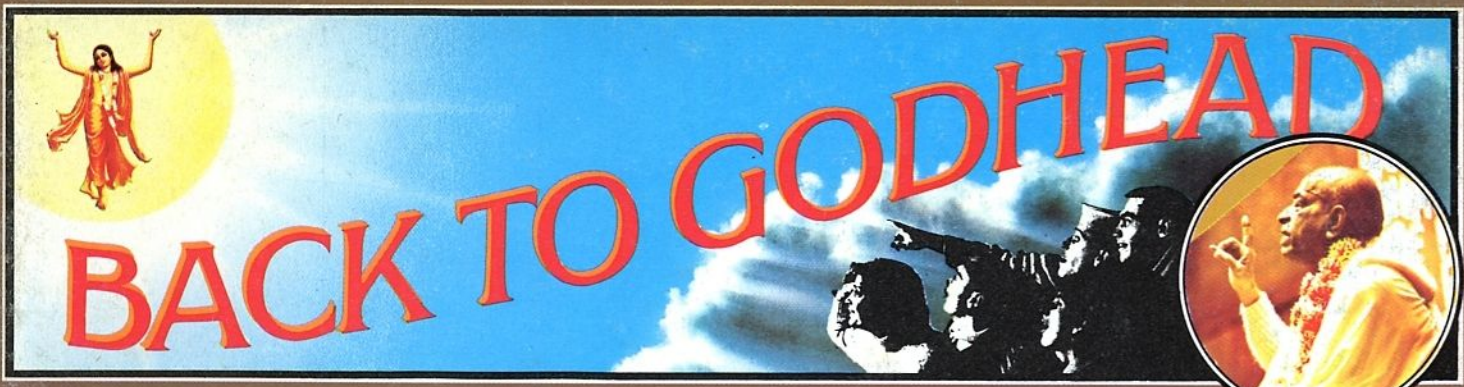


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.



Vol. 14 No. 5

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT



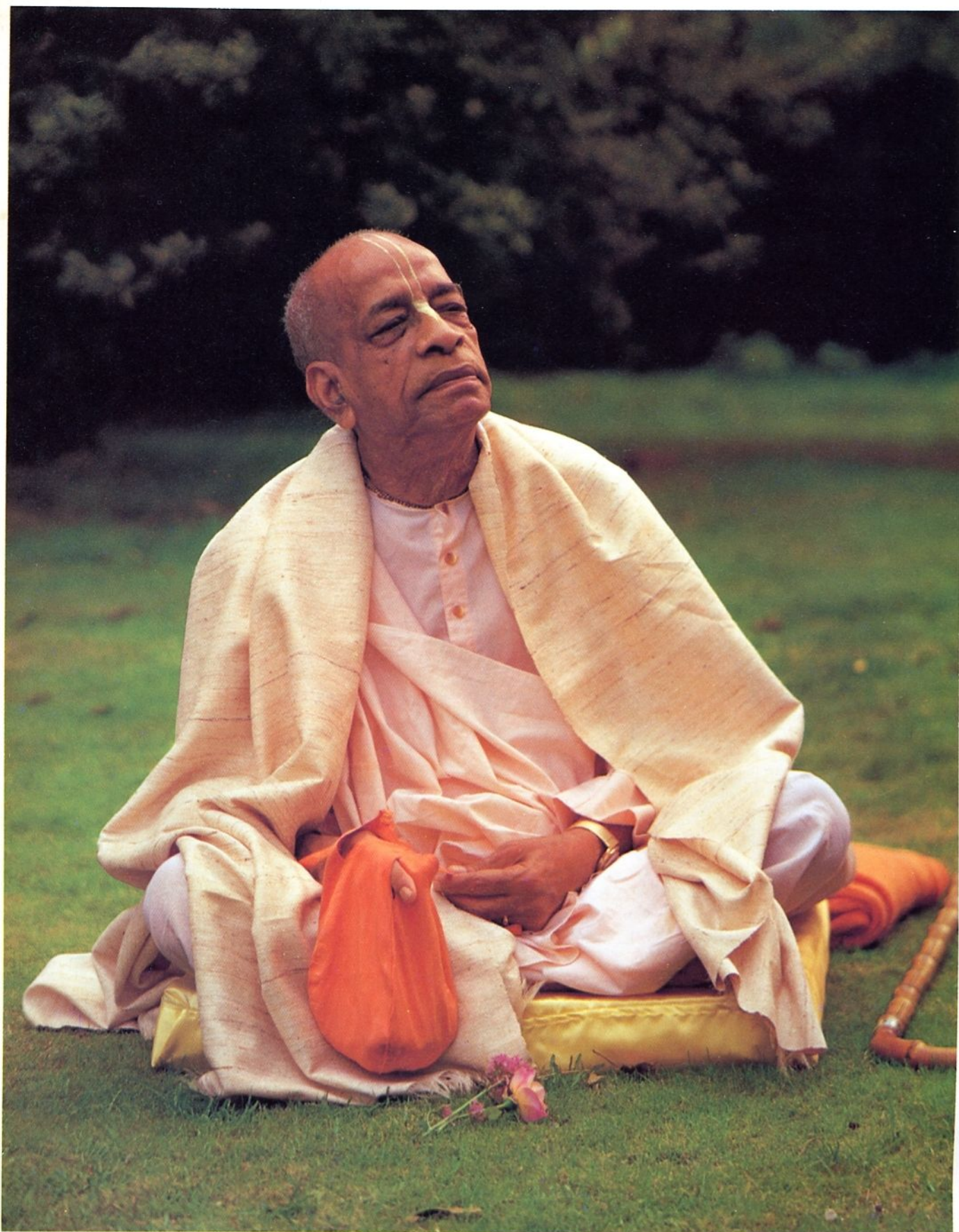


PHOTO: BHARGAVA DASA

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

BACK TO GODHEAD

VOL. 14, NO. 5

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT

FOUNDED 1944

FOUNDER

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

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PRONUNCIATION of Sanskrit words and names.
BACK TO GODHEAD follows the international scholarly
standard. Pronounce short a like the u in but, long ā
like the a in far (and hold it twice as long as the short
a). Pronounce e like the a in evade, long ī like the i in
pique. Pronounce the vowel ṛ like the ri in rim, and c
like the ch in chair. Pronounce the aspirated conso-
nants (ch, jh, dh, etc.) as in staunch-heart,
hedge-hog, and red-hot. Finally, pronounce sibilants ś
and ṣ like sh, and s like the s in sun. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say
KRISHNA, and for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

ABOUT SANSKRIT NAMES in by-lines, credits, and
text. Members of the International Society for Krishna
Consciousness receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His
great devotees, combined with *dāsa* (*dāśī* for women),
meaning "servant." For instance, the name *Kṛṣṇa*
dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

◀ **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami
Prabhupāda** came to America in 1965, at age seventy,
to fulfill his spiritual master's request that he teach the
science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout 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 stan-
dard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, traveling
almost nonstop, Śrīla Prabhupāda molded his inter-
national society into a worldwide confederation of
āśramas, schools, temples, and farm communities. He
passed away in 1977 in India's Vṛndāvana, the place
most sacred to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and his disciples are carry-
ing forward the movement he started.

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COVER: Mother Yaśodā Binds Lord Kṛṣṇa. Ordinarily, no one can hold any
sway whatever over Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the con-
troller of the entire cosmic manifestation. But a great devotee like Mother Yaśodā
can take part in His childhood pastimes and bind Him with transcendental love.
(Cover art: Rāmanātha dāsa.)

ABOUT BACK TO GODHEAD: "Godhead is light" has always been BACK TO GODHEAD's byword—"Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience." Godhead means the source of everything, and this journal is meant to assist readers in cultivating practical, scientific realization of Godhead. To this end BACK TO GODHEAD explores the ideas presented in ancient India's Vedic literatures, especially *Bhagavad-gītā*. As the *Gītā* itself informs us, "When one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime."



TODAY'S SCIENTISTS

Making Life or Taking Life?

These exchanges between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and organic chemist Thoudam D. Singh, Ph.D., took place in Los Angeles in 1973, during early-morning walks along the shore of the Pacific Ocean.

Dr. Singh: Many scientists hope that in the future they will be able to make babies in test tubes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If they *begin* with living entities—the sperm cells—what is the purpose of the test tube? It is only a place for combination with the ovum. But so is the womb. Where is the credit for the scientists if this is already being done in *nature's* test tube? It is already being done by nature, but when some scientist does it, people will give him the Nobel Prize. The scientists are rascals. They are speaking nonsense, and because they are juggling words, others are being misled.

Dr. Singh: Nobel is the person who invented dynamite.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: He has created great misfortune, and he has left his money for creating further misfortune. [Laughter.]

Chance and Necessity In the Same Breath

Śrīla Prabhupāda [holding a rose in his hand]: Can any scientist create a flower like this in the laboratory?

Dr. Singh: That is not possible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, it is not. Just see how wonderfully Kṛṣṇa's energy is working! No scientist can create a flower like this in his laboratory. They cannot create even a few grains of sand, yet they claim to possess the most advanced intellects in the universe. What foolishness!

Dr. Singh: They take matter, manipu-

late it, and then claim that they have created something wonderful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How have *they* created anything? They take the sand and mix it with some chemicals and make glass. They have not created the sand or the chemicals; they have taken them from the earth. How have they created anything?

Dr. Singh: They say, "We have taken the materials from nature."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then they are foolish. Where does nature come from? As soon as we speak of nature, the next question should be, "*Whose* nature?" Is it not so? For instance, I speak of *my* nature, and you speak of *your* nature. Therefore, as soon as we speak of nature, the next inquiry should be, "*Whose* nature?" Nature means energy. And as soon as we speak of energy, we must inquire into the source of that energy. For example, if you speak of electric energy, you must accept its source, the powerhouse. How can you deny it?

Dr. Singh: The French scientist Dr. J. Monod got the Nobel Prize in 1965. He says that everything started by chance—that by chance certain chemicals combined and formed the basic molecules.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But where did the chemicals come from?

Dr. Singh: According to him, they were created simply by chance, and when the necessity arose, molecules of the chemicals reorientated themselves.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If everything was happening by chance, how can there be

necessity? How can he speak of chance and necessity in the same breath? It is nonsense.

Dr. Singh: It would certainly be stupid to say that a beautiful instrument like a violin was made by chance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. It is most regrettable that such a rascal can get recognition. He is talking foolishness and getting recognition.

Darwin Kicked Out

Dr. Singh: What you have been saying also completely contradicts Darwin's theory of evolution.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Darwin is a rascal. What use is his theory? We kick out Darwin's philosophy. The more we kick out Darwin's philosophy, the more we advance in spiritual consciousness.

Dr. Singh: Many scientists doubt Darwin's theories. But Darwin's supporters say that life started from matter and evolved from unicellular organisms to multicellular organisms. They believe that higher species like animals and men did not exist at the beginning of creation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Darwin and his followers are rascals. For example, at the present moment we see both the intellectual person and the foolish ass. Why do both these entities exist simultaneously? Why hasn't the ass form evolved upward and disappeared? Why do we never see a monkey giving birth to a human?

The Darwinists' theory that human

life began in such and such an era is nonsense. *Bhagavad-gītā* says that you—the eternal soul—can directly transmigrate to any species of life you like, according to your efforts. Sometimes I travel to America, sometimes to Australia, and sometimes to Africa. The countries already exist. I am simply traveling through them. It is not that because I have come to America, I have *created* or *become* America. And there are many countries I have not yet seen. Does that mean they don't exist? The scientists who support Darwin are nonsensical. *Bhagavad-gītā* explains that all the species exist simultaneously, and that you can go to whichever species you like. You can even go up to the kingdom of God.

Evolution . . . and Devolution

Dr. Singh: Śrīla Prabhupāda, what is the difference between the transmigration of souls in animal bodies and the transmigration of human souls?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Animals transmigrate in only one direction—upward—but human beings can transmigrate to either a higher or a lower form of life. The body is awarded according to the living entity's desire. The lower animals have one kind of desire, but the human being has thousands and millions of desires—animal desires as well as human desires. By nature's law, the lower species are coming up from animal forms to the higher, human forms. But once you come to the human form, if you don't cultivate spiritual awareness you may return to the body of a cat or dog.

Dr. Singh: The scientists have no information that you can travel up to or *down* from the human platform.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore I say they are rascals. They have no knowledge, yet they still claim to be scientists. Real science is in the *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.25], where Kṛṣṇa says, *yānti deva-vratā devān pītṛṇ yānti pītṛ-vratāḥ*. This means that whatever one focuses his consciousness on in this life will determine the type of body he gets in his next life. But if one focuses his consciousness on Kṛṣṇa, he ends the process of transmigration entirely. *Yaṁ prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma*: "When one goes to that supreme abode of Mine, he never returns to this material world of birth and death." [Bg. 8.21] Promotion to the spiritual world (*samsiddhiṁ paramām*) is the ultimate perfection of human life. Read *Bhagavad-gītā*; everything is there. But the scientists have no idea of this perfection; they do not even know anything about the existence of the living entity apart from the gross body.

Dr. Singh: Must the spirit soul necessarily have a body—either spiritual or material?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The soul already has a spiritual body, which the material body covers. My material body grows upon me—my spiritual body—but my material body is unnatural. The real body is spiritual. I am accepting various bodies that are unnatural to my constitution. My real, constitutional position is to be a servant of Kṛṣṇa. As long as I do not come to that position, I remain a servant of

“I say to them,
‘If life originated
from chemicals,
and if your science
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biochemically
in your
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matter and get many material bodies according to the laws of material energy. I get one body and then give it up. I desire something else and then get another body. This process is going on under the strict laws of material nature. People think they completely control their destinies, but they are always under nature's law of *karma*:

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

“The bewildered spirit soul, under the influence of the modes of material nature, thinks himself to be the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by nature.” [Bg. 3.27] The source of this bewilderment is that the living entity thinks, “I am this body.”

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*
[Bg. 18.61]

In this verse the word *yantra*, or “machine,” means that in any species of life, we are traveling in bodies that are like machines provided by material nature. Sometimes we are moving to higher species, sometimes to lower species. But if, by the mercy of the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, one gets the seed of devotional service and cultivates it, he can become free from the cycle of birth and death. Then his life is successful. Otherwise, he has to travel up and down through the different species of life, becoming sometimes a blade of grass, sometimes a lion, and so forth.

Dr. Singh, can you tell me where that university is that teaches this knowledge?

Dr. Singh: There is none.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is the scientists' position: no knowledge. They simply advertise their ignorance as knowledge. They do not even know who they are!

Dr. Singh: But if the scientists knew that they were not their bodies, their whole outlook would change.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, we want that.

Dr. Singh: But they don't want to admit their failure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then that is further foolishness. If you are a fool and you pose yourself as intelligent, that is further foolishness. Then you cannot make progress. And if you remain in ignorance and advertise yourself as a man of knowledge, you are a great cheater. You are cheating yourself, and you are cheating others. The scientists are so mad after materialistic progress that they have progressed to the level of cats and dogs.

“... But I Am Not Changing”

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The first lesson in self-realization is that we are not these bodies, but eternal spirit souls. Once you were a child. Now you are a grown man. Where is your childhood body? That body does not exist; but *you* still exist, because you are eternal. The circumstantial body has changed, but *you* have not changed. This is the proof of eternity.

You remember that you did certain things yesterday and certain things today, but you forget other things. Your body of yesterday is not today's body. Do you admit it or not? You cannot say that today is the thirteenth of May, 1973. You cannot say that today is yesterday. The thirteenth was yesterday. The day has changed. But *you* remember yesterday; and that *remembrance* is evidence of your eternity. The body has changed, but you remember it; therefore you are eternal, although the body is temporary. This proof is very simple. Even a child

can understand it. Is it difficult to understand?

Dr. Singh: People want more proof.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What more is required? The eternality of the soul is a simple fact. I am an eternal soul. My body is changing, but I am not changing. For example, sometimes I think, "Oh, I used to jump and play, but now I cannot jump because my body has changed." I want to jump, but I cannot do it. That jumping propensity is eternal, but because of my old body I cannot do it.

Dr. Singh: The scientists say that consciousness comes into being only when your material body comes into being—and that it lasts for only one body.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is foolishness. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [2.13] Kṛṣṇa explains,

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

"As the embodied soul continually passes, in this body, from childhood to youth to old age, so the soul similarly passes into another body at death. The self-realized soul is not bewildered by such a change." Just as in this lifetime I am going from body to body (I can see this happening year by year), so at the time of death there is a similar change.

Defective Detecting

Dr. Singh: But according to the scientists, we cannot actually *observe* this last change. Scientists find it very hard to see the spirit soul. They say its existence is very doubtful.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Their eyes are so imperfect that they cannot observe many, many things. Their ignorance does not make the *Bhagavad-gītā* unscientific. They must first admit the imperfection of their senses.

Dr. Singh: And because our senses are defective, the technological enlargements of our senses must also be defective, of course. The microscopes with which we detect things must also be defective.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Material existence means defective existence. If you construct something with defective knowledge and imperfect senses, whatever you construct must be defective.

Dr. Singh: Even if scientists devised a perfect microscope, they would still have to look through it with defective eyes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is right. Therefore we conclude that whatever the scientists may say is defective.

Dr. Singh: Still, they want to sense the

soul by some means.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How can they see it? It is too small to see. Who has that seeing power? If you inject someone with just one hundredth of a grain of very venomous poison, he dies immediately. No one can see the poison or how it acts, but it is acting nevertheless. So why don't the scientists see the soul by its action? In such cases we have to see by the effect. If I pinch myself I immediately feel it, because I am conscious throughout the whole of my skin. But as

**"The scientists
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soon as the soul is out of my body, which is the case when my body dies, you could take the same skin and cut and chop it, and nobody would protest. Why is this simple thing so hard to understand? Is this not detecting spirit?

Dr. Singh: We may detect the soul in this way, but what about God?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: First of all, let us understand the soul. The soul is a sample of God. Once you understand the sample, then you can understand the whole.

"What Is This Nonsense?"

Dr. Singh: Scientists are in the process of trying to create life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Process of"! "Trying to"! That we kick out. That we don't accept. A beggar is saying, "I am trying to be a millionaire." We say, "When you become a millionaire, then talk. Now you are a poor beggar; that's all." The scientists say they are trying, but suppose I ask you, "What are you?" Will you say, "I am trying to be . . ."? What are you now? That is the question. "We are trying" is not a proper answer, what

to speak of a scientific proposition.

Dr. Singh: Well, although they haven't been able to create life so far, they say they will create life in the future.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What future? When this crucial point is raised, they reply, "We shall do it in the future." Why in the future? That is nonsense. "Trust no future, however pleasant." If they are so advanced, they must demonstrate *now* how life can be created from chemicals. Otherwise what is the meaning of their advancement? I say to them, "If life originated from chemicals, and if your science is so advanced, then why can't you create life biochemically in your laboratories?" They are talking nonsense.

Dr. Singh: They say that they are right on the verge of creating life.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That's only a different way of saying the same thing: "In the future." The scientists must admit that they still do not know the origin of life. Their claim that they will soon prove a chemical origin of life is something like paying someone with a postdated check. Suppose I give you a postdated check for ten thousand dollars but I actually have no money. What is the value of that check? Scientists are claiming that their science is wonderful, but when a practical example is wanted, they say they will provide it in the future. Suppose I say that I possess millions of dollars, and when you ask me for some money I say, "Yes, I will now give you a big postdated check. Is that all right?" If you are intelligent, you will reply, "At present give me at least five dollars in cash so I can see something tangible." Similarly, the scientists cannot produce even a single blade of grass in their laboratories, yet they are claiming that life is produced from chemicals. What is this nonsense? Is no one questioning this?

