, the *yogī* may then prepare for leaving his body. He must now make "the long tongue."

With a sharpened goat's tooth, the *yogī* cuts the septum, or cord of flesh, under his tongue. Day after day he cuts the septum again, so that the tongue can extend higher and higher. As it heals, the *yogī* cuts further. At last, he can stretch his tongue up to the middle of his nose, then to his eyes. When he can stretch his tongue to his forehead, he is ready. Then by the *kuṇḍalīnī* force the *yogī* raises the living soul up to the throat and inserts the "long tongue" in the postnasal passage. This keeps the soul from passing out the mouth, nose, eyes, or ears. Through mystic fire a channel opens, the top of the skull fractures, and the soul enters the clear white light. Once in this light, the *yogī* will probably make the mistake of thinking that he has become God. Completely forgetting his whole struggle with his body, he will fall immediately into a low form of life like that of a germ or stone. As *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32) informs us, "Because of his impure intelligence, the *yogī* who would become one with God ultimately falls back down to the material world—no matter how severe the austerities he has performed."

Now we have viewed the real path of the *tantra* in detail. The followers of the Vaiṣṇava *tantras* suggest that for genuine spiritual progress, you don't have to go to all this trouble. Instead you can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and your life will be sublime.



An intimate disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda's since 1967, His Holiness Acyutānanda Svāmī spent the last eleven years studying and teaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India. From 1967 to 1972, he resided in āśramas in both Bengal and South India. There he became proficient in Bengali, and he made an extensive study of the Vedic scriptures underlying the various schools of Indian thought. After 1972 he taught the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the subcontinent, consistently receiving warm welcomes at important devotional centers. Not long ago, he returned to the West for an extended visit and lecture tour.

# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## Humanism: Giving Credit Where Credit Isn't Due

Now that I'm preparing a book on the life of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I have been researching the centuries-old biographical tradition. In one collection of biographies, I came upon an editor's introduction that riled me:

That from the ranks of humanity there can emerge a Socrates, a Cato, a Jesus, a More, a Newton, a Mozart, a Balzac, a Deburau, a Napoleon, is in my eyes a thing more wonderful than all the miracles ever imagined by the makers of religions. . . . Our desire for an immortality of the soul shall be dedicated to the belief that the great wonder of creation is man and the infinite possibilities that lie not within the theologies of religious leaders, but within ourselves.

Why does this man feel that to praise great men he has to decry God? This kind of humanism is nothing new, of course, but it is surely misplaced and misinformed and does justice neither to God nor to man.

For the sake of argument, let us accept that the extraordinary human being is the most wonderful thing in the world. Still we have to inquire, "Where does the extraordinary greatness of a particular man or woman come from?" In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead affirms, "It is I who am the ability in man." And the transcendentalist reasons that intelligence has to come from an original source of intelligence—an original, supreme consciousness. The skeptic may deny this, but he cannot offer any explanation why someone like Socrates suddenly arises. The appearance of a great personality may seem like a unique combination of historical exigency and individual merit, but a great man cannot be explained merely by historical, economic, sociological, genealogical, or psychological factors. What's more, there is no scientific method for producing such a great personality. The intellectual community cannot produce an Einstein, the art schools cannot produce a poet or musician, nor can politicians or historians produce a great man of action. We may take pride in the achievements of great men, but these achievements

are hardly the independent creation of humanity.

Even the "great man" cannot understand how he has come by his uncommon powers. Why, when his contemporaries appear to work just as hard and to have just as good an education, does he rise above all of them? If there really is no explanation, if greatness is simply an accident, why should we praise an accident? If Mozart's music is superior by accident, then why give Mozart so much credit? Those who thoughtfully study the life of a great man usually conclude that "destiny" or "genius" or "inspiration" or "special power"—not accident—accounts for his high achievement. Of course, the *Bhagavad-gītā* explains in detail that one's *karma*, his activity in past lives, accounts for his abilities in this life. At any rate, everyone appreciates a person who makes a great contribution to humanity. But while most people wonder at the greatness of the man, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person inquires even further—into the cause, the source of the greatness of all men and women and indeed of all life.

