

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



BACK TO GODHEAD



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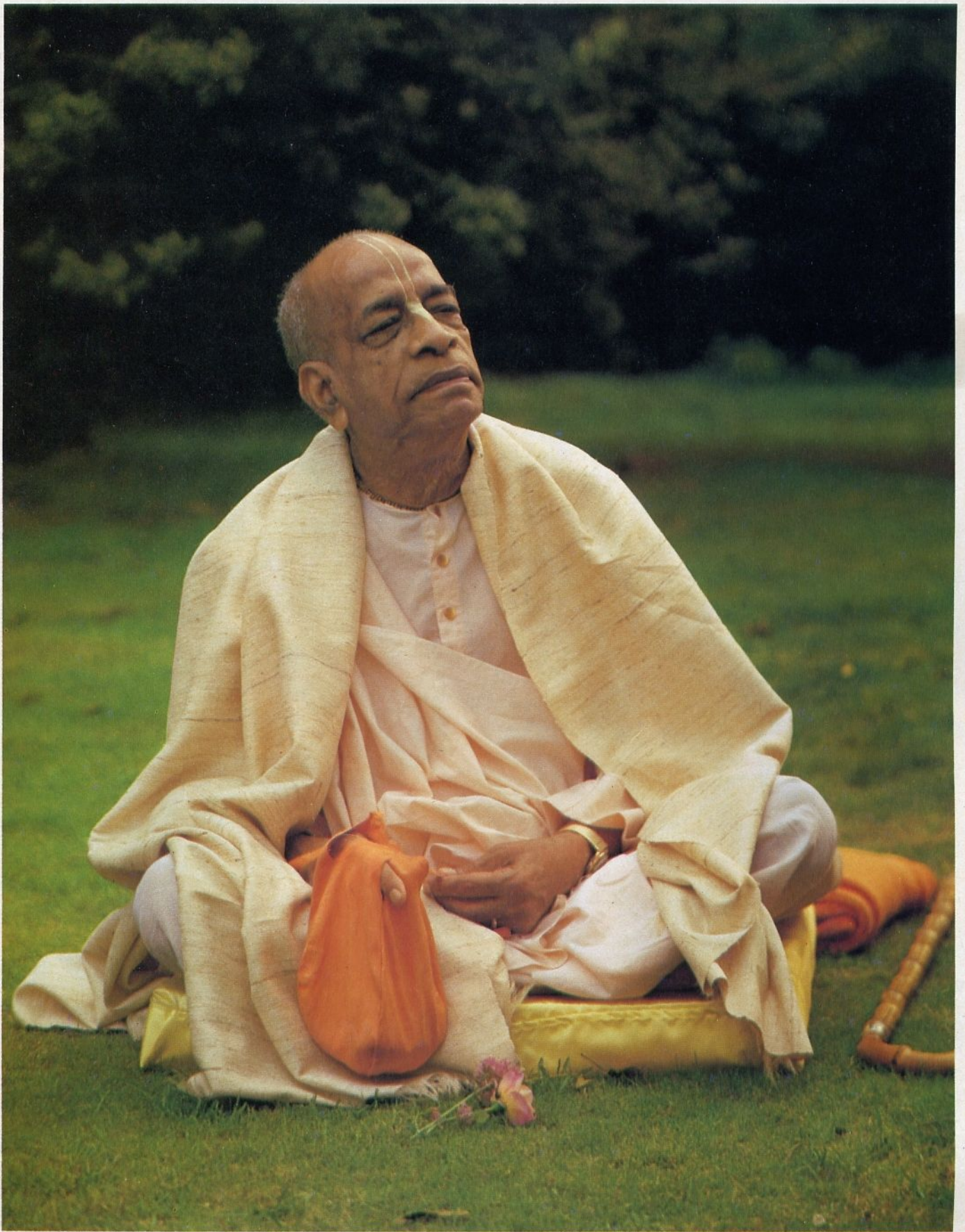


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His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

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BACK TO GODHEAD

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His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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PRONUNCIATION. Sanskrit words and names in
BACK TO GODHEAD are spelled according to a schol-
arly system that shows how to pronounce each word.
The sound of the short **a** is like the **u** in **but**. Long **ā** is
like the **a** in **far** and held twice as long as the short **a**,
and **e** is like the **a** in **evade**. Long **ī** is like the **i** in **pique**.
The vowel **ī** is pronounced like the **ri** in the English
word **rim**. The **e** is pronounced as in **chair**. The aspir-
ated consonants (**ch**, **jh**, **dh**, etc.) are pronounced as
in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog** and **red-hot**. The two
spirants **ś** and **ṣ** are like the English **sh**, and **s** is like the
s in **sun**. So pronounce **Kṛṣṇa** as **KRISHNA** and
Caitanya as **CHAITANYA**.

◀ **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupāda** came to America in 1965, at age 70, to
fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach Kṛṣṇa
consciousness to the English-speaking world. In a
dozen years he published some seventy volumes of
translation and commentary on India's Vedic
literatures, and these are now standard 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 in 1977 in In-
dia's Vṛndāvana, the holy place most sacred to Lord
Kṛṣṇa, and his disciples are carrying forward the move-
ment he started.

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COVER: The Transcendental Pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa last ap-
peared on earth, some fifty centuries ago, each day His friends came over and His
mother helped Him get dressed. He played like an ordinary boy. Yet at times He
did things that were anything but ordinary. (See page 33.) (Cover art: Dhṛti-devī
dāśī.)

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."

KNOWLEDGE IS THE SOLUTION

by HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

*tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

“Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you, because he has seen the truth.” [Bhagavad-gītā 4.34]

Knowledge is the solution. And for knowledge we have to go to the right person, the *tattva-darśī*. *Tattva-darśī* means “one who has actually seen or experienced the Absolute Truth.” Unless we find such a person—one who has actually seen the Absolute Truth or who has experienced what the Absolute Truth is—there is very little chance for our making spiritual advancement.

So we have to find a person who is experienced in the Absolute Truth and then follow the principles stated here: *praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā*. *Praṇipātena* means to surrender, *paripraśnena* means to inquire, and *sevayā* means to render service—three things. You should find a person who is self-realized, who has experience in the Absolute Truth, and then, on your part, you have to surrender to him, you have to inquire, and you have to render service. When these things are completed, there is no doubt about your spiritual salvation. If you have actually found a person who is self-realized, and if you have surrendered to him honestly, with inquiry and service, then you must know that your spiritual salvation is guaranteed. Guaranteed. There is no doubt about it.

Next Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

*yaḥ jñātvā na punar moham
evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava*

*yena bhūtāny aśeṣāṇi
drakṣyasi ātmany aho mayi*

“And when you have thus learned the truth, you will never again come under delusion, for you will know that all living beings are but part of Me, and that they are in Me, and are Mine.” [Bg. 4.35] Here Lord Kṛṣṇa says that as soon as one gets knowledge from the right person, then he never again comes into the field of delusion. The whole thing is that in the present stage of our life, we are conditioned and deluded—we do not know things as they are, and that is the cause of all our miseries.

Otherwise, constitutionally we are *ānandamayo bhyāsāt*—by nature we are jolly. In the *Vedānta-sūtra* you'll find that the nature of Brahman, or spirit, is *ānandamaya*, full of bliss. And in *Brahma-samhitā* [5.1] it is said, *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*: “Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller, and His form is composed of eternity, knowledge, and bliss.” *Sat, cit, ānanda*. *Sat* means “eternity,” *cit* means “full knowledge,” and *ānanda* means “pleasure.” This is our constitution. We are all fragmental portions of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. Therefore, because He is eternal and full of knowledge and pleasure, we are also eternal and full of knowledge and pleasure.

Unfortunately, we have been put into contact with the material energy. Therefore, we are experiencing just the opposite. What is the opposite of *sac-cid-ānanda*? *Sat* means “eternity.” So we are now just the opposite: *asat*. *Asat* means “non-eternal.” This body will cease to exist. We are put into such a condition that however hard we may try to keep our youthfulness—by so many medicines, injections, and so many other

things which we have invented by our advancement of material science—death is sure. *Antavanta ime dehāḥ*: the body must one day be finished. Therefore, there is no question of *sat*, eternity. And *cit . . . cit* means “knowledge.” We have no knowledge. We have senses, but these are all imperfect senses. When somebody speaks about the Lord, we challenge, “Can you show me the Lord?” But we do not know that our senses are so imperfect that we can barely see even what we are daily seeing. If the light is turned off, then we cannot see each other, even in this room. So our seeing power is conditional. It is not perfect. Similarly, all our senses are imperfect. So by imperfect senses and by speculation with our imperfect mind, we cannot reach the Absolute Truth. It is not possible—not possible.

Therefore the *Bhagavad-gītā* says, *tad viddhi praṇipātena*: “If you are at all serious about understanding transcendental knowledge, then you must approach a person who has experience of the Absolute Truth.” Otherwise, it is not possible for you to understand. If you think, “I shall realize the Absolute Truth by mental speculation,” it is not possible, because you are fortified with only imperfections. Your senses cannot approach the Absolute Truth, or Brahman. Therefore it is said, *avān-mānasa-gocaraḥ*: “Brahman is beyond mental speculation.” In fact, one name of the Supreme Lord is *Adhokṣaja*. *Adhokṣaja* means “the one by whom our material senses are defeated.” Our material senses are defeated in every respect. So it is not possible to realize the Absolute

Fifty centuries ago, on India's Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa showed His bewildered friend Arjuna the science of the self.

yes



“The whole thing is that in the present stage of our life, we are conditioned and deluded—we do not know things as they are, and that is the cause of all our miseries.”

Truth if we do not find a person who is a realized soul, who is absolute, who has understood.

In India, generally the *brāhmaṇas* [saintly intellectuals] are expected to be the spiritual masters, because *brāhmaṇa* means “he who has sufficient knowledge in the transcendental science” (*brahma jānāti brāhmaṇaḥ*). That is a *brāhmaṇa*. Now, due to this modern age, Kali-yuga [the age of quarrel and hypocrisy], it is very difficult to find a qualified *brāhmaṇa*. Therefore, it is also very difficult to find a qualified spiritual master. So Caitanya Mahāprabhu [the incarnation of God for this age] has recommended,

*kibrā viprā, kiba nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā sei 'guru' haya*

“Never mind whether one is a *brāhmaṇa* or a *śūdra* [a workingman] or a *sannyāsī* [a renounced monk] or a householder. Never mind what he is; that doesn't matter. If he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa, then he is a bona fide spiritual master.” [Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.128]

So here in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is the science of Kṛṣṇa. Every one of you should study *Bhagavad-gītā* very scrutinizingly, with all your arguments, with all your sense, with all your philosophical knowledge. As it is said here, *tad vid-dhi praṇipātena paripraśnena*: it is not that you have to submit yourself blindly. Although your spiritual master may be self-realized and experienced in the Absolute Truth, still you have to *question* him. You have to understand from him all critical points by your intelligent questions. That is allowed.

So it doesn't matter where he's born or what he is—whether he's a *brāhmaṇa* or a *śūdra* or an American or an Indian or whatever. Never mind. When you go to a doctor, a medical practitioner, you do not ask, “Well, Doctor, are you American or Indian? Are you a *brāhmaṇa*? Are you a Jew? Are you a Christian?” No. If he has the qualifications of a medical man, you surrender: “Doctor, treat me. I am suffering.” There is no question. Similarly, if you find someone who has the qualifications of a spiritual master, you can accept him as a spiritual master and surrender to him.

You'll be surprised that Lord Caitanya's principal disciples were all so-

called fallen men in society. He appointed one Haridāsa Ṭhākura as *nām-ācārya*. (*Nāmācārya* means “the prime minister, or the authority, in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.”) This Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a Muhammadan. He happened to take his birth in a Muhammadan family, but he became a follower of Lord Caitanya. And after training him, Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave him the highest post in His spiritual mission.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in this world to introduce the system of chanting the holy names of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. And Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who happened to be a Muhammadan, became so enlightened that Caitanya Mahāprabhu appointed him the supreme minister for administering this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Haridāsa was made the authority, the *nāmācārya*. So there is nothing barring anyone from becoming a spiritual master. Everyone can become a spiritual master, provided he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. And that is very reasonable. If you do not know the subject matter, how can you be a teacher? A teacher is he who knows the science.

So Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna and to all the human race, *yaj jñātvā na punar moham*: “By understanding this science, you will not be illusioned.” Because Arjuna was illusioned, he was not prepared to fight. So this *Bhagavad-gītā* instruction was given to Arjuna. Here Kṛṣṇa says, “If you actually undergo the training under an experienced, bona fide spiritual master, then you will not succumb to the illusory energy.”

Then Kṛṣṇa says,

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ
sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamaḥ
sarvaṁ jñāna-plavenaiva
vrjinam santarīsyasi*

“Even if you are considered to be the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries.” [Bg. 4.36] Now, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says we are in the midst of the ocean of ignorance. This life, this conditioned life in the material world, is just like an ocean of ignorance. Lord Caitanya therefore prays to Śrī Kṛṣṇa like this: *ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram*

patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau—“My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, I have fallen in the ocean of ignorance.” So, we are in the ocean of ignorance. Now, if you have a very good ship, you can very easily cross the Atlantic Ocean without any difficulty. Similarly, if we have the ship or the boat of perfect knowledge, then there is no fear. We can cross the ocean of ignorance very easily.

Now, here Kṛṣṇa says, *api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamaḥ*: a person may be the most sinful man, the *supermost* sinful man, but if he gets this knowledge of the Kṛṣṇa science, then he can cross over the ocean of ignorance very easily. This means that it does not matter what our past life was. Any Vedic literature, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*, does not take into account what you were in the past—that doesn't matter. Because we are in ignorance, we might have done so many things which are not approved, which are not virtuous. That is quite possible. Every one of us is subjected to suffering, because due to ignorance we do so many sinful things. Nobody can say, “I am free from any sinful activities.” Nobody can say that. But that doesn't matter, because Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, *api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamaḥ*: “Even if one is the most sinful man, when he understands the Kṛṣṇa science, he's free.” He's free, and he can cross over the material ocean of ignorance very easily.

How is it possible? In the next verse [Bg. 4.37], Kṛṣṇa gives a very nice example:

*yathaidāmsi samiddho 'gnir
bhasmasāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāni
bhasmasāt kurute tathā*

“As the blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.” Whatever you put in a fire, the fire will go on burning. It will burn everything to ashes. Never mind whether it is wood or some dirty thing; the fire will turn it into ashes. Similarly, if you get this Kṛṣṇa science, if you understand this Kṛṣṇa science, then all your reactions to your sinful activities—whatever you might have done in the past—will all be burned to ashes. Burned to ashes.

“A person may be the most sinful man, but if he gets this knowledge, this knowledge of the Kṛṣṇa science, then he can cross over the ocean of ignorance very easily.”

In the next verse [Bg. 4.38], Kṛṣṇa says,

*na hi jñānena sadṛśaṁ
pavitram iha vidyate
tat svayam yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ
kālenāmani vindati*

“In this world there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the self within himself in due course of time.”

Therefore, we must seek knowledge. And the perfection of knowledge, as we have several times explained in these meetings, is to understand Kṛṣṇa. That’s all. In the Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, you’ll find, *bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate*: “After culturing knowledge for many, many births, one comes to Kṛṣṇa, and he understands that Vāsudeva [Kṛṣṇa] is everything.” *Vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*: “Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, is everything, the cause of all causes.” He’s the cause of all causes. Always remember that when I speak of Kṛṣṇa, I am speaking of God—God is the cause of all causes.

Now, these days the idea of communism is becoming very prominent. So, in the Kṛṣṇa science there is a very nice conception of spiritual communism. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you’ll find that there was once a discussion between Nārada [a great devotee-sage] and Yudhiṣṭhira [a great devotee-king]. Nārada was explaining that in this manifested material world—whether on the higher planets or on this planet or in outer space—whatever wonderful things and material resources there are, they are all manufactured by the Supreme Lord. Just try to understand. Nothing in this world is done by any human being. Everything is done by God. Nobody can deny it. *Ātmāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*: “Everything in existence is owned and controlled by the Supreme Lord.” Therefore, all living entities—from the ant on up to Brahmā, the highest human being, or the highest demigod—all of them have the right to use the material resources.

Now, Nārada says that you can use all these material resources, as much as you require, but if you want more, if you take more, then you’ll become a thief, and you are punishable. Just see the idea of

spiritual communism! Everything in the universe (on this planet or on other planets), belongs to God. Now people are trying to go to the moon. The Russians are trying to put their flag first on the moon, so that they’ll conquer. It is just like when you Americans first came from Europe. You conquered this tract of land, America, and you put up your flag. So now people are trying to go to the moon. But this putting up a flag is ignorance. Why are you putting up your flag? It is not your property; it is God’s property. This is knowledge. But if I think, “It is my property, so I must put my flag here,” that is ignorance.

In this morning’s lecture I gave another example. If you throw some bags of grain in the street, many pigeons will come, but each pigeon will pick up only four, five, six, eight, ten grains—

and then go away. He will not take even one grain more than he needs. As soon as he’s satisfied to his heart’s content—“Oh, I am full”—he’ll go away. He’ll not stock any grain. And this is natural. But if we put a hundred bags of flour on the street, and if we ask people to come and take, then somebody will take ten bags, somebody will take fifteen bags, somebody will take thirty bags, and somebody will not take any bags, because he’s weak and cannot. So the distribution will not be equal. That is our advancement of civilization. The knowledge which the pigeons, the cats, and the dogs have, we are lacking. What is that knowledge? That the whole thing belongs to the Supreme Lord and that we can accept whatever we need—but not more than that. This is knowledge.

(continued on page 35)

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THE SOUL IN THE BODY

Just Passing Through

by VIŚĀKHĀ-DEVĪ DĀSĪ

“... Overall, I don’t remember too much from those days. . . . I was always getting into things and talking in class. The teachers were strict, and we had to study hard. I played on the basketball team. And oh, those ugly high boots—how we hated them!”

Robert A. Griesser
recalling his school days.

Today Mr. Robert A. Griesser (he’s my father-in-law) teaches history at California’s Orange Coast College. Inexorable time has carried him far from his mischievous boyhood days; fashions and customs have changed, along with his thinking and, most noticeably, his physical form.