Dr. Singh: But once they are successful they are going to make superbeings, superhuman beings.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They cannot create even an ant—and now they are going to make "superbeings." And we have to believe them. [Laughter.]

A Scientific Method For Drawing Money

Dr. Singh: Well, yes. The scientists say, "After all, we've already done so much in the past, and we'll accomplish more in the future."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In the past there was death, and people are dying now. So what have the scientists done?

Dr. Singh: Helped them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Scientists have

helped to minimize the duration of life! Formerly men lived one hundred years; now they seldom live more than sixty or seventy years. And the scientists have discovered atomic energy; now they can kill millions of people at once. They have simply cleared the way for death. And yet they dare to declare that they will make life!

Dr. Singh: But now we have airplanes and televisions and—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: If they can make things, why don't they make an imitation sun to save electricity? These rascals say everything, but they cannot do anything. That is their position. Yet they speak big, big words, simply to take money from the taxpayers. They say they know the composition of the moon and the composition of the sun, so why can't they make them? Why can't they create an artificial sun so that the people of Iceland and Greenland can be saved from so much cold?

How long can science cheat people? One hundred years, two hundred years? You can cheat all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time. But you cannot cheat all of the people all of the time. [Laughter.]

Dr. Singh: This cheating has been going on since time immemorial, so perhaps they think they can continue forever.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Not since time immemorial! Science has been cheating people for only the past two or three hundred years, not before that.

Dr. Singh: Oh, really?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes, for the last two hundred years they have been preaching that life comes from matter—not for thousands of years. And the cheating will be finished within fifty years.

Dr. Singh: Yes. Now people are rebelling against science.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And what is that science? It is not science! It is ignorance. Ignorance is passing for science. But this cheating cannot go on for long, because some people are becoming intelligent.

Dr. Singh: They say that in the future they want to go to the subsurface of Mars.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They are all becoming "big men" with their statements about the future.

Dr. Singh: They say that it will happen in about ten years.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: So what if they say one year? They may say ten years or one year, but we do not accept such propositions. We want to see what they are doing now.

Dr. Singh: They are developing their technology by using small-scale models.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They are simply childish. In my childhood I used to watch

the tramcars go along the rail. Once I thought, "I shall take a stick and touch it to the wire, and I shall also go along the rails." The scientists, with all their plans, are just as childish. They spend so much money, and politicians are financing them, but the result is zero.

Dr. Singh: That is how they discover things—by research.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And what is the cost of the research? It is a scientific method for drawing money from others, that's all. In other words, it is cheating.

**“The scientists
cannot stop death,
and they cannot
stop old age.
Now there is
more medicine—
and more
disease. So what
have they
accomplished?”**

Scientists juggle words like "plutonium," "photons," "hydrogen," and "oxygen," but what good will people get from this? When people hear this jugglery of words, what can they say? One scientist explains something to some extent, and then another rascal comes along and explains it again, but differently, with different words. And all the time the phenomenon has remained the same. What advancement has been made? They have simply produced volumes of books.

Dr. Singh: After spending all that money to go to the moon and bring back just a few rocks, the scientists on the space project decided that there was nothing more to do there. Now they want to go to other planets. That costs millions and billions of dollars.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: People work very hard while the rascal government takes taxes and spends money unnecessarily. There should be no sympathy when so much hard-earned money comes from the public and is spent so foolishly.

Dr. Singh: Now the scientists have organized a whole department in science called gerontology, in which they study how to prolong life. That is what they do

with heart transplants.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is nonsense! Their real aim should be to stop the suffering. The scientists cannot stop death, they cannot stop birth, they cannot stop disease, and they cannot stop old age. So what have they done? Formerly people used to become old, and nowadays they are becoming old. Formerly people used to become diseased, and now they are becoming diseased. Now there is more medicine—and more disease. So what have they accomplished?

Suppose an old man is in great pain, suffering from many diseases, and suddenly the doctors increase his life span with a heart transplant. What is the profit? Let them stop death; that would be an achievement. They cannot do these things! Therefore, I say that all their research is simply a struggle for existence. Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* [15.7],

*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke
jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
manaḥ-śaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi
prakṛti-sthāni karṣati*

“The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind.”

Dr. Singh: Now there is a big petrol problem, a shortage of oil.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The scientists have created it. They have built a civilization that is dependent on oil. This is against nature's law, and therefore there is now an oil shortage. When the petrol supply dwindles away, what will these rascal scientists do? They are powerless to do anything about it. By nature's law, winter is coming. Scientists cannot stop it and turn it into summer. They wrongly think they are in control of nature.

They do not realize that if they really want to conquer nature, they should try to conquer birth, death, old age, and disease. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.14] Kṛṣṇa says,

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etaṁ taranti te*

“This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is very hard to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.”

Dr. Singh: So, is it very hard to overcome nature's laws?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: For the materialists, it is impossible. But if one surrenders to Kṛṣṇa, it becomes easy.

REALITY, LIFE, AND QUANTUM MECHANICS

by SADĀPŪTA DĀSA

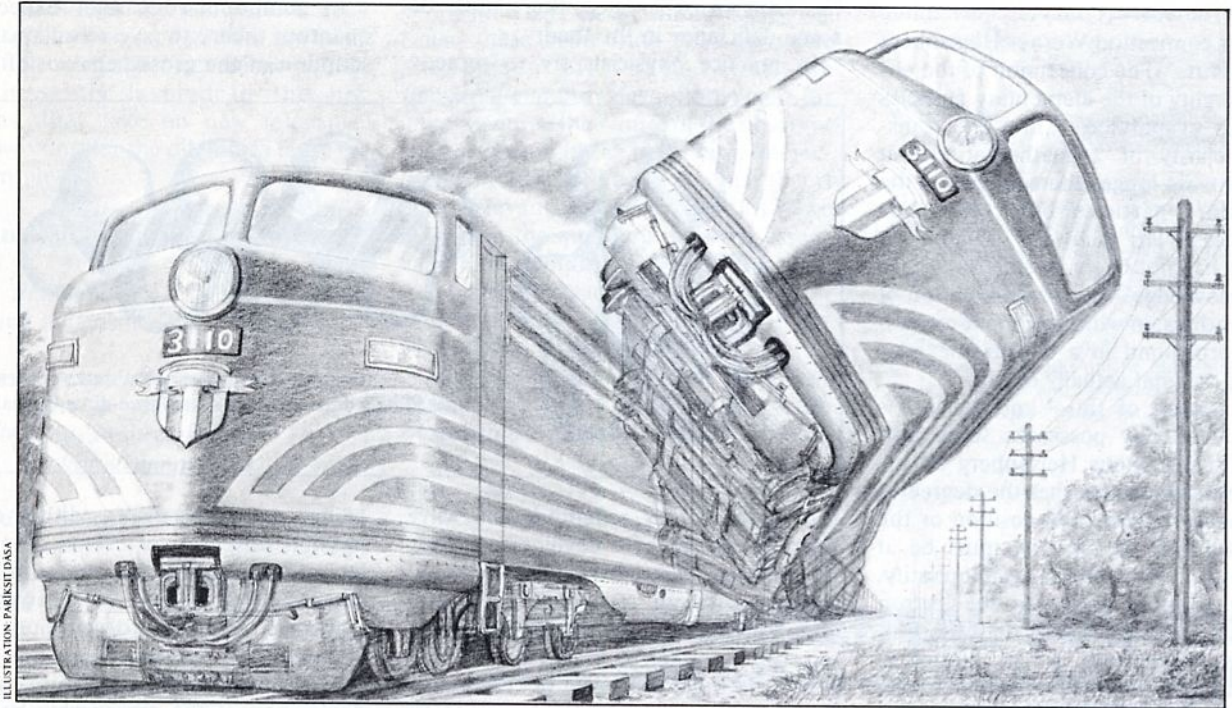


ILLUSTRATION: PARIKSHIT DĀSA

Fig. 1. In quantum mechanics, uncertainty on the atomic level can become amplified to produce a situation in which a train is simultaneously derailed and not derailed!

In recent years the idea that life can be reduced to chemistry and physics has become very prominent in the life sciences. According to this idea, all living organisms, including human beings, are simply aggregates of molecules interacting in accordance with chemical and physical laws. This conception of life has found particular emphasis in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology, where the study of DNA, RNA, and the processes of protein synthesis have lent credence to the picture of the living cell as a molecular machine.

What are the molecules that combine together to make this machine, and what is really known of the laws governing their interaction? For the answers to these questions we must turn to physics, and in particular to the quantum theory,

which provides the basis for the present understanding of atoms and molecules. However, we find ironically that modern physics presents a description of molecules that seriously undermines the mechanical picture developed by the molecular biologists. While the biologists have attempted to reduce life to the interaction of inanimate entities, the physicists have developed a conception of inanimate entities that necessitates the presence of life—the life of a conscious observer. We will briefly describe this development and indicate some of its implications for our understanding of the nature of reality, and in particular the nature of life.

To begin, let us consider how modern physics uses quantum mechanics to describe atoms and molecules. In popular books these are often depicted as three-dimensional shapes (see Fig. 2); but this is misleading. In fact, quantum mechanics provides no natural description of three-dimensional objects in space. In quantum mechanics all natural phenomena are described by means of a

mathematical construct called the wave function. The wave function can be represented as a three-dimensional arrangement only for a very simple system. For example, we can represent the hydrogen atom three-dimensionally if we regard the nucleus as a fixed point and only the electron as an active entity. However, the wave function for the helium atom (with two electrons) requires six dimensions, and that for the carbon atom (with six electrons) requires eighteen dimensions. In general, the wave function for an entity composed of n particles requires $3n$ dimensions. So, if we tried to quantum-mechanically represent the complex molecules found in living organisms, we would require wave functions involving many thousands of geometric dimensions.

Actually, it is a mistake to think of the wave function as a model of objective reality. Rather, we should understand it to be only a store of information about the results of observations that could be made by a particular observer. In quantum mechanics there is a system of

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computational procedures called "observables," which one can apply to the wave function to predict the expected results of corresponding observations. The wave functions and observables can be reformulated mathematically in many different ways, the only requirement being that for each observation all the reformulations yield the same predicted value. Thus modern physics deals only with observations, whereas nineteenth-century physics dealt with arrangements of matter in space.

In this connection Werner Heisenberg pointed out, "The conception of the objective reality of the elementary particles has thus evaporated... into the transparent clarity of a mathematics that represents no longer the behavior of the elementary particles but rather our *knowledge of this behavior*."¹ (Italics added.) It has not been possible to regard this "knowledge" as a representation of actual entities, in which symbolic expressions correspond in a one-to-one relationship to what actually exists.

One feature of this "knowledge" is that it inevitably possesses some ambiguity. The famous Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that the degree of uncertainty in either the position or the momentum of an electron must be at least as great as a specific small quantity. Thus we cannot conceive of the electron as a definite object with a definite position and momentum; we are limited to speaking simply of observations of "position of an electron" or "momentum of an electron," and we cannot think of the electron separately from the observer and his measuring apparatus.

Ambiguities and Paradoxes

According to the quantum theory, natural processes can amplify atomic ambiguity without limit. To illustrate such amplification, Erwin Schrödinger conceived his famous "cat paradox," which we will describe here in a slightly modified form. Suppose someone attaches a bomb to a railroad track and then connects the bomb to a Geiger counter so that the decay of a radioactive atom will cause it to explode. We then have a scenario in which, say, the 5 P.M. express train will derail if the atom decays within a certain period, and it will not derail if it doesn't. Suppose we can describe the entire scene, including the train and its passengers, by quantum mechanics (this is a big assumption). The quantum theory would then predict that at 5:01 the wave function describes a train that is both derailed and not derailed! (See Fig. 1.) The quantum-mechanical ambiguity in the state of the

atom has become enormously amplified, and the "knowledge" represented by the wave function has become ambiguous on a large scale.

The situation of the 5 P.M. express is a source of difficulty if we try to interpret the quantum theory as a description of objective reality. The wave function at 5:01 describes the passengers on the train as simultaneously experiencing the derailment of the train and its normal functioning. Since no one ever actually has such an experience, there must be some deficiency in the theory.

In practice physicists try to remedy

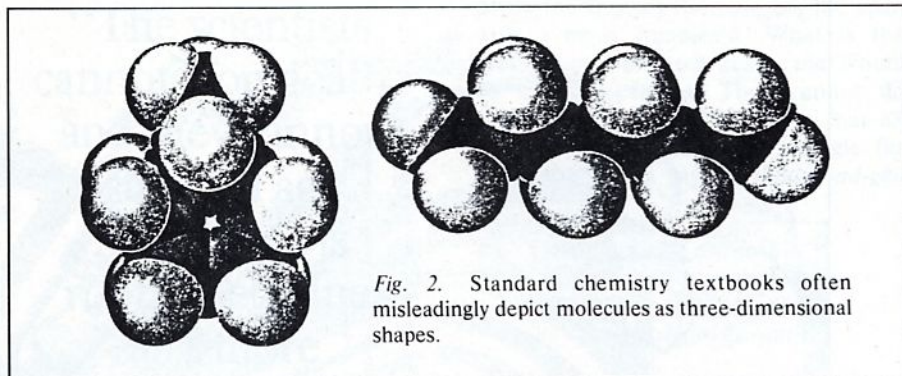


Fig. 2. Standard chemistry textbooks often misleadingly depict molecules as three-dimensional shapes.

this deficiency by redefining the wave function whenever it develops a degree of ambiguity that entails impossible experiences for an observer. It has not been possible to justify this redefinition in terms of either physical forces or any other natural principle of causation. Rather, the wave function is said to be redefined by absolute chance. In our train example, we would have to choose a new wave function that either unambiguously represents a derailed train, or unambiguously represents a normal train. We would have to make this choice before any observer might perceive an impossible ambiguity, but we could attribute the choice to no natural cause other than pure chance.

Much controversy has arisen over this process of redefinition, and we will not attempt to do justice to this issue here.² We can conclude, however, that the only sensible way to interpret the quantum theory is as a system of knowledge about observations. It has not been possible to interpret the theory as a description of actual entities existing in space. Furthermore, we can conclude that the knowledge conveyed by the theory is inherently uncertain and sometimes in need of revisions that cannot be determined by any known principles.

Strictly speaking, then, we cannot describe the world on the basis of quantum theory without positing a region that contains the observer and that cannot be described by the theory. Some physicists

have proposed that the boundary of this region should be drawn at the point where atomic ambiguities first become amplified to the macroscopic level.³ Others, such as John von Neumann, have tried to reduce this region to zero, and thus they have been forced to posit a nonphysical observer whom von Neumann called the "abstract ego."⁴ In either case, difficulties and paradoxes arise, and the theory does not give an adequate account of the observer.

In addition, we cannot expect the quantum theory to give an adequate description of the gross behavior of living

beings, even if we disregard their role as possible observers of events. The problem of ambiguity in the quantum theory suggests that it may be seriously incomplete, even as a description of the behavior of *inanimate* matter. What, then, to speak of the quantum theory's description of the measurable behavior of living organisms? Even without undertaking the formidable calculations required to generate such a description, we can anticipate that it, too, will be inadequate.

Needed: a New Theory of Physics

From the above discussion, we can see the need for a new theory of physics—one resolving both the problem of ambiguity and that of the observer's role. One prominent physicist, Eugene Wigner, has suggested that such a theory should directly take life into account. He has proposed that many of the principles, entities, and laws involved with life are presently unknown because they do not play a highly significant role in the non-living phenomena on which the present theory is based.⁵

In making this proposal, Wigner has also pointed out another deficiency of the quantum theory, one that must be shared by all purely mathematical descriptions of natural phenomena. This deficiency is the failure of the theory to give any account of consciousness. As Wigner points out, our knowledge of our

consciousness is primary, and our knowledge of all other things is the content of our consciousness." Thus consciousness exists, even though the arrays of numbers appearing in mathematical theories say nothing about it. A theory that truly accounts for life must deal with consciousness, and this means that the theory cannot be exclusively quantitative in nature.

Let us briefly describe how the *Bhagavad-gītā* gives an outline for such a theory. Although the conceptions presented in the *Bhagavad-gītā* are not at all compatible with the mechanistic worldview presently favored in the life sciences, they take on new relevance when we consider the dilemmas faced by modern physics.

Insights into the Enigmas

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.61) describes the living organism as follows:

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām
hr̥d-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmāyan sarva-bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

This verse describes the organism as a machine (*yantra*) made of material energy, and to this degree the verse agrees with the mechanistic views of the biologists. However, it further says that the conscious self rides in this machine as a passenger, and that the machine is being directed by the Supreme Lord in His aspect as material controller (*īśvaraḥ*), also known as *paramātmā*. Elsewhere the *Bhagavad-gītā* describes the *paramātmā* as all-pervading and as the source of all material senses and qualities (Bg. 13.14–15). The *paramātmā* directs the material apparatus through laws (summarily described as the modes of material nature) that are ultimately psychological in character.

In a very general way, the *paramātmā* corresponds to the natural laws of the physicists, which are regarded as invariant in time and space and as the ultimate causal principles underlying all material phenomena. However, the *paramātmā* possesses all-pervading consciousness, as well as unlimited qualities, and is thus not susceptible to complete description in mathematical terms.

The psychological modes by which the *paramātmā* directs nature may be susceptible to quantitative description to some extent. These modes of nature correspond to the higher laws and entities Wigner felt would be necessary in any adequate theory of life. In the limiting case involving only inanimate matter,

these higher laws should approximate the natural laws physicists have deduced from their observations of matter. However, in cases involving living beings, we may expect to find many phenomena that obey higher psychological laws but that defy explanation within the existing theories of physics.

By adjusting the actions of the material energy in accordance with both the modes of nature and the desires of the individual conscious living entities, the *paramātmā* acts as the intermediary between these beings and the observable phenomena of nature. Thus the *Bhagavad-gītā* provides a framework for understanding the nature of the observer and the nature of the observer's interaction with matter. We can see that this is quite relevant to modern physics if we recall that the quantum theory is essentially a description of observations, and that the theory's account of the observer and the process of observation is beset with serious difficulties.