Thus far, for the sake of argument we have assumed that mankind's ultimate object of study is mankind. But let's think for a moment. Is man really the ultimate? No, he cannot be. As great as any man may be, he is still a tiny creature subject to the miseries of old age, disease, and death. This is true not just for the average man but even for a Napoleon, a Socrates, a Shakespeare, or an Einstein. So anyone who is actually advanced will acknowledge his frailty with all humility. He will acknowledge that he is actually a tiny creature in a vast universe, that he must bow to time and the control of the Supreme. In other words, a man's relative greatness does not make him the supreme great.

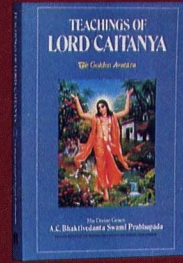
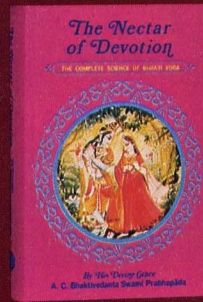
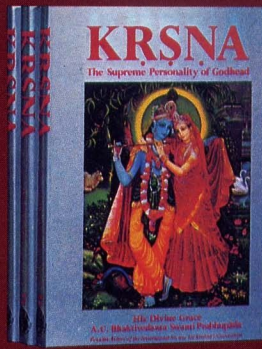
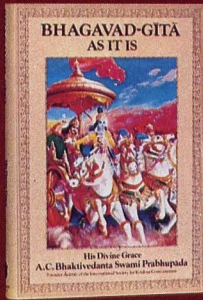
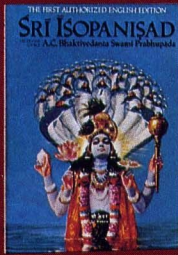
As the Vedic literature explains, the supreme great is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān—"the one who possesses all the opulences: wealth, power, beauty, strength, knowledge, fame, and renunciation." In this world a great man may have one or two of these qualities to some degree. But no human being possesses all these qualities to a greater degree than his contemporaries. The person who possesses all the opulences to an infinite degree, eter-

nally, can be defined as God, and whatever greatness we see in man or in nature is but an infinitesimal spark of His greatness. As Lord Kṛṣṇa informs us in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "I am the generating seed of all existences. There is no being, moving or unmoving, that can exist without Me. There is no end to My divine manifestations. Know that all beautiful, glorious, and mighty creations spring from but a spark of My splendor." (Bg. 10.39-41)

Man is surely great, and his real greatness lies in his ability to understand God's message: that he is made in God's image; that he is an eternal soul, part and parcel of God; and that God is the supreme. Any man who doesn't help other people recognize their identity as eternal souls, any man who doesn't acknowledge that we are now in a state of ignorance that forces us to undergo repeated births and deaths, is not really a great man. Any man who cannot help his fellow beings become liberated from the sufferings of this material world cannot be considered a great contributor, even though he may have made a longlasting impression on his contemporaries. (How longlasting is this world's fame, anyway? We may call Shakespeare or Socrates "immortal" for a few hundred or a few thousand years after their passing, but what is this compared to eternity?) Men who are actually great are quick to acknowledge the greatness of God, who out-dramatizes Shakespeare and out-thinks Socrates.

As I begin my study of the life of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, I see that he did everything in the pure consciousness of glorifying God. And he helped others see that devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is the very purpose of life. I can understand that I won't be able to do full justice to his life, but at least I can see that here is true greatness. As Śrīla Prabhupāda showed us, a great person does not claim that he is dominating events or that he has created the greatest wonder, nor does he leave a legacy that does nothing to free mankind from birth and death. No. A great person is he who realizes that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Being, is everything. A great person surrenders to Him, and he shares this enlightenment with others.

—SDG



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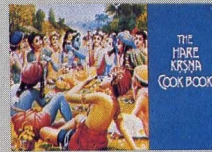
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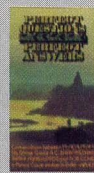


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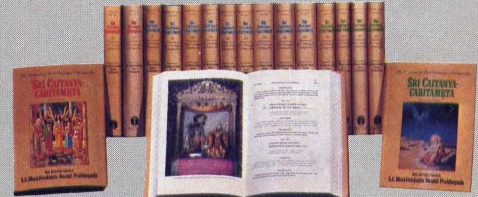
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