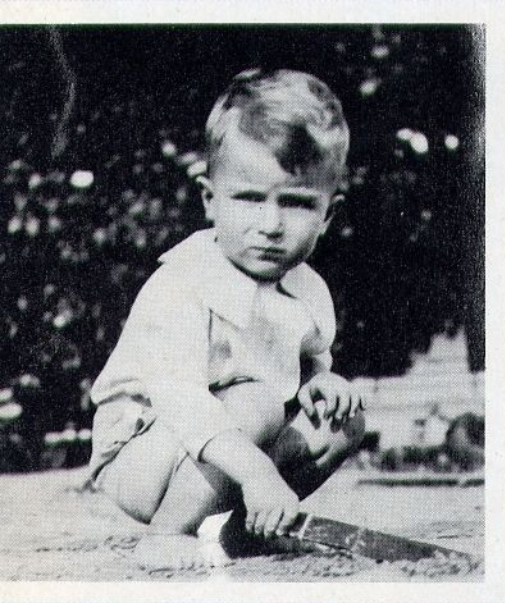
If you had known Mr. Griesser in 1920 and then were to see him again today, after a lapse of fifty-eight years, you probably

wouldn’t recognize him. That’s how radically his appearance has changed. And, analytically speaking, the hands that once tied up those ugly high boots are not the same hands that today grade college term papers, although they belong to the same person. The bone, muscle, blood, and skin cells that made up young Robert’s hands all died long ago and have been replaced several times over with new cells. Through the years, Mr. Griesser’s whole body has completely changed. Yet he feels (more than feels—he *knows*) he’s the same person, although you may not.

Sometimes the body is compared to a garment. Just as we change our shirt and coat, so we change our body (and Robert Griesser has changed from a stoic-looking first-grader to a jolly lieutenant colonel to a thoughtful college professor). But the person wearing the garment (in this case, Mr. Griesser) doesn’t change. So the question is, Who is that

1920

1917



person that remains the same within the changing body? Or, to put it another way, “Who am I?”

Anyone who asks this question—“Who am I?”—shows considerable intelligence. After all, even animals spend time solving the food problem, finding somewhere to live, having sex, and protecting themselves from danger. But we humans alone can look beyond the body and mind and ask, “Who am I?”

Ancient India’s *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.13), gives this basic question a clear answer: “From childhood to youth to old age, the material body is always changing. But within the body is a spiritual soul. He never changes but always stays the same.” What all this means is that right now we can’t see who we really are. Mr. Griesser, for example, is a spiritual soul, but we don’t see him (the soul) in any of these photographs—all we see is Mr. Griesser’s body.

In other words, the body (which is material) and the soul (which is spiritual) are two totally different energies. Matter has no consciousness. Spirit, on the other hand, has consciousness. And what’s more, the spiritual soul within the body remains the same—it doesn’t change—while the body changes in six ways—birth, growth, reproduction, duration, dwindling, and finally, vanishing.

As the *Bhagavad-gītā* goes on to explain, “Only the material body of the indestructible, immeasurable, and eternal soul is subject to destruction. . . . For the soul there is never birth nor death. Nor, having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying, and primeval . . .” (Bg. 2.18, 2.20)

The body, then, is nothing more than dead matter. It’s the soul’s presence within it that makes the body *appear* alive. And it’s the eternal soul’s presence that gives a continuing identity to the changing body. That explains how Mr. Griesser knows that he’s the same person, despite all the different

bodies he’s had over the past sixty-five years. He, the spiritual soul, hasn’t changed. Just his body has.

So we have to center our interest not on the body but on the soul dwelling within the body. At present we’ve forgotten the soul, just as we forget about ourselves when we dream at night. When we’re asleep we may think we’re flying in the sky or seated on a royal chariot. We forget our name and responsibilities. In the same way, although we appear awake now, we’re actually asleep to our identity beyond the mind and body. The goal of human life is to wake up to who we are and to act accordingly (as a spiritual being).

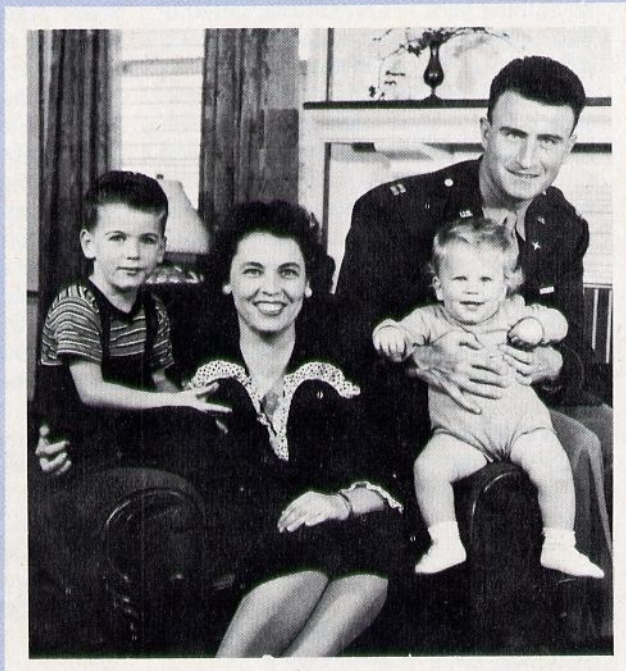
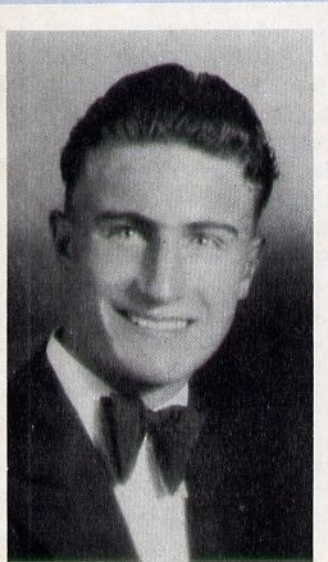
Recently, Orange Coast College honored my father-in-law with a plaque for “thirty years of leadership and service” in the teaching profession, and soon he’ll be retiring. But when I meet him I always think to myself that he still has the spirit of a young man. And actually it’s so. The soul never becomes old. He’s always fresh and young. But now he’s passing through one body after another, from childhood to youth to old age.

Once we know who we are (not this body or mind but a spiritual soul), then a whole new world awaits us. In the words of *Bhagavad-gītā*, this new world is “characterized by the ability to see the self by the pure mind and to relish and rejoice in the self. In that joyous state, one is situated in boundless transcendental happiness and enjoys himself through transcendental senses. Established thus, one never departs from the truth, and upon gaining this, he understands there is no greater gain.” (Bg. 6.20–23)

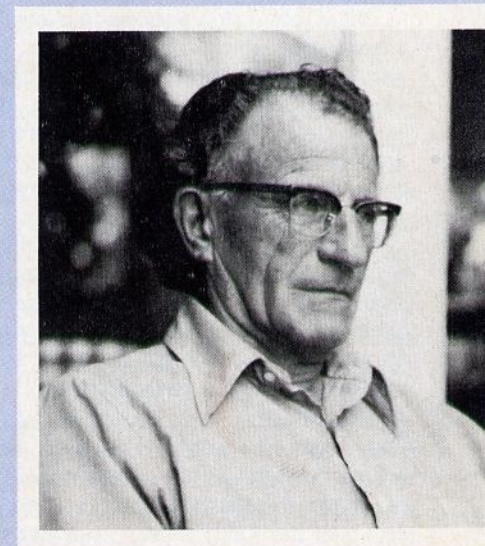
The body is a kind of garment. Just as we change our shirt and coat, so we change our body. Below we see Mr. Griesser changing from a little tot to a first-grader to a high school senior to a lieutenant colonel to a college professor. He’s changed his body several times over, but still he feels he’s the same person. So the question is, Who is he— and “Who am I?”

1943

1930



1978



REMEMBERING ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

Some Personal Recollections by His Disciples

One summer evening at the Bhaktivedanta Manor, near London, Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting in his room with his disciples, a few guests, and a woman reporter who was scantily dressed despite the chilly English weather. From the first, the reporter's questions betrayed her cynical view of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. At last, clearly exasperated by his adroit and authoritative answers, she resorted to the old standby, "Why do you people have bald heads?"

"Why do you have bare legs?" said Śrīla Prabhupāda.

She was speechless.

"Better to have warm legs and a cool head," he went on. "You must have a cool head to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy."

Everyone, including the woman reporter, laughed with delight.

Yadubāra dāsa

When Śrīla Prabhupāda was visiting Detroit in 1976, he met with two clergymen. First he asked them if they believed that God is a person.

"Yes," they agreed.

Then he asked, "Aren't we also eternal persons meant to love God?"

They agreed again.

"And isn't the only thing separating us from enjoying ecstatic life with God sin?"

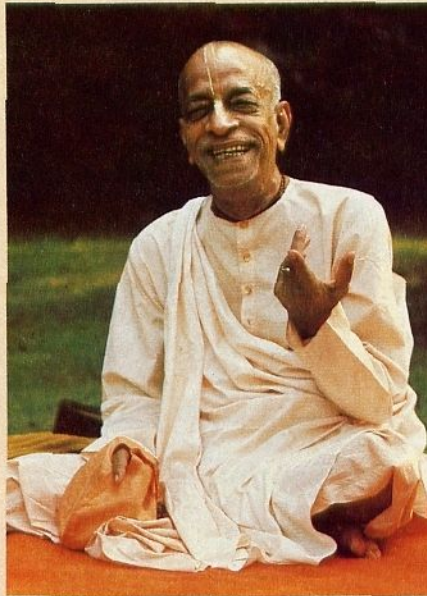
Once again they agreed.

Like a pouncing lion, Śrīla Prabhupāda challenged, "Then why don't you teach people how to lead a sinless life!"

Śrīla Prabhupāda went on to show that meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxicants, and gambling pollute people's consciousness, and that if the clergymen rose above these things, others would follow their example. Mundane welfare work or political agitation would be simply a waste of time.

As they left with flower garlands around their necks, packages of Bengali sweets in their hands, and *Bhagavad-gītās* under their arms, one of them turned to Śrīla Prabhupāda. "Why, I feel like we've become your disciples."

Śrīla Prabhupāda chuckled. After they'd gone he quoted a Sanskrit verse which confirmed that only a *gōsvāmī*—someone who has gained complete control over his bodily senses—can give real



spiritual life to his disciples. And we knew we had a *gōsvāmī* for our spiritual master.

Badarīnārāyaṇa dāsa

In 1969 Śrīla Prabhupāda came back to America from his first speaking tour outside the country, and the devotees from the East Coast centers rushed to the Boston center to greet him. While Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting in his room with all his disciples, one came forward with a gift-wrapped box. He wanted to offer something to Śrīla Prabhupāda, but only had a sweater that his parents had sent as a birthday gift. Someone opened the box before Śrīla Prabhupāda. It was an inexpensive synthetic sweater, but Śrīla Prabhupāda said it was very nice. The devotee apologized to Śrīla Prabhupāda, explaining that it was just a gift from his parents to himself. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda pulled off his own sweater—a beautiful, silky Scottish cashmere sweater that he'd received in London. Śrīla Prabhupāda held it out to the devotee in exchange for the one he had given. The devotee was so moved that he broke into tears. Śrīla Prabhupāda always gave more to us than we were able to give him, because he had the greatest thing to give—Kṛṣṇa.

Brahmānanda Svāmī

The first time he went to Latin America, Śrīla Prabhupāda stopped at

our center in Mexico City. He also appeared on national television, lectured at universities, and gave a well-attended address at the town square in Cuernavaca. Then one of our life members invited Śrīla Prabhupāda to visit his country villa in Puerto Vallarta. On the first night there, I was sitting next to Śrīla Prabhupāda when I noticed an itching sensation. Sure enough, some big, ugly mosquitos were flying around, and I wondered whether he might be experiencing the same disturbance.

So I immediately asked, "Are the mosquitos biting you, Śrīla Prabhupāda?"

"No," he said.

"It must be because you're a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa," I said. "That must be the reason they're bothering me and not you."

"Yes," he said. "Here they are respectful. But in Calcutta they make no distinction."

Citsukhānanda dāsa

I first met Śrīla Prabhupāda in Dallas, in January of 1975. He came aboard our traveling bus-*āśrama* around lunchtime, and the cook offered him a silver platter filled with assorted Indian delicacies—savories, fried vegetables, milk sweets, and tropical fruits. He ate a single slice of papaya and said briefly that a *yogī* requires very little food to maintain his body. Then he offered the rest of the fruit dish to a baby boy, who leaned forward from his mother's arms to snatch a big strawberry. "Children like red," said Śrīla Prabhupāda, smiling.

Recently the child's father, one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples, had left the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and was encountering all sorts of personal problems. When Prabhupāda spoke to the disciple's wife, the words seemed to come right from the core of his heart. "Tell him to come back. He is a very intelligent boy." He glanced at the child and said, "Now you become a pure devotee and rescue your father."

Tears welled up in Śrīla Prabhupāda's eyes. His gravity affected the whole atmosphere. "It is like when I cut my finger—the pain is felt in the mind as well. Similarly, when my disciple has some difficulty, I feel the pain, also."

Gopāla Ācārya dāsa

CHEMISTRY AND CONSCIOUSNESS

At the present time the life sciences are dominated by the idea that life can be completely understood within the framework of chemistry and physics. By this point of view, all features of life, from the metabolic functioning of cells to the mental phenomena of thinking, feeling, and willing, are to be explained as the consequences of underlying chemical processes. With the spectacular successes of modern molecular biology, this viewpoint has, indeed, become so pervasive that, in the words of James Watson, "Complete certainty now exists among essentially all biochemists that the... characteristics of living organisms... will all be completely understood in terms of the coordinative interactions of small and large molecules."¹

Yet in spite of the popularity of this view, we can point to at least one feature of life—the phenomenon of conscious awareness—that is not amenable to this kind of explanation. By "conscious awareness" we mean the elemental experience of being aware of something. We are not referring to the particular sensations, thoughts, or feelings that one may be aware of, although these may always be associated with consciousness. Nor are we necessarily referring to self-awareness, although it may be said that consciousness must entail self-awareness to some degree.

Now, the basic assumption underlying modern science is that anything real can be described completely, at least in principle, by a system of numbers, and that all phenomena can be described by

by RICHARD L. THOMPSON, Ph.D.

transformations of these numbers according to certain rules of calculation. This conception is epitomized by the science of chemistry, and by the attempt to make chemistry the basis of a complete understanding of life. According to this approach, a living organism consists of a combination of many atoms composed of electrons and nucleons, thought to be entities completely describable in terms of numerical variables such as mass, charge, momentum, spin, energy, and so forth. The organism is taken to be "nothing but" the sum total of these atoms in interaction with one another (by Coulomb's law of electrical attraction and repulsion, the van der Waal's forces, and other laws expressed in terms of changes in numerical variables with the passage of time).

Let us see how these considerations apply to understanding conscious awareness. The example is often given that describing yellow light as an electromagnetic oscillation with a wavelength of 6,000 Angstrom units does not tell us anything about our awareness of the sensation of yellow. What would constitute an explanation of this awareness? Suppose we were able to give a complete physical description of the interaction of light with photosensitive cells in the retina of the eye, the subsequent flows of ions through the cell walls of neurons in the optic nerve, the resulting discharge of certain chemicals in the synaptic clefts between neurons, and so forth. In its perfected state such a description would consist of a system of numbers and rules of calculation, and it might predict with great accuracy such things as the variation of different electrical potentials in the brain.

It might predict, for example, that when yellow light strikes the retina, a certain pattern of electrical oscillations will occur that can be described by several thousand numbers, beginning with 1.26345, 6.87535, 7.9987.... This prediction might then be verified by ex-

perimental measurements. Yet this would still tell us nothing about the awareness of seeing yellow light. By its very nature, such a description does not even make reference to conscious awareness, much less provide a clear understanding of it.

In modern scientific thinking, and especially in behavioral psychology, the paradigm of numerical describability has led people to confuse conscious awareness with the behavior of the physical body. Thus, awareness is falsely identified with the sequence of electrochemical reactions and physical movements which result in the body's emission of the sound pattern "I am conscious." Yet we can certainly conceive of a physical situation in which such sounds are produced but where we would have no reason to suppose that consciousness is present—a tape recorder, for example, running an appropriate tape. The measurable behavior of objects evidently tells us nothing about any experience of conscious awareness that may be associated with them. Clearly, conscious awareness is something qualitatively different from those aspects of reality that we can hope to describe in numerical terms.

Nonetheless, not only is my own consciousness very real—for it is the very foundation of all my specific experiences of reality—but I have every reason to suppose that other living beings, or at least human beings, are also conscious. Even though an automaton is conceivable that could respond systematically to a printed page without awareness, I am still convinced that you, the reader, are aware of these sentences as you read them. Even though the behavior of a material structure cannot be identified with consciousness, the similarity among human beings implies that they share the property of conscious awareness. Consciousness is thus a common feature of the world, being experienced at present by several billion beings, at the very least.

(continued on page 31)

DR. RICHARD L. THOMPSON, a charter member of the Bhaktivedanta Institute, is a formally initiated disciple of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. After studying at the State University of New York and Syracuse University, he received a National Science Fellowship and completed his Ph.D. in mathematics at Cornell, specializing in probability theory and statistical mechanics. His dissertation—"Equilibrium States on Thin Energy Shells"—has been published as memoir number 150 of the American Mathematical Society.

Questions People Ask About Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa

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



Q. I'm afraid I'm a rather materialistic person. I want a compatible mate, a reasonable amount of money, healthy children, and things like that. Can I still chant Hare Kṛṣṇa?

A. Definitely. Whoever you are, whatever you do, and whatever it is you want out of life, just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, and your life will be sublime.

Q. I get the feeling that if I start chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, then sooner or later I'm going to have to give something up. What's the catch?

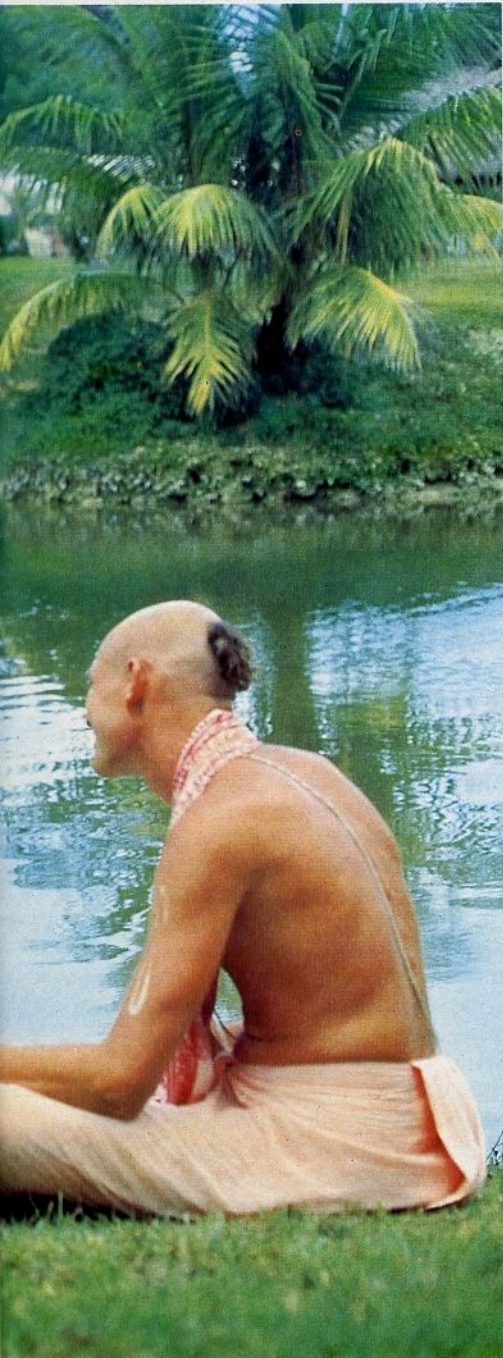


PHOTO: MURALIVADANA DASA

A. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting the *mahā-mantra*. So you never have to give up anything. But if you're actually serious about achieving self-realization, the Vedic literature says there are four things you should avoid: intoxicants, meat-eating, illicit sex, and gambling. These four items are material contaminations—the soul doesn't need them at all—and if we want to become spiritually pure, we should try to get free from them. And chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa makes it easy. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, you come directly in touch with Kṛṣṇa, the supreme reservoir of pleasure. So the pleasure you taste by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is more than enough to make the so-called pleasures of material life seem just completely insignificant.