At present we may find it extremely difficult to bridge the gap between the *Bhagavad-gītā*'s description of the

paramātmā and the known laws of physics. Yet it is important to realize that modern scientific knowledge by no means rules out the possibility that both nature and the living beings have attributes lying far beyond the scope of our present theories. By remaining open to conceptions of life much broader than the limited mechanistic view, scientists will lose nothing. Rather, they may gain a deeper insight into both the perplexing enigmas of modern physics and the profound view of life presented in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

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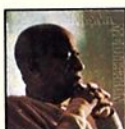


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The Biography of a Pure Devotee

“JUST HEAR ME”

by SATSVARŪPA DĀSA GOSWAMI

Śrīla Prabhupāda had come to America to speak about Kṛṣṇa. From the beginning of his stay he had found opportunities—the living-room gatherings at the home of the Agarwals (his first hosts in America), the lecture appearances in churches, schools, and the Lion’s Club of Butler, Pennsylvania. He had spent an hour at the University of Pennsylvania talking to Dr. Norman Brown’s Hinduism class. In New York he had given lectures at the Tagore Society and at the Misra Yoga Society. But he did not attach great importance to giving speeches in places where people gathered to hear him only once and then went away. This was the main reason he wanted a New York building: so that people could regularly come, chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, take *prasāda* (sanctified food) in his company, and regularly, repeatedly hear him speak from *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

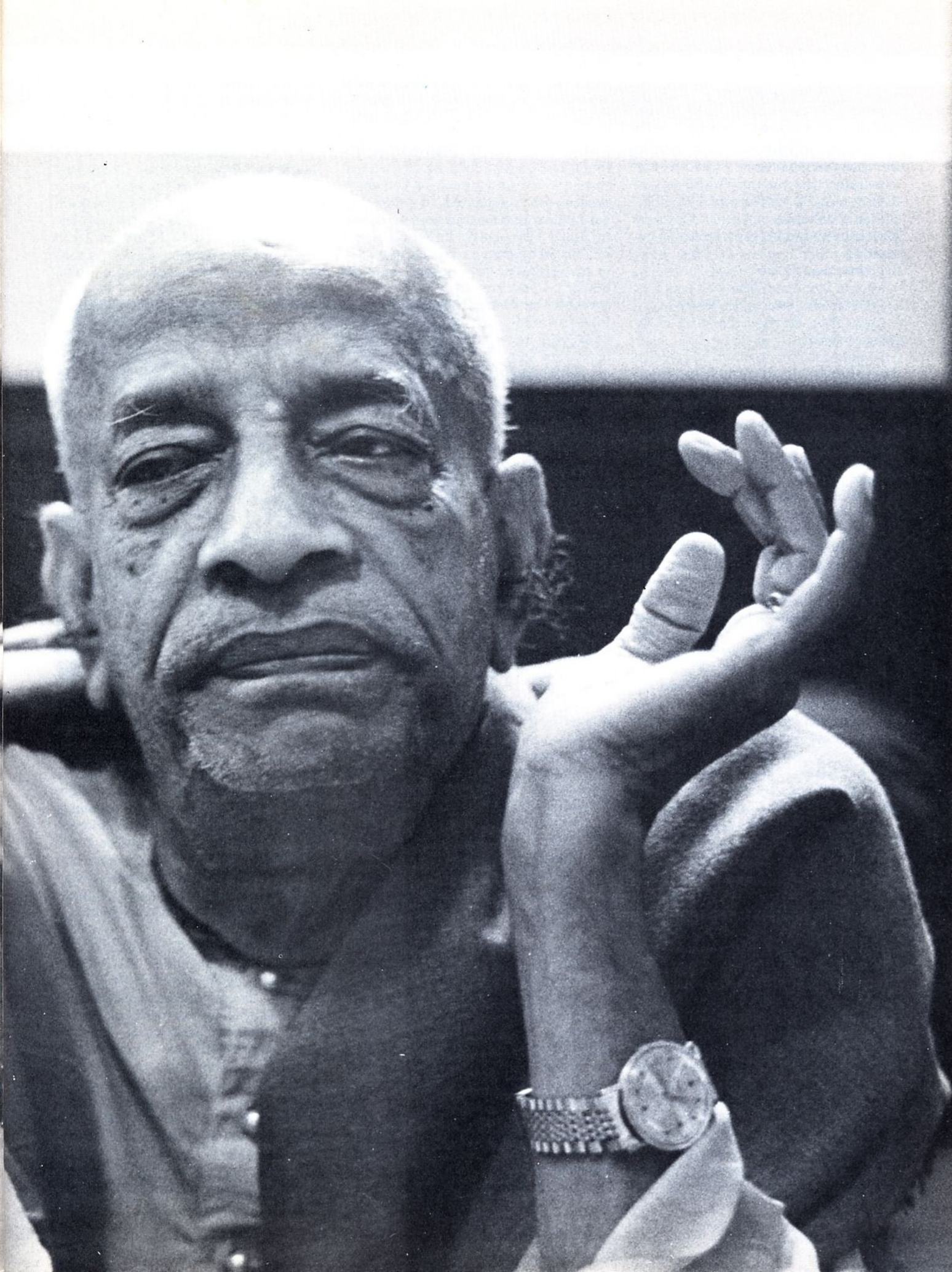
When Śrīla Prabhupāda moved out of Dr. Misra’s studio into a small office, he had what he was looking for—his own place—but not even euphemistically could his room be called a temple. His name was on the door, and anyone seeking him could find him there. But who would come to such a place? The idea of a temple was to attract people to Kṛṣṇa by the temple’s opulence, but Room 307 of 100 West Seventy-second Street was just the opposite—bare poverty. Even someone interested in spiritual topics would find it uncomfortable to sit on the rugless floor of a room shaped like a narrow railroad car.

But Śrīla Prabhupāda’s spiritual master had told him years before not to be despondent if few people attended the *kīrtana* (chanting) or lecture. “Even if no one attends,” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī had told him, “you can go on chanting to the four empty walls.” Thus it was Śrīla Prabhupāda’s personal duty to glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa in whatever setting He had provided.

The first people who came to see Śrīla Prabhupāda in his third-floor room were a few of Dr. Misra’s students who had met him at Dr. Misra’s *yoga* studio. One of them donated a reel-to-reel tape recorder, and Śrīla Prabhupāda began recording his talks. He taped several hours of an essay called “Introduction to *Gītāpaniṣad*,” which he later used in his published translation of *Bhagavad-gītā*. He also recorded his chanting and singing of *bhajanās* (devotional songs), singing along to his own accompaniment with *karatālas* (hand cymbals). In talks punctuated with sounds of car horns and occasional sirens from the street, Śrīla Prabhupāda began his first regular lectures on *Bhagavad-gītā* in America, starting from the Second Chapter.

Now Arjuna is perplexed. (Thus Prabhupāda speaks on March 19, 1966.) *He is perplexed about whether to fight or not to fight. After seeing in front of him his relatives with whom he was to fight, he was perplexed. And*





there was some argument with Kṛṣṇa. Now here is a point: Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

(Prabhupāda's voice is earnest—sometimes it becomes high-pitched and breaks with urgency to communicate to his listeners. His voice is sincere and convincing. His cultured British diction bears a heavy Bengali accent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda suddenly pauses in his lecture and addresses someone in the room.)

Prabhupāda: *What is that?*

Man in the room: *What?*

Prabhupāda: *What is this book?*

Man: *Well, this is a translation of the Bhagavad-gītā.*

(Prabhupāda is obviously displeased that while he is speaking someone is looking through a book. This is hardly like the respect offered to the learned speakers described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.)

Prabhupāda: *Well, no, you can hear me.*

Man: *I AM hearing.*

Prabhupāda (taking the role of a teacher and correcting his student): *Yes, don't turn your attention. Just hear me.*

(Śrīla Prabhupāda at this time is not an established spiritual master of many disciples [he has no disciples in America], and there is no compelling reason why any of his casual guests should feel obliged to obey or listen to him. He simply begs for their attention—and yet demands it ["Just hear me"]—as he attempts to convince people to become Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees.)

You have heard that one must accept the spiritual master after careful examination (Prabhupāda continues), just as one selects a bride or a bridegroom after careful examination. In India they are very careful. Because the marriage of boys and girls takes place under the guidance of the parents, so the parents very carefully see to it. Similarly, if one has to accept the spiritual master . . . It is necessary. According to Vedic injunctions, everyone should have a spiritual master. Perhaps you have seen a sacred thread. We have got sacred thread. Mr. Cohen? You have seen? Sacred thread.

(Śrīla Prabhupāda pauses. His audience may not have noted the thin white cords he wears across the upper part of his body—they can be seen around his neck. For thousands of years *brāhmaṇas* in India have worn such threads, which are placed diagonally across the torso, looped over the left shoulder and down to the right waist. A *brāhmaṇa* holds his thread in his right hand while chanting the sacred *Gāyatrī mantra* three times a day. But this is all strange indeed to Americans. Prabhupāda himself is exotic to them. His grey

chāḍa (shawl) around his shoulders, he sits cross-legged and erect on a thin pillow, and they sit facing him on the other side of his trunk, which now functions as a desk and lectern. They are close together in the narrowness of the room, under a dim light. He is frail and small and foreign to them, yet somehow he is completely assured, in a way that has nothing to do with being a foreigner in New York—and they can sense it. Two white lines of painted clay run neatly vertical on his forehead. His pale peach clothes are gathered in loose folds around his body. He pauses only a few seconds to inquire whether they have ever seen a white sacred thread.)

That sacred thread is a sign that a person has a spiritual master. Here, of course, there is no such distinction, but according to the Hindu system a married girl also has some sign so that people can understand that this girl is married. She wears a red mark so that others may know that she is married. And according to the division in the hair . . . What is this line called?

Man: *Part.*

Prabhupāda: *Eh?*

Man: *Part.*

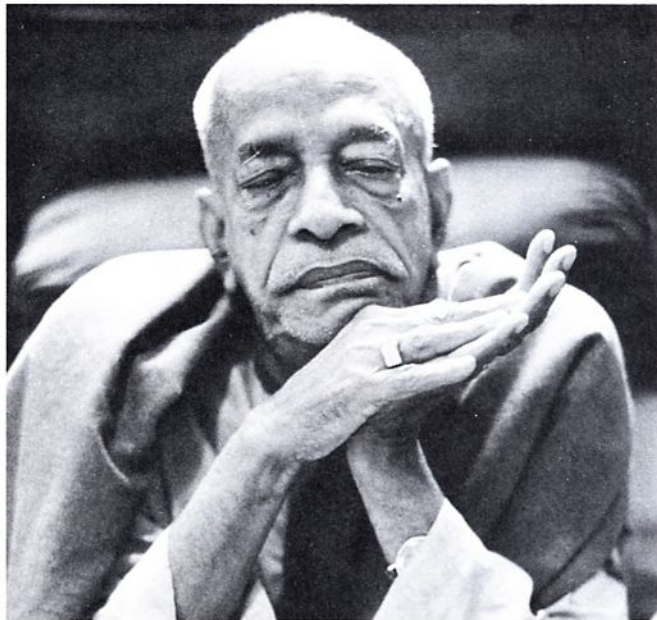
Prabhupāda: *What is the spelling?*

Man: *Part!*

Prabhupāda: *Part. This parting also has some meaning. (They know English, and he knows the Gītā. But he knows a good deal of English, whereas they know practically nothing of the Gītā, which he has to spoonfeed to them. But occasionally he asks in reciprocation, and they supply him English words.) When the part is in the middle, then the girl has her husband, and she is coming from a respectable family. And if the part is here (with a slight gesture he indicates a part on the side of the head), then she is a prostitute. And then again when a girl is well dressed it should be understood that she has her husband at home, and when she is not well dressed it is to be understood that her husband is away from home. You see? And a widow's dress . . . There are so many symptoms. So, similarly, the sacred thread is a sign that a person has accepted a spiri-*

tual master, just as the red mark symbolizes that a girl has a husband.

(One could say Śrīla Prabhupāda is approaching a very heavy topic at an early point in his meetings. What is the need of taking a spiritual master? Is this just for India? But he says, "Everyone should have a spiritual master." What is a spiritual master, anyway? Most of the audience probably doesn't take this matter seriously; it is not as if they are faced with a personal decision. They may look upon the idea of accepting a spiritual



master as another cultural item from Hinduism, like the thread, or the part in the woman's hair, or the widow's dress. The audience can easily regard his discussion as a kind of cultural exposition, just as one comfortably watches a film about the living habits of people in a foreign land although one has no intention of adopting these habits as one's own. The *svāmī*, as a Hindu, is wearing a *brāhmaṇa's* thread, but one doesn't have to think that Americans should wear them. Actually, Śrīla Prabhupāda has no motive but to present the Absolute Truth as he has heard it in disciplic succession. And if anyone in that railroad car-shaped room were actually to ask himself, "Should I surrender to a spiritual master?" he would be confronted by the existential presence of a genuine guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda. One is free to regard his talk as one likes.)

In every step of one's life the spiritual master guides him (Prabhupāda continues). Now, to give such guidance the spiritual master should also be a very perfect man. Otherwise how can he guide? Now, here Arjuna knows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the perfect person. So therefore he is accept-

ing Him—*śiṣya te 'haṁ sādhi mām tvāṁ prapannam.* (Sanskrit! No one knows a word of it! But there is never any question for Śrīla Prabhupāda—even if they don't understand, the sound of *sāstra*, scripture, will purify them and make them pious. It is his authority, and he cannot omit it. Anyway, he will translate everything. And Prabhupāda thinks they will feel the weight of the scholarly Sanskrit authority, the original though foreign words of the sages.)

"I am just surrendering unto You, and You accept me as Your disciple," Arjuna says. Friendly talks cannot make a solution to perplexity. Friendly talks may be going on for years together, but with no solution. So here Arjuna accepts Kṛṣṇa as the spiritual master. This means that whatever Kṛṣṇa will decide he has to accept. One cannot deny the order of his spiritual master. Therefore one has to select a spiritual master by whose orders one will not commit a mistake. Suppose you accept the wrong person as spiritual master and he guides you wrongly. Then your whole life is spoiled. So one has to accept a spiritual master whose guidance will make one's life perfect. That is the relationship between spiritual master and disciple. It is not a formality; it is a great responsibility, both for the disciple and for the spiritual master. And . . . yes?

Student: *But if the disciple is in ignorance before . . .*

Prabhupāda: *Yes. (Śrīla Prabhupāda acknowledges a serious question. Yes. It is for answering questions like this from "disciples in ignorance" that he has left retirement in India and come to America.)*

Student: *. . . how does he know which master to choose?—he doesn't have the knowledge to make a wise decision.*

Prabhupāda: *Yes. So the first thing is that one should be searching after a spiritual master, just as when you search after some school, you must have at least some preliminary knowledge of what a school is. So that knowledge is like this:*

tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-ṇiṣṭham

According to this verse, the spiritual master is required for a person who is inquisitive about transcendental knowledge. There is another verse in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam: one should search after a spiritual master if one is inquisitive about transcendental subject matters. Unless one is at least conversant with preliminary knowledge of transcendental matters, how can he inquire from his spiritual master? And he has to inquire.

After discussing the spiritual master,

Śrīla Prabhupāda went on to describe Kṛṣṇa as Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As always, his lectures were grave and thorough in scholarship. In one talk he would cover a number of ideas. His talks were not prepared lectures on a single specialized subject. Nor did he pause to grope for something to say. It was only a question of how much his audience could take. Otherwise, Śrīla Prabhupāda knew exactly what he wanted to say. Now the constraints of Butler, Pennsylvania, and the

**Sometimes a guest
would speak out
with an irrelevant
question, and
Śrīla Prabhupāda
would patiently
consider it.
At the same time,
his mood was always
one of urgency.**

Ananda Ashram were behind him. He was free to speak about the Absolute Truth in full. Throughout his life he had prepared for this, yet he was still exploring his Western audience, testing their reactions and discovering the best ways to present Kṛṣṇa.

But we should always remember that He is God. He is all-powerful. . . . In strength no one could conquer Him. In beauty . . . as far as beauty is concerned, when He was on the battlefield—have any of you seen a picture of Kṛṣṇa? Have you seen? Have any of you ever seen Kṛṣṇa? Oh . . . no?

No one had ever seen Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda's voice faded, and he paused as he looked out at his audience. None of them had the slightest previous knowledge of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In India hundreds of millions worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa as the eternal form of all beauty and truth and viewed His graceful form daily in temples, in sculpture, in painting, and in dance. His philosophical teachings in *Bhagavad-gītā* were all-famous, and Prabhupāda was His intimate emissary. Yet the ladies and gentlemen at Seventy-second Street looked at him blankly.

Sometimes during a talk an outsider would open the door and hesitantly glance inside. Śrīla Prabhupāda would stop his lecture and invite the visitor further with words and gestures: "Yes, yes, come in. You can come here." Sometimes he would commiserate with his "fellow New Yorkers," chuckling about the discomforts they shared. "Suppose there is a heavy snowfall, the whole New York City is flooded with snow, and you are all put into inconvenience. This is a sort of suffering, but you have no control."

Sometimes he praised Dr. Misra's students for having learned so nicely from their teacher: "Now, what Dr. Misra is teaching is very nice. He is teaching that first of all you must know, 'Who am I?' That is very good, but that 'Who am I?' can be known from *Bhagavad-gītā* also—'I am not this body.'"

Sometimes, while Śrīla Prabhupāda was talking, a guest would suddenly speak out with an irrelevant question, and Śrīla Prabhupāda would patiently try to consider it. At the same time, behind the tolerance Prabhupāda's mood was always one of a personal urgency. Sometimes he spoke very fast, and one sensed his desire to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West as soon as possible. He had no followers, a few books, no temples, and he openly stated that his was a race against time. "I am an old man," he would say. "I could leave at any time." And so behind the formal delivery of the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy was an anxiety, an almost desperate desire to convince at least one soul to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness immediately.

In a second lecture delivered on the same verse of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrīla Prabhupāda discussed the real meaning of going to a sacred place in India.

One should go to a sacred place in order to find some intelligent scholar living there in spiritual knowledge and make association with him. Just like I . . . my residence is at Vṛndāvana. So at Vṛndāvana there are many big scholars and saintly persons living. So one should go to such holy places not simply to take bath in the water; one must be intelligent enough to find some spiritually advanced man living there and take instruction from him and be benefited by that. If a man has attachment to going to a place of pilgrimage to take a bath but has no attraction for hearing from learned people there, he is considered to be an ass. [He laughs.] Sa eva go-kharaḥ. Go means "cow," and khara means "ass." So the whole civilization is moving like a civilization of cows and asses. Everyone is identifying with the body. Yes, you want to speak?

(continued on page 32)

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

The Night-and-day Dream

This conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and a university student took place in Los Angeles, in January of 1974.

Student: In your books you say this world is like a dream.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. It is a dream.

Student: How is it a dream?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: For example, last night you had some dream, but now it has no value. It is gone. And again, tonight when you sleep, you'll forget all these things and dream. You won't remember, when you are dreaming tonight, "I've got my house; I've got my wife." You'll forget it all. So all of this is a dream.

Student: Is it true, or is it not true?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: How could it be true? At night you forget it. Do you remember when you sleep that you've got your wife and you're sleeping on a bed? When you have gone some three thousand miles away and seen something totally different in your dream, do you remember that you've got a place to reside in?

Student: No.

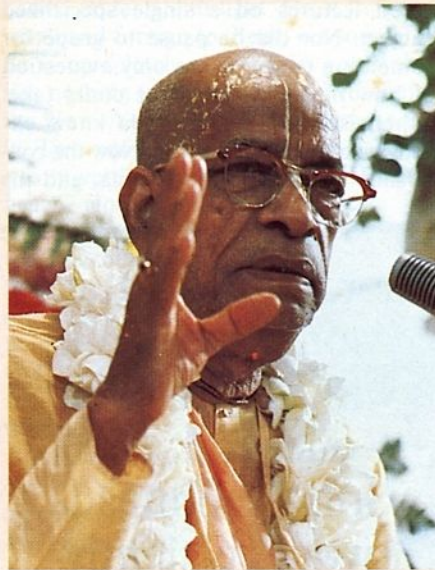
Śrīla Prabhupāda: So this is a dream. Tonight, what you are seeing *now* will become only a dream, just as what you saw last night—now you know it was only a dream. So both are dreams. You are simply a visitor, that's all. You are seeing this dream and that dream. *You*, the spirit soul, *are factual*. But your material body and the material surroundings you are seeing—this is a dream.

Student: But I have the impression that this experience is true and my dream is not true. What is the difference—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. This experience is all untrue! How could it be true? If it were true, how could you forget it at night? How could you forget it, if it were true? At night do you remember all this?