Q. But what if I don't want to give up these things? What if I'm not ready?

A. Then chant Hare Kṛṣṇa anyway. It's up to you. But if you're actually serious about spiritual life, why not *become* ready? Why keep doing things that just get you more materially entangled? It's common sense. If you're trying to build a fire, why pour water on it?

Q. I've heard about all kinds of mantras besides Hare Kṛṣṇa. Is there any difference?

A. We don't even have to talk about so-called *mantras* like "VROOSH" and "ZING." But you may have come across some of the thousands of authentic *mantras* that appear in ancient India's Vedic literature. As this same literature explains, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is more powerful than all the rest combined, and in this age it's the best *mantra* for bringing you complete self-realization. So you can understand why it's called the *mahā-mantra*, "the great *mantra*."

Q. I've read about plants responding to sound. If you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, does it have any effect on them?

A. Yes. A great spiritual master named Haridāsa Ṭhākura once said that the *mahā-mantra* benefits even lower life-forms, like plants. All living beings (plants included) are actually spirit souls. It's just that they're wearing different kinds of bodily garments, depending on

how much they've developed their consciousness in past lives. Plants have a comparatively undeveloped consciousness, but if you expose them to the sound of the *mahā-mantra*, that will restimulate it. But mainly, the *mahā-mantra* will develop *your* consciousness. It's already much more developed than the plants', and if you use it to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, then when this lifetime is over, you'll be ready to return to the spiritual world.

Q. Does the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra improve your self-awareness?

A. Yes. It acts much the way an alarm clock wakes you up from a dream. For instance, when you're asleep you might think you're a king living it up at your palace, or a skindiver being eaten alive by a shark—but when the clock goes off, "Wait. I'm really John So-and-so." And you know you were just dreaming, because it only lasted a few minutes and then it was over. Now, the thing is, the feeling of being "John So-and-so" is only going to last sixty or seventy years, at most, and then it will be over, too. So what is it but a long, drawn-out dream? People spend lifetime after lifetime as "John So-and-so," "Bill Such-and-such," and on and on. But the "self" they're aware of is just a temporary body in a temporary situation—just a dream. If you want to enjoy complete self-awareness and wake up to your inner self, even within this lifetime, then you can chant the *mahā-mantra*. The sound of Kṛṣṇa's names keeps you aware of who you really are: a spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Spirit, Kṛṣṇa.

Q. Can chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa help me to see God?

A. Yes. Actually, the only reason we can't see God now is that our hearts are covered over with "dust." This dust is our ignorance—the misconception that we are the body, and that we can be happy only by enjoying material pleasures. But when we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, we're in immediate contact with God, because He's nondifferent from His name. This spiritual contact thoroughly cleanses the dust from our hearts. We realize that we're not the body, and that only by associating with Kṛṣṇa can we be truly happy. It is then—when we're fully purified—that Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself to us, just as the sun reveals itself to us through a clean window.

On the lawn of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement's center in Miami, the center's president, Narahari dāsa, answers questions about chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

On a Society Without Brains

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Raymonde van den Heuvel, of the International Labor Organization, took place in Geneva during the summer of 1974.

van den Heuvel: I work for the International Labor Organization, which is a part of the United Nations family. We're concerned with the protection and welfare of all laborers in practically all nations in the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The Vedic literature describes four social classes—intelligent, administrative, mercantile, laborer. The laborers act as the legs of the social body, but legs must be guided by a head. That “head” of the social body is the intelligent class. The United Nations is taking care of the social body's legs, but what are they doing for the brain—the intelligent class?

van den Heuvel: We want to see that the laborers have their proper share in society's economic rewards.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But my point was that if you neglect the head of society, then in spite of your attention to the legs, things will not go very nicely—because the brain will not be in order.

van den Heuvel: But this is also an important aspect of society, don't you think? We aim to improve the lot of the workers of the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In America the laborer class is very highly paid, but because they are not directed by a brain, by an intelligent class, they simply spend their money on drinking.

van den Heuvel: The fact that a good thing is abused doesn't make it bad.

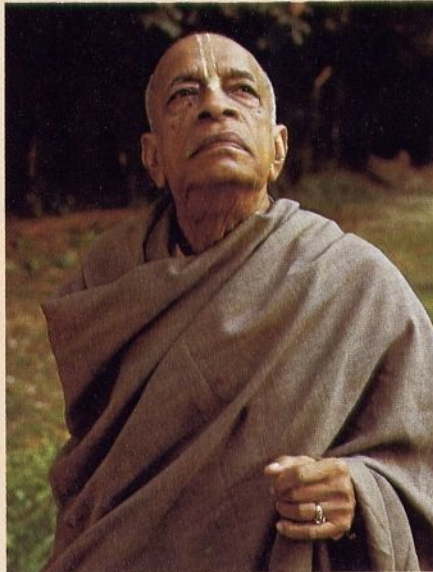
Śrīla Prabhupāda: The point is that everyone should be guided by the brain. That is the only way to organize society. What is the value in working hard like an ass, without any intelligence?

van den Heuvel: You can't force a man to use his brain.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore, the United Nations should support a class of ideal intelligent men who will act as the brain of society and guide the others so that everyone becomes happy.

van den Heuvel: I think you'll find that in every society throughout the world there is a priestly class, a class of philosophical leaders.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Priestly class! The



Bible says, “Thou shalt not kill.” But the priests have amended this to suit their own whims. They have sanctioned killing by allowing thousands of huge slaughterhouses for killing innocent animals. How can such so-called priests guide? I have asked so many Christian gentlemen and priests about this: “Your Bible teaches, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ Why are you violating this commandment?” They give me *vague* answers. They have not even taught the people what is sinful. That means a lack of brains in society.

van den Heuvel: My organization is not directly concerned with people's brains.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Your organization may not be directly concerned, but if human society is brainless, then no matter what organizations you make, people will never become happy. If people are not taught by the intelligent class of society how to discriminate between pious and sinful activities, then they are no better than the animals.

van den Heuvel: Of course, when you speak of the distinction between pious activities and sinful activities . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They see no such distinction anymore. But in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness society, I instruct my students from the very beginning to avoid sinful activities. They must give up completely all meat-eating, gambling, illicit sex, and intoxication. And now just compare their character and behavior with anyone else's. Even the Christian priests are surprised. They say, “These boys are our boys. How is it that before

joining your movement, they never came to church, but now they are mad after God?” In the streets, people ask, “Are you Americans?” You see. Everything can be rectified by proper guidance. But if there is no brain in society, you can manufacture so many organizations, but people will go on suffering. That is nature's law: if the people are sinful, they have to suffer.

van den Heuvel: I don't think that you can expect an *international* organization to indoctrinate people . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Why not? It *should* be international—everyone. The United Nations is meant for international activity, so our proposal is that the United Nations maintain an international organization of first-class intelligent men to act as the brains of society. Then people can be happy. But if you want to keep the hands and legs working without direction, without a brain, then you will never be successful.

van den Heuvel: You know, I think of myself as a servant of mankind, with a view toward helping people to understand one another and the world a little better. I'm trying now to organize workers' education programs . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But please try to understand. I'm stressing on the point of society's brain. If there is no ideal class of men, if the brain is not in order, then any amount of education or organization you do will be unsuccessful. The United Nations is an organization for all human society, but they have no department which can actually be called the brain organization.

van den Heuvel: That's true.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is my point.

van den Heuvel: We are only servants of the leaders of our member states. If Mr. Nixon and all the other heads of state don't have brains, then I'm afraid the United Nations can't do anything to give them brains.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then your big organization is just decoration for a dead body. A body with no brain is a dead body. You may decorate a dead body to your full satisfaction, but what is the use? Without a brain-class of men in society to instruct the others what is right and what is wrong, then the social body is dead, or headless. And whatever work you do will simply be useless decoration for a dead body.

THE PROPOSITION 13 JITTERS: What Now for Intellectuals on the Public Payroll?

by DRUTAKARMĀ DĀSA

After California voters passed Proposition 13 and cut back state property taxes by seven billion dollars, the Los Angeles county government responded to the taxpayers' revolt by announcing plans to reduce spending on public services like libraries and schools. So when I went to the neighborhood branch library not long ago, I kept my ears open.

Usually, the librarians are a quiet crew. But today they were gathered in small groups and worrying quite audibly. The bespectacled older ladies in the circulation department, the high-school kids who shelve the books, and the intelligent-looking young professionals fresh out of library school—all were talking about their uncertain futures, and some were even daring to voice nervous criticisms of the "higher-ups."

A young lady with shoulder-length dark brown hair was sitting at the reference desk. I needed a book that didn't seem to be on the shelves and asked her if she could get it from another branch.

"Well, I just don't know," she said apologetically. "I can't even get stamps to mail out requests. But I'll try on the phone—if it's still connected."

"About how long will it take to get it if they have it there?" I asked.

"It's hard to say," she said as she dialed. "If they cut back on services, it might take forever. I don't even know if I'll be working here tomorrow. There might not even be a library." She was smiling wanly as she spoke, trying to carry on in the free-and-easy California way.

A short, balding man in his fifties was standing next to me, and he had something to add. "These politicians—you know they're getting a million dollars a year to run their own staffs, and you can be sure they aren't cutting back on them."

Myself, I couldn't help remembering an old Vedic prediction. Five thousand years ago the great sage Vyāsa said our

age would be cursed with unbearable taxation. And I remembered that several years before the Jarvis-Gann initiative made the ballot, my spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda made a point: "Every year the government men are exacting heavy taxes, and whatever money they receive they divide among themselves, while the citizens' condition remains the same—every government is doing that." And somehow, I couldn't really believe that Proposition 13 was going to change things very much.

"Well, I guess we're not indispensable," said a serious-looking reference librarian, about thirty or so, with a neatly-trimmed beard. Some of the patrons (who more than likely had voted "Yes on 13," as the bumper stickers had said) were standing around looking like they were having second thoughts. It seems no one likes to see someone else lose his job. You can never tell who'll be next.

I was feeling a little sympathetic toward the young library professionals. They were my own age; they probably came from the same middle-class background. All they wanted was a nice public service job, so that they could make a decent living, help people, and at the same time nurture their own intellectual and cultural interests.

I recalled that I had once worked as an assistant reference librarian in St. Petersburg, Florida. It was a federally funded position, and since I was a veteran and had a few years of college, I got it. A nice job. I sat at a desk, and people would come up to me all day long with questions about anything from what was the address of their congressman to what were the latest do-it-yourself manuals on repairing motorcycle engines. It felt good knowing that I was helping them find the answers.

I imagined that my counseling, problem-solving role harked back a little to what the old-time *brāhmaṇas* of India must have done. Of course, real

brāhmaṇas would never have taken a paycheck. People naturally appreciated their teachings and looked after their needs. So they couldn't be hired and fired by politicians and businessmen. And they didn't smoke marijuana, play poker, eat steakhburgers, or chase women, as I was doing.

In the old Kṛṣṇa conscious culture, the *brāhmaṇas* taught not only the usual arts and sciences but also the science of self-realization and realization of God. And they taught not only by what they said but also by what they did; they were gentle, truthful, forgiving, austere, kind, and pure. When I was working at the library I sensed I was deficient on all these counts, though nobody ever put it to me like that and I didn't really think much about it.

And unfortunately, nobody has ever put it like that to the perplexed young librarians with the Proposition 13 jitters. They do know a lot about the Dewey decimal system, and they do try to be kind and helpful. But no one has ever trained them to be self-reliant, full of transcendental knowledge, and perfect in character. If someone were to come up and ask them, "What books will tell me how to get free from old age, disease, death, and rebirth, and can you explain them to me?" they wouldn't know what to say. The books are the Vedic literatures, and the only people that can explain them are qualified *brāhmaṇas*.

So although in one sense I sympathized with the straight-haired young lady and her bearded co-worker, in another sense I didn't. They don't really deserve a privileged position in society.

But they could. They could become real *brāhmaṇas*—lead pure lives, learn the science of self-realization, and help bring some sanity to this country and the world.

The social body is a lot like our own bodies. It needs legs (workingmen and craftsmen to provide essential services),

(continued on page 34)



Every Town and Village

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

Bangalore: Spiritual Culture Going Strong



Head priest Sampatkumara Bhattacharya, of Tirupati temple, urges Bangalore residents to work together with members of ISKCON.

Bangalore, the capital of the South Indian state of Karnataka (formerly Mysore), is known for textiles, for a verdure that has made it the nation's "garden city," and for a prodigious spiritual heritage, notably in the realm of dance and music.

Since ISKCON opened a center there in 1977, people have responded warmly. In the metropolitan area alone, more than 350 have become life members, and recently a man in neighboring Gujarat state donated 100 choice acres.

This past July, the devotees gave Bangalore something—its first full-scale Festival of the Chariots, or Ratha-yātrā. (The festival originated some twenty centuries ago in Purī, Orissa, and it is usually associated with that place.) At any rate, twenty-five thousand people came out to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-

mantra and taste *prasāda*, "the Lord's mercy," food offered to Kṛṣṇa.

Keynoting the festival was Mr. Gundu Rao, Karnataka's Minister for Transport and Tourism. Sampatkumara Bhattacharya, the head priest of the Tirupati temple, spoke highly of ISKCON's founder and spiritual preceptor, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The head priest urged Bangalore residents to work with ISKCON and so keep their spiritual culture going at full strength.

For their own part, the devotees are making Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vedic translations and commentaries available in three local languages. With the renewed interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they recall his words: "Books are the basis."

Food Relief in Kenya

Nairobi, Kenya: ISKCON Food Relief workers are providing meals for thousands. The food is called *prasāda*, "the Lord's mercy," since it is offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa. An international team of volunteers works from a pavilion adjacent to the local ISKCON center, and each evening people come for steaming bowls of a Kenyan staple: thick, boiled maize and maraguey beans (which are rather surprisingly similar to Boston baked beans). The cost per serving is half a Kenyan shilling, about five cents. Also, each copy of the Swahili edition of BACK TO GODHEAD contains a coupon entitling

the bearer to a free meal.

His Holiness Brahmānanda Svāmī, coordinator of ISKCON's African Mission, recently announced plans to open a second food distribution center in the Kenyan port city Mombasa, where a generous donation of land has been received.

The African food distribution program receives backing from ISKCON Food Relief's international headquarters in New York City.

Graphics Awards for BACK TO GODHEAD

In its recent DESI competition, *Graphics: USA* conferred two awards on BACK TO GODHEAD's designer, one for editorial design and the other for a cover. Additional awards went to the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust for its 1978 calendar and the cover of a recent book, *Teachings of Lord Kapila*.

Arts Dean Appreciates Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books

Not long ago, Dr. V. P. Singh, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at North India's Benares Hindu University, made this assessment of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books: "The author has shown vast erudition and unparalleled genius in his unique presentation of pure philosophy and transcendental science. I especially appreciate his translation of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. After carefully going over the deep and inspiring thoughts of the author, I feel that I have discovered an unequaled body of literature which has both scholastic quality and devotional impact. I can think of no more qualified person than Śrīla Prabhupāda to have given us such a clear picture of the message of the Vedic literature, for he himself is a true follower of that very message. The evidence of Śrīla Prabhupāda's sincerity of purpose is found in his great success in spreading Vedic culture here and abroad. His writings have created such an impact that they now appear in thirty languages in over one hundred countries. I hope that every sincere seeker of truth and higher knowledge will find repose in the books of His Divine Grace."

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 about the meaning of the festivals listed here.

Year 493 Caitanya Era Vaiṣṇava month of Padmanābha (September 17–October 16, 1978)		
Sept 17 (Padmanābha 7)	Sept 28 (Padmanābha 12)	Oct 11 (Padmanābha 25)
Arrival in America, in 1965, of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.	Indira-ekādāśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Victory celebration of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya.
Oct 17 (Padmanābha 26)	Oct 13 (Padmanābha 27)	Oct 16 (Padmanābha 30)
Pāñkāśī-ekādāśī (fasting from grains and beans).	Disappearance of Śrīla Raghunāthadāsa, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī.	Autumn rāsa dance of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Disappearance of Śrīla Mūrārī Gupta.

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 SEVENTEEN

Punishment and Reward of Kali

In this part of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the saintly King Parīkṣit learns that the same rogue-in-king's-clothing who was beating an innocent cow (mother earth) was also torturing a helpless bull (religion personified). King Parīkṣit then raises his sword to slay the imposter, who personifies the present age of quarrel.

TEXT 31

राजोवाच

न ते गुडाकेश्यशोधराणां
बद्धाञ्जलेवै भयमस्ति किञ्चित् ।
न वर्तितव्यं भवता कथंचन
क्षेत्रे मदीये त्वमधर्मबन्धुः ॥३१॥

rājovāca

na te guḍākeśya-yaśo-dharāṇām
baddhāñjaler vai bhayam asti kiñcit
na vartitavyam bhavatā kathañcana
kṣetre madiye tvam adharma-bandhuḥ

rājā uvāca—the King said; na—not; te—your; guḍākeśa—Arjuna; yaśaḥ-dharāṇām—of us who inherited the fame; baddha-añjaleḥ—one with folded hands; vai—certainly; bhayam—fear; asti—there is; kiñcit—even a slight; na—neither; vartitavyam—can be allowed to live; bhavatā—by you; kathañcana—by all means; kṣetre—in the land; madiye—in my kingdom; tvam—you; adharma-bandhuḥ—the friend of irreligion.

TRANSLATION

The King thus said: We have inherited the fame of Arjuna; therefore since you have surrendered yourself with folded hands you need not fear for your life. But you cannot remain in my kingdom, for you are the friend of irreligion.

PURPORT

The personality of Kali, who is the friend of all kinds of irreligiosities, may be excused if he surrenders, but in all circumstances he cannot be allowed to live as a citizen in any part of a welfare state. The Pāṇḍavas were entrusted representatives of the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who practically brought into being the Battle of Kurukṣetra, but not for any personal interest. He wanted an ideal king like Mahārāja

Yudhiṣṭhira and his descendants like Mahārāja Parīkṣit to rule the world, and therefore a responsible king like Mahārāja Parīkṣit could not allow the friend of irreligiosity to flourish in his kingdom at the cost of the good fame of the Pāṇḍavas. That is the way of wiping out corruption in the state, and not otherwise. The friends of irreligiosity should be banished from the state, and that will save the state from corruption.