Student: No. I don't remember.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then—how could it be true? Just as you don't remember the dream you saw last night and so you call it a "dream," similarly this experience—because you forget it at night—this is also a dream. . . .



Student: But I have the impres—

Śrīla Prabhupāda: This is a daydream; that is a night dream. That's all. When you dream at night, then you perceive *that* as being real. Yes. You think that is real. It is a dream, but you are crying, "There is a tiger! Tiger! Tiger!" Where is the tiger? But you are seeing it as fact—a tiger. "I'm being killed by a tiger." But where is the tiger? . . . Or you dream you are embracing some beautiful girl. Where is that beautiful girl? But actually it is happening.

Student: It is happening?


Śrīla Prabhupāda: In one sense it is happening, because there is discharge of semen. Nocturnal emission. But where is that girl? Is it not a dream? But similarly, this so-called real-life experience is also a dream. You are getting the impression of factuality, but it is a dream. Therefore it is called *māyā-sukhāya*, illusory happiness. Your nighttime happiness and your daytime happiness are the same thing. At night you are dreaming you are embracing a nice beautiful girl, and there is no such thing. Similarly, in the daytime also, whatever "advancement" you are making—this is also like that. *Māyā-sukhāya*: you are dreaming, "This process will make me happy" or "That process will make me happy," but the whole process is only a dream. You are taking this daydream as reality because the duration is long. At night when you

dream, the duration is just half an hour. But this daydream lasts for twelve hours or more. That is the difference. This is a twelve-hour dream, and that is a half-hour dream—but actually both of them are dreams. Because one is a twelve-hour dream, you are accepting it as real. That is called illusion.

Student: Illusion.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. . . . You are making a distinction between an animal and yourself, but you are forgetting that just as the animal will die, you will also die. So where is your advancement? Will you remain forever? You will also die. So where is your advancement over an animal? That is stated in the Vedic literatures. *Āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-māithunam cal samānam etat paśubhir narāṇām*: this business—eating, sleeping, sex life, and defending—this is also the animal's business, and you are doing the same. So how are you distinct from an animal? You will die; the animal will die. But if you say, "I will die after one hundred years, and this ant will die after one hour," that does not mean that you are in reality. It is a question of time. Or take this huge universe—it will all be destroyed. As your body will be destroyed, this universe will also be destroyed. Annihilation. Dissolution. Nature's way—the whole thing will be dissolved. Therefore, it is a dream. It is a long-duration dream, that's all. Nothing else. But the advantage of having this human body is that in this dream, you can realize the reality—God. That is the advantage. So if you don't take advantage of this dream, then you are missing everything.

Student: So I'm half-asleep?

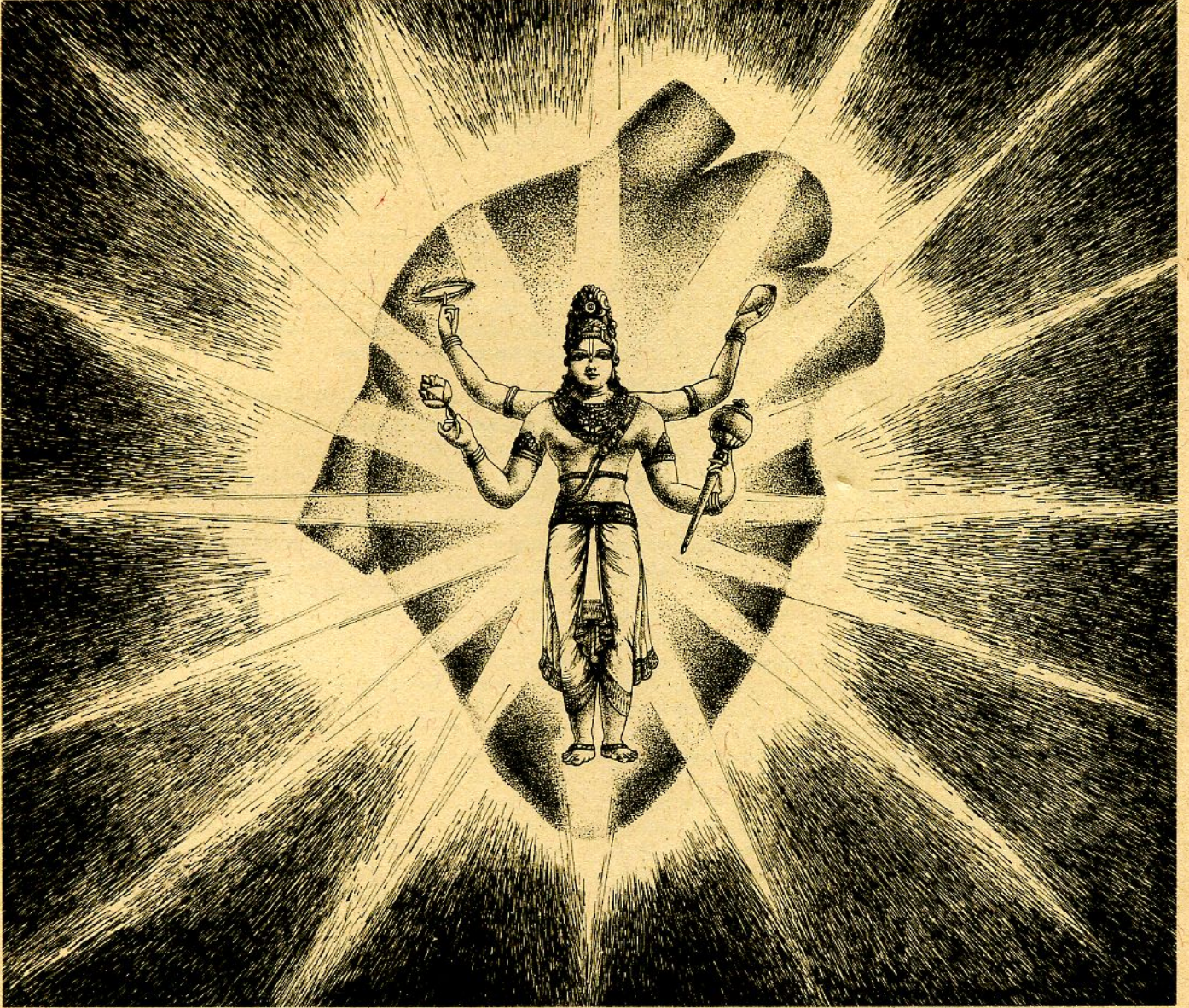
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. This is the situation. Therefore, the Vedic literatures say, *uttiṣṭha*: "Get up! Get up! Get up!" *Jāgrata*: "Become awakened!" *Prāpya varān nibodhata*: "Now you've got the opportunity; utilize it." *Tamasi mā jyotir gama*: "Don't stay in darkness; come to the light." These are Vedic injunctions. And we are teaching the same thing. "Reality is here—Kṛṣṇa. Don't remain in this dark place. Come to this higher consciousness." 

The Beautiful Story of the Personality of Godhead

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Translation and commentary by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
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Second Canto: "The Cosmic Manifestation"



CHAPTER ONE

TEXT 38

The First Step in God Realization

In this part of our continuing presentation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the great sage Sukadeva Gosvāmi explains to King Parikṣit (who has been cursed to die within seven days) that after learning to see the Supreme Lord's universal form, one can gradually realize His personal form.

इयानसावीश्वरविग्रहस्य

यः सन्निवेशः कथितो मया ते ।

सन्धार्यतेऽस्मिन् वपुषि स्थविष्ठे

मनः स्वबुद्ध्या न यतोऽस्ति किञ्चित् ॥३८॥

*iyān asāv īsvara-vigrahasya
yaḥ sanniveśaḥ kathito mayā te
sandhāryate 'smin vapuṣi sthaviṣṭhe
manaḥ sva-buddhyā na yato 'sti kiñcit*

iyān—all these; *asau*—that; *īsvara*—Supreme Lord; *vigrahasya*—of the form; *yaḥ*—whatsoever; *sanniveśaḥ*—as they are located; *kathitah*—explained; *mayā*—by me; *te*—unto you; *sandhāryate*—one may concentrate; *asmin*—in this; *vapuṣi*—form of *virāt*; *sthaviṣṭhe*—in the gross; *manaḥ*—mind; *sva-buddhyā*—by one's intelligence; *na*—not; *yataḥ*—beyond Him; *asti*—there is; *kiñcit*—anything else.

TRANSLATION

I have thus explained to you the gross material gigantic conception of the Personality of Godhead. One who seriously desires liberation concentrates his mind on this form of the Lord, because there is nothing more than this in the material world.

PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10), the Supreme Personality of Godhead has verily explained that the material nature is only an order-carrying agent of His. She is one of the different potencies of the Lord, and she acts under His direction only. As the supreme transcendental Lord, He simply casts a glance over the material principle, and thus the agitation of matter begins, and the resultant actions are manifested one after another by six kinds of gradual differentiations. All material creation is moving in that way, and thus it appears and disappears in due course.

Less intelligent persons with a poor fund of knowledge cannot accommodate the thought of this inconceivable potency of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by which He appears just like a human being (Bg. 9.11). His appearance in the material world as one of us is also His causeless mercy upon the fallen souls. He is transcendental to all material conceptions, but by His unbounded mercy upon His pure devotees, He comes down and manifests Himself as the Personality of Godhead. Materialistic philosophers and scientists are too much engrossed with atomic energy and the gigantic situation of the universal form, and they offer respect more seriously to the external phenomenal feature of material manifestations than to the noumenal principle of spiritual existence. The transcendental form of the Lord is beyond the jurisdiction of such materialistic activities, and it is very difficult to conceive that the Lord can be simultaneously localized and all-pervasive, because the materialistic philosophers and scientists think of everything in terms of their own experience. Because they are unable to accept the personal feature of the Supreme Lord, the Lord is kind enough to demonstrate the *virāt* feature of His transcendental form, and herein Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has vividly described this form of the Lord. He concludes that there is nothing beyond this gigantic feature of the Lord. None of the materialistic thoughtful men can go beyond this conception of the gigantic form. The minds of the materialistic men are flickering and constantly changing from one aspect to another. Therefore, one is advised to think of the Lord by thinking of any part of His gigantic body, and by one's intelligence only one can think of Him in any manifestation of the material world—the forest, the hill, the ocean, the man, the animal, the demigod, the bird, the beast or anything else. Each and every item of the material manifestation entails a part of the body of the gigantic form, and thus the flickering mind can be fixed in the Lord only and nothing else. This process of concentrating on the different bodily parts of the Lord will gradually diminish the demoniac challenge of godlessness and bring about gradual development of devotional service to the Lord. Everything being a part and parcel of the Complete Whole, the neophyte student will gradually realize the hymns of *Īsopaniṣad* which state that the Supreme Lord is everywhere, and thus he will learn the art of not committing any offense to the body of the Lord. This sense of God-mindedness will diminish one's pride in challenging the existence of God. Thus one can learn to show respect to everything, for all things are parts and parcels of the supreme body.

TEXT 39

स सर्वधीवृत्त्यनुभूतसर्व
आत्मा यथा स्वप्नजनेक्षितैकः ।
तं सत्यमानन्दनिधिं भजेत
नान्यत्र सज्जेद् यत आत्मपातः ॥३९॥

*sa sarva-dhī-vṛtty-anubhūta-sarva
ātmā yathā svapna-janeṣṭaikah
taṁ satyam ānanda-nidhim bhajeta
nānyatra sajjet yata ātma-pātaḥ*

saḥ—He (the Supreme Person); *sarva-dhī-vṛtti*—the process of realization by all sorts of intelligence; *anubhūta*—cognizant; *sarve*—everyone; *ātmā*—the Supersoul; *yathā*—as much as; *svapna-jana*—a person dreaming; *iṣṭa*—seen by; *ekah*—one and the same; *taṁ*—unto Him; *satyam*—the Supreme Truth; *ānanda-nidhim*—the ocean of bliss; *bhajeta*—must one worship; *na*—never; *anyatra*—anything else; *sajjet*—be attached; *yataḥ*—whereby; *ātma-pātaḥ*—degradation of oneself.

TRANSLATION

One should concentrate his mind upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who alone distributes Himself in so many manifestations just as ordinary persons create thousands of manifestations in dreams. One must concentrate the mind on Him, the only all-blissful Absolute Truth. Otherwise one will be misled and will cause his own degradation.

PURPORT

In this verse, the process of devotional service is indicated by the great Gosvāmī, Śrīla Śukadeva. He tries to impress upon us that instead of diverting our attention to several branches of self-realization, we should concentrate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the supreme object of realization, worship and devotion. Self-realization is, as it were, offering a fight for eternal life against the material struggle for existence, and therefore by the illusory grace of the external energy, the *yogī* or the devotee is faced with many allurements which can entangle a great fighter again in the bondage of material existence. A *yogī* can attain miraculous successes in material achievements, such as *aṇimā* and *laghimā*, by which one can become more minute than the minutest or lighter than the lightest, or in the ordinary sense, one may achieve material benedictions in the shape of wealth and women. But one is warned against such allurements because entanglement again in such illusory pleasure means degradation of the self and further imprisonment in the material world. By this warning, one should follow one's vigilant intelligence only.

The Supreme Lord is one, and His expansions are various. He is therefore the Supersoul of everything. When a man sees anything, he must know that his seeing is secondary and the Lord's seeing is primary. One cannot see anything without the Lord's having first seen it. That is the instruction of the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. So whatever we see or do, the Supersoul of all acts of seeing or doing is the Lord. This theory of simultaneous oneness and difference between the individual soul and the Supersoul is propounded by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the philosophy of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*. The *virāt-rūpa*, or the gigantic feature of the Supreme Lord, includes everything materially manifested, and therefore the *virāt* or gigantic feature of the Lord is the Supersoul of all living and nonliving entities. But the *virāt-rūpa* is also the manifestation of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, and going further on and on one will eventually see that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate Supersoul of everything that be. The conclusion is that one should unhesitatingly become a worshiper of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or, for that matter, His plenary expansion Nārāyaṇa, and none else. In the Vedic hymns, it is clearly said that first of all Nārāyaṇa cast a glance over matter and thus there was creation. Before creation,

there was neither Brahmā nor Śiva, and what to speak of others. Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya has definitely accepted this, that Nārāyaṇa is beyond the material creation and that all others are within the material creation. The whole material creation, therefore, is one with and different from Nārāyaṇa, simultaneously, and this supports the *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* philosophy of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Being an emanation from the glancing potency of Nārāyaṇa, the whole material creation is nondifferent from Him. But because it is the effect of His external energy (*bahiraṅgā māyā*) and is aloof from the internal potency (*ātmamāyā*), the whole material creation is different from Him at the same time. The example given in this verse very nicely is that of the dreaming man. The dreaming man creates many things in his dream, and thus he himself becomes the entangled seer of the dream and is also affected by the consequences. This material creation is also exactly a dreamlike creation of the Lord, but He, being the transcendental Supersoul, is neither entangled nor affected by the reactions of such a dreamlike creation. He is always in His transcendental position, but essentially He is everything, and nothing is apart from Him. As a part of Him, one should therefore concentrate on Him only, without deviation; otherwise one is sure to be overcome by the potencies of the material creation, one after another. It is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.7) as follows:

*sarva-bhūtāni kaunteya
prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikāṁ
kalpa-ksaye punas tāni
kalpātau visṛjāmy aham*

“O son of Kuntī, at the end of the millennium every material manifestation enters into My nature, and at the beginning of another millennium, by My potency, I again create.”

The human life, however, is an opportunity to get out of this repetition of creation and annihilation. It is a means whereby one may escape the Lord's external potency and enter into His internal potency.

Thus end the Bhaktivedānta purports of the Second Canto, First Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The First Step in God Realization.”

CHAPTER TWO

The Lord in the Heart

TEXT 1

श्रीशुक उवाच

एवं पुरा धारणयात्मयोनि-
र्नष्टां स्मृतिं प्रत्यवरुह्य तुष्टात् ।
तथा ससर्जेदममोघदृष्टि-
र्यथान्वयात् प्राग् व्यवसायबुद्धिः ॥ १ ॥

*śrī-śuka uvāca
evam purā dhāraṇayātma-yonir
naṣṭāṁ smṛtiṁ pratyavarudhya tuṣṭāt
tathā sasarjedam amogha-dṛṣṭir
yathāpyayāt prāg vyavasāya-buddhiḥ*

śrī-śukah uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *evam*—just in the same way; *purā*—prior to the manifestation of the cosmos; *dhāraṇayā*—by such a conception; *ātma-yonih*—of Brahmāji; *naṣṭām*—lost; *smṛtim*—remembrance; *pratyavarudhya*—by regaining consciousness; *tuṣṭāt*—because of appeasing the Lord; *tathā*—thereafter; *sasarja*—created; *idam*—this material world; *amogha-dṛṣṭih*—one who has attained clear vision; *yathā*—as; *apyayāt*—created; *prāk*—as formerly; *vyavasāya*—ascertained; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Formerly, prior to the manifestation of the cosmos, Lord Brahmā, by meditating on the *virāt-rūpa*, regained his lost consciousness by appeasing the Lord. Thus he was able to rebuild the creation as it was before.

PURPORT

The example cited herein of Śrī Brahmāji is one of forgetfulness. Brahmāji is the incarnation of one of the mundane attributes of the Lord. Being the incarnation of the passion mode of material nature, he is empowered by the Lord to generate the beautiful material manifestation. Yet due to his being one of the numerous living entities, he is apt to forget the art of his creative energy. This forgetfulness of the living being—beginning from Brahmā down to the lowest insignificant ant—is a tendency which can be counteracted by meditation on the *virāt-rūpa* of the Lord. This chance is available in the human form of life, and if a human being follows the instruction of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and begins to meditate upon the *virāt-rūpa*, then revival of his pure consciousness and counteraction of the tendency to forget his eternal relationship with the Lord can follow simultaneously. And as soon as this forgetfulness is removed, the *vyavasāya-buddhi*, as mentioned here and in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.41), follows at once. This ascertained knowledge of the living being leads to loving service to the Lord, which the living being requires. The kingdom of God is unlimited; therefore the number of the assisting hands of the Lord is also unlimited. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.14) asserts that the Lord has His hands, legs, eyes and mouths in every nook and corner of His creation. This means that the expansions of differentiated parts and parcels, called *jīvas* or living entities, are assisting hands of the Lord, and all of them are meant for rendering a particular pattern of service to the Lord. The conditioned soul, even in the position of a Brahmā, forgets this by the influence of illusory, material energy generated out of false egoism. One can counteract such false egoism by invoking God consciousness. Liberation means getting out of the slumber of forgetfulness and becoming situated in the real loving service of the Lord, as exemplified in the case of Brahmā. The service of Brahmā is the sample of service in liberation distinguished from the so-called altruistic services full of mistakes and forgetfulness. Liberation is never inaction, but service without human mistakes.

TEXT 2

शब्दस्य हि ब्रह्मण एष पन्था
यन्नामभिर्चर्यति धीरपार्थैः ।
परिभ्रमंस्तत्र न विन्दतेऽर्थान्
मायामये वासनया शयानः ॥ २ ॥

*śābdasya hi brahmaṇa eṣa panthā
yan nāmabhir dhyāyati dhīr apārthaiḥ
paribhramāns tatra na vindate 'rthān
māyāmaye vāsanayā śayānaḥ*

śābdasya—of the Vedic sound; *hi*—certainly; *brahmaṇaḥ*—of the Vedas; *eṣaḥ*—these; *panthāḥ*—the way; *yat*—what is; *nāmabhiḥ*—by different names; *dhyāyati*—ponders; *dhīḥ*—intelligence; *apārthaiḥ*—by meaningless ideas; *paribhraman*—wandering; *tatra*—there; *na*—never; *vindate*—enjoys; *arthān*—realities; *māyā-maye*—in illusory things; *vāsanayā*—by different desires; *śayānaḥ*—as if dreaming in sleep.