TEXT 32

त्वां वर्तमानं नरदेवदेहे-
ष्वनुप्रवृत्तोऽयमधर्मपृगः ।
लोभोऽनृतं चौर्यमनार्यमंहो
ज्येष्ठा च माया कलहश्च दम्भः ॥३२॥

tvām vartamānam nara-deva-deheṣu
anupravṛtto 'yam adharma-pūgaḥ
lobho 'nṛtam cauryam anāryam aṁho
jyeṣṭhā ca māyā kalahaś ca dambhaḥ

tvām—you; vartamānam—while present; nara-deva—a man-god, or a king; deheṣu—in the body; anupravṛttaḥ—taking place everywhere; ayam—all these; adharma—irreligious principles; pūgaḥ—in the masses; lobhaḥ—greed; anṛtam—falsity; cauryam—robbery; anāryam—incivility; aṁhaḥ—treachery; jyeṣṭhā—misfortune; ca—and; māyā—cheating; kalahaḥ—quarrel; ca—and; dambhaḥ—vanity.

TRANSLATION

If the personality of Kali, irreligion, is allowed to act as a man-god or an executive head, certainly irreligious principles like greed, falsehood, robbery, incivility, treachery, misfortune, cheating, quarrel and vanity will abound.

PURPORT

The principles of religion, namely *austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness*, as we have already discussed, may be followed by the follower of any faith. There is no need to turn from Hindu to Moham-medan to Christian or some other faith and thus become a renegade and not follow the principles of religion. The *Bhāgavatam religion* urges following the *principles of religion*. The principles of religion are not the dogmas or regulative principles of a certain faith. Such regulative principles may be different in terms of the time and place concerned. One has to see whether the aims of religion have been achieved. Sticking to the dogmas and formulas without attaining the real principles is not good. A secular state may be impartial to any particular type of faith, but the state cannot be indifferent to the principles of religion as above mentioned. But in the age of Kali, the executive heads of state will be indifferent to such religious principles, and therefore under their

patronage the opponents of religious principles, such as greed, falsehood, cheating and pilfering, will naturally follow, and so there will be no meaning to propaganda crying to stop corruption in the state.

TEXT 33

न वर्तितव्यं तदधर्मबन्धो
धर्मेण सत्येन च वर्तितव्ये ।
ब्रह्मावर्ते यत्र यजन्ति यज्ञै-
र्यज्ञेश्वरं यज्ञवितानविज्ञाः ॥३३॥

na varitavyam tad adharmabandho
dharmena satyena ca varitavye
brahmāvarte yatra yajanti yajñair
yajñeśvaram yajña-vitāna-vijñāḥ

na—not; varitavyam—deserve to remain; tat—therefore; adharmā—irreligiosity; bandho—friend; dharmena—with religion; satyena—with truth; ca—also; varitavye—being situated in; brahma-āvarte—place where sacrifice is performed; yatra—where; yajanti—duly perform; yajñair—by sacrifices or devotional services; yajña-iśvaram—unto the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead; yajña—sacrifice; vitāna—spreading; vijñāḥ—experts.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O friend of irreligion, you do not deserve to remain in a place where experts perform sacrifices according to truth and religious principles for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

Yajñeśvara, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the beneficiary of all kinds of sacrificial ceremonies. Such sacrificial ceremonies are prescribed differently in the scriptures for different ages. In other words, sacrifice means to accept the supremacy of the Lord and thereby perform acts by which the Lord may be satisfied in all respects. The atheists do not believe in the existence of God, and they do not perform any sacrifice for the satisfaction of the Lord. Any place or country where the supremacy of the Lord is accepted and thus sacrifice is performed is called *brahmāvarta*. There are different countries in different parts of the world, and each and every country may have different types of sacrifice to please the Supreme Lord, but the central point in pleasing Him is ascertained in the *Bhāgavatam*, and it is truthfulness. The basic principle of religion is truthfulness, and the ultimate goal of all religions is to satisfy the Lord. In this age of Kali, the greatest common formula of sacrifice is the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. That is the opinion of the experts who know how to propagate the process of *yajña*. Lord Caitanya preached this method of *yajña*, and it is understood from this verse that the sacrificial method of *saṅkīrtana-yajña* may be performed anywhere and everywhere in order to drive away the personality of Kali and save human society from falling prey to the influence of the age.

TEXT 34

यस्मिन् हरिर्भगवानिज्यमान
इज्यात्ममूर्तिर्यजतां शं तनोति ।
कामानमोघान् स्थिरजङ्गमाना-
मन्तर्वहिवीर्युरिवैष आत्मा ॥३४॥

yasmin harir bhagavān ijamāna
ijyātma-mūrtir yajatām śaṁ tanoti
kāmaṁ amoghān sthira-jāṅgamānām
antar bahir vāyur ivaiśa ātmā

yasmin—in such sacrificial ceremonies; hariḥ—the Supreme Lord; bhagavān—the Personality of Godhead; ijamānaḥ—being worshiped;

ijya-ātma—the soul of all worshipable deities; *mūrtiḥ*—in the forms; *yajatām*—those who worship; *śaṁ*—welfare; *tanoti*—spreads; *kāmān*—desires; *amoghān*—invulnerable; *sthira-jāṅgamānām*—of all the moving and nonmoving; *antaḥ*—within; *bahih*—outside; *vāyuh*—air; *iva*—like; *eśaḥ*—of all of them; *ātmā*—spirit soul.

TRANSLATION

In all sacrificial ceremonies, although sometimes a demigod is worshiped, the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is worshiped because He is the Supersoul of everyone, and exists both inside and outside like the air. Thus it is He only who awards all welfare to the worshiper.

PURPORT

It is even sometimes seen that demigods like Indra and Candra are worshiped and offered sacrificial awards, yet the rewards of all such sacrifices are awarded to the worshiper by the Supreme Lord, and it is the Lord only who can offer all welfare to the worshiper. The demigods, although worshiped, cannot do anything without the sanction of the Lord because the Lord is the Supersoul of everyone, both moving and nonmoving.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.23) the Lord Himself confirms this in the following *śloka*:

ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam

“Whatever a man may sacrifice to other gods, O son of Kuntī, is really meant for Me alone, but it is offered without true understanding.”

The fact is that the Supreme Lord is one without a second. There is no God other than the Lord Himself. Thus the Supreme Lord is eternally transcendental to the material creation. But there are many who worship the demigods like the sun, the moon and Indra, who are only material representatives of the Supreme Lord. These demigods are indirect, qualitative representations of the Supreme Lord. A learned scholar or devotee, however, knows who is who. Therefore he directly worships the Supreme Lord and is not diverted by the material, qualitative representations. Those who are not so learned worship such qualitative, material representations, but their worship is unceremonious because it is irregular.

TEXT 35

सूत उवाच

परीक्षितैवमादिष्टः स कलिर्जातवेपथुः ।
तमुद्यतासिमाहेदं दण्डपाणिमिवोद्यतम् ॥३५॥

sūta uvāca
parīkṣitaivam ādiṣṭaḥ
sa kalir jāta-vepathuh
tam udyatāsim āhedam
daṇḍa-pāṇim ivodyatam

sūtaḥ uvāca—Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said; *parīkṣitā*—by Mahārāja Parīkṣit; *evam*—thus; *ādiṣṭaḥ*—being ordered; *śaḥ*—he; *kalih*—the personality of Kali; *jāta*—there was; *vepathuh*—trembling; *tam*—him; *udyata*—raised; *asim*—sword; *āha*—said; *idam*—thus; *daṇḍa-pāṇim*—Yamarāja, the personality of death; *iva*—like; *udyatam*—almost ready.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: The personality of Kali, thus being ordered by Mahārāja Parīkṣit, began to tremble in fear. Seeing the King before him like Yamarāja, ready to kill him, Kali spoke to the King as follows.

PURPORT

The King was ready to kill the personality of Kali at once, as soon as he disobeyed his order. Otherwise the King had no objection to allowing him to prolong his life. The personality of Kali also, after attempting to get rid of the punishment in various ways, decided that he must surrender unto him, and thus he began to tremble in fear of his life. The king, or the executive head, must be so strong as to stand before the personality of Kali like the personality of death, Yamarāja. The King's order must be obeyed, otherwise the culprit's life is in risk. That is the way to rule the personalities of Kali who create disturbance in the normal life of the state citizens.

TEXT 36

कलिरुवाच

यत्र क्वाथ वत्स्यामि सार्वभौम तवाङ्गया ।
लक्ष्ये तत्र तत्रापि त्वामात्पुशरासनम् ॥३६॥

kalir uvāca
yatra kva vātha vatsyāmi
sārva-bhauma tavaṅgāyā
lakṣaye tatra tatrāpi
tvām ātpeṣu-śarāsanam

kalih uvāca—the personality of Kali said; *yatra*—anywhere; *kva*—and everywhere; *vā*—either; *atha*—thereof; *vatsyāmi*—I shall reside; *sārva-bhauma*—O lord (or emperor) of the earth; *tava*—your; *āṅgāyā*—by the order; *lakṣaye*—I see; *tatra tatra*—anywhere and everywhere; *api*—also; *tvām*—Your Majesty; *ātta*—taken over; *iṣu*—arrows; *śarāsanam*—bows.

TRANSLATION

O Your Majesty, though I may live anywhere and everywhere under your order, I shall but see you with bow and arrows wherever I look.

PURPORT

The personality of Kali could see that Mahārāja Parikṣit was the emperor of all lands all over the world, and thus anywhere he might live he would have to meet with the same mood of the King. The personality of Kali was meant for mischief, and Mahārāja Parikṣit was meant for subduing all kinds of mischief-mongers, especially the personality of Kali. It was better, therefore, for the personality of Kali to have been killed by the King then and there instead of being killed elsewhere. He was, after all, a surrendered soul before the King, and it was for the King to do what was required.

TEXT 37

तन्मे धर्मभृतां श्रेष्ठ स्थानं निर्देष्टुमर्हसि ।
यत्रैव नियतो वत्स्य आतिष्ठंस्तेऽनुशासनम् ॥३७॥

tan me dharmabhṛtāṁ śreṣṭha
sthānam nirdeṣṭum arhasi
yatraiva niyato vatsya
ātiṣṭhaṁs te 'nuśāsanam

tat—therefore; *me*—me; *dharmabhṛtām*—of all the protectors of religion; *śreṣṭha*—O chief; *sthānam*—place; *nirdeṣṭum*—fix; *arhasi*—may you do so; *yatra*—where; *eva*—certainly; *nityataḥ*—always; *vatsye*—can reside; *ātiṣṭhan*—permanently situated; *te*—your; *anuśāsanam*—under your rule.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O chief amongst the protectors of religion, please fix some place for me where I can live permanently under the protection of your government.

PURPORT

The personality of Kali addressed Mahārāja Parikṣit as the chief amongst the protectors of religiosity because the King refrained from killing a person who surrendered unto him. A surrendered soul should be given all protection, even though he may be an enemy. That is the principle of religion. And we can just imagine what sort of protection is given by the Personality of Godhead to the person who surrenders unto Him, not as an enemy but as a devoted servitor. The Lord protects the surrendered soul from all sins and all resultant reactions of sinful acts (Bg. 18.66).

TEXT 38

सूत उवाच

अभ्यर्थितस्तदा तस्मै स्थानानि कलये ददौ ।
धूतं पानं स्त्रियः घ्नना यत्राधर्मश्चतुर्विधः ॥३८॥

sūta uvāca
abhyarthitas tadā tasmai
sthānāni kalaye dadau
dyūtam pānam striyaḥ śhnā
yatrādharmaś catur-vidhaḥ

sūtaḥ uvāca—Sūta Gosvāmī said; *abhyarthitaḥ*—thus being petitioned; *tadā*—at that time; *tasmai*—unto him; *sthānāni*—places; *kalaye*—to the personality of Kali; *dadau*—gave him permission; *dyūtam*—gambling; *pānam*—drinking; *striyaḥ*—illicit association with women; *śhnā*—animal slaughter; *yatra*—wherever; *adharmāḥ*—sinful activities; *catur-vidhaḥ*—four kinds of.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parikṣit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed.

PURPORT

The basic principles of irreligiosity, such as pride, prostitution, intoxication and falsehood, counteract the four principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness. The personality of Kali was given permission to live in four places particularly mentioned by the King, namely the place of gambling, the place of prostitution, the place of drinking and the place of animal slaughter.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī directs that drinking against the principles of scriptures, such as the *sautrāmaṇi-yajña*, association with women outside marriage, and killing animals against the injunctions of scriptures are irreligious. In the *Vedas* two different types of injunctions are there for the *pravṛttas*, or those who are engaged in material enjoyment, and for the *nivṛttas*, or those who are liberated from material bondage. The Vedic injunction for the *pravṛttas* is to gradually regulate their activities towards the path of liberation. Therefore, for those who are in the lowest stage of ignorance and who indulge in wine, women and flesh, drinking by performing *sautrāmaṇi-yajña*, association of women by marriage and flesh-eating by sacrifices are sometimes recommended. Such recommendations in the Vedic literature are meant for a particular class of men, and not for all. But because they are injunctions of the *Vedas* for particular types of persons, such activities by the *pravṛttas* are not considered *adharmā*. One man's food may be poison for others; similarly, what is recommended for those in the mode of ignorance may be poison for those in the mode of goodness. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu, therefore, affirms that recommendations in the scriptures for a certain class of men are never to be considered *adharmā*, or irreligious. But such activities are factually *adharmā*, and they are never to be encouraged. The recommendations in the scriptures are not meant for the encouragement of such *adharmā*, but for regulating the necessary *adharmā* gradually toward the path of *dharma*.

Following in the footsteps of Mahārāja Parikṣit, it is the duty of all

executive heads of states to see that the principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, are established in the state, and that the principles of irreligion, namely pride, illicit female association or prostitution, intoxication and falsity, are checked by all means. And to make the best use of a bad bargain, the personality of Kali may be transferred to places of gambling, drinking, prostitution and slaughterhouses, if there are any places like that. Those who are addicted to these irreligious habits may be regulated by the injunctions of the scripture. In no circumstances should they be encouraged by any state. In other words, the state should categorically stop all sorts of gambling, drinking, prostitution and falsity. The state which wants to eradicate corruption by majority may introduce the principles of religion in the following manner:

1. Two compulsory fasting days in a month, if not more (austerity). Even from the economic point of view, such two fasting days in a month in the state will save tons of food, and the system will also act very favorably on the general health of the citizens.

2. There must be compulsory marriage of young boys and girls attaining twenty-four years of age and sixteen years of age respectively. There is no harm in coeducation in the schools and colleges, provided the boys and girls are duly married, and in case there is any intimate connection between a male and female student, they should be married properly without illicit relation. The divorce act is encouraging prostitution, and this should be abolished.

3. The citizens of the state must give in charity up to fifty percent of their income for the purpose of creating a spiritual atmosphere in the state or in human society, both individually and collectively. They should preach the principles of *Bhāgavatam* by (a) *karma-yoga*, or doing everything for the satisfaction of the Lord, (b) regular hearing of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from authorized persons or realized souls, (c) chanting of the glories of the Lord congregationally at home or at places of worship, (d) rendering all kinds of service to *bhāgavatas* engaged in preaching *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and (e) residing in a place where the atmosphere is saturated with God consciousness. If the state is regulated by the above process, naturally there will be God consciousness everywhere.

Gambling of all description, even speculative business enterprise, is considered to be degrading, and when gambling is encouraged in the state, there is a complete disappearance of truthfulness. Allowing young boys and girls to remain unmarried more than the above-mentioned ages and licensing animal slaughterhouses of all description should be at once prohibited. The flesh-eaters may be allowed to take flesh as mentioned in the scriptures, and not otherwise. Intoxication of all description—even smoking cigarettes, chewing tobacco or the drinking of tea—must be prohibited.

TEXT 39

पुनश्च याचमानाय जातरूपमदात्प्रभुः ।
ततोऽनृत्तं मर्दं कामं रजो वैरं च पञ्चमम् ॥३९॥

*punaś ca yācamānāya
jāta-rūpam adāt prabhuḥ
tato 'nṛtaṁ madam kāmam
rajo vairam ca pañcamam*

punaś—again; *ca*—also; *yācamānāya*—to the beggar; *jāta-rūpam*—gold; *adāt*—gave away; *prabhuḥ*—the King; *tataḥ*—whereby; *anṛtam*—falsehood; *madam*—intoxication; *kāmam*—lust; *rajaḥ*—on account of a passionate mood; *vairam*—enmity; *ca*—also; *pañcamam*—the fifth one.

TRANSLATION

The personality of Kali asked for something more, and because of his begging, the King gave him permission to live where there is gold because wherever there is gold there is also falsity, intoxication, lust, envy and enmity.

PURPORT

Although Mahārāja Parikṣit gave Kali permission to live in four places, it was very difficult for him to find the places because during the reign of Mahārāja Parikṣit there were no such places. Therefore Kali asked the King to give him something practical which could be utilized for his nefarious purposes. Mahārāja Parikṣit thus gave him permission to live in a place where there is gold, because wherever there is gold there are all the above-mentioned four things, and over and above them there is enmity also. So the personality of Kali became gold-standardized. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, gold encourages falsity, intoxication, prostitution, envy and enmity. Even a gold-standard exchange and currency is bad. Gold-standard currency is based on falsehood because the currency is not on a par with the reserved gold. The basic principle is falsity because currency notes are issued in value beyond that of the actual reserved gold. This artificial inflation of currency by the authorities encourages prostitution of the state economy. The price of commodities becomes artificially inflated because of bad money, or artificial currency notes. Bad money drives away good money. Instead of paper currency, actual gold coins should be used for exchange, and this will stop prostitution of gold. Gold ornaments for women may be allowed by control, not by quality, but by quantity. This will discourage lust, envy and enmity. When there is actual gold currency in the form of coins, the influence of gold in producing falsity, prostitution, etc., will automatically cease. There will be no need of an anticorruption ministry for another term of prostitution and falsity of purpose.

TEXT 40

अमुनि पञ्च स्थानानि ह्यधर्मप्रभवः कलिः ।
औत्तरेयेण दत्तानि न्यवसत् तभिदेशकृत् ॥४०॥

*amūni pañca sthānāni
hy adharma-prabhavaḥ kaliḥ
auttareyeṇa dattāni
nyavasat tan-nideśa-kṛt*

amūni—all those; *pañca*—five; *sthānāni*—places; *hi*—certainly; *adharma*—irreligious principles; *prabhavaḥ*—encouraging; *kaliḥ*—the age of Kali; *auttareyeṇa*—by the son of Uttarā; *dattāni*—delivered; *nyavasat*—dwelt; *tat*—by him; *nideśa-kṛt*—directed.

TRANSLATION

Thus the personality of Kali, by the directions of Mahārāja Parikṣit, the son of Uttarā, was allowed to live in those five places.

PURPORT

Thus the age of Kali began with gold standardization, and therefore falsity, intoxication, animal slaughter and prostitution are rampant all over the world, and the saner section is eager to drive out corruption. The counteracting process is suggested above, and everyone can take advantage of this suggestion.

TEXT 41

अथैतानि न सेवेत बुभूषुः पुत्र्यः क्वचित् ।
विशेषतो धर्मशीलो राजा लोकपतिर्गुरुः ॥४१॥

*athaitāni na seveta
bubhūṣuḥ puruṣaḥ kvacit
viśeṣato dharma-śīlo
rājā loka-patir guruh*

atha—therefore; *etāni*—all these; *na*—never; *seveta*—come in contact; *bubhūṣuḥ*—those who desire well-being; *puruṣaḥ*—person; *kvacit*—in any circumstances; *viśeṣataḥ*—specifically; *dharma-śīlah*—those who are on the progressive path of liberation; *rājā*—the king; *loka-patiḥ*—public leader; *guruh*—the *brāhmaṇas* and the *sannyāsīs*.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, whoever desires progressive well-being, especially kings, religionists, public leaders, brāhmaṇas and sannyāsīs, should never come in contact with the four above-mentioned irreligious principles.

PURPORT

The brāhmaṇas are the religious preceptors for all other castes, and the sannyāsīs are the spiritual masters for all the castes and orders of society. So also are the king and the public leaders who are responsible for the material welfare of all people. The progressive religionists and those who are responsible human beings or those who do not want to spoil their valuable human lives should refrain from all the principles of irreligiosity, especially illicit connection with women. If a brāhmaṇa is not truthful, all his claims as a brāhmaṇa at once become null and void. If a sannyāsī is illicitly connected with women, all his claims as a sannyāsī at once become false. Similarly, if the king and the public leader are unnecessarily proud or habituated to drinking and smoking, certainly they become disqualified to discharge public welfare activities. Truthfulness is the basic principle for all religions. The four leaders of the human society, namely the sannyāsīs, the brāhmaṇa, the king and the public leader, must be tested crucially by their character and qualification. Before one can be accepted as a spiritual or material master of society, he must be tested by the above-mentioned criteria of character. Such public leaders may be less qualified in academic qualifications, but it is necessary primarily that they be free from the contamination of the four disqualifications, namely gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter.

TEXT 42

वृषस्य नष्टांस्त्रीन् पादान् तपः शौचं दयामिति ।
प्रतिसं दध आश्वस्य महीं च समवर्धयत् ॥४२॥

*vṛṣasya naṣṭāms trīn pādān
tapah saucam dayām iti
pratisandadha āśvāsya
mahīm ca samavardhayat*

vṛṣasya—of the bull (the personality of religion); *naṣṭān*—lost; *trīn*—three; *pādān*—legs; *tapah*—austerity; *saucam*—cleanliness; *dayām*—mercy; *iti*—thus; *pratisandadhe*—reestablished; *āśvāsya*—by encouraging activities; *mahīm*—the earth; *ca*—and; *samavardhayat*—perfectly improved.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter the King reestablished the lost legs of the personality of religion [the bull], and by encouraging activities he sufficiently improved the condition of the earth.

PURPORT

By designating particular places for the personality of Kali, Mahārāja Parikṣit practically cheated Kali. In the presence of Kali, Dharma (in the shape of a bull), and the earth (in the shape of a cow), he could actually estimate the general condition of his kingdom, and therefore he at once took proper steps to reestablish the legs of the bull, namely austerity, cleanliness and mercy. And for the general benefit of the people of the world, he saw that the gold stock might be employed for stabilization. Gold is certainly a generator of falsity, intoxication, prostitution, enmity and violence, but under the guidance of a proper king or public leader, or a brāhmaṇa or sannyāsī, the same gold can be properly utilized to reestablish the lost legs of the bull, the personality of religion.

Mahārāja Parikṣit, therefore, like his grandfather Arjuna, collected all illicit gold kept for the propensities of Kali and employed it in the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, as per instruction of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. As we have suggested before, one's accumulated wealth may be divided into three parts for distribution, namely fifty percent for the service of the

Lord, twenty-five percent for the family members and twenty-five percent for personal necessities. Spending fifty percent for the service of the Lord or for propagation of spiritual knowledge in society by way of the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* is the maximum display of human mercy. People of the world are generally in darkness regarding spiritual knowledge, especially in regard to the devotional service of the Lord, and therefore to propagate the systematic transcendental knowledge of devotional service is the greatest mercy that one can show in this world. When everyone is taught to sacrifice fifty percent of his accumulated gold for the Lord's service, certainly austerity, cleanliness and mercy automatically ensue, and thus the lost three legs of the personality of religion are automatically established. When there is sufficient austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, naturally mother earth is completely satisfied, and there is very little chance for Kali to infiltrate the structure of human society.

TEXTS 43-44

स एष एतर्ह्यास्त आसनं पार्थिवोचितम् ।
पितामहेनोपन्यस्तं राजारण्यं विविक्षता ॥४३॥
आस्तेऽधुना स राजर्षिः कौरवेन्द्रश्रियोल्लसन् ।
गजाह्वये महाभागश्चक्रवर्ती बृहच्चक्रवाः ॥४४॥

*sa eṣa etarhy adhyāsta
āsanam pārvhivocitam
pitāmahenopanyastam
rājñāraṇyam vivikṣatā*

*āste 'dhunā sa rājarṣiḥ
kauravendra-śriyollasan
gajāhvaye mahā-bhāgaḥ
cakravartī br̥hat-śravāḥ*

sah—he; *eṣah*—this; *etarhi*—at the present; *adhyāste*—is ruling over; *āsanam*—the throne; *pārvhiva-ucitam*—just befitting a king; *pitāmahena*—by the grandfather; *upanyastam*—being handed over; *rājñā*—by the King; *araṇyam*—forest; *vivikṣatā*—desiring; *āste*—is there; *adhunā*—at present; *sah*—that; *rāja-ṛṣiḥ*—the sage amongst the kings; *kaurava-indra*—the chief amongst the Kuru kings; *śriyā*—glories; *ullasan*—spreading; *gajāhvaye*—in Hastināpura; *mahā-bhāgaḥ*—the most fortunate; *cakravartī*—the Emperor; *br̥hat-śravāḥ*—highly famous.

TRANSLATION

The most fortunate Emperor Mahārāja Parikṣit, who was entrusted with the kingdom of Hastināpura by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira when he desired to retire to the forest, is now ruling the world with great success due to his being glorified by the deeds of the kings of the Kuru dynasty.

PURPORT

The prolonged sacrificial ceremonies undertaken by the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya were begun shortly after the demise of Mahārāja Parikṣit. The sacrifice was to continue for one thousand years, and it is understood that in the beginning some of the contemporaries of Baladeva, the elder brother of Lord Kṛṣṇa, also visited the sacrificial place. According to some authorities, the present tense is also used to indicate the nearest margin of time from the past. In that sense, the present tense is applied to the reign of Mahārāja Parikṣit here. For a continuous fact, also, present tense can be used. The principles of Mahārāja Parikṣit can be still continued, and human society can still be improved if there is determination by the authorities. We can still purge out from the state all the activities of immorality introduced by the personality of Kali if we are determined to take action like Mahārāja Parikṣit. He allotted some place for Kali, but in fact Kali could not find such places in the world at all because Mahārāja Parikṣit was strictly vigilant to see that there were no places for gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter.

Modern administrators want to banish corruption from the state, but fools as they are, they do not know how to do it. They want to issue licenses for gambling houses, wine and other intoxicating drug houses, brothels, hotel prostitution and cinema houses, and falsity in every dealing, even in their own, and they want at the same time to drive out corruption from the state. They want the kingdom of God without God consciousness. How can it be possible to adjust two contradictory matters? If we want to drive out corruption from the state, we must first of all organize society to accept the principles of religion, namely austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, and to make the condition favorable we must close all places of gambling, drinking, prostitution and falsity. These are some of the practical lessons from the pages of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

TEXT 45

इत्थम्भूतानुभावोऽयमिमन्नुसुतो नृपः ।
यस्य पालयतः क्षौणीं यूयं सत्राय दीक्षिताः ॥४५॥

*itham-bhūtanubhāvo 'yam
abhimanyu-suto nṛpaḥ
yasya pālayataḥ kṣaunīm
yūyam satrāya dīkṣitāḥ*

itham-bhūta—being thus; *anubhāvaḥ*—experience; *ayam*—of this; *abhimanyu-sutaḥ*—son of Abhimanyu; *nṛpaḥ*—the king; *yasya*—whose; *pālayataḥ*—on account of his ruling; *kṣaunīm*—on the earth; *yūyam*—you all; *satrāya*—in performing sacrifices; *dīkṣitāḥ*—initiated.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parikṣit, the son of Abhimanyu, is so experienced that by dint of his expert administration and patronage, it has been possible for you to perform a sacrifice such as this.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇas* and the *sannyāsīs* are expert in the spiritual advancement of society, whereas the *kṣatriyas* or the administrators are expert in the material peace and prosperity of human society. Both of them are the pillars of all happiness, and therefore they are meant for full cooperation for common welfare. Mahārāja Parikṣit was experienced enough to drive away Kali from his field of activities and thereby make the state receptive to spiritual enlightenment. If the common people are not receptive, it is very difficult to impress upon them the necessity of spiritual enlightenment. Austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness, the basic principles of religion, prepare the ground for the reception of advancement in spiritual knowledge, and Mahārāja Parikṣit made this favorable condition possible. Thus the ṛṣīs of Naimiṣāranya were able to perform the sacrifices for a thousand years. In other words, without state support, no doctrines of philosophy or religious principles can progressively advance. There should be complete cooperation between the *brāhmaṇas* and the *kṣatriyas* for this common good. Even up to Mahārāja Aśoka, the same spirit was prevailing. Lord Buddha was sufficiently supported by King Aśoka, and thus his particular cult of knowledge was spread all over the world.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta purports of the First Canto, Seventeenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Punishment and Reward of Kali."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Mahārāja Parikṣit Cursed by a Brāhmaṇa Boy

TEXT 1

सूत उवाच

यो वै द्रौण्यस्त्रविप्लुष्टो न मातुर्दरे मृतः ।
अनुग्रहाद् भगवतः कृष्णस्याद्भुतकमेणः ॥ १ ॥

*sūta uvāca
yo vai drauṇy-astra-vipluṣṭo
na mātur udare mṛtaḥ
anugrahād bhagavataḥ
kṛṣṇasyādbhuta-karmaṇaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca—Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said; *yaḥ*—one who; *vai*—certainly; *drauṇi-astra*—by the weapon of the son of Droṇa; *vipluṣṭaḥ*—burned by; *na*—never; *mātuh*—of the mother; *udare*—in the womb; *mṛtaḥ*—met his death; *anugrahāt*—by the mercy; *bhagavataḥ*—of the Personality of Godhead; *kṛṣṇasya*—Kṛṣṇa; *adbhuta-karmaṇaḥ*—who acts wonderfully.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said: Due to the mercy of the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who acts wonderfully, Mahārāja Parikṣit, though struck by the weapon of the son of Droṇa in his mother's womb, could not be burned.

PURPORT

The sages of Naimiṣāranya became struck with wonder after hearing about the wonderful administration of Mahārāja Parikṣit, especially in reference to his punishing the personality of Kali and making him completely unable to do any harm within the kingdom. Sūta Gosvāmī was equally anxious to describe Mahārāja Parikṣit's wonderful birth and death, and this verse is stated by Sūta Gosvāmī to increase the interest of the sages of Naimiṣāranya.

TEXT 2

ब्रह्मकोपोत्थिताद् यस्तु तक्षकात्प्राणविप्लवात् ।
न सम्मुहोहोरुभयाद् भगवत्परिताशयः ॥ २ ॥

*brahma-kopothitād yas tu
takṣakāt prāṇa-viplavāt
na sammumohorubhayād
bhagavaty arpitāśayaḥ*

brahma-kopa—fury of a *brāhmaṇa*; *utthitāt*—caused by; *yaḥ*—what was; *tu*—but; *takṣakāt*—by the snake-bird; *prāṇa-viplavāt*—from dissolution of life; *na*—never; *sammumoha*—was overwhelmed; *uru-bhayāt*—great fear; *bhagavati*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *arpita*—surrendered; *āśayaḥ*—consciousness.

TRANSLATION

Furthermore, Mahārāja Parikṣit was always consciously surrendered to the Personality of Godhead, and therefore he was neither afraid nor overwhelmed by fear due to a snake-bird which was to bite him because of the fury of a *brāhmaṇa* boy.

PURPORT

A self-surrendered devotee of the Lord is called *nārāyaṇa-parāyana*. Such a person is never afraid of any place or person, not even of death. For him nothing is as important as the Supreme Lord, and thus he gives equal importance to heaven and hell. He knows well that both heaven and hell are creations of the Lord, and similarly life and death are different conditions of existence created by the Lord. But in all conditions and in all circumstances, remembrance of Nārāyaṇa is essential. The *nārāyaṇa-parāyana* practices this constantly. Mahārāja Parikṣit was such a pure devotee. He was wrongfully cursed by an inexperienced son

of a brāhmaṇa, who was under the influence of Kali, and Mahārāja Parikṣit took this to be sent by Nārāyaṇa. He knew that Nārāyaṇa (Lord Kṛṣṇa) had saved him when he was burned in the womb of his mother, and if he were to be killed by a snake bite, it would also take place by the will of the Lord. The devotee never goes against the will of the Lord; anything sent by God is a blessing for the devotee. Therefore Mahārāja Parikṣit was neither afraid of nor bewildered by such things. That is the sign of a pure devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 3

उत्सृज्य सर्वतः सङ्गं विज्ञाताजितसंस्थितिः ।
वैयासकेर्जहौ शिष्यो गङ्गायां स्वं कलेवरम् ॥ ३ ॥

*utsrjya sarvataḥ saṅgam
vijñātājita-samsthitiḥ
vaiyāsaker jahau śiṣyo
gaṅgāyām svaṁ kalevaram*

utsrjya—after leaving aside; *sarvataḥ*—all around; *saṅgam*—association; *vijñāta*—being understood; *ajita*—one who is never conquered (the Personality of Godhead); *saṁsthitiḥ*—actual position; *vaiyāsakeḥ*—unto the son of Vyāsa; *jahau*—gave up; *śiṣyaḥ*—as a disciple; *gaṅgāyām*—on the bank of the Ganges; *svam*—his own; *kalevaram*—material body.

TRANSLATION

Furthermore, after leaving all his associates, the King surrendered himself as a disciple to the son of Vyāsa [Śukadeva Gosvāmī], and thus he was able to understand the actual position of the Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The word *ajita* is significant here. The Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is known as Ajita, or unconquerable, and He is so in every respect. No one can know His actual position. He is unconquerable by knowledge also. We have heard about His *dhāma*, or place, eternal Goloka Vṛndāvana, but there are many scholars who interpret this abode in different ways. But by the grace of a spiritual master like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, unto whom the King gave himself up as a most humble disciple, one is able to understand the actual position of the Lord, His eternal abode, and His transcendental paraphernalia in that *dhāma*, or abode. Knowing the transcendental position of the Lord and the transcendental method by which one can approach that transcendental *dhāma*, the King was confident about his ultimate destination, and by knowing this he could leave aside everything material, even his own body, without any difficulty of attachment. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is stated, *param dr̥ṣṭvā nivartate*: one can give up all connection with material attachment when one is able to see the *param*, or the superior quality of things. From *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand the quality of the Lord's energy that is superior to the material quality of energy, and by the grace of a bona fide spiritual master like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, it is quite possible to know everything of the superior energy of the Lord by which the Lord manifests His eternal name, quality, pastimes, paraphernalia and variegatedness. Unless one thoroughly understands this superior or eternal energy of the Lord, it is not possible to leave the material energy, however one may theoretically speculate on the true nature of the Absolute Truth. By the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Mahārāja Parikṣit was able to receive the mercy of such a personality as Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and thus he was able to know the actual position of the unconquerable Lord. It is very difficult to find the Lord from the Vedic literatures, but it is very easy to know Him by the mercy of a liberated devotee like Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

TEXT 4

नोचमश्लोकवार्तानां जुषतां तत्कथामृतम् ।
स्यात्सम्भ्रमोऽन्तकालेऽपि सरतां तत्पदाम्बुजम् ॥४॥

*nottamaśloka-vārtānām
juṣatām tat-kathāmṛtam
syāt sambhramo 'nta-kāle 'pi
smaratām tat-padāmbujam*

na—never; *uttama-śloka*—the Personality of Godhead, of whom the Vedic hymns sing; *vārtānām*—of those who live on them; *juṣatām*—of those who are engaged in; *tat*—His; *kathā-amṛtam*—transcendental topics about Him; *syāt*—it so happens; *sambhramah*—misconception; *anta*—at the end; *kāle*—in time; *api*—also; *smaratām*—remembering; *tat*—His; *pada-ambujam*—lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

This was so because those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead, of whom the Vedic hymns sing, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives.

PURPORT

The highest perfection of life is attained by remembering the transcendental nature of the Lord at the last moment of one's life. This perfection of life is made possible by one who has learned the actual transcendental nature of the Lord from the Vedic hymns sung by a liberated soul like Śukadeva Gosvāmī or someone in that line of disciplic succession. There is no gain in hearing the Vedic hymns from some mental speculator. When the same is heard from an actual self-realized soul and is properly understood by service and submission, everything becomes transparently clear. Thus a submissive disciple is able to live transcendently and continue to the end of life. By scientific adaptation, one is able to remember the Lord even at the end of life, when the power of remembrance is slackened due to derangement of bodily membranes. For a common man, it is very difficult to remember things as they are at the time of death, but by the grace of the Lord and His bona fide devotees, the spiritual masters, one can get this opportunity without difficulty. And it was done in the case of Mahārāja Parikṣit.

TEXT 5

तावत्कलिर्न प्रभवेत् प्रविष्टोऽपि सर्वतः ।
यावदीशो महानुर्व्यामामिमन्यव एकराट् ॥ ५ ॥

*tāvat kalir na prabhavet
praviṣṭo 'piha sarvataḥ
yāvad īśo mahān urvyaṁ
ābhimanyava eka-rāṭ*

tāvat—so long; *kaliḥ*—the personality of Kali; *na*—cannot; *prabhavet*—flourish; *praviṣṭaḥ*—entered in; *api*—even though; *iha*—here; *sarvataḥ*—everywhere; *yāvat*—as long as; *īśaḥ*—the lord; *mahān*—great; *urvyaṁ*—powerful; *ābhimanyavaḥ*—the son of Abhimanyu; *eka-rāṭ*—the one emperor.

TRANSLATION

As long as the great, powerful son of Abhimanyu remains the Emperor of the world, there is no chance that the personality of Kali will flourish.