TRANSLATION

The way of presentation of the Vedic sounds is so bewildering that it directs the intelligence of the people to meaningless things like the heavenly kingdoms. The conditioned souls hover in dreams of such heavenly illusory pleasures, but actually they do not relish any tangible happiness in such places.

PURPORT

The conditioned soul is always engaged in laying out plans for happiness within the material world, even up to the end of the universal limit. He is not even satisfied with available amenities on this planet earth, where he has exploited the resources of nature to the best of his ability. He wants to go to the moon or the planet Venus to exploit resources there. But the Lord has warned us in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16) about the worthlessness of all the innumerable planets of this universe, as well as those planets within other systems. There are innumerable universes and also innumerable planets in each of them. But none of them is immune to the chief miseries of material existence, namely the pangs of birth, the pangs of death, the pangs of old age and the pangs of disease. The Lord says that even the topmost planet, known as the Brahmaloaka or Satyaloka, (and what to speak of other planets, like the heavenly planets) is not a happy land for residential purposes, due to the presence of material pangs, as above mentioned. Conditioned souls are strictly under the laws of fruitive activities, and as such they sometimes go up to Brahmaloaka and again come down to Pātāloaka, as if they were unintelligent children on a merry-go-round. The real happiness is in the kingdom of God, where no one has to undergo the pangs of material existence. Therefore, the Vedic ways of fruitive activities for the living entities are misleading. One thinks of a superior way of life in this country or that, or on this planet or another, but nowhere in the material world can he fulfill his real desire of life, namely eternal life, full intelligence and complete bliss. Indirectly, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmi affirms that Mahārāja Parikṣit, in the last stage of life, should not desire to transfer himself to the so-called heavenly planets, but should prepare himself for going back home, back to Godhead. None of the material planets, nor the amenities available there for living conditions, is everlasting; therefore one must have a factual reluctance to enjoy such temporary happiness as they afford.

TEXT 3

अतः कविर्नामसु यावदर्थः
स्यादप्रमत्तो व्यवसायबुद्धिः ।
सिद्धेऽन्यथार्थे न यतेत तत्र
परिश्रमं तत्र समीक्षमाणः ॥ ३ ॥

*ataḥ kavir nāmasu yāvad arthaḥ
syād apramatto vyavasāya-buddhiḥ
siddhe 'nyathārthe na yateta tatra
parīśramam tatra samīkṣamānaḥ*

ataḥ—for this reason; *kaviḥ*—the enlightened person; *nāmasu*—in names only; *yāvat*—minimum; *arthaḥ*—necessity; *syāt*—must be; *apramattaḥ*—without being mad after them; *vyavasāya-buddhiḥ*—intelligently fixed; *siddhe*—for success; *anyathā*—otherwise; *arthe*—in the interest of; *na*—should never; *yateta*—endeavor for; *tatra*—there; *parīśramam*—laboring hard; *tatra*—there; *samīkṣamānaḥ*—one who sees practically.

TRANSLATION

For this reason the enlightened person should endeavor only for the minimum necessities of life while in the world of names. He should be intelligently fixed and never endeavor for unwanted things, being competent to perceive practically that all such endeavors are merely hard labor for nothing.

PURPORT

The *bhāgavata-dharma*, or the cult of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is perfectly distinct from the way of fruitive activities, which are considered by the devotees to be merely a waste of time. The whole universe, or for that matter all material existence, is moving on as *jagat*, simply for planning business to make one's position very comfortable or secure, al-

though everyone sees that this existence is neither comfortable nor secure and can never become comfortable or secure at any stage of development. Those who are captivated by the illusory advancement of material civilization (following the way of phantasmagoria) are certainly madmen. The whole material creation is a *jugglery of names* only; in fact, it is nothing but a bewildering creation of matter like earth, water and fire. The buildings, furniture, cars, bungalows, mills, factories, industries, peace, war or even the highest perfection of material science, namely atomic energy and electronics, are all simply bewildering names of material elements with their concomitant reactions of the three modes. Since the devotee of the Lord knows them perfectly well, he is not interested in creating unwanted things for a situation which is not at all reality, but simply names of no more significance than the babble of sea waves. The great kings, leaders and soldiers fight with one another in order to perpetuate their names in history. They are forgotten in due course of time, and they make a place for another era in history. But the devotee realizes how much history and historical persons are useless products of flickering time. The fruitive worker aspires after a big fortune in the matter of wealth, woman and worldly adoration, but those who are fixed in perfect reality are not at all interested in such false things. For them it is all a waste of time. Since every second of human life is important, an enlightened man should be very careful to utilize time very cautiously. One second of human life wasted in the vain research of planning for happiness in the material world can never be replaced, even if one spends millions of coins of gold. Therefore, the transcendentalist desiring freedom from the clutches of *māyā*, or the illusory activities of life, is warned herewith not to be captivated by the external features of fruitive actors. Human life is never meant for sense gratification, but for self-realization. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* instructs us solely on this subject from the very beginning to the end. Human life is simply meant for self-realization. The civilization which aims at this utmost perfection never indulges in creating unwanted things, and such a perfect civilization prepares men only to accept the bare necessities of life or to follow the principle of the best use of a bad bargain. Our material bodies and our lives in that connection are bad bargains because the living entity is actually spirit, and spiritual advancement of the living entity is absolutely necessary. Human life is intended for the realization of this important factor, and one should act accordingly, accepting only the bare necessities of life and depending more on God's gift without diversion of human energy for any other purpose, such as being mad for material enjoyment. The materialistic advancement of civilization is called "the civilization of the demons," which ultimately ends in wars and scarcity. The transcendentalist is specifically warned herewith to be fixed in mind, so that even if there is difficulty in plain living and high thinking he will not budge even an inch from his stark determination. For a transcendentalist, it is a suicidal policy to be intimately in touch with the sense gratifiers of the world, because such a policy will frustrate the ultimate gain of life. Śukadeva Gosvāmi met Mahārāja Parikṣit when the latter felt a necessity for such a meeting. It is the duty of a transcendentalist to help persons who desire real salvation and to support the cause of salvation. One might note that Śukadeva Gosvāmi never met Mahārāja Parikṣit while he was ruling as a great king. For a transcendentalist, the mode of activities is explained in the next *śloka*.

TEXT 4

सत्यां क्षितौ किं कशिपोः प्रयासै-
र्बाहौ स्वसिद्धे बुपवर्हणैः किम् ।
सत्यञ्जली किं पुरुधान्पात्र्या
दिग्बल्कलादौ सति किं दुकूलैः ॥ ४ ॥

*satyām kṣitau kiṁ kaśipoh prayāsair
bāhau svasiddhe hy upabarhaṇaiḥ kim
saty añjalau kiṁ purudhānna-pātryā
dig-valkalādau sati kiṁ dukūlaiḥ*

satyām—being in possession; *ksītau*—earthly flats; *kim*—where is the necessity; *kaśīpoh*—of beds and cots; *prayāsaīh*—endeavoring for; *bāhau*—the arms; *sva-siddhe*—being self-sufficient; *hi*—certainly; *upabarhaṇaiḥ*—bed and bedstead; *kim*—what is the use; *sati*—being present; *añjalau*—the palms of the hands; *kim*—what is the use; *purudhā*—varieties of; *anna*—edibles; *pātryā*—by the utensils; *dik*—open space; *valkala-āḍau*—skins of trees; *sati*—being existent; *kim*—what is the use of; *dukūlaiḥ*—clothes.

TRANSLATION

When there are ample earthly flats to lie on, what is the necessity of cots and beds? When one can use his own arms, what is the necessity of a pillow? When one can use the palms of his hands, what is the necessity of varieties of utensils? When there is ample covering, or the skins of trees, what is the necessity of clothing?

PURPORT

The necessities of life for the protection and comfort of the body must not be unnecessarily increased. Human energy is spoiled in a vain search after such illusory happiness. If one is able to lie down on the floor, then why should one endeavor to get a good bedstead or soft cushion to lie on? If one can rest without any pillow and make use of the soft arms endowed by nature, there is no necessity of searching after a pillow. If we make a study of the general life of the animals, we can see that they have no intelligence for building big houses, furniture, and other household paraphernalia, and yet they maintain a healthy life by lying down on the open land. They do not know how to cook or prepare foodstuff, yet they still live healthy lives more easily than the human being. This does not mean that human civilization should revert to animal life or that the human being should live naked in the jungles without any culture, education and sense of morality. An intelligent human cannot live the life of an animal; rather, man should try to utilize his intelligence in arts and science, poetry and philosophy. In such a way he can further the progressive march of human civilization. But here the idea given by Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī is that the reserve energy of human life, which is far superior to that of animals, should simply be utilized for self-realization. Advancement of human civilization must be towards the goal of establishing our lost relationship with God, which is not possible in any form of life other than the human. One must realize the nullity of the material phenomenon, considering it a passing phantasmagoria, and must endeavor to make a solution to the miseries of life. Self-complacency with a polished type of animal civilization geared to sense gratification is delusion, and such a "civilization" is not worthy of the name. In pursuit of such false activities, a human being is in the clutches of *māyā*, or illusion. Great sages and saints in the days of yore were not living in palatial buildings furnished with good furniture and so-called amenities of life. They used to live in huts and groves and sit on the flat ground, and yet they have left immense treasures of high knowledge with all perfection. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī were high-ranking ministers of state, but they were able to leave behind them immense writings on transcendental knowledge, while residing only for one night underneath one tree. They did not live even two nights under the same tree, and what to speak of well-furnished rooms with modern amenities. And still they were able to give us most important literatures of self-realization. So-called comforts of life are not actually helpful for progressive civilization; rather, they are detrimental to such progressive life. In the system of *sanātana-dharma*, of four divisions of social life and four orders of progressive realization, there are ample opportunities and sufficient directions for a happy termination of the progressive life, and the sincere followers are advised therein to accept a voluntary life of renunciation in order to achieve the desired goal of life. If one is not accustomed to abiding by the life of renunciation and self-abnegation from the beginning, one should try to get into the habit at a later stage of life as recommended by Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and that will help one to achieve the desired success.

TEXT 5

चीराणि किं पथि न सन्ति दिशन्ति भिक्षां
नैवाङ्घ्रिपाः परभृतः सरितोऽप्यशुष्यन् ।
रुद्धा गुहाः किमजितोऽवति नोपसन्नान्
कस्माद् भजन्ति कवयो धनदुर्मदान्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

*cīraṇi kim pathi na santi diśanti bhikṣāṁ
nāvāṅghripāḥ para-bhṛtaḥ sarito 'py aśuṣyan
ruddhā guhāḥ kim ajito 'vati nopasannān
kasmād bhajanti kavayo dhana-durmadāndhān*

cīraṇi—torn clothes; *kim*—whether; *pathi*—on the road; *na*—not; *santi*—there is; *diśanti*—give in charity; *bhikṣāṁ*—alms; *na*—not; *eva*—also; *aṅghripāḥ*—the trees; *para-bhṛtaḥ*—one who maintains others; *saritaḥ*—the rivers; *api*—also; *aśuṣyan*—have dried up; *ruddhāḥ*—closed; *guhāḥ*—caves; *kim*—whether; *ajitaḥ*—the Almighty Lord; *avati*—give protection; *na*—not; *upasannān*—the surrendered soul; *kasmāt*—what for, then; *bhajanti*—flatters; *kavayaḥ*—the learned; *dhana*—wealth; *durmada-andhān*—too intoxicated by.

TRANSLATION

Are there no torn clothes lying on the common road? Do the trees, which exist for maintaining others, no longer give alms in charity? Do the rivers, being dried up, no longer supply water to the thirsty? Are the caves of the mountains now closed, or, above all, does the Almighty Lord not protect the fully surrendered souls? Why then do the learned sages go to flatter those who are intoxicated by hard-earned wealth?

PURPORT

The renounced order of life is never meant for begging or living at the cost of others as a parasite. According to the dictionary, a parasite is a sycophant who lives at the cost of society without making any contribution to that society. The renounced order is meant for contributing something substantial to society and not depending on the earnings of the householders. On the contrary, acceptance of alms from the householders by the bona fide mendicant is an opportunity afforded by the saint for the tangible benefit of the donor. In the *sanātana-dharma* institution, alms-giving to the mendicant is part of a householder's duty, and it is advised in the scriptures that the householders should treat the mendicants as their family children and should provide them with food, clothing, etc., without being asked. Pseudomendicants, therefore, should not take advantage of the charitable disposition of the faithful householders. The first duty of a person in the renounced order of life is to contribute some literary work for the benefit of the human being in order to give him realized direction toward self-realization. Amongst the other duties in the renounced order of life of Śrīla Sanātana, Śrīla Rūpa and the other Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, the foremost duty discharged by them was to hold learned discourses amongst themselves at Sevākuṅja, Vṛndāvana (the spot where Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple was established by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and where the actual *samādhi* tombs of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī are laid). For the benefit of all in human society, they left behind them immense literatures of transcendental importance. Similarly, all the *ācāryas* who voluntarily accepted the renounced order of life aimed at benefiting human society and not at living a comfortable or irresponsible life at the cost of others. However, those who cannot give any contribution should not go to the householders for food, for such mendicants asking bread from the householders are an insult to the highest order. Śukadeva Gosvāmī gave this warning especially for those mendicants who adopt this line of profession to solve their economic problems. Such mendicants are in abundance in the age of Kali. When a man becomes a mendicant willfully or by circumstances, he must be of firm faith and conviction that the Supreme Lord is the maintainer of all living beings everywhere in the universe. Why, then, would He neglect

the maintenance of a surrendered soul who is cent percent engaged in the service of the Lord? A common master looks to the necessities of his servant, so how much more would the all-powerful, all-opulent Supreme Lord look after the necessities of life for a fully surrendered soul. The general rule is that a mendicant devotee will accept a simple small loincloth without asking anyone to give it in charity. He simply salvages it from the rejected torn cloth thrown in the street. When he is hungry he may go to a magnanimous tree which drops fruits, and when he is thirsty he may drink water from the flowing river. He does not require to live in a comfortable house, but should find a cave in the hills and not be afraid of jungle animals, keeping faith in God, who lives in everyone's heart. The Lord may dictate to tigers and other jungle animals not to disturb His devotee. Haridāsa Thākura, a great devotee of Lord Śrī Caitanya, used to live in such a cave, and by chance a great venomous snake was a copartner of the cave. Some admirer of Thākura Haridāsa who had to visit the Thākura every day feared the snake and suggested that the Thākura leave that place. Because his devotees were afraid of the snake and they were regularly visiting the cave, Thākura Haridāsa agreed to the proposal on their account. But as soon as this was settled, the snake actually crawled out of its hole in the cave and left the cave for good before everyone present. By the dictation of the Lord, who lived also within the heart of the snake, the snake gave preference to Haridāsa and decided to leave the place and not disturb him. So this is a tangible example of how the Lord gives protection to a bona fide devotee like Thākura Haridāsa. According to the regulations of the *sanātana-dharma* institution, one is trained from the beginning to depend fully on the protection of the Lord in all circumstances. The path of renunciation is recommended for acceptance by one who is fully accomplished and fully purified in his existence. This stage is described also in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.5) as *daiivī sampat*. A human being is required to accumulate *daiivī sampat*, or spiritual assets; otherwise, the next alternative, *āsurī sampat*, or material assets, will overcome him disproportionately, and thus one will be forced into the entanglement of different miseries of the material world. A *sannyāsī* should always live alone, without company, and he must be fearless. He should never be afraid of living alone, although he is never alone. The Lord is residing in everyone's heart, and unless one is purified by the prescribed process, one will feel that he is alone. But a man in the renounced order of life must be purified by the process; thus he will feel the presence of the Lord everywhere and will have nothing to fear (such as being without any company). Everyone can become a fearless and honest person if his very existence is purified by discharging the prescribed duty for each and every order of life. One can become fixed in one's prescribed duty by faithful aural reception of Vedic instructions and assimilation of the essence of Vedic knowledge by devotional service to the Lord.

TEXT 6

एवं स्वचित्ते स्वत एव सिद्ध
आत्मा प्रियो ऽर्थो भगवाननन्तः ।
तं निर्वृतो नियतार्थो भजेत
संसारहेतूपरमञ्च यत्र ॥ ६ ॥

evam̐ sva-citte svata eva siddha
ātmā priyo 'rtho bhagavān anantaḥ
taṁ nirvṛto niyatārtho bhajeta
saṁsāra-hetūparamaṁ ca yatra

evam—thus; sva-citte—in one's own heart; svataḥ—by His omnipotency; eva—certainly; siddhaḥ—fully represented; ātmā—the Supersoul; priyaḥ—very dear; arthaḥ—substance; bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; anantaḥ—the eternal unlimited; taṁ—unto Him; nirvṛtaḥ—being detached from the world; niyata—permanent; arthaḥ—the supreme gain; bhajeta—one must worship; saṁsāra-hetu—the cause of the conditioned state of existence; uparamaḥ—cessation; ca—certainly; yatra—in which.

TRANSLATION

Thus being fixed, one must render service unto the Supersoul situated in one's own heart by His omnipotency. Because He is the Almighty Personality of Godhead, eternal and unlimited, He is the ultimate goal of life, and by worshipping Him one can end the cause of the conditioned state of existence.

PURPORT

As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.61), the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the all-pervading omnipresent Supersoul. Therefore one who is a *yogī* can worship only Him because He is the substance and not illusion. Every living creature is engaging in the service of something else. A living being's constitutional position is to render service, but in the atmosphere of *māyā*, or illusion, or the conditional state of existence, the conditioned soul seeks the service of illusion. A conditioned soul works in the service of his temporary body, bodily relatives like the wife and children, and the necessary paraphernalia for maintaining the body and bodily relations, such as the house, land, wealth, society and country, but he does not know that all such renderings of service are totally illusory. As we have discussed many times before, this material world is itself an illusion, like a mirage in the desert. In the desert there is an illusion of water, and the foolish animals become entrapped by such an illusion and run after water in the desert, although there is no water at all. But because there is no water in the desert, one does not conclude that there is no water at all. The intelligent person knows well that there is certainly water, water in the seas and oceans, but such vast reservoirs of water are far, far away from the desert. One should therefore search for water in the vicinity of seas and oceans and not in the desert. Every one of us is searching after real happiness in life, namely eternal life, eternal or unlimited knowledge and unending blissful life. But foolish people who have no knowledge of the substance search after the reality of life in the illusion. This material body does not endure eternally, and everything in relation with this temporary body, such as the wife, children, society and country, also changes along with the change of body. This is called *saṁsāra*, or repetition of birth, death, old age and disease. We would like to find a solution for all these problems of life, but we do not know the way. Herein it is suggested that anyone who wants to make an end to these miseries of life, namely repetition of birth, death, disease, and old age, must take to this process of worshipping the Supreme Lord and not others, as it is also ultimately suggested in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.65). If we at all want to end the cause of our conditioned life, we must take to the worship of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is present in everyone's heart by His natural affection for all living beings, who are actually the parts and parcels of the Lord (Bg. 18.61). The baby in the lap of his mother is naturally attached to the mother, and the mother is attached to the child. But when the child grows up and becomes overwhelmed by circumstances, he gradually becomes detached from the mother, although the mother always expects some sort of service from the grown-up child and is equally affectionate toward her child, even though the child is forgetful. Similarly, because we are all part and parcel of the Lord, the Lord is always affectionate to us, and He always tries to get us back home, back to Godhead. But we, the conditioned souls, do not care for Him and run instead after the illusory bodily connections. We must therefore extricate ourselves from all illusory connections of the world and seek reunion with the Lord, trying to render service unto Him because He is the ultimate truth. Actually we are hankering after Him as the child seeks the mother. And to search out the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we need not go anywhere else, because the Lord is within our hearts. This does not suggest, however, that we should not go to the places of worship, namely the temples, churches and mosques. Such holy places of worship are also occupied by the Lord because the Lord is omnipresent. For the common man these holy places are centers of learning about the science of God. When the temples are devoid of activities, the people in general become unin-

terested in such places, and consequently the mass of people gradually become godless, and a godless civilization is the result. Such a hellish civilization artificially increases the conditions of life, and existence becomes intolerable for everyone. The foolish leaders of a godless civilization try to devise various plans to bring about peace and prosperity in the godless world under a patent trademark of materialism, and because such attempts are illusory only, the people elect incompetent, blind leaders, one after another, who are incapable of offering solutions. If we want at all to end this anomaly of a godless civilization, we must follow the principles of revealed scriptures like the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and follow the instruction of a person like Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī who has no attraction for material gain.