PURPORT

As we have already explained, the personality of Kali had entered the jurisdiction of this earth long ago, and he was looking for an opportunity to spread his influence all over the world. But he could not do so satisfactorily due to the presence of Mahārāja Parikṣit. That is the way of good government. The disturbing elements like the personality of Kali will always try to extend their nefarious activities, but it is the duty of the able state to check them by all means. Although Mahārāja Parikṣit allotted

places for the personality of Kali, at the same time he gave no chance for the citizens to be swayed by the personality of Kali.

TEXT 6

यस्मिन्नहनि यर्हवे भगवानुत्ससर्ज गाम् ।
तदैवेहानुवृत्तोऽसावधर्मप्रभवः कलिः ॥ ६ ॥

yasminn ahani yarhi eva
bhagavān utsasarja gām
tadaivehānurvṛtto 'sāv
adharmā-prabhavaḥ kalih

yasmin—on that; ahani—very day; yarhi eva—in the very moment; bhagavān—the Personality of Godhead; utsasarja—left aside; gām—the earth; tadā—at that time; eva—certainly; iha—in this world; anuvṛttau—followed; asau—he; adharmā—irreligion; prabhavaḥ—accelerating; kalih—the personality of quarrel.

TRANSLATION

The very day and moment the Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, left this earth, the personality of Kali, who promotes all kinds of irreligious activities, came into this world.

PURPORT

The Personality of Godhead and His holy name, qualities, etc., are all identical. The personality of Kali was not able to enter the jurisdiction of the earth due to the presence of the Personality of Godhead. And similarly, if there is an arrangement for the constant chanting of the holy names, qualities, etc., of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no chance at all for the personality of Kali to enter. That is the technique of driving away the personality of Kali from the world. In modernized human society there are great advancements of material science, and they have invented the radio to distribute sound in the air. So instead of vibrating some nuisance sound for sense enjoyment, if the state arranges to distribute transcendental sound by resounding the holy name, fame and activities of the Lord, as they are authorized in the *Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then a favorable condition will be created, the principles of religion in the world will be reestablished, and thus the executive heads, who are so anxious to drive away corruption from the world, will be successful. Nothing is bad if properly used for the service of the Lord.

TEXT 7

नानुद्वेष्टि कलिं सम्राट् सारङ्ग इव सारथुक् ।
कुशलान्याशु सिद्धयन्ति नेतराणि कृतानि यत् ॥ ७ ॥

nānudveṣṭi kalim samrāt
sāraṅga iva sara-bhuk
kuśalāny āśu siddhyanti
netarāṇi kṛtāni yat

na—never; anudveṣṭi—envious; kalim—unto the personality of Kali; samrāt—the Emperor; saram-ga—realist, like the bees; iva—like; sara-bhuk—one who accepts the substance; kuśalāni—auspicious objects; āśu—immediately; siddhyanti—become successful; na—never; itarāṇi—which are inauspicious; kṛtāni—being performed; yat—as much as.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parikṣit was a realist, like the bees who only accept the essence [of a flower]. He knew perfectly well that in this age of Kali, auspicious things produce good effects immediately, whereas

inauspicious acts must be actually performed [to render effects]. So he was never envious of the personality of Kali.

PURPORT

The age of Kali is called the fallen age. In this fallen age, because the living beings are in an awkward position, the Supreme Lord has given some special facilities to them. So by the will of the Lord, a living being does not become a victim of a sinful act until the act is actually performed. In other ages, simply by thinking of performing a sinful act, one used to become a victim of the act. On the contrary, a living being in this age is awarded with the results of pious acts simply by thinking of them. Mahārāja Parikṣit, being the most learned and experienced king by the grace of the Lord, was not unnecessarily envious of the personality of Kali because he did not intend to give him any chance to perform any sinful act. He protected his subjects from falling prey to the sinful acts of the age of Kali, and at the same time he gave full facility to the age of Kali by allotting him some particular places. At the end of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is said that even though all nefarious activities of the personality of Kali are present, there is a great advantage in the age of Kali. One can attain salvation simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Thus Mahārāja Parikṣit made an organized effort to propagate the chanting of the Lord's holy name, and thus he saved the citizens from the clutches of Kali. It is for this advantage only that great sages sometimes wish all good for the age of Kali. In the *Vedas* also it is said that by discourse on Lord Kṛṣṇa's activities, one can get rid of all the disadvantages of the age of Kali. In the beginning of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is also said that by the recitation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Supreme Lord becomes at once arrested within one's heart. These are some of the great advantages of the age of Kali, and Mahārāja Parikṣit took all the advantages and did not think any ill of the age of Kali, true to his Vaiṣṇavite cult.

TEXT 8

किं नु बालेषु शूरेण कलिना धीरमीरुणा ।
अप्रमत्तः प्रमत्तेषु यो वृको नृषु वर्तते ॥ ८ ॥

kim nu bāleṣu śūreṇa
kalinā dhīra-bhīruṇā
apramattaḥ pramatteṣu
yo vṛko nṛṣu vartate

kim—what; nu—may be; bāleṣu—among the less intelligent persons; śūreṇa—by the powerful; kalinā—by the personality of Kali; dhīra—self-controlled; bhīruṇā—by one who is afraid of; apramattaḥ—one who is careless; pramatteṣu—among the careless; yaḥ—one who; vṛkaḥ—tiger; nṛṣu—among men; vartate—exists.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parikṣit considered that less intelligent men might find the personality of Kali to be very powerful, but that those who are self-controlled would have nothing to fear. The King was powerful like a tiger and took care for the foolish, careless persons.

PURPORT

Those who are not devotees of the Lord are careless and unintelligent. Unless one is thoroughly intelligent, one cannot be a devotee of the Lord. Those who are not devotees of the Lord fall prey to the actions of Kali. It will not be possible to bring about a saner condition in society unless we are prepared to accept the modes of action adopted by Mahārāja Parikṣit, i.e., propagation of the devotional service of the Lord to the common man.

(continued in next issue)



RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN WEST GERMANY

THE TRIAL OF THE HARE KṚṢṆA PEOPLE

The raid . . . the media barrage . . . the courtroom encounter.
A half-million-dollar effort to snuff out the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

The searchlights flickering on the refectory walls didn't phase anyone very much. It was just after 8 A.M. on Sunday, December 14, 1974, and the hot cereal with fruit and milk had top priority for the roughly seventy devotees at the hilltop Kṛṣṇa center in the south German countryside. But soon one of them asked, "What's going on?" and another went to the window.

"The whole driveway is filled with police cars," the young man said, "—all

the way down, as far as you can see."

Most of the devotees kept focused on their breakfast, though a few more went to the windows. More policemen were getting out of their green and white cars and making their way up the hill. They had guns, shields, gas masks, and helmets with face guards, and in a moment they had the place surrounded.

Blond, blue-eyed Mahārathī dāsa opened a window and asked, "Why have you come?"

One of the officers shot some tear gas his way. Before anyone could open the doors, they had broken in and were storming through the halls with their boots and machine guns, looking into open cabinets and closets and breaking open the locked ones.

When Mahārathī had washed his eyes, he asked the policemen not to smoke inside the temple.

"If you don't be quiet," one of them offered, "we'll knock out your teeth."

When the police reached the women's quarters, they threw *sāris* on the floor and laced them with oil. One policeman announced, "This is my harem," and another addressed the celibate girls as "beautiful prostitutes." When one of the girls objected, a policeman warned, "Be careful, you cow. Otherwise, I'll hit you in the face so hard you'll think a horse has kicked you."

Searching the house, the police came upon two shotguns and a Colt pistol and confiscated them. Then they broke into the treasury and confiscated the donations collected in past weeks. Soon they started smashing everything in sight—walls, doors, chairs, windows.

After an hour or so, they marched the devotees out through the snow and into vans. One devotee didn't even get time to grab his shoes.

"My wife is seven months pregnant," another devotee explained. "Couldn't she just stay here?"

Four policemen locked his arms behind his back, pushed him outside, smashed his head several times into the side of a police car, and threw him inside. They put his wife into another car.

Standing outside with his arms folded, supervising the proceedings, was Mr. Hans-Gero Schomberg, the local Staatsanwalt (state attorney). He was a tall, good-looking young man, and at his invitation about a dozen reporters and photographers were on hand to cover the story for the next day's front pages.

An hour later, when the police vans unloaded the devotees at the Frankfurt jail, the reporters were waiting for them

again. One by one, the devotees went through fingerprinting, mug shots, and interrogation. Then the police let them go—except for the leaders. These two devotees they kept in jail for six weeks.

That evening, while the Kṛṣṇa leaders held on to their cell bars, the Staatsanwalt held a press conference, and within hours the whole country knew—"Hare Kṛṣṇa Criminals," "Frauds," "Kidnappers," "Gangsters."

History of Harassment

Not that they'd ever gotten great press. Since back in 1968, when the Kṛṣṇa movement first appeared on German soil, the devotees had always been portrayed as a little kooky at best. And now that their members and their distribution of books and their collections had increased, so had a sense of alarm, particularly among certain churchmen (the local counterparts of America's waning "anti-cult" crusaders).

Chief among these men was Father Friedrich-Wilhelm Haack, the "Commissioner for Questions on Sects and Ideologies" for one of the country's largest denominations. He and the others kept the press well supplied with pronouncements on how the apparently innocent Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees were in fact brainwashers, frauds, and criminals. With Father Haack's encouragement, a Berlin police inspector whose son had joined the movement wrote an article depicting the devotees as fanatics more

crazed and dangerous than the Baader-Meinhof gang. The article ran first in the *Kriminalist*, a periodical for law-enforcement officials, and soon it was picked up by newspapers all over the country.

Not long after, the illustrated weekly *Stern* ran a sensationalistic story about life in a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple.

"This young fellow had come to visit," explains Dutch-born Pṛthu dāsa, thirty-two. "He said he used to live in a monastery, and he asked to join us. But after some days he left, and then we saw his name on a really nasty 'inside' story. It made us look like some kind of Manson-styled loonies. Really outrageous nonsense.

"Those two articles created a small frenzy. And finally some village mayor wrote to the Frankfurt District Attorney and demanded that something be done. That's what eventually led to the raid on our temple."

At the time of the raid, the coordinator for the Kṛṣṇa movement in Germany was Haṁsadūta Svāmī, thirty-seven, who happened to be visiting America. "The temple leaders were in jail," he said, "I was out of the country, and Pṛthu was in Amsterdam. So the devotees had no leader. It was like a ship without a captain in a stormy sea. I mean, overnight our reputation was shattered. And anyone who had any connection with us—the milkman, the gas man, the garbage man—they just cut us off. The gas man came in the middle of the night and took all the gas bottles. The milkman took his milk cans, and we were just cut off from everything."



"They'd never seen anything like it—the defendants coming to court singing and dancing and wearing flower garlands."

"Our treasurer went to the bank to withdraw some money so we could keep functioning," another devotee related. "But armed guards blocked him at the door—illegally, we later found out—and there was nothing we could do. And then two days later the authorities got a restraining order that froze our account."

The temple leaders had to stay in jail for six weeks. Wasn't there any bail? "Fifty thousand marks apiece," says Sucandra, thirty-one, who was one of the two devotees held. "That's about twenty-five thousand dollars each—more than they ask even for murderers." And the other devotees didn't know how to get their leaders out. Lawyers asked for hefty fees in advance and then said that nothing could be done.

"But after six weeks," says Sucandra, "they were really anxious to get us out of there. They didn't have any real grounds for holding us, and it was stretching on and on and beginning to look ridiculous—keeping us separate and so on. So one day they just accepted the bail and let us go."

Must a Monk Be a Blithering Idiot?

What were the devotees accused of? No one actually knew. Says Pṛthu, "We didn't get the indictment until the end of November 1976—two years later. For two full years, they just kept us guessing. 'When is this case going to come to court?' we'd ask. And they'd say, 'Oh, maybe next month. We're still working on the investigation.' And during this whole time, all our funds were frozen, and we'd always be getting blasted in the press. And everyone on the streets would simply echo whatever the newspapers said."

Another devotee explains, "For two years we never went out with robes or shaven heads. We were always fearful. . . . People on the street would come up and spit on us or smash our cars. Or after we'd been distributing books, a policeman would come and take away all the donations. In Berlin someone even sprayed our temple with a machine gun. It was only by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa that the temple president bent down and the shots went over his head."

(A few years earlier, a gang of Rockers had stormed the Kṛṣṇa temple in Hamburg with knives, bats, and brass knuckles. The devotees, warned of the attack, had called the police for help—the police station was just around the corner—but as Haṁsadūta put it, "The police would say, 'Well, you know, we can't answer every little call.'" The

devotees somehow fought off the Rockers by themselves and then applied for a gun permit. When the authorities without explanation refused the permit, the temple president decided that his first duty was to protect the devotees, so he purchased some light arms anyway. These were the guns the police later found when they raided the temple near Frankfurt.)

Rockers weren't the only ones who gave the devotees trouble. "Even the police would harass us," Pṛthu says. "They seemed to think it was their sacred duty to beat the devotees—physically beat them and throw them in jail."

Finally, the devotees received the indictment. "They charged us with every-

"Is it a crime that we're intelligent and successful in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness?"

thing they could think of," says Haṁsadūta Svāmī. "Theft, kidnapping, fraud—they threw in as much as they could. The main thing was that they tried to make Kṛṣṇa consciousness look like some sort of underworld business empire. But their indictment hardly seemed like something they'd been cooking up for two years. It was all kind of thrown together. And much of it was just copied almost verbatim from that original slanderous article in the *Kriminalist*."

Their main target, though, was money. Not just a little money, either. "They took about 700,000 marks," says Pṛthu. "That's about 340,000 dollars. The money was there to print books, to purchase food for our relief programs in India, and to support our other programs for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But the government was monitoring the accounts, and they saw all this money going in and out. So they said, 'Now we've got to take away this money.'

"That's the main focus, the main emphasis—this money. They were simply envious because we had this money, even though we don't use it for ourselves. They think a God conscious person should have no money. But must a monk or a holy person be just some blithering idiot who can't do anything? Is it a crime that we're intelligent, that

we're successful in distributing our books, collecting funds, and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

"The whole case is centered on taking the money, not on any criminality. The criminality was simply their excuse. They made up all the accusations just to keep the money. So it's actually a case of simple theft. They didn't even care if they were right or wrong—they simply took the money first, and then it took them *two years* to figure out what to charge us with. They didn't like the fact that we had collected so much money, and they wanted to keep it—that's all. Plain and simple."

Dancing Into Court

When it finally came time for the trial, the devotees had managed to find lawyers who it seemed wouldn't cheat them, and so they were ready to go. Now it was December of 1977.

Says Haṁsadūta Svāmī, "The Staatsanwalt was telling everybody, 'They won't even show up. They won't even come to court.' Everyone was already there—the lawyers, the judges, the visitors, the Staatsanwalt. We were the only ones who weren't there. So everyone was a little on edge.

"Then about twenty-five or thirty of us came up to those somber old court buildings chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa full blast, with drums and cymbals. They'd never seen anything like it—the defendants coming to court singing and dancing and wearing flower garlands. All the windows opened, and the curtains went back. People were sticking their heads out, and we were waving like soldiers just back from a victory.

"After maybe ten minutes of chanting, we went into the courtroom, and everybody seemed to be smiling. They also seemed pleasantly surprised when the ten of us who were actual defendants sat down in our places, put pictures of Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda on the bench before us, and made little altars with flowers. Otherwise, it looked a lot like the Nuremberg trials. . . . two lawyers and a microphone behind each defendant—the whole works."

The Accuser Becomes the Accused

From the beginning, the devotees wanted to avoid complex legal arguments and instead speak out about Kṛṣṇa and the authenticity of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. In that way, they reasoned, even if they lost the case, the public would get a chance to hear

what they really wanted to say.

"I'd felt all along," says Hamsadūta Svāmī, "that this whole affair was Kṛṣṇa's arrangement. He hadn't forgotten about us. He'd actually been making an arrangement to glorify His devotees and push His movement forward. Otherwise, people might not have been interested. But this big raid and the slander in the press had fascinated them, and now we wanted them to find out just what our movement is all about, to find out that the devotees are actually following an ancient culture of spiritual science and philosophy. And that's exactly what we wanted the judges to find out, too."

Accordingly, the defense lawyers made a prompt motion that the judges (who for three years had read only the press reports) should now examine at least portions of the books upon which the movement is based—ancient India's Vedic scriptures. The judges accepted the motion, and the lawyers handed them German translations of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. After that the judges would often be seen reading while the case was going on.

In German courts the defense presents its case first, and then the prosecution. So one after another, the devotees got up and presented their statements. Hamsadūta Svāmī began.

"The thing that distinguishes a human being from an animal," he said, "is religion. Religion is the basis of law, which is the foundation of civilization. Without religion there is no duty, no standard of behavior, and no purpose or direction for human civilization.

"The greatest men in history were not businessmen, politicians, scientists, Stalins, Hitlers, or Napoleons. They were men dedicated to God—Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Caitanya. Great men are those who have dedicated their lives to the service of God by preaching His message in the world.

"In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is said that great souls live not for their own satisfaction but for the welfare of others. It is because of such pure devotees that there is light and hope in the world. Such pure devotees are called *mahātmās*, broadminded souls. Now, I ask you whether the Staatsanwalt is a *mahātmā*, a pure devotee of the Lord."

At this the audience—perhaps a hundred reporters and other onlookers—burst into laughter. The Staatsanwalt turned red.

Hamsadūta Svāmī continued, "What is the character of this man? How can he dare impugn the integrity of Hare Kṛṣṇa monks who have dedicated life and soul to spreading God consciousness? They daily accept insult and even risk personal

injury in their attempt to uplift human society by distributing books on the science of love of God. Does it matter, then, if they collect two thousand or two million or even two hundred million marks to carry on their mission?

"If collecting money were our purpose, distributing God consciousness would be the wrong line. Better that we had gone in for distributing pornography or heroin. We could have offered anything other than love of God and spared ourselves a lot of trouble.

"It is the duty of the government not

**“The greatest
men in history
were not Stalins,
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God.”**

to suppress but to protect and uphold the principles of religion—cleanliness, truthfulness, austerity, and mercy—for human society without religion is no better than animal society."

Then Hamsadūta Svāmī directly countered the charges and their author, the Staatsanwalt. (A portion of his statement appears at right.)

Now Pṛthu spoke.

"This is the same thing that happened thirty-five years ago," he said. "The same injustice, the same closing of the eyes. The same blind following, the same abuse of freedom.

"The Jews were involved with money, and Hitler wanted to control it. So first he called them criminals, and then he sent them off to concentration camps.

"When Hitler came to power, the Church made an agreement with the government that the churches wouldn't work against the government and the government wouldn't bother the churches. This was the Concordat. And immediately afterward, the Nazis stamped down upon so many sects. The Jehovah's Witnesses—they went into the concentration camps. The Jews went into concentration camps. Even church

“You don't know the first thing ...”

Hamsadūta Svāmī addresses
the court.



The preamble to the West German constitution contains these words: "The law is hereby formulated in responsibility before God and man." And in the dictionary God is defined as "the supreme being, the creator, and the ruler of the universe." So any state government is simply an insignificant part of the greater government of God. A state government that poses itself as a democracy but whose actual policy is to persecute and harass religious communities—such as ours—can hardly be civilized, cultured, or lawful. Such a society is barbaric and animalistic. It must of necessity destroy itself—and this is actually happening at the present moment here in West Germany.

If there is anything Germany is famous for, it is religious persecution. Today in West Germany, distributing Hitler literature or Hitler recordings or Hitler movies is very much appreciated, and the government never interferes. But distributing Kṛṣṇa conscious literature is treated as tantamount to the terrorism of the Baader-Meinhof gang!

At the cost of thousands of marks, the State has made a huge arrangement for a trial to persecute a handful of harmless monks whose only crime is distributing knowledge and love of God in the form of literature and records. I fail to see how the public will be able to accept the shameless attempt by their state government to

gag the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement through extended three-year legal maneuvers and slander campaigns in the press.

It is a well-known fact that exactly three years ago, agents of this government raided our temple in Frankfurt with a mob of seventy armed police. They tear-gassed and roughed up innocent and harmless devotees. They smashed furniture and defiled the temple. They rounded up the women in a room and attempted to proposition them as if they were common prostitutes.

The Staatsanwalt arranged that the press be there, so that the newspaper propaganda to slander our name would be one-hundred-percent effective. Some twenty-five hundred newspaper articles in Germany and around the world denounced the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees as demented, brainwashed criminals engaged in defrauding the public in the name of religion. The government fabricated charges such as kidnapping, falsifying papers, and so on. Recently, the Staatsanwalt set the same lying propaganda machine in motion again to sway public opinion in his favor for the court case.

At the time of the raid three years ago, two of our leading monks were arrested and unduly detained for six weeks. They were released only when an unheard-of bail bond of 100,000 marks was put up by the Hare Kṛṣṇa society. All this came about as a result of our *saṅkīrtana*, or book distribution, which was supposedly conducted without the proper permission—an offense comparable to parking a car in a no-parking zone. All the society's funds (about 700,000 marks) were frozen, and all our business connections (which were necessary for our normal functioning) were ruined by slanderous and malicious newspaper articles.

The Staatsanwalt and the criminal police kept us hanging on for two years without any information as to the future of our money and our movement. Now, three years later, the matter is coming before the court, and again the Staatsanwalt has initiated a slander campaign and filled the newspapers full of lies. The whole affair smacks of religious persecution, Nazi-style.

This Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is a bona fide religious movement representing the original culture and religion of India. It will be proved in this court by documented evidence and personal testimonies of some of the world's most respected religious and academic authorities that ISKCON is a genuine religious movement. With that evidence, the case of the prosecution will naturally collapse, because the basis for confiscating the 700,000 marks and leveling the fraud charges against members of ISKCON has all along been the unproven assumption that ISKCON is running a business for personal gain and profit.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Before being accepted as an initiated disciple, each member of ISKCON must be completely free from all addiction to sense gratification, such as meat-eating, intoxicants (including tea, coffee, cigarettes, and so on), illicit sex, and gambling. Where is the scope for personal gain?

If I ask any man in this courtroom whether he smokes, drinks, reads pornography, or eats meat, he will be found guilty on every count. These Hare Kṛṣṇa boys, however, do not smoke, go to the cinema, eat meat or fish or eggs, or keep illicit connections with women. And they do not gamble. Then what do they do? From morning till night in every town and village, they preach about the holy names of the Lord. I ask you, where is the scope for criminal intent? Are you not ashamed that you are persecuting religious monks whose only intent is to teach love of God in every town and village?

The preamble to your Constitution begins, "The law is hereby formulated in responsibility before God and man." So you, the Staatsanwalt, are a lawyer, a defender of the law. Can you say what God is? Do you abide by the orders of God? Do you even *know* what these orders are? If not, then what are you doing pushing forward a case in which the only issue in question is the authenticity of this religious movement, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness?

It is you who are the fraud. You pose as an upholder of laws "formulated in responsibility before

God and man," but *you do not know what God is, or what His laws are*. The State tries to persecute those who are actually doing God's work and observing His laws. And it openly supports everything godless and sinful. The liquor industry, the meat industry, the gambling casinos, the lottery, Dr. Muller's Sex Shops—all enjoy full protection from the government, which realizes millions of marks daily in the shape of tax revenues from such sinful and degrading activities. Isn't this fraud?

You have accused us of fraud. But only five percent of all the funds collected by ISKCON were spent for personal maintenance. How does this compare to the Red Cross, the Catholic Church, or the Protestant Church? Where is your evidence of fraud? All the money collected is still there in the bank, accounted for in the books. *We are being held under false arrest!* There is no evidence to support the charges.

When someone attempted to murder one of our devotees in the Berlin temple and we reported the incident to the local police, they dropped the case without any investigation. Isn't this fraud? The same thing happened in Mainz, where someone attempted to kill one of our devotees by shooting at him from a rooftop. Nothing was done by the police. Isn't this fraud? The same thing happened in Hamburg, where fifteen Rockers attacked our temple in the middle of the night. The local police were so busy that they couldn't send even one officer to give us protection. But when there is an opportunity for harassment and persecution, seventy policemen with machine guns can be spared and sent to the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in the mountains outside Frankfurt, where they can mercilessly beat devotees, manhandle pregnant women, and steal our money. Isn't this fraud? You have no idea what religion is and what religion isn't. You don't know the first thing about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

Therefore, the judges and the Staatsanwalt should be dismissed for some time with a sufficient supply of the Vedic literatures. They should study them carefully—and then reconvene and judge just what the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is. ❀



Prthu challenges the Staatsanwalt. "For three years this rascal, this rogue, this liar . . ."

members who stood up against the government were harassed—and the church didn't do anything about it.

"My father . . ." Prthu's voice shook with feeling. "My father was a Dutchman. . . . We were living in Germany in a little village, and Hitler was coming the next day, so everyone was ordered to hang out a flag. The only person who didn't do it was my father. That night they came and took him away—put him into a concentration camp.

"And now for three years this rascal, this rogue, this liar . . ." Prthu pointed at the Staatsanwalt, who stood up and objected. The judge overruled him. "It's the same thing," Prthu continued. "In the 1930's they ran so much propaganda against the Jews that people smashed the synagogues. And now again there's so much lying propaganda that people raid our Kṛṣṇa temples and assault our devotees in the street. People from the churches have asked the government to help stifle our Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, and that's just what's happening. Now the state has branded our monks criminals, so that they can seize our funds and drive us out. It's the same thing, the same style. Who can mistake it?"

Haṁsadūta Svāmī had spoken two hours, and Prthu spoke four. Then court adjourned for the day.

For the first time, the devotees had created a favorable impression in the press. The newspapers described them as

relaxed, peaceful, cheerful, and clean. Said the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, "The impact of the defense of the Hare Kṛṣṇa monks was so overwhelming that it dominated the whole atmosphere of the courtroom. It appeared that the state attorney was standing quite alone and helpless with his accusation files in hand."

"They turned the court into a tribunal," said the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, "and suddenly the accuser became the accused."

"Preaching Is Our Life"

The next day of the trial began with the devotees' children distributing cookies around the courtroom. After that they did it every day. Says Haṁsadūta Svāmī, "One little boy would walk around fearlessly and offer cookies to the prosecutor and the judges, and they couldn't refuse. The defense lawyers would pass the cookies around among themselves. One day the prosecutor complained to the judge that I was eating cookies, so all the lawyers made mock-choking sounds, and my lawyer said, 'I cannot tell a lie. I, too, am eating a cookie.'"

When court went into session, Sucasandra spoke again about what many people cared about most—the money. Now, the German states have laws that tightly rein the soliciting of funds. But

one section of the national collection laws says, "Churches, religious societies, and ideological societies are exempted" from these laws, "and also exempt are religious orders and religious congregations that use the funds collected for maintaining their livelihood."

The Staatsanwalt, however, had contended that the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement was not a religion at all, but a kind of shrewd business organization.

"When our devotees go out," Sucasandra countered, "they never think, 'I am collecting money.' Instead, they think, 'I am distributing love of God.' What we do is completely different from ordinary collecting—because when we go out our purpose is to *give* people something (a book or record) that will inspire their love for God. And if we're going to keep printing books and making records, people have to give some donations. Otherwise, if we just gave all these things away, we'd eventually go broke. That's only common sense.

"So we're going out and giving people something beneficial, and naturally they're giving whatever they can. That way we can print more books and keep our mission going.

"We see that materialistic life is making people suffer. So our mission is to print these books in the German language so that people can learn how to become free from suffering and attain the highest perfection of human life.

“What do we do with the money? We don’t try to gratify our senses. We just use it to spread God consciousness to people all over the world.

“We sent fifteen thousand marks to India for food distribution, and we also sponsor the distribution of food and books in Africa and the Middle East. And then we also take a little money to live on—five percent. The police who dug into our finances were amazed. Five percent—practically nothing.

“But the Staatsanwalt wants to twist the laws to say that a religion may collect only for its livelihood, and nothing more. If we’d spent ninety-five percent for eating, sleeping and having a nice time for ourselves—for our ‘livelihood’—that would presumably have been all right.

“But we don’t do that. Every one of us sleeps on the floor. It’s very simple—a Kṛṣṇa conscious life. And we like it. We do it voluntarily. But we’re being penalized for being so austere!

“Our livelihood—our life—is preaching. Unless we’re preaching—unless we’re printing and distributing books—we can’t live, because that’s our whole purpose, our whole mission.

“To perform *saṅkīrtana*—to give people our books and accept some contribution—is our constitutional right. If you don’t allow it, we’re ready to die doing *saṅkīrtana*, but we will not stop, no matter what you do. Whether we win this case or lose it, we’ll continue to distribute our books and help people find out about Kṛṣṇa, because this is our religious right. It’s our right, and we will not stop. It’s not a part of our religion; it is our religion. In all the Vedic scriptures you’ll find this confirmed.”

Emphasizing the scriptural authenticity of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement was Vedavyāsa dāsa, twenty-six, the final defendant to testify. It was he who had translated the scriptures of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement into German, and now he gave a careful, scholarly explanation of their history and purpose.

But he, too, was indignant. “The Staatsanwalt has gotten a statement from my mother saying that I’m a demented, demoralized robot, a moron,” he began. “But I’ve translated these books”—he pointed to a full set of Vedic writings, lined up on a table before him—“and they’ve won the praise of scholars and professors throughout Germany. Do you think this is the work of a moron?” Judge Franz answered by spending the better part of the afternoon reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and at the end of the day he took a full set with him. Chief Judge Maul took a copy of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Later the judges requested to see a film about the movement, and the defense rested its case.

“A Cow on Ice”

Now the Staatsanwalt faced a difficult task. He had to shake apart the credibility the devotees had so quickly established. “I just want to show you,” he said, “that these people are not the angels they’ve impressed you as being.” He had 131 witnesses, and so he began his case.

“During the time you worked for these people,” he asked a man who had

“What had appeared to be a band of criminal monsters turned out to be nothing more than cookie monsters.”

been the devotees’ bookkeeper, “did you feel they were purposely conducting fraudulent activities?”

“No,” the man answered. “I never had any idea like that. That was the furthest thing from my mind. Why, they’re the most friendly, warmhearted people. Anyone who comes to them immediately gets a meal. . . .”

The Staatsanwalt called another man.

“I was on the street,” the man testified, “and a young man approached me. We talked for awhile, he gave me a book, and I gave him a donation.”

“Did you feel like you were being cheated?” the Staatsanwalt asked.

“No.”

“Why did you give a contribution?”

“Well, I thought he was giving me something nice, so I should also give him something.”

The Staatsanwalt called another witness. Apparently he hadn’t screened them beforehand.

“I was very interested in the book,” the witness said. “Later I got more of them. And you know, I still read them today.”

Says Hamsadūta Svāmī, “It was as if Kṛṣṇa were putting the words into their

mouths. They would speak in such a way as to support everything we had already said in our defense.”

The Staatsanwalt’s case was beginning to crumble. As the *Nord Stuttgarter Rundschau* put it, “What had appeared to be a band of criminal monsters had turned out, to the amazement of everyone, to be nothing more than a band of cookie monsters whose only crime appeared to be distributing and eating cookies in the courtroom.”

Another incident concerned a fourteen-year-old boy the devotees had supposedly kidnapped and hidden away in America. By now he was eighteen, and the Staatsanwalt called him as a witness. But the boy asserted that he had actually slipped away from his drunken mother and had run off by himself to Amsterdam. “And right there on the spot,” says Hamsadūta Svāmī, “the Staatsanwalt had the boy handcuffed and arrested for suspicion of perjury, and he hauled him out of court. It was unprecedented. Even if a man is flat-out lying you don’t do that. The judges were furious. But they couldn’t do anything, because technically it was legal.”

By now the Staatsanwalt’s colleagues were calling him “a cow on ice” and wondering how to get him off. The devotees compared him with the hapless Michael Schwed, an assistant district attorney in Queens, New York. In 1977, amid great fanfare in the media, Mr. Schwed had prosecuted two Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees on unprecedented charges of “kidnapping through mind control and brainwashing.” (Mr. Schwed’s colleagues berated him for making “a laughingstock” of the D.A.’s office, the State Supreme Court threw out his indictments and said he had garnered “not a scintilla of evidence,” and the judge certified the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement as “a bona fide religion with roots in India that go back thousands of years.”)

Soon the press handed the Staatsanwalt his share of criticism. “The prosecution could not avoid the impression of religious persecution,” said the *Frankfurter Rundschau*. “Too often, as the defense rightly mentioned, the prosecution has called something humbug that is in fact holy to these monks.”

But the bad notices really started coming in when newsmen realized how much the trial of the Hare Kṛṣṇa people was going to cost. “One million marks,” says Pṛthu. “It cost one million marks—nearly half a million dollars—for them to prosecute us. Which means their raid hadn’t even gotten them enough money to pay the court costs.

“It was a big scandal all over the newspapers. The newsmen figured it out.

Our lawyers were court-appointed, and the state had to pay five hundred marks a day for each of them. There were ten defendants, and according to German law, each defendant had to have two lawyers. And there was the salary for the Staatsanwalt and his assistant, the guards at the door, five judges, the P.A. system, and the guy who wrote everything down. Then there was the cost of the police raid—all those policemen working overtime. Huge expense! They paid one million marks to prosecute us for 'illegal collection,' an offense that's really on the same level as illegal parking. And that's why they had to have the money—to pay for the court case."

Peculiar Testimony

Finally the Staatsanwalt called his star witness, the same Father Haack who had gotten the case going in the first place.

"That was a big day," recalls Haṁsadūta Svāmī. "All the newspapers were there. Everyone was expecting that he was really going to let the cat out of the bag and tell everyone the real dirt about the Hare Kṛṣṇa people."

The Father, it seemed, had a large collection of file cards recording his encounters with devotees on the streets. The cards gave the date, the time, and what had actually happened. "Whenever I would meet one of them," the Father said, "I would note it down." Then he proceeded to detail various nasty charges against the devotees.

"It looked really bad for us," says Haṁsadūta Svāmī. "But before he left the courtroom, one of my lawyers—it was just Kṛṣṇa's mercy—remembered something."

"I have a few questions," the lawyer said. "I find your statements very peculiar in light of the statements you made to the police three years ago. After the investigating officer interviewed you, he wrote down in his report that you could give no substantial information. According to his report, everything you said was from hearsay. And there was no mention of any cards. How is that?"

The witness became flustered. Perhaps the policeman hadn't asked the right questions, he suggested.

"Do you remember that policeman?" the lawyer asked.

The witness didn't really remember. After all, policemen came to him often. If he had come, it might have been for only a few minutes, ten or fifteen.

"Try to remember," the lawyer kept saying. "Such a big case, you were so concerned, and you'd been keeping the file cards. Surely you must remember."

But the witness didn't remember, and

finally he was excused.

Then the policeman was called to the stand. "Now, we want to know what connection you had with this priest," the lawyer said.

"Oh, yes. I remember him well. We often spoke together on the telephone."

"When you visited him, how much time did you spend with him—five minutes, ten minutes, half an hour?"

"Oh, we spent at least three or four hours together."

"And why did you write that he couldn't offer anything but hearsay?"

The judges seemed depressed. "We were forced to do this," one judge said later. "We didn't make that decision."

"Because it was a fact. He was just relating incidents he'd heard from other people."

Then the lawyer asked, "If this man had kept file cards, let's say, with information of meetings at definite times, would you have noted that in your report?"

"Definitely! That would have been something, at last. But he had nothing. He was just talking about things he'd read or heard."

Hot Air and Superior Forces

"Since the evidence showed that the Staatsanwalt had produced an excess of hot air," reported the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, "Judge Maul finally proposed to put an end to the case because of its disproportionate insignificance."

Yet on the last day of the proceedings, just before the judges retired to consider their verdict, they heard the testimony of Professor Klaus Finkelburg, one of Germany's leading constitutional lawyers. The State had pointed out all along that when the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement registered ten years ago, it was as a charitable

organization, not as a religion. But, asked Dr. Finkelburg, did this mean the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement had forfeited the constitutional rights guaranteed to every other religion? Registration was such a fine technical procedure that even Dr. Finkelburg and his colleagues had no idea how to go about it.

If the court actually wanted to reach a decision, Dr. Finkelburg submitted, it must first send the case to the constitutional court. They would determine whether Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a genuine religion and whether *sāṅkīrtana*, the movement's preaching work, comes within the scope of religious activity. Only then, he said, might the lower court resolve this case.

Still, on April 28, 1978, the court announced its verdict.

To the Staatsanwalt's chagrin, the judges absolved the devotees of all criminal charges. (The only exception: for illegal possession of weapons they gave the president of the Frankfurt temple a six-month sentence—and then suspended it.)

The judges noted that the only charge with possible substance was violation of the collection laws, and here they did not hold back their criticism of the prosecution. "Violations of the collection laws," said Chief Judge Helmut Maul, "should have been dealt with in a less extravagant way—for example, by fines—and not by the use of a four-month trial with more than thirty days in court.

"But higher-ups," Judge Maul said, "insisted that the trial take place."

The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, the judges agreed, was a bona fide religion—yet it was not a religion in the usual Western sense of the word and thus was not in the same category as the established churches.

Accordingly, the judges fined three devotees five thousand marks each and one devotee twenty-five hundred marks. Also, the court ruled, the confiscated donations would not be returned.

Although it wasn't in the written verdict, Judge Maul said one thing more: "Superior forces from outside this court have played a role in the finding of this verdict."

The judges seemed depressed. "They didn't want to look us in the eye," says Pṛṥthu.

"I don't like this decision at all," one judge said later. "We were forced to do this. We didn't make that decision."

On basic constitutional grounds the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees have appealed to a higher court. There they expect at least two years' delay, and then, eventually, vindication.