TEXT 7

कस्तां त्वनादृत्य परानुचिन्ता-
मृते पश्नसतीं नाम कुर्यात् ।
पश्यञ्जनं पतितं वैतरण्या
स्वकर्मजान् परितापाञ्जुषणम् ॥ ७ ॥

kas tām tv anādṛtya parānucintām
ṛte paśūn asatīm nāma kuryāt
paśyañ janam patitam vaitaraṇyāṁ
sva-karmajān paritāpāñ juṣāṇam

kaḥ—who else; tām—that; tu—but; anādṛtya—by neglecting; parānucintām—transcendental thoughts; ṛte—without; paśūn—the materialists; asatīm—in the nonpermanent; nāma—name; kuryāt—will adopt; paśyan—seeing definitely; janam—the general mass of people; patitam—fallen; vaitaraṇyāṁ—in Vaitaraṇī, the river of suffering; svā-karma-jān—produced from one's own work; paritāpāñ—suffering; juṣāṇam—being overtaken by.

TRANSLATION

Who else but the gross materialists will neglect such transcendental thought and take to the nonpermanent names only, seeing the mass of people fallen in the river of suffering as the consequence of accruing the result of their own work?

PURPORT

In the *Vedas* it is said that persons who are attached to demigods to the exclusion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are like the animals who follow the herdsman even though they are taken to the slaughterhouse. The materialists, like animals, also do not know how they are being misdirected by neglecting the transcendental thought of the Supreme Person. No one can remain vacant of thought. It is said that an idle brain is a devil's workshop because a person who cannot think in the right way must think of something which may bring about disaster. The materialists are always worshiping some minor demigods, although this is condemned in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.20). As long as a person is illusioned by material gains, he petitions the respective demigods to draw some particular benefit which is, after all, illusory and nonpermanent. The enlightened transcendentalist is not captivated by such illusory things; therefore he is always absorbed in the transcendental thought of the Supreme in different stages of realization, namely Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. In the previous verse it is suggested that one should think of the Supersoul, which is one step higher than the impersonal thought of Brahman, as it was suggested in the case of contemplating the *virāt-rūpa* of the Personality of Godhead.

Intelligent persons who can see properly may look into the general conditions of the living entities who are wandering in the cycle of the 8,400,000 species of life, as well as in different classes of human beings. It is said that there is an everlasting belt of water called the River Vaitaraṇī at the entrance of the Plutonic planet of Yamarāja, who

punishes sinners in different manners. After being subjected to such sufferings, a sinner is awarded a particular species of life according to his deeds in the past. Such living entities as are punished by Yamarāja are seen in different varieties of conditioned life. Some of them are in heaven, and some of them are in hell. Some of them are *brāhmaṇas*, and some of them are misers. But no one is happy in this material world, and all of them are either class A, B or C prisoners suffering because of their own deeds. The Lord is impartial to all circumstances of the sufferings of the living entities, but to one who takes shelter at His lotus feet, the Lord gives proper protection, and He takes such a living entity back home, back to Himself.

TEXT 8

केचित् स्वदेहान्तर्हृदयावकाशे
प्रादेशमात्रं पुरुषं वसन्तम् ।
चतुर्भुजं कञ्जयाङ्गशङ्ख-
गदाधरं धारणया स्मरन्ति ॥ ८ ॥

kecit sva-dehāntar-hṛdayāvakāśe
prādeśa-mātram puruṣam vasantam
catur-bhujam kañja-rathāṅga-śaṅkha-
gadā-dharam dhāraṇayā smaranti

kecit—others; sva-deha-antaḥ—within the body; hṛdaya-avakāśe—in the region of the heart; prādeśa-mātram—measuring only eight inches; puruṣam—the Personality of Godhead; vasantam—residing; catur-bhujam—with four hands; kañja—lotus; ratha-āṅga—the wheel of a chariot; śaṅkha—conchshell; gadā-dharam—and with a club in the hand; dhāraṇayā—conceiving in that way; smaranti—do meditate upon Him.

TRANSLATION

Others conceive of the Personality of Godhead residing within the body in the region of the heart and measuring only eight inches, with four hands carrying a lotus, a wheel of a chariot, a conchshell and a club respectively.

PURPORT

The all-pervading Personality of Godhead resides as Paramātmā in the heart of each and every living entity. The measurement of the localized Personality of Godhead is estimated to expand from the ring finger to the end of the thumb, more or less eight inches. The form of the Lord described in this verse with distribution of different symbols—beginning from the lower right hand up and down to the lower left hand with lotus, wheel of a chariot, conchshell and club respectively—is called Janārdana, or the plenary portion of the Lord who controls the general mass. There are many other forms of the Lord with varied situations of the symbols of lotus, conchshell, etc., and they are differently known as Puruṣottama, Acyuta, Narasiṁha, Trivikrama, Hṛṣīkeśa, Keśava, Mādhava, Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṅkaraṇa, Śrīdhara, Vāsudeva, Dāmodara, Janārdana, Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Padmanābha, Vāmana, Madhusūdana, Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇumūrti, Adhokṣaja and Upendra. These twenty-four forms of the localized Personality of Godhead are worshiped in different parts of the planetary system, and in each system there is an incarnation of the Lord having a different Vaikuṇṭha planet in the spiritual sky, which is called the *paravyoma*. There are many other hundreds and scores of different forms of the Lord, and each and every one of them has a particular planet in the spiritual sky, of which this material sky is only a fragmental offshoot. The Lord exists as *puruṣa*, or the male enjoyer, although there is no comparing Him to any male form in the material world. But all such forms are *advaita*, non-different from one another, and each of them is eternally young. The young Lord with four hands is nicely decorated, as described below.

TEXT 9

प्रसन्नवक्त्रं नलिनायतेक्षणं
कदम्बकिञ्जल्कपिशङ्गवाससम् ।
लसन्महारत्नहिरण्मयाङ्गदं
स्फुरन्महारत्नकिरीटकुण्डलम् ॥ ९ ॥

prasanna-vaktram nalināyatekṣaṇam
kadamba-kiñjalka-piṣaṅga-vāsasam
lasan-mahā-ratna-hiraṇmayāṅgadam
sphuran-mahā-ratna-kirīṭa-kuṇḍalam

prasanna—expresses happiness; vaktram—mouth; nalina-āyata—spread like the petals of a lotus; iṣaṇam—eyes; kadamba—kadamba flower; kiñjalka—saffron; piṣaṅga—yellow; vāsasam—garments; lasat—hanging; mahā-ratna—valuable jewels; hiraṇmaya—made of gold; aṅgadam—ornament; sphurat—glowing; mahā-ratna—valuable jewels; kirīṭa—headdress; kuṇḍalam—earrings.

TRANSLATION

His mouth expresses His happiness. His eyes spread like the petals of a lotus, and His garments, yellowish like the saffron of a kadamba flower, are bedecked with valuable jewels. His ornaments are all made of gold, set with jewels, and He wears a glowing head-dress and earrings.

TEXT 10

उभिद्रहृत्पङ्कजकर्णिकालये
योगेश्वरास्थापितपादपल्लवम् ।
श्रीलक्षणं कौस्तुभरत्नकन्धर-
मम्लानलक्ष्म्या वनमालयाचितम् ॥ १० ॥

unnidra-hṛt-paṅkaja-karṇikālaye
yogēśvarāsthāpita-pāda-pallavam
śrī-lakṣaṇam kaustubha-ratna-kandharam
amlāna-lakṣmyā vana-mālayācitam

unnidra—blooming; hṛt—heart; paṅkaja—lotus flower; karṇikālaye—on the surface of the whorl; yoga-īśvara—the great mystics; āsthāpita—placed; pāda-pallavam—lotus feet; śrī—the goddess of fortune, or a beautiful calf; lakṣaṇam—marked in that way; kaustubha—the Kaustubha jewel; ratna—other jewels; kandharam—on the shoulder; amlāna—quite fresh; lakṣmyā—beauty; vana-mālayā—by a flower garland; ācitam—spread over.

TRANSLATION

His lotus feet are placed over the whorls of the lotuslike hearts of great mystics. On His chest is the Kaustubha jewel, engraved with a beautiful calf, and there are other jewels on His shoulders. His complete torso is garlanded with fresh flowers.

PURPORT

The ornaments, flowers, clothing and all the other decorations on the transcendental body of the Personality of Godhead are identical with the body of the Lord. None of them are made of material ingredients; otherwise there would be no chance of their decorating the body of the Lord. As such, in the *paravyoma*, spiritual varieties are also distinguished from the material variegatedness.

TEXT 11

विभूषितं मेखलयाङ्गुलीयकै-
र्महाधनैर्नूपुरकङ्कादिभिः ।
स्निग्धामलाङ्घ्रितनीलकुन्तलै-
र्विरोचमानानहासपेशलम् ॥ ११ ॥

vibhūṣitam mekhalayāṅgulīyakair
mahā-dhanair nūpura-kaṅkaṇādibhiḥ
snigdhamalāṅghritānila-kuntalair
virocamānānana-hāsa-peśalam

vibhūṣitam—well decorated; mekhalayā—with an ornamental wreath about the waist; aṅgulīyakaiḥ—by finger rings; mahā-dhanaiḥ—all highly valuable; nūpura—ringing leglets; kaṅkaṇa-ādibhiḥ—also by bangles; snigdha—slick; amala—spotless; ākuñcita—curling; nīla—bluish; kuntalaiḥ—hair; virocāmāna—very pleasing; ānana—face; hāsa—smile; peśalam—beautiful.

TRANSLATION

He is well decorated with an ornamental wreath about His waist and rings studded with valuable jewels on His fingers. His leglets, His bangles, His oiled hair, curling with a bluish tint, and His beautiful smiling face are all very pleasing.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the most beautiful person amongst all others, and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes every part of His transcendental beauty, one after another, in order to teach the impersonalist that the Personality of Godhead is not an imagination by the devotee for facility of worship, but is the Supreme Person in fact and figure. The impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth is but His radiation, as the sun rays are but radiations from the sun.

TEXT 12

अदीनलीलाहसितेक्षणोल्लासद-
भ्रूमङ्गसंखचितभूर्यनुग्रहम् ।
ईक्षेत चिन्तामयमेनमीश्वरं
यावन्मनो धारणयावतिष्ठते ॥ १२ ॥

adīna-līlā-hasitekṣaṇollasat-
bhṛū-bhaṅga-saṁsūcita-bhūry-anugraham
īkṣeta cintāmayam enam īśvaram
yāvan mano dhāraṇayāvatiṣṭhate

adīna—very magnanimous; līlā—pastimes; hasita—smiling; iṣaṇa—by glancing over; ullasat—glowing; bhṛū-bhaṅga—signals of the eyebrow; saṁsūcita—indicated; bhūri—extensive; anugraham—benediction; īkṣeta—one must concentrate on; cintāmayam—transcendental; enam—this particular; īśvaram—the Supreme Lord; yāvat—as long as; manaḥ—the mind; dhāraṇayā—by meditation; avatiṣṭhate—can be fixed.

TRANSLATION

The Lord's magnanimous pastimes and the glowing glancing of His smiling face are all indications of His extensive benedictions. One must therefore concentrate on this transcendental form of the Lord, as long as the mind can be fixed on Him by meditation.

(continued in next issue)



Every Town and Village

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



Bhaktivedanta Books: 85.5 Million in Print

Los Angeles—Just-released Bhaktivedanta Book Trust figures (for the period October 1966 to March 1979) show that Śrīla Prabhupāda's translations of India's Vedic literatures now appear in some thirty languages and have gone well over the eighty-five million mark.

Last year the printing total surpassed the previous year's total by thirty percent, and BBT books appeared for the first time in Danish, Greek, and Kannada (a South Indian dialect).

The demand for Śrīla Prabhupāda's books seems to transcend all national and ideological boundaries. In the Middle East, people are eagerly purchasing a new Arabic translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, while Israelis are reading a Hebrew edition of *Easy Journey to Other Planets*. A pocket edition of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (first printing: 250,000 copies) is proving a bestseller in South America and Mexico.

In India (the Vedic literatures' homeland) Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are being translated into Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Telugu, Oriya, Marathi, Nepali, Tamil, and Kannada. On their travels throughout the subcontinent, BBT representatives often find themselves surrounded by crowds eager to make a purchase.

Language	Books in Print
1. English	55,891,037
2. Spanish	6,408,500
3. French	5,206,434
4. German	3,536,000
5. Italian	3,049,902
6. Dutch	2,209,044
7. Japanese	2,125,000
8. Portuguese	1,761,000
9. Bengali	1,742,000
10. Hindi	1,450,900
11. Swedish	470,000
12. Swahili	434,000
13. Gujarati	288,000
14. Telugu	257,000
15. Danish	150,000
16. Chinese	75,000
17. Nepali	70,000
18. Marathi	65,000
19. Hebrew	57,000
20. Oriya	51,000
21. Greek	45,000
22. Hungarian	30,000
23. Yugoslavian	30,000
24. Arabic	27,000
25. Czech	20,000
26. Korean	20,000
27. Polish	20,000
28. Tamil	20,000
29. Russian	5,000
30. Kannada	5,000
Total	85,518,817

Educator Proud of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books

Recently Shiv Sharma, Professor of Sanskrit at the College of Buddhist Philosophy in Ladakh, India, said this:

"I have read with great pleasure the books of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. At long last a noble heir to the tradition of India's eternally glorious message has rendered our Sanskrit literature in such a way that our English-speaking brothers in the West may easily understand it. This should be a matter of great pride to all of us.

"The manner in which His Divine Grace has presented *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the encyclopedia of Vedic culture—with specially prepared illustrations, original Sanskrit script, Roman transliterations, word-for-word synonyms, verse index, and table of contents and extensive general index—is a literary wonder of the world. Also, his clear and precise commentary make these volumes masterpieces of study for lovers of Vedic wisdom.

"Śrīla Prabhupāda's books teach the principles of brahminical culture, namely no intoxication, no illicit sex, no gambling, and no eating of meat, fish, or eggs. The value of his writings is seen in that he has molded for the better thousands of lost lives.

"As an educator, I highly recommend these books to all school, college, and university libraries."

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 Trivikrama (May 13-June 10, 1979))			
June 5	June 6	June 10	
Disappearance of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhīṣaṇa and Śrī Caṅgābhīṣa Govārdana	Pāṇḍava Nirjālā Ekādāśī (fasting from grains and beans)	Śrīnā-śaktī of Śrī Jagannātha-dēva	Disappearance of Śrī Mukunda Datta and Śrī Śrīdhara Paṇḍita
Vaiṣṇava month of Kāmaṇa (June 11-July 8, 1979)			
June 11	June 15	June 20	June 24
Disappearance of Śrīla Śyāmasānda Govārd	Disappearance of Śrī Vākrēvara Paṇḍita	Yoginī Ekādāśī (fasting from grains and beans)	Disappearance of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura
June 25	June 26	June 30	
Clearing of the Guṇḍīca temple	Kātha-śaktī of Śrī Jagannātha-dēva	Heri-pañcamī	

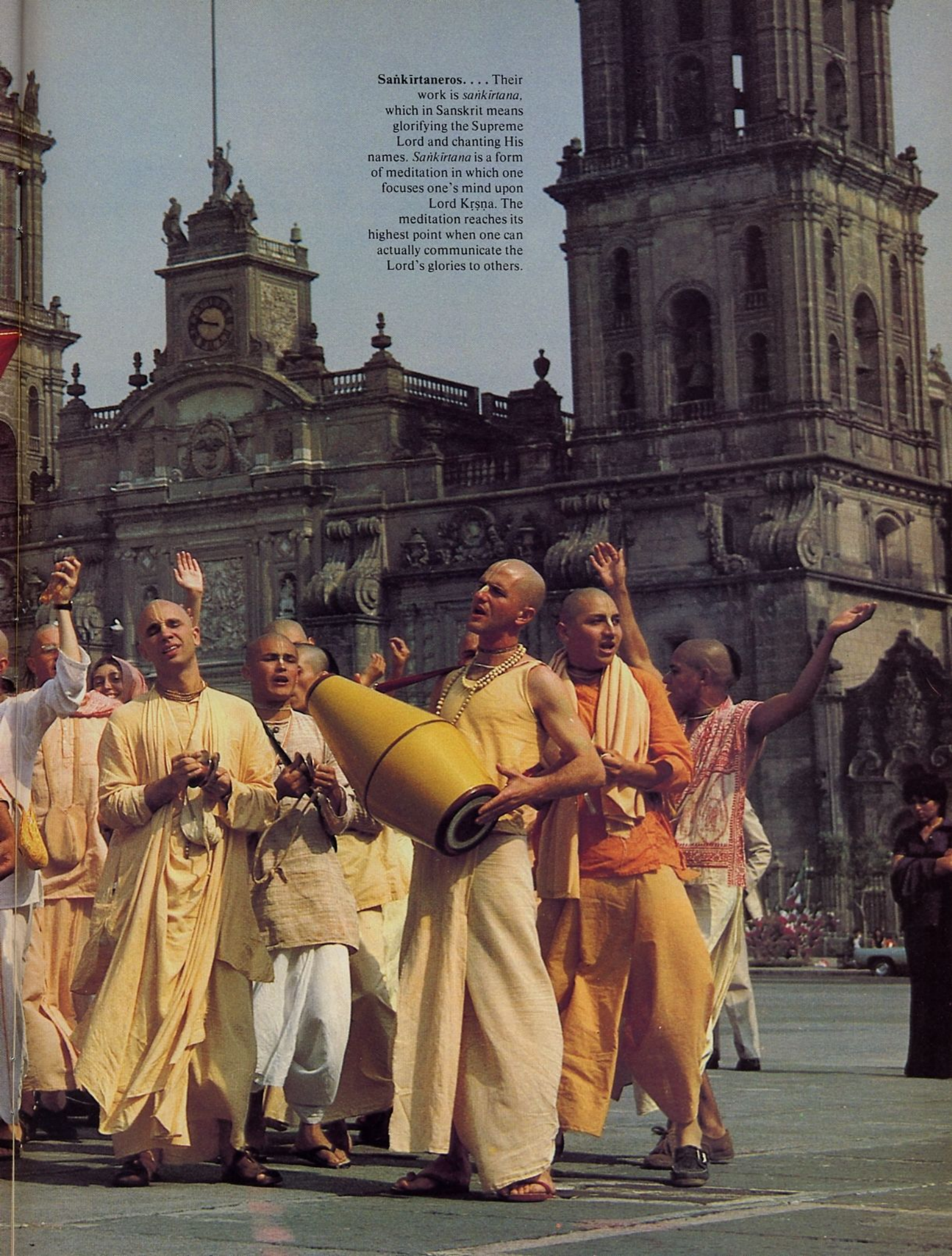
THE SĀNKĪRTANEROS OF MEXICO

Looking into the pale and reddish-brown faces of the passersby on Avenida Insurgentes, Mario Ortega Martell no longer sees only country people and businessmen, students and merchants, Mexicans and foreigners, men and women going about their business on a warm afternoon. Instead, looking deeper, Mario sees them as *almas espirituales*—spiritual souls, all part and parcel of God,

PHOTOS BY BHĀRGAVA DASA



Saṅkīrtaneros. . . Their work is *saṅkīrtana*, which in Sanskrit means glorifying the Supreme Lord and chanting His names. *Saṅkīrtana* is a form of meditation in which one focuses one's mind upon Lord Kṛṣṇa. The meditation reaches its highest point when one can actually communicate the Lord's glories to others.