CONSCIOUSNESS

(continued from page 9)

This brings us to the question of whether or not consciousness is associated with any violation of the laws of material phenomena studied in physics and chemistry. If consciousness is real and is affected by the behavior of matter, as we experience, then it stands to reason that the behavior of matter should also be affected by consciousness. This is certainly the general rule in physics, where if one entity or aspect of an entity (such as momentum) affects another, then it is affected in turn. If this rule applies to consciousness, then activities should be observable in conscious living beings that differ from the activities predicted by the physical laws.

It is interesting that in quantum mechanics, the fundamental theory of modern physics, we seem to find just such a situation. Since the development of this theory in the 1920's, one prominent school of thought, initiated by John von Neumann, has held that certain basic quantum mechanical principles imply that the consciousness of the observer influences the course of physical events. Here is a summary of this view taken from a standard textbook of physics:

If one accepts von Neumann's formulation of quantum mechanics, one is led to

far-reaching and not entirely palatable conclusions. . . . The outcome of these considerations is that quantum mechanics cannot give a complete description of the physical world because there must exist systems (called "conscious" by Wigner) that are beyond the theory's powers of description. . . .²

Unfortunately, the nature of the observer's influences are not made at all clear by the quantum theory. This is not surprising, for if consciousness is inherently not describable by numerical systems, we would expect that any mathematical theory of the interaction between consciousness and measurable variables could be only an approximation, at best.

Such methods cannot ultimately touch on the nature of consciousness itself. To actually understand consciousness, an approach is required that completely transcends the basic framework of modern scientific theory. This magazine is, of course, dedicated to the exposition of such a transcendental approach. Very briefly, this method is based on the study of consciousness through the medium of consciousness itself. It depends on the basic principle that our conscious awareness is not merely a passive receptor of material thoughts and sensations, but is the directly apparent symptom of a variegated realm of conscious entities predominated by the supreme Conscious Being. Through development of the rela-

tionship between the individual and supreme conscious entities, the true nature of consciousness can be known by direct conscious perception.

From the general point of view of the empiric scientific method, such an approach is as good as the results it produces when put into practice. As we have seen, it is certainly not ruled out by current scientific findings. On the contrary, it provides a challenge to the students of the life sciences. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5) the conscious entities are described as follows:

Besides the inferior nature [matter], O Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine, made up of the conscious entities who are struggling with material nature and sustaining the world.

This indicates the extent of the interactions between consciousness and matter, many of which may be accessible to study in approximate form by the experimental methods of physics and chemistry. Far from limiting the scientific enterprise, the higher study of consciousness outlined in *Bhagavad-gītā* suggests opportunities for scientists to make great advances over present theoretical conceptions.

1. Watson, J.D. *Molecular Biology of the Gene*, 2nd ed. Menlo Park, Calif.: W.A. Benjamin, Inc., 1970, p. 67.
2. Gottfried, K. *Quantum Mechanics*, New York: W.A. Benjamin, Inc., 1966, p. 188.

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Killing the Demons Of Tālavana Forest

It was a sweet-smelling, fruit-filled forest, but the demons threw terror into all who came near. Except Kṛṣṇa and His brother.

Fifty centuries ago, in the north Indian village of Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead played just like a cowherd boy. Yet there were times when He performed wonderful, superhuman activities.

One day, as usual, Kṛṣṇa went into the forest with His elder brother Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends, and on the way He played His flute. Vṛndāvana forest was full of buzzing bees, blooming flowers, and well-laden fruit trees. There were songbirds and clear lakes with waters that could relieve any kind of fatigue. Sweet-flavored breezes refreshed body and mind. When Kṛṣṇa saw all the trees overloaded with fruit and bending down toward the ground as if to welcome Him, He was pleased and started smiling. At times, for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, the boys imitated the sound of the swans or the dancing of the peacocks, and Kṛṣṇa also imitated the dancing and made His friends laugh.

When the boys got tired, they would sit down and rest. Balarāma would place His head on the lap of one of the boys and take a nap, and Kṛṣṇa would massage Balarāma's legs or fan Him with a palm frond. While Balarāma was resting, the other boys would dance or sing or wrestle among themselves. Instantly Kṛṣṇa would join in the fun, and He would laugh and compliment His friends on their prowess. When Kṛṣṇa felt tired, He would lie down with His head pillowed on the root of a big tree or the lap of a cowherd boy. Then some of the boys would massage His legs, others would fan Him with large leaves, and a few of the more sweet-voiced boys would comfort Him with beautiful songs. It didn't take long for Kṛṣṇa's fatigue to go away.

But as it happened, on this particular day a problem emerged, and some of the boys came to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to tell Them about it.

"Dear Balarāma," they began, "You are very powerful; Your arms are very strong. Dear Kṛṣṇa, You are very expert in killing all kinds of disturbing demons. Will You kindly note that just near this place there is a big forest called Tālavana. This forest is full of palm trees, and all the trees are filled with sweet, ripe fruit. Some of the fruit is already falling, and some is still in the trees. It is a very nice place, but because of a great demon named Dhenukāsura, it is very difficult to go there. No one can reach the trees to gather the fruit.

"Dear Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, this demon is present there in the form of an ass, and he is surrounded by similar demon friends who have assumed the same shape. All of them are very strong, so it is very difficult to get near this place. Dear brothers, You are the only persons who can kill demons like these. Other than You, no one can go there, for fear of being killed. Not even animals go there, and no birds are sleeping there; they have all left. Only from a distance can we appreciate the sweet aroma that is coming from the Tālavana forest. It appears that up until now, no one has tasted the sweet fruit there.

"Dear Kṛṣṇa, to tell You frankly, we are very attracted by this sweet aroma. Dear Balarāma, let us all go there and enjoy the fruit. The aroma of the fruit has spread everywhere. Don't You smell it from here?"

Desiring to please Their smiling friends, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma walked toward the Tālavana forest. When They arrived, Balarāma yanked the trees with

the strength of an elephant and shook all the ripe fruit to the ground.

Upon hearing the sound of the falling fruit, the demon Dhenukāsura rushed toward Balarāma with great force. The whole forest trembled, and the trees quivered as if there were an earthquake. With his hind legs Dhenukāsura started kicking Balarāma in the chest. At first Balarāma didn't say anything, but the angry demon kept kicking Him harder and harder. Suddenly Balarāma grabbed the demon's hind legs with one hand and whirled him around and around so fast that he lost his life.

Then Balarāma threw Dhenukāsura into the biggest palm tree in the forest, and the demon's heavy body toppled it down onto the trees nearby. It looked as if a powerful hurricane had struck. All the trees were crashing down, one after another. Yet this extraordinary show of strength wasn't particularly astonishing, since Balarāma is Lord Kṛṣṇa's primary expansion.

Now all Dhenukāsura's friends came together and attacked Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. The asses were set on avenging their cohort's death, but Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma grabbed all of them by the hind legs, whirled them around, and threw them into the palm trees. The asses' dead bodies made a panoramic scene; it appeared that clouds of various colors were floating in the treetops. At once the demigods from the higher planets showered flowers on Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, beat their drums, and offered devotional prayers. A few days after the killing of Dhenukāsura, people began coming into the Tālavana forest to gather the fruit. Animals returned without fear and started feeding on the lush grasses that grew there.

On arriving back in Vṛndāvana village, the cowherd boys told everyone how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had killed the demons. When the *gopīs* (the young cowherd girls) saw Kṛṣṇa coming home—a peacock feather on His head, His face smeared with the dust of the cows—they were overjoyed. Whenever He was away, they were morose. All day they would think of Him playing in the

forest or herding His cows in the pasture. But now that they saw Him coming home, their moroseness vanished, and they looked at His face the way bees hover over the honey of the lotus flower. The young *gopīs* smiled and laughed, and Kṛṣṇa played His flute and enjoyed their lovely, smiling faces.

In a moment Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were back at home with Their mothers,

Yaśodā and Rohiṇī, who cared for their beloved children by bathing and dressing Them. Kṛṣṇa received yellowish garments, and Balarāma bluish garments, and both wore all sorts of ornaments and flower garlands. After a hard day's work in the pasturing ground, They looked refreshed and beautiful. Now Their mothers set a number of delectable dishes before Them, and They were pleased to finish everything. Afterward, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma lay down on fresh, clean bedding, and with Their mothers singing sweetly about Their pastimes, They fell asleep. In this way, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma used to enjoy life in Vṛndāvana as cowherd boys. ❀

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



Relief for the hungry

Hunger remains a problem for thousands of families in India and East Africa. One vital and popular function performed for years by the ISKCON devotees in these areas is free distribution of nutritious food—vegetarian meals cooked with devotion and offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

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—KENNETH KEATING, Former U.S. Ambassador to India

PROPOSITION 13

(continued from page 13)

a stomach (farmers and merchants to keep food and other necessities coming), arms (government and military men to organize and protect), and brains—brains, to guide and give direction. The social body needs *brāhmaṇas*.

Happily, under the guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his disciples, now thousands are learning how to become *brāhmaṇas*: they're studying how to solve life's real problems—however you feel about Proposition 13, you're still going to get old and diseased and die. And like the *brāhmaṇas* of old, they aren't becoming the salaried employees of business or government. They aren't trotting from door to door with degrees and résumés between their teeth and tails wagging, like dogs in search of a master. Through books, lectures, and personal guidance, they're giving the science of self-realization to people all over the country and the world, and people are giving whatever they can to keep the work going.

So while Proposition 13 is giving nightmares to many paid public servants around the country, real *brāhmaṇas* aren't worried at all. A *brāhmaṇa*'s service to mankind doesn't depend on a paycheck with cost-of-living increases. Instead, it's inspired by a sincere desire to help people become free from ignorance, free from death and rebirth. And if any out-of-work librarians, professors, social workers, or teachers want to find out how to become a *brāhmaṇa*, they can visit the Kṛṣṇa center nearest them and ask about it—it's a great career. ❀

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SOLUTION

(continued from page 5)

When everyone understands this knowledge, there will be no difficulty. The whole world is made by the Lord's arrangement, so that you will have no scarcity. Everything is sufficient. There will be no scarcity, provided you know the distribution process. Now there is a fallacy in the distribution process. One is taking more, and another is starving. Therefore, the starving people are making a protest: "Why shall we starve?" But their knowledge is also defective. Here is the perfect knowledge: *ātmā-vāsyam idam sarvam*—we have to understand that everything is God's property, not our property. Then we can use things which are available as nature's products. Suppose there is an iron ore mine. So, whatever iron ore one requires, he can take. But if somebody makes the iron ore mine his own property, then according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* he becomes a thief. Then he's punishable, because the mine is God's property. Nobody can create the iron ore mine. We cannot create anything—we can simply transform things.

Suppose you are a worker or a laborer. You may manufacture a very nice table, but the ingredients—the wood, the iron, the instruments—they are supplied by God. You cannot manufacture iron. You cannot manufacture wood. So why do you claim that the table is yours? This is ignorance. So by the culture of the Kṛṣṇa science, when you understand the Kṛṣṇa science, then you become free from this ignorance.

We are suffering due to ignorance. It is just as if we were in a law court. Ignorance is no excuse in the law court. Suppose you have done something wrong. If you say to the judge, "I did not know, sir, that this is the law," that is no excuse. You'll be punished. Now, in the *śāstra*, in the Vedic literature, it is said that everything belongs to God, everything is manufactured by God. So everyone has a right—not only human beings, even the animals—everyone has a right to live and use things, as much as he requires. But if he stocks more, if he acquires more, he becomes a thief. And he's punishable. Now, suppose I say, "Oh, I do not know this law; therefore, I have accumulated so many things." That ignorance does not mean that you'll not be punished. You will be punished.

Therefore, we have to know the Kṛṣṇa science. Now, people of the modern age are lacking this knowledge. That is why we have formed this international society, and we invite all sincere souls to take part in the society and teach this science all over the world.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Two Reflections: Healer, Heal Thyself

In recent years thousands of religious figures have taken up faith healing. They use all kinds of approaches, but basically they claim that through their charismatic prayer and laying on of hands, God acts: He cures everything from cavities to brain tumors, releases sexual inhibitions, and even increases earning capacity. The faith healers have gained so much influence that many believe their craft should be recognized as one of religion's essential components. Says one elder healer, "People are putting healing back into the mainline churches, where it belongs."

But like psychiatrists, faith healers offer cures for the body, not the soul. Calling on God to fix up my finances or arthritis or my relationship with my wife is very poor religion, and not even good sense. It recalls a story about a pious washerwoman who tripped and fell and dropped her bundle off her head. She prayed to God, and after He appeared and asked her, "What do you want?" she answered, "O dear Lord! Please lift this load back on my head!"

In their attempt to improve people's lot in this temporary world, faith healers demonstrate precious little understanding of the nature of the soul or the soul's relationship with God. As the Vedic literatures inform us, the real self, the eternal soul, will never be satisfied by any adjustment or improvement we can make here, any more than a starving man will feel happy if we simply offer him entertainment or counseling. A starving man has to have food, and the soul has to reawaken his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, God. However much we comfort our bodies—through faith healing or this or that—until we achieve pure love of God we'll undergo reincarnation and get more bodies and more misery, on and on. But if we revive our devotion for the Lord, then when we pass away we'll go to His abode for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

What if a Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee finds himself with some bodily trouble? He understands that it's the result of his own past sinful acts, his own *karma*. Of course, he'll seek standard medical treatment, but he won't chant God's name as though it were merely a medical formula, a sure cure for all that ails. He'll chant just to glorify the Lord, as always,

and the rest he'll leave to Him. In the ancient *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* a devotee expresses these same sentiments: "My dear Lord, one who constantly waits for Your causeless mercy and goes on suffering the reactions to his past misdeeds, offering You respectful obeisances from the core of his heart, is surely eligible for spiritual liberation."

So faith healing is mundane; it's pseudoreligion, at best. Actual religion is pure devotional service to the Lord, and somewhat paradoxically, it's only when nothing else matters to us but this pure devotion that we'll be completely healed. Pure devotees who teach this secret are the only faith healers worthy of the name.

* * *

Though various religious groups claim millions of followers, the present age is irreligious. Despite nominal allegiance, the so-called followers disobey even basic religious laws and have little or no knowledge of the God they profess to worship. If one neither knows God nor obeys His laws, there is little meaning in claiming to be a Christian, Jew, Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist.

For instance, in every scripture we find an injunction comparable to the Biblical commandment "Thou shalt not kill." And yet we see that the so-called followers of these scriptures are themselves the most expert killers. They fight doggedly in political wars and kill millions of helpless animals in slaughterhouses. They may try to justify their atrocities through theological word jugglery, but if God Himself has outlawed killing, then how can they be constantly engaged in it?

Then, too, in every scripture we find the equivalent of the commandment "Thou shalt not commit adultery." It's a simple idea, really: if a person is actually religious, he'll have sex only within a God conscious marriage, and only to beget God conscious children. But how often do we see this standard upheld—even theoretically—by today's religious leaders? Under the pressures of mass promiscuity and licentiousness, the leaders endorse contraception and abortion and take part in the "normal" promiscuity of modern life. But as long as they're disobeying God's basic laws,

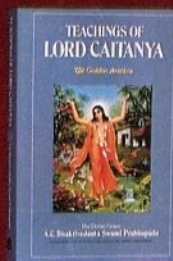
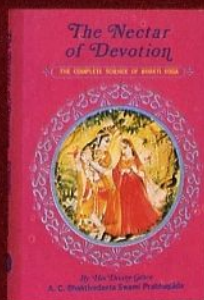
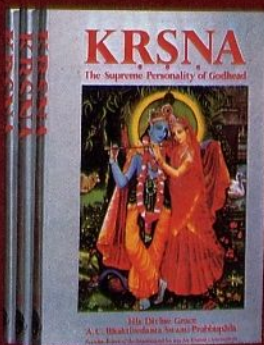
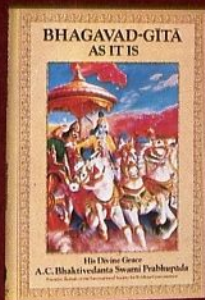
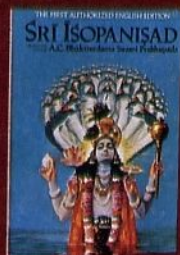
then how can they be religious?

If I love someone, then the first symptom will be that I do what he asks. If I won't do what God asks, then how can I say I love Him? And if I don't love Him, how can I say I know Him? Today's so-called religionists may pay lip service to adages like "God is great," "God is love," and so on, but they have little or no knowledge of God. Otherwise, they wouldn't act the way they do.

All of this brings us back to the faith healers and charismatics. If these people are actually seeing God and speaking with Him, as they claim, then why can't they give up such obvious transgressions as killing and adultery? If God is actually appearing to them in visions, then why hasn't He been able to convince them to clean up their own act? This disparity between the healers' "divinity" and their day-to-day lives makes us wonder whether their mystical experiences could be as intense or as genuine as they claim.

Fortunately, the Vedic literatures detail the symptoms of God's authentic representatives. First, a representative of God is a member of a disciplic succession that originates from God. And he teaches the same information his predecessors taught—he doesn't concoct some new interpretation—he teaches what appears in the scriptures. So from time immemorial there is a system of checks and balances: the representative of God describes what is in the scriptures, and the scriptures describe what is in him—the symptoms or characteristics of an actual spiritual master. For instance, the spiritual master is in control of his mind and senses and is free from sinful habits. He knows that material pleasure is temporary and illusory, and he never compromises with modern standards of promiscuity and consumption. If someone claims to be a spiritual master and yet lives a life no different from that of any other materialist, what is the value of his oratory, his visions, his speaking in tongues? Of course, people who are sincere will never deride an authentic spiritual master, regardless of the scripture he follows. But neither will they tolerate the hypocrisy of those who claim to know and love God and yet cannot save anyone—even themselves—from the common vices of a sinful age.

—SDG



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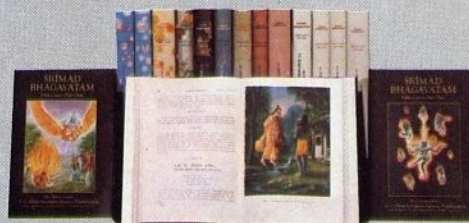
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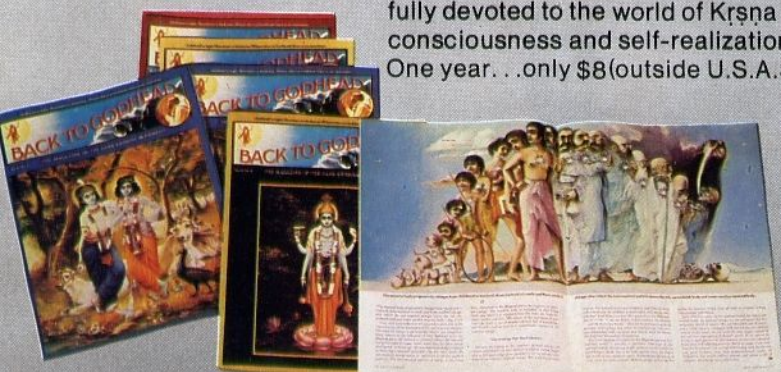


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