Flute-playing Lord Kṛṣṇa (right) and His eternal consort Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī are the center of everything the devotees do. Each day hundreds of people visit the Mexico City temple to see the Deities and share the devotees inspiration.



but all somehow unmindful of their relationship with Him.

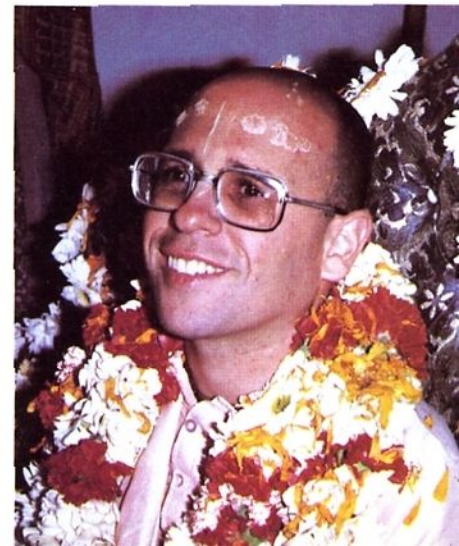
That's why he's out there, downtown in Mexico City, stopping people and talking with them, reaching into a cloth bag on his shoulder to hand them books they've never seen before. Fifteen months ago, someone on the street had handed him the same book, and what he found when he read it changed his life. Now Mario Ortega wants everyone to have the chance to taste what he calls "the nectar of the mercy of Kṛṣṇa."

The book was *Bhagavad-gītā Tal Como Es (Bhagavad-gītā As It Is)*, a Spanish translation and commentary upon one of

Teaching new disciples the art of dedicating their lives to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa: His Divine Grace Hṛdayānanda dāsa Goswami (right), one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's authorized successors.

India's most revered texts of spiritual enlightenment. The author was "Su Divina Gracia" A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder and spiritual preceptor of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Shortly after Mario had finished the book, the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa gathered in Guadalajara to hold the an-



nual Ratha-yātrā, the festival of the chariots. Each year in this celebration from ancient India, the devotees dance through the streets in cities worldwide, playing musical instruments, chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, and pulling huge multicolored floats that call to mind Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes.

Mario took part in the festival at Guadalajara, and that very day (the nineteenth of August, 1978—he whips off the date as readily as his birthday) he decided to join the temple in Mexico City and become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

“From my own experience,” Mario says, “I knew that the best thing you could do with your life would be to make

it pure—and even better than that would be to show other people how to do the same.

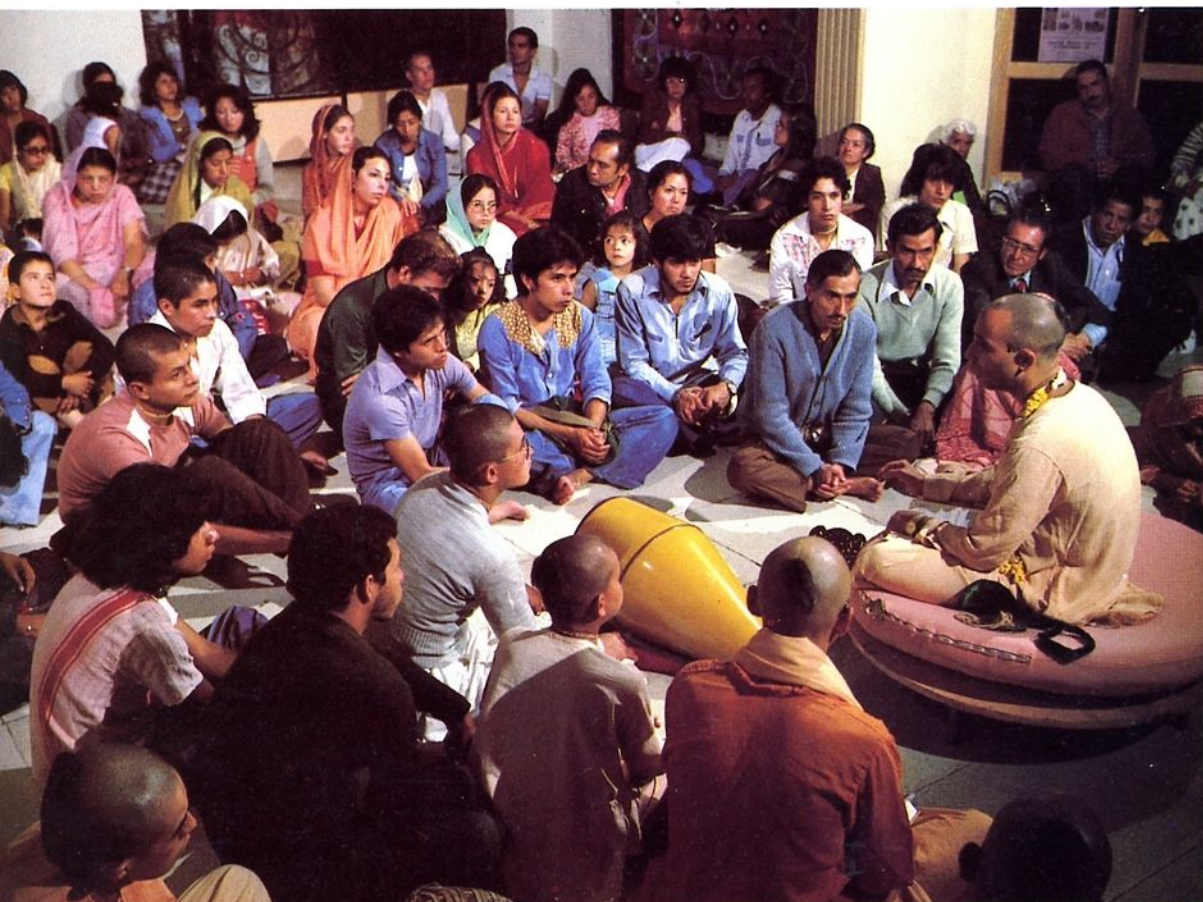
“Before I came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, though, I felt that my own way of life was completely impure. I was confused and indecisive about spiritual life and couldn't even help myself. But after I read that book, I lost my taste for materialistic activities. And now I understand that I was being cheated by *māyā*, illusion.

“I feel that I have become very fortunate, and because of that I want to give these books to others, so that they can also become fortunate. I want everyone to come in touch with Kṛṣṇa.”

It was in 1971 that Kṛṣṇa devotees went to Mexico from the United States and began Mexico's first Kṛṣṇa consciousness temple. That same year the devotees published the first Kṛṣṇa consciousness books in Spanish, and since then they have put out a steady flow of new titles.

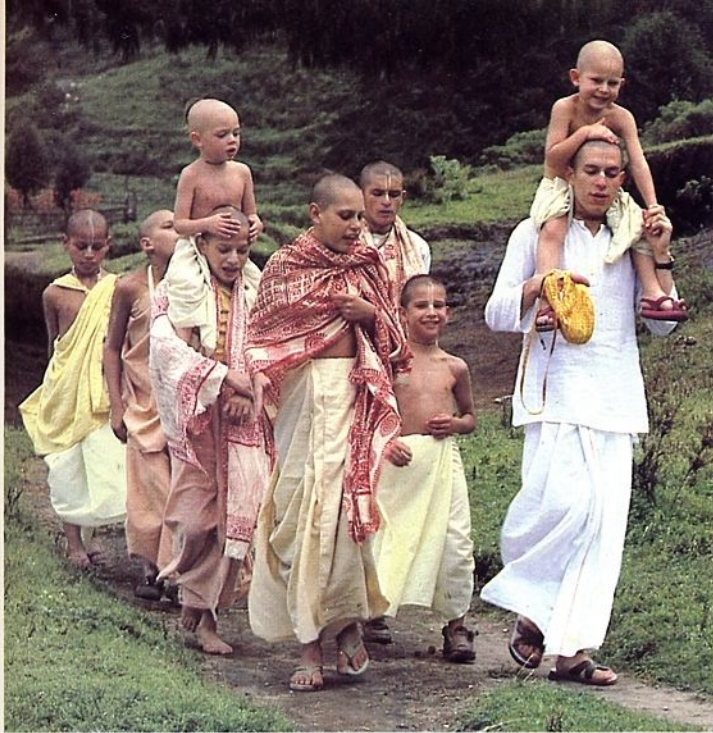
To distribute the books, the devotees travel from city to city and town to town. So although the only formally established Kṛṣṇa temples are in Mexico City and Guadalajara, word gets around, and people from all corners are reading about Kṛṣṇa and chanting His names.

The Mexico City temple, formerly the Ethiopian embassy, serves as the Kṛṣṇa movement's Mexico headquarters. Here



“Books are the basis of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement,” says Pañcadraṇḍī Svāmī (giving a class, left). The *saṅkīrtaneros* are distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's translations of India's Vedic literatures by the thousands. And by the thousands, people are getting firsthand experience of self-realization.





The children learn not only the usual subjects but also the science of self-realization, which opens up the world within and the world beyond. They learn how to discern the spiritual essence of life amid the complexities of an increasingly materialistic society.

soul within. So “Mexican” or “American” or “Valdez” or “Smith” or any other label that might have come along with my body doesn’t really apply to me. I’m really just a soul, part and parcel of God. So all I *really* have to do is devote myself to Him, and that will automatically be good for my nation, my family—everyone.”

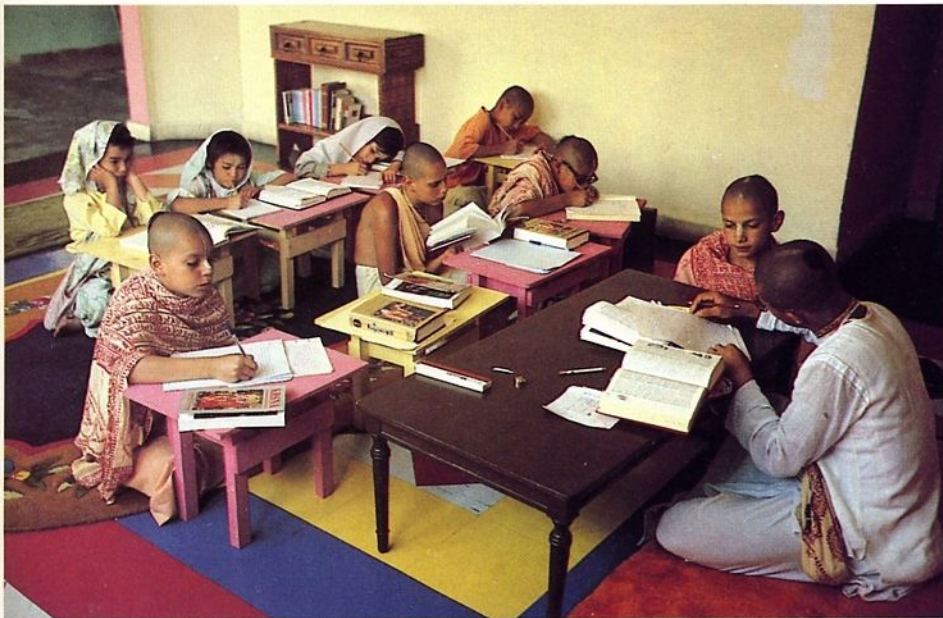
“Kṛṣṇa is universal. He is not the God of a particular country, time, or cultural group. God is one. So His name, qualities, pastimes, and philosophy will be attractive to anyone who thinks about things carefully. And *bhakti-yoga*—linking with God through devotional service—will be effective anywhere.”

An important feature of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in Mexico, as in other countries, is its Gurukula, a boarding school where learning how to advance in spiritual life is as much a part of the curriculum as reading, writing, and arithmetic. A child is ultimately a spiritual being, say the Kṛṣṇa conscious teachers, so what’s the use of a school that ignores spiritual realization? A materially brilliant student with no understanding of who he is or how he is connected with God is no better than a fancy package with nothing inside. At Mexico’s Gurukula (a modern three-story house with parquet floors, picture windows, and a large patio and garden courtyard) the children learn first to understand themselves and Kṛṣṇa, and then whatever else they need to know. The children get a strong general education (most Gurukula students are two or three years ahead of their public-school counterparts in reading and the other usual subjects), but more important, they learn how to discern the spiritual essence of life amid the complexities of an increasingly materialistic society.

As the children grow older, they will take further instruction under the guidance of a Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master, as do other initiated members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

The movement’s original spiritual master in the West was His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the author of the books that Mario Ortega and the other devotees distribute to the public. Many of the devotees in Mexico are Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciples, but since his passing, in 1977, newer devotees have been learning his teachings from one of his eleven authorized successors, His Divine Grace Hṛdayānanda dāsa Goswami.

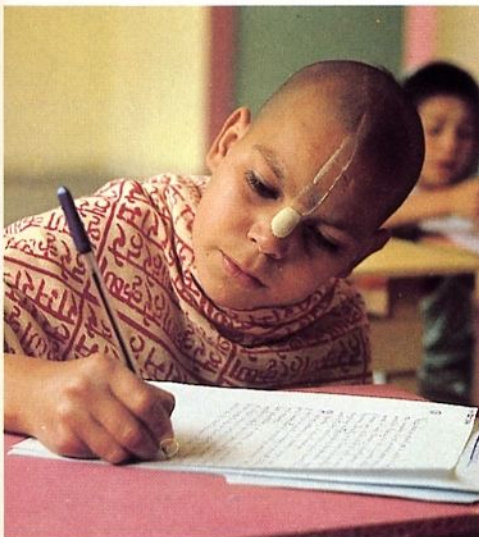
Śrīla Hṛdayānanda Mahārāja speaks fluent Spanish, Portuguese, and English and has spent the last six years teaching and traveling throughout the Latin American continent, opening centers,



devotees live and work and hold regular classes for the public and for a growing congregation of people who live and work nearby and follow the principles of devotional life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“Kṛṣṇa consciousness in Mexico is no different from Kṛṣṇa consciousness anywhere else,” says Pañcadraviḍa Svāmī, the movement’s director for Mexico and other Latin American countries. “Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a limited form of consciousness like nationalism, family loyalty, or a religious belief you hold because you were born into it. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the original consciousness of the soul.

“People feel drawn to Kṛṣṇa consciousness because it makes sense to them: ‘I’m not my material body but the

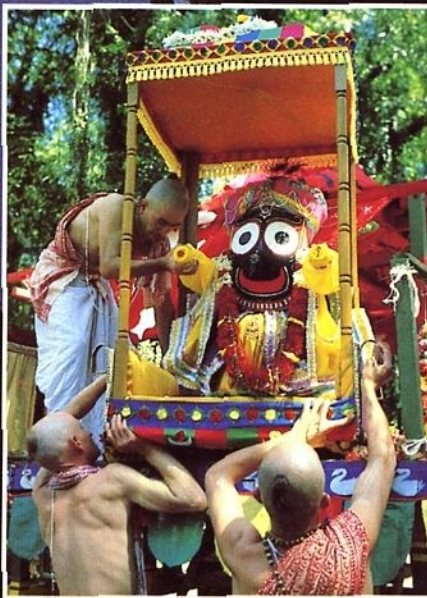
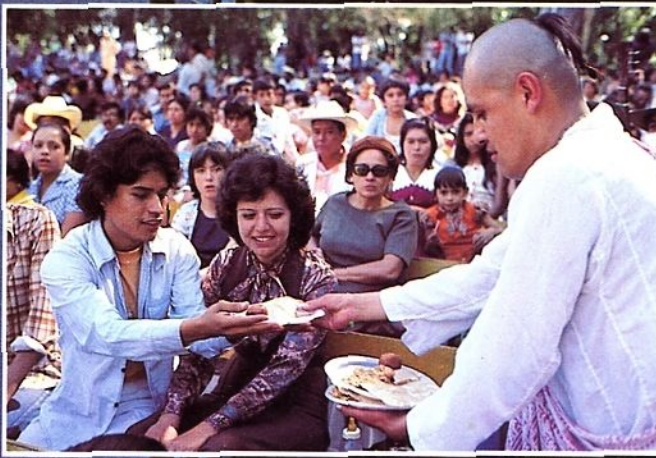


and overseeing new publications.

Less than two months ago, Mario Ortega became one of his disciples.

"Because my spiritual master is eternally linked with Śrīla Prabhupāda," says Mario (now known by the spiritual name Mahārṣi dāsa), "I also feel eternally linked with Śrīla Prabhupāda—and ultimately with Kṛṣṇa Himself.

"The message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is eternal and unchanging. It comes down from master to disciple, from one generation to the next. Five thousand years ago, Kṛṣṇa taught *Bhagavad-gītā* to His friend and disciple Arjuna. Kṛṣṇa's teachings dispelled all Arjuna's illusion, cleared up all his doubts, and revived his inner understanding—so that he knew who he really was and what he had to do. And even today, anyone who seriously tries to understand Kṛṣṇa's teachings from a bona fide spiritual master can get free from anxiety and illusion and make his life spiritually perfect."



The attraction at the Festival of the Chariots is Kṛṣṇa (right), who enjoys the proceedings in His form as Jagannātha, the Lord of the Universe.

Spiritual food (vegetarian dishes offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa)—a taste of spiritual ecstasy. At the yearly Festival of the Chariots (above), devotees pass out plates to thousands.



A joyous jaunt through the streets of Guadalajara: Lord Jagannātha and His sister Subhadrā and brother Balarāma (below, from right to left) look on from the chariot as the devotees and guests chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.



“JUST HEAR ME”

(continued from page 13)

Woman with an English accent: *In the places known as secret places—*

Prabhupāda: *Sacred. Yes.*

Woman: *Is it “sacred” places?*

Prabhupāda: *Yes.*

Woman: *—isn't it also a fact that there is more magnetism because of the meeting of saints and more advanced people?*

Prabhupāda: *Oh, yes, certainly. Certainly. Therefore the place itself has got some magnetism.*

Woman: *Yes, and when—*

Prabhupāda: *Just like at Vṛndāvana. That is practical. Now here I am sitting in New York, the world's greatest city, such a magnificent city, but my heart is always hankering after that Vṛndāvana.*

Woman: *Yes. [Laughs.]*

Prabhupāda: *Yes. I am not happy here.*

Woman: *Yes, I know.*

Prabhupāda: *I shall be very happy to return to my Vṛndāvana, that sacred place. But then, “Why are you here?” Now, because it is my duty: I have brought some message for you people. Because I have been ordered by my superior, my spiritual master, “Whatever you have learned you should go to the Western countries, and you must distribute this knowledge.” So in spite of all my difficulties, all my inconveniences, I am here, because I am obligated by duty. If I go and sit down in Vṛndāvana, that will*

be good for my personal convenience; I shall be very comfortable there, and I will have no anxiety, nothing of the sort. But I have taken all the risk in this old age because I am dutybound. I am dutybound, so I have to execute my duty, despite all my inconveniences.

“Despite inconveniences” meant that Śrīla Prabhupāda was willing to undergo any difficulty for himself, if only he could fulfill his spiritual master's order. It was not that for himself he needed anything, but for preaching he needed a more impressive presentation of Kṛṣṇa culture, complete with music, food distribution, a meeting hall, and money with which to print and distribute books vigorously. But simply the chance to speak was a source of life for him. Even when there were no disciples, Śrīla Prabhupāda was very hopeful. At least he was speaking, and someone was listening.

Śrīla Prabhupāda expressed his optimism in a letter to Sumati Morarjee, dated March 18, 1966: “I was very much encouraged when you wrote to say, ‘I feel that you should stay there until you fully recover from your illness and return only after you have completed your mission.’ I think these lines dictated by you are the words of Lord Bāla Kṛṣṇa expressed through your goodness.

“You will be pleased to know that I have improved my health to normal, and my missionary work is nicely progress-

ing. I hope my project to start a temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa will also be realized by the grace of the Lord.

“Since I came to New York from Butler, Pennsylvania, I have rented the above room at seventy dollars per month, and I am delivering lectures on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, accompanied by *saṅkīrtana* [chanting the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa], and the American ladies and gentlemen come to hear me. You will be surprised to know that they do not understand the language of *saṅkīrtana* yet they hear with attention. The movement which I have started here is completely new to them, because the Americans are generally acquainted with the Indian *yoga* gymnastics as performed by some Indian *yogīs* here. They never heard of the *bhakti* [devotional *yoga*] cult or the science of Kṛṣṇa before, and still they are hearing me. This is a great success for me.”

Things were looking up, but still most of the people who came to the classes were not really interested in the full commitment Śrīla Prabhupāda was looking for. One of Dr. Misra's followers describes the Misra people at that time as being “middle-class types merely into intellectual hair-splitting.” Śrīla Prabhupāda was not unaware of this, and apparently he was looking for people who could help him more directly.

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Ācārya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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NUCLEAR NEAR-DISASTER

Overreacting and Underreacting in Harrisburg

by MAṄDALEŚVARA DĀSA

Since the nuclear near-catastrophe that occurred recently at the Three Mile Island reactor site near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, I've read many accounts of what happened. But none of these accounts reported on what I saw firsthand. I was there in the state capitol building that morning, the thirtieth of March, when the nerve center of the Pennsylvania state government had its nervous breakdown.

I live about forty miles out of Harrisburg at Gītā-nāgarī, ISKCON's Pennsylvania farm community. We were planning an outdoor summer festival in the city, so I was in town to see about getting the necessary permits and licenses. I had been to the police chief's office, and he had referred me to another office at the capitol building.

A receptionist in one of the offices on the second floor was trying to help me locate the right department. But as I told her what I needed, she just shook her head. "I think they might have sent you to the wrong place," she said.

An unusual amount of noise and commotion out in the hallway distracted me for a moment as I was puzzling over what I should do. "I think I'd better check my directions again," I said, when half a dozen workers from another office wandered in, talking excitedly among themselves. "Could I use your phone to check back with the chief of police?" I asked, raising my voice above the sudden stir. "He's the one that sent me up here."

"We can try, but all the lines are pretty tied up now, you know."

"No, I don't know," I said as she dialed. "What's going on?"

"You don't know? Well, you must be the only one. That nuclear reactor on Three Mile Island is acting up. It's been leaking radioactive steam since early Wednesday morning—the largest leak in

history. And now they just found a gas bubble inside the thing, and they say if it doesn't cool off, the gas might blow up." She seemed pleased to initiate a newcomer into the fearful situation. "I'm not afraid," she went on, "but that's what everyone else is so worried about. And that's why I can't get this call through. All the lines are tied up."

From her description it was hard to tell exactly how critical the situation was. But I was there on Kṛṣṇa's business, so I had to get things done, despite tied-up phones or whatever.

But now the scene around me was changing. The entire office—and maybe the entire building—was in chaos.

One nervous fellow came running up to the desk. Trembling almost out of control, he shrieked, "What are they going to do about this?!"

The receptionist told him not to worry, that Governor Thornburgh was going to be on the radio in a few minutes to tell people what to do in case of an evacuation.

"They caused this," the man said. "Now what are they going to do about it?"

"I'm not afraid of radiation," she interrupted. "I had radiation treatment six months ago. Anyway, my nephew told me all about it. He used to deal with the stuff. He says there's not a thing in the world for me to worry about."

But the man kept demanding to know what "the fools who got us into this mess in the first place" were going to do about it.

The room was becoming really congested now, as men and women from the other offices came in, talking excitedly about leaving their jobs, or trying to call their families on the office telephone.

Then a woman in her late thirties walked in, stiffly swinging her purse. With an air of authority, she went up to

the receptionist and told her to notify the other offices that anyone who wanted could go home and wouldn't be docked any pay. She opened her purse and took out a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. "What am I doing? I've got to get out of here. I've got to call somebody and have them pick up my kids. I've got to pack everything." Trying to soften her tone, "If anyone asks for me . . . just tell them I left." And she swung her purse over her shoulder and ran out.

The man who had been shaking so much was still around. He was pacing near one of the other desks, smoking and trying to listen to the governor's report on the radio. But he couldn't stand in one spot long enough to listen. He kept walking away and talking to the others, spreading his confusion.

Actually, no one really stopped long enough to hear that announcement. They had already concluded that their lives were in danger and that they should save themselves. "I'm not going to stay around here waiting to die," someone was saying. "I'm taking my wife and kids and going back to Ohio."

Another man stuck his head through the doorway and announced, "Did you people know that fifty feet beneath the foundation of this building is a radiation-proof chamber for the governor and his friends?" Then they all began loudly discussing that. (The governor and 225 other big political leaders could live for 4 days in their underground offices.) At this point I excused myself.

As I walked down the hall, I saw more of the same confusion and overheard more talk about "saving yourself." Out in front of the capitol building, I saw a secretary running for her life, with a handkerchief over her nose and mouth.

Police sirens were screaming from all directions as I pulled out into the heavy flow of traffic and made my way slowly

along. Service stations were all filled with cars fueling for the getaway. I pulled in beside a phone booth to call the farm.

There was a man ahead of me trying to get in touch with his wife. He was telling someone to give her a message. "We've got to get out of here as soon as possible," he explained. "The radio says that things aren't critical and the governor will tell us if it's necessary to leave. Of course, they say no one's supposed to

breathe the air, either—whatever that means. Anyway, I'm not going to hang around to see what's going to happen." Then he hung up the receiver and started pacing back and forth and craning his neck to see if his wife had come—even though he'd just hung up less than ten seconds before.

I couldn't get my call through, but it seemed useless to stay in Harrisburg. The radio reports had advised people to

stay indoors, and anyway, the government offices weren't functioning. So I headed back to the farm. Once I was out of the city, the congestion on the highway began to clear.

As I drove I was thinking about what I'd just witnessed. Although nothing is as sure as death, it always seems to come as a big surprise, and no one knows what to do. "Oh! We've got to get the kids at school, pack our bags, stop by the bank, gas up the car, and get out of here..." (So in Ohio people don't have to die?)

The threat of nonexistence creates a fearful situation for all of us—because actually we're eternal. It's just that out of ignorance we've identified ourselves with our material bodies. Out of ignorance we've become attached to this temporary life as all in all. And out of ignorance we suffer life after life, in different species. Now, in the human form, we have the rare chance to get free from ignorance and understand our actual, spiritual selves and our relationship with the Supreme. Yet most people aren't interested (until it's too late).

But as the Vedic literatures point out, only by reawakening our relationship with the Supreme can we leave death (and the cycle of death and rebirth) behind. For years the devotees have been distributing transcendental literature and talking with the people of Harrisburg about solving life's ultimate problem, yet they never seemed terribly interested. Perhaps they took us to be some kind of religious sect out proselytizing. It seemed self-realization was low priority for people with so much important business. But today they would surely have agreed with the Vedic literatures that saving yourself from death is the most important business in life.

I rolled down the window for a breath of the fresh country air. You don't need nuclear power or even electricity to be happy, I was thinking. The people at Gītā-nāgarī farm are satisfied without all the gadgets and gimmicks of this short-lived technological age. The life-style is simple: plowing the fields with oxen and taking care of cows and making use of their abundant milk. At the same time the philosophy is sublime: trying to understand that everyone is an eternal spiritual being, a servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

When I got back, the other devotees and I discussed what had happened. A laugh or two, but mostly it was serious. Everyone saw the urgent need for making America Kṛṣṇa conscious. And everyone went back to work with new vitality. It was going to be quite a job.

Enhance your spiritual life

For spiritual realization, all you really need is the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. But to enhance your spiritual life, you may want to add the items listed below.

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Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

WHAT IS A MANTRA? In Sanskrit, *man* means "mind" and *tra* means "freeing." So a *mantra* is a combination of transcendental sounds that frees our minds from the anxieties of life in the material world.

Ancient India's Vedic literatures single out one *mantra* as the *mahā* (supreme) *mantra*. The *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* explains, "These sixteen words—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—are especially meant for counteracting the ill effects of the present age of quarrel and anxiety."

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* adds, "All *mantras* and all processes for self-realization are compressed into the Hare

Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*."

Five centuries ago, while spreading the *mahā-mantra* throughout the Indian subcontinent, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name You have invested all Your transcendental energies."

The name *Kṛṣṇa* means "the all-attractive one," the name *Rāma* means "the all-pleasing one," and the name *Hare* is an address to the Lord's devotional energy. So the *mahā-mantra* means, "O all-attractive, all-pleasing Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your devotional service." Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, and your life will be sublime.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The Sexual Revolution: Coming Full Circle?

Here we are in the middle of the sexual revolution, and yet, amazingly, more and more people are touting chastity. Says game-show star Jaye P. Morgan, “Your perceptions deepen, and you reach a higher level of awareness. And the good effects are cumulative. I feel much better now. . . .” “Now that I’m celibate, I feel fresher,” says a Chicago businessman. “My energy level is higher, and my mind isn’t so clogged up.”

What could be the real reason for this surprising trend? Are we losing our taste for sex? Not exactly. As psychoanalyst Mildred Newman points out, “For years there has been a trend in the direction of chastity. People have begun to feel terrible about indiscriminate sex with so many partners.”

Adds psychiatrist Dr. H. Colton, “Many of my clients have been badly hurt by the pain of multiple separations from many different partners. That, to me, is the most negative aspect of the sexual revolution. . . . People go from one relationship to the next, and in the process they experience great pain.”

Writer Janet Dailey says, “I don’t think there’s a woman born who doesn’t wish that the first man she met would be the one she married.” Dailey and her cowriters at Harlequin Enterprises, along with author Barbara Cartland, are heightening the popular mood with what *Human Behavior* magazine has called “the paperback virgin,” the heroine of the book racks who says, in effect, “Save yourself, because some day your prince will come.”

For people who would prefer that “some day” be sooner rather than later, India’s traditional Kṛṣṇa conscious culture offers a happy solution: the couple’s parents seek expert spiritual guidance and arrange for an early marriage, based on complete psychospiritual compatibility. The record shows that this

kind of spiritually-based marriage really works. For one thing, the woman doesn’t have to wait ten or twenty years (or her whole life) for her prince to come, and she can give her heart and not worry about some day having to take it back.

This kind of relationship turns out happy and successful because it’s based not just on “biological need” but on enlightenment. In fact, in *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa affirms, “Sex that accords with religious principles, married sex for producing spiritually enlightened children—that sex I am.” The couple have sex with intelligence and discretion, not in a doglike way but in a godly way. And they produce enlightened children who easily become self-realized, liberated from the material world’s cycle of death and rebirth. Naturally the children help their parents do the same.

Not only do the couple satisfy their desire for the temporary pleasures of family life, but also they follow the *Bhagavad-gītā*’s path to eternal, spiritual pleasures. Day by day they experience that the inner self can find full happiness only in the eternal loving relationship we all have with Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Self (Kṛṣṇa’s very name means “the all-beautiful, all-attractive one”). So both husband and wife save themselves for Him.

After the children are grown, the couple leave home and travel together to holy places of pilgrimage. Eventually they make their amicable parting of the ways—she to live with her eldest children or at a holy place, he to travel as a monastic teacher, both of them to attain self-realization and realization of God. (Then, too, people who are spiritually precocious can bypass the married phase altogether, stay celibate, and start concentrating on self-realization earlier in life.)

Of course, our modern quasi-culture

hardly makes chastity easy. “This new chastity is more challenging,” notes Dr. Joyce Brothers, “because the pressure from the culture is very strong *not* to be chaste.” The mass mind manipulators want to keep us ever conscious of our genitals, always ready to hark when a new book or bath soap promises to win us newer and more desirable sex partners. So even if we want to avoid “the pain of multiple separations,” it’s going to be extremely difficult. . .

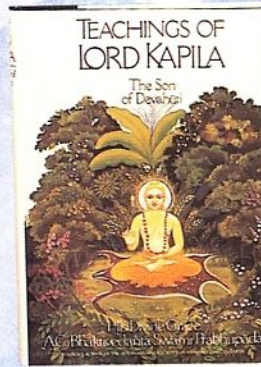
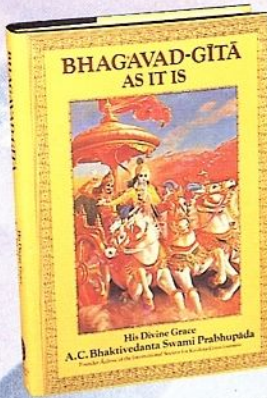
. . . unless we can find a genuinely higher pleasure. “The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment,” Kṛṣṇa says, “but the taste for sense objects will remain. Yet he can stay fixed and peaceful in consciousness *by experiencing a higher taste.*” [Bg. 2.59] As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, “Seekers of the Absolute Truth are never allured by unnecessary engagement in sense gratification, because the serious students seeking the Absolute Truth are always happily overwhelmed with the work of researching the Truth. . . . When one is actually Kṛṣṇa conscious, he automatically loses his taste for pale things.” The natural pleasure of our loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa is so great that it alone gives complete satisfaction and happiness, and we can easily go beyond short-lived, insignificant material pleasures—for lasting, unlimited spiritual pleasures.

Once we become spiritually fulfilled, we’ll be finished with sexual problems. In the latter part of our lives, if not much earlier, we’ll abstain to concentrate on self-realization and the unlimited pleasure within. Yet during married life, sex for the express purpose of producing children is also chaste. In other words, once we’re Kṛṣṇa conscious, chastity will follow as a natural by-product. We won’t be interested, *per se*, either in sex or no sex, but in doing all that we do in devotion to the Supreme. —SDG

Climb to the highest consciousness

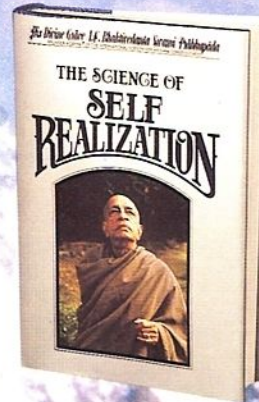
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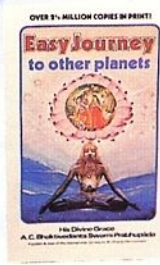
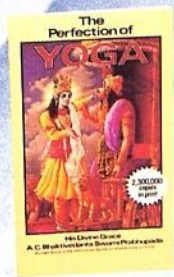


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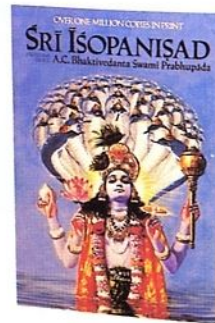
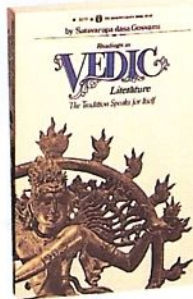


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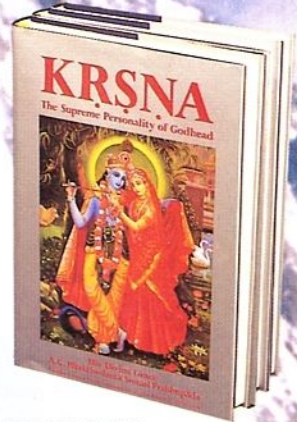
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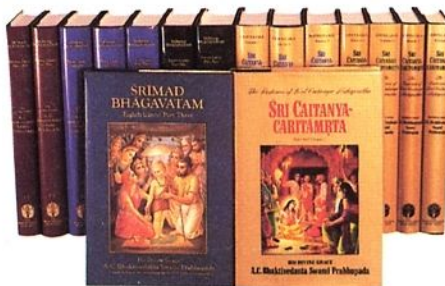
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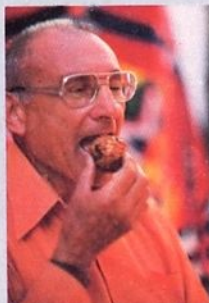
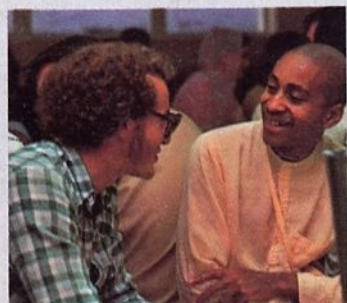
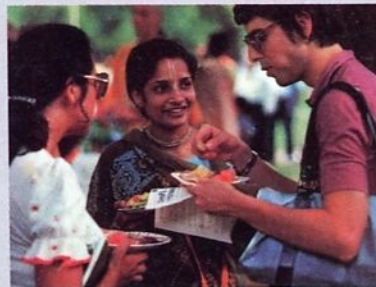
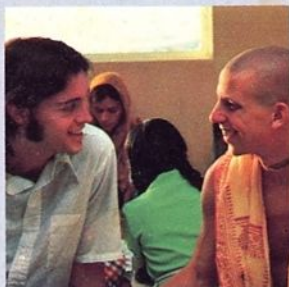
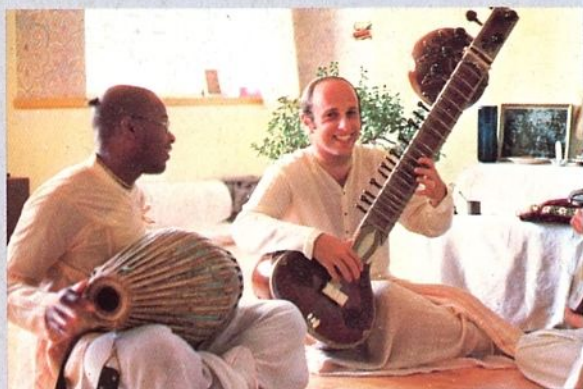
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